

THE WISH LIST

The Constitution of English Literature

The State, the Nation
and the Canon

Michael Gardiner

B L O O M S B U R Y

The Constitution of English Literature

The WISH List

(Warwick Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities)

Series editors: Jonathan Bate, Stella Bruzzi, Thomas Docherty and Margot Finn

In the twenty-first century, the traditional disciplinary boundaries of higher education are dissolving at remarkable speed. The last decade has seen the flourishing of scores of new interdisciplinary research centres at universities around the world and there has also been a move towards more interdisciplinary teaching.

The WISH List is a collaboration between Bloomsbury Academic and the University of Warwick, a university that has been, from its foundation, at the forefront of interdisciplinary innovation in academia. The series aims to establish a framework for innovative forms of interdisciplinary publishing within the humanities, between the humanities and social sciences and even between the humanities and the hard sciences.

Also in *The WISH List*:

Reading and Rhetoric in Montaigne and Shakespeare

Peter Mack

ISBN: 978-1-84966-061-7 (Hardback); e-ISBN: 978-1-84966-060-0

The Public Value of the Humanities

Edited by Jonathan Bate

ISBN: 978-1-84966-471-4 (Hardback); ISBN: 978-1-84966-062-4 (Paperback);
e-ISBN: 978-1-84966-063-1

Raising Milton's Ghost

John Milton and the Sublime of Terror in the Early Romantic Period

Joseph Crawford

ISBN: 978-1-84966-332-8 (Hardback); e-ISBN: 978-1-84966-419-6

Open-space Learning

A Study in Transdisciplinary Pedagogy

Nicholas Monk

ISBN: 978-1-84966-054-9 (Hardback); e-ISBN: 978-1-84966-055-6

Confessions

The Philosophy of Transparency

Thomas Docherty

ISBN: 978-1-84966-659-6 (Hardback); e-ISBN: 978-1-84966-679-4

The Constitution of English Literature

The State, the Nation, and the Canon

MICHAEL GARDINER

B L O O M S B U R Y
LONDON • NEW DELHI • NEW YORK • SYDNEY

Bloomsbury Academic

An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square
London
WC1B 3DP
UK

1385 Broadway
New York
NY 10018
USA

www.bloomsbury.com

First published 2013

© Michael Gardiner, 2013



This work is published open access subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 licence (CC BY-NC 3.0, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>). You may re-use, distribute, reproduce, and adapt this work in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided you give attribution to the copyright holder and the publisher and provide a link to the Creative Commons licence.

Michael Gardiner has asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as Author of this work.

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Bloomsbury Academic or the author.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

eISBN: 978-1-7809-3108-1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Typeset by Newgen Imaging Systems Pvt Ltd, Chennai, India

Contents

<i>Editorial Preface</i>	vi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
1 The Literary Form of the British State	1
2 The Greenwich Meridian, Greenwich	11
3 Imperial Sovereignty	49
4 Modernism as Constitutional Conservatism	69
5 Declaring Bankruptcy	99
<i>Notes</i>	123
<i>Index</i>	149

Editorial Preface

The field that we know, conventionally, as ‘English Literature’ has always been interdisciplinary. As an area of inquiry, it grows out of a series of several diverse interests. Yet, although many feel that we know the various stories of its construction, we have never fully come to terms with its *constitution*. What is it that constitutes the field; and, more importantly, what does the field itself help constitute within a national or regional series of cultures? To ask this is to raise fundamental questions concerning the very construction of modern identity in the field of ‘the English’; and, by ‘the English’, I mean much more than the people who happily accept that designation of their identity. ‘That which is English’ is the quarry of this book; and, in raising the question of what constitutes ‘the English’, the book also addresses those who feel uneasy with this term as a designation of their own constitution, their own constituencies.

Gardiner’s approach here not only addresses these as cultural issues – as issues of the lived everyday experience – but also as political and literary-aesthetic issues. Tracing a complex history through the formations and formulations of a British constitution, he is able to situate the entire intellectual field in ways that are daringly original, radically disturbing, and intellectually refreshing. Here is a story of whig opportunism, of liberal pretension, of Jacobin adventure and address. These – profound concerns of the construction of whatever nationhood might mean in this increasingly troubled geo-polity – form the core of our constitution of a series of literary forms. Those forms, in turn, depend on complex economic arrangements, whose origins as modern commerce find their roots in the story of imperial trade. In turn, this helps explain the massive international reach of the constitutional forms of ‘the English’ that sits at the core of the field of English Literature.

With quite extraordinary historical and literary range, Gardiner here provides not simply an explication of the constitution of English Literature, but also a series of questions for the very legitimacy of our constituencies, and our constitution. The questions are alive; and the WISH-list is fortunate to have here a work that is alert to their vigour and vibrancy.

Thomas Docherty

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to those who have allowed me to air parts of this essay, including: John Higgins, Thomas Docherty, Claire Westall, Emma Mason, Daniel Katz, Andy Mycock, Jon Mee, Paul Prescott, Anthony Barnett, Mike Small, James Mitchell, Terry Brotherstone, and Colin Crouch. Many thanks to Caroline Wintersgill and Mark Richardson at Bloomsbury.

CHAPTER ONE

The Literary Form of the British State

What is the jurisdiction of English Literature? Does English Literature have a common history? How is the 'national' use of English Literature different from that of other 'national' literatures? Is English in fact a national literature at all? What parameters, what assumptions might be important to historicizing the body of literary writing going under this name?

For the linked historical sketches which make up this book, there is a strong and mutually informing connection between the boundaries of the literary discipline – English Literature – and the boundaries of the sovereignty it describes – that of the British Union and empire. This book suggests that the disciplining form of English Literature has been founded – it has been *constituted* – in the form of the British state, and the experience which is interpolated as legitimate to it. (And it is crucial that English Literature is not, as we will see, the literature of England: on the contrary, English Literature relies on an ideal image of England which was always displaced into empire, and which is being made difficult by England's post-imperial return.) The modern British constitution and the discipline of English Literature have been mutually supporting: both arose from the need to bolster the informal state between the late seventeenth century and the dangers at the end of the eighteenth, and both came into question with the post-colonial unravelling of welfare consensus at the end of the twentieth.

The suggestion is that this mutual entwining has been an ongoing and accelerating process – but also that if the knit of English Literature and British constitution began to loosen between the 1950s (the end of consensus, the attrition of the imperial mission, the reworking of educational stratification, and the incursion of lived-experience into the literary canon) and the 1990s (devolution, democratic deficit, advanced neoliberalism, and the loss of a shared civility), it came even further undone with the financial panic of 2007–8. This book argues that in the absence of a codified constitution, between these dates English Literature continued to act as an informal or anti-formal constitution, but that the viability of English Literature as *constitutional culture* has fallen drastically, and may now be facing an insuperable challenge.

A cultural body has always been needed to present British authority as solid and unified, an unusual situation which has origins in the state's strong reliance on the integrity of the money form, and its corresponding need for the ultimate vesting of power in the parliamentary executive rather than the people – a constitutional principle which has nevertheless never been formally settled across Britain. The question has however become urgent since constitutional authority has recently been *seen to be* uneven across Britain's constituent nations, as it was for the nations of the British empire. From the inception of the British state at the end of the seventeenth century, culture has been charged with the ideological task of describing a common ground for the 'nation', understood in terms of ethnicity and empire. The apparently plurinational – and yet itself somehow national – state has relied on a displaced ideal of an England that can be continuously extended outwards – but this is not because of what used to be called 'Anglocentrism', as if England-the-place really did form a centre, but rather because of the cultural burden of holding together incommensurate constitutional authorities relying on its apparently most durable model, that is on a constitution 'settled' but open to perpetual informal modification. In this cultural sense, more than in any formal political sense, the United Kingdom can indeed be described as a 'unitary state'.

It is important in this context to see that a binding authority which depended on and was pushed by Britain's need for a dependable world currency (especially at the end of the seventeenth century) goes together with the avoidance of codification. 'British culture', the financial unification, has had this as its primary characteristic – the power to silently weld together the pre-existing sovereignties of Britain's nations – and its changing relationships within empire have had to be strictly anti-formal. And it is this anti-formality that gives the *literary* discipline its importance. Anti-formalism describes the unusual post-1688 establishment of Britain as a vehicle for imperial investment, rather than as a body based on, for example, ethnos or shared civil society.¹ The idea of a shared British constitution as more cultural than formal allows it to change 'invisibly', or ideologically, with tremendous subtlety, and especially in literature, through apparently natural processes.

Or put otherwise, the avoidance of present-tense and active experience which the anti-formal constitution demands has meant that *legal* principles of precedence have had to correspond to *cultural* ideals of precedence – or

heritage, or canonicity. The 'legal positivist' assumption which forms the backbone of the British constitution, insisting that what is right is what has always already been proven to be effective, is upheld primarily by a culture of continuity, and indeed by the 'shadow-codification' that is the literary discipline. Defined by the resistance to a formal written constitution, a unified Britain has been maintained through a cultural contest that I will also describe as *temporal*, as it is centred on the conflict between the present-tense inscription of experience and a form of 'precedent' which only exists outside history.

The argument here then is that, to an unusually high degree, the registration of history as experience is separate from and antagonistic to the state authority described by the British constitution and informally coded in English Literature. It is worth clarifying a point of nomenclature at the outset: here 'national' points to either the civil and affective elements of British life or, more likely, one of the four discrete areas which make up the United Kingdom. Most political scientists have long accepted that although made up of nations, the United Kingdom itself can't seriously be described as national.² The further step taken here is to suggest that the burden of ideologically 'nationing' Britain was undertaken *in the form of* English Literature. This is not to offer an alternative canon of English, or to identify some texts which are 'more' ideological, but rather to place the parameters of English Literature as broadly congruent to those of British government. The lack of the registration of experience is central here – the constitution and discipline under examination, especially in their 'high' forms from the start of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth, have been good at absorbing experience into a pre-existing form, and so at seeming ahistorical and universal.

Literary historians have struggled to date the 'origins' of English Literature in a number of ways. These will be addressed variously here, but by way of a beginning they will be seen to lie neither in the syllogistic terms of the first appearances of the phrase to describe university chairs, nor later in the (even more syllogistic) terms of ancient university departments taking on the name as a subject, but rather as somewhere between these two moments, in the constitutional bolstering of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, when a coherent set of cultural values was urgently demanded. It is significant that the counter-Revolutionary moment

of the 1780s–90s points back so strongly to that of the Hanoverian restoration or ‘whig revolution’ of 1688–9, a foundational moment for a unified Britain standing against those European systems which often seemed to be based on a threateningly formalized authority – rather than on the informality of markets.

There were signs of a growing body of study in and of English throughout the eighteenth century during which time the British financial sector also boomed – but for the purposes of this essay the *disciplining* of English with the rejection of a formal constitution rises from around the 1780s, and is concretized in the rejection of French and American codes as well as in the incorporation of Scottish, English, and Irish rogue elements in the 1790s–1810s. It is this period that sees English Literature behaving as a surrogate constitution. Faced with the need to reject the formalization of rights, the surrogate constitution had to be entirely informal and cultural, and based on the avoidance of action understood as the historical registration of experience. So while both constitution and literary discipline have often been presented in terms of a reverence for history construed as ‘the past’, something more like the opposite has been the case – what these institutions stand for has been the *avoidance* of history as experience, and so the avoidance of the past as past. The avoidance of history as experience is, in a quite fundamental sense, what *makes* the United Kingdom.

Recently, severe pressures have been brought to bear on the stability of British constitutional culture. For one thing, the informal (‘organic’) idea of franchise which rose at the turn of the nineteenth century has been devalued along with the devaluation of the idea of an exceptional and universal Anglophone civilization, which fell away gradually between the 1910s and the 2000s. For another, the era since the 1970s has seen a dramatic failure of the cohesive rationale of the British Union itself, which has accelerated in the latter stages of devolution in the late 2000s, bringing up the question of fundamental sovereignty differences. This has coincided with a widespread disaffection in the Westminster political class, who have been increasingly perceived across the parliamentary ‘spectrum’ as the managers of a discredited state-capitalism.

To engage in the long dating is also to go beyond seeing current malaises as a result of a new neoliberalism created sometime in the 1970s, the story with which the British left often consoles itself: while the post-1979 financial reinvention did make explicit the strengthening of some of the values of

the anti-Jacobin (1780s–1810s) era, in terms of sovereignty a ‘modernized’ counter-revolutionary culture goes back much further than the 1970s. A fortifying constitutional settlement can be perceived, in particular, beneath the gains of the welfare state from 1942, which demanded a strongly policed intuitive conception of a shared good giving rise to a more ‘total’ environment. This is an uncomfortable idea for the British left, but one increasingly borne out by the brittle constitutional settlement. The long fall of consensual sovereignty has correspondingly left English – with its basis in an imperial ideal rather than a place, in precedent rather than experience – with what we might call a ‘heritage deficit’, an unpayable cultural debt to an imaginary past. And the post-2008 era is a dangerous time to be carrying debt.

Indeed the turn of the 2010s saw a perfect storm approaching British constitutional culture: a maturing Scottish national self-determination movement with roots in popular sovereignty increasingly threatened to infect the entire UK; a failure of trust in the Westminster political class reached chronic levels; inequality and surveillance were seen to be integral parts of the policy of all major parties; and there was a premonition of debt which might never be fixed under the prevailing governmental structure. If the informal constitution was indeed cultural, could English Literature really retain the civilizing and universalizing shape it had had during imperial and consensual times? The 1980s and ’90s had already seen the political impact of the movement related to popular sovereignty, later known as the Scottish Literary Renaissance (a movement which doesn’t require knowledge as to the ‘nationalist’ politics of individual writers, as the hoary and misleading question has it) – and this would accelerate as devolution unwound towards the 2011–12 mandate for constitutional referendum. However – the registration of a desire for popular sovereignty became quite widespread throughout Britain after 2008, and can be seen in the student actions and Occupy protests of 2010–11, as well as in reactions to the tripling of university fees in 2012 in *one part* of the UK, troubling the apparent naturalness of the informal constitution and English Literature’s role in upholding it.

And yet the question of these impacts on the scope of English Literature is typically still strenuously avoided within the discipline itself. If anything, its foundations seem to have become more entrenched with the attrition of the ‘British national’ mandate: the conditions which have troubled the mission of English have also petrified it with the need to market itself as

a 'hard' subject (high entry requirements, stringent testing, demonstrable cultural capital, class prestige, apparent employability). At the level of canonicity – the ideal of a set of civilizing texts and classification – 'new' authors were already being added to university reading lists in an apparent act of multicultural bounty – with English still largely speaking in terms of heritage and universalized sensibility, even, or especially, when claiming to be 'reaching out'.

This desire to hold onto the 'hard' disciplinary term has left many in the field in a double-bind: to remain a coherent and saleable whole, the discipline has to deny any ruptures in its cultural governance, and yet it also has to claim a public significance, which stands at odds with the demands of heritage. And so a terrible burden has been placed on English Literature's unspoken forms of trust – whether understood in canonical, constitutional, instinctual, or financial terms. We can be sure that we are in problematic territory when the bond between trust and meaningful participation, even for an aspiring middle class, is *seen* to have been broken. And as university fees are almost tripled overnight for 'home' students, the understanding of home universalized to give English Literature its civilizing mission takes on an uncanny presence: to be a 'home' student in debt in England-the-place is now to be quite perceptibly alienated from the very 'experience' promised.

The troubles of 'British national' cultural authority have also been studiously ignored by a whiggish press which only reacts when absolutely forced, and which presents any registration of the national as a local problem.³ The press has also avoided criticism of what is perhaps the last ideological pin to fall in English Literature, that of state multiculturalism, which demands an expression of constitutional loyalty along with a declaration of 'racial' placement relative to an always-prior default which itself could never be defined (most prominently, 'black British' as a term which demands acknowledgement of a typology relative to an interpolated default plus allegiance to the neoliberal state). Nevertheless the cultural ground has shifted as constitutional questions have become re-territorialized, with ground-level criticisms of an ideal and interpolated centre which relates to no place. And the demonization of England-the-place, and indeed of any other sub-universal body, in the British press in the 2000s of course ignored the way the parliamentary left was often dedicating itself to saving the idea of British culture as *national*: Britishness, that is, has remained the ideally transparent and somehow wholesome form of nationalism.⁴

In this context, multiculturalism in particular was used to repeat the race-and-state typologies of the high-imperial era on which English Literature had thrived. It is perhaps unsurprising that in the area of the British Union retaining a serious attachment to popular sovereignty and a discrete civil society – Scotland – national experience has been less open to racination: by the mid-2000s, Asifa Hussain and William Miller were showing that Pakistani-born Scots were more likely to identify nationally than were their English counterparts.⁵ (This is of course not the same as saying that there is no racism in Scotland – of course, there is.) But a Scotland attached to popular sovereignty has become something of a location of desire for constitutional sceptics throughout the UK. Once a key and enthusiastic player in the expansion of empire, Scotland – largely echoing the historical place of Ireland – has come to crystallize the threats to British constitutional culture as continuation or canonicity.

Over the past two centuries, then, English Literature as a discipline has relied on its ability to congeal incommensurable constitutional models across UK nations. Although once confidently patrician and universalist, then reworked as a progressive traditionalism in the twentieth century, constitutional culture has been troubled by the material realities of the post-colonial era,⁶ after which it has only just clung on with the help of a parliament-oriented vested media. But a cultural drift from constitutional consensus has asked increasingly difficult questions about a unified informal franchise now widely perceived to be dysfunctional. As Michael Keating has long argued, if the UK really were a properly functioning plurinational state, each member would be able to conceive of itself as a constitutional entity without recourse to an imaginary whole – but this does not account for the missing ingredient of universalization, English Literature, reworked as a constitutional glue for troubled times.⁷

Today cultural defences against a territorial, present-tense England are rapidly crumbling,⁸ where until recently, the specificity of England was kept taboo via a multiculturalism which was able to present the constitution as universal and informal.⁹ Defences against the ‘territorial’ taboo in British parliament have come not only from the left (the Labour Party, which is in fact well to the right on any serious metric),¹⁰ but also from explicit conservatives, for example in the post-1999 rash of books on ‘Englishness’, every one setting out to *avoid* a recovery of English place while claiming to flag it up.¹¹ Despite these defences, during the final, post-2008, defence of

English Literature as British constitutional culture, the threats will be seen most clearly in England itself. David Goodhart has argued for contiguous political and national borders for England,¹² and recently Ben Wellings has suggested that the potential for the well-worn ascription to cultural Englishness has become politicized and open to self-determination – an initiative which I propose now exists throughout the UK.¹³

The threat of the return of territorial England against the universal meant that by the end of the 2000s ‘nationalism’ had to be strenuously demonized, even as an invisible UK nationalism was vigorously promoted. After 2008, the British National Party and similar organizations were useful for this, although (as these factions have themselves pointed out) many of their messages would until recently have been seen as British common sense.¹⁴ Facing the possibility of a Scottish referendum on independence, attempts to concede Englishness as itself national have been both belated and in fact still often avoided in territorial England itself (as in the recent ‘Blue Labour’ movement, propelled into the centre of the party, which has murmured about England the place despite remaining supportive of British parliamentary centralization, and being driven by a questionable fear of a Tory England).¹⁵

It is not coincidental that readings of a provincialized England have grown with post-colonial sovereignty scepticism: a sub-field of literary criticism separating a territorialized post-colonial England might be traced back to Ian Baucom’s influential 1999 book, describing England’s idealized displacement and the eclipse of the national as an affective entity.¹⁶ In 2003 Jed Esty made a comparable case for England as having been stretched out in imperial export then un-stretching.¹⁷ And yet neither of these important accounts were able to recognize English Literature as the cornerstone of British constitutional culture, implying that the state form responsible for empire could be stripped back to revive a core of England, although this core was precisely what had been eclipsed by empire. There is no formal analogy to ‘feeling more English than British’ (the ‘Linz-Moreno question’), that is, ‘feeling English’ still tends to revert to measurement of British voting patterns which are unable to account for the possibility of formal English agency. Surveys on Englishness should remember that modern England has *never* had national representation, making difficult casual assumptions about its affective culture.

For these reasons, we might return our understanding of the term *national* to a time before its co-opting by anti-Jacobin British constitutional

culture, especially the time when the current informal constitution had to be firmed up, using the cultural body of English Literature. The national might then be understood better in terms of cultural history than of the ‘self-creation’ demanded by Linz-Moreno, which is in the end a form of self-ownership which I will describe as itself fundamentally British. Looking increasingly dated as structural franchise problems are seen to overwhelm any accounts of identity, Moreno has nevertheless recently become popular with Westminster think-tanks, relentlessly returning to an identitarian ideal which places voters – those who mandate the British state – as consumers locked willingly into a network of abstracted relationships ultimately dependent on the commodity form.¹⁸ Moreno certainly tends to draw whiggish answers about an ideal self, shepherding questions towards existing psephological terms and particularly the misleading category of ‘feeling British’ (begging the question of whether a body overwhelmingly dependent on alienated labour can ever really be felt). It is quite possible that a history of literary authority will be more useful than self-reporting in understanding British constitutional culture, and that the history of English Literature is much more politically determinant than we tend to assume.

The long-accepted universalism that ties together British state and English Literature then can and should be historicized. There is nothing axiomatic about placing Derek Walcott next to Geoffrey Chaucer on syllabi or in publishing catalogues. If the absorbent force of English Literature is indeed also the universalized constitutional culture of the British state, this only became solid after the defeat of Jacobite, Irish, American, Anglo-radical, and French Jacobin challenges.¹⁹ And at the latter end of this long disciplining process, the breaking points of English Literature tended to appear both in decolonizing territories and then in a Scotland whose constitutional incorporation seemed less settled.²⁰ It is not surprising that by the late 2000s most people *throughout the UK* saw the Scottish government, with at least an animating myth of popular sovereignty, as more of a carrier of civic values than the British one.²¹ Even the BBC, a key ideological institution arising simultaneously with university English to help save British constitutional culture in its ‘silver era’, has tacitly given up on a unified address (that is, anything beyond England tends to get parenthesized) – while hanging on to the British rubric.²² And after the 2011 Scottish elections, flutters of anxiety about the constitutional status quo were registered even within the

parliamentary mainstream, further attenuating the continuity function of the literary discipline.²³

Moreover, as faith in the parliamentary version of the public has collapsed, ground-level protests have suggested both resistance to prevailing economic wisdoms and a call for a return of cultural understanding to the commons – with the national as a one conduit – where it had belonged to an absorptive state. Also clearer now is how the heritage of English Literature has to be paid for with the experience of its student-interns, or put otherwise, how financial debt corresponds to the debt of influence which has structured the English canon since the growth of English Literature as an informal constitution. The demonstrations of 2010–11 moreover exacerbated the troubles of informal constitutional culture, and, crucially, exposed its alienation of present-tense experience. After this, a defence of literary experience will also be an ‘occupation’ of English – a phrase less frivolous than it appears if the discipline is understood as an imperial defence against popular sovereignty, imposed by the ahistorical time of heritage.

CHAPTER TWO

The Greenwich Meridian, Greenwich

On the platform of a railway station in the southern reaches of the island, expectant passengers look eastwards to where, according to official timetables, a train should have emerged from the grounds of the Maritime Museum. Their expressions echo those who waited for triumphant ships returning down the estuary to the centre of the first Elizabethan world. Beyond the tunnel, preparations are being made for the most marketized and militarized Olympic Games ever, which will later be milked as a sign of 'British national' unity. The river beyond has recently already seen the procession of the Royal Diamond Jubilee flotilla fail to divert attention much from a failing economy, suffering from structural problems related to the centrality of the financial City, also nearby. In the station, there is no way to buy tickets since the machines are out of order and there are no staff, but automated announcements warn that travelling without a ticket could lead to a criminal conviction. Some look up at a departure board on a pole with the wires of CCTV cameras climbing up it. And on the board, the time of the next train is given as four minutes before the present time. The disjunction is striking, but goes unremarked. The impossible past is too quotidian to be remarkable here: the 'past' in which the train *really came* is the guiding temporality of British governance. The point is not that the train is late, nor that trains are worse here than anywhere else in the world, but that the acceptance of the incommensurable disjunction of times is taken as normal. Here the acceptance of a past which was never experienced at any time is simply realistic, and indeed realist.¹ And the present made of impossible and interpolated pasts is the very stuff of British constitutional culture and, most centrally, of English Literature.

In her influential tract on World Literature (2005), Pascale Casanova describes a literary Greenwich Meridian, a standard which stratifies the relative powers of global literary production, which she claims (after Herder) have split along national lines:

By exporting their languages and institutions, colonizing nations (which is to say dominant literary nations) succeeded in strengthening their

political pole. The expansion of linguistic (or linguistic-cultural) areas therefore constituted a sort of extension of European national literary spaces.²

Casanova's marking of a literary temporality is well taken. But in a way which says much about the blindspots of the sub-field of World Literature more generally, the national, or the ethno-national, is described here without attention to the local conditions of the formation of states, nation-states, or constitutional jurisdiction. In this account, all peripheral national literary space naturally aspires to a statehood which can universalize other spaces on its own terms, so that

The most independent territories of the literary world are able to state their own law, to lay down the specific standards and principles applied by their internal hierarchies, and to evaluate works and pronounce judgments without regard for political and national divisions.³

Casanova's connection between literary time and political 'tempo', the 'artistic clock' of legitimacy,⁴ is a crucial one (reminiscent of the 'time-lag' familiar to postcolonial studies), and it helps describe the contrast of texts on the railway departure board. And Casanova is undoubtedly right that writers far from the meridian but stuck in a major language suffer a structural disadvantage,⁵ since they seem to come 'late', and are then understood as an anachronism,⁶ leaving them to 'refer, consciously or unconsciously, to a [metropolitan] measure of time that takes for granted the existence of a literary present'.⁷ Also important is Casanova's description of how the 'common standard for measuring time, an absolute point of reference' is understood as literary canonicity: 'aesthetic distance is also measured in temporal terms . . . the prime meridian determines the present of literary creation'.⁸ However, an obvious problem with Casanova's temporal definition of aesthetic distance is in her placing Paris, the capital of the republic which led modern Europe in forcing experience into sovereignty, as the fixed site of the cultural meridian.⁹

There are of course stylistic levels on which the centrality of Paris seems quite natural – Paris condensed many of the literary markers of modernity – but the universalist cultural tempo belongs more to the British Union's struggle, from the Seven Years' War through the Pax

Britannica, to capture the literary-linguistic high ground as a corollary of sovereign unification.¹⁰ Casanova does briefly describe, via Stefan Collini's *Public Moralists* (1991), how nineteenth-century popular literary anthologies concretized ideas of 'Englishness' (that is, Britishness) in a way which suggested the existence of a strong meridian.¹¹ But for Casanova it is Paris rather than London which sets world literary time on its own terms, an assumption which is understandable, but perfectly wrong. The competition for literary universality at the level of method, model and canon, for acceptance as the temporal 'still point', was definitively won by the British Union of the 1790s–1810s, and depends on its ability to present itself as a temporal centre of global culture, that is, as the temporal origin of debt.

And Britain's position as a regulator of credit is intimately related to and presses the unification of the state itself at the end of the seventeenth century, when a unified British credit system was established in part thanks to the Anglo-Dutch financial reform of William III, and when writers like John Locke and Daniel Defoe argued for state unification specifically on the basis of property-owning citizens and the integrity of money.¹² But the constitutional culture of debt only fully coheres as a result of the anti-Jacobin push of the Napoleonic Wars a century later. Following the sea battles of 1802–15, the defeat of the French and Spanish fleets cleared routes to the imperial territories, allowing for a rapid acceleration of the universalization of British credit – that is, temporality – and of course the 'flotilla' motif has remained important to British culture, something not lost on the organizers of the 2012 Jubilee celebrations not far from Greenwich railway station.¹³

By the 1830s, even a lagging Bourbon France was being drawn into British tempo by the conservative victors of the ideological sovereignty battle which had accompanied the Napoleonic Wars, for which social rules were never written but naturally cohered. This was somewhat intuited during a later era when 'Theory' was making inroads into universalist English: one of the most widely anthologized sections of Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975) concerns the anti-Napoleonic whig Jeremy Bentham's design for a surveillant panoptical prison, allowing the 'formal' spectacle of the guillotine to be superseded by an 'informal', progressive self-disciplining.¹⁴ The point here is that in a study largely concerned with French institutions, Foucault turns to anti-Jacobin Britain for the rationalization of the spectacle of the guillotine into the managerial

figures of the prison and the factory,¹⁵ at a time when Britain was being urgently forced to bolster an informal constitution against popular republicanism.

So although there certainly is a kind of a meridian in the Revolution of 1789–92, and although France would remain aesthetically influential throughout the nineteenth century, it was unified and unifying Britain which most successfully aimed at an ahistorical and organically regulating still point of time. The rigorously anti-formal British meridian could allow of no challenge since it allowed of no present-tense experience: what characterized this sovereignty form was that it was perpetually anterior, based on an ideal of precedent, the organic, and the legal positivism of the always-already. If the national canonization of the literary work, as Casanova perceptively suggests, frees it from everyday critical judgement by ‘killing’ it, by placing it in a specific context,¹⁶ nevertheless the *refusal* of historical context is a defining feature of the disciplining power of British canonicity. Casanova is absolutely right to say that cultural power should be understood as textual and temporal, but when she describes how ‘literary spaces have been able to appear in the absence of a formally constituted state’,¹⁷ what she is describing is precisely an informal, unwritten *British* sovereignty.

This, indeed, is underlined by Casanova’s stress on how literature lying on the meridian will tend to become suffocated by the consequences of its own universalizing desires, and get trapped within realism.¹⁸ If there is a single attribute which describes the globalized culture of the Greenwich Meridian, it is the persistence of realism, the positivist insistence on an intuitive understanding of things as they always are, should be, and have been. So after the anti-Jacobin resistance to action had been embedded in constitutional culture, especially through the movement which would become known as Romanticism, literary realism would become central to the Victorian novel of serious qualities, which in turn would be recuperated within English as a university subject in the mid-twentieth century as the British constitution reached its most mature or ‘totalizing’ form. Casanova does recognize how a realism within English Literature helped maintain the ‘cultural protectorates’ of the Anglosphere, especially from the mid-Victorian period when empire was culturally rebranded,¹⁹ and that the extension of Commonwealth was bound up with ‘nation-building’ exemplars right up to and including the Booker Prize – and moreover that British English Literature

was particularly good at assimilating its own ‘peripheries’.²⁰ But again what is missing is a distinction between a constitution based on experience of the present and a constitution based on the impossibility of writing ever reaching present experience. The Greenwich Meridian is the still point, the *meridian*, precisely because it is the point at which history becomes impossible, where heritage takes the shape of prior and instinctual values – and in this lies its strength and its persistence for English Literature.

It is because of the ideological weight of the Greenwich Meridian that the doubled time on the railway departure board is allowed to stand here for what are still, under the most unfeasible circumstances, called public services, implying a shared good, something commonly owned and controlled. Of course it is practically impossible for the passengers queued indefinitely by marketized monopolies under surveillance cameras to believe they are really participating in a public as shared good. But the British meridian’s alienation of experience allows the *public* of public services to take on a meaning quite different to the one implied. What is seen as belonging to all of us is in practice an unusually strong state franchising power untempered by the sovereignty of the people in its protection of capital. Under financial and legal positivism ideas of public and private are mutually dependent, even as they are presented as separate kinds of experience.²¹

And the term given to this instinctual, anti-formal definition of public value has been realism. The passengers on the platform accept the impossible combination of times on the departure board not only because answering back would be petulant, but also because it would be unrealistic. In modern Britain, the unreachable time of realism, in economic or literary senses, is intimately connected to the way that waiting for a call centre can realistically be described as service, that surveillance in indefinite queues can realistically be called health care, and policy decisions made by business organizations can realistically be called unfortunate. Realism bridges the gap between personal experience and informal, managerial government. By the time the victory of conservative market liberalism no longer had to be concealed (the era now called neoliberal), the *real* – understandable in terms of the theory following Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Žižek as the (ideological) world of primary social truths – has frequently come to be seen as the entire imaginable world, reflected in ‘reality TV’ and similar feints towards the idea of the public which fill the free papers left on the Greenwich trains.²² The public of the meridian, of course, is a carefully

assembled set of private concerns, in this case divided into the lines, the trains, the ticketing, and a long chain of related services outsourced into quasi-competitive monopolies. Despite the language of privatization and nationalization, such services are never really either national or private: nationalization in any serious sense would imply an outmanoeuvring of state continuity, a participation by passengers in the running of the trains, which is precisely what is missing; privatization would imply a service working through the logic of economic cycles, which are carefully held off.

So here the *performance* of the public comes to supersede the public itself, and the path for this is cleared by realism's eclipse of experience. The doubling of time seen in the realist separation of performance from experience, so clearly visible on the departure board, has then been recognized as having similarities to the performance of the public in Stalinism, leading the London government commentator Tony Travers to describe post-1990s British governance as Gosplanesque.²³ Travers is hardly a wild-eyed libertarian, and his analogy is not far-fetched: there have been few serious modern bodies which might be described as state-nations – that is, civic societies held in place almost solely by a monopoly of violence, but the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union have been two key examples – both requiring the state to perpetually overrule national experience in a 'doubled' time.

As it happens, the academic lawyer Iain McLean has recently imaged the British constitution, structurally 'permanent' yet always undergoing hidden modification, as a series of train crashes, apparently static but driven by 'disasters'.²⁴ McLean's primary target is the Victorian constitutional commentator A. V. Dicey, a figure more responsible than any other for confirming the constitution as an organic body based on positivist principles always resisting codification. And behind Dicey was an anti-systematic line of thought fully established during the 1790s–1810s counter-Revolutionary period, resisting any formalization and feeding into familiar ideas of English anti-intellectualism expressed in a constitution ideally beyond all human meddling.²⁵

Secure in the unreachable time of perpetual precedent, the Diceyan constitution only ever offers obscure glimmers of its workings in those occasional failures of precedent when the everyday alienation of experience becomes *visible* in some kind of rupture: the everyday ceding of experience goes unnoticed till its realism is undermined by a 'crash'. The constitutional

train crash is like the revelation of a coup d'état, as historical change appears from behind the mask of continuity (as in the real coup which attempted to impose para-constitutional standards on Ulster in 1913–14 and in which Dicey himself was a key player).²⁶ The absolute continuity which characterizes the British constitution can then be seen as a realism joining up silent coups through an excision of the present which insists that no action is taking place. The ahistorical authority of the meridian relies on the avoidance of the visible crash, and of any registration of any sovereignty based on personal experience.

In sovereignty terms the aggressive modernization of this state-capitalist consensus might be better dated to the early 1940s than to the end of the 1970s. The years 1940–2 saw a tremendous expansion of state power allowing for a more totalized conception of the public which demanded belief in a refreshed parliamentary sovereignty (though this would be severely criticized within two decades, as I will suggest). The new 1940s state-capitalist welfare taking on the 'familiar' sign of progressive consensus was also a strong standardization of the double time which 'realistically' alienated present experience. George Orwell's most iconic novel (1949) then became an uncomfortable read during the neoliberal return of the organic constitution: long sold as a parable of the Stalinist 1930s, the Orwellian vision would also be widely seen as describing attenuated experience trapped in an impossible time.²⁷ Authority in Orwell's dystopia depends on realism rising over experience, as newspaper articles are written for a prior official narrative, fragments of proof of memory are instinctively discarded, and a search for the past in the proletarian quarters brings only detritus which can never cohere into a shared history.²⁸ Deprived of any sense of participation, Orwell's underclass cede their experience to alcohol, pulp media, pornography, and gambling, while a fearful, disenfranchised, and instinctively orthodox middle class, the Party, are bound to internalize the separation of the division of experience and the real.

This orthodox British middle class, the class of Party members expected to be capable of instinctual doublethink, are the latter-day carriers of the continuant or organic anti-Jacobin constitution solidified at the end of the eighteenth century. So in the single most influential account of British culture as a class-fix, *The Break-Up of Britain* (1977), Tom Nairn describes how England's (then Britain's) pioneering role in institutionalizing primitive accumulation encouraged the anti-formal constitution, a constitution

which preceded modern ideas of rights and based citizenship on property. This constitution then blocked the middle class's revolutionary potential in a way which differentiated the new British state from the European continent.²⁹ Between Orwell and Nairn this class had been vigorously reworked by a state technocracy drawing in the psychologists, sociologists, and town planners who had helped reform the post-war state, creating an ideally meritocratic but still rigorously anti-formal regime. But although the effects of the technocratic denial of popular sovereignty may have been grasped by some (and here Nairn joins the wider ranks of the New Left), the alienating state was generally strengthened by welfare success, and would be allowed, in an atmosphere of relative consumer affluence, to underscore a public which was real but beyond experience. The sleight of hand which gave rise to an economic 'Golden Age' of 1951–73 and which is now typically gazed on with some nostalgia, nevertheless also allowed a strengthening of a continuant constitution based on capital rationalization before all else, though now more effectively presented as a shared culture.

The New Left staple from the 1950s of understanding how 'informal' Britain might better be defined as a class category than as a national one has frequently been forgotten, but remains crucial.³⁰ For the 'Nairn-Anderson thesis', conservative reaction to Jacobin revolution showed how established capital could be left unchallenged because of the premodern nature of the English revolution, with the whig settlement of 1688 foreclosing in perpetuity the possibility of constitutional overhaul. Throughout the long eighteenth century, British governance became increasingly and confidently settled around property, and British government accepted this as an *economic* truism. With Locke, property rights took the role that might otherwise have been taken by formal constitutional rights, and with the expanding financial sector this became the primary motor of British 'national identity'.³¹ In train-crash terms, continuation *was* the form of British revolution, perpetual, invisible, and untouchable. Its ascendancy begins with a parliamentary sovereignty seeming to ameliorate raw power and traceable to post-1688 curbs on royal prerogative, and an extension of the executive power of parliament between 1689 and 1720, as well as government bureaucracy under 'public men'.³² So as Chris Thornhill describes in his comparative sociology of constitutions, from this point, both common law rights and the authority of parliament remained, but the latter rose over the former as a defining principle.³³

And crucially, the Hanoverian ‘public credit revolution’ spread the idea of universal but ‘national’ debt as *the* unifier of state, with a budgetary debt running from 1692 to 1693, and the establishment of the Bank of England the following year (after which, the Acts of Union were passed after a few skirmishes by 1707).³⁴ Financial government had the effect of reducing the opposition between estates – executive, budgetary, and legal – allowing for the diffusion of the informal constitution, and so for its strengthening.³⁵ Unlike the ideas of revolutionary France which would follow, resistance to the informal British constitution could be spread and contained, so that, as Thornhill puts it:

The incorporation of parliament as a distinct legislative organ allowed the state to internalize previously potent bearers of private privilege and sources of political dissent, to convert externalistic or private conflicts into disputes that could (to some degree) be settled within the state . . . [i]n the earlier documents of the English constitution, thus, the *separation of powers* began tentatively to emerge as a principle that stabilized the state both above society and its day-to-day operations, that helped further to transform the dualistic elements of earlier constitutional arrangements into inner components of the state, and that endowed the state with more complex facilities for engaging with and pacifying social conflict.³⁶

Parliamentary consent could then become a micromanaging source of everyday power, and a ‘permanent’ centre of British governance for which a way of life fell under unspoken precedent.³⁷ So also in the 1780s–1810s anti-Jacobin redux of the whig revolution defined against the formalist European revolutions, ‘public opinion’ was confirmed as an activity reserved for those invested with official or inherited positions, to suspend active criticism from the state – so that the public became a shadow-state, tracking the constitution but unable to take an active role in it. The public could then mandate competition between politicians at the price of underscoring a deeper fundament of rule, which became a kind of ‘elite subterfuge’, or what Walter Bagehot later described as an ‘efficient secret’.³⁸

The constitution disciplined as English Literature becomes an alternative codification at around this point. This anti-Jacobin dating of the origins of English is more ‘structural’ than a dating which merely tracks uses of the term. In his influential argument in *Devolving English Literature* (1992),

Robert Crawford follows the early establishment of individual vernacular English chairs, particularly in Scotland.³⁹ Published five years before the Scottish devolution referendum, the concentration here on influential individuals at times doing something like English Literature takes in the belletristic or trained-rhetoric manner of Adam Smith and Hugh Blair, but is not yet in a position to look at the sociocultural conditions which couched the discipline *as* discipline. Crawford's account is ambivalent, both groundbreakingly historical about the discipline and yet sticking within a received canonicity and within the methods of biography and the mapping of individual sensibilities and reputations. This is understandable for a time when it was seen to be important to show how Scots were crucial to the progression of a global subject.⁴⁰ And yet similar assumptions can be seen in later studies when the unfolding of devolution should have exploded universalist tendencies in constitutional culture, as in Jed Esty's otherwise persuasive *A Shrinking Island* (2003), which is more or less silent on the question of sovereignty, even though the book's discussion of the contested space of Englishness turns on it.

In 1992, part of Crawford's mission was to provide a Scottish modification of assumptions of a number of 1980s studies which had located the origins of English in an early-twentieth-century Oxbridge conversion of anti-Jacobin principles into a discrete university subject (specifically, the Cambridge Tripos).⁴¹ Terry Eagleton had recognized ideological English as early as 1976,⁴² but the New Left about which he complained had in fact grasped the national problem more clearly since it had understood the unfolding of the national (often with respect to decolonization),⁴³ and had pressed the analysis of lived-experience in the form of Cultural Studies – while Eagleton's own reading was typically highly canonical, risking a reformulation of the canon rather than a fundamental criticism of it. Crawford's understanding of English Literature accounted for early individual figures,⁴⁴ but it also influentially traced them from the principle of linguistic improvement in mid-eighteenth-century Scotland, and so from the problems of British unification. However, while there is a lot to be said for the Scottish Enlightenment stress on sympathy, civility, and rhetoric, a more structural dating of the discipline would see the growth of English Literature as constitutional culture as belonging more to the reaction against Enlightenment than the Enlightenment itself. By the 1790s, the Humanities had long included a universalized 'vernacular' literature, but only during

the anti-Jacobin peak did a canon of individual exemplars become essential to the idea of preserving heritage, and so confirm an ahistorical shadow-constitution.⁴⁵

Crawford's early models, over-individualized as they may be, are certainly revealing. Overlooked by the 1970s–80s 'rise of English' or 'Tripos' models was the Adam Smith who from the 1750s was describing improvement in terms of the spread of a polite literary temperament in a specific registration of English language use – as projected through the lectures of Hugh Blair in 1759–62 which were influential throughout the Anglosphere.⁴⁶ Also important is the influence of the idea of cultural perfectibility in Adam Ferguson, as transmitted by John McLennan's entry in the 1857 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, then the anthropological work of J. G. Frazer, which would in turn become a major source for contemporary referents for the 1910s 'rise of English', as in the T. S. Eliot who read Walter Scott's ideas of national memory through an American milieu.⁴⁷

Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) is both instructive and problematic in this context, linking progressive British ambitions to a development of *Scotland's* legal tradition within Union. Despite encouraging an organic natural law, Ferguson's *Essay* does point out that meritocracy often mistakes inheritance for virtue, and argues instead, after Smith, for a virtuous economic liberalism.⁴⁸ In Ferguson, perfected law can act as a defence against the worst excesses of free trade, though this also requires a zealous constitutional participation – and in this he draws from Smith's liberalized commonwealth of sensibility in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759).⁴⁹ Constitutional perfectibility then depends on increasing efforts to refine interpersonal bonds – but this sensibility would soon be seen as over-abstracted, and a source of *attack* for English Literature.⁵⁰ The latent desire for action in the Scottish Enlightenment's understanding of constitution both fed into and was contested by the small-c British conservative settlement during the era of revolutions.⁵¹ This suggests that dating English Literature from mid-eighteenth-century individuals will struggle to show them adding up to a shadow-system of judgement, or a canonicity. A canonicity, a principle of continuant coherence, would require the temporality of the anti-formal meridian, and this meridian would only be fully established after the anti-Jacobin pamphlet war of the 1790s–1800s.

To follow Crawford's model, if one side of the ensuing debate on Scotland's sovereignty takes in crypto-Jacobins like Robert Burns, on the

other a much more powerful apologist for the new organic constitution is the Walter Scott who brokers between antiquarian nationalism and British pragmatism.⁵² The key is that Scott's compromise would become iconic to the mid-1810s English Literature fundament, beside the rise of his admirer Jane Austen, whose organic plot settlements were ranged against challenges to the established estate. Alistair Duckworth has described the successful, and soon to be familiar, combination of tradition and improvement against Jacobin innovation in *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice*,⁵³ whose Darcy 'like [Edmund] Burke's responsible official . . . does not "look to the paltry pelf of the moment, not to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent existence, in the permanent part of [his] nature"',⁵⁴ Moreover, 'Burke requires as qualities of his ideal statesman a "disposition to preserve and an ability to improve" . . . and it is exactly these requirements which are united in the marriage of Darcy and Elizabeth.'⁵⁵

For Scott, the aristocracy should survive but should adapt to historical change;⁵⁶ for Austen, historical change is to be guarded against (with the partial exception of *Persuasion*, whose new order of estates nevertheless still relies on Tory reform after victory in the Napoleonic Wars), and guarded against via a complex scheme of manners to which carefully managed reading habits are central, and are used to massage minor improvements in station. Established as a bridge between sensibility and realism in the 1810s, three of Austen's novels were completed during the height of the anti-Revolutionary fears of the late 1790s, and helped codify the limitations of class mobility through competition for access to inheritance. Although Austen's popularity did dip soon after the Napoleonic Wars, it significantly rose again in the 1910s with 'university English', which aimed to re-establish the anti-Jacobin and realist-positivist sense of the state-national as organic and instinctual.⁵⁷

This suggests, then, that it was through the broad movement of organicist anti-Jacobinism that the social duties of literary exemplars were defined, especially in the 'maturing' journey towards constitutional conservatism which was undertaken during the time later known as the Romantic period. The fulcrum here, the model which gives the Greenwich meridian its most enduring characteristic, is Edmund Burke's 1790 *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, a tract which rises above other anti-Jacobin writing of the time in at least one respect – in its insistence on the distinction between the *abrogation* of authority seen in the French Revolution on one hand,

and on the other respect for *pre-existing* legitimate authority in the British reaction.⁵⁸ This temporal distinction between present-tense action and the non-present organic time of reaction describes precisely the crux of the value of English Literature as a form of heritage – as well as the alienation of experience on the train departure board.

However, despite Burke's anti-Jacobin claim that pre-existing legitimate authority is characterized by a reverence for the past, since *Reflections* relies on the ideal continuity of restoration-as-revolution, the past is *interpolated*, that is, it has never been an experienced present for any person in any historical time – and this clears the ground for a 'pure' precedence, an imaginary past outside of history. The unifying moment of 1688 was a natural restoration of a timeless authority, while the French Revolution was an unnatural irruption of violence. The 1688 restoration maintained what had legitimately always already been there, while the 1789 revolution took on a form of action illegitimately exceeding pre-existing authority.⁵⁹ The 1688 restoration rescued eternal native values threatened by the turmoil of the Civil War era, and was now able to unite the whole archipelago under legitimated money – although in fact of course this natural situation has involved a constitutional takeover of the British Isles, in a form aiming at invisibility and continuity, but which we might see as a train crash.

The bases of the whig revolution/restoration which establishes this state form lie in the literary, in the constitution by other means. Burkean and Jacobin ideas engaged in battle on these terms throughout the literary war of the 1790s–1810s; although underlining a nascent English Literature, the conservative victory which ensued was not about encouraging writing – this was what the Jacobins had done in the social contract, to disastrous effect – but the opposite, the managing and delimiting of writing.⁶⁰ As the Burkean constitutional form became hegemonic after the Napoleonic Wars, so informal constitutional culture was increasingly embedded in the terms of precedent, or literary canonicity. But the Burkean settlement left a paradox in British conservatism, since it had to enact the abstraction of ideally informal organization while claiming to protect against all forms of abstraction: a stable society maintains 'familiar' relationships, but since the principles underpinning them are too instinctual for definition, they must always exist beyond experience, and so themselves be abstract and systematic.

The post-1790 constitution is then continuant in its willingness to extend franchise to anyone willing to admit their coming late to it (and, as Orwell

hinted after the new ‘whig revolution’ of welfare state bureaucracy, *everyone* comes late to this kind of authority: it is not an oppression by any identifiable group, but a naturalization of the state’s abstracted relationships within the self). Just as Casanova described the literary and political ‘tempo’ of lateness to literary power, in anti-Jacobin Britain the alienation of action around a central and ideal space becomes a foundation of cultural value. This is not to say that the distinction between reaction and revolution, between parliamentary and popular sovereignty, is entirely down to Burke or Burkeans – similar debates had been building up to this conservative-whig crescendo throughout the eighteenth century – but Burke’s very explicit promotion of 1688 as restoration against the violent spectre of constitutional formalism would give shape to the organic ideals of the literary discipline which followed. It is not that the influence of Burke had a monopoly on nineteenth-century thought – his prose was influential and much copied until the middle of the century, but his influence was patchy – rather, in raising precedent over action, and particularly over the active writing of rights or common conventions, Burke’s *Reflections* set limiting terms for British constitutional culture, making not only political action but also unmanaged literacy a potentially dangerous ‘act of public engagement’.⁶¹ The foundational principles of disciplined English Literature from this time became congruent with the organic body of the modern British constitution, the still point of English, the Greenwich Meridian, Greenwich.⁶²

If we grasp this central question of temporality in Burke’s *Reflections* – the way it places cultural value outside of history – then we see also that the threat to the British constitution has not been, as has often been claimed by conservatives, in a lack of reverence for history, but rather in the opposite, in *putting history back*. And the refusal of the ahistorical, or the insistence on the registration of experienced time, an insistence which characterizes every period of constitutional pressure, might be described, as I have suggested elsewhere, as *Gothic*.⁶³ Gothic arises, in its anti-Jacobin form, because the Burkean settlement carries within it the counter-suggestion that the authoritative and respect-worthy dead – who are of course not really dead at all since they have never been alive *in time* – might become active, and describe an actual experience, an action in the past, a revivification or zombification which Burkean time needs to avoid.

This Gothic, or *rehistoricizing*, conception of death is then shared by constitutional criticism in its threat to reactivate history against the continuity

demanding by the state – and is also the death longed for by Orwell’s Party member, trapped in a series of empty times. The ideology of timeless continuity struggles against a flood of present-tense experience, and demands a strong and disciplined ideology, or, as David Punter put it in his study of Gothic during the neo-Burkean revival in 1980, ‘continuous and massive efforts of repression’.⁶⁴ The implications of the concealment of death are there to be read in Burke, and were answered a year later by the Mary Wollstonecraft who countered Burke’s description of French political action as a foreign form of hell by suggesting that for the British worker, hell was already earthly.⁶⁵ The ‘untimely’ experience of labour is described, also, in William Blake’s *Songs* (1789) and *Four Zoas* (1797), and in his shadow- and sickness-filled account of the French Revolution from 1791.⁶⁶ The radical implications of anti-Burkeanism would remain after the wars, but would largely go underground, or would come to seem counter-intuitive within a disciplined English Literature.

The rapid growth in the 1790s of ‘Terror Writing’ (that is, Gothic fiction) moreover depended on the way the Napoleonic Wars had reached right into the British population,⁶⁷ its living death resonating with the violence which had seemed abstract and far-off. The threat of experience, of course, was a central element of Terror Writing’s scandal.⁶⁸ Gothic in this sense has represented the spectre of experience, especially expressed through the literate mob, in English ever since.⁶⁹ The threat was amplified by an unwritten-constitution environment in which reading and massification had become interdependent worries for the British establishment: between 1771 and 1831 the British population doubled, and between 1771 and 1791 the budget publisher James Lackington saw a fourfold acceleration of book production, with a shift towards a lower demographic exacerbated by reading clubs and travelling libraries.⁷⁰ Reading circles were widely feared as cultural levellers and were worried over by anti-decadent journals, and on the contrary the disciplining of reading was linked to the possibility of betterment – the paradigm made afresh by Austen for the anti-Jacobin era.

So Marilyn Butler has described an attempt to ‘shrink’ the reading club, spatially and conceptually, as well as the architecture channelling ‘Society’, protecting against the threat of collective political thinking.⁷¹ In William Godwin’s *Caleb Williams* (1794), literacy indexes entry into the world of hereditary power as well as its dangers.⁷² And later in William Hazlitt’s *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte* (1828–30), political action is retrospectively seen

as having been linked to changes in the dissemination of literature during the period.⁷³ The dangers of literacy are explicitly indicated in Burke's *Reflections*, in which the French Revolutionary settlement is no more than the 'blurred shreds of paper' of the Jacobin driven to challenge inherited powers, to rewrite the social contract and to 'consider his country as nothing but *carte blanche*, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases'.⁷⁴ (And here it is worth registering a scepticism over the orthodoxy that the proposition that the British constitution is unwritten is a lazy and inaccurate one. This now common assertion has some validity: taken in terms of all the statutes and judgements scattered throughout the commonwealth, the constitution is of course in some sense 'written'⁷⁵ – but only to about the same extent that any diverse corpus is 'written' if every possible source containing any words which might make it up is tracked and put together in order. The British constitution really is unwritten in the sense that it is uncodified in any meaningful way in any document, or set of documents. As a 'primary text' the British constitution can never be reached.)

With the perception of the active menace of mass literacy, a countervailing disciplining force had to be drawn upon to confirm the social value of the continuant constitution, making English Literature a streaming and limiting field. Despite the sheaves which spill out invitingly from the front pages of university websites, as a discipline English Literature has never aimed at *more* writing, but rather to work as literacy's gatekeeper. In the anti-Jacobin period, the nascent discipline was correspondingly fascinated and horrified by both promiscuous writing and the vision of illegitimacy and ruin within constitutions. William Blackstone's commentary of 1765–9, the primary source for the Burkean tradition of informal constitution, had imagined the 'English' (British) constitution as an ancient ruined castle, perpetually undergoing small repairs but always in need of a rebuild, 'erected in the days of chivalry, but fitted up for a new modern inhabitant'.⁷⁶ And Burke's own early (1757) ideas of the sublime had of course provided a source for Romantic state-nationalism by describing beauty in terror only when experienced from a distance.⁷⁷ Similar images of the undead are still to be found in the high era of constitutionalism, in Walter Bagehot's defence of the 'great ghost' of governance,⁷⁸ as in the mid-Victorian Gothic revival which echoes Burke's sublime in monuments which allow the 'public' to gaze upon terror from afar with a spectatorial metaphysical frisson. The distance built into this

idea of the sublime, concretized in the complex system of checks and balances blocking the translation of received values into action, was also at base this *temporal* distance, with ideal 'English' space as a degree zero. As Matthew Arnold would later rework Burke, aesthetic reflection would then be established over action as the defining native quality – whatever imperial action was going on elsewhere.⁷⁹

The great disciplining period of the organicist settlement then is the anti-Jacobin one, which establishes 'in perpetuity' the restoration moment of state-formation.⁸⁰ As Butler has described, a mid-eighteenth century rise of the creative arts was *halted* by the conservative turn of the 1790s,⁸¹ and resistance to the organic British settlement was made more difficult by reaction to the unfolding of the French regime after 1792.⁸² Similarly for David Simpson, Burke's attacks on the French revolutionaries served to crystallize a longer British 'nationalist tradition already firmly set against system and theory',⁸³ a consolidation of eighteenth-century sensibility strengthened for an anti-Jacobin age.⁸⁴ A new ideal of heritage was then charged with preserving a way of life (though this was a way of life which was, of course, *created* in its preservation).⁸⁵ Simpson describes the 1790s amplification of the tradition of Francis Bacon and the Earl of Shaftesbury as a recrudescence against those radicals like Godwin who were more ready to open up to the 'abstraction' of action.⁸⁶ The new of anti-systematic thought then in fact belongs in a lineage from the state-forming Hanoverian restoration to its anti-formal naturalization against Jacobins – so that it was Thomas Paine, not Burke, who had to cast around to find a political language to describe his opposition to the organic compact.⁸⁷ In *Imagining the King's Death*, John Barrell sees a new terminology being created by Painites against William Pitt in the mid-1790s, as they felt that they had to answer the way a constitution existed in name only – and suggests that this language inaugurates a new modern imagery of constitutional overhaul.⁸⁸

This constitutional defence was not, of course, only directed against France. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, threats against the Anglo-British organic settlement had seemed to coalesce: even with the apparent pacification of Scottish Jacobites and the nascent proletariat of England itself, the Irish Union took encouragement from the Jacobin action of 1789–92 in the rebellion of 1798 – to be answered by in a drastic London centralization in 1801 to keep Ireland 'inside' the British constitution, a desire for absorption which would echo throughout the nineteenth century.⁸⁹ The authority of

the anti-Jacobins was answered by state reaction including ‘train crash’ anti-terror laws (as in the 1793–4 Treason Trials), and suffocating moves towards Jacobin writers taken by, among others, the Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers from 1792. The 1794 Whig Coalition with Pitt was bolstered by the Party Whip system inaugurated in the same year, allowing blocs to be rallied against sedition, and after the suspension of habeas corpus in 1797, the Press Act of 1798 drove Jacobinism further out of the literary mainstream, as in the same year did the establishment of the government-backed *Anti-Jacobin Review*, and a wider move towards classification and learned societies.⁹⁰ Unionist Scotland took part enthusiastically, in part through the popularity of Walter Scott and the *Edinburgh Review*,⁹¹ which from 1802 blended the whiggish progressivism of the Enlightenment with criticism of the excesses of Jacobin early Romantics. The Tory *Quarterly Review*, and later *Blackwood’s*, struck increasingly strong chords of exceptionalism as Britain stood alone in the Napoleonic Wars from 1802/1803, by which time most of what would become known as Romantic literature had been brought round to disciplining ideas of natural heritage.

It is not merely that political debate was ‘reflected’ in the literature of the times: more fundamentally, the battle for the informal constitution took place in terms of access to textual circulation. For 1790s radicals, print meant the ability to carry collective messages beyond immediate Burkean bonds to a *national* scale.⁹² As Jon Mee puts it, the ‘[c]irculation [of text] was central to the meaning of writing in the [Revolutionary and counter-Revolutionary] context’.⁹³ So at the latter end of the imperial mission, anti-Jacobin values were often historicized as having stood against the action of mass literacy and domestic empowerment. Most iconically in Raymond Williams’s *Culture and Society* (1958), the Burkean settlement was seen as a bulwark against the historical, aiming to universalize the contingent needs of the ascendant capitalist class.⁹⁴ The civilizing mission spreading from Burkean instinct was institutionalized for state purposes which then overwhelmed the civic nation *in perpetuity*, so that

Burke shifts . . . from *society* to *state*, and [. . .] the essential reverence for society is not to be confused, as Burke seems to confuse it, with that particular form of society which is the State at any given time . . .

The difficulty about this position, of course, comes when the State form changes, as it had done in France, and yet is considered, in its new form, as a destroyer of civil society.⁹⁵

So under the influence of Burke, the valorized ‘present’ form (that is, the form belonging to an impossible past) comes to describe a perfectible state dependent on inheritance.⁹⁶ After its embedding in late Romanticism, this thinking would reach a peak in Arnold, who takes it from Burke and leans on the idea of the poet as native conduit, as concretized in the 1810s–20s S. T. Coleridge for whom literary and constitutional assumptions really begin to coalesce.⁹⁷

Burke’s ‘New Whig’ 1790 defence of pure continuity however also shares much with the ‘Old’ Whigs who were at first glance alienated by *Reflections*.⁹⁸ Jeremy Bentham’s progressivism would cast a long shadow over nineteenth-century constitutional commentary – but as in Burke it relied on a denial of the idea of first-principles rights in a way which left the English organic seeming to be the least tyrannical form. In Bentham’s *Anarchical Fallacies* (1791), the French Declarations abrogate and therefore reduce fundamental rights, reversing the natural order of rights and duties.⁹⁹ So for Bentham as for Burke, rights arise from a law which pre-exists the subject people:¹⁰⁰ the ‘origination of governments from contracts is a pure fiction’, and ‘[c]ontracts came from government, not government from contracts’. And this order is already seen in ‘the word *constitution*, something *established*, something *already* established, something possessed of *stability*, something that has given *proofs* of stability’.¹⁰¹ Government then needs a literary limiting function to sweep away communal and active fallacies – the natural role of the British meridian:

[i]t is in England, rather than in France, that the discovery of the rights of man ought naturally to have taken its rise: it is we – we English, that have the better *right* to it. It is in the English language that the transition is more natural, than perhaps in most others: at any rate, more so than in the French. It is in English, and not in French, that we may change the sense without changing the word, and, like Don Quixote on the enchanted horse, travel as far as the moon, and farther, without ever getting off the saddle.

The whig 'sense' of rights then takes precedence over the writing of rights, even as it leaves the possibility of divergent understandings of the same term in law (making the Eng Lit caricaturing of 'French poststructuralism' two centuries later somewhat ironic). Bentham himself here even acknowledges that the perpetual alteration of guiding terms shows a Quixotic, that is, self-deluding, tendency – and it is this that gives the rule of Anglo-British heritage its flexible power. Bentham's whiggish demand for precedent-based reform would lead to the high Victorian liberalism of John Stuart Mill, which linked (English) common law precedent to negative liberty, or freedom as non-interference in formal politics.¹⁰² As Bentham hints here, 'recognition of the nothingness of the laws of nature and the rights of man . . . is . . . a negative one, as the most perfect acquaintance that can be formed with the existing laws of England'.¹⁰³

This combination of negative liberty and legal positivism helps illustrate the form of the British constitution, economically liberal and socially conservative, a shape it would keep all the way from Hanoverian unification to what became known as neoliberalism. Bentham is already relying on the right to ownership of intellectual labour rising with the Locke who spoke to the whigs of the restoration in 1688 – and then to the anti-Jacobins of the 1790s, in turn central to English Literature's realism.¹⁰⁴ And if Locke nailed down the natural legitimacy of property rights as the central constitutional principle, so also one of the first and most celebrated proponents of Lockean empiricism, and one of the most energetic pamphleteers of restoration in the form of the Anglo-Scottish Union, Daniel Defoe, would later be established as English Literature's 'first novelist'.¹⁰⁵ Defoe's unionism ideally based the British moment around the nascent British qualities of capitalist cultivation, as described by the present era's most influential inheritor of the whig historiographic tradition, Linda Colley, whose *Britons: Forging the Nation* describes a happy confluence of British desires in individualism, Protestantism, work ethic, empiricism, and free trade.¹⁰⁶ So Defoe's 'first novel in English' wishfully describes a pan-British story of a stranded English traveller based on records of a Scottish shipwreck thrown onto empiricist self-reliance, dramatizing the Lockean right to individual ownership of a created world. As a British unifier, positivist realism would forever have a central place in constitutional culture, at least as long as that constitution stood up.

It is significant then that Defoe was strongly revived after the 1790s pamphlet war: for William Hazlitt's 1818 *Lectures on the English Poets*,

Robinson Crusoe, along with only *Pilgrim's Progress* and Boccaccio, was seen to concretize the essence of poetry existing within great prose.¹⁰⁷ As early as in 1798 in *Practical Education*, Maria and Robert Lovell Edgeworth had already noted that the desert-island story was beginning to act as a form of psychic training for boys,¹⁰⁸ and the rise of the island adventure during the Victorian phase of empire has been well documented.¹⁰⁹ Also crucial though is the more general later spread of Defoe's positivist realism in the emerging twentieth-century canon of university English. Leslie Stephen's *Hours in a Library* (1892), bracketed by canonical epigrams, begins with a reassessment of 'De Foe's Novels',¹¹⁰ and in Virginia Woolf's *The Common Reader* (1925), Defoe represents 'the perennial and the immortal' and 'the important and lasting aspect of things'.¹¹¹ Tellingly in Woolf, since *Crusoe* bases fiction on empirical fact, it also usefully *limits* focus.¹¹² So *Crusoe*'s 'vision is clear and order has been achieved',¹¹³ showing a mature understanding of natural government, or constitutional positivism.¹¹⁴ For Woolf in neo-realist mode it is the accumulation of facts that gives Defoe's defining novel its legitimacy and its organic truth,¹¹⁵ as it converts the proximal into the familiar, 'persuad[ing] us to see remote islands and the solitudes of the human soul. By believing fixedly in the solidity of the pot and its earthiness, he has subdued every other element to his design; he has roped the whole universe into harmony'.¹¹⁶

This most foundational novel would correspondingly become one of the most reworked texts of the post-colonial era, as the 'rise of the [realist] novel' faded in the post-Suez era (and a last major marker might be Ian Watt's 1957 study of that name). So in Muriel Spark's *Robinson* (1958), the colonial entrepreneur attempts to close off the rewriting of his claim by extending the Lockean property rights of his eponymous island:¹¹⁷ controlling the movements of his subjects, he equates his own sensibility with governance – though the island's caves undermine him by producing echoes (presaging the undermining of literary exemplars in deconstruction),¹¹⁸ and the shipwreck brings a subversive new source of language, while Robinson himself is impossible to imagine in the present tense.¹¹⁹ In J. G. Ballard's 1974 take on *Crusoe*, *Concrete Island*, the shipwreck is a motorist who has slipped over the motorway protector on 'tides' of traffic, separated from the trade routes, and left to attempt escapes,¹²⁰ in particular struggling to write an emergency message.¹²¹ Ballard's Friday, moreover, is a 'tramp', connoting a threat to take enclosed

land by walking across it and rendering it placed and physical¹²² – and again their relationship is negotiated by the literacy of the shipwreck's promise to teach communication while his own help messages are blown away.¹²³ And perhaps the most famous of the post-colonial *Crusoes*, J. M. Coetzee's 1986 *Foe* sees Susan Barton struggle to write her memories of the island,¹²⁴ and become the author of a writing which threatens to place her.¹²⁵ All of these postcolonial rewritings, coming after the high point of British consensus, revisit the relationship between enfranchisement and literacy, all put their characters into conflict with inherited models of civility through language, and all question the constitutional association of positivism and realism.

This constitutional culture, only ideally based on sense-impression, can never itself be directly experienced: it relies on a metaphysical authority beyond text, a form which is, as Burke puts it in *Reflections*, 'incapable of definition, but not impossible to be discerned'.¹²⁶ Such an ahistorical authority has to take on ultimately religious signs of nature and instinct, in a metaphysics whose priests would be found among the disciplining Romanticist literati who acted as conduits between the spiritual realm of instinct – 'nature' conceived in an ideally unalienated form – and the earthly realm of letters. This critical class would be established as the clerisy in Coleridge, then later reincarnated as the 'best self' in Arnold, the bearers of the imperial Anglosphere in John Seeley, the literary elite in F. R. Leavis and Q. D. Leavis, and the meritocracy in the post-1942 welfare state. All of these versions of the anti-formal disciplining elite establish ideal standards for the individual's access to metaphysical literary value. And the Enlightenment scepticism which had suggested a dissociation between language and object was now the moment against which disciplinary English had to react, via an ideal and anti-popular version of Burkean 'prejudice', so that, as Butler puts it, '[t]he necessity to reconstitute the arts without the people became a driving force behind creative endeavour'.¹²⁷ So on the British meridian, decadent stimulus would become an object of fear for the anti-Jacobin literati of the times, most iconically through that great marker of the new organic and of the new English, Wordsworth and Coleridge's Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1801–2).¹²⁸

The Preface, an entry point into modern English Literature poetry, is also one of the most important registrations of Burkean anti-formalism, making the cultural mediation of the passions determinant but also unknowable.¹²⁹ Its understanding of David Hartley's ideas of associationism tracks the

Burkean stress on familiar bonds, as is expounded in poems like Coleridge's 'The Aeolian Harp',¹³⁰ in which the association is a creative conjunction of thoughts formed in a state of excitement but only comprehensible through reflection in solitude and according to laws of nature.¹³¹ A Lockean empiricism is clearly at work in the conversion of sensation into knowledge, but experience is also only licensed by an idealized 'place' for reflection, an English 'soil' of a kind which could be universalized (paradoxically inaugurating the *disjunction* of England-the-place and English Literature).¹³² Ideas are created physically and then converted into poetic form by those minds able to grasp an ideal conception of nature – a conception imagined to outstrip commodity relations, even as they are underscored.

And through the use of natural diction, the flow of emotions which had troubled early Romanticism is now modified in a 'tempered rashness'¹³³ which allows for 'everyday' language to take its place in the continuant order. The 'Advertisement' in Wordsworth's solo-authored 1798 edition describes how the middle class, the potentially Jacobin class appeared in Britain, must be strengthened in their belief in continuity by the nativizing of vernacular¹³⁴ – or, as the 1800 version has it, 'to bring my language near to the language of men'.¹³⁵ As uncontrollable emotions are given form by nature, so poetry's emotion is balanced in literary form by metre and prosody, and literary form becomes a governing order, able to act as a check on systematic action, poetic sensibility based on a disciplined passion.¹³⁶ Creativity is defined neither by mere passionate imagery nor by unbending laws of metre, but by literary form as a restraining framework for experience:¹³⁷

In the one case the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passions, whereas in the other the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.¹³⁸

This understanding of the vernacular then leads to the 'flexibility' of the English literary canon, which would track the flexibility of the English constitution, as it would be most influentially described by A. V. Dicey a few decades later, for which rules can be perpetually modified within the

boundaries of instinctive ordering principles. Writing relies on and is bounded by a metaphysical truth which can be glimpsed in nature (in its new sense), imbuing the land with ideal and magical properties – and the psychogeography of English Literature would thereafter be defined largely by ideal spaces, or as Ian Baucom has described them, *lieux de memoire*.¹³⁹ Wordsworth's Burkean conversion is famously underlined in the first book of the *Prelude* (1805/50), which moves from the register of political hope to that of solace, reconciling past and present in nature as an ideal continuity.¹⁴⁰ And his (unperformed) play *The Borderers* (1797) uses a thirteenth-century Anglo-Scottish skirmish to manoeuvre its radicalized young protagonists from the dangers of systematic reason towards a mature idea of private morality, or an organic understanding of belonging in terms of the immanent forces of nature – a sentiment of moral realist adjustment which would become central to canonical Victorians.¹⁴¹

The need to temper the apparently artificial rights which might be carried by the passions, as encouraged by the 'sensational' fiction which had spread in the 1790s,¹⁴² is answered in the Preface in terms of a secular aesthetic spirituality acting as an ordering principle in poetic language – and so, spiritually guiding language.¹⁴³ Nature, as an ideal of that which has always been the case, only affords glimpses of the metaphysical, and itself remains untouchable as an ordering principle, taking on a guiding role, as nature guides Coleridge's Ancient Mariner in *Lyrical Ballads* and the walker of Wordsworth's *Prelude*.¹⁴⁴ Nature then becomes a saviour from 'gross and violent stimulants', from the tendency to give in to the 'great national events' of the French Revolution.¹⁴⁵ The ideal outcome is that through a stabilizing of moral relations 'a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently'.¹⁴⁶ Wordsworth's 1815 Preface, a survey setting out the properties of composition in a range of literature of the period, begins with the empiricist yet metaphysical demand for powers 'of Observation and Description, that is, the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves' – and this natural bending of realism to the absolute would become a staple of the most iconic nineteenth-century constitutional commentators, given a positive literary gloss by, for example, Arnold.¹⁴⁷

Even the William Hazlitt who remained largely sympathetic to Jacobinism would index creative art to nature as against public judgement.¹⁴⁸ The later Hazlitt also takes forward criticism of the systematizing and rational

tendencies of the Enlightenment, of contractual fundamentalism, the writing-out of social rules. In *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), he suggests that pure eloquence – associated with the Scottish Enlightenment – has been weighed down by facts and ‘mechanism’, so that ‘the plea of humanity is lost by going through the process of law’.¹⁴⁹ In one of the first serious accounts of English Literature relative to the modern political ‘English Question’, Anthony Easthope (1999) thus suggests that a Romantic conception of empiricism was fundamental to the discipline as defined against the attachment to systems. In *The Spirit of the Age*, Hazlitt sees Wordsworth’s poetry as both democratic and obedient to the laws of nature,¹⁵⁰ and in ‘Merry England’ (1825), the organicist and empiricist ideal defines constitutional Britain through opinion which can ‘only be constructed through the harsh impact of external impressions’.¹⁵¹ By now ‘liberty . . . is but a modern invention (the growth of books and printing)’ which must be kept within a natural balance.¹⁵² In more tabloid mode, William Cobbett’s *Weekly Political Register* stresses a natural connectedness in opposition to Scottish Enlightenment thought as over-rational and as reducing people to labour ‘to be given to the Scotch to make bridges and canals in the Highlands’ – a comment which these days puts us in mind of the ‘funding subsidy’ assumptions behind a quasi-English ‘grievance nationalism’, and which repeats the commitment to the organic over the incursion of any apparently systematic registration of the national.¹⁵³

And the threat of the Napoleonic Wars would of course be echoed in the threat of labour concentration, to be answered by the same organicism. Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria* (1817) appeared in reaction to a new fear of a domestic revolution, following the suspension of habeas corpus in March (as well as reprintings of the constitutional appeals of Thomas Paine).¹⁵⁴ In October 1817 John Gibson Lockhart in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* attacked the latent Jacobin tendencies of ‘Cockney’ writers including Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and John Keats, as politically recidivist and artistically immature.¹⁵⁵ And yet Hunt himself in 1817–18 condemned the harrowing of Merry England, blaming, like Hazlitt, a mechanistic tendency – so presaging twentieth-century Tudor-organicist writers like F. R. Leavis and T. S. Eliot. For Hunt’s nativism, in Wordsworthian mode, ‘the English must look to their own soil; and however slow may be the changes which result, those changes, in Europe at least, will infallibly be connected *with* the soil’.¹⁵⁶ In this moment of organicist idealism, though, the territorial is exactly what gets lost.

In 1821 in 'Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen, and Other Imperfect Sympathies', Charles Lamb similarly distinguished between the mechanical Scottish (Enlightenment) mind and the organic English one, with clear implications for maintaining the informal constitution: '[t]he owners of the sort of [organic, Burkean] faculties I allude to have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive . . . The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) . . . never hints or suggests any thing, but unloads his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness'.¹⁵⁷ And in Coleridge's *Biographia* the movement of intuition is imaged organically as a mind growing outwards like a plant, connoting the solid oak and the way of nature – which might be contrasted in our own time with Franco Moretti's image of the 'wave', cultural influence spreading outwards, rather than the root-and-branch of familial inheritance implicit in Coleridge's image.¹⁵⁸ So as David Higgins puts it, in both high and popular modes the nativist 'attack on the Scottish Enlightenment has much in common with Burke's attack on the French one',¹⁵⁹ and its settlement can be read as the victory of positivist, informal inclusion.¹⁶⁰

At the same time, the individuation of writers fed into maturing literary markets, as authors became, in the line which had arisen from Lockean Unionist capitalism, owners of their own creative self-presentation.¹⁶¹ As the textual creations of the individual consciousness became privately owned, so the widespread use of quotation marks began to appear to establish boundaries of linguistic ownership, where separation from the textual commons had previously been less pronounced.¹⁶² (For some this will trigger thoughts of the Scottish Literary Renaissance of the 1980s–90s, at the head of today's constitutional scepticism, a movement which often questioned the orthography behind linguistic ownership, for example in the James Kelman who eschewed quotation marks altogether.)¹⁶³ Problematically for English as a discipline, the ownership enforced by quotation rising with the 'permanent' constitution can't keep the same form forever: the ground is now shifting with newer regimes of information dissemination in which areas of plagiarism and ownership are less clear, and with information flows which are difficult to subject to the same kinds of copyright regimes. The positivist self-ownership of literary voice is also troubled by the way a marketized English Literature has to reach out to new clients – students from East Asian backgrounds, for example, will tend to be harder to convince of the absolute moral wrong of mixing texts without quotation marks, often having come from backgrounds less touched by

ideas of Lockean self-ownership. Since every student-client can't simply be failed for plagiarism, the instinctive enclosure of literary property could pass as easily as it came, undoing many of the assumptions behind English canonicity.

The impact of quotation marks at the time of the firming-up of English Literature means it is also particularly significant that Edmond Malone's most authoritative edition of English's most authoritative sensibility, *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*, dates from precisely the year of Burke's *Reflections*, 1790. Margreta de Grazia has charted the newfound importance of literary authenticity in this edition, which aims to mark out Shakespeare as a self-owning consciousness at the centre of the disciplinary firmament.¹⁶⁴ So forcefully organicist has this individual sensibility now become that 'Shakespeare study . . . [is] immune even to what Edmund Burke considered "of all circumstances, the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world": the French Revolution.'¹⁶⁵

By this time, of course, Shakespeare had already long been seen as embodying the values of an empiricist and exceptionalist British state,¹⁶⁶ but Malone's 1790 edition forcefully grounds this individual in terms of Lockean ownership, in this case overtaking the textual profligacy of the Tonson publishing dynasty (who had themselves nevertheless aimed to create their own canon since the 1680s, even receiving official state sponsorship to do so in 1719–20).¹⁶⁷ De Grazia dates a move towards a modern form of authorial legitimacy from the folding of the Tonsons' empire, and with it the attrition of the convention of admixing editorial commentary, which is now relegated to footnotes or margins, leaving the original discrete and clear.¹⁶⁸ Commentary becomes secondary to the legitimate properties of authenticity and intention, and 'Malone's [edition] secures Shakespeare's self-ownership, not legally as copy but hermeneutically as original meaning'.¹⁶⁹ Shakespeare as a discrete sensibility and guardian of the eternal-organic is then placed to centre British moral sensibility in the anti-Jacobin age, as Wordsworth and Coleridge would suggest in the Preface.¹⁷⁰

This Shakespearean sensibility takes on a special canonical gravity in anchoring the organic settlement during the Napoleonic Wars, and by the time of *Biographia Literaria*, as Simpson glosses it, 'the essence of Englishness has been identified in Burke and Shakespeare in politics and literature respectively'.¹⁷¹ Coleridge was also now able to read Wordsworth as a modern Shakespeare, tying this anchor of English canonicity to the

recently established counter-Jacobin moment.¹⁷² The centralization of Shakespeare is typically dated in the preceding period, between the 1730s and Garrick's Stratford Jubilee of 1769, after which he was pressed into service as an organicist exemplar against American rebels threatening to write a constitution.¹⁷³ But the pointed affirmation of Shakespeare as English civility was emphasized in the 1802 version of the Preface – that is, after the establishment of textual enclosures – where nature made him uniquely and instinctively able to accommodate himself to the 'people', and so to act as a precursor to Wordsworth's own influential attempt to recreate the poetic epiphany in instinctual cadences.¹⁷⁴

Creative imagination in English is by now increasingly defined by the measure of a nature-led Shakespeare – as centring all nature-led native sensibilities – both in terms of a vindication of ideal form and as a demonstration of the legitimate connection of the individual to the universal.¹⁷⁵ And after this counter-Jacobin embedding, times of constitutional need would see Shakespeare's revival as guarantor of the legitimate use of the vernacular, in Lawrence Olivier's 1944 *Henry V* as much as in Coleridge's 1810s lectures. As Nigel Leask has shown, the *Biographia* understands Shakespeare the individual sensibility as having been central to the French war push which underlined informal British governance.¹⁷⁶ Nor is it coincidental that the notes in Malone's edition which enclose and reconstruct Shakespeare as pure sensibility were augmented by William Blackstone, the key constitutional source for Edmund Burke.¹⁷⁷ De Grazia thus likens the self-ownership given to this author to agrarian enclosure, the separation of private property from commonly owned ground.¹⁷⁸ The realignment of Shakespeare, and so of the individual in the canon, then becomes key to establishing the subject via governance as property rights.¹⁷⁹

And this new phase of Shakespeare was also already glancing towards the imperial prize: as Andrew Murphy has shown, 1800s editions were full of images of the nascent empire,¹⁸⁰ as in the illustrations in Michael Wood's 1806 edition, which had also learned from Malone the importance of the authority of Shakespeare without commentary admixture.¹⁸¹ This holds for the 1800s and 1810s school of 'Folioists' applauded by the *Edinburgh Review*, and for the tendency in editions from Longman's of 1807 to Constable's of 1819 to agree on one single canonical text (that of Johnson, Reed, and Steevens).¹⁸² By the late 1810s, publishers were noting the tremendous

proliferation of ‘authoritative’ editions of Shakespeare¹⁸³ – grounded in the 1810s Coleridge who now saw him less a man than an exemplar of the universal.¹⁸⁴ In Coleridge’s 1811–12 *Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton*, Shakespeare proves the continuity of a vernacular ‘in possession of all’, and is as nourishing as the ancients, a role pointing towards the rapprochement of organicism and Platonic idealism in English education.¹⁸⁵ In Coleridge’s 1818 Lectures, Shakespeare has a clear, unique, and metaphysical moral mission:

Give to a subtle man fancy, and he is a wit; to a deep man imagination, and he is a philosopher. Add, again, pleasurable sensibility in the three-fold form of sympathy with the interesting in morals, the impressive in form, and the harmonious in sound – and you have the poet.

But combine all, – wit, subtlety, and fancy, with profundity, imagination, and moral and physical susceptibility of the pleasurable, – and let the object of man be action be universal; and we shall have – O rash prophesy! say, rather, we have, a Shakspeare!¹⁸⁶

In this environment of rigorous informality, the aesthetic readily became the governmental – or as Jonathan Bate has put it, what was literary authority for the early Romantics became political authority for the late Romantics.¹⁸⁷ Shakespeare idolatry was soon pressed outwards into the opening empire as a basis of franchise, and Gauri Viswanathan and others have shown its hold on the Indian literary curriculum as early as the 1820s.¹⁸⁸ None of this is to say, of course, that the primacy of the individual in literary study is unique to English, but the metaphysics of the exemplary organic sensibility has an unusually important role in a state-nation whose very foundation demands that aesthetic exemplars have to *stand in* for common ownership. And it is not only that throughout much of the global history of English Literature Shakespeare has often been the only compulsory author on many courses – but also that this model has to an unusual extent been taken as a guarantor of human values, rather than, for example, as an object for contextual reading (and how many of us have been told at school that Shakespeare is timeless, or watched adaptations which show that he demonstrates human nature across the ages?)

The slide from aesthetics to governance after the 1800s–10s therefore builds a standard universalist path to travel, and a new ‘class’ of arbiters

can emerge. Coleridge's *Statesman's Manual* (1816) lays out grounds for a critical class to maintain standards in English Literature in the form of an elite lay clerisy, with the bible as a guiding metaphor for law.¹⁸⁹ And by the time of his most explicit relation of literary fundament to constitutional fundament, *On the Constitution of the Church and State* (1829), the miraculating ground of nature has found its place beyond the everyday and is able to give rise to material laws.¹⁹⁰ Building on the Preface here, natural law is real but inaccessible by language or consciousness, so that ideas 'may well . . . powerfully influence a man's thoughts and actions, without his being distinctly conscious of the same, much more without his being competent to express it in definite words'.¹⁹¹ 'Social contracts' can only ever exist beyond time, place, and direct expression or apperception – and yet they are entirely natural, and like the seasons, 'ever-originating'.¹⁹² (The 'seasonal' metaphor for the natural workings of British government would become something of a staple of nineteenth-century constitutional commentary.) So duty arises 'out of the very constitution of our humanity . . . [and] shall be as general as the presumption of the fitness at the time of its establishment' – a slide from contingency to permanence recalling Williams's diagnosis of Burke's slide from society to state.¹⁹³ For Coleridge then, contra recent radical demonstrations in Edinburgh and Hackney 'in need to prove freedom of will, which should not have to be proven', any constitutional fundamentalists still believing in rights before duties are disastrously misguided,¹⁹⁴ since authority belongs not to any one statute but to the state as the divine aspect of a 'land [which] belongs to God'¹⁹⁵ – a point he underlines with an epigraph from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*.¹⁹⁶

The aesthetic-theistic state – that is, the state based on an informal and necessarily metaphysical constitution – then finds its elite managing class, which Coleridge calls the clerisy, while writers like Paine and Blake, though Deists and believing in the divine in the human, risk treason in failing to see the need for a 'national' church. Reversing the French Revolutionary paradigm, the divine principle of the state gives rise to political representation, rather than vice versa. So

a Constitution is an idea arising out of the idea of a state; and because our whole history from Alfred onward demonstrates the continued influence of such an idea, or ultimate aim, on the minds of our fore-fathers, in their character and functions as public men; alike in what they resisted and

in what they claimed; in the institutions and forms of polity which they established . . . even because it is an *idea* it cannot be *adequately* represented, in a correspondent scheme of means existing; we speak, and have a right to speak, of the idea itself, as actually existing, *i.e.* as a *principle*, existing in the only way in which a principle can exist – in the minds and consciences of the persons, whose duties it prescribes, and whose rights it determines.¹⁹⁷

In this single tortuous sentence (here in fact redacted), Coleridge crystallizes the metaphysical assumptions of his tract, in which sovereignty is inexpressible and unrepresentable yet has a definite existence binding subjects through the few ‘public men’ who can be entrusted with office, something like in the early Hanoverian bureaucracy. The constitution is a structuring principle which does not allow apperception of itself – harmonious, undated, self-forming, and born of natural divinity:

nothing can be proposed more certain in its grounds, more pregnant in its consequences [than the British Constitution], or that hath more harmonical reason within itself: and which is so connatural and essential to the genius and innate disposition of this nation, it being formed (silk-worm like) as that no other law can possibly regulate it – a law not to be derived from Alured, or Alfred, or Canute, or other elder or later promulgators of particular laws, but which might say of itself – When reason and the laws of God first came, then came I with them.¹⁹⁸

The purpose of Nature is then to ‘connect the permanence of a state with the land and the landed property’.¹⁹⁹ As Coleridge had already suggested in parts of the *Biographia* and in *The Friend* (1809–10),²⁰⁰ the ministers of the sacred principles of the state, the clerisy, must allow the constitution to be transmitted in aesthetic form, or that of English letters. The ideal of disinterestedness (later neutrality, later meritocracy) allows the aesthetic clerisy to ameliorate the class divisions concretized by industrialization. As early as 1802 Francis Jeffrey had identified the tendency of the most favoured current poetry to take on religious properties and to be transmitted by lay priests, ‘whose authority it is no longer lawful to call into question’²⁰¹ – but Coleridge ‘codifies’ this in a clerisy whose ideal disinterestedness would be transmitted all the way to the technocrats of the welfare state, and who

would form a critical class more or less continuously present within English Literature.

This clerisy obviates the need for the expansion of real franchise, since an aesthetic elite can now take the place of overt political classes – and according to the universal laws of nature ‘simply appear throughout the liberal arts and sciences’.²⁰² The clerisy then becomes of clear use to anti-collective rhetoric,²⁰³ reducing class conflict to the duty to transmit ideas to the many from the minds of the few, ‘an elite to purify and revivify society’.²⁰⁴ Or as Hazlitt has it in *Lectures on the English Poets* (1818), since ‘[p]oetry is the universal language which the heart holds with nature and itself’,²⁰⁵ Coleridge ‘lifted philosophy to heaven’,²⁰⁶ and, as he says in *The Spirit of the Age* (1825) bore a ‘mind reflecting ages past’.²⁰⁷ Also identifying *Lyrical Ballads* as a Gallosceptic earthly anchor for divine poetic language,²⁰⁸ Hazlitt describes how as literary form is aestheticized, it becomes ideally neutral, and apolitical.

This reading of the Preface suggests that British Romanticism would also come to conceal, despite first appearances, a strong neoclassicism: poetic taste is natural, but is acquired according to strict, if informal, criteria of value which define new and more durable ‘classes’, whose economic origins are unclear. The Preface is key in having overlain absolute (neoplatonic) values on the Christian and animistic characteristics of the apparent signs of nature, mountains, rivers, trees, and soil²⁰⁹ – and having shown how the everyday registration of nature is beholden to eternal laws:

The principal object [. . .] was to make the incidents of common life interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of nature: chiefly as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Low and rustic life was generally chosen because in that situation the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are under less restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that situation our elementary feelings exist in a state of greater simplicity and consequently may be more accurately contemplated and more forcibly communicated.²¹⁰

And the growing moral realism which arises from this idea of nature would be increasingly necessary to save the souls of a British merchant class

during the nineteenth century (themselves, of course, necessary to empire).²¹¹ The growth away from Revolutionary sentiment is cemented in Coleridge's 1820s: in Scott's *Redgauntlet* in 1824 (also the year of his notorious Unionist Edinburgh pageant for George IV), rebels admit, with a Hanoverian-Diceyan admission of the need for permanence, that 'the cause is lost for ever!'²¹² (A comparable Wordsworthian moment of apostasy can be seen in Book Three of *The Prelude*, where hope is overthrown.)²¹³ A mature conception of organic natural governance could be increasingly taken for granted as a coda to the Romantic reconstruction of constitution.²¹⁴ T. H. Gill has shown how the Wordsworthian combination of a redefined nature and Platonism became a staple in the growing body of constitutional culture, for example in the aspiration to become 'a better man' exemplified by *Lyrical Ballads*' 'Michael', a figure seen as a motif for a metaphysical purity under moral self-control.²¹⁵

Wordsworth the man was also often paralleled with the biblical figure of Samuel, fitting into the 'Anglo-Israeli' tradition of Britain as elect nation (elect, of course, because unwritten and so put in place by some higher power).²¹⁶ The lineage from Wordsworth would help centre an elect nativism through the paternal organicism exemplified by Prime Minister Disraeli and George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876), a mid-Victorian exemplar sometimes described as creating a shared bank of spiritual memory.²¹⁷ The 'elect' metaphor depends on the metaphysics of nature and particularly the perceived failure of the French Revolution, a failure which seemed to encourage a combination of epiphany and metaphysical speculation, and ensure the continuity of a mythic 'national' character.²¹⁸ The clerisy then aims at, as Simpson puts it, a "progressive transition without breach of continuity", the evolutionary sequence that Burke had projected for the body politic'.²¹⁹ And after the Wars, this is no longer limited to the British Isles: in a Lockean cultivation of foreign soil free to be taken since not profitably used, English can become a universalist and properly developed substitute for the experience of native peoples – which Coleridge describes as having been blank until the arrival of missionaries.²²⁰

Later constitutional sceptics would therefore point out that emerging industrial Britain was governed by the almost total ascendancy of various forms of Burkean continuity between the 1790s and 1830s.²²¹ Williams, not long after René Wellek's famous definition of the canonical Romantic movement in terms of nature, imagination, and myth,²²² describes how the mainstream of organicist writing which had taken on Burke turned into the

claim for the artist's access to the universal in isolation – also, of course, a description of the isolation of the alienated labour of the British worker.²²³ This is the moral absolute which ensures, as the Preface suggests, clerical management of the 'empire of human society'.²²⁴

On the level of political economy, J. S. Mill would combine a new progressivism with a Coleridgian class of gifted individuals to posit a 'permanent benefit' to the British nation.²²⁵ Mill's Utilitarianism borrows from and exceeds that of Bentham in incorporating into moral philosophy a metaphysics of culture – itself a key Coleridgian term.²²⁶ And the metaphysical tempering of emotion was also extended in a not-so-lay sense by the Oxford Movement, which would help set a moral tone for Victorian English. John Keble's *Lectures on Poetry* from 1832 onwards turn the lay spirituality of nature towards the established church, and are dedicated to Wordsworth, who 'BY THE SPECIAL GIFT AND CALLING OF ALMIGHTY GOD/ WHETHER HE SANG OF MAN OR OF NATURE . . . WAS RAISED UP/ TO BE A CHIEF MINISTER/ NOT ONLY OF THE SWEETEST POETRY/ BUT ALSO OF THE MOST SACRED TRUTH'.²²⁷ Keble's Wordsworth makes poetry a marker of community against sedition, a sacral folk reverence for the 'departed' (again bringing up the question of the Burkean abstraction of death as timeless, or the possibility of any person who was historically present and so could depart).²²⁸ Although Coleridge's literary influence was patchy in the mid-nineteenth century, his *Aids to Reflection* (1825) fed strongly into the Oxford Movement's writerly Anglicanism.²²⁹

This set the ground for Victorian jurists to show how Coleridge's clerical cultural politics could help re-establish the high church as a constitutionally conservative brake on 'national' life.²³⁰ For some Anglicans, Coleridgian clerisy acted as a force against subversion in a fragmenting industrial society.²³¹ And the restraining of the passions was not only an ideal formal principle but also an entry point into disciplined English, so that '[r]ather than celebrating, as the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* does, the moment of spontaneous overflow, Keble valorizes the disciplines and restrictions which poetic language places upon emotion'.²³² Wordsworth's consolatory powers would remain strong throughout the century as a 'lay spirituality' able to cure social ills, reaching as far as John Ruskin and the Rossettis.²³³ Wordsworth would retrospectively be seen as central to Romanticism itself and so English literary history, especially after M. H. Abrams's field-defining *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953).²³⁴

As Ben Knights has shown, the 1830s work of Matthew Arnold and Elizabeth Gaskell was indebted to Wordsworth's conception of nature as consolatory, as later, with even more lasting influence, was George Eliot.²³⁵ The ideal of the divine state beyond action would be felt in Arnoldian criticism as well as mid-Victorian poets including Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning²³⁶ – and the realist seriousness of Wordsworth's vernacular life certainly helps explain the turn in Browning to the dramatic monologue which aims to get to the heart of an inner feeling while allowing the character to speak 'for himself'.²³⁷ A more concerted period of Wordsworthian revival in the last decades of the century was accompanied by a growth of disciplining anthologies,²³⁸ and this moment in turn would feed into post-First World War ideas of an aesthetic elite drawn from a modernized version of the 'natural' organic community – however much it protested its own radical modernity – as is seen in F. R. Leavis's *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture* (1930) and many similar manifestos.²³⁹

It was this Leavisite moment which saw the establishment in Triplos English of the strong canon centred on moral realist fiction, taking precisely the line from Jane Austen through George Eliot as the true story of English beginning with the anti-Jacobin protection of heritage.²⁴⁰ Eliot's Wordsworthian disciplining moralism was particularly important, tellingly re-glossed in Leavisite English as the voice of native realism. George Eliot's is a 'pure' transmission of the post-Jacobin lay-clerical morality – or as Nietzsche put it in *Twilight of the Idols*, 'G. Eliot. – They have got rid of the Christian God, and now feel obliged to cling all the more firmly to Christian morality: that is *English* consistency.'²⁴¹ But similar visions of a Wordsworthian-Coleridgian sensibility run through an English Literature narrative which is, as Stephen Gill puts it, 'integral to purification and elevation of social life and discourse'.²⁴²

Eliot's Wordsworthian lay-clerical realism thus becomes a carrier for the anti-Jacobinism valorized as the discipline in the twentieth century – serious, moral, not too comic, and willing to bring together the individual psychologies which constitute an informal and intuitive community. So the still Wordsworthian *Middlemarch* (1871–2) would become Leavis's key example of anti-systematic personal bonds felt on and through an organic land, a middle march. And this mode, later described by Williams as *psychological* realism as opposed to a *social* realism which had become submerged,²⁴³ would rise in Eliot and over the decadent French line

through Flaubert,²⁴⁴ and the form would *become*, in terms of our modern understanding, the canonicity of English Literature.

Eliot's *Felix Holt, the Radical* (1866) is an even stronger Wordsworthian cautionary tale, which forces the eponymous radical to mature to stand against the mob.²⁴⁵ In January 1868 *Blackwood's* published an extension of Holt's address, attracted by its organicist inheritance facing the mob as a pernicious human flood – also the disaster, of course, on which Eliot's story turns in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860).²⁴⁶ Eliot's best-known statement of the morality of the realist mission, though, comes in *Adam Bede*, in which the storyteller explains:

I might refashion life and character entirely after my own liking . . . [but] my strongest effort is to avoid any such arbitrary picture, and to give a faithful account of men and things as they have mirrored themselves in my mind. The mirror is doubtless defective, the outlines will sometimes be disturbed, the reflection faint or confused; but I feel as much bound to tell you as precisely as I can what that reflection is, as if I were in the witness-box, narrating my experience on oath.²⁴⁷

Not only is realist morality described here in Wordsworthian and associationist terms as natural, universal, and prone to distortion, it is also seen as a legal truth whose language belongs to the witness-box. And this line through Wordsworthian realism to a late-imperial turn back to consolation was pressed by not only the circle of the Leavises: for Virginia Woolf, Wordsworth's 'sedative' tranquillity was undiminished in its emotional hold on the 'national' canon, offering a 'sense of security . . . gradually, delightfully, and completely [to] overcome . . . us'.²⁴⁸ And for Woolf (echoing Felix Holt) a Romantic Eliot can perceive and channel flows of desire: '[t]he flood of memory and humour which [she] pours so spontaneously into one figure, one scene after another, until the whole fabric of ancient rural England is revived, has so much in common with a natural process that it leaves us with little consciousness that there is anything to criticise'.²⁴⁹

The takeup of neo-Romantic organicism in another form by Mill offers the clerisy a strengthened role as an 'improving intelligentsia':²⁵⁰ where in Coleridge the disinterested clerisy mediates ideas, in Mill the improving intelligentsia measures and rationalizes the franchise – as, similarly, in Matthew Arnold the cultivated best self would civilize and conserve, and

in Leavis and Woolf the literary elite would manage the canon. Mill's 1838 discussion of Bentham, added to his shorter 1833 Bentham essay and his 1840 discussion of Coleridge, fuses these figures for the early Victorian environment as 'the two great seminal minds of England in their age'.²⁵¹ For Mill, Bentham and Coleridge marry the progressive and conservative elements needed to bolster the English constitution against the indisciplined collective, in an organicism so influential that 'every Englishman of the present day is by implication either a Benthamite or a Coleridgean'.²⁵² Together these two lead to the progressive conservatism which would keep constitutional culture dynamic enough to spread the ideal meridian throughout the Pax Britannica (and which still seems intuitive today).²⁵³ Mill's Bentham answers the intellectual-generalist scepticism of the Scottish Enlightenment,²⁵⁴ as 'philosophers are now forced . . . to break down the generality of their propositions, and join a precise issue in every dispute',²⁵⁵ and Mill's Coleridge demonstrates the spuriousness of prior rights²⁵⁶ – and together they influence the moral realism of which Eliot would become the exemplar.

For Mill's anti-formal progressive conservatism, the English (British) are therefore blessed to have their spirit of compromise,²⁵⁷ and Bentham may even have placed too much emphasis on popular power, to be checked by Coleridge's paternalism.²⁵⁸ Mill's Coleridge awakens an era of philosophical spirit, a guiding metaphysics, which supersedes an eighteenth-century sympathy,²⁵⁹ and adapts ahistorical time as nature to the backbone of the Victorian constitution:

The long duration of a belief, he thought, is at least proof of an adaptation in it to some portion or other of the human mind; and if, on digging down to the root, we do not find, as is generally the case, some truth, we shall find some natural want or requirement of human nature which the doctrine in question is fitted to satisfy.²⁶⁰

This adaptation of the clerisy would be instrumental in the imperial mission of empire as an extension of Lockean franchise, and to allow aesthetic elites to take a progressivist stance: for Mill in *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861) an elite of the right kind (via which he is pointing more or less to a bureaucracy of civility) was more desired by the population than was democracy.²⁶¹ Tellingly described as a conservative but not a Tory, Mill's

Coleridge then anticipates imperial jurists' concern with 'permanence' in constitutional culture while 'adopt[ing] one liberal opinion after another'.²⁶² The idea of liberty itself now takes the shape of the state, universal and morally bound to expand.²⁶³ Coleridgian metaphysics shows that literary culture has 'pushed its way *into* religion'²⁶⁴ – and this can be balanced via the elder (James) Mill's 'balance of three forms':²⁶⁵ '[t]he existing Constitution, and all the arrangements of existing society, continued to be applauded as the best possible. The celebrated theory of the three powers . . . made the excellence of our Constitution consist in doing less harm than would be done by any other form of government'.²⁶⁶

In J. S. Mill, Coleridge's divine state has become a 'national property',²⁶⁷ 'a continuing and progressive civilization',²⁶⁸ and an empire, one in which the unmediated personal experience has no place. By the 1830s a universalist vernacular English bounded by a Coleridgian clerisy could legitimately limit entry into the management of imperial state. Thomas Macauley's 1835 'Minute on Indian Education' famously drew on this understanding of constitutional culture to suggest a steering capacity for the anti-formal discipline, but already by this time, Orientalists' concern with native languages had waned in favour of the universalism of English. Between 1793 and 1813, English had been established as the language of the East India Company, and 'the East' had gone from being a generator of Romantic ambivalences to an uncultivated Lockean hinterland.²⁶⁹ The canonicity needed to reel it in to franchise, taking on forms of testing, disciplining, and 'aesthetic aristocracy', belonged to the new and specifically British objectivity of the still point of Burkean time, on the Greenwich Meridian, Greenwich.

CHAPTER THREE

Imperial Sovereignty

Thirty years or so after the apparently most serious and hotly disputed ‘French’ arguments over authors and authority within the academic study of English, we find that their fallout has in fact been quite effectively recuperated into the subject. ‘Theory’ as one domesticated element of a modular English degree has turned out to be quite useful in, among other things, confirming a prior default centre which can again assume the form of an author-based and authoritative canon. So like every other extrinsic threat, ‘French theory’ is effectively absorbed into English precedent. Most seminars, study guides, interviews, biographical paraphernalia, and other publishers’ materials are, or until very recently have been, dependent on a methodology which aims to piece together the worldviews of model sensibilities, and turn these exemplary visions into a single continuous story of English, whatever twists this great story is imagined to take. The persistence of the individual author as a structuring principle certainly has something to do with Lockean self-ownership. It has something to do with the modularization of degrees which allows for ‘theoretical’ questions to be disengaged from, or to be ‘used on’ primary texts, confirmed as the core business of canonical English (and which will likely be even more so with the marketing of English as a ‘hard’ subject during the present moment of financial rationalization in universities in England). It also has something to do, though, with the late-Romantic metaphysics of literary form turned against collective action. With the streamlined canon of exemplars as legitimation of political power, *canonicity* emerges as a tool to universalize franchise in empire.

After the Napoleonic Wars and the domestic turmoil of the 1820s and 1830s, the ideally disinterested meritocracy of Coleridge and Mill would take strikingly different but comparable forms – one becoming iconic in the Thomas Carlyle who suggested a radical strengthening of a version of traditionalist individualism, and one in the Matthew Arnold whose uplifting aestheticism would set the tone for modern criticism.¹ Both versions move to head off a nascent democracy with a strengthening of ‘aesthetic aristocracy’ within the bounds of the informal constitution. The guardian class or clerisy would be selected by a state which stood ‘beyond’ (as befits the alienation

built into Britishness as the money form), and would work to hold off the excesses of shared experience under modern conditions. And as above, since informal constitutions tend to be based on individual self-ownership and disciplined sets of ideal exemplars,² the British paradox is that abstraction is contained in opposition to abstraction, taking the form of an ideal continuity.³ The question of governance is in this case categorically also the question of textuality: since a text is an *historical* record, fixed to an experienced time, the management of text is crucial to an informal constitution which needs to avoid the registration of experience.

So, Carlyle expands the Romantic need for exemplars into an extreme form of individualism, which nonetheless remains within the trajectory of an ideal clerisy: his new aristocracy moves onwards both from the Walter Scott imagined to have given in to antiquarian compromise (though Carlyle's personal antagonism to Scott is well documented by Robert Crawford),⁴ and from a failed idealism perceived in Coleridge as blocking the emergence of a more powerful lay-clerical force, the 'priests of our new church'.⁵ By 1829, Carlyle was distinguishing between mechanistic and *dynamic* thinking (the latter allowing for the incorporation of an anti-formal action rather than being stuck to the contemplative-organic),⁶ and diagnosing the dangers of a mechanical age, against which he aimed to radicalize conservatism along lines of individual will.⁷

Correspondingly, Carlyle's *The French Revolution* (1837), rather than insisting on either a Jacobin or an anti-Jacobin ethics, personalizes the whole story, turning its belligerents into heroes, and foregrounding the question of individual strength. This account of the revolution could be said to reverse the method of Walter Scott: if Scott's often-assumed role is as one of the first great writers of *historical fiction*,⁸ allowing for a background history to be played out as a human drama, Carlyle aims at something like the opposite, a *fictional history*. The victorious British constitution is still universally and eternally right, as is proven by its ability to produce a Shakespeare,⁹ but it must be reinvigorated in order to thrive. As labour concentration is seen still to risk the dangers of collectivity once deflected by the anti-Jacobinism of the 1790s, a radical anti-formal individualism has to be helped into ascendancy.¹⁰

In his homage to the heroic in *Past and Present* (1843), Carlyle further 'activates' the Burkean distinction between representation in words – an illegitimate popular claim to experience – and continuant right – a legitimate

claim by the standing and therefore ‘time-honoured’ authority.¹¹ Heroism, or the radical individualism of the cultural exemplar, is for Carlyle recalling the terms of Wordsworth’s nature, the ‘soil of all social business among men’,¹² to be pressed into service against organized combinations and neo-Jacobin insurgency: ‘[h]ero-kings, and a whole world not unheroic – there lies the port and happy haven, towards which, through all of these, stormtost seas, French Revolution, Chartism, Manchester Insurrections, that make the heart sick in these bad days, the Supreme Powers are driving us’.¹³ The informal constitution is made dynamic by certain individuals worthy of universalization, and a kind of ‘action’ is incorporated insofar as it is able to elude a definite historical language. Action becomes a set of exemplars on a seamless timeline – and English Literature, as the continuum drawn between these moments, is modest, gentlemanly, silent. ‘National’ silence was of course in a sense a self-fulfilling idea, since it had been demanded by the anti-Jacobin fear of the literate mob, but in Carlyle the formulation of silence becomes clearer: although great deeds can and should be performed by ‘England’ (Britain) around the world, it is now understood that the informal constitution means that speaking these deeds would break the spell of the continuant authority which made them possible. This moment, indeed, is one of the origins of the ‘English silent people’ myth, a myth which, although revived in the twentieth century era of devolution, has almost always only been repeated by *British* nationalists bearing a ‘grudge nationalism’ they impute to England:¹⁴ in this tradition, the ‘English’ don’t have to speak their power, and are too polite and too pragmatic to do so.

In the Burke-Carlyle sense, ‘they’ *can’t* speak, of course, because to do so would be to formalize ‘their’ power, to fix them to a place which must be represented, which is certainly not England, nor even Britain in a territorial form, but an movement ever outwards. In *Past and Present*, the authority of literature as a surrogate constitution is then praised as the animus of an imperial rule which can never declare itself:

The English are a dumb people. They can do great acts, but not describe them. Like the old Romans, and some few others, *their* Epic Poem is written on the Earth’s surface: England her mark! . . . And yet they did produce one Shakespeare: consider how the element of Shakespearean melody does lie imprisoned in their nature.¹⁵

The spread of the franchise then draws on a perfectible constitutional culture understood in terms of Burkean continuity: '[t]he Future hereby is not dissevered from the Past, but based continuously on it; grows with all the vitalities of the Past, and is rooted down deep into the beginnings of us. The English Legislature does not occupy itself with epochs'.¹⁶ A new dynamism (that is, imperial expansion) can reinvigorate Burkean Romanticism by directing its sensibilities, as ever particularly centred on the special sensibility that proves special sensibilities, Shakespeare, used as a frontispiece in many editions of Carlyle's book. The heroic also encourages an examinable yardstick of competition for the aesthetic elites, leading to, among others, the colonial Civil Service, described by Chris Baldick and others as driving the development of English.¹⁷

So if a purpose of Coleridge's clerisy had been to outmanoeuvre class conflict while deflecting criticism of the informal organic constitution, Carlyle goes further to spurn the bourgeoisie and any other socioeconomic class which might block aesthetic leadership, and so allow 'national' destiny to be obscured by the minutiae of material life.¹⁸ So in *Past and Present* the man of letters is the one who transcends his age rather than occupying it,¹⁹ and *Of Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841) puts history squarely into the possession of the strongest individuals.²⁰ Heroic effort is also of course tied into the mid-century gentlemanly athletic competition which acts as an aspirational source of imperial unification and stratification, leading to the moment of *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857).²¹

As ever the greatest weight is borne by Shakespeare, a 'free gift of Nature',²² and a figure able to see the *insides* of situations – to grasp the metaphysics of literary form – and now able to unite the whole Anglosphere.²³ So although the ideal franchise has become global and, for Carlyle at least, heroic, it is still fought out on the terrain of literary management: '[p]rinting, which comes necessarily out of Writing, I say often, is equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable'.²⁴ But democracy should only be entrusted to those able to see the heart of nature, of which individuals Carlyle provides a list (a list which oddly enough would have included Robert Burns – if only he had written in Standard English).²⁵

A slightly softer variation of the mid-Victorian informal and aestheticized constitution is found in the Matthew Arnold of the 1860s, who also stands for a wider imperial 'cultural turn' in the 1850s and '60s. In *Culture and Anarchy* (1867), poetry's metaphysical force offers a way out of the

materialist malaise which is endemic to merchant society – and this time the metaphysical force is congruent, as luck would have it, to a British state which is already able to embody the ‘best self’ of each individual.²⁶ This best self, after the form of the *Lyrical Ballads*, understands the spiritual in terms of poetic form and vice versa, although for Arnold Romanticism had over-advanced ideas, leaving behind it the need for a long period of informal recuperation. Arnold’s ‘Democracy’ (1861), which might at a glance seem like an early argument for the freedom of the liberal arts, tellingly opens with an epigraph from Burke on the moral dangers to literature of *reducing* governmental authority: strong aesthetic control is as important to the high era of empire as it was to the anti-Jacobin one.²⁷ Where the aristocracy had previously been an exemplar of greatness of spirit,²⁸ in the industrial age the real audience for cultural-constitutional reform had to be, as Wordsworth’s Preface predicted, the aspiring middle class, potentially prone to Jacobinism and needful of protection from vulgar egotistic lures and from the ‘total democracy’ which, Arnold claims (not sympathetically), has been achieved in France.²⁹

This appeal to the aesthetic sensibilities of the established middle class, perennial in the history of the British constitution, would be increasingly tested and codified during the highest era of imperial expansion, in the various forms which seemed to firm up the history of the discipline,³⁰ leading to the partially justified assumption that Arnold stands behind twentieth-century English. ‘Democracy’ here becomes the form of aesthetic civilization which results from the British middle class’s pooling their best selves: ‘[b]y giving them a national character, it can confer on them a greatness and a noble spirit’.³¹ Although the state is instrumentally ‘the representative of the acting-power of the nation’,³² it also provides ‘an ideal of high reason and right feeling . . . commanding general respect, and forming a rallying-point for the intelligence and for the worthiest instincts of the community, which will herein find a true bond of union’.³³

This appeal to ‘right feeling’ is perhaps the peak of mid-Victorian aesthetic betterment as a buffer against popular democracy:³⁴ what Arnold describes as barbarism can, he explains, be avoided by state intervention into school curricula, a *modus operandi* that would eventually be vindicated by secondary school reform and by the disinterested formal analysis which developed with university English in the twentieth century.³⁵ Arnold’s ‘Democracy’ sets itself against both religious dissenting and collective politics,³⁶ aiming

to adapt civilization to the older role of the aristocratic ennoblement now in decline. What this offers, along with a confirmation of the benefits of 'English' civilization, is an answer to the new difficulty perceived in maintaining the franchise of imperial territories: the essay was published four years after the 1857 Indian Mutiny, and the cost of guarding against such insurrections suggested that franchise would increasingly require a vigorous cultural mission where force alone would not suffice. The benevolent guidance of a properly educated transmitter middle class was then necessary to the informal integrity of the empire, with vernacular English classics becoming central to the curriculum and working alongside Classics and biblical study.³⁷ The parameters of the whig conception of English are underlined in Arnold's 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' (1864), in which the organicism of the late Tudor era is vindicated by the 1688 restoration, and is seen as maintaining 'non-dissociated' language still connected to the objects and emotions it described – an ideal which would survive all the way through to the Tripos remaking of the subject.³⁸ Here Arnold praises the clerisy's ideal disinterestedness, which he now calls political impracticality,³⁹ as well as the Burke who stands against action and 'saturates politics with thought'.⁴⁰ Literary criticism is by now acknowledged as more important for what it prevents than for what it does, and its ability to keep untouched by history that added informal element which makes literature special and appropriate for governance.⁴¹

In *Culture and Anarchy* moreover the state as the set of best selves reaches towards the ideal of 'do[ing] away with classes'⁴² – which means also avoiding the language of collective experience, and stressing the need for a study of spiritual perfection.⁴³ The divine community which Coleridge and his followers had rescued from the excesses of Romanticism is also now given to the service of a 'culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail'.⁴⁴ Again, it so happens that these values already precisely exist in the British 'idea of the whole community, *the State*' – which must be perpetually raised over popular, common, or formal ideas of the national.⁴⁵ Religious conformity and interpersonal sympathy are then the marks of humanity which 'establish' 'English' (British) national culture,⁴⁶ and as ever these duties precede rights rather than vice versa.⁴⁷ The state is a source of 'worship' but not of fanaticism – that is, not of political action – and literary value represents the perfectibility of civility *outwith* action.⁴⁸ A disciplined aesthetic then, rather than accepting the possible existence of material

social classes, creates a harmony between estranged castes – the Barbarians (the decadent aristocracy), the Philistines (the mercantile bourgeoisie), and the Populace (the ignorant class to be moulded) – and transcending these differences becomes the state purpose of English literary study.⁴⁹

So despite the material gains of empire, British ‘national’ greatness can never be *presented* in material terms – its governance must concentrate on the incitement of admiration of ‘higher and spiritual ends’.⁵⁰ This aesthetic order is now defined (in a way which can be related broadly to British whig conservatism) in terms of a convergence of Hellenic thought – the push to see things as they really are – and Hebraic thought – the demand for conduct and obedience: so where the Renaissance usefully returned Hellenism to England, the ‘Indo-European’ English people have been left in need of Hebraism for moral discipline.⁵¹ As free trade and mechanization, and so labour concentration, have forced the extension of the franchise, they have also endangered ideals of the good,⁵² in this case represented by the aesthetic balances of constitutional culture.⁵³

The positivist settlement nevertheless guarantees that ‘England’ (Britain) has always already attained a ‘relative moral perfection’ in avoiding formal codes,⁵⁴ with the state as best self acting as a guard against the vulgar literacy which would leave a metaphysical lack, a ‘British form of atheism’.⁵⁵ The newspaper reporter and the commercially minded Member of Parliament then represent types of the uncivilized mercantile bourgeois, or Philistine, a biblical term reworked here to connote 1790s anti-Jacobin accusations of radicalism.⁵⁶ The loss of desire for aesthetic perfection is of course made worse by increasing division into vulgar economic classes – leaving the perpetual demand to keep purifying the ground of heritage, which now becomes the function of what would become known as English literary criticism.⁵⁷

Arnold’s ‘aristocracy of talents’ bisects the anti-Jacobin clerisy and the twentieth-century meritocracy, and encourages a general penetration of the right kind of culture, but only via that section of the middle class allowed global governing power.⁵⁸ And this extension of constitutional culture is encouraged not only through a Lockean promise to develop un-cultured soils, but also ‘out of love and kindness’, a ‘dutiful’ and philanthropic imperial cohesion which would in the context of mid-Victorian imperial morality increasingly attract mainstream constitutional legitimation, most significantly in A. V. Dicey.⁵⁹ If the most obvious literary-critical inheritor

of Arnold's classless aristocracy of talents is F. R. Leavis, the idea would nevertheless enjoy a much more general dominance throughout social thought from the 1860s to the 1950s.⁶⁰ Chris Baldick's *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848–1932* (1983) thus puts Arnold at the apex of the long trajectory of examined, objective, or 'disinterested' English, and takes from Arnold as its epigraph one of the clearest bridging statements between literary form and constitutional form: '[t]he precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states'.⁶¹

Baldick's account of Arnold indeed arrived at a time when the aesthetic exemplar in English departments was struggling to fend off a real or imagined spectre of (French) Theory, and so to maintain a core discipline which in the long view had changed remarkably little from Arnold's civilizing mission. This ideal separation of constitutional culture from politics would embed a clerical class which was in practice still largely a product of inheritance and worked through 'individual moral constitutions'.⁶² As with Wordsworthian Romanticism, it was crucial for Arnold to aim his programme at the Philistines, since if the upper and middle classes could remain culturally fused, Britain would be strengthened as a counter-revolutionary power – the model described by the New Left in terms of England's pre-modern revolution.⁶³

Arnold's civility also helps lead along a line of universalist Anglophone cultural management travelling from Macauley's 1830s to the eventual shedding of any gesture towards popular determination altogether, as in J. C. Collins's *The Study of English Literature* (1891), for which English Literature is simply a duty to the state.⁶⁴ The nascent Oxford English school discussed from 1893, which largely concerned itself with an anecdotal canon of sensibilities, showed how easily the heroic-individual (Carlyle) and the instinctual-absolute (Arnold) could be combined in the late-Victorian understanding of disinterested examination. Ideal disinterestedness as amplified by the aesthetic idealism of Arnold would be a cornerstone of revived English in the twilight of high empire,⁶⁵ and clear the path for the mid-twentieth-century dominance of Practical Criticism as a new form of disinterestedness. (This phrase itself is nevertheless far from 'disinterested', having been used in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* to recuperate the nativist neoclassicism of Wordsworth.)⁶⁶

The 1850s–60s cultural turn exemplified by Arnold went together with an idea of an expanded 'Greater Britain', a global vindication of the

universal reach of a constitution proofed from insurgent shocks like the 1857 Indian Mutiny and the 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion. Mill's *On Liberty* (1859), reaching throughout the wider free-trading empire, encouraged those regions which were willing to come 'late' to a liberal-conservative franchise advantageous to a global Britain congruent with Anglophone rule.⁶⁷ Britain intuitively becomes the global-national form of a 'people'. So in *Essays on Reform* (1867), Dicey, James Bryce, Leslie Stephen, and Frederic Harrison call for a 'more national policy', using the term in an ethnocultural sense – presaging Dicey's crucial later idea of Britain's uniquely 'flexible constitution' able to incorporate new aspirational territory relative to a central meridian.⁶⁸ Charles Dilke's iconic travelogue-manifesto of the next year remains one of the most significant attempts to 'culture' the Anglophone empire in 'English' terms.⁶⁹

In Dilke's amplification of the informal constitution, even America, although lost to British government control, is nevertheless as important a part of the Anglosphere as is England itself, and more significantly is a transmitter of 'English' values to the new world.⁷⁰ About half of Dilke's long travelogue concerns an America which is still defined by an informal constitutional culture, 'the America of the law-abiding, mighty people who are imposing English institutions on the world'.⁷¹ The extension of a cultural franchise to the whole English-speaking world – as well as the world which is not yet English-speaking but could be if it made the effort – both unifies and underlines the need for centralized literacy control. In America, for example, the over-expansion of literacy can, according to Dilke, exacerbate racial as well as class tensions – in anticipation of which, of course, the British empire had already developed its own racial typology.⁷²

And for Dilke, Macauley's famous call to use English to civilize a sentinel class of managers in India can only ever go part-way towards solving that country's corruption. The difficulty of imposing English universally as cultural exemplar across this entire territory can be understood in terms of a lack of natural law, with the disciplined English exported to address this natural failure now candidly described as the language of truth:

It is not easy to see how this vital defect [of Indian corruption] can be amended, except by the slow process of raising up a native population that we can trust and put in office, and this is impossible unless we encourage and reward the study of the English tongue. The most needed of all social

reforms in India . . . could itself in no way be more easily brought about than by the familiarization of the Hindoos with English literature; and that greatest of all the curses in India, false-swearing in the courts, would undoubtedly be both directly and indirectly checked by the introduction of our language.⁷³

English language is even more directly equated with legitimate civility in John Seeley's comparable later account *The Expansion of England* (1883).⁷⁴ Seeley's book is as thoroughly 'culturalist' as is Dilke's, and argues for a federal empire – that is, where federation means the ability to absorb territory under a single continuant constitution.⁷⁵ This allows an ideal England – the nation as the disciplined language – to be exported through informal inclusion,⁷⁶ completing the idealization of, or the dis-placement of, territorial England – making the constitution 'almost boundless', and government able to cross national borders without rethinking its constitution.⁷⁷

So English, the language and the discipline, becomes necessary for Seeley for the indefinite retrospective adaptation of the constitution, and underwrites the way new territory can soak up excess population under an expanding set of informal laws, even allowing 'English' people to emigrate without losing their nationality.⁷⁸ (And yet, perhaps unsurprisingly, this is not an even spread: the furthestmost of the 'Greater' territories have more need of English Literature since they are 'wanting in organic unity and life', and have to wait for literary authority to arrive from the centre – Casanova's 'tempo'.)⁷⁹ Tracing early ideas of a Greater Britain back to James I's (union-of-crowns, pre-Civil War) export of a 'living' vitality,⁸⁰ Seeley's sovereign-in-parliament stands for a 'great homogeneous people' united 'in a very special way', that is, by the naturally improving literary exemplars which can cover the Anglosphere.⁸¹ Overlapping with A. V. Dicey's constitutional commentary, Seeley's constitutional spread is seen as a duty, not an imposition: the 'English empire' differs from continental European empires in that it makes no claim to *own* its colonies (that is, through prescriptive rights), but rather allows its natural liberty to extend, as by a universal law.

By the time of *The Growth of British Policy* (1895), framing his account with the settlement of Revolutionary England's turbulence in the whig settlement of 1688,⁸² Seeley is perceiving the victory of a permanent and 'fixed condition', a 'timeless' progressive conservatism of the kind desired

both by anti-Jacobin Romantics and Victorian jurists. Cultural 'England' is now certainly an ethno-linguistic aggregate and, through its metaphysical and cultural reach, a natural world leader, so that '[i]t is no exaggeration to say that in power the English [speaking] countries would be more than a match for the remaining nations of the world, whom in the intelligence of their people and the extent and wealth of their dominions they already considerably surpass'.⁸³ The Anglophone ideal – which Seeley hypothesizes, somewhat bizarrely, in terms of a battle which pits France and Spain against England and the New World – rises with empire, but leaves behind it cultural global sovereignty forms reaching long into the twentieth-century welfare era. Indeed, we might note how close Seeley's English Atlantic is to Orwell's Oceania: the Anglosphere is circumscribed by a positivist, globalizing sweep across the long period from the 1680s to the 1940s, becoming the Ingsoc in which is reincarnated the 'totalized' informal whig consensus.

Seeley's combination of flexibility and permanence then also shows how the Hanoverian and financially rationalizing unification of 1688 allowed for the possibility of perpetual revolution without change, an ever-accelerating stasis, the continuant as a progressive ideal. Seeley is quite explicit about governance as a literary-linguistic 'restoration' able to 'nationalize' the Anglosphere in perpetuity:⁸⁴ William III's post-1688 resistance to France, clearing the path for union and empire, is seen as settling 'our troubles . . . [which had been] closely involved with the question of constitutional liberty'.⁸⁵ And this use of cultural franchise can be read in that most canonical imperial commentator on the British constitution (and whose commentaries have often been seen for the anti-formal settlement as the constitution), A. V. Dicey. Dicey's determination to press the informality of freedom in empire should be seen next to the apparently more cultural-anthropological work of Dilke and Seeley, while owing something to the Romantic nation of Wordsworth and Coleridge. A key is the way for Dicey the *bête noire* of the Irish Home Rule movement threatened disruption of the whole Greater British tradition, especially from the 1880s – but in how he rejects, *contra* Seeley, even a federal solution, leaving the demand for the strict and even spread of parliamentary sovereignty across all regions of the empire.⁸⁶

Dicey's case for centralized and universalized governance is set out in his 1886 riposte to the Home Rule proposals of the time, a polemic for which Irish access to English constitution is a right rather than an imposition – but

a right which is compulsory and crucial.⁸⁷ For Dicey, Irish Home Rule is not only – or even primarily – a question for the Irish, but a question for every region of empire, since any change in the spread of sovereignty would create an imbalance of power destabilizing the whole (and this is an argument which clearly retains significance in the debates surrounding the rights of jurisdiction over the 2014 Scottish independence referendum).⁸⁸ Dicey's account of Home Rule then concentrates on the evils of nationality portrayed as belligerent (or active) ethnicity, while a rigorous informality, in this case reliance on precedent, seems to give 'British nationality' a transparent status – Britain the nation is not really national, a status which it retains till the present day.⁸⁹ The demonization of the national in ethnic terms would also become quite familiar during the era of devolution – as would Diceyan comments about Britain's peripheries being lucky to be propped up by the universal. In a way that speaks to the way we now see the 1977 West Lothian Question (why should Scottish MPs be allowed to vote in two parliaments but English MPs in only one?), Dicey's concern is that parliamentary sovereignty should remain undisturbed throughout the whole territory, since any specificity of place could signal a local 'dictatorship', which he tellingly likens to the Paris mob.⁹⁰ Crucially, universalization demands centralization – and ironically for a constitution moved forward by 'train crashes', a strong and 'wise driver' is needed to maintain parliamentary authority, keeping it universal and blind to any specific place.⁹¹

Centrally for textual criticism of constitution, since for Diceyan commentary legislation can never proceed from principles concretized in any text, it relies on the admission that authority can only exist as precedent and interpretation: that is, interpretation is representation.⁹² Interpretation becomes a kind of shadow-text where the original does not exist, but never itself becomes textual, or active. Constitutional interpretation is able to bind judgement along informal lines which seem intuitive.⁹³ And criticism as constitution demands a hermeneutic 'state culture' to oversee individual cases, a power which hangs over common law like Arnoldian aesthetics hangs over English. (A similar line is pressed from the same year by Walter Bagehot, tutor to many late-Victorian jurists, who is perhaps even more insistent on constitutional informality.)⁹⁴

In Dicey then the Irish question, a scourge on the culture of the mainland but necessary to the integrity of governance, demonstrates why the British constitution is bound to maintain representation as ahistorical and resistant

to codification. Ireland is the greatest of many threats to the evenness of the informal constitution:

Home Rule, to put this matter in its strongest form, means, it may be said, the application to Ireland of the very principle on which the English constitution rests – that a people must be ruled in accordance with their own permanent ideas of right and justice, and that unless this be done, law, because it commands no loyalty, ensures no obedience. The whole history of the connection between the two islands which make up the United Kingdom is a warning of the wretchedness, the calamities, the wickedness and the ruin which follow upon the attempt to violate this fundamental principle not only of popular, but of all good and just government.⁹⁵

These terms of permanence have by this point become a recurrent motif, signalling a new continuity of revolutionary performance which can be linked to both Burke and Orwell.⁹⁶ In Diceyan commentary, no Parnellian (or Jacobin) assertion of local power can compete with what is now, somewhat duplicitously, called a ‘popular’ desire for permanence, a settled wish which paradoxically occupies a position beyond experience.⁹⁷ Dicey’s best-known commentary, *Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution* (1885), thus begins by reinvoking the Burkean-Coleridgian veneration of the intangible beyond literacy,⁹⁸ reminding us in Burkean mode that the constitution has no historical origin,⁹⁹ and that the primary duty of all laws is to ensure the integrity of parliament as a permanent precedent – a more aggressive form of the whiggish legal positivism/negative liberty knot which insists that what has already happened must have been what was most fitting.¹⁰⁰ The creation of custom is now described as ‘constitutional morality’,¹⁰¹ and it exists in a circular, totalizing sense ‘in a state the will of which is ultimately obeyed by the citizens of the state’.¹⁰² For Dicey as for Coleridge, the idea of the state enters the mind divinely before isolated contemplation gives it form, and this idea comes to us via an unalienated nature – so that although the summoning of Parliament is not systematic, it is as inevitable as night and day.¹⁰³

Dicey also contrasts, to an almost obsessive degree, Britain’s informal, natural, uncodified, or *flexible* constitution, with France’s *rigid* constitution. For the French constitution, ‘public sentiment’ means nothing more than

‘political considerations’,¹⁰⁴ whereas the British constitution is guided by higher moral forces – and is never, by implication, political. That is, the popular is to be *contrasted* with the political – but the popular is also (metaphysically) bound by a coherent will which it must nevertheless be imagined to form. And for Dicey the fact that the French constitution is merely ‘political’ means that it is not even properly legal – a revealing definition of legality as beyond participation.¹⁰⁵ So French *droit administratif* (usually glossed as ‘martial law’) is then seen as based on coercion, in an echo of the Burkean distinction which sees the French constitution as abrogating the present through text, while the English (British) constitution is too civilized to have any such ‘violent’ equivalent.¹⁰⁶ This distinction, of course, overlooks the British counter-terror of the 1790s, the imperial militia established in Ireland and throughout empire, the suspensions of habeas corpus on the mainland in 1797 and 1817, the countless other emergency powers which the parliament deemed necessary to empire – right through to the surveillance state of the 2000s – and a litany of Irish *droits administratifs* taking in Dicey’s own coup of 1914.¹⁰⁷ But where federation might bring the danger of a ‘rigid’, or textual, constitution, an unwritten and centralized but informal settlement can be infinitely adapted, and so infinitely open to bureaucratic elites, enabling the totalized state through a subtler, but ultimately more powerful, route. And yet, on a wave of imperial realist moralism, the Diceyan state was seen as a natural good since it was *stable* in accordance with the interpolated wishes of the people – it was in Bagehot’s terms ‘impressive’ while remaining protective of its ‘efficient secret’, maintaining Britain’s place at the imperial meridian.¹⁰⁸

Much becomes clear about modern Britain as a ‘control society’ if we see how this most canonical constitutional commentary demonstrates that legal positivism, perceived as a necessary idealization of ‘really existing law’, has to *seem* less rule-bound since its principles are informal – while in fact it demands more self-disciplining, making it in practice more bureaucratic.¹⁰⁹ And the anti-Jacobin avoidance of proclamations of rights comes to correspond, from the comfort of high Victorian realism, to the extrapolated assumption that the English people are naturally conservative and will never feel the desire to make any such proclamation.¹¹⁰ (The assumption, of course, remains strong today: England is still often colloquially presented as instinctually conservative, though almost always without asking how we could possibly know how under any properly national conception of franchise, modern England would

follow the conservative path which is casually assumed for it by relying on *British* measures of identity, especially UK voting patterns.¹¹¹ Dicey argues that this kind of conservative trust has allowed the British freedom of the press to lead Europe¹¹² – but although the press is rarely overtly censored,¹¹³ ‘public opinion’ already had a tremendously well-ingrained ideological role, informally regulating opinion within a tradition of constitutional realism.

As a coda to, and an instructive description of, the long victory of the whig constitution, Dicey’s *Lectures on the Relation Between Law and Public Opinion* (1905) describes three phases of constitutional thought evolving over the high era of imperial English Literature: first, there was reaction to the French Revolution, followed by the last days of Old Toryism, both phases allowing little reform, and finally, a modernized version of Benthamism, where the book’s sympathies clearly lie, but which is also potentially prone to a misguided collectivism.¹¹⁴ The long ‘legislative stagnation’ after 1789 was necessary in the face of formal threat, and the reactionary consolidation of the 1800s and 1810s was an understandable result (and one which Matthew Arnold would describe as a numbing of curiosity, triggering the need for a reinvigorated middle class).

The neo-Benthamite era on the contrary allowed for an updating of progressive conservatism to the conditions of high empire,¹¹⁵ and a further finessing of ‘constitutional morality’ into ‘legislative public opinion’, helping to incorporate and neutralize the dangers of a widening franchise.¹¹⁶ For Dicey Benthamite reform then proved that the ‘omnipotence of the Parliament’ could work through liberal individualism,¹¹⁷ so that an individualist ‘character of permanence’ could come naturally (and meritocratically) to the fore.¹¹⁸ The mutualistic relationship between individual and state was seen for Dicey in the People’s Charter of 1838, and, more iconically, in the Great Exhibition of 1851 (which we might nevertheless now see as demonstrating Britain’s need to keep *performing* itself in order to avoid having to define itself).¹¹⁹ This relationship was continued by classic liberalism (*On Liberty* is in the frame here),¹²⁰ and Bentham and Mill together foresee a successful defence of the middle class against ‘the tyranny of the majority’,¹²¹ making the state more open to the ‘spirit of the age’ – that is, to the current incarnation of permanence – which would in turn also make it stronger and able to absorb more powers.¹²²

While claiming a form of public opinion, this thinking is of course bound to the growth needs of empire, based on a whiggish and alienating

thinking of the Burkean formulation of the un-systematic system: '[p]ublic opinion . . . is, after all, a mere abstraction; it is not a power which has any independent existence; it is simply a general term for the beliefs held by a number of individual human beings'.¹²³ Like that of Burke, Dicey's liberty is therefore both highly abstract – 'a general term' – and based on the evidence of working law, the pragmatic combination of positivism and metaphysics basking in English Literature's long Romantic tail.¹²⁴ And with one eye on growing imperial rivalries, Dicey has by now become more forthright about legal positivism: it is quite proper that rather than judgements provoking legal changes, legal changes have already happened by the time they become constitutional – the writing of law must take place in Burke's impossible time of events which happen without ever being experienced, the temporality which came to ascendancy during the Napoleonic Wars.¹²⁵ And English law, drawing on a 'whole body of ideas and beliefs',¹²⁶ is now able to outmanoeuvre any active threats to constitutional informality, via legislative judgement, which is quite clearly circular – '[j]udicial legislation aims rather at serving the certainty than at amending the deficiencies of the law'.¹²⁷ In this positivist or realist circularity, a metaphysics recalling the Burkean Coleridge,¹²⁸ law is serviced by legislation whose aim is in turn to approximate an ideal of law – a closed circuit describing the working of the British constitution as well as the aim of the influential 'disinterested' English criticism which comes to prominence in the 1910s–20s, and which searches for a literary form already established before the act of reading.

Diceyan commentary of course would never solve the problem of Home Rule, and nation-based criticism of constitutional culture would slowly grow, especially from the mid-twentieth century, in the self-determination movement (at the start often party-nationalist) in Scotland. Thus the stress, in Scottish critiques all the way from the 1950s to Iain McLean's Dicey-targeted one of 2010, on the separate principles of the Scottish legal system as outlined by James Dalrymple, First Viscount of Stair, as against the prevailing Diceyan universalism and the assumed sovereignty of parliament.¹²⁹ In retrospect in Scotland, as far deeply as this may have been buried during high empire, the sovereignty of parliament assumed by Blackstone, Burke, Bagehot, and Dicey was always a matter of *cultural* debate (and a post-2010 confusion over the right to legislate the 2014 referendum revived difficult questions over this incommensurability of sovereignties). McLean reminds us that the 1706–7 Acts of Union required a new formulation by both signatories, and

so the Acts informally *instated* parliamentary sovereignty rather than, as constitutional culture would later imply, *restoring* it.¹³⁰

For McLean then, only between Locke's influence on unification and Blackstone's presence in the mid-eighteenth century did sovereignty in Britain slide from the popular to the parliamentary, and allow for the timeless and universal tropes relied on by the imperial commentators of whom Dicey stands at the head.¹³¹ As McLean points out, the 'timeless' tradition has never provided an adequate explanation for the events of 1660 and 1688, when a monarch was *invited* to become head of state, creating the revolutionary precedent which led to Union.¹³² The Union – a continuant 'empty present' in the terms I have described – then relies for McLean on an ongoing usurping of sovereignty by those apparently only observing it – again recalling how Dicey's Ulster coup was unlawful by any serious use of his own terms.¹³³ Under the kind of textual criticism gestured towards by the tradition of constitutional scepticism which leads to McLean, Dicey's Ulster coup does exactly what he would have wanted to avoid – it makes explicit the way that parliamentary sovereignty is always *ex post facto* constituting itself retrospectively as if it had always already existed.¹³⁴ Diceyan sovereignty demands infinite powers for the executive unless the executive has previously bound itself, but this also admits that the principle of parliamentary sovereignty 'in perpetuity' is even more totalizing than the constitutional systems it claims to supplant.¹³⁵ Laws become true just by reiteration, just as the English literary canon gains value by the exemplary force of individual authors.¹³⁶ This mutually reinforcing relationship of normative forces then calls for a reading which points up the constitutional *action* hidden under the sign of continuity.¹³⁷

McLean's critique was pointedly timed, coming between the unwinding of devolution and the independence referendum mandate in 2010. But it also followed, as had his previous critiques, a long buildup of questions over sovereignty pressed by Scots lawyers like Neil MacCormick from the 1950s onwards (prominently, by Neil Walker and Hector McQueen), the early reaches of which might be compared to the work of constitutional sceptics in the New Left.¹³⁸ Both these threads stressed how in Britain a single conception of sovereignty had worked to culturally absorb another more popular-tinged lineage (as well as to maintain an inherited or appointed upper chamber).¹³⁹ Both threads also pointed out that despite its claims to balance, parliamentary sovereignty in its Hanoverian-Burkean form tends towards a *de facto* unicameral authority: opposition to constitutional

overhaul is a primary rationale of the parliamentary settlement, while the performance of parliamentary participation is made almost compulsory, a combination of totalizing elements later known as ‘elective dictatorship’.¹⁴⁰ (Although this term was popularized in 1978 by the Tory Lord Hailsham, the neo-Burkean Conservative governments which soon followed his diagnosis would further strengthen parliamentary sovereignty,¹⁴¹ and would revive the imperial mix of economic liberalism and social conservatism – with unforeseen consequences, since it would underscore a condition of *democratic deficit*, or antagonism between civic nation and state. Moreover the appointment of life peers made the upper house less partisan – less ‘naturally Tory’ – and more a site of aspiration, patronage, and reward for a unified political class.)¹⁴²

Crucially for McLean, popular sovereignty in fact has a much longer history than parliamentary sovereignty, one readable as far back as the seventeenth century in England and possibly the fourteenth in Scotland – and was only in the eighteenth overwhelmed by the (cultural) weight of assumption brought by the unified Anglo-British constitution.¹⁴³ So if the constitution does indeed exist as interpretation of a spectral text, always anti-formal and only fleetingly ‘visible’ as commentary, an aim of a constitution-sceptical literary criticism would be to point up where the grain of the active shows through this apparently seamless flow. Such a criticism would recognize that the state and its interpolated culture can never admit that popular sovereignty is unconstitutional, because to do so would be to reveal a moment of historical change – thus the need for the adaptive definitions of parliamentary sovereignty as reflecting the people’s will, as constitutional morality, as a natural conservatism.¹⁴⁴ The ideal continuity which would struggle to survive the contraction of empire was questioned by constitutional critiques from the 1950s onwards, most prominent among which was that of the early MacCormick, acknowledged here by McLean as a mentor.¹⁴⁵

After various modernizations, the Diceyan embedding would only finally begin to lose its grip in these post-imperial times, prodded by the revelation of British economic vulnerability.¹⁴⁶ Michael Keating dates the rupture of a general loss of belief in a unified British sovereignty to questions raised about the centralization of state-capitalism in the 1970s, before which a beneficent whig historiography was still largely assumed.¹⁴⁷ And making a point which is more significant to sovereignty debate than any number of ‘self-identifying’ Moreno surveys, Keating reminds us that in practice thinking about civil

society has tended to become concentrated in that area of the constitutional jurisdiction with some grounding, whether cultural or formally legal, in popular sovereignty, and increasingly associated with the idea of a shared public – Scotland.¹⁴⁸ The extent to which popular sovereignty is a Scottish ‘myth’ is not the point here, at least not as much as the cultural pressure for a popular participation in sovereignty and its post-Diceyan import. Given the rigorous informality of the British constitution, it is unsurprising that Scottish scepticism over Diceyan authority during the period of democratic deficit was so largely undertaken through literary means: the 1980s–90s cultural renaissance is only misleadingly explained as the global export of five or six writers, or the question of whether these writers personally hold nationalist positions – far less the canard of Edinburgh’s rise to global prominence as UNESCO City of Literature in 2004 (for a sense of perspective on this, 2012’s UNESCO City of Literature was Norwich).

Much more serious is the constitutional scepticism directed against Diceyan norms to suggest that national representation would include a defined body of participants. For Keating as for McLean and others, recent questions of national self-determination are to be traced back to 1880s–1920s arguments over Irish Home Rule in terms of their disturbance of the integrity of the closed constitution,¹⁴⁹ often historicized in terms of the epochal shock of the First World War. As a source of trauma and of the realization of ideological disjunction between ideal space and territorial place, the First World War was certainly a shibboleth – but so also, as the integrity of competing empires ran into trouble, other constitutionally foundational modes appeared to describe the modernization and reinvention of English Literature as a ‘national’ discipline during the 1910s and 1920s.

CHAPTER FOUR

Modernism as Constitutional Conservatism

The modernization of the ideally disinterested constitution might be traced as far back as the Charter Act 1853 (India) and the Northcote-Trevelyan reforms (1854), as steps were taken towards examination in the disciplined and universal (but as yet unnamed) canon of vernacular greats. The social need for a new canon had been taken up by prominent supporters of the aesthetic elite including Matthew Arnold,¹ as the old aristocracy was joined in government by a literary-cultural aristocracy. The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 would reconfirm this standardization across the British Union,² after which the canon was increasingly pressed in secondary education, initially via a strengthening network of English public schools.³ Official or institutionalized stories of English Literature – the semi-formalized canon – became common around the turn of the century, and the English Association was founded in 1906, but a reinforcement came as the war revealed the extent of illiteracy among the rank and file of soldiers (an illiteracy upon which, as I have suggested, English in fact paradoxically depended), the subject of some hand-wringing after the war, and a sign that questions of citizenship and literacy could no longer be put off.⁴ This would feed into the disciplining and disciplinary moment which later came to be known as the 1910s–20s ‘rise of English’ – but which might be seen less as the beginning of something new than as a modernist reinvention of the organic, anti-formal, whig constitutional tradition.

Modernism may seem a strange description for this, but modernism is an increasingly contested term. Once taken to connote formal experiment by a few privileged figures within a set period, it has more recently been recontextualized in terms of a range of local contexts around the world, particularly via World Literature.⁵ In the Anglo-British situation it might also be understood as a bolstering of a natural ‘national’ sovereignty in a diminished empire – indeed, a redress of the thorough contextualization of British modernism as a fetishizing of formal innovation in a few authors within a strong canon is probably overdue. It is true that the formally experimental aspect of British modernism had an easy target in the poetic Georgianism concerned with trauma, nostalgia, and convalescence during

and after the First World War, but a binding principle of the canonical literary movements of the time was a conservatism relative to the constitution.

This can be seen from the late 1910s in terms of the many challenges to the integrity of the 'British national', taking in not only imperial rivalries, including the ongoing Irish Home Rule crisis (and the Easter 1916 uprisings, as well as the trials of partial independence from 1922), but also the influence of the Soviet Revolution on growing and unpredictable collectives from 1917, particularly in that most dangerous area for popular sovereignty, Glasgow, and the related labour disturbances which would reach through to the General Strike of 1926, itself partly triggered by unpredictable credit markets after the war. The era of diminished empire and increasingly explicit class conflict reaches a new British ground, after much difficulty, with the strengthening of the state against a new fear of invasion in 1940–2, a moment which echoes the threat of French invasion in the mid-1790s. If the new settlement of 1940–2 does indeed represent a new whiggish moment of regrouping, then British modernism, especially within the newly named discipline of English, had been working towards this moment throughout the inter-war years.

This renewed whig conservatism in British literary modernism should also be placed in proximity to growing related authorities, specifically the BBC, the state's most significant cultural organ throughout the twentieth century, and the economic orthodoxy which was often described as Keynesian. In both financial and cultural-canonical senses, these organs helped return the state to its Hanoverian role as a manager of debt. The 1914–20 years saw a previously unimaginable national debt come to seem normal, recalling the post-1688 'credit revolution'.⁶ The spectre of collectivity also forced a return to 'the land' – to a contestation of the Romantic definition of soil beyond the alienation forced by commodity relations – albeit a land compromised by the troubled imagery of war.⁷ In sovereignty terms, the road to the post-1942 technocracy was paved by modernist 'clerical' whig conservatives: F. R. Leavis, whose influence on canonical standards remained into the mid-century; John Reith, whose BBC softened the fall of empire by reinventing a language of commonwealth impartiality; and J. M. Keynes, whose state-capitalism fed into the totalizing parliamentary orthodoxy of consensus.

One effect of the First World War, of course, was to concentrate a sense of participation in British-national effort and so in a centralized state,

particularly after Lloyd George's measures of 1917.⁸ Modern wartime political economy demanded a strengthened relationship between working collectives and conservatives, leading to an attrition of laissez-faire or what George Dangerfield later described as the *Strange Death of Liberal England* (1935).⁹ A new concentration and grasping of labour, galvanized by the war, also had to be accounted for by a modernized mission for the cultural continuation of franchise. And if the lack of basic literacy among British soldiers was in part the product of the long history of political suspicion of reading, once needed to protect Britain's constitutional informality, it now had to be recast as a problem of modern logistics.¹⁰ The linguistic standardization demanded by the Newbolt Report of 1921 (*The Teaching of English in England*) called for a renewed role for an English Literature made rigorous and objective – or radically disinterested – and now with a discrete institutional place, able to feed out teachers to schools to manage literary excess.¹¹ Right through to the early welfare state, the Leavisism which resulted from this would exert a strong and often casually accepted influence.

In these inter-war years George Sampson was particularly forthright about the need to use the new university subject as a weapon against working-class enfranchisement and the dangers of the massed poor who might take literacy into their own hands (a class who now constituted, as Chris Baldick tellingly paraphrases it, an enemy within).¹² F. R. Leavis's stress on the sensibilities of the great authors revised the line-up, but more importantly strengthened the structure, of the literary canon – repeating the anti-formalist adjustment-and-strengthening which characterized the constitution. Leavis's story of the individuals who make up the canon culminates in those few contemporary figures he sees as stressing continuity, localist organicism, and immutable value – particularly the D. H. Lawrence who reinvents Burkean time as an instinctual form of 'Life', a mode of being vital precisely because it is not dependent on history. Lawrence's sense of immanent timeless tradition makes him particularly valuable for Leavis's reinvention of the progressive conservatism which has survived from Burke all the way through the 'divine state' metaphysics of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold, and Dicey. So Lawrence

can truly say that what he writes must be from the depth of his religious experience, [and] that makes him, in my opinion, so much more truly

creative as a technical inventor, an innovator, a master of language, than James Joyce . . . [in Joyce] there is no organic principle determining, informing and controlling the vital whole, the elaborate analogical structure, the extraordinary variety of technical devices, the attempts at an exhaustive rendering of consciousness.¹³

Again this gives the lie to the idea of modernism as a set of formal experiments: there is certainly something being made anew here, but in the ahistorical tradition of British constitutional circularity, central to the reinvention is a reinvigorated version of an organic wholeness which is always already there. Innovation then belongs in the service of a protean vitalism standing in opposition to the decadent formal play of writers like Joyce who lack a structure of tradition within which to arrange the elements of a whole consciousness, as seen in the disciplining of emotion in late Romanticism. Leavis's Lawrence certainly signals the revival of a native guardian elite, and of an ideal Tudor tradition, as more visibly do T. S. Eliot and Leavis's own ideal English local community.

And just as importantly, Leavis influentially presses into the centre of the strengthened modern canon both the Austen who had saved the 'English' estate from Romantic excesses, and the George Eliot who had followed Wordsworth and Mill to carry on the most fundamental characteristic of modern organic English, its realist moral seriousness.¹⁴ If this lineage is most fully depicted in Leavis's later *The Great Tradition* (1948), it is established as early as 1932 in the pages of *Scrutiny*, the journal which the Leavises (F. R. and Q. D.) would come to dominate, and which would eventually itself become important in Cambridge thought. F. R. Leavis would also later declare an interest in neo-Romantic continuant liberal conservatism by editing an edition of Mill's essays on Bentham and Coleridge – judging their worth relative to the syllabus of the Cambridge English Tripos,¹⁵ and especially in terms of their influence on George Eliot.¹⁶

Scrutiny as a whole clearly marks a return to and re-strengthening of the anti-Jacobin norms which had become part of the literary life of the middle class between the 1780s and the 1830s, and led to the anti-sceptical realist novel. As Scott, Austen, and Coleridge had domesticated Burkean Romanticism within the literary mainstream, keeping the baser passions in check, so Leavis, along with Denys Thompson and others, would in turn domesticate the settled permanence seen in Dicey for a new turbulent age.

If there was a general, post-Newbolt admission that mass illiteracy was no longer desirable or practical (though Q. D. Leavis makes a good attempt at arguing for it in 1932),¹⁷ nevertheless high culture (culture appealing to the increasingly discrete middle class), or literature's metaphysics, was now charged with the constitutional responsibility to manage an emerging mass culture through strident new assertions of canonical value. Again the Tudor Eden resettled by the 1688 Restoration becomes central as an antidote to mechanization and the threat of social systems – and so also for Virginia Woolf in *The Common Reader* (1925), at times sounding much like *Scrutiny* (by which she was nevertheless not favoured), the Elizabethan age was an age of fire in comparison with the present pallid age of newspaper.¹⁸ In 1932 Woolf would also argue for the kind of self-control in reading which can only come from education by an aesthetically elite clerisy.¹⁹ And as the title of Woolf's collections suggests, her primer-type critical essays are at base an Arnoldian attempt to capture the key ground of the middle class, working to extend the aesthetic constitution much as did the Leavises and T. S. Eliot.²⁰

One of the most aggressive early reinventions of English for an aesthetic elite is F. R. Leavis's *For Continuity* (1933), a book which draws on the instinctual conception of canonicity expounded in the first number of *Scrutiny*, before Leavis himself had joined.²¹ The continuity of *For Continuity* is ideally artisanal in the organic sense of the ideal village, pre-capitalist, and rejecting a class-based solution by rejecting the technologies which have led to it. The mechanization which is seen to have given rise to social classes must for Leavis become the target of the new aesthetic elite able to foreclose the need for class conflict. In what might now be read as an antique form of radical conservatism, for Leavis the world of the machine should be disavowed: capitalism and socialism imply a cultural levelling, and levelling means a destruction of heritage to leave a morass of decadent lived-experience.

Only a critical guardian class can stave off the governance implications of the cultural dumbing-down threatened by the machine and the mass, a situation which finds its ideal in the pre-Civil War era before the dissociation of language – helping explain the Tudor fetish passed on from organicist 'English' writers like Hunt and Cobbett to these modernists, who also draw in a Seeleyan 'national' consciousness which extends throughout a wide Anglosphere.²² In this desire, Leavisism would have a more lasting success than many working in English today would like to admit, 'codifying' the

discipline in a way which would secure for it a global cachet within a declining empire. T. S. Eliot's reading of the restoration moreover has much in common with the Seeleyan periodization of the spread of Anglophone informal constitution, and is even more forthright in its pre-Civil War longings.

However, the tone of loss in the modernist reinvention of English is hard to overcome: despite what the Leavises and Eliot agree is a crisis of the organic community in the enclosures of common land (not, of course, seen as a problem of capitalism as such, but of a greater need for an Arnoldian tempering of commercialism), both are bound to uphold, to 'restore', a parliamentary establishment whose upper chamber is defined by inheritance and whose franchise is carefully limited. This is a contradictory, if influential, form of 'English nationalism' which in fact favours British parliament and *blocks* the national, leaving a problem which would only begin to be unpicked in English at the end of the twentieth century and relative to the process of devolution.²³ As the ideal of aesthetic disinterestedness is staged anew in I. A. Richards,²⁴ Eliot, the Leavises, and *Scrutiny*, the vigour of the literary elite is seen to have to work with Anglo-British landed parliamentary elites to preserve value. Of course, this is only part of the story of British modernism: the relatively genteel tendencies of *Scrutiny* were only the more acceptable side of a wider radical-conservative tendency which would go as far as the cutting edge of the avant-garde magazine *Blast!* (1914), in which Wyndham Lewis provocatively re-invents England as the best location for a re-disciplining of cultural standards – because, by implication, it is the space most dedicated to unaccountable ahistorical time, the Greenwich Meridian, Greenwich, against the woolly egalitarian talk endemic in constitutional Europe.²⁵

In any case, the combination of meritocratic minority and 'traditional' establishment or heritage, the new liberal conservatism, was highly successful in reinvigorating English Literature as a shared culture ideally allowing for mobility beyond social class.²⁶ The aspirational power of the new university discipline would filter through schoolteachers, lecturers, and cultural managers to various extents until at least the 1970s, often placing aspirants in competition for enfranchisement. Leavis's *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture* (1930) speaks vigorously for a disinterested elite aesthetic minority which would later be reinvented as a 'meritocracy' – as a cure for the damage done to language by the machine, again addressing itself to the aspiring middle-class managers of literacy. The problem for this elite

is the apparent rise of the 'wrong' kind of temporal alienation, the alienation of the assembly line rather than the right and proper alienation of Burkean time, a loyalty to a 'past' which exists outside experience. There is certainly a wilful localism to this, and a commitment to a kind of ongoing hermeneutic investigation.²⁷ But the result is a new aesthetic order which protects and bolsters the ahistorical constitution: among others, Q. D. Leavis's *Fiction and the Reading Public* (1932), F. R. Leavis's *For Continuity* (1933), F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson's *Mass Civilization and Minority Culture* (1930), and in its own way T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* (1943), all take on the need to limit and individualize literacy, imagined in its worst form as pulp fiction and advertising, and to confirm that the real enemy is the material experience of the present.

Many of the essays of Eliot's *The Sacred Wood* (1920) amplify Burkean temporality to locate tradition quite candidly outside of experienced time altogether.²⁸ Most iconically in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919), Eliot stresses that there is no point at which literary value can be seen to originate – either it must, in Burkean terms, be a timeless restoration, or in Wordsworthian terms, must arise from an idea of nature which ideally and paradoxically refuses to admit of any alienation. Unalienated nature – and by extension, realism as the instinctual registration of nature – remains the power behind the renewal of the traditional community which offers an escape from the evils of modern life. Eliot's later widely anthologized call here is quite explicitly for a return to a form of tradition which is *not* the past, but an ideal of the past existing outside of the past – making it one of the clearest expressions of an aesthetics of Burkean time during the whole modern period of English.²⁹

Eliot's later 'Burnt Norton' (1936) presents an even stronger and more nuanced version of Burkean time, dramatizing a struggle with temporal immanence, the way the present can never be recovered because it floods the consciousness with *too much* experience to be viewed with any meaningful perspective, making it inaccessible. In 'Burnt Norton', direct experience must be submitted to ordering principles which can only be glimpsed in moments of epiphany – which for Coleridge had been arranged in a lay religion, and for Eliot were arranged in the figure of the Anglican Christ of the established church. Eliot's Christ then becomes the backdrop to the timeless customs of the English village, and the ruralism of writers like George Sturt from the 1900s onwards.³⁰ The elimination of the experience of the present, and

of all the pasts which may possibly once have been a present, can certainly be understood as an aggressive reassertion of Burke's instinctual value as a principle of civilization. However, the dangers of economies of scale have now been apprehended, as have the proletarian delusions of mass franchise and the everyday attrition being visited on Western society as a whole.

And so, the silent fulcrum of Burkean time spreading experience into an impossible continuity becomes Eliot's 'still point of the turning world': history is meaningless without access to time's 'outside', which is visible in traces in poetic form, but which themselves never add up to the possibility of a socially active writing.³¹ The eternal is immanent in the flux of actions (like Lawrence's 'Life' in Leavis), but it is pointless to look at the flux for meaning precisely because it is active, as had been Arnold's 'rush and roar' of events.³² So in 'Burnt Norton', although people do in a sense 'inhabit' time, experience can never be measured according to any temporality which is historical,³³ or which for Eliot is lost to the 'metalled ways' of the timepiece.³⁴ The self-deception in trying to register historical experience is imaged in 'Burnt Norton' in the need to counter the song of the tempting thrush, whose decadent stimulus is a distraction from the authority of the undeceiving bird offering moments of privileged epiphany, even if these moments only serve to remind us that experience is outside of historical time.³⁵ The twittering of the thrush in Eliot, like the twittering of mass advertising in the Leavises, can then only gesture towards a more mature and moral management of the linguistic order.

Of course, there is a degree of ambivalence in the Leavises' and Eliot's Diceyan calls for perpetual permanence: relentlessly modernist in terms of their adaptation, they are also, like the discipline itself, incurably elegiac over the loss of organic order – an order which has always already been lost, just as within Britain England itself had always already been lost.³⁶ Their fascination with the registration of the everyday as they understand it is picked up by Jed Esty's persuasive link to the later, left-leaning, and more determinedly 'everyday' movement surrounding figures like Richard Hoggart and E. P. Thompson.³⁷ On some level both periods' 'Englishes' show the marks of what would later be called Cultural Studies – albeit more wilfully in the latter case. Esty argues therefore that the two periods form part of a longer and ambivalent movement of English: '[m]odernism's nativist and culturalist turn represents the first part of the decolonizing dialectic in which the tropes and modes of colonial knowledge came home to roost at the end of empire'.³⁸

The organicism revived in the 1920s–30s can indeed be seen as provoking a popular ‘national’ thinking and a return to a concern with a ‘way of life’ to be taken up and politically reworked later by Cultural Studies, for Esty a ‘second-order universalism based on English cultural integrity’.³⁹ This model is persuasive, but not without problems, not least that Esty’s ‘shrinking’ England imagines a constitutionally solid political body through all the phases of empire, whereas what characterizes the informal constitution is precisely its need, using phantasmic images of England in empire, to cohere across incommensurate sovereignty forms. We can certainly see, though, the constitutional conservative modernism trailblazed by Leavis, Eliot, Woolf, and others in the 1920s and ’30s, as being taken up by state cultural agencies after 1940–2, a quasi-revolution which would in turn be seen as at best incomplete, at worst duplicitous, by constitutional sceptics from the end of the 1950s (particularly the New Left), after which the difficulty of overturning the established franchise was sometimes perceived as something like a neo-Jacobin problem.⁴⁰

To the Leavises’ version of modernization should be added the closely related, and in many ways more powerful, disciplining force of John Reith’s BBC.⁴¹ From its inception in 1922, a year after the Newbolt Report, the BBC acted as an agent of ‘discursive’ state censorship or literacy management, working along similar informal lines of allegiance, understood in terms of continuity and exemplary language, and investing in a patrician and Seeleyan vision of the cultural value of the Anglosphere. Traditionally taking many of its staff from Arts and Humanities departments of ancient universities, from the outset the BBC’s outlook was realist in Leavis’s sense of being empiricist and moral, and relied on a version of the transparent, disinterested ideal running through Coleridge and Arnold. Always open to technological modification, the BBC’s method nevertheless still belongs in this tradition of the clerisy, or, in the post-1942 term which made the progressive elite generally acceptable, the meritocracy.

The Corporation’s unifying role can still be seen clearly today on prime-time slots in the predominance of phrases like ‘throughout the nation’ and ‘the UK as a nation’, to a degree quite disproportionate to how people experience their own nationality.⁴² And this is underscored in the way that, as in the public of public transport, the organization still often claims public status despite all evidence to the contrary – charging for use and making an opt-out de facto compulsory, adopting aggressive outsourced tactics for collection, and

holding on to an entirely unaccountable managerial structure. For almost a century the Corporation has in various forms represented the perennial needs of constitutional culture, as well promoting Standard English broadly in line with the ideas of Leavisite modernism. (It would later partially forgive 'regional accents' – under the sign of multiculturalism – as acceptable deviations from an assumed default, repeating for a mass audience the sociolinguistic fantasy that the ideal dialect is without place, just as the British national is somehow beyond nationalism.)

Growing rapidly from 1922, the BBC began simultaneous broadcasting the following year, a move readable in terms of Benedict Anderson's celebrated description of national unification through the shared time of mass media – mere newspapers, in Anderson's account – to become one of the world's great state-unifying media, and the UK's most important hedge against popular sovereignty.⁴³ The service covered most of the mainland by the end of the decade, and by the late 1930s was describing the need to reinvent the empire as an extended family, as a 'multinational', monarchical, Commonwealth 'community of British listeners', via numerous anthropological documentations of empire including *Edges of the World*, *Gordon of Khartoum*, *Responsibilities of Empire*, *Lines on the Map*, and *Brush Up Your Empire*, as well as Empire Day celebrations and Royal anniversaries, and a stream of Edwardian dramatic adaptations.⁴⁴ The constitutional order here remained one of centrifugal cultural dissipation counterweighed by centralization – and, as in English Literature, a largely imaginary England was still the default centre for the BBC's global family: on Empire Day 1924, for example, England fulsomely summoned Scotland, Ireland, and Wales to join the celebrations (much as it did during the first sequences of the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics, near the Greenwich Meridian). In the same year, the Wembley Empire Exhibition speeches and the direct address of King George V solidified the understanding between monarch-in-parliament and state broadcaster.⁴⁵

The BBC's strong ideological alignment of 'nation', monarch, empire, and commonwealth therefore itself had an important modernizing function in bolstering the whig constitution. Set up in the same year as the Irish Free State, the Corporation stressed a combination of discrete ethno-nationalities for constituent regions *plus* enthusiastic participation in commonwealth – meaning that it could incorporate and foreclose not only Diceyan worries over Ireland but also Home Rule claims which sometimes shaded into the

Marxist, and which linked to the Miners' and 1926 General Strikes in the Scottish Literary Renaissance of 1925–35 (and thus the argument, still sometimes used, that Scottish nationalism is a product of British civility).⁴⁶ Moreover, the premonition of war throughout the late 1930s accelerated the BBC's constitutional mission:⁴⁷ for a few years before 1940, popular fiction and film explicitly recalled the 1790s in imagining foreign attacks, this time on London from the air, most famously in dramatization of the vision of H. G. Wells, but also in the kind of propaganda film in which the BBC took an increasing stake.⁴⁸

For example the J. B. Priestley-narrated *Britain at Bay* (1940) put protection of the homeland to the soundtrack of a patriotic poetic canon,⁴⁹ and Priestley's series of BBC talks *Postscripts* (1940) stressed the natural ascendancy of a way of life and described its armed forces as having a 'conscious, social purpose'.⁵⁰ English Literature heritage was also pressed into service by the Crown Film Unit, with Humphrey Jennings's *Words for Battle* (1941) tracing a line through Browning and Kipling.⁵¹ And the Ministry of Information which ran state propaganda operations was headed by Reith from January to May 1940, and as Robert Mackay has shown, took on wide powers to regulate information.⁵² The unifying role of the Blitz has been much debated since, but the familiar spectre of illiberal European 'systems' certainly proved a springboard for the BBC to rapidly expand and to represent a modernized version of anti-formal homeliness.⁵³ Parliamentary sovereignty could then by cultural means become more durable than the governments of European systems (and it is hard not to call to terms the Diceyan contrast with French *droit administratif* in this case).⁵⁴ The propaganda function of the BBC's remaking of the public was widely understood by the establishment: in 1937 in 'Art and the State', Keynes argues that the Corporation should remain centralized and under direct control of the government, rather than becoming an optional or subscription service.⁵⁵ (Though as it happens, in the same Clough William-Ellis-edited collection, H. J. Massingham, an important but largely forgotten radical ecologist, draws on Richard Tawney to note that the enclosures, with their reduced conception of enfranchisement and their binding to British governance through the upper chamber, ruined the nation as they made the empire:⁵⁶ '[i]t was the landowner, not the villager, who profited by the Napoleonic wars'.)⁵⁷

So although the early motifs of monarch, empire, and ideal-universal England had already represented an obvious form of 'homing' for the BBC,

the Second World War further ‘domesticated’ its role, as well as allowing for amalgamation with organizations including the British Council, set up in 1934.⁵⁸ Originally addressing those affected by the Blitz, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts was merged with the Board of Education in 1942, to be chaired by the Keynes who had seen the BBC as a key organ of state.⁵⁹ During the war the BBC doubled its staff, and, as Jörn Weingärtner has argued, the consolidation of arts agencies made a modern unified British cultural policy possible.⁶⁰ The early BBC’s somewhat Arnoldian status as sovereignty insurance also saw its board of governors being appointed directly by the prime minister, a condition later defended by Reith, who also steered the BBC’s monopoly through the report of the Beveridge Committee on Broadcasting (1949) to cover the iconic moment of the Queen’s coronation in 1953. And the entirely closed and business-oriented status of BBC guardians which grew in the early welfare state remains in place today, though this is more or less unregistered among those who still describe the organization as public.⁶¹

From the late 1930s then the BBC further honed its modernized policy of centralization plus regionalization, and the suspension of the autonomy of regional networks during the war rationalized the presentation of a national-multinational family of peoples, a situation which remains in today’s near-compulsory use of British terms even when referring to England, as still often happens to highly misleading effect with education.⁶² Reith’s broadcasting devolution helped solidify the linguistic and universalizing ‘nation’ – British nationalism pumped into living rooms *en masse* through the perpetual Seeleyan recreation of the peripheries as discrete but conjoined: so as Thomas Hajkowski puts it, ‘the BBC, perhaps the most powerful institution for the dissemination of information and entertainment in Scotland, constructed a powerful sense of “Scottishness” through its organizational structure, policy, and programs’ (especially true after the Westerglen transmitter, 1932), a situation which ‘allowed BBC Scotland to foster a [British] sense of Scottish national identity for its listeners’.⁶³ A diffuse BBC could then unfold its mission of a modernized, diversified form of consensus,⁶⁴ ideally plurinational and yet itself ‘invisibly’ national, and increasingly ‘progressive’, enclosed, and bureaucratic.⁶⁵ The BBC also understood that the participation of the imperial territories in the war underscored the single temporality of the universalist constitution – and the United States’s dark hints about the outmodedness of empire were duly met

by a Diceyan-Reithian projection of empire as responsibility or patronage, and the post-Beveridge (1942) Report rapprochement of imperialism, business, and a parliamentary 'state socialism'.⁶⁶

Modernized English Literature remained a unifying central thread for the Corporation: the Newbolt Report-inspired 'BBC English' is an obvious example, becoming a sociolinguistic phenomenon unto itself. But so also is the fixed identitarian sovereignty which fed into the consensual era, which again has retained a deeply entrenched presentation of shared constitutional culture, such that, typically, the BBC either simplifies constitutional debate out of the picture (it is a problem for Scottish Nationalists, and often tied up with the personal ambitions of the leader of one of their political parties), or it channels participation into a consumer democracy, at its worst a quasi-interactive control feedback in shows like the 'National' Lottery.⁶⁷ As has often been noted, the tightening spiral between what would become known as reality TV and 'news itself' is itself a form of realism which exists alongside but never touches personal experience, the impossible time of the spectral train taking over the whole horizon of understanding.⁶⁸ As suggested above, standing out in this realism is its centrality to the Tripes English for which *Robinson Crusoe* was the first novel and *Middlemarch* the most central. The state broadcaster's 'social mission' is also the mission of English Literature – as was accepted by the Reithian ideal which found its greatest opportunities with the large-scale state intervention of the turn of the 1940s.

If these two British modernist movements shared a liberal-conservative and Romantic commitment to tradition adapted to the prevailing sovereignty form, the same was true of the last leg of the modern triad, the state adaptation of Keynesian economics. Like the BBC, state-Keynesianism found its moment with the start of the Second World War, when government money ('public funds') was made available on an unprecedented scale. As many have pointed out, Keynes's work itself, with scattered hankerings for a post-capitalist future, often differs from the state-Keynesianism which would follow it – and yet, there are many qualities common to both. Along with a desire to ameliorate the damage caused by market cycles and so to formulate an apologia for state-capitalism, Keynes shows strong support for a whig sovereignty model increasingly reliant on credit markets as a unifying mechanism. And credit is canonicity: the two are faces of the same coin of temporal alienation, as concretized in the Burke for whom experience and

history were mutually exclusive. It is perhaps not surprising that Keynes's undergraduate prize essay of 1904 describes Burke's 'political wisdom' in supporting anti-formal policy.⁶⁹

Keynes's key modernist work, the *Treatise on Money* (1930), correspondingly echoes the constitutional demand to reform-and-retrench, asking for a revision, rather than a rewriting, of the agreement between the 'living' and the 'dead', and stressing that contractual fundamentalism can only lead to revolution.⁷⁰ Although the *Treatise* underscores government power in control over money flow, enterprise, and consumption, this does not simply mean that Keynes supported more spending (or more *public* spending) – rather, the normalization of 'national' credit after the Depression had the effect of confirming consensus.⁷¹ Despite Keynes's apparent damascene journey towards responsible investment as described by Robert Skidelsky and others, even for the post-Depression Keynes, government-supported credit-based markets are still a basis of the civilized life, and are often projected through a subject understood in terms of consumption – so that in some ways, as has occasionally been suggested, this most British figure might be seen as the first neoliberal.⁷² Neoliberalism may only commonly have taken on its name after the 1970s crisis and radical right, but a turn of the lens reveals it to be readable as the result of a state-capitalist constitutional modernization of the inter-war years – as taken on by Labour progressives after the Blitz.

Keynes's demand to invest 'nationally' was also underlined by a pull away from gold towards a fiat currency whose debt levels were newly subject to government control. So his *General Theory* (1936) discourages 'holding' money while encouraging 'a large extension of the traditional functions of government'.⁷³ A 'national' struggle for cheap money then becomes an ethical duty, and Keynes's attacks on Churchill's return to gold from 1925 onwards can be seen as criticizing not only the exchange rate at the point of entry, as has usually been assumed – and a criticism vindicated in terms of the British industrial relations which led to the Miners' Strike – but also of the demand for fiat currency as modernized national power, with any resort to the explicit functions of state described by Keynes in Arnoldian terms as barbarous.⁷⁴

Although conscientiously progressive, Keynes, hedge fund manager for the Bloomsbury literati,⁷⁵ also showed a prescient concern with 'risk management' – and not only in the way usually assumed, in the insight that no economic circumstance is finally decidable, but also in the authoritative

way which has much in common with neoliberalism. His early *Treatise on Probability* (1921) at one point distinguishes propositions from events, the former imagined to exist independently from their context⁷⁶ – something of a standard in Keynes's Cambridge, at the time of early university English: the context-free proposition could exist on its own, allowing for a presentation of ideological truths as if they had arisen from nature (the 'unfortunately' clause which adorns almost every business letter in the neoliberal era).⁷⁷ Keynes's radicalism in stressing the ultimate uncertainty of markets is now widely appreciated,⁷⁸ but this disguises the way that information control would also become a key principle of modern government, yielding the ability to legislate over mass debt. Keynes claims that markets are bound to elements that are finally unknowable – and yet, access to experience would be the means by which to measure power, a combination which recalls the combination of positivism and metaphysics we have seen in constitutional culture from Coleridge to Dicey.⁷⁹

Although, as Robert Skidelsky rightly notes, Keynes's own economic morality never looked anything like Tory self-interest,⁸⁰ and there were indeed scattered hints of the post-capitalist 'good life', state-Keynesianism nevertheless paved the way for the strengthening of sovereignty in the name of progressive credit management.⁸¹ Despite the aim of 'public' spending during recession, Keynes's claim of unknowable outcomes involves two related sovereignty problems: first, this unknowability in large part belongs with an alienation from the present which takes its place in a whig lineage going right back to Burke; or, maintenance and management of markets acts as another sovereignty hedge. Second, the spending described is only problematically public, since, as we have seen, the public as commons is precisely what is subsumed by the para-national, financial structure of the British state – into whose service Keynesian economics was comfortably drawn after 1940–1.

Although Keynesianism only really took hold as an orthodoxy from the turn of the 1940s, when the executive could draw on the whole financial resources of the government, state-capitalists had already recognized the 'national'-authoritarian potential of Keynesian economics since the 1929–30 Depression and the *Treatise*. The naturalization of debt used to mould the business cycle can be seen as a modernization of Burkean time just as much as can Leavisism or the BBC, alienating experience and forcing a perpetual 'lateness' to personal action – magnified in an environment in which the financial City of London increasingly took on the macroeconomic burden.

Credit money made normative at state level helps bind the population to constitutional culture: the apparent necessity of financial growth means that 'national' inflation and deficit can be described in Burkean-Wordsworthian terms as a natural balance.⁸²

The sovereignty power of this modernised state binding helps explain why ideas leading to the *Treatise* were seized on by state socialists in the Labour Party, in which realm they remain popular today. Oswald Mosley's pamphlet *Revolution by Reason* (1925),⁸³ published before he left Labour to found the British Union of Fascists, represents one of the earliest calls to apply Keynes's 'nationalizing' ideas – and one of the earliest and most embarrassing recognitions of their totalizing potential – praising the acceptance of fiat debt and inflation as a corollary of submission to the state.⁸⁴ And as Christopher Harvie has suggested, Keynesian centralization belongs to a wider economic centralization of the post-Depression years, an assumption of unitary authority which would pass through G. M. Young's *Early-Victorian England: The Portrait of an Age* (1932) and Joseph Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942).⁸⁵ State-Keynesianism not only pioneered the presentation of the organs of the welfare state as public bodies even as the constitution was held out of reach, it also fed into a Croslandite acceptance of corporate capital management as streamlined or franchised by government policy, becoming the economic common sense of the Labour Party's amplification of parliamentary sovereignty.⁸⁶

The latest, and still more or less living, incarnation of the everyday acceptance of indebtedness to the state as a condition of the 'public' might then be traced through the consensual era of the 1940s to the combination of over-leveraging and surveillance which characterized the 2000s.⁸⁷ This modern economics is about as 'disinterested' as is modern English, and also takes up an ideal managerial place imagined to be beyond political bias, a 'science' of economics or ecocracy which would be accepted even right up to and through the noughties crash.⁸⁸ The 'national' ecocracy should be seen relative to Keynes's struggle to leave gold,⁸⁹ to some an ethical protection from global financial storms – but also a 'nationalization of finance' which has been widely understood as fantasizing a new British global hegemony after the high era of empire.⁹⁰

So, retrospective looks at the Golden Age of welfarism from the 1940s to 1970s might do well to remember the underscoring of sovereignty it revived, and the ideological promotion of indebtedness which kept action

out of reach. The consensual post-war settlement was levelling in a sense, but in another it underscored the possibility of a perpetual procrastination of a democratic reckoning, and the cross-translation between imperial cultural debt (the canon) and personal financial debt. But, helped by the memory of shared struggle in war, state-Keynsianism helped give rise to an ideology of the public so powerful that even today criticism of it is more or less taboo on the British left, however attenuated that public becomes. Correspondingly, although from the 1940s to the 1960 some kind of public sector ethos grew, the new public was only likely have a cosmetic effect on the makeup of the Establishment, and came at the price of making constitutional change unthinkable.⁹¹ Nikolas Rose's Foucauldian account of the post-war years extensively describes the 1940s disciplining of the whole person's experience – leisure as well as work – in terms of labour and consumption.⁹² Sceptical thinking of the 1950s–70s confirms that as the official ideal of shared service grew, those who had public services acting in their name in fact had a decreasing understanding of the aims of those organizations, or of who managed them – as is registered by the New Left and the nascent discipline of Cultural Studies.⁹³ The modern form of citizenship-as-debt demanded a simultaneous continuous inflation of the economy and contraction of imperial markets, or stagflation.

Although a stagflationary Britain was famously acknowledged in James Callaghan's 1976 Labour Conference speech, delivered with the IMF gun to his head,⁹⁴ the career from Lockean money and Hanoverian succession suggests that 'empty', credit-based growth and imperial markets have gone hand in hand ever since the establishment of unified credit at the end of the seventeenth century. However, this may only have reached crisis when empire then Union were thrown back on themselves, the moment with whose fallout we are now living. As uncomfortable as it may be for the British left, the 1951–73 Golden Age which brought real socioeconomic advances also represented a final reinvention of the sovereignty power of a 'clerical' political class, or meritocracy, who magnified the old British standard of perpetual alienation through debt.⁹⁵ The welfare-consensual Golden Age is indeed foreseen as the 'Golden Country' in which Orwell's Winston Smith is promised a meeting with Inner Party member O'Brien – a land of plenty and total state control.

That is, the state-Keynesian idea of growth, as much as the civilizing mission of liberal-conservative literary criticism, helped underscore a modernized constitutional culture after 1942, just as the threat of European

invasion which gave the government sudden new scope made parallel the 'states of emergency' of 1939–45 and 1789–1815. Understood through Burke as an alienation of experience, debt (as 'public spending') could now be presented as a 'national' good even despite its anti-commons and anti-national implications (and, for that matter, Keynes's own personal concerns about inflation). Of course, despite the prevailing wisdom promoted by the media, state spending and public spending are not the same thing, and it was surely difficult to miss this in the 2008 panic, which emptied out a huge amount of 'public funds' into those institutions with the least public interest – banks. The year 2008 forced state-Keynesianism to declare itself outright, threatening a constitutional 'train crash' as the government had to be seen to step in to guarantee profit for unproductive markets in the name of stability – so that what British capitalism had called *risk* was seen to have been always informally but determinedly managed.

The moment of state-Keynesianism has been a difficult one to pass: from the Golden Age right through to the present, it has been common for Labour think tanks to argue for the public good of state services whose status as public bodies is plainly defunct.⁹⁶ In Keynesian Britain, markets may seem to have accepted the uncertainties concerning rational expectations, but the state always manages the correctives which allow markets to 'work'. In contrast to the Marxian description of crises of markets as threatening the integrity of the state, state-Keynesianism understood the role of 'public' investment as guaranteeing the state's continuant authority. So in his post-2008 autopsy of the banking crisis, Andrew Gamble bypasses the hoary Golden Age assumptions of a British Keynesian left, to find overlaps in the Marxian and Austrian analyses usually held to have defined opposite attitudes in the twentieth century – but which both regard market collapses as phenomena which do not merit support by public debt for the ideological needs of the executive.⁹⁷ In whig Britain, indebtedness to the state has been the price for what the *General Theory* called a 'permanent quasi-boom',⁹⁸ causing a perpetual thinning-out of national services understood in terms of shared ownership.⁹⁹ So rather than presenting political stability as a necessary condition for economic growth, on the contrary the *performance* of economic growth has been seen to have become a condition for political stability.¹⁰⁰

It is not surprising then that, as Chris Thornhill describes, the period after the Second World War also saw a falling off of contextual studies

of constitutions, as the economic settlement once more demanded that the informal codification of franchise be taken for granted.¹⁰¹ Certainly, the modernized informal influences as they inflected on the welfare state fed into a ‘constitutional Keynesianism’, perhaps most signally seen in Ivor Jennings, sometimes imagined to be a maverick in opposing Dicey’s subjection of discretionary powers in the name of a mandarin class.¹⁰² Jennings’s 1941 *The British Constitution* describes a modernized and strengthened parliamentary sovereignty, idealizing what it sees as more participation in an expanded franchise now incorporating a sophisticated balancing rationale.¹⁰³ This description of course begs the question of how successfully parliamentary sovereignty really does transmit personal desires, which have to pass through the media-driven and backward machinery of British elections.

Jennings’s 1941 commentary might moreover be seen as offering an apologia for a managerial class ameliorating the parliamentary prerogative over law, as well as a modernized gloss on, rather than a criticism of, a Diceyan ‘constitutional morality’ which further clears the road for a clerical bureaucracy acting in terms of a precedent now spread throughout the whole of social life.¹⁰⁴ The assumption of universal mandate through informal routes expressed less by the Diceyan general will than the established vicissitudes of psephology and identity, and the victory of the circularity of precedent as the everyday, meant that for Lord Atkin in 1962 *Common Law*, the everyday self-disciplining at work throughout Anglo-Britain could be seen as acting in a way which was more executive than the executive itself.¹⁰⁵ The whiggish crypto-Diceyanism of Jennings then sets a tone for the post-war constitutional wisdom of state socialism, especially in his progressive faith in British public services, as well as for a belief in psephology and electoral processes as the master-discourses of political participation – and the assumption as natural, if eccentric and imperfect, of the signs of an evolving system of representation. The insistence on received psephology as politics can of course be seen as a near ancestor of the Moreno question for national identity (do you feel more x than y?), a narrow invitation to self-ownership which still appeals to many positivist Political Scientists. For Jennings, as for the long line of conservative whigs before him, the alienated British form of parliamentary sovereignty is to be celebrated as the best possible because it is anti-formal, gesturing back to Seeleyan culture, and helping explain why even during the war, Churchill was signalling a move back towards ‘Oceanic’

thinking, famously declaring a preference for the culture of the 'open sea' over Europe to French allies during key campaigns.¹⁰⁶

And despite nominal criticisms of Dicey on the reach of law, Jennings's influential sense of 'public opinion' is Diceyan in its reliance on an ability to adapt to an ideal shared opinion, and so to be 'flexible'.¹⁰⁷ Perpetual evolution, and perpetual expansion of the legislative or bureaucratic class is imagined to make parliamentary procedure ever more democratic – though Jennings does recognize that corporations blur the boundaries between government and enterprise – as in the BBC.¹⁰⁸ Still, some form of 'public opinion', in the spirit of Coleridge and Mill, creates an overall balance outweighing any slight corrective which might be provided by a written constitution.¹⁰⁹ Inconsistencies are to be evened out by checks and balances, and MPs will tend to be trustworthy since they are only modestly remunerated (though this misses both the privilege of the amateur patrician and the social capital allowed to the aspiring careerist).¹¹⁰ 'Public opinion' then guarantees that parties do not correspond to social class even and especially through the co-opting of 'labour'. For Jennings, even the Lords are in touch with the 'spirit' of the law.¹¹¹

But by 2007 (a key year for sovereignty debates, since it saw a nationalist minority government in Edinburgh overlap with the onset of financial crisis), the constitutional commentator Anthony King felt able to look back on the era of Jennings (and Harold Laski) to suggest that a result of the consensual era had been a 'power-hoarding constitution' based on 'pathological adversarialism'.¹¹² A 'total' version of the constitution had left itself able only to argue over changes which *forestalled* general overhaul,¹¹³ so that constitutional change, like the over-specialized Humanities, could only ever be particularist and technical rather than general and critical, and so unable to question the bases of its own legitimacy. For King devolution, in part arising through the appearance of stagflation in the mid-1970s, really did bring rapid constitutional change, but only in an 'invisible' sense aiming to present itself as a perpetual gradualism.¹¹⁴ The train crash would never be seen under present constitutional conditions, under the watch of reformist Labour.

King's account, like others of the time, allows for a historicization of the era dominated by Jennings's modernized consensual evolution,¹¹⁵ suggesting that, rather than fundamentally threatening the Diceyan constitution, a greater bureaucratic machinery could absorb and neutralize action within

parliamentary contest, as parties occupied the entire field of the political, competing for the progressive ground.¹¹⁶ Coupled with the palliative consumerism of the ‘permanent semi-boom’, the Jennings constitution then allowed for the emergence of ‘catch-all’ political parties whose power lay in marketing specific policies at specific groups, a model similar to that described at about the same time by Karl Polanyi and Joseph Schumpeter.¹¹⁷ The 1940s reincarnation of ideal disinterestedness then aimed to produce an ‘elite of clever and disinterested public servants’, a Croslandite consensus critiqued then as now by writers like David Marquand as a *rebranding* of public services which remained carefully separate from popular experience.¹¹⁸

The early 1940s settlement might also, King implies, be seen as one for which the ideal of democracy loses any referent outside of itself, which is dedicated solely to perpetual reinvention, as parties become ever more pragmatic in marketing carefully targeted promises.¹¹⁹ Parliamentary sovereignty then becomes streamlined to the channelling of public opinion as the rational distillation of self-actualizing wants, and audit culture becomes ascendant, as seen in a saturation of public culture with accountability, further alienating experience through maintenance of labour.¹²⁰ The ideal of transparency helps present power as naturally evolving, and the need to maintain informal checks-and-balances over written rights is confirmed by the faux mandate of elections, which take up an inordinate proportion of ‘British culture’. In this sense, neither the apparent failings of post-war Labour, nor the apparent deviations of New Labour, as it was apologetically described, are that surprising, as labour-based sovereignty itself is perceived as conservative and as having to perpetually re-invent itself in commodity terms to placate aspiration.¹²¹ And Jennings himself notes that the party term ‘Conservative’ was only adopted over ‘Tory’ at an apparent conclusion to class standoff to express reaction to threats to the continuity of parliamentary sovereignty – ‘apparently by way of a consensus of opinion, to indicate that the British Constitution was in danger from the Reformers and had to be conserved or protected’.¹²²

And yet from only a decade and a half after the new consensus there were formidable counter-currents to this straitened and modernized British culture, for multiple reasons including the difficulties of maintaining superstates (both of the Seeleyan-Oceanic and the post-Hungarian Soviet type, the latter till then still looked on fondly by much of the British left), and the effects of new forms of stratification within education, particularly

as working-class writers were projected into hostile elites. In the meritocracy of the post-war era, the latter-day incarnation of the Coleridge-to-Richards ideal of the disinterested and the examinable, the scholarship student would often rise to join an Arts or Humanities environment in an ancient university whose canonicity had been built to exclude him (for the scholarship child is almost always imaged as a boy), problematizing the terms of franchise assumed by consensual Britain.

Expanding this critique into the terms of literary form, Raymond Williams's 'social realism' experienced something of a revival at the end of the 1950s over the 'psychological realism' associated with positivist continuity, and the welfare state was seen as partly addressing but also partly reproducing the class divisions glossed by Leavisism. The resultant critique, of course, would grow into the counter-discipline of Cultural Studies, which has remained a thorn in the side of English Literature ever since. Williams's *Culture and Society* is one of the most iconic interventions of a kind rising through the *Universities and Left Review* then *New Left Review*, an environment which effectively linked 1790s Jacobinism to a counter-consensual democratic critique.¹²³ Cultural Studies has continued to oddly echo and distort the English Literature department, which emerged from within Classics in the 1910s. As a subject Cultural Studies has remained pointedly difficult to market as a 'hard' one in neoliberal terms, and is one of the subjects present-day conservatives are most keen to see disappear – particularly since it encourages the analysis of everyday processes rather than transmitting ahistorical heritage.

Correspondingly, underlining the way a challenge to constitutional culture is also a challenge to the sovereignty of English Literature, Williams describes the history of the term *culture* as more or less coincident with that of the term *democracy*, both coming into common English use only during the era of revolutions and worker concentration, the Burkean era of the end of the eighteenth century.¹²⁴ As was often hinted by New Left writers, since culture, unlike heritage, demands a registration of everyday experience, on a structural level it represents a disciplinary and political challenge to canonical or Leavisite English. Williams's reading of Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), which described working-class material while warning about a narrowing of affective experience under consensual conditions,¹²⁵ suggests how the heritage of parliamentary sovereignty continues to stand against democracy in principle, and looks somewhat shocking in a time of expanding consumer power.¹²⁶

Williams similarly teases out the terms of Leavis's *Mass Civilization and Minority Culture* and Leavis and Denys Thompson's *Culture and Environment*, as misleadingly conflating culture (historical, active) and civilization (ahistorical, reactive), in a way which mirrors Burke's distinction between revolution (1789) and restoration (1688). English Literature had been continuously managing this slippage via the modern form of clerisy, surviving as the 'appreciation' of classics by a 'zealous reforming minority' still bound to inheritance on fundamental levels.¹²⁷ But counter-currents would then aim at the 'process of revaluation of the inherited tradition',¹²⁸ or, as we might put it now, another way of reading after English. Williams's *The Long Revolution* (1961) moved further towards a shared understanding of the experience eclipsed by English – and Williams's account would be reprinted in 2011 to follow the student and Occupy protests, which (as I will suggest) amplified scepticism over parliamentary authenticity or canonicity.¹²⁹ In this book Williams extends his critique of the ascendancy of the social-realist over the psychological-realist in the canonical story of English:¹³⁰ Where psychological realism, ascendant in the Leavisite remaking of the canon, had concerned itself with tracing the individual character onto lateral and intuitive (Burkean) bonds, the post-consensual moment showed a new social-realist registration of experience – and the period 1956–63 would indeed see an explosion of social-realist fiction and film.¹³¹

A recursion of experience beyond the psychological and organicist realism which had risen in the long nineteenth century and had been underlined by inter-war British constitutional culture was then in Williams and the New Left intermittently perceived as open to territorialization, de-enclosure, or formal registration.¹³² The modernized British constitution, beholden to an 'appraisal culture' now lacking a global reach for its markets, would struggle to answer the question of territorialization and provincialized power (and it is also worth mentioning the abandonment of the British Blue Streak for the American Skybolt nuclear missile system in April 1960, the year before the publication of *The Long Revolution*).¹³³ It was increasingly suggested around the turn of the 1960s that the consensual mixed economy had left parliamentary sovereignty stronger, and so popular sovereignty weaker.¹³⁴ In sovereignty terms, the early Thatcherites of two decades later have a case as inheritors of this radicalism: state-capitalism presented as a public good was the target of libertarian Tories from the mid-1970s, albeit with no time for the public at all, far less the commons (though with dialectically

productive results, since visible splits in the consensual constitution allowed for a recursion of everyday experience as a constitutional principle, and, of course, led to the recursion of popular sovereignty in Scotland). Thatcher's own stated economics praised the 'real' Keynes who argued for the correction of markets in a low-interest low-inflation economy over the state overwhelming of markets – not the Keynes claimed by Labour as promoting 'public' investment or long-term ethical investments which he conceived, as Skidelsky puts it accidentally connoting devolution metaphors, as a 'marriage', but the Keynes of rational self-maximization and property rights, a prophet of public choice theory and shareholder sovereignty.¹³⁵

And alongside the critiques of Raymond Williams working in and against English should be laid Karl Polanyi's classic *The Great Transformation* (1944), a book which appeared only three years after Jennings and offered a withering critique of post-war 'constitutional Keynesianism'¹³⁶ – although Polanyi was rarely taken up by 1950s and '60s New Left accounts. This is slightly surprising given Polanyi's concentration on British economy in the period after the Burkean whig victory, 1795–1834, a period which saw the full establishment of an anti-formalist market system using choice as an ideological cover. Polanyi's account of course can also be seen as describing the inception of what would become known as neoliberalism – and it must be seen within the time-frame of its publication, as state-Keynesianism was strengthening the informal constitution much as had the anti-Jacobin literati of the 1790s–1810s.

Just as Polanyi traced the sovereign dispossession in the informal British constitution,¹³⁷ so also 1940s 'state neoliberalism' can be seen as the survival at all costs of anti-Jacobin constitutional culture, and as the inheritor of the parliamentary sovereignty of the line through Burke, Coleridge, Mill, Arnold, Dicey, Leavis, Reith, and Jennings. Polanyi also duly stresses the expansion of credit markets in the 'modernizing' 1920s – something of which Keynes was aware, but which he refused to declare as a disenfranchisement, even while it normalized the state's management of debt. So for Polanyi, 'with the failure of the credit system in the 1920s, the almost forgotten issues of early capitalism reappeared. First and foremost among them stood that of popular government'.¹³⁸ The resulting slide towards neoliberalism and post-democracy relied on the constitutional conservatism built into the modernist redefinition of the organic – and it is telling that Polanyi's example of the British answer to European fascism is that Leavisite cornerstone,

D. H. Lawrence's 'erotic vitalism', a link that Polanyi makes independent of any reference to literary criticism.¹³⁹

So in a new era of high consensus, Britain was seen by Polanyi as having pioneered a type of 'national' public described purely in market terms sponsored by a narrowly instrumental state, a 'transformed' freedom for which

[s]overeignty, of course, was a purely political term . . . [Governments] neither could nor would bind their countries in respect to monetary matters – this was the legal position. Actually, only countries which possessed a monetary system controlled by central banks were reckoned sovereign states.¹⁴⁰

This binding of sovereignty and central banks, as seen in the modernized Keynesian 'moral' fiat currency, again demands the alienating acceptance of the state distribution of debt. So for Polanyi the state's spread of a market economy demands micro-power as a conduit for a simultaneous managerial devolution and centralization: '[f]or however generously devolution of power is practical, there will be strengthening of power at the center, and, therefore, no individual freedom'.¹⁴¹

A comparable diagnosis of the post-imperial managerial malaise would appear six years after this in Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), a book also concerned with the post-war management of franchise – and particularly, in this case, with the fallout of Britain's (Seeleyan) tendency to describe empire as national: for Arendt the projection of a universalized constitutional culture causes an attrition of *both* state and nation, since the former is unable to accommodate shared action and the latter is robbed of affective civil society and opened to unlimited bureaucratization.¹⁴² Arendt's book, like Polanyi's, has travelled far, but was also quite specific to its 1940s–50s British environment, appearing at the height of the welfare-consensual push and just after the Orwellian description of the perpetual performance of a bureaucratic anti-revolutionary revolution.¹⁴³

By the time the neoliberal era was being widely critiqued *as neoliberal* in the 1990s and 2000s, there were already signs of a return to Polanyi (whether avowed or otherwise), in a broad range of writers including Andrew Gamble, Colin Crouch, and David Marquand. Consumer sovereignty had been worried over since the new Oceanic turn which saw a nascent Reaganomics

coincide with the Centre for Policy Studies in the UK: Richard Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man* (1977), for example, describes how individualist terms were easily imposed on consensus,¹⁴⁴ and apparently shared goals converted to mass individuation, or celebrity realism.¹⁴⁵ By the 2000s the British Polanyian concentration had become broader and angrier, and was often describing, even before 2008, a Marxian Polanyi's account of a privatization of social thought – often ranged *against* state-Keynsianism, whether in strong (Marquand) or mild (Crouch) form. So in *The Decline of the Public* (2004), Marquand, a veteran of the New Left, historicizes the neoliberal 'renewal' of democracy, and carefully distinguishes between the public domain – in which audited outcomes can be made transparent, empty of content, and open to bureaucracy and surveillance – and the public sector, an open exchange without calculation of gain.¹⁴⁶ (The latter, of course, was precisely what was becoming untenable under the British sovereignty conditions of the 'explicitly' neoliberal era.)

The Polanyian turn of the early 2000s, parallel to and amplifying Sennett's flagging of a transatlantic turn to financial markets, is nevertheless also important to the recognition that the destruction of the public was not an entirely post-1970s phenomenon. Welfare consensus in the 1940s 'empowering' in economic terms, can now be read as disempowering in its rationalization of risk, as in a Keynesian management of unpredictability which feeds into the Anthony Giddens–Tony Blair moment.¹⁴⁷ The stakes were certainly raised in the mid-1970s, in part because of changing economies of franchise, for example the inability of 'naturally stagflationary' economies like Britain to deal with oil precarity, but also domestically because of the uncomfortable social implications surrounding the 1973 Kilbrandon Report on devolution and national self-determination, furthering the possibility of a sovereignty challenge.¹⁴⁸ (Also instructive for the new Polanyian turn, though, were changes in political contest over a 'national' London with the devolved Greater London Assembly election of 2000, readable in one sense as another coup d'état as the ruling Labour Party pressed their own choice of candidate to maintain an image of London as finance hub – a battle of 'two cities' whose literary-cultural implications have not yet been much recognized in the Humanities.)¹⁴⁹

And crucially for those who administer English as well as for those who are said to be required to draw 'skills' from it, as Marquand has stressed, the loss of an interpersonal or commons-based version of the public also

risks the loss of professionalism, since it spells the end of the possibility of judgements made independent of bureaucratic compulsion, and so a challenge to the Humanities' ability to take positions beyond those based on short-term reward. This also helps explain why 'hard' institutional English is in danger of repeating the Polanyian condition of government and turning towards customer choice as a public subject within a complex bureaucracy. With the attrition of professionalism and personal judgement, 'public' positions of responsibility have increasingly been taken by problem-solvers, a tendency which according to Marquand and others of the New Left has much in common with that other modern state-nation the Soviet Union, as critiqued by sovereignty sceptics after the 1956 invasion of Hungary.¹⁵⁰ The comparison of the *performance* of a public to late Soviet planning picked up the background feeling of the new Polanyian moment,¹⁵¹ and paralleled, in institutional English, the definition of 'impact' in terms of those projects which are most readily performable, even if they are often those with the least impact in popular terms.¹⁵²

However, where the dis-crediting of the state-bureaucratic model has been widely perceived after 2008, there have also been widespread hints at the creation of a newly common ethos.¹⁵³ An interpersonal commons is suggested not only by the long cultural history leading up to and through devolution, but also by the wave of discontent which has followed the failure of the financial model. And this coalescence of desires has remained largely unspoken because, as the Polanyian turn anticipated, the informal constitution has maintained the natural ascendancy of 'flexible' parliamentary bodies. So as Tom Nairn put it in 2011, although an investment in the public sector might have been useful to various countries struggling after the 2008 crisis, the same couldn't be said of a UK whose shared services had melted away.¹⁵⁴ The combination of expanded choice and contracted franchise is also critiqued in the Colin Crouch who asked in 2011 why neoliberalism had so stubbornly failed to make way, and stressed that neoliberals tended to be centralizers using local government as their (micropolitical) means.¹⁵⁵ The impulse towards combined choice and centralization allows sovereignty to be hoarded even as it appears to be shared, and 'market Keynesianism' leads to chains of *risk trading* – the simultaneous performance of growth and monopolization of the management of probability.¹⁵⁶ Since 2008, it has become clearer that in the British context the public and the private are both separated from *and* nested inside one another,¹⁵⁷ a disempowerment which

has through two centuries of constitutional culture come to seem natural to the informal British constitution.

So Crouch describes how, whatever the claims made for Keynesianism by post-democratic governments, Keynes's ideas have been made 'occult' in the way 'public spending' has become incalculable through ever more hidden outsourcing – recalling the insight of the New Left about the ease with which British capitalism was incorporated into state provision through widespread informal consensus.¹⁵⁸ The state's expropriation of the commons as public would also, of course, eventually be of use to David Cameron's 'Big Society', albeit this time in a peculiar retro-Disraelian sense of the term rather than in any very serious attempt at redefinition (and why, as Polanyi might ask, would the society need redefinition in any case?)¹⁵⁹ Cameron's homely sense of franchise projected through an era which had to maintain 'hard' English looks something like a Leavisite Big Canon, one which can take on 'other' literatures into the same discipline, but only to further accumulate cultural capital within the same parameters.

The 2008 banking recapitalization can of course be seen as part of the inheritance of state-Keynsianism in its demand for an official return to optimism over debt expansion – or as Gamble puts it, ideology spread thin.¹⁶⁰ London in particular has had to be maintained as an official world financial centre despite and through the attenuation of the public in that city, which is perhaps now the most unequal in the developed world.¹⁶¹ The modernist paraphernalia of consensualism has also paradoxically come into vogue in something like a welfare state nostalgia, despite a massive increase in surveillance and informal state powers and a clear inability to convert tax income into public services. In this sense, 'British' is simply a sovereign binding to capital,¹⁶² and enfranchisement a market projected as a shared public – or in Schumpeterian terms, a competition between elite factions for the licence to manage business cycles.¹⁶³

So Gamble describes how the 2008 panic underlined the way the neoliberal state was bound to appear to leave the road free for action while in fact making popular participation more difficult.¹⁶⁴ Neither redistributors of wealth nor facilitators of social intercourse, post-war governments became the consumers of marketized monopolies, political authority became the micro-power of shareholder sovereignty,¹⁶⁵ and 'public' policy a PR problem.¹⁶⁶ The function of governments was then, as Crouch describes it, to engineer

the presentation of risk so as to individuate the ‘public’ into ‘debt-holders, participants in credit markets’.¹⁶⁷ This makes it all the more troubling that ‘public services’, such as the on-time train which has always already never arrived at the station at Greenwich, have remained untouchable as *public* for most left progressives: ‘[o]nce privatized Keynesianism had become a model of general economic importance, it became a kind of bizarre collective good, however nested in private actions it was’.¹⁶⁸

As the passengers at the Greenwich Meridian understand, such services demand aspiration to a personal control that can never be reached – just as literary study demands aspiration to a canonical value which can never be reached by its student-clients. Understood in economic and literary terms, debt as alienation has been made to seem intuitive:

The essence of this trap is perfectly expressed in what is now happening to the welfare state. Governments have to make deep cuts . . . to satisfy the anxieties of the financial markets over the size of the public debt, the operators in these markets being the very same people who benefited from the bank rescue, and who have already begun to pay themselves high bonuses – bonuses ‘earned’ because their operations have been guaranteed against risk by the government spending that created the public debt.¹⁶⁹

The logic of this then leaves nothing but for the ‘public’ to be performed with ever more gusto as it becomes ever more estranged, and for public debt, understood in terms of private finance or of constitutional culture, to be continuously re-presented as a moral good. As the performance of the public comes to be a kind of theatre, a ‘transformation’ in a Polanyian sense, or a *transformismo* in a Gramscian sense,¹⁷⁰ so the entire constitutional culture of the British state-nation, rather than just its economic fortunes, can be seen as a ‘bubble’, relying on endless and ever more tenuous reflation.

But as suggested above, a crisis point may be reached when ideas of popular sovereignty join up throughout the whole UK.¹⁷¹ Although concerning sovereignty forms, in many ways this is more a cultural argument than a legal one, since it addresses the incommensurable terms of precedent spreading across the UK.¹⁷² So, the civilizing mission of English as constitutional culture must become seriously troubled when the state’s best

self is perceived, especially in England, as having been *extrinsically* British, and dependent on the *performance* of consensus. This problem returns, in particular, as Scottish education shows a socially ambitious autonomy at the very time education in the territory whose name was given to the literary discipline seems left to the whims of financial panics, and universal English is perceived as a debt bubble.¹⁷³

CHAPTER FIVE

Declaring Bankruptcy

Back in Greenwich, in a dimly bright building next to the station, a line of people are queuing to shout personal details at a wall of perspex. Many are referred to another queue behind which a line of phones leads to yet more queues in a distant call centre whose operators have been well schooled to speak British truth in Seeleyan English. Here there are five windows and only one teller – but what really holds the line up is less the disinterest of the tellers or the semi-anonymous others milling around behind them, than the fact that the solo teller is required to insert two elements into every communication with a customer: one a studiously ad-libbed question about plans for the weekend or the holidays, and the other an attempt to sell debt. Regular customers of British banks casually deflect such attempts, often maintaining a veneer of friendly conversation above their impatience, in a way that might almost be described as instinctual. Still, all are required to queue, to spend an unspecified time waiting to fund a bank whose income depends on nothing more than the fact that its claim is precedent. Just as on the railway platform, the quotidian violence of this situation is too normal to attract comment: every worker is required by law to have a bank account, and most are quite accustomed to this culture of debt, loans, credit card brochures, ‘housing ladders’. This is an environment which bespeaks disenfranchisement: the space of the bank is ultra-private and minutely monitored and even more packed with surveillance cameras than the streets outside, and yet everywhere posters and ads seem to gesture towards a public life, an imagined familiarity and a friendly nod to the shared realities of life. This contradiction is one of the first things to strike those who arrive in, or who return to, the UK.

And this is not sometime in the 1990s, but in 2012 – four years after the banking panic and the widespread dis-crediting of the financial system, when a huge amount of ‘public’ funds were passed into the hands of the somehow necessary purveyors of debt, against a background of Burkean threat that the failure of banks would destroy a ‘way of life’. Even in 2012, despite an almost total lack of trust, so powerful is the ideology of debt as citizenship that queuing to listen to the tellers’ pitches is seen as valid, even

as necessary human interaction. And so the indebted citizen lives out her alienating time, waiting for a point when she will be able to communicate with the teller who is telling her to buy the debt which would force her to wait for another time when she could pay it back, and so on forever, with the promise of experience hanging, while both she and the bank know it will never really arrive. So naturalized is the distance between experience and the meridian in this moment of indebted realism that, in Burkean form, spotting violence would require an unthinkable moment of rupture, and the environment works hard to make this impossible. The taboos on the violence of debt also conceals physical effects on the body: as numerous studies have shown, dependence on anti-depressants, illegal drugs, and alcohol, have risen rapidly with the structural inequality which is necessary to a post-imperial British economy.¹

However – despite the compulsory shows of confidence in this place, where the scale of private debt is so great as to be unsustainable in consensual terms, the idea of a shared British future must also be seen to be emptied out. Intimations of this emptying-out are already at hand, and a whiggish media are increasingly struggling to convince their readers that tax revenues really do go straight to ‘public services’, implying schools, hospitals, leisure centres, rather than on maintaining debt.² Can parliamentary sovereignty still control this debt with no imperial markets into which to expand, and without the 2000s housing equity bribes which kept people voting as a surveillance state was built up around them?³ As is now widely appreciated, what has been known since 2010 as ‘austerity’ (a term nostalgically connoting the consensual 1940s) could have been paid for by the income increase at the top end of the scale: it is not that too much was spent on public services during the 1990s–2000s, but that what remained of a British public had been converted to debt for the maintenance of the financial form of the state.

As this book has argued, a unified British constitutional culture has been reliant on this indebted, anti-national form since the end of the seventeenth century, and then again in stronger constitutional terms from the time of the Napoleonic Wars – as encouraged by that ‘first novelist’ Daniel Defoe, who pamphleted for Union in financial terms in the 1700s.⁴ And this process, being anti-formal and unaccountable, is cultural: if debt does indeed structure the ‘canonicity’ of the British constitution, then English Literature is its queuing mechanism. But what happens when parliamentary sovereignty fails to adapt to the runaway inequality implied by the queuing-to-queue

at the Bank of Greenwich Meridian – if this civility is *seen as* belonging to the interests of capital rationalization? What space is left then for English Literature’s traditional civilizing mission?

Of course, the debt taken on by the government in 2008 and presented in ideological terms as ‘public’ has to some extent been reflected across Western economies in general – and yet there is also something quite unique about the central and ‘natural’ status of debt financing in the Anglosphere.⁵ Perhaps somewhat despite Keynes’s own worries, state-Keynesians have made a debt-based growth model central to the maintenance of constitutional culture as a way of life, even as the good life⁶ – and yet the widespread appreciation of the scale and systemic nature of this debt creates problems for any apologia for the vicissitudes of parliamentary democracy (the idea that it’s worth some political ‘corruption’ to keep the engines running). Rather than being limited to one or even two parliamentary cycles, this kind of debt has come to cross over many elections and many reinventions of parties. The debt is increasingly recognized as being a debt to the franchiser that is the state, not to any one executive or faction. Under the right circumstances, this realization could prove too much for informal British parliamentary sovereignty – it could end in a bankruptcy of constitutional culture as such. And hand-wringing in the mainstream British press about how the nation is to manage this debt misses the more obvious possibility that the state-nation may well *not* sustain this debt in its present form. If the modernized whig model of pan-British democracy was difficult to sustain in the Golden Age of the 1940s to the 1970s, there has been almost nothing left of it since, even as the BBC and the press have continued to promote a debt-driven economy right up to and through the crash of 2007–8. And as British constitutional culture is attenuated, so also is the long-accepted authority of English Literature.

The 1942–2008 period may then have been the last long modernization of the tight knit between British civilization and constitutional culture as a disciplinary mechanism of ‘canonical debt’. If the genius of the British ideology of 1942–2008 lay in its ability to present state-capitalist policy in terms of a public understood through an informal and inaccessible constitution, the late 2000s banking panic suggests that these realist terms may no longer hold the powers they once did. The connection of state economics to violence across the parliamentary ‘spectrum’ could be seen in the neo-Keynesian response to 2008, for which the need to demonstrate public projects triggered the renewal of the nuclear missile system Trident, a

long-obsolete and useless weapon reliant on a reincarnation of an ultimately anti-Jacobin Europhobia (and housed in the one nation least willing to accept it).⁷ It has been this kind of intervention which has made it difficult to conceal the way that what J. K. Galbraith described as ‘military Keynesianism’⁸ bequeathed to the 1942–2008 British state the kind of anti-social stasis that Burkean conservatism had bequeathed to the 1790–1832 British state. And Britain’s turning-inwards in the absence of new markets has underscored the centrality of the financial City in a way which has increasingly been seen as suicidal and unsustainable.⁹

The perennial British-left explanation through the new conservatism from the mid-1970s is, in sovereignty terms, both misleading and quite understandable: the Thatcherite era did see the appearance of a new Burkeanism, as well as a revived Europhobia building on a combination of Soviet communism and the EU,¹⁰ and was perhaps the last phase during which a precedent-based form of English Literature seemed saveable. And it is worth remembering that until the widespread loss of faith in the canonicity of a unified British culture in the 1970s and the rise of democratic deficit, in the English departments of even modern universities, English Literature still largely took for granted a canon built along more or less Leavisite lines of authority. In Willy Russell’s *Educating Rita* (1983, stage play 1980), when a hairdresser-turned-mature student asks her tutor how he knows which books to read, he reacts as if the question has never occurred to him: ‘Well, I suppose one’s always just known, really.’¹¹ The class-fix is easy to see here, but this is also backed by the Burkean time of English: the reluctant tutor gradually realizes that for him questioning the authority of precedent also means questioning what he had thought of as instinctual value, and he becomes increasingly uncomfortable with Rita confusing her new student experience and her sense of what she *should* do. ‘Of course’, she says well into her studies, ‘you can’t do Blake without doing *Songs of Innocence and Experience*’.

The tragicomic element here lies in how Rita’s progress also points to Dr Bryant’s own fall from experience towards alcoholic cynicism, coinciding with Rita’s entry into what, like Leavis’s Lawrence, she calls Life, but which Bryant sees as drawing the life from her: although her education in English gives her a few middle-class opportunities, these come at the cost of replacing her own experience with an interpolated authority based on precedent and lying beyond her. Rita’s case of course echoes that of the ‘scholarship boy’ described by Raymond Williams and others of the New Left, but in this new

Burkean era, English is newly estranged since the welfare state has more fully embedded the ideology of meritocratic reward, while the public is *seen* to be have lost its meaning.

In the same early 1980s moment of Burkean revival, Alasdair Gray's celebrated *Lanark* (1981) marked a move towards constitutional scepticism within an environment which saw the beginning of a general and cultural revival of the idea of national popular sovereignty. Published in the year which probably represented the peak of democratic deficit – the year in which an elected UK MP died on hunger strike protesting Ireland's entrapment by the Diceyan assumptions of the constitution¹² – *Lanark* often describes as cannibalistic and savage the struggle for civic life through continuant bureaucracy.¹³ Pointedly anti-realist, it also undermines authorial self-ownership in an 'Index of Plagiarisms', in a Gothic character doubling mechanism, and in contradictory story 'codas'.¹⁴ And in an attack on Burkean alienation, in *Lanark* time is to be purchased from the municipal authorities on credit.¹⁵ Thaw's experience in Gray's novel also suggests, contra Dicey, that large states block democracy by 'armouring' themselves (the book is published at the height of the New Cold War),¹⁶ as is seen on a personal level in his skin disease, which shields him from the touch of others.¹⁷ In David Peace's (2004) depiction of conflict between constitutional continuity and the popular mob in the Miners' Strike (1984–5),¹⁸ the European invader has become a communist enemy within¹⁹ – and reaction naturalizes surveillance and anti-terror measures imported from Dicey's Ireland.²⁰ In a ferocious parody of the mid-1980s, Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1993) describes a group of Edinburgh junkies literalizing economic liberalism by 'marketizing' the NHS, liberating its products, turning every encounter into entrepreneurship, and creating for themselves individuated, self-maximized lives built around addiction – embodied debt – in an empty time made up of a series of surrogate presents.²¹ These derelict estates of the Enlightenment city belong on a continuum with the regions of the Opium Wars which had fallen to post-1815 free-market Britain,²² in the key of the widely exported J. S. Mill's Edinburgh-tinted *On Liberty*, in wars lobbied for by the traders of that city.²³ (And perhaps the only thing more ironic than this book's description of the liberating, 'opportunistic' culture of neoliberalism is the way an ultra-whiggish film adaptation in 1996 was successfully marketed for export under the umbrella of Cool Britannia, directed by the choreographer of the enclosure-happy 2012 London Olympics Opening Ceremony.)²⁴

The era of democratic deficit then sees the *appearance* of a latent battle over the experience of time, showing how despite claims of rolling back the state, the state got stronger and the public smaller, through a process of, as David Punter put it in his 1980 Gothic exploration, ‘sealing off questions, shepherding discontent into permissible channels’.²⁵ Increasingly, state-nationalism has been able to press a form of Jennings consensualism into ahistorical use as heritage²⁶ – but rather than as inaugurating neoliberalism, this period might be seen as *amplifying* an existing culture of constitutional precedent, and triggering a widespread loss of faith in the political class.²⁷ The self-determination struggles in Scotland, and to an extent Wales, carried out by literary means as demanded by the anti-formal constitution, also drove a disruption of constitutional continuity in the Gothic mode described above – elsewhere I described the new ‘Gothic’ in terms of the examples of the Scottish Literary Renaissance, industrial music, and nuclear war television docu-dramas.²⁸ This last example of course again recalls the renewal of Trident, as well as the spectre of the walking dead, who trouble Burke’s continuant time in which ‘the dead’ have never really lived or died. The existential threat of the Cold War, the way its potential abolition of time threatened living time itself, could perhaps be placed out of mind, but when made visible through dramatization, this violence was returned in a way which made continuity difficult.²⁹ The nuclear explosion, real or epistemological, also recalls Franco Moretti’s model of the ‘waves’ of literary influence which spread from epicentres – uncontrollable ripples of energy which contrast with the apparently pacific organic trees in the Wordsworthian understanding of nature.³⁰

Looking directly at the ‘rupture’ of nuclear horror, that is, threatens to reactivate historical time by establishing death *as an action*.³¹ Thus the (Foucauldian) importance to post-1790s and then post-1940s Britain of the disciplining move away from spectacle in making the visibility of death a taboo:³² from Burke to Jennings in various forms constitutional culture had to seem to have the ‘public will’ at heart, while making the theft of life by banks or train queues *realistic* – meaning that the revelation of the ‘train crash’ of death as action now seems an unconscionable shock. Burke’s *Reflections* was quite specific about how resistance to the anti-Jacobin constitution represented a kind of graverobbing, making the dead real when the continuant constitution required them to be timeless and abstract. Britain’s taboo on death remains, of course, in the surveillance-as-welfare of the NHS,³³ as

well as in the horrified fascination with death as action personified by those figures, from suicide bombers to health service whistleblowers, willing to deal with the terms of life and death, gazed on by British mass media in something like the way Victorian Gothic monuments were gazed on by those imperfectly certain that they remained cushioned.³⁴ A constitution-sceptical criticism would aim to *historicize* these moments of rupture or action, to make them visible and open to action.

The process, of course, is uneven: the Gothic pressure on constitutional culture during the time of the democratic deficit would lead the ‘popular-aligned’ region of Scotland to the Constitutional Convention of 1988–95, which is generally acknowledged as forcing devolution as an *open-ended* process. Whatever its direct influence on policy, the Convention represents one of the most important articulations of the moments of making-visible, of the changes which had been visited on unified British constitutional culture during the long 1942–2008 period. Based, like mid-1790s movements, in Edinburgh, the 1988 Convention declared itself concerned with ‘fundamental flaws in the British constitution’, and saw the common slippage between ‘English’ and ‘British’ not simply as a mistake to be corrected in multicultural mode, but as a correct description of how the dis-placement built into constitutional culture since the eighteenth century had had to abandon any accountable territorial sovereignty.³⁵ A balance of powers based on limiting the textual (and so the historical) registration of rights had left a state form which was ‘now mainly embodied in the Prime Minister . . . who . . . has further formidable powers of patronage [and] as head of the Executive . . . controls Parliament’.³⁶

This concentration of executive power, of course, gives the lie to Jennings’s balanced parliamentary rule as reflecting a public mood, as well as the more forthright Diceyan rule of law. Such constitutional scepticism was answered in the British press by a gradual ‘partification’, peripheralization, and latterly personalization and infantilization, of almost all constitutional questions in the mainstream press (Alex Salmond’s photograph next to every newspaper story on constitutional change). The Convention’s *Claim of Right* (1988) anticipates, over two decades in advance, this tendency to reduce pressing UK sovereignty questions to ethnicity or pride or party,³⁷ and how one of its effects is to exclude over 90 per cent of the UK population from questions about their own governance. The convention also suggests that the ‘inflexible’ attachment of the Conservative and Unionist Party to

parliamentary sovereignty in fact makes them a party of *disunion*, presaging the way that, as Gerry Hassan described in 2008, constitutional rupture might arise from a combination of ‘grudge-nationalist’ Tory revolt on one hand, and Scottish cultural pressure for self-determination on the other.³⁸ The *Claim* explicitly revisits the anti-Jacobin embedding of constitutional culture as continuity to make a comparison with the ‘transformation . . . found in France, where the Estates General of 1789 turned themselves into a National Assembly with the remit of drafting a constitution’.³⁹

Also revealing are the contrasting reactions published alongside the *Claim* in its 1989 edition by Polygon, an imprint usually associated with literary fiction.⁴⁰ Michael Fry’s is an instructive Burkean apologia, describing how no Convention can achieve legislative responsibility, since to do this would be to assume rights prior to the state.⁴¹ Neil MacCormick’s ‘Unrepentant Gradualism’ on the contrary claims that ‘democracy requires that the popular exercise of power is an intelligent one made by persons who understand the constitution within which they are working’ – in contrast with the persistence of ‘what Lord Hailsham used to call an elective dictatorship’.⁴² Christopher Harvie parallels the (Diceyan) 1880s Home Rule movement and the 1980s one – and the *Claim* had indeed discussed the centralization implied by the creation of the Westminster-controlled Scottish Office.⁴³ Harvie also questions, in what we might now call a Gothic exposure of violence, whether the continuant constitution really does yield the most peaceful settlement possible, or whether it has become liable to let its locked-in violence slip:

when [the UK government’s] backers consider their interests threatened, we do not see a ‘pillar of the constitution’ in Ivor Jennings/Harold Laski terms – a great institution-of-state acceding to ‘moderate’, consensual leadership – but a feral creature capable of doing a lot of damage to such concepts and persons as get in its way, the ‘rule of law’ included.⁴⁴

And Bernard Crick’s ‘For My Fellow English’ demonstrates – on wide territory, as the title implies – how action is blocked through an ‘ideology of parliamentary sovereignty [which] arose because from the end of the seventeenth century [and whose] major business . . . was holding the United Kingdom together’.⁴⁵ Restoration, instinct, and Burkean prejudice (the latter term again less taboo in the mid-1980s) had swamped the whole field of participation, so that even ‘while Mrs. Thatcher has turned her back on

Burke, Labour's leaders still echo him . . . [l]ike Burke . . . Labour's present leaders also believe in "unlimited and supreme . . . sovereignty" but want it in their hands'.⁴⁶ Crick also reminds us, in a way that would become crucial at the end of the 2000s as a concrete constitutional challenge began to come into view, that the assumption of parliamentary sovereignty in the Acts of Union is not backed by international laws, and that its reliance on precedent can only be self-referential.⁴⁷

In the 1988 *Claim*, the England-based organization Charter 88, named 'to mark our rejection of the complacency with which the tercentenary of the Revolution of 1688 has been celebrated [and] to reassert a tradition of demands for constitutional rights',⁴⁸ also described the rending of the constitutional fabric of the United Kingdom after the exposure of some of the myths of consensualism during the period of democratic deficit and the exposure of the social consequences of the reinforcement of parliamentary sovereignty:

We have been brought up in Britain to believe that we are free: that our Parliament is the mother of democracy . . . [but t]oday such beliefs are increasingly implausible. The gap between reality and the received ideas of Britain's 'unwritten constitution' has widened to a degree that many find hard to endure.⁴⁹

Here as in Arendt's 1951 account, the fact that the British social contract is not formulated and yet is universalized is seen by both the *Claim of Right* and Charter 88 as leaving it particularly prone to rule by bureaucracy. The structural power of the constitution is never declared in an undivided sense as personal action, but is rather disciplined into separate specialized pressures, none of which can ever threaten the whole – so a 'British belief in the benign nature of the country's institutions encourages an unsystematic perception of these grave matters; each becomes an "issue" considered in isolation from the rest'.⁵⁰ The 'Restoration' of 1688, the anchor of constitutional power and of the civility of English Literature, merely shifted the absolute power of the monarch into the hands of the parliamentary oligarchy, 'enabl[ing] the government to discipline British society to its ends . . . in the name of national security'.⁵¹ An alternative constitutional culture was then imagined by factions on both sides of the border – and seen as retracting the timeless claims to informality, and, in the case of Charter 88, as signalling the need

to '[d]raw up a written constitution, anchored in the idea of universal citizenship'.⁵²

But despite and because of the careful management of devolution (and the skills of the British left in maintaining the disenfranchising mandate of Westminster parliament), the sceptical moment of 1988 was largely recuperated, especially in England, through re-inflationary promises of a more equitable capitalism representing something like an updating of Croslandite consensus. Constitutional culture this time, for perhaps the last time it would be allowed to happen, was now corroborated by the rebranding moment of Cool Britannia, which attempted, among other things, to claw back the gains of the Scottish Literary Renaissance, with Scottish authors presented as members of a whole saleable British family.⁵³ And with finance explicitly replacing industry in what might be a terminal imperial move, the compulsory performance of the UK shrank back to a perpetual precedent of expansion – a 'heritage-time' – becoming, as Tom Nairn described it, retro-, music hall, theme park, 'a parody-Britain served by a stranded City cash-nexus'.⁵⁴ In terms recalling the Polanyian turn, it was increasingly appreciated in a sceptical Scotland that a 'disinterested' managerialism had taken over where politics had failed.⁵⁵

Nairn's 2002 account of this process also explicitly echoes Stuart Hall's 1983 use of the idea of Gramscian *transformismo* to describe the new Burkean moment – apparently revolutionary events staged to conceal the fact of a rational widening of inequality and a block on popular participation.⁵⁶ Where structural change is blocked, democracy is played out as an adversarial pantomime – a gentlemanly contest which can nevertheless be suspended as necessary, as it has been on numerous occasions from the 1790s to the 2000s.⁵⁷ A condition of perpetual *transformismo* can make the apparently liminal state seem permanent, a continuity of endless invisible coups, or a form of the 'state of exception' described by Giorgio Agamben.⁵⁸ The continuous demand for change within the terms of the same means that, as Nairn puts it, 'the only course left is 'to reproduce "tradition" in ever more berserk forms, *in order to avoid replacing it*' – a 'profoundly Burkean original vision',⁵⁹ and one 'compell[ing] a displacement into an improbable alternative: the "realism" of management boards, growth (or decline) tables, and share or property ownership'.⁶⁰

Moreover, this 'national' discipline has gradually been seen as having forced the national experience of England to recede, and English Literature

described less in terms of conservation than of loss. The realization of this loss colours the largely Burkean commentaries published around the time of the enactment of devolution, of which Roger Scruton's *England: An Elegy* (2000) is typical: although apparently written as a wistful defence of 'England' to be rediscovered through an Eliotic organicism, this account really gets more elegy than it bargains for, in pointing up how the England projected by the state-nation from the turn of the seventeenth to the turn of the twenty-first century was imaginary and extrinsic, leaving England itself buried by the export needs of the 'flexible' constitution.⁶¹ But during the 2000s the national sovereignty of England would come to be more contested than it had been at any time since the Act of Union – and already, accounts like that of Scruton have encouraged forms of contest which would doubtless confound the aims of the publication itself.

Since the turn of the 2000s the stretching of constitutional culture, in Krishan Kumar's terms the long double movement of the British Union then empire, has been increasingly called to account in terms of the absence of representation for England the place.⁶² It is not that (as Scruton implies, and as, from a different ethical stance, Jed Esty would imply soon after) England has *shrunk*, but on the contrary that England the place has begun to appear, and to threaten a revival of formal legislation. Other faux-bewildered popular accounts of around 2000 (Simon Heffer, Jeremy Paxman, Andrew Marr, John Redwood, among others) similarly search for a phantom national, in fact struggling to describe the ongoing jurisdiction of a universalized informal state, tending to fall back onto an aggressively anti-systematic position of 'listing' the imagined qualities of England, a jumble of what is experienced and what is projected through English Literature – with its contradictions often described as part of the country's organic charm.⁶³ Defining England *as territory* or in civic terms has been taboo since it might undo the instinctual, expansive, universalist, cultural binding which had held the sovereignty forms together. (Meanwhile, though, Labour think-tanks have their belated admission of English 'identity' swamped by assumptions of natural conservatism, ignoring the possibility of a national reconsideration of the terms of representation.)⁶⁴

An increased awareness of competing sovereignties has also encouraged a rebirth of interest in the legal contest surrounding Diceyan truisms, an interest which had arisen from the 1950s apparently as part of a minority concern within Scots Law, but had become commonplace in the era of

democratic deficit. *MacCormick v. Lord Advocate* (1953) was nominally based on the right of the reigning monarch to call herself Elizabeth II (she was Elizabeth I of Great Britain), but its ruling that ‘the principle of the unlimited sovereignty of Parliament is a distinctively English principle which has no counterpart in Scottish Constitutional Law’ has been much-celebrated and much-debated since.⁶⁵ After a gradual blooming of popular-sovereignty-oriented thinking following this case and its afterlives, Sections 5 and 6 of the 1998 Scotland Act were carefully drafted to avoid any more such fundamental claims and to reserve all constitutional matters to Westminster.⁶⁶ However, as Gavin Drewry has recently observed, the conduct of the 1995 Constitutional Convention and the 1997 referendum may themselves be seen as having confirmed popular consent:⁶⁷

[B]oth through the Convention [1995] and in the referendum, the wishes of the electorate may be seen as authorizing the institution of devolution and its fundamental terms; hence popular consent, in one form or another, becomes a prerequisite for any subsequent changes to the devolution ‘settlement’.⁶⁸

So, to the more clearly national Scottish contest pressed by the 1980s Literary Renaissance and its contexts, must now be added the way that, especially after the demonstrations of 2010–11, popular sovereignty has begun to appear as a general goal throughout the whole of the UK. The Scottish question does play a part in this – not one to be simply transposed onto the English question, but nevertheless its prominence does make popular constitutional change more concretely thinkable throughout the region.

In general, also, Diceyan constitutional compacts work much less well in the post-2008 environment: for one thing, there is a growing awareness of the class-fix which lies behind even the modernized Diceyan version of justice, and for another, the breakdown of consensus through the related crises of self-determination and credit bubble have revealed the clash of sovereignties that still exists. Informal constitutional culture has always failed to specify *which* rights are instinctually known to be shared – leaving its legal authority based on a culture which is expansively ‘sticky’, or, in the most aggressive Diceyan sense, ‘flexible’.⁶⁹ Another received wisdom about the effectiveness of sovereignty has broken down with the very widespread loss of faith in the

political class, and in the political economy of the post-imperial UK.⁷⁰ The result is a growing realization that the sovereignty question must be seen as contested – whether in its broadest sense as constitutional culture, or more specifically as English Literature – even if its outcome seems formally legal – for as we know from Dicey himself, constitutional commentary *stands for* the law.⁷¹

The building desire for popular sovereignty after 2008 might then be seen as ‘national’ not in terms of (ethno-)nationalism but in the sense of the reclamation of public place open to common control and ownership. For Michael Keating, negotiated sovereignty is a likely outcome of the untying of a UK constitution which has over-strained logic to stick to precedent (though Keating writes without specific address of the uncodified constitution’s need for a literary-cultural cohesion).⁷² Keating also points to Peter Katzenstein’s suggestion that more national, smaller bodies might be more open to post-Keynesian policy possibilities – following the collapse of the Diceyan super-state, which had clung on and reinvented itself over the course of two world wars.⁷³ And the fear of giving up the British state-capitalist growth model is understood as primarily a *political* fear: the outcome of the ‘permanent quasi-boom’ which followed post-imperial stagflation has only served to lock parties into a continuant culture for short-term gain.⁷⁴

And yet despite the cultural binding of incommensurate sovereignties, even among left-leaning academics there has been, at least until very recently, a reluctance to historicize the era of ‘British national’ culture, to see it as an ideology or as an exceeding of constitutional remit. In Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm’s celebrated *The Invention of Tradition* (1983), modern Scottish nationality is quite casually described as having been created for instrumental purposes, but the same analysis is not performed on the much more influential realm of Britishness, even though many in the northern parts of Britain at this high point of democratic deficit were busily trying to de-invent the form, with its tremendous reach over global inequalities.⁷⁵ There is indeed a need to demonstrate the ‘invention’ of British culture: Even if all constitutions of all kinds are to an extent positivistic in that they interpolate and legitimize the people who are to be subject to it,⁷⁶ the limitation of literacy as limitation of franchise called for by capital rationalization reveals a loaded and state-metaphysical ‘aesthetic governance’. During the high period, till around 2008, the most common result was a jumble dependent on peripheral civil society painted as holding up an imaginary centre. So

Keating asks, for example, why despite the happy coalescence of interests described by Linda Colley's *Britons*, often still taken up as a credible model by academic commentators, Scotland has nevertheless survived as a nation, where it might have had a more comfortable position as a region under the English constitution.⁷⁷ The answer to this lies in the cultural nature of informal sovereignty models, which rise and fall, and which every political indicator shows to be shifting.

So, four concluding thoughts while we queue for our perspex confession. First, we might, against the grain of the British left, see welfarist sovereignty from the 1940–2 consensual fear of invasion, for all its immediate material benefits, as inevitably leading to an over-stretching of a state-capitalism in a form it could never maintain – rather than staying too attached to 1979 and the wave of ‘privatizations’, even if the latter moment did accelerate and make explicit the much longer disenfranchising process. Second, given the congruence of the parameters of English Literature as a management of writing as historical action and the parameters of the British constitution as an unwritten management of action, we might begin to see the emergence of a criticism able to chart ruptures in the constitutional ‘text’ which has sought to enforce an ideal continuity throughout the United Kingdom, and more widely the empire. Third, we might recognize, post-2008, that the entirely informal, untouchable, and reactive form of parliamentary sovereignty almost unique to the United Kingdom is unsustainable not only on ethical but also on economic terms, as the credit form on which it was built has revealed the real extent of its problems.

Fourth, and worthy of a final detour here, we might appreciate that where unified constitution and unified culture are most likely to fray is in the fate of the long civilizing mission of university education, most centrally in the ‘permanent’ para-constitutional glue of English. For if there is one overwhelming factor that brings together the explicitly national (in terms of self-determination) and ethical fears over ‘indebted citizenship’, it is the explosion of university fees. Indeed, the narrowing of franchise in trebling fees in an era of economic meltdown may signal the last gasp of English Literature’s control over continuant values. The post-2012 English ‘home’ student embarking on a course of English Literature either comes from a narrow band of privilege which assumes entitlement, or knows that she will have to pay for the education with an indefinite amount of debt, with, that is, temporal alienation. Unsurprisingly given the needs of higher education

to seem a public and British institution (debt management is undertaken by ‘Universities UK’, implying sovereignty convergence), official efforts to sell student loans sound much like the rhetoric of banks, presenting fees as if they belonged to a projected future self rather than to the experiencing self of the present, leaving the student better off, even as a canny investor.⁷⁸ What the literary intern-client is left with, of course, is an accelerated version of the displacement of the present also felt by those waiting on the railway platform and in the bank queue. A cultural acceptance of the attrition of experience is now built on a continual displacement: where debt as alienation was a normal part of enfranchisement, ‘student experience’ now takes the place of experience itself.

I have been arguing that what makes the discipline of English Literature, in its roughly two-century-long sense, so specific in this context is the way that money-debt – alienated time or precedent over present – structures both English canonicity and British constitution, and how the former is the cultural framework of the latter. Now, however carefully English study is presented as an investment, as an experience forming a whole person through an expensively bought cultural capital, there is a clear if unspoken understanding that interest flows inevitably to the managers of debt, and so the self-determination education brings is also always slipping away. The long-term mission of English to uphold British capitalism is, in other words, laid bare in a way that would have shocked Matthew Arnold, and for which we may have to go right back to eighteenth-century ‘improvement’ for an analogy.

The ‘English’ ideology is certainly stretched thin here: in a way that recalls Colin Crouch’s ‘shareholder sovereignty’, the October 2010 Browne Report, led by the ex-head of BP and a director of Goldman Sachs, while recommending lifting the fees cap and withdrawing teaching support, also made claims to be encouraging student-centredness, connoting a return to Lockean self-ownership which takes on a more visibly ‘total’ form on this side of the empire. ‘British’ (English) universities had of course already been largely absorbed into an explicitly market-led model of teaching, research, and access, with Peter Mandelson’s 2009 ‘consumer revolution’ in education reflected in the Quality Assurance Agency.⁷⁹ The Humanities, subjects which guarantee no return unless rigorously ‘hardened’ (re-canonized), are particularly prone to stagflation, and ‘soft marking’ easily points towards a ‘growth’ of grades as ideological justification for a contracting labour

market. The difficulty of judging degrees for indebted paying customers while maintaining institutional integrity now also really troubles the ideal of a disinterested clerisy or meritocracy, which is sacrificed to the unforgettable need for a 'semi-permanent boom'. The *visible* return of Britain's stagflationary form makes the idea of English as a meritocratic aspiration difficult to sustain.

Such are the pressures on the disinterested ideal of the aesthetic elite, which had survived in English all the way from the clerisy to state-multiculturalism. In a 2012 article describing the rise of the 'overclass', Peter Osborne describes a transatlantic (or an Oceanic) significance in the American sociologist Charles Murray's description of a 'cognitive elite', a caste which becomes separated off by the way cultural capital is increasingly restricted to a narrow inter-generational socioeconomic band.⁸⁰ The cognitive elite is formed from the most debt-proofed students entering the highest-ranked universities, joining an interpretive community (or a canonical fix), learning to speak the same language, forming relationships, and having children to whom they bequeath this cultural capital – leading to a literary elite more acute than anything bargained for by Coleridge or Leavis, or even Carlyle, Arnold, or T. S. Eliot.

Particularly arresting in Osborne's description of the overclass is the way it is concentrated in desirable British postcodes,⁸¹ corresponding to the specialization of the kinds of school able to connect with the university's civilizing mission – and his citing the vested privileges of the French *ancien régime*, a Jacobinesque note which may seem surprising (Osborne's Tory politics are well-known). The *ancien régime* comparison had already famously been made by the left-wing civic nationalist Tom Nairn, in his diagnoses of 'terminal' Britain as the end of a rotten British dynasty, or 'Ukania'.⁸² And the study behind Osborne's account, Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's *The Bell Curve* (1994),⁸³ had posited a move by the cognitive elite to preserve their increasingly separate, and potentially dysgenic, status by protecting access to key spaces – implying gated communities, but quite readable in terms of the space of the English department as guarantor of civility, the university's own enclosure. The separation of a cognitive elite would nevertheless be somewhat familiar for English, since it would act like a new form of the typology of 'race', the creation of discrete roles or experiential 'temporalities'. Working within that subject most invested in the saleability and economic rationalization of a Meridian form, fees for English are crucial

in their ability to separate experience from the *performance* of experience.⁸⁴ And the first signs of the cognitive elite's peeling off *along national lines* – that is, underneath and undermining the integrity of Britain – became visible right after the great fees hike: in the first year of £9000 fees, home university applications went down 9.9 per cent in England, but only 1.5 per cent in Scotland, while non-UK EU applications to Scottish universities went up 6 per cent, and to English universities down 16.5 per cent.⁸⁵

There appears then the possibility of returning to an era even before anti-Jacobin Romanticism, before the establishment of English Literature as a progressive-conservative informal constitution. All gestures towards egalitarianism might be dropped altogether, and English Literature spirited backwards to leapfrog the welfare streaming that the 1950s scholarship society claimed to ameliorate, the post-First World War 'rise of English' and the Northcote-Trevelyan/Civil Service restructuring which led to it, the Arnoldian best self, and even the late Romantic clerisy – to go all the way back to an eighteenth-century model of betterment thinkable only within a gentlemanly class, allowing of a narrower behavioural and linguistic conception of individual improvement than any with which we are familiar.

But after all a return to an eighteenth-century improvement made generational and ideally 'permanent' would not be all that surprising in this discipline: it would be like the closing of an arc, returning English to a period before the height of British imperial ascendancy. Especially as a 'hard' subject, English is largely happy to accede to the phasing out of working-class students, researchers, and faculty, and will become more so as it self-selects those staff most versed in the interpretive codes of the cognitive elite. Many faculty would be placated by a multiculturalist language of Widening Participation, even if this – as is likely – turned out to *narrow* the class basis of access. This new protection of English from the commons would increase its saleability by streamlining it – on one side, towards the higher-ranked sixth-forms' ideas of methodology which often still owe much to Leavisite ideas of plot, character, and sensibility, and on the other side to the mobilization of 'skills' demanded by a precarious labour market forcing students to compete for dwindling resources. It is possible to imagine a time, not that far away, when English departments are filled with people none of whom can remember when the 'good postcode' and the elite university were not joined in a shared language virtually impenetrable to anyone outside the cognitive elite.

However, it is precisely the entanglement of English Literature and sovereignty that stands in the way of this type of class apocalypse. The doubts introduced into constitutional culture make it more difficult for English to maintain the disciplinarity of the imperial meridian. If the Arnoldian universalization of Burkean Romanticism made English Literature powerful because it was placeless and always seemed to preclude any form of participation, this is seriously jeopardized by a reterritorialization of the kind implied by the recent uneven recursion of popular sovereignty. The last defence of English as constitutional culture may have been state-multiculturalism, forcing a separation, classification, and queuing under the rubric of equality – which is still how large sections of the fields of postcolonial literature and World Literature work. At base a reinvention of the category of race, multiculturalism stood for the continuity of an organic franchise, ‘flexible’ in the Diceyan sense – that is, absorptive and standardizing – and a continuity of the basis of parliamentary sovereignty itself. In his Irish discussions, Dicey had already suggested that the fact that Home Rule federalism might miss out ‘minorities’ was another reason the ‘English’ franchise had to be universal.⁸⁶

And the logic of multiculturalism has also been the logic of interdisciplinarity, a duplicitous term which has increasingly channelled funding and priorities within the Humanities. Under audit conditions, practitioners in English have had to continually rebrand through gestures towards interdisciplinarity which have in practice meant that each field has had to be delineated anew, disciplined, and strengthened, to make way for the *performance* of crossing them.⁸⁷ Interdisciplinarity should be sharply distinguished from the mostly Scottish tradition known since the 1960s as intellectual generalism, for which specialisms are not assumed: just as multiculturalism separates and underlines ‘cultures’ (races), interdisciplinarity separates and underlines specialized methodologies which then have to be seen to be exceeded, *returning* disciplinarity, as assuredly as the validity of the constitution is returned by reform. Generalism on the other hand usually refers to a branch of thinking from around 1960 when G. E. Davie historicized a contest between a socially engaged, active, and public criticism and the more specialized education associated with imperial management (a specialized education which today might be described in terms of ‘skills’). What is important here is not so much how ‘true’ Davie’s account was, as its resistance to imperial disciplining, also seen by Davie in terms of the imperial Civil

Service exams, which date from the same year as the more comprehensive Scottish General-then-Honours degree (the three- or four-year degree that remains free to home students), exams whose Arnoldian assumptions he documents.⁸⁸ Working in part through the peer-testing of these, and willing to reach into the social generalism might be seen as something like an educational popular sovereignty.⁸⁹ Long before postcolonial studies emerged as a sub-field of English, specialization is revealed as necessary to British geopolitical authority⁹⁰ – as in the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act which helped unify linguistic standards.⁹¹

After the unification running from the Civil Service Reforms through the Education Act to university English, as Davie implies, Cambridge thought in particular would rest heavily on the ‘disinterested’ proposition, increasingly leading to ideal enquiry without context, and link Leavisism, Practical Criticism, Language Philosophy, and state-Keynesianism.⁹² The common quality in all of these is a narrow understanding of positivism – the literary-philosophical positivism tied to the realist canon, the legal positivism going back to Locke and rising through Dicey, and the propositional truths of logical positivism (a movement conspicuously missing from the 1980s ‘rise of English’ accounts, though it was an important part of the intellectual background of the early stages of the discipline). In all of these state-modernizing modes of thought, the coding of informal government is central – but these consensual assumptions no longer hold as they did.

So if generalism might be described as having a ‘national’ valency, it is not just in the obvious sense of its Scottish specificity, but rather in the sense of its critical relation to sovereignty. This is the sense in which ‘national’ also applies to the protests of 2010–11 – and the argument here has been that English the discipline has been bound to the ideological definition of a ‘national’ community as continuant rather than a more serious definition as participatory. In *The English Question* (2008) Thomas Docherty recalls Karl Jaspers’s 1923 argument that the university has the potential to help reinvent a wounded nation:⁹³ in the British situation though, the healed ‘nation’ would first both have to be a constitutionally bounded territory or territories, and to assume some level of formality. This in turn would require a challenge to English as the constitutional culture of a ‘permanent’ nativist sovereignty:

English is, as it were, now a supposed multicultural English; yet it is simply that we have changed the description of what it might mean to be

English – being English remains the quarry and goal. Better, and much more fundamentally, *being* is the goal: being, and not *becoming*, is what has become important.⁹⁴

That is, English in its current form remains a quest for identity and ontological permanence (*being*, not *becoming*), and ultimately a perpetual realignment to fit the impossible time I have described as rising with anti-Jacobinism. ‘Being English’, with its Diceyan-Seeleyan overtones of an Anglosphere of civility taking on a central ‘tempo’, is only ever able to legitimize what seemed already fixed.⁹⁵ For Docherty a participatory desire returns the possibility of a ‘clandestine’ English able to counter instrumental uses of a subject ‘whose capital has lain more or less explicitly in questions of legitimation, valuation, and power’.⁹⁶

As the post-2008 era unwinds, literary study may *already* be reinventing itself as a clandestine activity: the unsustainable debt settlement tied to the sovereignty form is quite possibly already killing the old parameters of English Literature, however energetic the bureaucratic attempts to maintain it as a ‘hard’ subject. This question concerns not only pre-established nations, but also a wider scepticism over the constitution and its political class, arising through the combination of movements towards self-determination, the unevenness of university fees across the UK, and the 2010–11 protests and their afterlives, all troubling the anti-formal, legal-positivist settlement of English.

It is important then to see how since 2008 the ‘national’ of self-determination movements has come to look like the ‘national’ of the student and Occupy movements, often offering popular-sovereignty-related critiques of the dis-crediting of the political class, with the explicit aim of retaking common space. Many of the 2010–11 protests throughout the UK, taking in students and activists as well as large proportions of what could be renamed the ‘general public’, took place on campuses, and were galvanized by the linking of education to huge debt. In the foreword to Dan Hancox’s account of the student protests *Fightback* (2012), Anthony Barnett connects the centralization of City credit to the long growth of fees policy:⁹⁷ Under a rubric of choice, students enter a world in which all the affective choices have already been made,⁹⁸ in a familiar presentation of inequality as chance.

Elsewhere Barnett persuasively suggests that the student protests of 2010 might be at least as significant as those of 1968, especially given that the

strategies of the earlier period were often imagined to have been co-opted within the parliamentary system, particularly Thatcherism, whereas what is now increasingly in question is the continuant sovereignty of the British state itself.⁹⁹ Recently there has been much speculation as to why the Occupy movement ‘failed’¹⁰⁰ – wilfully misreading the way that the movement opened up unpredictable forms of action and non-instrumental relationship, often undertaken in reclaimed common space. Of course, just as 1968 has been commodified, so will 2010–11, but this does not mean the ‘failure’ of its moves to take the commons, especially since these effects are by definition hard to quantify when measured in relation to the metrics it was rejecting – programmes of demand, voting patterns, abstracted representation, legislation.¹⁰¹ The historical problematic of the Britain of the turn of the 2010s is the movement of action away from the parliamentary fundament, rather than towards what used to be called its left.

And this can be read back into the definition of the national as a conduit which coalesces movements for active or unalienated possibilities defined by people in terms of their own experience. As well as being beneficial in itself, the experience of commonality against ‘civility enclosures’ multiplies in unpredictable ways to make whig continuity less certain. The enclosure has been facilitated by the reduction of the national to identity: identity, which might be seen as mutually exclusive with collective experience, demands the confirmation of a reified self based on commodity relations, and so is particularly appropriate for the British form (and thus the answering of constitutional scepticism with ‘self-owning’ Moreno questions). As the English-then-British imperium had entered early into primitive accumulation and alienated labour, it was *more* in need of an informal constitution foreclosing negotiation, and so more bound to keep producing reified identity answers to sovereignty questions (for example as noted earlier, ‘black British’, in one of the most recent incarnations of English Literature). The desire for permanence seen most signally in Dicey would suggest a perpetual reification into fixed identity, making the British constitution unusually ‘total’ and prone to consumer relations. In this sense, self-determination doesn’t mean that any one territory of Britain has to be ‘independent’ in a discrete sense (though this is one possible route out of the anti-formal constitution at the moment): The outmanoeuvring of identity measures of nationality is certainly difficult, but self-determination points to a territorialization as participation – and so an end to the ultimate dis-placing discipline.

There were indeed odd hints of a more communal and cross-class version of the Jacobinesque in the 2010 protests: days of action took on a new temporality in social media space, looking something like a ‘Revolutionary calendar’, as *#dayx* and *#dayx2* became common twitter hashtags. Many of the Occupations took place in university libraries or other contested spaces of literary franchise, and one of the biggest, with great irony for whig constitutional culture, in the Jeremy Bentham room at UCL. Many actions involved teach-ins or talk-ins in quasi-public spaces whose enclosure had come into contest, most famously in stations – a ‘train crash’ waiting to happen.¹⁰²

None of this really depends on comparison of the scale of post-2008 demonstrations with previous post-1945 demonstrations, but rather on seeing how the contest over British constitutional culture at the turn of the 2010s took the apparent settlement of Humanities education unawares (including the unions, which looked comfortable in an Industrial Relations model not far from the Butskellism of the post-war settlement) – and how this was particularly noticeable in literacy management. The police response of kettling protestors in 2010–11 also recalled anti-Jacobin reactions by *creating* a ‘mob’ in order to control it, compressing groups made of some of the most literate and some of the most excluded from literacy. And, recalling how colonial management rebounded back onto the mainland during the Miners’ Strike, many of the police techniques now commonly used to combat direct action had originally been introduced to the mainland by Frank Kitson’s 1971 plan for operations in the key Diceyan space of Northern Ireland.¹⁰³

In Michael Bailey and Des Freedman’s account of the 2010 protests, John Rees similarly points out that the Hungarian protest moment of 1956 was also student-driven before it was union-driven (and the moment of 1956, like the Algerian War of Independence, may have made inroads into English Literature as great as that degree zero for ‘Theory’, 1968, since it gave rise to the Cultural Studies which often insisted on lived-experience and which proved difficult to fence off).¹⁰⁴ Often based on contests over political, physical, and canonical space, the 2010 demonstrations pointed to a shift which asked not only what was studied – they did not ask to *rearrange* the canon – but more widely how and why the boundaries of cultural value were formed. Seen in the terms described in this essay, the cracks revealed in the mandate of the political class do threaten to significantly change the correspondence between state and literary value – though of course, a time-lag has been created by a mainstream media still reliant on presenting

the state response as the ‘public’ one. Even so, Guy Aitchison and Aaron Peters note that even the BBC’s chief political correspondent, Nick Robinson, at one stage reported that the government had ‘lost control of the streets’, or had ceded public space – and similar, as Rory Rowan has pointed out, can also be mapped onto social media, whose textual power relations are still little discussed in the study of English.¹⁰⁵ Aitchison and Peters describe this shift in terms of a move to the anti-ideological bazaar of knowledge and away from the Cathedral of knowledge – tellingly recalling the terms of the lay clerisy inflected in the Scotto-British *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, key carrier of the whig disciplining of scholarship, as well as flagging the contest over occupied St. Paul’s, image of British consensualism.¹⁰⁶ Adam Harper has discussed the use of the ‘book bloc’, an originally Italian protest technique in which demonstrators carry polystyrene shields made to look like the kinds of works of philosophy or literature which have challenged the canonicity of English.¹⁰⁷

Albert Toscano has suggested that student protests pressured the question of experience versus debt in a way that suggested a new *temporal* solidarity¹⁰⁸ – which of course would trouble the Burkean settlement which has been, as I have argued, the fulcrum of the discipline. Even as student debt was being presented as a (Polanyian) choice to create a generation of brave new sovereign subjects,¹⁰⁹ those who had had their futures pre-sold were still willing to create collectives in a way that shows the difficulty of sustaining alienated constitutional investment:

That the ideology of the consumer-subject is a vast existential Ponzi scheme is beginning to dawn on many. But to see in this a re-edition of a lived-experience of ‘no future’ would be insufficient . . . [compared to] the formation of a solidarity between those who have no future – except one encompassed by debt and by the near-total absence of collective control over the spaces and times of everyday life.¹¹⁰

After the state-Keynesian consensus, an active criticism of constitutional culture is also a withdrawal of participation from indebted cultural institutions. Alongside the ethical problems, for parliamentary sovereignty there is also the practical question of whether such debt can still be indefinitely extended through disciplinary precedent and informal constitution. This book has argued that the civilizing role of English *as constitutional culture*

also gives it a particular role in citizenship as debt, and suggested that the time of literary experience is reclaimed as a central act in taking experience from the constitution more generally. This might mean refusing to queue for a promise of the centralized 'tempo', whether in the salons of cultural capital or in banks amongst cheery propaganda posters. It might mean questioning the departure board in the station – an inconsequential act in one sense of course, since we know trains are late all over the world – but in another sense crucial, since access to the duplicitous text of the departure board more widely opens up the shared experience of text produced in common space. It might mean mobs of Britons queuing on railway platforms rising at the same time and saying, the train is not on time.

Notes

Chapter One

- 1 Thus the adaptation of the classic Marxian argument that a national ruling class will build a state around itself to protect its interests: in Britain there was no pre-existing nation, but the need for economic rationalization came first. See below for definitions of Britain/the UK as a social class rather than a nation.
- 2 Cf. for example Michael Keating, 'Stateless nation-building: Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland in the changing state system', *Nations and Nationalism* 3–4, December 1997, 689–717; it has been argued that, especially before devolution, the UK acted as a 'fifth state', though this capacity has somewhat waned – cf. Arthur Aughey, 'Fifth Nation: The United Kingdom between definite and indefinite articles', *British Politics* 5–3, 2010, 265–85.
- 3 Cf. Michael Gardiner, 'England and the *Guardian*'s "Disunited Kingdom"', *openDemocracy*, 1 November 2011: www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/michael-gardiner/england-and-guardians-disunited-kingdom.
- 4 Colin Kidd has often complained that not enough attention has been paid to Scottish Unionisms, with the implication that recent 'nationalism' (meaning self-determination) is unthinkingly projected backwards – cf. *Union and Unionisms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) – on unionism as provincialism, 14; on the lack of interest in 'legal nationalism' in the key eighteenth century, 178–80; on the simplification of the twentieth-century rise, 198–9; on nationalism as a form of unionism, 257–99.
- 5 Asifa M. Hussain and William L. Miller, *Multicultural Nationalism: Islamophobia, Anglophobia, and Devolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 146–69.
- 6 Here 'post-colonial' represents a temporal marker, implying a time after the height of empire, while 'postcolonial' indicates tendencies which can go right back through the colonial era; this distinction is necessary and broadly in line with postcolonial criticism since the 1990s.
- 7 Michael Keating, *The Independence of Scotland: Self-government and the Shifting Politics of Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 160.
- 8 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 160.
- 9 The fear of a naturally Tory UK has both massively increased and become more confused since talk of a Scottish independence referendum in Labour think-tanks and press, cf., for example, Stewart Lee, 'Shame on you, Alex Salmond, for selling us out to the Bullingdon Club', *Guardian*, 5 February 2012; other more sceptical accounts of the undemonstrated dependency of Labour on Unionism include Stuart Campbell, 'Why labour doesn't need Scotland', *Wings Over Scotland*, 10 January 2012: <http://wingsland.podgamer.com/why-labour-doesnt-need-scotland/>; Gerry Hassan, 'Post-unionism, post-nationalism and the politics of voice', ed. Claire Westall and Michael Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England* (London: Palgrave, 2013), 31–45; Gerry Hassan and Eric Shaw, 'The territorial dimensions of labour' ed. Hassan and Shaw, *The Strange Death of Scottish Labour* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 299–315.
- 10 On the placement of parties at the time of the 2010 election, see for example Political Compass, UK Parties at 2010 General Election: www.politicalcompass.org/ukparties2010.
- 11 For example Jeremy Paxman, *The English: A Portrait of a People* (London: Penguin, 1999); Simon Heffer, *Nor Shall My Sword: The Reinvention of England* (London: Phoenix, 2000 (1999)); Roger Scruton, *England: An Elegy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2000); cf. Michael Gardiner, *Literature of England in English Literature* (London: Palgrave, 2012), 31–5; on the 'listing' tendency as a thin version of Englishness, see Arthur Aughey, 'English is the country and the country is England' ed. Westall and Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England*, 46–59
- 12 David Goodhart, 'England arise', *Prospect*, 26 July 2008: www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/englandarise/.
- 13 Ben Wellings, *English Nationalism and Eurocepticism: Losing the Peace* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012), 3.
- 14 Among many examples of a pre-6 May 2010 *Guardian* obsession with the BNP which backhandedly encouraged the idea of an 'ethnic' England, see for example Jim Wolfreys, 'BNP manifesto seeks more than votes', 27 April 2010: www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/apr/27/bnp-manifesto-launch-nick-griffin; Cole Moreton, 'Let's raise a glass to multicultural Saint George', 23 April 2010: www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/apr/23/saint-george-multicultural-reality.

- 15 For example Richard English, *Is There an English Nationalism?* (London: IPPR, 2011); John Denham, 'The rise of English pride', IPPR, 27 January 2012: www.ippr.org/articles/56/8585/the-rise-of-english-pride?siteid=ipprnorth; Alastair Bonnett, *Left in the Past: Radicalism and the Politics of Nostalgia* (London: Continuum, 2010); Jon Cruddas Roscoe Lecture, 2 March 2011: www.newstatesman.com/2011/03/labour-book-noonan-tradition.
- 16 Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); cf. Jed Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003); Peter J. Kalliney, *Cities of Affluence and Anger: A Literary Geography of Modern Englishness* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007); Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).
- 17 Esty, *A Shrinking Island*, 9, 11, 135, 156; cf. Baucom, *Out of Place*, 39; cf. David Lloyd, *Anomalous States: Irish Writing and the Post-Colonial Moment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 42–6.
- 18 For example Guy Lodge, Wyn Jones, R. Henderson and D. Wincott, *The Dog That Finally Barked: England as a Political Community* (London: IPPR, 2012).
- 19 For example Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848–1932* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983); Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquests: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000 (1989)); cf. Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*; Baucom, *Out of Place*; Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- 20 See Tom Nairn, *Pariah: Misfortunes of the British State* (London: Verso, 2002); Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 1–38, 226–73; Robert Colls, *The Identity of England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 (2002)), 337–76; Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004); Robert Hazell, ed., *The English Question (Devolution)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); Arthur Aughey, *The Politics of Englishness* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Aaron Kelly, 'James Kelman and the deterritorialization of power', ed. Berthold Schoene, *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 175–83; Michael Rosie and Pille Petersoo, 'Drifting apart?: Media in Scotland and England after devolution', ed. David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer, *National Identity, Nationalism, and Constitutional Change* (London: Palgrave, 2009), 122–43.
- 21 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 107.
- 22 Joan McAlpine, 'When did the media lose its Scottish accent of the mind?', ed. Gerry Hassan and Rosie Ilett, *Radical Scotland: Arguments for Self-Determination* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2011), 222–38; Rosie and Petersoo, 'Drifting Apart? Media in Scotland and England after Devolution', eds. McCrone and Bechhofer, *National Identity, Nationalism and Constitutional Change*, 144–62.
- 23 Lodge et al., *The Dog That Finally Barked*; cf. Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 171.

Chapter Two

- 1 Cf. Jacques Lacan, trans. D. Porter, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1992 (1959–60)); Jacques Lacan, ed. Alan Sheridan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan 11: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978 (1973)); on realism cf. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Winchester: Zero, 2011), esp. 16–20.
- 2 Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2007 (2004)), 116; on Herder, 87.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 86.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 88, 90.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 115; for the controversy this stirs up concerning Franz Kafka's 'minor' language as described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and its incorporation into World Literature, see Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 203–4; Deleuze and Guattari, trans. Dana Polan, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986 (1975)); David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 201–2; Christopher Prendergast, *Debating World Literature* (London: Verso, 2004); Michael Gardiner, *The Return of England in English Literature* (London: Palgrave, 2012), 144–5.
- 6 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 100.

- 7 Ibid., 92.
- 8 Ibid., 87, 89.
- 9 Ibid., 87, 98.
- 10 Cf. Marilyn Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and Its Background* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982 (1981)), 12.
- 11 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 240; 117–18; cf. Stefan Collini, *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain 1850–1930* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).
- 12 Cf. Constantine George Caffentzis, *Clipped Coins, Abused Words, and Civil Government. John Locke's Philosophy of Money* (New York: Autonomedia, 1990).
- 13 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 173; Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 107; on the flotilla as an anti-Jacobin sovereignty gesture in 2012, see Claire Westall and Michael Gardiner, 'The last great British summer for England', *openDemocracy*, www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/michael-gardiner-claire-westall/last-great-british-summer-for-england.
- 14 Michael Foucault, trans. Alan Sheridan, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991 (1975)); on the need to see Foucault's description of Bentham's panopticon within the context of the whole book, see Anne Schwan and Stephen Shapiro, *How to Read Foucault's Discipline and Punish* (London: Pluto, 2011), 5–6.
- 15 Especially as it moves towards the mid-twentieth century, this essay will tend towards the Deleuzian model of 'control societies', in which the carceral space of the factory tries to expand to take over personal relationships outside of capitalism: Gilles Deleuze, 'Postscript on the societies of control', *October* 59, Winter 1992, 3–7.
- 16 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 92.
- 17 Ibid., 104.
- 18 Ibid., 114.
- 19 Ibid., 117; on the move to cultural empire cf. Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), for example 36–41; cf. Robert Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).
- 20 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 120–1.
- 21 Cf. John Holloway, *Crack Capitalism* (London: Pluto, 2010).
- 22 Cf. Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*.
- 23 Tony Travers cited in Iain McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 168; there is a discussion on the movement from government to governance in London and elsewhere in the UK in Tony Travers, *The Politics of London: Governing an Ungovernance City* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 20; on 'soft Stalinism', see for example Tom Nairn, *Pariah: Misfortunes of the British State* (London: Verso, 2002); Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, 39–53.
- 24 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 44.
- 25 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 165.
- 26 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 111–25.
- 27 The terms of the 'continuant' and 'action' to which this refers relate especially to John Macmurray, *The Self as Agent* (London: Faber, 1995 (1957)); John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber, 1995 (1957)).
- 28 George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987 (1949)), 33, 34–41, 67–76.
- 29 Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain* (London: New Left Books, 1977), 16–22.
- 30 Cf. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society* (London: Hogarth, 1992 (1958)), 3–20; E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1991 (1963)).
- 31 On the economics of anti-Jacobin culture, cf. M. O. Grenby, *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. 9–10; cf. Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 20, 36.
- 32 Cf. Geoffrey Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power: Late Stuart and early Georgian Britain, 1660–1722* (London: Longman, 1993), 227, 257–9.
- 33 Cf. Chris Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions: Constitutions and State Legitimacy in Historical-Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 147.
- 34 Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power*, 261–70.
- 35 Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions*, 149, 154.
- 36 Ibid., 150.
- 37 Ibid., 153, 238.

- 38 Cf. Dan Hind, *The Return of the Public: Democracy, Power and the Case for Media Reform* (London: Verso, 2012), 30–7, 40, 44; Bagehot's 'efficient secret' is discussed in: Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 (1867)), 11.
- 39 Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000 (1992)).
- 40 Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, 6, 11.
- 41 Cf. Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848–1932* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983); a move away from belletrism towards a disinterested 'rise of (Oxbridge) English', Richards, Leavis, and *Scrutiny*, is described in Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 17–53: 32–3, 43–53.
- 42 Terry Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London: New Left Books, 1976).
- 43 On Williams, see Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology*, 11–42.
- 44 Here as elsewhere, capitalization indicates a named subject, while lower case suggests the literature of England the place.
- 45 Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, 7, 18.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 165, 217; cf. T. S. Eliot, 'The Dry Salvages', *Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968 (1941)), 25–33.
- 48 Adam Ferguson, ed. Fania Oz-Salzberger, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 (1767)), 220, 243; Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (London: Penguin, 2010 (1759)).
- 49 Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 159–60, 229.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 171.
- 51 Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, 84.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 115; cf. Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 46–50.
- 53 Alastair Duckworth, *The Improvement of the Estate: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994 (1971)), 45–53.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 128.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 142; Austen's work as socially conservative but 'improving' and formally radical is developed in Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987 (1975)).
- 56 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 111.
- 57 Kathryn Sutherland, 'Jane Austen and the invention of the serious modern novel', ed. Thomas Keymer and Jon Mee, *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature 1740–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 244–62: 245 (this section of Sutherland's account tellingly blurs England and Britain, mirroring Austen's place in the canon); F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (London: Faber, 2008 (1948)), 9–23.
- 58 Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 (1790)).
- 59 Cf. Michael Gardiner, *The Cultural Roots of British Devolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 79–101; Cairns Craig, *Intending Scotland: Explorations in Scottish Culture since the Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), 77–144, 179–202.
- 60 Cf. Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions*, 8.
- 61 David Duff, 'Burke and Paine: contrasts', ed. Pamela Clemit, *The Cambridge Companion to British Literature of the French Revolution in the 1790s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 47–70: 56.
- 62 The way the next two centuries of British ideology go back to the Jacobinesque concentration of collectives from the 1780s onwards was often hinted at by Raymond Williams and the New Left within the context of the welfare state; this is also, in another way, the basis of Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, which begins with the London Corresponding Society, against which Burke was reacting.
- 63 Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 110–37.
- 64 David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: History of Gothic Fiction from 1765 to the Present* (London: Longman, 1980), 421.
- 65 Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, ed. Sylvana Tomaselli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 (1790)); cf. Robert Miles, 'The 1790s: the effulgence of Gothic', ed. Jerrold E. Hogle, *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 41–62.
- 66 William Blake, 'Songs of innocence and experience', ed. David V. Erdman, *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970 (1789)), 7–32; 'The four Zoas: the torments of

- love & jealousy in the death and judgment of Albion the ancient man' (1797), ed. Erdman, *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, 296–399; 'The French Revolution' (1791), ed. Erdman, *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, 282–96.
- 67 Cf. Miles, 'The 1790s: the effluence of Gothic', 42–3.
- 68 Cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 110–37.
- 69 Maggie Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 6.
- 70 On Lackington, see *Critical Review* 65, June 1988, 1788, cited in Simon Bainbridge, ed., *Romanticism: A Sourcebook* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008), 215; cf. Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 15.
- 71 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 26, 37.
- 72 William Godwin, *Caleb Williams, or, Things as They Are* (London: Penguin, 2005 (1794)).
- 73 William Hazlitt, *Life of Napoleon*, 4 vols (London: G. Bell and Sons (1828–30)), I, 1.
- 74 Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 126, 157.
- 75 Tom Nairn, *After Britain: New Labour and the Return of Scotland* (London: Granta, 2000), 276–7.
- 76 William Blackstone, *Commentary on the Laws of England* (London: s.n., 1809 (1765–9)), III, 268; Miles, 'The 1790s: the effluence of Gothic', 44.
- 77 Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 (1757)).
- 78 Cited in Anthony King, *The British Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 18; cf. its description as a 'Gothic cathedral', 40.
- 79 Matthew Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', ed. Stefan Collini, *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 (1864)), 43, 48, 50.
- 80 Cf. Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 11–38.
- 81 *Ibid.*, 40.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 11, 15, 113.
- 83 David Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt against Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 52.
- 84 This helps describe what is so unsettlingly misleading about the *Guardian* cover comment on the 2005 Routledge Classics edition of that anchor of modern English Literature, Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, which suggests that 'it must have come on like punk rock'. This meridian had a consolidating and progressive function which could not be further from the destructive, anti-state moment of punk.
- 85 Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt against Theory*, 4, 126–48; cf. Baucom, *Out of Place*, 32–3.
- 86 Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt against Theory*, 43, 52, 55.
- 87 *Ibid.*, 57.
- 88 John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); on 'Political dictionaries', 1–3.
- 89 Cf. Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 55.
- 90 Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People: England 1730–1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 (2006)), 169, 259; cf. Clifford Siskin, *The Work of Writing: Literature and Structural Change in Britain 1700–1830* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 172–9.
- 91 Cf. Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689–c.1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 255; cf. William Christie, *The Edinburgh Review in the Literary Culture of Romantic Britain: Mammoth and Megalonyx* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009).
- 92 Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt against Theory*, 135.
- 93 Jon Mee, 'Popular radical culture', ed. Clemit, *The Cambridge Companion to British Literature of the French Revolution in the 1790s*, 117–28: 117.
- 94 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 3–20.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 10.
- 96 *Ibid.*, 11.
- 97 Cf. Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus; and selected prose* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970 (1833–4)), 36 (the section is ostensibly on 'Editorial Difficulties').
- 98 Cf. Edmund Burke, *An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, in Consequence of Some Late Discussions in Parliament, Relative to the Reflections on the French Revolution (1791)*, online version: <http://archive.org/stream/appealfromnewtooooburkiala#page/n7/mode/2up>.

- 99 Jeremy Bentham, 'Anarchical fallacies: being an examination of the Declarations of Rights issues during the French Revolution', ed. *The Works of Jeremy Bentham, Published under the Superintendence of His Executor, John Bowring*, 11 vols, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1838–43 (1791)), online version: http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=1921&chapter=114226&layout=html&Itemid=27, n.p.
- 100 Bentham, 'Anarchical fallacies', n.p.
- 101 Ibid.
- 102 For example John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 (1859)), 50–1.
- 103 Bentham, 'Anarchical fallacies', n.p.
- 104 John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (1690), online version: <http://libertyonline.hypermall.com/Locke/second/second-frame.html>.
- 105 Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 (1786)); cf. Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (London: Hogarth, 1987 (1957)), 60–92; cf. Virginia Woolf, 'Defoe', *The Common Reader (First Series)* (London: Hogarth, 1968 (1925)), 121–31; Virginia Woolf, 'Robinson Crusoe', *The Common Reader (Second Series)* (London: Hogarth, 1965 (1932)), 51–8.
- 106 Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009 (1996)).
- 107 William Hazlitt, 'On poetry in general' excerpted in Geoffrey Keynes, ed., *Selected Essays of William Hazlitt* (London: Nonesuch, 1930), 386–410: 403.
- 108 Maria and Robert Lovell Edgeworth, *Practical Education* (London: J. Johnson, 1811 (1798)).
- 109 For example Richard Phillips, *Mapping Men and Empire: Geographies of Adventure* (London: Routledge, 1997), esp. 22–44 on *Robinson Crusoe*; Jeffrey Richards, ed., *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); John M. Mackenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); on the run-up to World War One and the nexus of literacy, empire, and militarism, see Patrick Brantlinger, *The Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988).
- 110 Leslie Stephen, *Hours in a Library* (London: John Murray, 1917 (1874–9)), 1–43; here *Robinson Crusoe* in particular is described as being valuable because 'time-honoured'.
- 111 Woolf, *The Common Reader (First Series)*, 121–31: 121, 129.
- 112 Ibid., 123; it is worth noting that the canonical order of realism which goes Austen – Eliot – Conrad in Woolf's 1925 account is left intact in Leavis's 1948 account in *The Great Tradition*.
- 113 Woolf, 'Robinson Crusoe', 54.
- 114 Ibid., 55.
- 115 Ibid., 56.
- 116 Ibid., 58.
- 117 Muriel Spark, *Robinson* (London: Penguin, 1964 (1958)), 10, 83.
- 118 Cf. Jacques Derrida, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005 (2003)); Jacques Derrida, trans. Patrick Mensah, *Monolingualism of the Other, or, The Prosthesis of Reason* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).
- 119 Spark, *Robinson* 59, 167, 131.
- 120 J. G. Ballard, *Concrete Island* (London: Harper Perennial, 2008 (1974)), 15, 16, 19, 32, 34, 39; cf. 42–6, 61.
- 121 Ibid., 66, 74.
- 122 Ibid., 99, 115, 138, 167; on the retaking of English land, cf. Simon Featherstone, *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 67–83; Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 17–37.
- 123 Ballard, *Concrete Island*, 151–2.
- 124 J. M. Coetzee, *Foe* (London: Penguin, 1987 (1986)), 25.
- 125 Ibid., 40, 73, 81, 88.
- 126 Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 62.
- 127 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 37.
- 128 Cf. Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt against Theory*, 152–9; cf. Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, 6; cf. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'The Monk: a romance', review in *Critical Review, or Annals of Literature*, 19 February 1797, 194–200.
- 129 Bainbridge, *Romanticism*, 230; Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 35, 58.
- 130 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'The Eolian harp', ed. William Keach, *Coleridge: The Complete Poems* (London: Penguin, 1997 (1796)), 87–8.

- 131 Typically, a late Scottish Enlightenment skeptical response is to be found in Dugald Stewart, *Elements of the Philosophy of Human Mind* (Boston, MA: Wells and Lily, 1818 (first two volumes 1792, 1811)); cf. Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*, 5.
- 132 Nicholas Roe in William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads* (London: Routledge, 2009 (1801–2), 18; for an alternative history of associationism which stresses the centrality of David Hume, see Craig, *Intending Scotland*.
- 133 Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, 34, 312.
- 134 *Ibid.*, 49, 305.
- 135 *Ibid.*, 296.
- 136 *Ibid.*, 305, 308.
- 137 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 138 *Ibid.*, 299–304.
- 139 *Ibid.*, 38; Baucom, *Out of Place*, 18–37.
- 140 Cf. T. H. Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 181.
- 141 William Wordsworth, *The Borderers* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982 (1797)); Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 64, 87.
- 142 Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 37, 106, 140.
- 143 Nicholas Roe, introduction to Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, 14.
- 144 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Rime of the ancient mariner', ed. Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, 51–78; Wordsworth, ed. Jonathan Wordsworth, M. H. Abrams and Jonathan Gill, *The Prelude, 1799, 1805, 1850* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979 (1805/50)), 117.
- 145 Wordsworth, 'Preface', ed. Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, 286–314: 293–4.
- 146 *Ibid.*, 290–2
- 147 Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', 33.
- 148 William Hazlitt, 'Why the arts are not progressive – a fragment', *Morning Chronicle*, 11–15 January 1814.
- 149 William Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age* (London: Henry Colburn, 1825), 296–7; cf. David Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness: periodical writing and national identity after the Napoleonic Wars', ed. Claire Westall and Michael Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England* (London: Palgrave, 2013), 63–76.
- 150 Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age*, 233; cf. Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness'.
- 151 Hazlitt, 'Merry England', *New Monthly Magazine*, 14 January 1825, 557–65: 564, 560; cf. Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness'.
- 152 Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age*, 308.
- 153 William Cobbett, 'To money-hoarders', *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 55, July 1825, 65–108: 87–8; quoted in Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness', 68; cf. David Stewart, *Romantic Magazines and Metropolitan Literary Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011).
- 154 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 62.
- 155 Especially 'Z' (John Gibson Lockhart), 'On the Cockney school of poetry', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 2–7 October 1817, 38–41.
- 156 Hunt, 'Christmas and other old national merry-makings considered', quoted in Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness', 72.
- 157 Charles Lamb, 'Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen, and other imperfect sympathies', *London Magazine*, 4 August 1821, 152–6; quoted in Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness', 66–7.
- 158 As discussed in Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 89; cf. Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (London: Verso, 2007).
- 159 Higgins, 'Romantic Englishness', 70.
- 160 Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions*, 2.
- 161 Cf. Williams, *Culture and Society*, 32.
- 162 Cf. Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 214, 217; cf. William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (2004)), 70; elsewhere in this study (somewhat risking fetishising authenticity at times in struggling to reconstruct the makeup of contemporary readers rather than seeing how certain works have sedimented into a canonicity), St Clair links some conception of intellectual property back to the advent of printing and growing capital ties to the government, a situation unchanged from the fifteenth to the late eighteenth centuries, 2, 43–65; St Clair's 'reading nation' seems to be Britain.

- 163 Cf. Michael Gardiner, *From Trocchi to Trainspotting: Scottish Critical Theory since 1960* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 72–130; cf. Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 167–99.
- 164 de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 1–2, 202; William Shakespeare, ed. Edmond Malone, *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare; Collated Verbatim with the Most Authentick Copies . . .* (London: J. Rivington and Sons, 1790).
- 165 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 166 *Ibid.*, 10.
- 167 *Ibid.*, 196, 200.
- 168 *Ibid.*, 193, 281.
- 169 *Ibid.*, 208.
- 170 *Ibid.*, 196–7.
- 171 Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt against Theory*, 62; cf. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 138.
- 172 Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt against Theory*, 62–3.
- 173 Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 185.
- 174 Wordsworth and Coleridge, ‘Preface’, 291–2; Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 78.
- 175 Cf. Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination*, 82.
- 176 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Nigel Leask, *Biographia Literaria* (London: J.M. Dent, 1997 (1817)), 191.
- 177 Peter Martin, *Edmond Malone, Shakespearean Scholar: Literary Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 (1995)), 37–8.
- 178 de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim*, 182–3.
- 179 *Ibid.*, 182–3, 187–8; Cf. Ian Parson, ‘Copyright and society’, in *Essays in the History of Publishing: A Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of Longman 1724–1974* (London: Longman, 1974), 42–3.
- 180 Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 167.
- 181 *Ibid.*, 189.
- 182 *Ibid.*, 170–1, 188.
- 183 *Ibid.*, 168.
- 184 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, 9.
- 185 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘On Shakspeare and Milton’, *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare and Other Poets* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1914 (1811–12)), 33–165; 58, 121.
- 186 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘Lectures on Shakespeare’, in *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare and Other Poets*, 183–394: 394.
- 187 Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination*, 38.
- 188 Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquests: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000 (1989)), 42–3; the book especially follows the 1830s work of the Scottish Missionary Alexander Duff and Trevelyan examination reforms; Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, 167.
- 189 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘The Statesman’s manual, a lay sermon’, ed. Reginald James White, *The Political Tracts of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953 (1817)), 55–116.
- 190 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State According to the Idea of Each: II Lay Sermons* (London: Hurst, Chance and Co., 1830 (1829)), 4–5.
- 191 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 192 *Ibid.*, 6–7.
- 193 *Ibid.*
- 194 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 195 *Ibid.*, 42.
- 196 *Ibid.*, n.p.
- 197 *Ibid.*, 11–12.
- 198 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 199 *Ibid.*, 19, 24.
- 200 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Friend: A Series of Essays to Aid in the Formation of Fixed Principles in Politics, Morals, and Religion, with Literary Amusements Interspersed* (London: W. Pickering, 1837 (1809–10)); cf. James Engell, ‘Biographia Literaria’, ed. Lucy Newlyn, *Cambridge Companion to Coleridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 59–74.

- 201 Francis Jeffrey quoted in Paul Magnuson, 'The Lake School: Wordsworth and Coleridge', ed. Keymer and Mee, *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature 1740–1830*, 227–43: 228.
- 202 Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, 47; cf. Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, 312.
- 203 Ben Knights, *The Idea of the Clerisy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 38.
- 204 Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, 50, 63.
- 205 Hazlitt, 'On poetry in general', 386–410: 386.
- 206 William Hazlitt, 'Coleridge', *Lectures on the English Poets*, 1818, excerpted in Keynes, *Selected Essays of William Hazlitt*, 723–5: 724.
- 207 William Hazlitt, 'Mr. Coleridge', excerpted in Keynes, *Selected Essays of William Hazlitt*, 725–38: 726, 730.
- 208 Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age*, excerpted in Keynes, *Selected Essays of William Hazlitt*, 739–51: 739, 740, 742, 749, 743; on Hazlitt, see 'On the difference between writing and speaking', ed. Duncan Wu, *Complete Writings*, 10 vols, vol. 8 (London: Pickering and Chatto, 245–60).
- 209 Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, 294.
- 210 *Ibid.*, 289–90.
- 211 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 33.
- 212 Walter Scott, *Redgauntlet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 (1824)), 396; cf. Christopher Harvie, *A Floating Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 43.
- 213 Wordsworth, *Prelude* III, 478–92.
- 214 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 8.
- 215 Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians*, 124, 138–54.
- 216 *Ibid.*, 40, 184; on the Anglo-Israeli tradition see Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 107–9, 125–8.
- 217 Barry Qualls, 'George Eliot and religion', ed. George Levine, *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 119–37: 122, 130; on William Blake, see Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 16; cf. William Blake, 'Jerusalem', section 'To the Jews': 'Jerusalem the Emanation of the Great Albion', in Erdman, ed., 169–72: 169; on *Daniel Deronda* and philosemitism, see Gertrude Himmerfarb's detailed study of this single book, *The Jewish Odyssey of George Eliot* (Jackson, TN: Encounter Books, 2012); Himmerfarb also discusses Judaism in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, suggesting a qualified sense of the elect nation – Gertrude Himmerfarb, *The People of the Book* (Jackson, TN: Encounter Books, 2011); although Himmerfarb sees Eliot as exceptional in Victorian fiction, this is to underplay her centrality to the creation of Tripos English in the 1910s.
- 218 Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, 20, 41.
- 219 Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt against Theory*, 61.
- 220 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 2 vols, I, 512–13, online at: www.gutenberg.org/files/6081/6081-h/6081-h.htm#2HCH0001; Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt against Theory*, 61.
- 221 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 33, 34.
- 222 René Wellek, 'The concept of Romanticism in literary history', *Comparative Literature* 1–1, Winter 1949, 1–23: 1–2; 147–72.
- 223 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 39.
- 224 *Ibid.*, 41, 42; Wordsworth, 'Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*', 302 (1802 version).
- 225 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 57.
- 226 *Ibid.*, 60, 61, 64, 65, 70.
- 227 John Keble, trans. Edward Kershaw Francis, *Lectures on Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912 (1841)), 8.
- 228 Keble, *Lectures on Poetry*, 13–14, 22, 33; Emma Francis, "'Healing Relief . . . Without Detriment to Modest Reserve . . .': Keble, women's poetry and Victorian cultural theory", ed. Kirstie Blair, *John Keble in Context* (London: Anthem, 2004), 116–24: 118.
- 229 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 90.
- 230 For example A. V. Dicey, *Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1981 (1905)), 331.
- 231 Michael Scrivener, 'Literature and politics', ed. Keymer and Mee, *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature 1740–1830*, 43–60: 44.
- 232 Emma Mason, "'Her Silence Speaks": Keble's female heirs', ed. Blair, *John Keble in Context*, 125–41.

- 233 John Ruskin, *Modern Poets, Volume I: Of General Principles, and of Truth* (Boston: Adamant, 2000), 218–26; cf. Elizabeth K. Helsinger, ‘Ruskin on Wordsworth: the Victorian critic in Romantic country’, *Studies in Romanticism* 17–3, Summer 1978, 267; Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians*, 107.
- 234 M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971 (1953)); on the idea of healing in Mill, see 333–5; on eighteenth-century legacy for need for common feelings, see 103–44; cf. Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 7.
- 235 Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians*, 119, 145, 174, 178.
- 236 Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*, 143; Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians*, 168–203.
- 237 For example Robert Browning, ‘Fra Lippo Lippi’, *Selected Poems* (London: Penguin, 2000 (1855)), 62–72; a more biographical and patchy but usefully ambivalent account of the influence is John Haydn Baker, *Browning and Wordsworth* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004).
- 238 For example Stephen, *Hours in a Library*, this also starts with a long canonizing list of epigraphs, vii–xiii; cf. John Dover Wilson, *Leslie Stephen and Matthew Arnold as Critics of Wordsworth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939); Stephen is placed as a key reviving figure who both re-Anglicizes Wordsworth and describes him as having the quality to bring between the sensations of the child and the reason of the man, for example 43.
- 239 Knights, *The Idea of the Clerisy*, 1, 228; F. R. Leavis, *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture* (Cambridge: Minority Press, 1930).
- 240 Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, 9–20.
- 241 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and Anti-Christ* (London: Penguin, 1990 (1889)), 80.
- 242 Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians*, 158.
- 243 Raymond Williams, ‘Realism and the contemporary novel’, *Universities and Left Review* 4, Summer 1958, 23–5.
- 244 Cf. Francis Mulhern, *The Moment of Scrutiny* (London: New Left Books, 1979), 257; Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, 240–3.
- 245 George Eliot, *Felix Holt, The Radical* (London: Penguin, 1995 (1866)).
- 246 Felix Holt (George Eliot), ‘Address to working men’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, 1868, 103–627, 1–11; George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985 (1860)), 588–607.
- 247 George Eliot, *Adam Bede* (London: Penguin, 2008 (1859)), 193.
- 248 Woolf, *The Common Reader (First Series)*, 301, cf. 300.
- 249 *Ibid.*, 211.
- 250 Knights, *The Idea of the Clerisy*, 141.
- 251 J. S. Mill and John Bowring, ‘The works of Jeremy Bentham’, *London and Westminster Review* 7/29, August 1838, 467–506.
- 252 J. S. Mill and John Bowring, ‘The literary remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge’, *London and Westminster Review*, March 1840, 4, hereafter Mill, ‘Coleridge’.
- 253 Mill, ‘Bentham’, 4, 7.
- 254 *Ibid.*, 4, 5; cf. Mill, ‘Coleridge’, 17.
- 255 Mill, ‘Bentham’, 8, 11.
- 256 Mill, ‘Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy’, 2, 9–11.
- 257 Mill, ‘Bentham’, 25, 26, 28.
- 258 *Ibid.*, 29.
- 259 Mill, ‘Coleridge’, 257–302.
- 260 Mill, ‘Coleridge’, 3.
- 261 Knights, *The Idea of the Clerisy*, 174; Mill, *Representative Government*, n.p.: ‘if the *élite* of these classes formed part of the Parliament, by the same title as by any other of its members – by representing the same number of citizens, the same numerical fraction of the national will – their presence could give umbrage to nobody, while they would be in the position of highest vantage, both for making their opinions and councils heard on all important subjects, and for taking an active part in public business’.
- 262 Mill, ‘Coleridge’, 27, 38–9.
- 263 *Ibid.*, 14, 15–16, 33.
- 264 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 265 J. S. Mill, ‘Government’, ed. Terence Ball, *James Mill: Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992 (1820)), 1–43; 17; cf. T. R. S. Allen, *Law, Liberty, and Justice: The Legal Foundation of British Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994 (1993)), 49.
- 266 Mill, ‘Coleridge’, 22.

- 267 Ibid., 24–5.
 268 Ibid., 26.
 269 Cf. J. S. Mill, *The History of British India* (London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, 1820 (1817)).

Chapter Three

- 1 Matthew Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', ed. Stefan Collini, *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 (1861)), 37.
- 2 Chris Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions: Constitutions and State Legitimacy in Historical-Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 155.
- 3 Ibid., 152.
- 4 Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000 (1992)), 135–45.
- 5 Carlyle quoted in Christopher Harvie, *A Floating Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 26.
- 6 On my distinction between *action* and *activity* or mere happenings, here as elsewhere, see John Macmurray, *The Self as Agent* (London: Faber, 1995 (1957)), in which the key term is described in terms of mutual recognition as historical being.
- 7 Cf. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society* (London: Hogarth, 1992 (1958)), 71–3.
- 8 Most influential and field-breaking, is György Lukács, trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell, *The Historical Novel* (London: Merlin, 1962 (1957)), 30–63.
- 9 Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution* (London: Modern Library, 2002 (1837)), 753–4.
- 10 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 79; E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1991 (1963)), 781–905.
- 11 Thomas Carlyle, *The Writings of Thomas Carlyle, 30 vols, Vol. X: Past and Present* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1843).
- 12 Carlyle, *Past and Present*, 34.
- 13 Carlyle, *Past and Present*, 36; later in 'Democracy' in the same volume, Carlyle would stress, like Coleridge, the need for the individual to restrain liberty, 201–21: 215.
- 14 Michael Gardiner, *The Return of England in English Literature* (London: Palgrave, 2012), 31–5; the poem is G. K. Chesterton, 'The secret people', 1907.
- 15 Carlyle, *Past and Present*, 159.
- 16 Ibid., 265.
- 17 On reformed examinations for service in the East India Company 1855, and the gradual growth of influence from the 1850s–80s of the 1853 India Act's plans to open access to competitive examination, see Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848–1932* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 70–2.
- 18 Carlyle, *Past and Present* 14, 99.
- 19 Ibid., 75.
- 20 Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1898 (1841)), for example 41.
- 21 Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's School Days* (London: Penguin, 1994 (1857)); cf. Harvie, *A Floating Commonwealth*, 185.
- 22 Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 103.
- 23 Ibid., 1, 104.
- 24 Ibid., 164.
- 25 Ibid., 180–3, 189–90; Carlyle's almost universal use of the term English for British, even to describe Robert Burns, is of course typical of the aspiration of mid-century Scottish entrepreneurs, cultural or financial.
- 26 Arnold, 'Culture and Anarchy', 99.
- 27 Matthew Arnold, 'Democracy', ed. Collini, *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings*, 1–25: 1–2.
- 28 Ibid., 4.
- 29 Ibid., 5, 8.
- 30 Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 18–58.
- 31 Arnold, 'Democracy', 18.
- 32 Ibid., 23.

- 33 Ibid., 14–15.
- 34 Ibid., 16–17.
- 35 Ibid., 18; Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 24–5 et passim; cf. F. R. Leavis, *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture* (Cambridge: Minority Press, 1930).
- 36 Arnold, 'Democracy', 20.
- 37 Ibid., 1–25.
- 38 Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', 26–51: 31; cf. Marilyn Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and Its Background* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982 (1981)), 58. It is also worth noting the similarities and differences of this model of dissociation from that of Agamben trans. Liz Heron, *Infancy and History: On the Destruction of Experience* (London: Verso, 2007 (1978)); for Giorgio Agamben, our perception of the relationship between language and experience has diminished; for Eliot, an affective presence has been lost.
- 39 Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', 37.
- 40 Ibid., 34.
- 41 Matthew Arnold, 'Culture and anarchy: an essay in practical and social criticism', ed. Collini, *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 53–187: 68, 99.
- 42 Ibid., 79.
- 43 Ibid., 55, 59.
- 44 Ibid., 61, 62, 70; on 'Education', see 159.
- 45 Ibid., 98, 109.
- 46 Ibid., 62.
- 47 Ibid., 161.
- 48 Ibid., 154–8, 183.
- 49 Ibid., 185; on 'Barbarians', see 104.
- 50 Ibid., 64, 67.
- 51 Ibid., 127, 134, 136–7.
- 52 Ibid., 169, 177.
- 53 Ibid., 178, 181.
- 54 Ibid., 68.
- 55 Ibid., 119.
- 56 Ibid., 104, 114; on 'Barbarianism of nonconformist schools', see 118.
- 57 Ibid., 71, 73, 78.
- 58 Ibid., 79, 83.
- 59 Ibid., 87.
- 60 See for example Alan Lovell, 'The scholarship boy', *Universities and Left Review* 2, Summer 1957, 33–4; Raymond Williams, *Border Country* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2002 (1960)).
- 61 Burke, *Reflections* quoted in Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 1.
- 62 Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 27.
- 63 Ibid., 34; cf. Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain* (London: New Left Books, 1977), 11–37.
- 64 Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 64; John Churton Collins, *The Study of English Literature: A Plea for Its Recognition and Organization at the Universities* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1891).
- 65 Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 88.
- 66 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, Ch. XVII; the phrase itself is used in Ch. XV and unpacked in Ch. XVII; online version: www.gutenberg.org/files/6081/6081-h/6081-h.htm#2HCH0001.
- 67 John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 (1859)); on the export of *On Liberty* through Asia after the Opium Wars and via globalizing economics; see for example Hiraakawa Sukehiro, 'Japan's turn to the West', ed. Marius B. Jansen, *The Cambridge History of Japan, Vol. 5: The Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 432–98.
- 68 A. V. Dicey et al., *A Plea for Democracy: An Edited Selection from Essays on Reform* (London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1967 (1867)); Harvie, *A Floating Commonwealth*, 17.
- 69 Charles Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867* (London: Macmillan, 1870 (1868)).
- 70 Dilke, *Greater Britain*, 1–199.
- 71 Ibid., 199.
- 72 Ibid., 2.

- 73 Ibid., 548; the chapter on 'English learning' is 543–9; cf. J. R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1971 (1883)), 185–200.
- 74 John Cross, introduction to Seeley, *The Expansion of England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1972 (1883)), xi–xxvii: xii.
- 75 Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 34–6.
- 76 Ibid., 38.
- 77 Ibid., 38, 48–50; on the displacement of England, see Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 3–40.
- 78 Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 159.
- 79 Ibid., 88; England is 'a distinct organism within Greater Britain', 202.
- 80 Ibid., 99.
- 81 Ibid., 126, 174.
- 82 J. R. Seeley, *The Growth of British Policy, Vol. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897 (1895)).
- 83 Ibid., 572.
- 84 Ibid., 314.
- 85 Ibid., 329, 333.
- 86 On the apparent intellectual victory of the anti-federalist Dicey over Gladstone's federal-colonial model for Ireland, and the ensuing sovereignty confusions of the 1910s, cf. Martin Kendle, *Federal Britain: A History* (London: Routledge, 1997), 58–78.
- 87 A. V. Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule* (Richmond, Surrey: Richmond Publishing, 1973 (1886)), 11.
- 88 Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule*, 16; cf. Michael Greenwell and Andrew Tickell, *Scottish Independence Podcast 2*, 21 September 2012; online at: <http://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2012/09/21/scottish-independence-podcast-2/>.
- 89 Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule*, 203.
- 90 Ibid., 29–30.
- 91 Ibid., 120, 170, 171, 183; cf. Kendle, *Federal Britain*, 30–3; James Mitchell, *Devolution in the UK* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 195–208.
- 92 Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule*, 186.
- 93 T. R. S. Allen, *Law, Liberty, and Justice: The Legal Foundation of British Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994 (1993)), 9; T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the individual talent', *Selected Essays* (London: Faber, 1999 (1919)), 13–22.
- 94 Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 (1867)); Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule*, 169; Iain McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 16.
- 95 Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule*, 71.
- 96 Ibid., 261.
- 97 Ibid., 76, 159, 164, 168.
- 98 A. V. Dicey, *An Introduction to the Law of the Constitution* (London: Macmillan, 1979 (1885)), 1.
- 99 Ibid., 1.
- 100 Ibid., 60; cf. Kendle, *Federal Britain*, 47.
- 101 Ibid., 24.
- 102 Ibid., 73.
- 103 Ibid., 422, 441.
- 104 Ibid., 127, 133.
- 105 Ibid., 135.
- 106 Ibid., 287; there are struggles to modify this stark Diceyan distinction between English Common Law and *droit administratif* as early as the movement I am calling British modernism, which works through a largely Eng Lit idea of the meritocracy to argue that an administrative class is indeed necessary, but primarily in order to work out the extents of relative roles under the informal constitution; cf. Jeffrey Jowell, 'The rule of law and its underlying values', ed. Jeffrey Jowell and Dawn Oliver, *The Changing Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11–34: 14.
- 107 Cf. Kendle, *Federal Britain*, 47.
- 108 Dicey, *An Introduction to the Law of the Constitution*, 146, 149; cf. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1973 (1951)), 207–21.
- 109 Cf. Allen, *Law, Liberty, and Justice*, 93; Gilles Deleuze, 'Postscript on the societies of control', *October* 59, Winter 1992, 3–7.
- 110 Dicey, *An Introduction to the Law of the Constitution*, 199.

- 111 The Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) regularly recommends policy on the interpolated basis of a naturally Tory England, but in the past couple of years has turned ambivalent and agnostic, sometimes recognizing the longer-term constitutional issue, for example Nick Pearce, 'Learning English: what Gladstone and Disraeli have to teach us about the English question', 17 January 2012; online at: www.ippr.org/?p=636&option=com_wordpress&Itemid=17; *The Guardian*, mainstream voice of the Labour Party, take the mapping on British onto English voting almost uniformly for granted, for example Stewart Lee, 'Shame on you, Alex Salmond, for selling us out to the Bullingdon Club', *Guardian*, 5 February 2012; the 2010–11 movement of Blue Labour was based on a revival of 'English nationalism' which really meant British nationalism and was driven by fear of a Tory UK; on the post-war psephology of this, cf. Gerry Hassan, 'The future of "The Global Kingdom": post-unionism, post-nationalism and the politics of voice', ed. Claire Westall and Michael Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England*, (London: Palgrave, 2013), 31–45.
- 112 Dicey, *An Introduction to the Law of the Constitution*, 239.
- 113 *Ibid.*, 248.
- 114 A. V. Dicey, *Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1981 (1905)), 63.
- 115 *Ibid.*, 7, 81, 95; Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', 26–51: 36.
- 116 Dicey, *Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion*, 17, 27.
- 117 *Ibid.*, 17, 173, 305.
- 118 *Ibid.*, 173–4.
- 119 *Ibid.*, 176, 181–2.
- 120 *Ibid.*, 183, 209.
- 121 *Ibid.*, 427.
- 122 *Ibid.*, 210, 306.
- 123 *Ibid.*, 414–15.
- 124 *Ibid.*, 440, 461–2.
- 125 *Ibid.*, 33.
- 126 *Ibid.*, 361–2, 391.
- 127 *Ibid.*, 366.
- 128 On rule of law as an immaterial ideal cf. Martin Loughlin, *Foundations of Public Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 337.
- 129 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 33–4; in *Union and Unionisms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Colin Kidd takes issue with Stair's separateness from *English Common Law*, 175, citing MacCormick himself – 'Stair as analytical jurist', ed. D. Walker, *Stair Tercentenary Studies* (Edinburgh: Stair Society, 1981), 187–99.
- 130 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 34.
- 131 *Ibid.*, 19–20.
- 132 *Ibid.*, 21.
- 133 *Ibid.*, 44, 111; for an extended discussion of Dicey and the Ulster coup d'état, see 100–27, 142–54.
- 134 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 26; cf. King on Jennings's apologia for Dicey: Dicey is right but parliament is not 'sovereign' since the people could (somehow) overrule it; Jennings appreciates anti-democratic possibilities in the name of the will of the people, and his parliament 'shares sovereignty with the people', 35–6.
- 135 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 9, 131.
- 136 *Ibid.*, 20, 134.
- 137 *Ibid.*, 33, 209.
- 138 On the twentieth-century rise of the distinctness of Scots Law as a radical tradition (a pejorative account), see Colin Kidd, *Union and Unionisms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 198–9; cf. McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 136–8.
- 139 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 143, 227, 234; this differs slightly from the usual historical development of nation-states in which the largest constituent power overwhelms the smaller ones: Scottish nationhood was bequeathed a kind of ethnocultural discreteness, which was even *encouraged* from the centre of government, while its constitutional discreteness was conclusively culturally buried – there were no cantons or prefectures with their own statutory legislatures, but, as 1998 devolution confirmed, the assumption that all legal matters were automatically 'reserved' to an extrinsic area.
- 140 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 236; cf. Tom Nairn, *Pariah: Misfortunes of the British State* (London: Verso, 2002), 22–6; Anthony King, *The British Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 80–90.

- 141 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 316.
- 142 Ibid., 233–40; Peter Osborne, *The Triumph of the Political Class* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2007).
- 143 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, 313.
- 144 Ibid., 178; cf. Michael Keating, *The Independence of Scotland: Self-government and the Shifting Politics of Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 40.
- 145 McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, viii–ix, 137; Neil MacCormick, *Questioning Sovereignty: Law, State, and Nation in the European Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002 (1999)), esp. 49–62; Neil Walker, ed., *MacCormick's Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).
- 146 Here as elsewhere, post-imperial has a slightly different meaning from post-colonial (which in turn has a different meaning from the cultural tendencies that are postcolonial); imperialism is taken to be an ongoing cultural and economic attitude which largely lost its grip throughout the twentieth century then took another step down in 2008, but which has not disappeared.
- 147 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 1.
- 148 Ibid., 54, 162; at the time of completion of this script, one survey had just found that in the north of England, the Liberal Democrats who formed part of the ruling coalition were polling lower than the Scottish National Party, despite the fact that the SNP did not field any candidates there: *Newsnet Scotland*, 30 September 2012; online at: www.newsnetScotland.com/index.php/scottish-politics/5952-polling-woes-worsen-for-nick-clegg-as-party-trail-snp-in-england.
- 149 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 23; cf. Kendle, *Federal Britain*, 30–3.

Chapter Four

- 1 Chris Baldick's account remains authoritative on the influence of the India Act on university English: *The Social Mission of English Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 70–82; the full text of the Northcote-Trevelyan Report is at: www.civilservant.org.uk/northcotetrevelyan.pdf.
- 2 On the use of the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act to unify within Britain, see Lindsay Paterson, *Scottish Education in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 1–2; R. D. Anderson, *Scottish Education since the Referendum* (Glasgow: Economic and Social History Society of Scotland, 1997), 8–9.
- 3 Cf. Hilary Sheedman, 'Defining institutions: the endowed grammar schools and the systematisation of English secondary education', ed. Detlef K. Muller, Fritz Ringer and Brian Simon, *The Rise of the Modern Educational System: Structural Chance and Social Reproduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 113–34.
- 4 Matthew Arnold is cited as comparing a literacy rate of 2 per cent to 57 per cent among recruits in Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 92–3.
- 5 Cf., for example ed. Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel, *Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995); Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (London: Palgrave, 2008 (1995)); Hans Bertens, 'World Literature and postmodernism', ed. Theo D'haen and David Damrosch, *The Routledge Companion to World Literature* (London: Routledge, 2011), 204–12.
- 6 Peter Clarke, *Keynes: The Twentieth Century's Most Influential Economist* (Bloomsbury, 2010 (2009)), 176.
- 7 For example Simon Featherstone, *Englishness: Twentieth-Century Popular Culture and the Forming of English Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 9–27, 67–83; Michael Gardiner, *The Return of England in English Literature* (London: Palgrave, 2012), 17–54.
- 8 Cf. David Marquand, *Britain Since 1918: The Strange Case of British Democracy* (London: Phoenix, 2009 (2008)), 42.
- 9 George Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England* (Edison, NJ: Transaction, 2010 (1935)); cf. Christopher Harvie, *A Floating Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 235, 260.
- 10 On the turn to the Newbolt Report and its embedding in English Literature, cf. Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 92–8; on the ambivalence of the 1921 Newbolt Report, cf. Lynda Mugglestone, "'Proper English" and the politics of standard speech', ed. David Morley and Kevin Robins, *British Cultural Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 181–94: 186–9.
- 11 Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, 93–8.

- 12 Ibid., 102; the origins of the phrase *enemy within* are debated but are typically linked to anti-British forces within Britain, whether Jacobin, fifth-columnist, or, most tellingly for the current situation, the anti-communist Thatcherite description of Trade Unionists; cf. Ian MacGregor and Rodney Taylor, *The Enemies Within: The Story of the Miners' Strike, 1984–5* (London: William Collins and Son, 1986); George Sampson, *English for the English: A Chapter on National Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921).
- 13 F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (London: Faber, 2008 (1948)), 37.
- 14 Ibid., 18–19.
- 15 Edited with an introduction by F. R. Leavis, *Mill on Bentham and Coleridge* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1950), 1.
- 16 Leavis, *Mill on Bentham and Coleridge*, 5; the otherwise rational Bentham is described via Coleridge as reliant on a 'religion of humanity', 15, 23.
- 17 Q. D. Leavis, *Fiction and the Reading Public* (London: Bellew, 1990 (1932)).
- 18 Virginia Woolf, 'Defoe', *The Common Reader (First Series)* (London: Hogarth, 1968 (1925)), 75; Woolf's *Orlando* also makes an attempt at the preservation of the Elizabethan estate (literary and landed), in a thinly-veiled autobiography of the conservative writer Vita Sackville-West: *Orlando: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 (1928)).
- 19 Woolf, *The Common Reader (Second Series)* (London: Hogarth, 1965 (1932)), 258.
- 20 Woolf, *The Common Reader (First Series)*, 11.
- 21 F. R. Leavis, *For Continuity* (Cambridge: Gordon Fraser/Minority Press, 1933); L. C. Knights and Donald Culver, 'A manifesto', *Scrutiny* 1–1, 1932, 2–7.
- 22 Cf. Knights and Culver, 'A manifesto'; John Spiers, 'The contemporary situation in Scotland', *Scrutiny* 5–2, September 1936, 188–94.
- 23 Cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 31–5; another 'modernist' form which hankers after the organic English village despite constitutional quietism is the 'fiction-travelogue' (of which H. V. Morton's *In Search of England* is often taken as the blueprint), which is described here and in Simon Featherstone's *Englishness*.
- 24 Especially I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1929).
- 25 Ed. Wyndham Lewis, *Blast!* 1–2 (1914–15); online at: www.modjournal.org/render.php?id=1143209523824844&view=mjp_object.
- 26 Here as elsewhere I am careful to distinguish between the radical-right understanding of the minority and either that of the era of multiculturalism or the Deleuzian sense of a language-community working within a larger language.
- 27 Cf. Michael Bell, *F. R. Leavis* (London: Routledge, 1998), 20; Richard Storer, *F. R. Leavis* (London: Routledge, 2009), 37.
- 28 T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1920); cf. Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 18, 30.
- 29 T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (London: Faber, 1999), 13.
- 30 George Sturt, *Change in the Village* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1912); cf. F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson, *Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness* (Cambridge: Gordon Fraser, 1933).
- 31 T. S. Eliot, Burnt Norton, in *Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968 (1936)), 7–13, for example 'To be conscious is to be in time/ But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden . . . / Be remembered', 10; 'Only by the form, the pattern, / Can words or music reach the stillness', 12; cf. Virginia Woolf, 'A Sketch of the past', collected in *Moments of Time: A Collection of Autobiographical Writing* (London: Pimlico, 2002 (1938)), 78–160.
- 32 Matthew Arnold, 'The function of criticism at the present time', ed. Stefan Collini, *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 (1861)), 41.
- 33 On labour time, 'clock time', as the basis for a national collective, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 (1983)), 24–5.
- 34 Eliot, Burnt Norton, 11.
- 35 Ibid., 8.

- 36 On Leavis's method as hermeneutically experimental, see Michael Bell, *F. R. Leavis* (London: Routledge, 1988); Michael Bell, 'F. R. Leavis', ed. A. Walton Litz, Louis Menand and Lawrence Rainey, *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 389–422; Storer, *F. R. Leavis*.
- 37 Jed Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 43–6, 183–95; cf. Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working-Class Life* (London: Penguin, 2009 (1957)); Raymond Williams, 'Working-class culture', *Universities and Left Review* 2, Summer 1957, 29–32.
- 38 Esty, *A Shrinking Island*, 9; cf. Tim Edenson, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 13.
- 39 Esty, *A Shrinking Island*, 14, 43–6.
- 40 Ibid., 7; cf. Peter J. Kalliney, *Cities of Affluence and Anger: A Literary Geography of Modern Englishness* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 20–1; cf. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1991 (1963)).
- 41 Cf. Jörn Weingärtner, *The Arts as a Weapon of War: Britain and the Shaping of National Morale in the Second World War* (London: Tauris Academic, 2006).
- 42 Cf. Michael Rosie and Pille Petersoo, 'Drifting apart?: Media in Scotland and England after devolution', ed. David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer, *National Identity, Nationalism, and Constitutional Change* (London: Palgrave, 2009), 122–43.; Joan McAlpine, 'When did the media lose its Scottish accent of the mind?', ed. Gerry Hassan and Rosie Ilett, *Radical Scotland: Arguments for Self-Determination* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2011); Michael Gardiner, 'Nationalise the BBC', *openDemocracy*, 16 July 2012; online at: www.opendemocracy.net/ourbeeb/michael-gardiner/nationalise-bbc; this last also makes the point that the 'No' campaign on Scottish independence took its chief executive from what was an apparently neutral British-national BBC environment: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-18610027.
- 43 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 24–5.
- 44 Thomas Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain, 1922–53* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 3, 6, 21–43, 72.
- 45 Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain*, 26, 86.
- 46 Cf. Hugh MacDiarmid, *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2008 (1926)); Scott Lyall, *Hugh MacDiarmid's Poetry and Politics of Place* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 104–5; Lewis Grassie Gibbon, *Cloud Howe*, ed. *A Scots Quair* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1995 (1933)), 241–478; cf. Colin Kidd, *Union and Unionisms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 257–99.
- 47 Robert Mackay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 20–1, 36.
- 48 Cf. H. G. Wells, *The Shape of Things to Come: The Ultimate Revolution* (London: Penguin, 2005 (1933)); cf. William Cameron Menzies, dir., and H. G. Wells, wr., *Things to Come* (London Film, 1936); Marice Elvey, dir., Noel Pemberton-Billigton and L'Estrange Fawcett, *High Treason* (Gaumont, 1929); Robert Knauss, *War in the Air* (London: J. Hamilton, 1932).
- 49 Harry Watt, dir., J. B. Priestley, wr., *Britain at Bay* (GPO, 1940); cf. Anthony Havelock-Allen, dir, and Leslie Howard and A. G. Macdonald, wr., *From the Four Corners* (Ministry of Information, 1942).
- 50 J. B. Priestley, *Postscripts* (London: Heinemann, 1940), vi, 40, 50; cf. Weingärtner, *The Arts as a Weapon of War*, 16; cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 36–411.
- 51 Humphrey Jennings, dir. and wr., *Words for Battle* (Crown Film Unit, 1941).
- 52 Mackay, *Half the Battle*, 142.
- 53 Cf. Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Mackay, *Half the Battle*, 18–19.
- 54 John Baxter, dir., and John Baxter, Barbara Emary, Geoffrey Orme and J. B. Priestley, wr. *Let the People Sing* (Rock Studios, 1942); Basil Dearden, dir., and J. B. Priestley, Basil Dearden, and Sidney Cole, wr., *They Came to a City* (Ealing, 1944).
- 55 J. M. Keynes, 'Art and the state', ed. Clough Williams-Ellis, *Britain and the Beast: Essays by Various Authors on the Preservation of Rural Amenities* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1937), 1–7: 4.
- 56 H. J. Massingham, 'Our inheritance from the past', ed. Clough Williams-Ellis, *Britain and the Beast*, 8–31: 9, 11.
- 57 Massingham, 'Our inheritance from the past', 25, 29.

- 58 Weingärtner, *The Arts as a Weapon of War*, 161.
- 59 Ibid., 81–8, 133; Keynes, ‘Art and the state’, 1–7.
- 60 Ibid., 161; cf. Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain*, 8–13.
- 61 On the organization of the BBC, cf. Dan Hind, ‘A corporation run by bankers, not journalists: who are the BBC Trust?’, *openDemocracy*, 11 July 2012; online at: www.opendemocracy.net/ourbeeb/dan-hind/corporation-run-by-bankers-not-journalists-who-are-bbc-trust.
- 62 Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain*, 90.
- 63 Ibid., 135, 140.
- 64 Dan Hind, *The Return of the Public: Democracy, Power and the Case for Media Reform* (London: Verso, 2012), 55.
- 65 The term state nationalism was popularized in the British case by for example James Kellas, *The Scottish Political System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989 (1973)), 5–6; this ideology becomes more obvious in a period of constitutional negotiation.
- 66 Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain*, 58–61, 70, 96.
- 67 Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 51–3.
- 68 Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Winchester: Zero, 2011); cf. Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 154–5.
- 69 Robert Skidelsky, *Keynes* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 41.
- 70 Ed. Donald Moggridge, *Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes Vol. VII: A Treatise on Money Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973 (1936)); cf. Skidelsky, *Keynes*, 42.
- 71 Clarke, *Keynes*, 106; cf. Keynes, *A Treatise on Money Part 2*, 137; here Keynes also links a great period of England’s economy to the Shakespearean period of English culture.
- 72 D. E. Moggridge, *Keynes* (London: Fontana, 1976), 42–3.
- 73 J. M. Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes Vol. VII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973 (1936)), 329, 379.
- 74 Clarke, *Keynes*, 65; the moral ill of holding gold is described in the *General Theory*, 337; on the return to the Gold Standard, cf. J. M. Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill* (London: Hogarth, 1925); for a discussion of the ‘exchange rate timing’ assumption, cf. J. K. Galbraith, *The Age of Uncertainty, Part 7: The Mandarin Revolution* (BBC TV, 1977).
- 75 Clarke, *Keynes*, 51.
- 76 J. M. Keynes, *A Treatise on Probability* (London: Macmillan, 1957 (1921)), 5; on shorting, cf. Clarke, *Keynes*.
- 77 On positivism – economic, linguistic and constitutional – in mid-century Cambridge, cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 104–9.
- 78 Cf. Chris Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions: Constitutions and State Legitimacy in Historical-Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 46.
- 79 Moggridge, *Keynes*, 32; Keynes, *General Theory*, 247.
- 80 Skidelsky, *Keynes*, 40.
- 81 On the guiding influence of the state as a positive when understood in terms of gradual reform which doesn’t break with tradition, cf. Keynes, *General Theory*, 372–81.
- 82 Skidelsky, *Keynes*, 93, 121, 124; cf. Keynes, *General Theory*, 242–3.
- 83 Oswald Mosley, *Revolution by Reason: An Account of the Birmingham Proposals, Together with an Analysis of the Financial Policy of the Present Government which Has Led to Their Great Attack upon Wages* (Leicester: Blackfriars, 2005 (1925)).
- 84 Robert Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes, Vol. 2, The Economist as Saviour* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 246.
- 85 Harvie, *A Floating Commonwealth*, 15; G. M. Young, ed., *Early-Victorian England 1830–1865: The Portrait of an Age* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951 (1932)); F. R. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2010 (1942)).
- 86 Anthony Crosland, *The Future of Socialism* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956); Stuart Hall, Gabriel Pearson, Ralph Samuel, and Charles Taylor, ‘The Insiders’ series, from *Universities and Left Review* 3, Winter 1957; David Marquand, *The Decline of the Public* (London: Polity, 2004), 27, 69, 115; cf. Michael Barratt-Brown, ‘The controllers: a research document on the British power elite’, *Universities and Left Review* 5, Autumn 1958, 53–61; 6, Spring 1959, 38–41; 7, 1959, 43–9.
- 87 Colin Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism* (London: Polity, 2011), 12.
- 88 The phrase is taken from the challenge to the orthodoxies of British managerial economics in *openDemocracy*’s series *Uneconomics*, from 9 February 2012 onwards; online at: www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/collections/uneconomics.

- 89 Cf. Galbraith, *The Age of Uncertainty, Part 7*; for a contemporary Marxist account of the gold standard as a marker of financial prestige and so of a British *lack of* development, see Leon Trotsky, trans. Allan Clinton, 'Where is Britain going', 1975 (1925), online version: www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/britain/wibg/index.htm.
- 90 Skidelsky, *Keynes*, 96, 102 – this guide to Keynes also describes his strong turn to the national-British, 'let finance be primarily national'; cf. Galbraith, *The Age of Uncertainty, Part 7*; Galbraith concentrates on the timing and exchange rate in Keynes's criticisms of the 'treasury view' of leaving the Gold Standard – but with a subtextual consideration of Keynes's attachment to fiat currency as a British 'national' unifier; in his obituary, Joseph Schumpeter describes how specific Keynes's work was to 'English' issues – cited in Clarke, *Keynes*, 164.
- 91 Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 57.
- 92 Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (London: Routledge, 1989).
- 93 Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 58.
- 94 This speech is often cited and represents an epochal shift away from the prior form of Keynesianism (without, of course, acknowledging any sovereignty implications): 'We have been living on borrowed time . . . We used to think you could spend your way out of a recession and increasing employment by cutting taxes and boosting spending. I tell you in all candour that this option no longer exists, and that insofar as it ever did exist, it only worked by injecting a bigger dose of inflation into the economy, followed by a higher dose of unemployment as the next step.'
- 95 The meritocracy is famously seen as dystopian and totalizing soon after the Suez Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Hungary and the crystallization of the New Left, in Michael Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy, 1870–2033: An Essay on Education and Equality* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1958); for a post-2008 sceptical account see Richard Seymour, *The Meaning of David Cameron* (Winchester: Zero, 2010), 45–61.
- 96 Graeme Cooke, Adam Lent, Anthony Painter and Hopi Sen, *In the Black Labour*, Policy Network, 2 December 2011: www.policy-network.net/publications/4101/-In-the-black-Labour.
- 97 Andrew Gamble, *The Spectre at the Feast: Capitalist Crisis and the Politics of Recession* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 46, 49.
- 98 The call for the economy to function 'permanently as a quasi-boom' is in Keynes, *General Theory*, 322; cf. Iain McLean, *What's Wrong with the British Constitution?*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 191.
- 99 Gamble, *The Spectre at the Feast*, 57.
- 100 *Ibid.*, 164.
- 101 Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions*, 3.
- 102 Ivor Jennings, *The Law and the Constitution* (London: University of London Press, 1959 (1933)); cf. Jowell, 'The rule of law and its underlying values', 11–34: 14–15.
- 103 Anthony King, *The British Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 36, 46.
- 104 Ivor Jennings, *The British Constitution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961 (1941)).
- 105 T. R. S. Allen, *Law, Liberty, and Justice: The Legal Foundation of British Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994 (1993)), 15; see Anthony King on Lord Atkin arguing against the Lords on martial law in 1942 and so showing common law (in the Orwellian period) to be more executive than the executive; King, *The British Constitution*, 116–17; there is a discussion of the condition known as 'post-democracy', a phrase popularized by Peter Mandelson, in Colin Crouch, *Coping With Post-Democracy* (London: Fabian Society, 2000).
- 106 Winston Churchill quoted in Marquand, *Britain Since 1918*, 79.
- 107 Jennings, *The British Constitution*, 1, 99.
- 108 *Ibid.*, 93, 120.
- 109 *Ibid.*, 11, 18.
- 110 *Ibid.*, 73.
- 111 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 112 King, *The British Constitution*, 72, 74; David Donald and Alan Hutton, 'Economic self-determination: towards a political economy of Scottish citizenship', ed. Hassan and Ilett, *Radical Scotland: Arguments for Self-Determination*, 53; the first results of the Scottish government's (minority) 'National conversation' would be published in November 2009, and would stress public participation.
- 113 King, *The British Constitution*, 81.
- 114 *Ibid.*, 89, 179.
- 115 *Ibid.*, 1–2; 64.

- 116 Ibid., 49–50.
- 117 Ibid., 54, 56.
- 118 Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 53, 99; cf. Marquand, *The Decline of the Public*, 27; cf. Marquand, ‘Lucky Jim and the Labour Party’, Spring 1957, I-1, 57–60.
- 119 King, *The British Constitution*, 251.
- 120 Ibid., 362.
- 121 Jennings, *The British Constitution*, 188, 202.
- 122 Ibid., 43.
- 123 Cf. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*.
- 124 Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society* (London: Hogarth, 1992 (1958)), xiv; on the etymologies of culture and cultivation, cf. Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1994), 27–30.
- 125 Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*; cf. Raymond Williams, ‘Working class culture’, *Universities and Left Review* 2, Summer 1957, 29–32.
- 126 Williams, *Culture and Society*, 8–9.
- 127 Ibid., 235, 243, 252–4, 308, 315.
- 128 Ibid., 319, 322.
- 129 Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965 (1961)), 61–3; Williams, with a new foreword by Anthony Barnett, *The Long Revolution* (London: Parthian, 2011 (1961)).
- 130 Williams, *The Long Revolution*, 306.
- 131 Williams, *The Long Revolution*, 306, 307, 314; on social and psychological realism, see Williams, ‘Realism and the contemporary novel’, *Universities and Left Review* 4, Summer 1958, 23–25; cf. John Wain, ‘Along the tightrope’, ed. Tom Maschler, *Declaration* (London: McGibbon and Kee, 1957), 85–106; cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 76–109.
- 132 Williams, *The Long Revolution*, 364.
- 133 Ibid., 321–34, 352, 378–80; on the move from Blue Streak to Skybolt and the imperial connotations, see for example Marquand, *Britain Since 1918*, 171–2.
- 134 Williams, *The Long Revolution*, 345–6, 353, 361.
- 135 Peter Clarke provides a convincing account of Thatcher’s paleo-Keynesianism: “No, no, no”, she told one interviewer in 1979, “I am afraid Keynesianism has gone mad and it wasn’t in the least little bit what Keynes thought”. Nor was this a stray remark – she returned happily to this theme on numerous occasions’ (*Keynes*, 17); on Keynes’s move to investments as a kind of marriage, see Robert Skidelsky, *Keynes: Return of the Master* (New York: Public Affairs, 2010 (2009)), 72. The ‘marriage’ – or ‘divorce’ – metaphor is a wearied one within journalistic presentations of Anglo-Scottish Union, to illustrate the apparent and legalistic duties of Union. Public choice theory stems in large part from James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock, *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1962), which should probably be seen in relation to Thatcherism as is the Hayek of popular legend, especially as it impacted on advisors to the Conservative Party and the Centre for Policy Studies in the mid-1970s; cf. also Adam Curtis, *The Trap: Whatever Happened to Our Dreams of Freedom?* (BBC, 2007).
- 136 Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 2001 (1944)).
- 137 Ibid., 235.
- 138 Ibid., 231.
- 139 Ibid., 246.
- 140 Ibid., 26.
- 141 Ibid., 264.
- 142 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1973 (1951)), 207–21.
- 143 On the need to revisit Arendt’s own underestimation of the immediately post-World War Two expansion of British Unionist bureaucracy, see Graham MacPhee, ‘Anticipating the neoliberal nation: Philip Larkin and the displacement of Englishness’, ed. Claire Westall and Michael Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England* (London: Palgrave, 2013), 130–44; on the changes to ‘English ethnicity’ to favour moves to language and culture, see Robert Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).
- 144 Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Knopf, 1977); cf. Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 100; the first CPS papers date from 1974, and they begin to become ascendant after the 1976 admission of stagflation; also sometimes underestimated is the effect of Richard Dawkins’s *The Selfish Gene* (1976), which underlines the naturalness of self-maximization on a philosophical level: Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006 (1976)).

- 145 Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man*, 337–40.
- 146 Marquand, *The Decline of the Public*, 26, 34.
- 147 *Ibid.*, 68, 69; on Giddens and risk management, see Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (London: Polity, 1998), 63–4; Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 51–4.
- 148 Lord Kilbrandon, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Constitution* (London: HMSO Cmnd. 5460, 1973); Labour Party, *Devolution: The English Dimension* (London: HMSO Cmnd. 5732, 1976); cf. James Mitchell, *Devolution in the UK* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 195–208; on the long devolutionary movement and the Literary Renaissance, see Michael Gardiner, *The Cultural Roots of British Devolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 131–55; Alan Riach, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography: The Masks of the Modern Media* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 223–31; Berthold Schoene, ‘Going cosmopolitan: reconstituting Scottishness in post-devolution criticism’, ed. Schoene, *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 7–16; Michael Gardiner, ‘Literature, theory, politics: devolution as iteration’, ed. Schoene, *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature*, 43–50; Thomas Docherty, ‘The existence of Scotland’, ed. Eleanor Bell and Gavin Miller, *Scotland in Theory* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), 231–48; Cairns Craig, ‘Beyond reason – Hume, Seth, Macmurray and Scotland’s postmodernity’, ed. Bell and Miller, *Scotland and Theory*, 249–83; Cairns Craig, *Out of History: Narrative Paradigms in Scottish and British Culture* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1996); Aaron Kelly, ‘James Kelman and the deterritorialization of power’, ed. Schoene, *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 175–83.
- 149 Marquand, *The Decline of the Public*, 21, 114–17; Andrew Rawnsley, *Servants of the People* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2000); Tony Travers, *The Politics of London: Governing an Ungovernable City* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004); Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 44–8; Nicholas Jones, *Control Freaks: How New Labour Gets its Own Way* (London: Politico, 2001); the question of whether London really is a national capital – is the capital of England – is extremely murky within the constitution, and will also shade into cultural argument; here we are in need of a serious geography of capital and inheritance, of the kind done by Danny Dorling; I am not considering the metropolitan whimsy of John Lanchester, *Capital* (London: Faber and Faber, 2012).
- 150 Marquand, *The Decline of the Public*, 109, 111; on the early New Left on the Soviet invasions of Hungary, see for example Ralph Samuel and Charles Taylor, ‘A Left notebook’, *Universities and Left Review* 2, Summer 1957, 75–80; Francis Fejto, ‘Hungary and socialism’, *Universities and Left Review* 3, Winter 1958, 12–18.
- 151 Tom Nairn, *Pariah: Misfortunes of the British State* (London: Verso, 2002), 56–7, 60–71; Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, 39–53.
- 152 Marquand, *The Decline of the Public*, 81, 86, 101; cf. Thomas Docherty, *For the University: Democracy and the Future of the Institution* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 92–3.
- 153 Marquand, *The Decline of the Public*, 126–9.
- 154 Richard Wyn Jones and Tom Nairn, ‘Ukanian discussions and Homo Britannicus’, ed. Hassan and Ilett, *Radical Scotland*, 267–81: 275.
- 155 Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*, 22, 55.
- 156 *Ibid.*, 98; cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 51–4.
- 157 Cf. Paolo Virno, trans. Isabella Bertoletti, James Cascaito and Andrea Casson, *A Grammar of the Multitude* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004); John Holloway, *Crack Capitalism* (London: Pluto, 2010).
- 158 Cf. Aeron Davis, ‘Economic alternatives in the current crisis’, ed. Michael Bailey and Des Freedman, *The Assault on the Universities* (London: Pluto, 2011), 49–58: 52; Andrew Gamble, *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988); Colin Crouch, *Coping with Post-Democracy* (London: Fabian Society, 2000).
- 159 At the time of completing this thesis, the leader of the Labour Party was reinventing himself in Tory Disraelian terms as a ‘one nation’ leader at the party conference, in part via advice from ‘Blue Labour’, and so completing, in a bid for Unionist commonality, a pan-parliamentary occupation of the Disraelian ‘elect nation’ exceptionalist trope which owes much to Blake and Wordsworth; even for a repetitive politician in a soundbite era Miliand’s repetition of the phrase ‘one nation’ 44 times in a speech is extraordinary – Patrick Wintour, ‘Ed Miliband moves to claim Disraeli’s “one nation” mantle’, *The Guardian*, 2 October 2012; online at: www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2012/oct/02/ed-miliband-one-nation-speech1.

- 160 Gamble, *The Spectre at the Feast*, 37.
- 161 There is wide speculation that London is becoming the world's most unequal city; divisions are mapped as exceptionally unequal in London and New York in Daniel Dorling, *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Persists* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2010), 287–8, on concentrated divisions in housing, cf. 172–3; for Dorling, London may be the most unequal city in the developed world; cf. Gerry Hassan, 'The future of "The Global Kingdom": post-unionism, post-nationalism and the politics of voice', ed. Westall and Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England*, 31–45.
- 162 Michael Keating, *The Independence of Scotland: Self-government and the Shifting Politics of Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 27.
- 163 Cf. Gamble, *The Spectre at the Feast*, 49–51.
- 164 *Ibid.*, for example 82–3.
- 165 Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*, 91, 103.
- 166 Cf. Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 77–93.
- 167 Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*, 99, 102, 116.
- 168 *Ibid.*, 117.
- 169 *Ibid.*, 118; the description of a 'trap' here is also reminiscent of Adam Curtis's documentary of that name.
- 170 Cf. Stuart Hall, 'The great moving-right show', ed. Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques, *The Politics of Thatcherism* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1983), 19–39; Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*, 116; cf. 135.
- 171 Michael Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 31.
- 172 Compare this to the often-confused claims of bias by the 'No to Independence' campaign when the vagueness of English Common Law as a unifier is suggested, even by specialist academic lawyers who stress the lack of definitive case law to decide jurisdiction; online at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnUuwIqgWO4.
- 173 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 153; administrative separation of education in Scotland effectively ran before and pressed devolution while devolution legislation was still in the balance; after the election of New Labour in 1997, the Liberal Democrats in Holyrood were sensitive to the desire to resist fees, but this desire was pressed mostly strongly by an ascendant SNP; when fees were introduced as early as 1998, the Cubie Commission was convened in July 1999 and recommended modest graduate taxes of the English kind – which were strongly criticized by Scottish students at the time and thrown out by the SNP in 2007; this has remained one of the key planks of self-determination campaigns. There is an account of this by Aaron Dobson, 'The Cubie Report explained', *The Guardian*, 28 January 2000; online at: www.guardian.co.uk/education/2000/jan/28/tuitionfees.highereducation; I am grateful to Terry Brotherstone for a clarification of this history.

Chapter Five

- 1 Cf. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Equality Is Better for Everyone* (London: Penguin, 2010); regular surveys of and updates on inequality are provided by the Joseph Rowntree Trust, online at: www.jrf.org.uk/.
- 2 At the time of completion Olly Huitson has just published a story showing BBC coverups of NHS dysfunctionality, allowing patients to die (and so risking the Gothic passage between state-time and bio-time): 'How the BBC betrayed the NHS: an exclusive report on two years of censorship and distortion', *openDemocracy* 27 September 2012, online at: <http://opendemocracy.net/ourbeeb/oliver-huitson/how-bbc-betrayed-nhs-exclusive-report-on-two-years-of-censorship-and-distorti>.
- 3 One marker of the use of housing equity to keep key voters in line after Iraq and the surveillance state was the reduction of interest rates in August 2005 in an already overheating market: www.bankofengland.co.uk/boeapps/iadb/Repo.asp.
- 4 Cf. Daniel Defoe, *History of the Union* (Dublin: J. Exshaw, 1799 (1709)).
- 5 Robert Skidelsky, *Keynes: Return of the Master* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 6.
- 6 Skidelsky, *Keynes: Return of the Master*, 20, 22.
- 7 See for example Allegra Stratton and Ashley Seager, 'Darling invokes Keynes as he eases spending rules to fight recession', *Guardian* 20 October 2008 (this was immediately after the peak of the banking panic): 'jobs would be created by the construction of two aircraft carriers and the replacement of the Trident nuclear deterrent', online at: www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2008/oct/20/economy-recession-treasury-energy-housing
- 8 J. K. Galbraith, *The Age of Uncertainty, Part 7: The Mandarin Revolution* (BBC TV, 1977).

- 9 On the centrality of London see for example recent proposals on social stratifying public service pay, social cleansing of boroughs, and the power of the mayor.
- 10 Cf. Gregory Claeys, *The French Revolution Debate in Britain: The Origins of Modern Politics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 34.
- 11 Dir. Lewis Gilbert, wr. Willy Russell, *Educating Rita* (Acorn Pictures, 1983).
- 12 Bobby Sands was elected to parliament in 9 April 1981, becoming the only MP ever to be elected in prison, and precipitating a change in the law to prevent other prisoners being elected.
- 13 Alasdair Gray, *Lanark: A Life in 4 Books* (London: Picador, 1991 (1981)), 98, 295, 322, 432–3.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 485 et passim, 500 et passim.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 410–16; cf. Cairns Craig, review of *Lanark, Cencrastus*, Autumn 1981, 11–13.
- 16 Cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 120–1.
- 17 Gray, *Lanark* 68, 226, 288–9.
- 18 David Peace, *GB84* (London: Faber, 2004), 137, 202.
- 19 Peace, *GB84*, 258, 409, 466; on the alienation of working miners through this phrase and a reaction recalling anti-Jacobinism, cf. Richard Vinen, *Thatcher's Britain: The Politics and Social Upheaval of the Thatcher Era* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 282.
- 20 Peace, *GB84*, 46, 124, 232, 279, 332, 364.
- 21 Irvine Welsh, *Trainspotting* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1993); one of many contrasts of real and empty time is the scene where a group of junkies observe theatre-goers coming out of the playhouse, knowing that they have restaurant reservations, and so, futures, 306. The story is in large part built on a punk ethic – many characters came of age in the late 1970s – playing on a stagflationary sense of ‘no future’.
- 22 Cf. Andrew Porter, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 110–11.
- 23 See for example Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War, 1840–42* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997 (1976)).
- 24 Cf. Michael Gardiner, ‘British territory: Irvine Welsh in English and Japanese’, *Textual Practice* 17.1, 2003; Alan Riach, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography: The Masks of the Modern Media* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 223–32; Aaron Kelly, ‘James Kelman and the deterritorialization of power’, ed. Berthold Schoene, *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 175–83; Danny Boyle, dir., *Trainspotting* (Channel 4, 1996); BBC, Olympics opening ceremony, 27 July 2012.
- 25 David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: History of Gothic Fiction from 1765 to the Present* (London: Longman, 1980), 419; cf. David Punter and Glennis Byron, *The Gothic* (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2004), 7–12.
- 26 Cf. Dan Hind, *The Return of the Public: Democracy, Power and the Case for Media Reform* (London: Verso, 2012), 43; cf. Stephen Driver and Luke Martell, ‘Blair and “Britishness”’, ed. David Morley and Kevin Robins, *British Cultural Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- 27 Cf. Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004); Peter Osborne, *The Triumph of the Political Class* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2007); David Craig and Matthew Elliott, *Fleeced! How We've Been Betrayed by the Politicians, Bureaucrats and Bankers – and How Much They've Cost Us* (London: Constable, 2009).
- 28 Maggie Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 1; Julia Kristeva, trans. Leon S. Roudiez, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); cf. Jerrold Hogle, ‘Introduction: The Gothic in Western Culture’, ed. Hogle, *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, 1–20: 7; Michael Gardiner, *The Return of England in English Literature* (London: Palgrave, 2012), 95, 21, 23, 88.
- 29 Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 127–37.
- 30 Cf. Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History* (London: Verso, 2007).
- 31 Punter, *The Literature of Terror*, 421.
- 32 Michael Foucault, trans. Alan Sheridan, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991 (1975)), 32–71.
- 33 Huitson, ‘How the BBC betrayed the NHS’.
- 34 Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 (1790)), 162–3; cf. 96; cf. Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, 29.
- 35 Owen Dudley Edwards, ed., *A Claim of Right for Scotland* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1989), 13–15.
- 36 Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 18; similar noises had been made, less pejoratively, by Richard Crossman in his introduction to the 1963 edition of Walter Bagehot’s *The English Constitution* (London: Collins, 1963), 191.

- 37 Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 34.
- 38 Michael Keating, *The Independence of Scotland: Self-government and the Shifting Politics of Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 205; Gerry Hassan, 'A short history of the future break-up', ed. Mark Perryman, *Imagined Nation: England after Britain* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2008), 148–70; on the English West Lothian Question, cf. Arthur Aughey, 'English is the country and the country is England' ed. Claire Westall and Michael Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England* (London: Palgrave, 2013), 46–59.
- 39 Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 35.
- 40 Polygon has published almost entirely fiction, and mostly Scottish fiction, and is known (especially since Canongate's move to London) as Scotland's foremost fiction imprint; one of the most notable exceptions to this is the series which begins with Owen Dudley Edwards's *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 1989, concerns issues of culture and self-determination, and is series-edited by Cairns Craig under the title *Determinations* until 1997, the year of the devolution referendum.
- 41 Michael Fry, 'Claim of wrong', ed. Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 93–8: 95.
- 42 Neil MacCormick, 'Unrepentant gradualism', ed. Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 99–109: 106.
- 43 Chris Harvie, 'Scotland's English problem', ed. Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 126–31: 127.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 127.
- 45 Bernard Crick, 'For my fellow English', ed. Edwards, *A Claim of Right for Scotland*, 150–62: 153.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 157–9: 157.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 128, 309.
- 48 Anthony Barnett, Stuart Weir et al., 'The original Charter 88'; online at: www.unlockdemocracy.org.uk/pages/the-original-charter-88.
- 49 Charter 88, n.p.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 Tom Nairn, *Pariah: Misfortunes of the British State* (London: Verso, 2002), 1; Michael Gardiner, *The Cultural Roots of British Devolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 107–9; cf. Kelly, 'James Kelman and the deterritorialization of power'.
- 54 Nairn, *Pariah*, 4, 12, 16–17.
- 55 Driver and Martell, 'Blair and "Britishness"'; Ross McKibbin, 'Treading water', *New Left Review*, July–August 2000, 69–74; Nairn, *Pariah*, 153.
- 56 Hall, 'The great moving right Show'; Nairn, *Pariah*, 144, 67.
- 57 Nairn, *Pariah*, 31, 39; in 2007, the year of the 'credit crunch', *Privacy International* listed the UK as number five in the world on a list of states most crippled by 'endemic surveillance'; online at: www.privacyinternational.org/article/leading-surveillance-societies-eu-and-world-2007.
- 58 Cf. Giorgio Agamben, trans. Kevin Attell, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004 (2003)).
- 59 Nairn, *Pariah*, 115, italics in original.
- 60 Nairn, *Pariah*, 147; cf. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Winchester: Zero, 2011).
- 61 Roger Scruton, *England: An Elegy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2000); on English as a loss, cf. Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 7–8.
- 62 Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- 63 Simon Heffer, *Nor Shall My Sword: The Reinvention of England* (London: Phoenix, 2000 (1999)); Jeremy Paxman, *The English: A Portrait of a People* (London: Penguin, 1999); John Redwood, *The Death of Britain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999); on the 'listing' tradition and its challengers, see Aughey, 'English is the country and the country is England'.
- 64 Richard English, *Is There an English Nationalism?* (London: IPPR, 2011); Guy Lodge, Wyn Jones, R. Henderson and D. Wincott, *The Dog That Finally Barked: England as a Political Community* (London: IPPR, 2012).
- 65 MacCormick v Lord Advocate SC 396, 1953; c.f. Neil MacCormick, 'The English constitution, the British state, and the Scottish anomaly', British Academy Lecture 1997.
- 66 Cf. Anthony Bradley, 'The sovereignty of parliament – form or substance?', Jeffrey Jowell and Dawn Oliver, *The Changing Constitution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35–69.
- 67 Gavin Drewry, 'The executive: towards accountable government and effective governance?', ed. Jowell and Oliver, *The Changing Constitution*, 187–21; something to this effect was indeed admitted in the

- Cameron-Salmond summit of 15 October 2012 which led to the 'Edinburgh Agreement', allowing the Scottish government jurisdiction over the 2014 referendum.
- 68 Drewry, 'The executive', 218.
- 69 Cf. T. R. S. Allen, *Law, Liberty, and Justice: The Legal Foundation of British Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994 (1993)), 143; this defence of Dicey comes just before a widescale discrediting, and is partially reworked by Allen's later work.
- 70 Cf. Allen, *Law, Liberty, and Justice*, 283.
- 71 Gavin Anderson et al., 'The independence referendum, legality and the contested constitution: Widening the debate'; online at: <http://ukconstitutionallaw.org/2012/01/31/gavin-anderson-et-al-the-independence-referendum-legality-and-the-contested-constitution-widening-the-debate/>. This paper also points out that *Axa General Insurance Ltd v Lord Advocate* (2011) 'rejected the argument that, at least for the purposes of judicial review at common law, the Scottish parliament is to be understood as a subordinate legislature'.
- 72 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 165–7.
- 73 Keating, 'The political economy of self-determination', 41; Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 119; cf. Peter Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
- 74 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*; see also Gerry Hassan in conversation with Zygmunt Bauman, 'Politics, power and the shape of things to come', ed. Gerry Hassan and Rosie Ilett, *Radical Scotland: Arguments for Self-Determination* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2011), 250–66; Nairn, *Pariah*.
- 75 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 37.
- 76 Cf. Chris Thornhill, *A Sociology of Constitutions: Constitutions and State Legitimacy in Historical-Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 216; Jacques Derrida cited in *Otobiographies: L'enseignement de Nietzsche et la politique du nom propre* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 2005), 26, based on a bicentennial conference on the American Declaration of Independence at the University of Virginia.
- 77 Keating, *The Independence of Scotland*, 20.
- 78 Alan Finlayson, 'Britain, greet the age of privatised Higher Education – an argument and a debate', *OpenDemocracy* 9 December 2010; online at: www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/alan-finlayson/britain-greet-age-of-privatised-higher-education; Universities UK, 'The facts about fees: Student loans 2012': online at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=vq7RslzaxKI
- 79 Hind, *The Return of the Public*, 90; cf. Thomas Docherty, *The English Question*, (Brighton: Sussex University Press, 2008), 144.
- 80 Peter Osborne, 'The rise of the overclass', *The Telegraph*, 20 January 2012; online at: www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financialcrisis/9027846/The-rise-of-the-overclass.html.
- 81 Cf. Danny Dorling, *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Persists* (London: Policy Press, 2011).
- 82 Tom Nairn, *After Britain: New Labour and the Return of Scotland* (London: Granta, 2010).
- 83 Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve: The Reshaping of American Life by Differences in Intelligence* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).
- 84 Cf. Thomas Docherty, *For the University: Democracy and the Future of the Institution* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 86; on Browne report, see 164–6.
- 85 Sean Coughlan, 'UK university applications down as fees rise', BBC News, 20 January 2012; online at: www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-16787948.
- 86 A. V. Dicey, *England's Case against Home Rule* (Richmond Surrey: Richmond Publishing, 1973 (1886)), 193.
- 87 See note 8 above on British-left faux anti-nationalism; in his memoirs Tony Blair says, 'I supported the UK [and] distrusted nationalism as a concept', *A Journey* (London: Harper Collins, 2010), 251, quoted in Gerry Hassan, 'The future of "The Global Kingdom": post-unionism, post-nationalism and the politics of voice', ed. Westall and Gardiner, *Literature of an Independent England*, 31–45.
- 88 George E. Davie, *The Democratic Intellect: Scotland and Her Universities in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1961), 42, 58, 210.
- 89 *Ibid.*, 15, 17.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 42.
- 91 *Ibid.*, xix; cf. Lindsay Paterson, *Scottish Education in the Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 37–9; on 'myth' as productive, see 37–8.
- 92 Davie, *The Democratic Intellect*, 171; Gardiner, *The Return of England*; Ernest Gellner, *Words and Things: A Critical Account of Linguistic Philosophy and a Study of Ideology* (London: Routledge, 2005 (1959)); cf. Muriel Spark, *The Ballad of Peckham Rye* (London: Macmillan, 1960).

- 93 Docherty, *The English Question*, 8.
- 94 *Ibid.*, 24.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 25, 36.
- 96 *Ibid.*, 139, 145; two essays in ed. John Holmwood, *A Manifesto for the Public University* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011) explicitly discuss the amplification of inequality specific to the neoliberal British university; John Holmwood, 'The idea of a public university', 12–26; Diane Reay, 'Universities and the reproduction of inequality', 112–28; this latter also penetratingly shows the persistence of a structural inequality working through education as relatively unchanging throughout the whole British period – and how this works through an absolute (and 'disinterested') language of 'the best'; cf. also Docherty, *For the University*.
- 97 Anthony Barnett, 'A fight for the future', ed. Dan Hancox et al., *Fightback* (London: *openDemocracy*, 2011), 13–29; 17, 19–20.
- 98 Barnett, 'A fight for the future', 19–20; cf. Docherty, *For the University*.
- 99 Anthony Barnett, 'Will the tens trump the sixties?', ed. Hancox et al., *Fightback*, 279–88; 288; on the reabsorption of disenfranchising and 'self-expressing' individualism in the British society of control settled by neoliberalism, cf. Carl Cerdeström and Peter Fleming, *Dead Man Working* (Winchester: Zero, 2012); contrary to the British habit of describing every protest movement as a failure, the 'recuperation' of the main tenets of the 1968 students protests into the Thatcherite ideology of anti-statism might be seen dialectically as exposing a *strengthening* of parliamentary sovereignty, and so as amplifying self-determination movements in an era of democratic deficit.
- 100 Among many others, cf. Jeff Reeves, 'Failed Occupy movement needs to wake up', *Huffington Post*, 21 August 2012; online at: www.huffingtonpost.com/jeff-reeves/failed-occupy-wall-street_b_1799128.html. It is worth noting that most autopsies of the failed movement are American rather than arising from the UK.
- 101 Cf. John Holloway, *Crack Capitalism* (London: Pluto, 2010), 38–45.
- 102 Rob Pinney, 'Students stage teach-in at Euston station – London', *Demotix*, 26 January 2011; online at: www.demotix.com/news/569541/students-stage-teach-euston-station-london#slide-1.
- 103 Tom Griffin, 'The military response to direct action, General Kitson's manual', *openDemocracy*, 22 December 2010; online at: www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/tom-griffin/military-response-to-direct-action-general-kitsons-manual.
- 104 John Rees, 'Student revolts then and now', ed. Michael Bailey and Des Freedman, *The Assault on the Universities* (London: Pluto, 2011), 113–22; 115; cf. Fejto, 'Hungary and socialism'.
- 105 Guy Aitchison and Aaron Peters, 'The open-sourcing of political activism: how the internet and networks help build resistance', ed. Hancox et al., *Fightback*, 44–60; 44–5; Rory Rowan, 'Geographies of the kettle: containment, spectacle & counter-strategy', ed. Hancox et al., *Fightback*, originally published in *Critical Legal Thinking*; online at: www.criticallegalthinking.com/2010/12/16/geographies-of-the-kettle-containment-spectacle-counter-strategy/; cf. Dan Hancox, *Kettled Youth* (London: Vintage Digital, 2011).
- 106 Aitchison and Peters, 'The open-sourcing of political activism', 50, 57; there is a discussion of the significance of St Paul's for state culture in Gardiner, *The Return of England*, 131–2.
- 107 Adam Harper, 'Images of reality and student surrealism', ed. Hancox et al., *Fightback*, originally published with illustrative images in *Rouge's Foam*: <http://rougesfoam.blogspot.co.uk/2010/12/images-of-reality-and-student.html>.
- 108 Albert Toscano, 'The university as a political space', ed. Bailey and Freedman, *The Assault on the Universities*, 81–90; 84.
- 109 Toscano, 'The university as a political space', 85.
- 110 *Ibid.*, 85.

Index

- Acts of Union 19, 64, 107
Adam Bede (George Eliot) 46
aesthetic order 55, 75
aesthetic-theistic state 40–1
Aids to Reflection (Coleridge) 44
Algerian War of Independence 120
Anarchical Fallacies (Bentham) 29
Anglicanism 44
‘Anglo-Israeli’ tradition 43
anti-Jacobinism 22, 45, 50, 118
Anti-Jacobin Review 28
Arnold, M. 27, 29, 34, 45–6, 49, 52–6,
60, 63, 69, 71–3, 77, 80, 82, 92,
113–17
- Barnett, A. 118
Barrell, J. 27
‘BBC English’ 81
The Bell Curve (Murray) 114
Bentham, J. 13, 29–30, 44, 47, 63, 72,
120
Beveridge Committee on Broadcasting,
report (1949) 80
Beveridge Report (1942) 81
Biographia Literaria
(Coleridge) 35–7, 56
Blackstone, W. 26, 38, 64–5
Blake, W. 25, 40, 102
Blue Labour 8
book bloc 121
Booker Prize 14–15
The Borderers (Wordsworth) 34
The Break-Up of Britain (Nairn) 17
Britain at Bay (Priestley) 79
The British Constitution (Jennings) 87
British Empire Exhibition (1924–25) 78
Britons: Forging the Nation
(Colley) 30
- ‘broadcasting devolution’ in
1920s–30s 80
Browne Report (October 2010) 113
Browning, R. 45, 79
Brush Up Your Empire
(documentary) 78
‘Burkean time’ 24, 48, 71, 75–6, 83, 102
Burke, E. 22–4, 26, 29, 32, 37, 104
‘Burnt Norton’ (Eliot) 75–6
- Caleb Williams* (Godwin) 25
Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy
(Schumpeter) 84
Casanova, P. 11–14, 24, 58
Charter 88 107
Charter Act (1853) 69
Chartism 51
Churchill, W. 52, 87
Civil War 23
Cobbett, W. 35, 73
Coetzee, J. M. 32
Cold War 104
Coleridge, S. T. 29, 32–50, 54, 56, 59,
61, 64, 71–2, 75, 77, 83, 88, 90, 92,
114
Colley, L. 30, 112
Collins, J. C. 56
The Common Reader (Woolf) 31, 73
Concrete Island (Ballard) 31
conservatism 22–3, 47, 50, 55, 58–9,
63, 66, 70–1, 73–4, 92, 102
Considerations on Representative
Government (Mill) 47
Constitutional Convention, 1988–95
105–7, 110
‘constitutional Keynesianism’ 87, 92
constitutional morality 61, 63, 66, 69, 87
consumer revolution (Mandelson) 113

- 'Cool Britannia' 103, 108
 Crawford, R. 20–1, 50
 Devolving English Literature 19–20
 'credit revolution' after 1688 70
 Cultural Studies 76, 85
Culture and Anarchy (Arnold) 52–4
Culture and Environment
 (Thompson) 91
Culture and Society (Williams) 28, 90

Daniel Deronda (George Eliot) 43
 Davie, G. E. 116–17
The Decline of the Public
 (Marquand) 94
 Defoe, D. 13, 30–1, 100
 democratic deficit 66–7, 102–5, 107,
 110–11
 Diceyan rule of law 105
 Dicey, A. V. 16–17, 33, 43, 55, 57–67,
 71, 76, 78–9, 81, 83, 87–8, 92, 103,
 105–6, 109–11, 116–20
Discipline and Punish (Foucault) 13
 disenfranchisement 92, 99
 Docherty, T. 117–18
 Drewry, G. 110
droit administratif 62, 79
 Duckworth, A. 22

 Eagleton, T. 20
Early Victorian England: The Portrait
 of an Age (Young) 84
 Easthope, A. 35
Edges of the World (documentary) 78
Edinburgh Review 28, 38
Educating Rita (Russell) 102–3
 Education Act (Scotland) (1872) 69, 117
 elective dictatorship 66, 106
 Eliot, G. 43, 45, 72
 Eliot, T. S. 21, 35, 72–5, 114
 empiricism 30, 33, 35
Encyclopaedia Britannica 21, 121

England: An Elegy (Scruton) 109
 'English atheism' 55
 English Association 69
 Englishness surveys 8
The English Question (Docherty) 35,
 117
Essay on the History of Civil Society
 (Ferguson) 21
Essays on Reform (Dicey) 57
 Europhobia – Soviet communism and
 EU 102
The Expansion of England (Seeley) 58

The Fall of Public Man (Sennett) 94
Felix Holt, the Radical (Eliot) 46
 Ferguson, A. 21
Fiction and the Reading Public
 (Leavis) 75
Fightback (Barnett and Hancox) 118
Foe (Coetzee) 32
For Continuity (Leavis) 73, 75
 Foucault, M. 13, 85
Four Quartets (Eliot) 75
Four Zoas (Blake) 25
 French Revolution 22–3, 25–7, 34, 37,
 40, 43, 50–1, 63
The Friend (Coleridge) 41
 'The Function of Criticism at the
 Present Time' (Arnold) 54

 Galbraith, J. K. 102
 Gamble, A. 86, 93, 96
 generalism 116–17
 General Strike (1926) 70, 79
General Theory (Keynes) 82, 86
 George V 78
 Godwin, W. 25, 27
 'golden age' of welfare (1951–73) 18,
 85–6
 Goodhart, D. 8
Gordon of Khartoum (documentary) 78

- Gosplan 16
- Gothic
and 'constitutional culture' 105
1980s exposure of violence 25, 104–6
mid-Victorian Gothic revival 26, 105
'Terror Writing' 25
- Gray, A. 103
- The Great Tradition* (Leavis) 72
- The Great Transformation*
(Polanyi) 92
- The Growth of British Policy*
(Seeley) 58–9
- Habeas Corpus, suspension of 28, 35
- Hanoverian 'public credit
revolution' 19
- Hanoverian 'restoration' (1688) 4, 23,
54, 73, 107
- Harper, A. 121
- Hazlitt, W. 25, 30–1, 34–5, 42
- Hellenism 55
- Henry V*, Olivier performance 38
- 'heritage deficit' 5
- Herrnstein, R. J. 114
- Hoggart, R. 76, 90
- Home Rule 60–1, 64
- Hours in a Library* (Stephen) 31
- housing equity 100
- Hungary, 1956 invasion 95
- Hussain, A. 7
- Imagining the King's Death*
(Barrell) 27
- Indian Mutiny (1857) 54, 57
- Industrial Relations 120
- Introduction to the Study of the Law of
the Constitution* (Dicey) 61
- The Invention of Tradition* (Ranger and
Hobsbawm) 111
- Irish Home Rule movement 60–1, 64,
70
- Jennings, H. 79
- Jennings, I. 87–9, 92, 104–6
- Keating, M. 7, 66–7, 111–12
- Keble, J. 44
- Keynes, J. M. 70, 79–87, 92–4, 96–7,
101–2, 111, 117, 121
- Kilbrandon, Lord 94
- Lanark* (Gray) 103
- Language Philosophy 117
- Leavis, F. R. 35, 45–7, 56, 70–8, 83,
90–2, 96, 102, 114–15, 117
- Leavisism 71, 73, 78, 83, 90, 117
- Leavis, Q. D. 32, 73, 75
- Lectures on Poetry* (Keble) 44
- Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton*
(Shakespeare) 39
- Lectures on the English Poets*
(Hazlitt) 30–1, 42
- Lectures on the Relation Between Law
and Public Opinion* (Dicey) 63
- Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*
(Hazlitt) 25
- Lines on the Map* (documentary) 78
- Lockean empiricism 30, 33
- Locke, J. 9, 13, 18, 30–1, 33, 36–7, 43,
47–9, 54–5, 65, 85, 113, 117
- The Long Revolution* (Williams) 91
- Lyrical Ballads* 32, 34, 42–4, 53
- Macauley, T. 48, 56–7
- mandate for constitutional referendum
(2011–12) 5
- Mandelson, P. 113
- Mansfield Park* (Austen) 22
- 'market Keynesianism' 95
- markets, crises of 86
- Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture*
(Leavis) 45, 74–5
- Massingham, H. J. 79

- meritocracy 21, 32, 41, 49, 55, 74–5, 77, 85, 114
- Middlemarch* (Eliot) 45
- ‘military Keynesianism’ (Galbraith) 102
- Miller, W. 7
- Mill, J. S. 30, 44, 46–9, 57, 63, 88, 92, 103
- The Mill on the Floss* (Eliot) 46
- ‘Minute on Indian Education’ (Macauley 1835) 48
- The Mirror and the Lamp* (Abrams) 44
- Morant Bay Rebellion (1865) 57
- Moretti, F. 36, 104
- Mosley, O. 84
- multiculturalism 6–7, 78, 114, 116
- Murphy, A. 38
- Murray, C. 114
- Nairn-Anderson thesis 18
- Nairn, T. 17–18, 95, 108, 114
- Napoleonic Wars 13, 22–3, 25, 28, 35, 37, 49, 64, 79, 100
- neo-Benthamite era 63
- neo-Burkean revival 25
- neoliberalism 1, 4, 30, 81–3, 92–5, 103–4
- Newbolt Report 71
- New Cold War 103
- Northcote-Trevelyan reforms (1854) 69
- Osborne, P. 114
- Occupancy movement (2010–11) 5, 91
- Of Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (Carlyle) 52
- Olivier, L. 38
- Olympic Games 11
- On Liberty* (Mill) 57, 63, 103
- On the Constitution of the Church and State* (Coleridge) 40
- Opium Wars 103
- The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Arendt) 93
- Orwell, G. 17–18, 23, 25, 59, 61, 85, 93
- Past and Present* (Carlyle) 50–2
- paternalism 47
- Pax Britannica 12–13, 47
- Peace, D. 103
- People’s Charter (1838), 63
- ‘permanent quasi-boom’ 86, 111
- Pilgrim’s Progress* (Bunyan) 31
- The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* (Malone) 37
- Polanyi, K. 89, 92–5
- ‘Polanyian turn’ 95
- Practical Criticism 56, 117
- Press Act (1798) 28
- Pride and Prejudice* (Austen) 22
- Priestley, J. B. 79
- privatization 16, 94, 112
- psychological realism 45, 90–1
- Public Moralists* 13
- public opinion 19, 63, 88–9
- public services 15, 85, 87, 89, 96–7, 100
- public spending 82–3, 86, 96
- Punter, D. 25, 104
- Quality Assurance Agency 113
- realism 15, 45
- Redgauntlet* (Scott) 43
- Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Burke) 22–4, 26, 29, 32, 37, 104
- Reith, J. 70, 77, 79–81, 92
- Responsibilities of Empire* (documentary) 78
- Revolution by Reason* (Mosley) 84
- ‘rise of English’ (1910s–20s) 21–2, 69
- ‘rise of English’ critical school (1970s–80s) 21, 117

- 'rise of the "overclass"' (Osborne) 114
Robinson Crusoe (Defoe) 31, 81
Robinson (Spark) 31
 Romanticism 14, 29, 33, 42, 44, 52–4,
 56, 72, 115–16
 Rose, N. 85
 Ruskin, J. 44
 Russell, K. 102–3
- The Sacred Wood* (Eliot) 75
 Schumpeter, J. 84, 89, 96
 Scotland Act (1998) 110
 Scottish Enlightenment 20–1, 35–6, 47
 Scottish Literary Renaissance 5, 36,
 104, 108
 Scott, W. 21–2, 28, 43, 50
 Scruton, R. 109
 Sennett, R. 94
 Shakespeare, W. 37–40, 50–2
 'shareholder sovereignty' 113–14
A Shrinking Island (Esty) 20
 Skidelsky, R. 82–3, 92
The Social Mission of English Criticism
 (Baldick) 56
 social realism 45, 90
Songs of Innocence and Experience
 (Blake) 25, 102
 Soviet Revolution 70
 Spark, M. 31
The Spirit of the Age (Hazlitt) 35, 42
 Stalinism 16
 state-capitalism 4, 70, 81, 91–2, 112
 state-Keynesianism 81, 83–4, 86, 92,
 117
 state-multiculturalism 114, 116
Statesman's Manual (Coleridge) 40
 Stephen, L. 31, 57
Strange Death of Liberal England
 (Dangerfield) 71
The Study of English Literature
 (Collins) 56
- Tennyson, A. 45
 Thatcherism 82
Theory of Moral Sentiments (Smith) 21
 Thompson, D. 91
Tom Brown's School Days (Hughes) 52
 Toscano, A. 121
 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'
 (Eliot) 75
 'train crash' constitution 28
Trainspotting (Welsh) 103
transformismo 108
 Travers, T. 16
Treatise on Money (Keynes) 82
Treatise on Probability (Keynes) 83
 Trident, nuclear missile system 101–2,
 104
Troilus and Cressida (Shakespeare) 40
Twilight of the Idols (Nietzsche) 45
- Ulster coup (A.V. Dicey) 65
 UNESCO City of Literature 67
 universal vernacular English 48
The Uses of Literacy (Richard) 90
 Utilitarianism (Mill) 44
- Weekly Political Register* (Hazlitt) 35
 Welfare State 5, 24, 32, 41, 71, 80, 84,
 87, 90, 96, 103
 Wellings, B. 8
 Welsh, I. 103
 William III
 Anglo-Dutch financial reform 13
 resistance to France 59
 Williams, R. 28, 90–2, 102
 Wollstonecraft, M. 25
Words for Battle (Jennings) 79
 World Literature 11–12, 69, 116
 World War One 67, 69–71
 World War Two 80–1, 86–7
- Young, G. M. 84

