Altered states: challenges to narratives of state unity in 19th century American fiction

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Altered States:
Challenges to Narratives of State Unity
in 19th Century American Fiction

by
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This dissertation critiques the treatment of State spaces in four 19th Century American novels—Charles Brockden Brown’s *Edgar Huntly* (1793), James Fenimore Cooper’s *Wyandotte; or, the Hutted Knoll* (1843), John Rollin Ridge’s *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta* (1854), and Herman Melville’s *The Piazza Tales* (1856)—to expose underlying resistances to the limiting historical narratives that fuel and justify the imperialistic expansion of State. Through a close examination of the narrative construction and interpretation of geographic features, topographical layouts, and other environmental elements, I detail how these texts engage issues of State expansion and appropriation, establishing prominent correlations between territorial capture, the underpinning logics of imperialism, and the associated ideological manipulation of history. Such manipulated histories can be understood as “dominant” or “hegemonic” State narratives that establish and preserve national unity in a bid to maintain State power. Brown, Cooper, Ridge, and Melville turn to spatial relations to elucidate the mechanisms that produce these dominant historical narratives, and subsequently interject alternative histories that are heterogenic and non-teleologic in structure. Uncovering these early 19th Century novelists’ awareness of the relationship between space and State power provides a picture of the diverse resistances to the early chapters of US imperialism. Further, this study attempts to expose the mechanistic tendencies of State regimes to create teleological narratives of history, and how such histories are resisted in contemporaneous fictions.
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Looking back—and although I was oblivious to the possibility at the time—I believe the kernel of this project was sparked in my first semester at University at Albany, in a now mythical Critical Theory class taught by Professor James Lilley. The thinkers that I encountered in that class appear in the pages below both overtly and covertly. Yet, it was the patient rigor and enthusiasm that James brought to these philosophers that left an indelible mark on both what and how I think.

If Dr. Lilley opened my eyes to new critical approaches, Professor Jennifer Greiman showed me the power of such approaches when tangling with literature. In my second semester I enrolled in Dr. Greiman’s 19th Century novel class, where I first read Charles Brockden Brown, and where I first seriously engaged Melville—the two juggernauts that bookend this project. Jennifer’s responses to my writing have always been generous in their feedback and unparalleled in their insights, and I a much better writer and scholar for having her guidance over the past seven years.

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Introduction:

“An Unexplored Region”: Space and Narratives of State Unity

Nearly 40 years after the Lewis and Clark expedition, Burton’s Magazine and American Monthly Review published a series of journal entries attributed to Julius Rodman, an entrepreneurial fur trapper who supposedly crossed of the Rocky Mountains more than ten years prior to the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery. According to the publisher’s foreword, Rodman’s journal “claim[s] public attention” for two significant reasons: first, it “embodies a relation of the first successful attempt to cross the gigantic barriers of that immense chain of mountains which stretches from the Polar Sea in the north to the Isthmus of Darien in the south”; and “of still greater importance, [the journal] gives the particulars of a tour, beyond these mountains, through an immense extent of territory, which, at this day, is looked upon as totally untravelled [sic] and unknown, and which, in every map of the country to which we can obtain access, is marked as ‘an unexplored region’” (Poe 1196; italics in original, 1187).

The publication of Rodman’s journals in Burton’s drew understandable public interest, even extending to members of the US Senate. In February of 1840 Senator Robert Greenhow penned an official exposition to register that Rodman’s journal was “recently discovered in Virginia” and depicts “an account of an expedition across the American continent, made between 1791 and 1794. As if anticipating disbelief, Greenhow assures his colleagues of the document’s preliminary validity, writing, “nothing as yet appears either in the journal or relating to it, calculated to excite suspicions with regard to its authenticity.”
Perhaps anticipating further concerns of his colleagues, Greenhow is quick to record Rodman’s cohort as a “party of citizens of the United States” (Jackson).

This last assurance of the party’s nationality arguably speaks more to the anxieties of Greenhow’s contemporaries than to the ideals or political allegiances of Rodman’s party. Certainly nothing in the body of Rodman’s journal bespeaks interest in national territorial expansion; nor is the explorer a particularly exceptional model of Americanness. According to the publisher, Rodman is “a native of England,” whose family emigrated via New York, and eventually “made their way to Kentucky, and established themselves, almost in hermit fashion, on the banks of the Mississippi” (1188). Far from intending to sow American influence or share his experience with any audience (national or otherwise), the motivations of Rodman’s expedition are laid bare prior to his narrative: as either a capitalistic enterprise of fur trapping and trading; or—as the publisher suggests—“a desire to seek, in the bosom of the wilderness, that peace which his peculiar disposition would not suffer him to enjoy among men” (1188). Finally, according to the publisher’s admission, the author did not intend his journals for public distribution, and hardly “made his own journey a subject of conversation”—even after the “perfect novelty” that accompanied the publication of Lewis and Clark’s journals. Indeed the very reconstruction of the journals is encouraged by French botanist Andre “Michau” [sic: Michaux], whom “had made an offer of his services to Mr. Jefferson, when that statesman first contemplated sending an expedition across the Rocky Mountains” (Poe 1188-1189). Greenhow caricaturizes Rodman as an American essentialist in an attempt to turn the latter’s journal into a pre-Lewis and Clark cultural addendum to America’s claim on the west. When scrutinized, however, Rodman’s emigrant past, his privileging of sensation over rationality, and his reluctance to
disseminate his narrative suggest a far more non- or even anti-nationalistic sentiment to Rodman's expedition. Simply put, the United States seems the last thing on Rodman’s mind as he embarks.

Greenhow’s insistence on Rodman and company’s citizenship is increasingly interesting when placed alongside the “credit” that a similar American affiliation promises Lewis and Clark expedition, expressed by Thomas Jefferson in his 1803 charge to Meriwether Lewis:

> Your mission has been communicated to the ministers here from France, Spain & Great Britain, and through them to their governments; & such assurances given them as to its objects, as we trust will satisfy them. The country [of Louisiana] having been ceded by Spain to France, the passport you have from the minister of France, the representative of the present sovereign of the country, will be a protection with all its subjects; & that from the minister of England will entitle you to the friendly aid of any traders of that allegiance with whom you may happen to meet. (Jefferson)

And, later:

> As you will be without money, clothes or provisions [when you reach the Pacific Ocean], you must endeavor to use the credit of the U.S. to obtain them, for which purpose open letters of credit shall be furnished you, authorising [sic] you to draw upon the Executive of the U.S. or any of its officers, in any part of the world, on which draughts can be disposed of, & to apply with our recommendations to the Consuls, agents, merchants, or citizens of any nation with which we have intercourse, assuring them, in our name, that any aids they may furnish you, shall be honorably repaid, and on demand. (Jefferson)

In each of these passages Jefferson grafts the global-political and economic clout of the US onto the body of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The explorers and their party carry with them the essence of the nation: its treaties and sovereignty, its military strategies, and even its global economic standing. Recognizing that the State is essentially embodied with these explorers opens new conversations regarding the doctrine of Discovery—a “universally recognized” but unwritten code between Western powers that grants ownership to the
nation that first “discovers” the land (Marshall). Such a relationship also suggests more ideological engines at work in the State’s enclosure of space than merely the legal claim to land: carrying such “credit” as that of the State itself, the scope of the Lewis and Clark expedition extends beyond the mere search for a navigable route across the unknown and unclaimed wildernesses of the west; as embodiments of the State that are literally moving and figuratively “discovering” the west, Lewis and Clark impose a particular type of relationship between the State and the land. Alongside recording and reporting measurements of geographic, scientific, and social knowledge to be collected in archives of State, the Corps of Discovery extend the economic and political influence of across the previously politically “blank” space of the continent.

The co-publisher and author of the "rediscovered" journals of Julius Rodman is, of course, Edgar Allen Poe, who served as an editor at Burton’s Magazine from 1839 – 1840 (“Burton’s”). Beyond speaking to the author’s own proclivity for deception, Poe’s success in duping Greenhow and other members of the Senate goes beyond mere farce as it exposes the State’s ability to manipulate historiography in its favor. Greenhow’s projection of Americanness upon Rodman rhetorically realigns this historical artifact with the narratives

\[\text{\footnotesize 1 While not mentioned often in my dissertation, the Doctrine of Discovery is undeniably a significant corresponding moment in understanding the logics of State expansion during the 19th Century, and an avenue of potential future research. The 1823 Supreme Court case of Johnson v. M’Intosh justified the seizure of land from Native Americans and other colonial victims. As Blake Watson explains in “The Doctrine of Discovery and the Elusive Definition of Indian Title” (Lewis and Clark Law Review, 2011), according to Justice Marshall “the European discovery of America ‘gave exclusive title to those who made it,’ and that such discovery ‘necessarily diminished’ the power of Indian nations ‘to dispose of the soil at their own will, to whomsoever they pleased’ (5).}
\]
\[\text{\footnotesize 2 The Journal of Julius Rodman is the most demonstrably convincing of Poe’s numerous exploration hoaxes, which include “The Unparalleled Adventures of One Hans Pfaall” (1835, published in The Southern Literary Messenger) and The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym (1837).}\]
that legitimate the State regime and its continued expansion, and further ensures that these fundamental relationships between the State and the land remain intact. If the Lewis and Clark journals are to be supplanted as the earliest exploration of the region beyond the Rockies, the archival record must safeguard the west as rhetorically unified and politically “American”.

As Rodman’s route closely coincides with that of Lewis and Clark, Poe deliberately invites comparisons between his fabricated journal and those of other historical explorers. Yet, as Rodman’s international origins contrast with the nationalizing mission of Lewis and Clark, the “editors G. M.” of Burton’s (read: Poe) insist that philosophies and character of the explorers are also divergent. Take, for instance, the comparison between Rodman’s and Lewis’s observations of “The Tavern,” a cave along the Missouri River. “We wish to call attention to the circumstance that, in every point, Mr. R.’s account falls short of Captain Lewis’s,” the Editor explains:

In all points which relate to effects, on the contrary, Mr. Rodman’s peculiar temperament leads into excess [...] his facts are never heightened; his impressions from these facts must have, to ordinary perceptions, a tone of exaggeration. Yet there is no falsity in this exaggeration, except in view of the general sentiment upon the thing seen and described. As regards his own mind, the apparent gaudiness of color [of the cave] is the absolute and only true tint. (italics in original, 1206)

As Greenhow projects Amerianness upon Rodman, the “Editor” here creates a character that is a credible counterpart to Lewis. The measurement of truth is here equated not to the observable and measurable world—as Jefferson’s charge to Lewis and Clark would emphasize—but rather to relativistic observations: Rodman’s “own mind.” While critics have honed in on “the erosion of Enlightenment optimism” that crops up in the Lewis and
Clark journals (especially from Lewis’s entries), Poe’s Rodman eschews all anticipation of such optimism, and is instead a more sympathetic and humanistic observer (Hallock 126).

*The Journal of Julius Rodman* engages a national mythology of western exploration to expose the politic underpinnings of the State narratives—specifically the manipulation of artifacts and figures within historical archives to maintain the centrality of State authority. Poe’s playfulness in mirroring and satirizing the Lewis and Clark journals and other early journals and memoirs of exploration—including Washington Irving’s *Astoria* (1836) and the memoirs of Alexander MacKenzie (1792)—teases out in the State’s interest in maintaining historical legitimacy while appearing to grow its territory organically and smoothly. Invoking the manipulation of other myths of western exploration, the reception of *The Journal of Julius Rodman* demonstrates the palimpsestic nature of State historiography—that historical evidence is always veneered with a gloss of State nationalism. The material circulation and recording of *The Journal* within the Congressional archive is evidence of a significant ideological link between unterritorialized regions and political power, suggesting an intimacy between spatial understanding, the act of territorialization, and the maintenance of an expanding State.

Arguing that such relationships between space, State historical narratives and State archives are a trope of the transition of the US from colony to Empire, this dissertation critiques the treatment of State spaces in four 19th Century American novels—Charles Brockden Brown’s *Edgar Huntly* (1793), James Fenimore Cooper’s *Wyandotte; or, the Hutted Knoll* (1843), John Rollin Ridge’s *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta* (1854), and Herman Melville’s *The Piazza Tales* (1856)—to expose underlying resistances to the limiting historical narratives that fuel and justify the imperialistic expansion of State.
Closely examining the narrative construction and interpretation of geographic features, topographical layouts, and other environmental elements, I detail how these texts engage issues of State expansion and appropriation, establishing prominent correlations between territorial capture, the underpinning logics of imperialism, and the associated ideological manipulation of history. Such manipulated histories can be understood as “dominant” or “hegemonic” State narratives that establish and preserve national unity in a bid to maintain State power. Brown, Cooper, Ridge, and Melville turn to spatial relations to elucidate the mechanisms that produce these dominant historical narratives, and subsequently interject alternative histories that are heterogenic and non-teleologic in structure. Uncovering these early 19th Century novelists’ awareness of the relationship between space and State power provides a picture of the diverse resistances to the early chapters of US imperialism. Further, this study attempts to expose the mechanistic tendencies of State regimes to create teleological narratives of history, and how such histories are resisted in contemporary fictions. If successful, we must reexamine the place of these authors within the literary narrative of America, viewing them as less unifying a national culture than resisting the homogenization of space and identity.

**Materializing the Imagined Community—De-Homogenizing US History**

In his “Introduction” to *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson writes “Nation, nationality, nationalism—all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse” [sic] (3). I believe that the adaptability of the nation is perhaps its strongest characteristic, and is a source of nationalism’s saliency and power. Anderson further defines nations as limited “imagined communities” that simultaneously influence identity
while excluding others. To put another way, the alignment of a citizenry and territory with collective ideologies constitute a nation. As the nation relies upon the circulation of nationalistic sentiment through channels of communication, it requires a physical infrastructure.

The nation is to be contrasted with what I call the “State.” While examining the politics of a nation might include, for instance, its governmental structure and systems of checks and balances, an examination of the State would focus on the political theories of those structures. While similarly reliant on the “friend/enemy” distinction, the State is less a singular identifiable entity (as Anderson speaks of a nation) than a concentration of power that is constituted through the agglomeration of physical space.3 My understanding of the State draws on the political theory of Carl Schmitt, who writes in 1969, “today one can no longer define politics in terms of the State; on the contrary what we can still call the State today must inversely be defined and understood from the political” (qtd. in PT xv). As Schmitt suggests, the State reaches its zenith with the rise of imperialism where political power is increasingly decentralized and able to be deployed evenly across territory. With the rise of global imperialism and the spread of political States, the rule of law and the doctrine of sovereignty increasingly pervade everyday existence (PT 13). Because I am less interested in the constitution of the body of a community, and more interested in the politics that manipulate and shape the ideologies of that body, this dissertation focuses primarily on the State—particularly its formation and manipulation of ideology to maintain power.

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3 The mechanism of State formation will be explored in depth below, and is revisited in my chapter on Melville.
Although the context of my discussion is "American" in frame, as it intersects the foundations of modern statecraft and imperialism its ramifications are beyond national in scope. Certainly, a traditionalist reading of this project would see it bookended by significant events in the historical narrative of the American State—namely the Revolutionary War and the close of a terrestrially contiguous frontier. Yet, and again considering the narrative history of national unity across 19th Century America, the novels I engage offer a unique opportunity to remap and retrace resistances that exist behind the formulaic narrative of the Union and Confederacy that have driven histories of the “Early Republic” era. The timeframe of the project, then, does not intend to trace the history and development of an exceptional America (whether that be called a “Western Democracy” or is interpreted as an emergent global empire), but to elucidate the more subversive mechanisms of statecraft that materialize during the transition from colonialism in the late 18th Century to imperialism in the late 19th Century. In this regard, while my primary sources are canonically “American,” I consider the scope of this project to be more politically significant than geographically specific. This is not an excuse to occlude any discussion of American political or national history (and I do turn to national contexts to validate my interpretations of these texts); rather, I want to emphasize that my broader argument has less to do with the situated aspect of these literary works within a national (American) history, than with their similarities when interpreting the relationship between and interaction with space and the structure of the developing imperialist State.

A central tenet to my argument is that “dominant” or “hegemonic” State narratives—those narratives that I claim these four novels seek to disrupt—grow out of the interconnectedness of three features of the modern imperial State: the politics of
knowledge (the archive); the capture and control of physical territories; and the conceptualization and understanding of physical space. While I will turn momentarily to more completely elucidate these three pillars of my argument, first I will critically contextualize my discussion of dominant State narratives in political and historical terms.

In the landmark *Imagined Communities* (1983) Benedict Anderson claims that the transition from being a “colony” on the fringe of an empire to a sovereign and autonomous “nation” occurs largely through 1) the rearrangement of knowledge through new, streamlined methods of communication such as print capitalism, 2) the homogenization of language, and 3) the broadcast conceptualization of a unified geography and people. According to Anderson, in mastering a national space the State generates, measures, collects, and catalogues information that will come to constitute the historical narrative of that nation. The data collected is processed through a myriad of different narrating structures—demographic data, laws, legislation, regulations, museums, maps, novels, travel books, pamphlets, and news stories—each with a “frame [that] is historical and their setting sociological” (Anderson 204).4 As each structure is placed alongside another in what Walter Benjamin has called “homogenous, empty time,” narratives appear to “transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfilment [sic], but by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar,” thus uniting their participants under a faith in the simultaneity of their actions, and creating Anderson’s “imagined community” (Benjamin, qtd. in Anderson 24; Anderson 24).

Trish Loughran claims that while Anderson’s narratives of nation-building are

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4 Also see Mary Louise Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturalization*, whose “predominant theme is how travel books written by Europeans about non-European parts of the world created the imperial order for Europeans ‘at home’ and gave them their place in it” (3).
justifyable in some instances, in the context of the developing US empire “Anderson’s formulations about imagined communities rely on a similar fantasy about the ability of print to erase local differences and to install, in their place, a formal homogeneity, whether in fact or in feeling” (14). As myths of a unified Early Republic are largely structured around documents such as The Federalist Papers and Thomas Paine’s Common Sense, Loughran examines print circulation and social infrastructure to claim that “a mutually informed, or national, discourse did not emerge via print culture until different areas of the country were in [...] sustained contact”—that is, by the late 1830s, with improvements in infrastructure and the development of new technologies such as the telegraph (italics in original, 23). Loughran’s distinction between the State and the nation is central to her argument against Anderson: while an Andersonian “nation” is an “imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign,” Loughran jettisons “the image of [citizens’] communion” in the “minds of each [fellow nation-member]” to focus on the very visceral connections that such an imagining requires. Where Anderson turns to examine the ideological structures and rhetoric that inform a political community, Loughran insists that the formulation of the nation in Early Republic relies on a mythology of material circulation in a non-existent physical infrastructure.

The material evidence that Loughran traces illustrates the fractured and uneven development of the US; in the prominent The Backcountry and the City (2005) Ed White traces the historiographical roots of narratives of national unity (what White terms “synthesis”) to the Revolutionary Era itself. To White, the Revolutionary War has become the historiographical equivalent to “the originary Big Bang from which all subsequent American history flowed[:] All conflicts prior to the Revolution are anticipatory rehearsals,
all ensuing conflicts so many haunted reprises or logical extensions” (3). White names the agents of this nationalist “big bang” “federalist synthesizers”: wealthy urban politicians who rhetorically “fuse into effective formations the groups and classes that are otherwise too scattered and vague to be acted upon,” and thereby create the myth of a unified and homogenous nation (White, 10). “[T]he (U.S.) ’nation,’” according to White, “is a development within a federalism with roots in the top-down managerial project of colonization” that is essentially anti-democratic and anti-republic in its efforts to limit and curtail diverse interests (11). As both Loughran and White argue, the myth of nationalism is an exercise of historical constriction that centralizes power through State-sponsored narratives.

The methodology of both Loughran and White inform my own approach to the literature of the era. Loughran’s skepticism of Anderson is legitimated through her examination of the space of the nation to expose gaps in the material infrastructure of the Early Republic; in turn, I examine how the creation of physical spaces within literature becomes method of critiquing political power and territorial expansion. As White examines the manipulations of historical narratives by Federalist synthesizers, I identify a critical awareness of similar manipulations in literature of the era. Recognizing the influence of both Loughran and White upon my work, I turn to examine resistances to hegemonic State narratives in the literature of 19th Century America. I argue that each of these texts recognize and challenge the rhetorical structures of the State by offering not only more complex and diverse narratives of US history but alternative models of history as well. Significantly, each text grounds its inquiry in the physical realm by deliberately constructing and engaging regions and diverse communities on the fringe of State
territorialization. In order to examine how the correlation between State historical narratives and the portrayal of these physical spaces are entwined, we must understand the source of these rhetorical structures—the archive.

Controlling Narrative: The Archive

An archive—as Derrida would remind us—is a literal storehouse of information: a physical collection of disparate artifacts and data sets that require an arkheion, a house where these records are assembled and ordered (Archive Fever 2). We are tempted to think of an archive as a warehouse-type building full of musty boxes of artifacts and myriad “data” from the outside world—perhaps as a marble library or museum storehouse where artifacts and books sit in stasis, collecting dust until a public exhibit is commissioned. It is a familiar and comforting model, after all, that such archives are preserved for a greater public good, with periodical selections narratively serialized and put on public display for the dissemination of knowledge.

British novel scholar Thomas Richards disagrees with this image of archive-as-museum, insisting that viewing the archive as such overlooks the ideological gravity of its very concept: “The archive was neither a library or a museum” Richards writes, “Rather the imperial archive was a fantasy of knowledge collected and united in the service of state and Empire” (6). As empire is motivated by the fantasy that all territory can be encompassed and controlled, the archive is an embodiment of the fantasy of the unity of all knowledge—that knowledge falls neatly into a body, an organized system that can be assembled, learned, and mastered (Richards 4). The fantasy of empire is to wholly encompass the

5 It is this dwelling on Freud’s “archive” that launches Derrida’s Archive Fever. Let us remember, of course, that while physical Freud’s archive would be psychological as well.
world under a grid of colonial power; the means to this power is an archive that orders, classifies, and normalizes difference along imperial frontiers. In this regard, Laura Ann Stoler suggests that we “critically reflect” upon archives “not as sites of knowledge retrieval but of knowledge production, as monuments of states as well as sites of state ethnography.” Doing so, Stoler argues, exposes archives “as cultural artifacts of fact production, of taxonomies in the making, and disparate notions of what make up colonial authority” (“Colonial Archives” 90-1). Stoler here draws on Michel De Certeau’s proposition to bring the ordinary, everyday practices of users out of the “obscure background of social activity;” to “bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and make-shift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of ‘discipline’” by developing a methodology to analyze such actions (De Certeau xi; xiv). Stoler argues for resituating the collecting and cataloguing of knowledge within the scope of its “historiographic operation”—that is, within the very actions through which it was created, attending not to just its content but its materiality as well (“Colonial Archives” 89).

Collecting artifacts in a repository for knowledge, the archive is an enactment of power that is constantly manipulating and reorganizing its contents to legitimate itself as historical fact. The archive functions to permeate the boundary between interior of an individual—the intellect, the comprehension of the outside world—and the exteriority of the subject that is in contact with the world and a governing body: a State. Relying on official or sanctioned interpretations—even if contradictory—the national narrative selectively limits access to the archive to secure and insulate authority and power. As

6 Stoler, on Dutch colonial archives: “Documents honed in the pursuit of prior issues could be requisitioned to write new histories, could be reclassified for new initiatives, could be renewed to fortify security measures against what were perceived as new assaults on imperial sovereignty and its moralizing claims.”
“revisionist” histories evince, information that is held sacrosanct in the archive can be revisited, rearranged, and reconstructed to adapt to the varied challenges and perspectives of different phases and eras in governance. While these small adjustments may shed new light on a past that has grown murky and contested, they too function within the confines of the archival power system and cannot challenge the legitimacy of the archive itself—for to do so would be to undercut its own legitimacy. The archive seeks to create a world where anomalies and remnants do not exist; where everything smoothly conforms to a paradigmatic structure or configuration.

In this quest for paradigm, the archivist is always seeking new material to aid and insulate its particular historical perspective from any prospective challenges: to grow itself and to further accumulate authority and control over the world outside. While constantly revising a national narrative to maintain this balance of power—to ensure that any new phenomena or experience will be readily explained and incorporated. It is no mistake, then, that techniques of archivization were developed and refined along imperial frontiers—notably in British India and the Dutch East Indies—places where new and exotic inexplicables were encountered and processed into manageable and storable information to later inform methods of bringing these elements under control. The archive constantly agglomerates information from interactions with the unknown, the undocumented, and unsettled, even in the realm of minutiae. Archivization (to use Derrida’s term) is the arrangement and annulment of the unexpected. In addition to being international in scope, imperial frontiers are also domestically defined (sub-cultures, social and racial segregations, for instance), but always stand beyond the purview of the nation, along some

7 Stoler identifies this practice as “codes of recognition and systems of expectation” (“Colonial Archives,” 109).
figurative or actual frontier. The archive is therefore the purveyor of its own frontier: the perceived limit of the archive both defines and constantly oversteps the limit of knowledge, further infiltrating and normalizing the realm of the non-state (again, either foreign or domestic in nature) to bring it under control. Narratives are constructed from the archive by positioning specks of information alongside one another in some logical construct—all one needs to do is to reorganize that information, to add to or subtract from it, or to view it in a new light in order to change its meaning and its place within a unified State. As the recent rush of original “archival research” suggests, archives are not frozen with a absolutely determined meaning (that is, in a paradigm), but actually rely upon an infinite diversity of interpretability, as large and tractable as the archival collection itself.

The recursive nature of archivization enables the State to shape its own historical narrative, and to actively manipulate its authority to address the divergent goals of the present. Bringing these background processes into focus, we are able to reconceive the relationship between imperial practice and archivization, where the taxonomic systems created from archives and associated with Enlightenment rationality actually come to recursively empower and spur imperial appetites and expansion. As Stoler explains, “Documents honed in the pursuit of prior issues could be requisitioned to write new histories, could be reclassified for new initiatives, could be renewed to fortify security measures against what were perceived as new assaults on imperial sovereignty and its moralizing claims” (Archival Grain 3). This revolving mechanism leads Derrida to explain that the “archivization produces as much as it records the event” (Archive Fever 17). I argue that the recursive nature of archivization engenders the hegemonic narratives that further imperial colonization and expansion. Selecting, ordering, and narrating archived materials
creates the authority of State that defines a subject’s proper relationship to the space of the State that surrounds it—whether the place of a community (as a colony, imperial land holdings and lordship, frontiers, etc.) or the social status of a subject within a nation (as citizen, slave, or even as a non-entity).

When working seamlessly archivization is able to collect and reorganize histories to minimize the production of unanticipated “remnants” or anomalies in the future.⁸ Remnants that are outside of the State nationalizing narrative act as a pest or interloper that must be contended with and exterminated by rewriting the interrelations of elements of the archive.⁹ Each of my selected novels identify iterations of these remnants that persist alongside hegemonic archival systems, uncovering ulterior implications of archivization, and challenging the legitimacy of the archival roots of history (national, imperial, scientific, political, etc.).

As archivization legitimates political, social, racial, and scientific categorizations through the use of narratives so too it packages and justifies the agglomeration of territory. This process is evident through an examination of the imperial history of the United States; for instance, through the projection of a trustworthy and abstract Euclidean topology upon the captured landscape; the creation of politically defined racial identities that rely on enlightenment principles of observation, organization, and categorization of difference; and

⁸ Loughran calls these “regional differences” (14). Foucault identifies these in Nietzsche as “stock or descent; it is the ancient affiliation to a group, sustained by the bonds of blood, tradition, or social class” that is unquantifiable in an enlightenment schema of history (italics in original, Nietzsche, Genealogy, History 80-83). Stoler examines actual marginia in Dutch colonial archives in Along the Archival Grain. Marginia in archives are wonderfully ironic physical evidence of the unarchivable (the remnant) covertly inserting itself into the archive.

⁹ There are many instances of “remnants” in US history, but treatment of minority cultures (Native Americans, Mexicans, and Africans) seems to be the most prominent and problematic.
even scientific observations, which are manipulated to inform narratives of social
hierarchy and nationalism. While this narrative can be described as a mythology—a tale
that influences the way that citizenry and subjectivity perceive the functioning of the
surrounding world—the archive it draws on is always physical and corporeal, comprised of
documents, artifacts and occurrences that are taken from the world and placed alongside
one another to form the semblance of a logical system that reinforces a unifying
nationalism. Returning to a familiar passage from Jefferson's letter to Meriwether Lewis
elucidates this process of assemblage:

Your observations are to be taken with great pains & accuracy, to be entered
distinctly & intelligibly for others as well as yourself, to comprehend all the
elements necessary, with the aid of the usual tables, to fix the latitude and
longitude of the places at which they were taken, and are to be rendered to
the war-office, for the purpose of having the calculations made concurrently
by proper persons within the U.S. Several copies of these as well as of your
other notes should be made at leisure times, & put into the care of the most
trustworthy of your attendants, to guard, by multiplying them, against the
accidental losses to which they will be exposed. A further guard would be
that one of these copies be on the paper of the birch, as less liable to injury
from damp than common paper.

In this relationship, the act of collecting and properly storing information becomes more
important than Lewis's own interpretation of the events. This is not the image of the
frontiersman that is conquering the wilderness through mastery of the land, but rather
through a mastery of information, a desire for “great pains and accuracy...entered distinctly
and intelligibly...for the purpose of having the calculations made concurrently by proper
persons within the United States.” The copying and care of the documents trumps even the
safety of Lewis himself—it is not his return, but that of the collected information that is
paramount to the expedition.
In addition to the power of information, Jefferson also recognizes the fragility of records. As the archive protects the integrity of a national history by naturalizing its place in the physical world, it also safeguards against the disintegration of these records—for these records are the source of the mythical nation. This is not a realization discovered through the passage of time, but cotemporaneous with the creation of the archive and the nation. Further, the frontiersman on the front lines of territorialization appears less as an individual pioneer than an extension of the national archivist—a preserver and emblem of nationalistic mythology that shifts the relationship between national spaces and the State. It is no mistake, then, that the misplacement, destruction, and misinterpretation of written correspondence is a central motif in Charles Brockden Brown’s frontier novel Edgar Huntly, where the struggle between the ordering principles of enlightenment rationalism and experiential overreach are dramatized against an uncontainable landscape. As Edgar discovers, the ordering of space is the first principle in State territorialization.

As the storehouse and engine of national mythology, the archive is simultaneously source and justification for the ascendency and maintenance of State power. It must remain invisibly malleable and expansive, able to account and incorporate the unknown and the newly discovered. Yet, beyond being merely a storehouse for collected evidence, the archive has external spatial ramifications, and acts to define the very physical boundary of the State. As a source of ideology, the archive both legitimates and anticipates the incorporation of these boundaries into the State, constantly reconstituting itself by rejiggering the hegemonic narratives of the nation.
Narrating Space: State Nomos and Spatial Manipulation

As scientific, mathematical, or technical disciplines, geography and cartography certainly are neutral. However, as every geographer knows, they can be instrumentalized in ways both immediately relevant and highly political. This is particularly evident with respect to the concept of the Western Hemisphere. Despite the neutrality of geography as a science, purely geographical concepts can generate a political struggle, which sometimes justifies Thomas Hobbes’ pessimistic maxim that even arithmetical and geometric certainties become problematic if they fall within the sphere of the political: the intense friend-enemy distinction.

- Carl Schmitt, The Nomos of the Earth (1950) 88

To understand the way that the archive works in conjunction with space to unify and preserve the State we must examine how space functions within the modern State. In The Production of Space (1974), Henry Lefebvre writes of space as a “triad”—a “dialectical interaction” of society that simultaneously produces, masters, and appropriates space (37). According to Lefebvre, space is less a fact of metaphysics than a conceptual “container” created by societies to house what occurs in the world. This distinction is significant as it suggests that the limitations of space are aligned with the conceptual boundaries of a society, and are circumscribed by ideological constructs such as language and science (16-17). What Lefebvre calls representational space—the space of the lived world—is heavily influenced by “the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers” (those architects of State ideologies), and is thereby manipulated to inversely affect society and the broader understanding of the world. Lefebvre claims that a “pure” space free from social influence does not exist: contact with and theorization of any spatial realm is already “shot through with a knowledge—i.e. a mixture of understanding and ideology—which is always relative and in the process of change” (41). As cultural
understanding and ideology change, so too does the conception of space: the manipulation of social understanding and ideology can affect not only the day-to-day lives of a society, but also reach beyond the boundaries of a State to influence an understanding of space generally.

Contemporary studies contend a constitutive correlation between what is included and what is excluded from a State. Another way to say this is that State sovereignty and power rely upon perceptible boundaries and enemies (cf. Agamben; Deleuze and Guattari). This last contention is an extension of Carl Schmitt’s development of a modern theory of State *nomos*: that there is an intimate connection between the control of physical space and the constitution of State power; or, as Schmitt states, a “relation between order and orientation” (*Nomos* 49):

> *Nomos* is the *measure* by which the land in a particular order is divided and situated; it is also the form of political, social, and religious order determined by this process. Here, measure, order, and form constitute a spatially concrete unity. The *nomos* by which a tribe, a retinue, or a people becomes settled, i.e., by which it becomes historically situated and turns a part of the earth’s surface into the force-field of a particular order, becomes visible in the appropriation of land and in the founding of a city or a colony. (italics in original, 70)

Prior to any State regime, Schmitt reasons, there must be a secured and bounded space, and the *territorialization* of that space (to borrow a word from Deleuze and Guattari) is entwined with the structuration of the State. Every community has at its root a *nomos*—

10 See, for example, Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of the war machine in relation to the State in *1000 Plateaus*:

> ...the State itself has always been in a relation with an outside and is inconceivable independent of that relationship. The law of the State is not the law of All or Nothing (State societies or counter-State societies) but that of interior and exterior. The State is sovereignty. But sovereignty only reigns over what it is capable of internalizing, of appropriating locally. Not only is there no universal State, but the outside of States cannot be reduced to "foreign policy," that is, to a set of relations among States. (360)
transitional moment that gives birth to history, engenders a hegemonic founding narrative, and justifies communal formation and existence. As Schmitt explains,

\[ I \]n some form, the constitutive process of a land-appropriation is found at the beginning of the history of every settled people, every commonwealth, every empire. This is true as well for the beginning of every historical epoch. Not only logically, but also historically, land-appropriation precedes the order that follows from it. It constitutes the original spatial order, the source of all further concrete order and all further law. It is the reproductive root in the normative order of history. (48)

Like the archive, nomos is itself “a constitutive historical event—an act of legitimacy” that functions in retrospect as its own justification; that is, it writes and reproduces its own “normative” history and is shielded by law (73). This act of simultaneous constitution and retroactive historical normalization is, I claim, especially apparent in Melville’s “The Piazza,” where the narrator’s fantasy comes to justify the establishment and existence of an architectural feature that orders the world around it.

If all spaces are influenced by ideology and understanding, familiar models of State that rely upon an interior / exterior binary must be reevaluated.\(^{11}\) Often characterized as blanks on a map, even Rodman’s “unexplored regions” are socially constructed spaces that function both as an exterior and as a potential for State expansion. That is, despite their perceived physical distance, these places beyond State boundaries are bound to the State’s inner structure, and are presupposed through the very boundary-line that defines State

\(^{11}\) Often equated with the term “wilderness,” what constitutes a “frontier” remains contested in the cultural history of the United States. See, for instance, the indexed pages for “frontier (‘New Western’) history” in Hallock’s *From the Fallen Tree* (pages 18-25). Throughout *From the Fallen Tree* Hallock hardly mentions conceptual or defining differences between “wilderness” and “frontier” (287). Hallock does accomplish a wonderful summary of the transitional thinking of historians from “open” wildernesses of Native American genocide to, more recently, contested spaces of contact between multiple cultures (Hallock, 21). As I am more interested in the relationship between spatial structures and the State, I turn more deliberately to the frontier as a structure rather than as a “wilderness” that is mastered by colonists.
sovereignty. Aziz Rana elucidates the correlation between republican ideals and territorial expansion in *Two Faces of American Freedom* (2010):

> [There are] inextricable ties, for Anglo settlers, between liberty and empire. In the years preceding revolt, colonists developed a remarkably robust account of freedom, one that saw self-rule as requiring economic, political, and spiritual independence. Liberty presupposed the individual’s ability to assert control over all the primary sites of collective life. However, the precondition for this vision was both the expansion of slavery in the expropriation of indigenous groups. Not unlike other historical experiments in settler colonization, the internally emancipatory features of settler society politically necessitated external domination. This essential connection between liberty and subordination shaped the institutions of the early Republic and has exerted a lasting impact on the direction of collective life. Only by recognizing this dichotomy can we appreciate what was historically novel in our collective experience – the attempt by an independent settler society to intertwine republicanism with empire. (22-23)

Such a relationship is further reinforced through the changing definition of the word and concept of the frontier in the 19th century. The word “frontier” itself stems from a military associations, describing a “prow of a ship, [or] front rank of an army,” further tying it to the foremost protrusion of a State (especially in an imperial sense) (*OED*). In his investigation of the usage of the term, historian John Juricek tenuously suggests a shift in the common definition of the word “frontier” “following the War of 1812,” when “most Americans began to orient themselves primarily toward the west” (16). Regardless, more than being an identifiable *place*, a frontier is a conceptual political *space* that is necessary for an empire to exist; another way to say this is that a frontier is already territorialized within the State as a space of further potential.

The territorialized frontier is palpably illustrated in the State’s use of maps and surveying. More than merely delineating territory, maps become an argument for imperial expansionism. Anderson recognizes such a mechanism in the birth of the nation, although it can be extrapolated to apply to a State writ-large:
The appearance, late in the nineteenth century especially, of ‘historical maps,’ intended to demonstrate, in the new cartographic discourse, the antiquity of specific, tightly bounded territorial units. Through chronologically arranged sequences of such maps, a sort of political-biographical narrative of the realm came into being, sometimes with vast historical depth. (174-5)

This rhetoric of national sovereignty precisely demonstrates the retroactive power of archivization in creating new historical narratives. Anderson demonstrates how the historical map is extrapolated from the authoritative database of the archive, and used to bolster a historical narrative depicting the smooth, evolutionary formation of the State. Another useful example is Lewis Evans’ “Map of Pensilvania, New-Jersey, New-York, and the Three Delaware Counties” (1749), highlighted in Thomas Hallock’s examination of early American geography and cartography, From the Fallen Tree (2010; see Figure 1 below). The map details “Pensilvania” and New Jersey, the Appalachian Mountains (the boundary of the colonies until the Treaty of Paris in 1783), and the Hudson and Susquehanna Rivers stretching northward toward the left and right boundaries. The specificity of the Hudson (a valuable northward trade route) and the Susquehanna (critiqued in the accompanying text as “afford[ing] no sea navigation,” yet “convenien[t] to [Native Americans]…by its Length and large Branches [which enable] communication with the Country beyond the Mountains”) highlight the focus on transportation of information and goods, yet also suggest potential expansion.
Figure 1: Lewis Evans' 1749 "Map of Pensilvania, New-Jersey, New-York, and the Three Delaware Counties" (reprinted from Thomas Hallock's From The Fallen Tree, page 35). Regarding the Hudson, Hallock writes "A ship hugs the south shore of Long Island, while another approaches the Delaware Bay; emphasizing commerce, tidal readings mark the ports" (Hallock, 35-6). The Susquehanna River is known and mapped by Evans from his trip to the Iroquois council at Onandaga in 1743 (Hallock, 35).

The space between the Adirondack range and the Susquehanna River has no cartographic specification—rather, it is inscribed with some "Remarks on the Endless Mountains." This mapped blank is marked within the scope of the empire by its very absence. Its blankness does not suggest a terra incognita—a materially unknown space yet to be discovered—but, by its negative delineation, this "blank" is effectively bounded
within the complex of relations of the already mapped areas, affirming its spatial materiality. Through this delineation—even though a negative one—the space is assimilated into “frontier” in three ways: 1) by an imposed relation to other already conquered spaces, 2) by a believed understanding of its material existence, 3) and in an engrained relationship between the space and the individual, group and culture.\textsuperscript{12} Thus, empire creates a frontier from \textit{a terra incognita}, and places itself in an objective relation to the frontier.\textsuperscript{13} One can see the difficulty in attempting to discuss—or to even comprehend—any space prior to its capture by empire, for as soon as the space is experienced, imagined, or even dreamt, it is immediately incorporated.

With the development of the modern State and the diminution of the “open” or “blank” space of terrestrial frontiers, space is increasingly perceived as stable and controlled. \textit{Space} becomes \textit{territory}—a sovereign geography of a particular nation-State. Whereas space had been previously perceived as an open, agentless backdrop, State territory is infused with potential with boundaries that rigidly define what is inside and what is outside, and is understood as unified in terms of history, geography, and culture. Analyses of this transition from space to territory have spurned new examinations of the way that the State itself is grown from and reproduces spatial logic. Each of my selected novels deploys different methods of figurative and ideological manipulation of space and spatial understanding to justify the imperialistic extension of power in the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century. In

\textsuperscript{12} This assemblage of deterritorialization is constantly and infinitely reconfiguring itself within a society, group or individual to accord with the entity’s own changes, but limits the “lines of flight” of the territory itself. Similar to the archive, it is not a strict and uniform model, but constantly reconstituting itself in an infinite network of relations. It is not that territory is dichotomous to deterritorialization, but that territory is lived and experienced through change, whereby deterritorialization is the “line of flight” that enables this change.

\textsuperscript{13} Deleuze and Guattari would say, it “finds an objectivity in the territory [it has] drawn” (317).
fiction, this manipulation becomes a mechanism to insert narratives that resist the 
hegemonic ordering and teleological narratives of State.

One can anticipate the relevancy of nomos to examinations of America’s early 19th
century, where territory is doubled twice within the three decades following the nation’s 
inception. In the last decades of the 18th century, the new American nation was faced with a 
problem of space that would linger and define it into the modern era: “[B]etween 1776 and 
1784,” Richard Slotkin explains, “the United States had defeated England and doubled or 
tripled its territory, reaching past the Appalachians to the Mississippi. Between 1803 and 
1819 this territory was redoubled by purchases of Louisiana, West Florida, and Florida” 
(111). With the retraction of British colonial claims and the expansion of land holdings 
west to the Mississippi River, statesmen and civilians alike were transitioning from life 
under colonial auspices to that in an autonomous nation. Each colony-turned-state was 
forced to reconcile its relationship to its neighbors in a horizontal balancing of power, 
ensuring that neither state nor federal entities would be so powerful as to overturn the 
other. At the same time, federal leaders debated the parceling of newly acquired territories, 
and traders and trappers, emboldened by assertions of a burgeoning national authority, 
pushed westward under the banner of mercantilism, with agriculturalists settling more 
permanently in their wake. This rapid territorial expansion inspires historian Daniel 
Walker Howe to quip that during the peacetime of 1815, “distance remained for Americans 
‘the first enemy’” (40). Although the space of the American continent was becoming 
increasingly catalogued, measured, and mastered (with previous inhabitants being pushed 
aside as victims of progress), territorial plenty reemphasized the conundrums of 
management: how to maintain State sovereignty without instituting a too-familiar and
over-zealous centralization of power in the hands of a single person. While fundamental to America’s transition from a collection of colonies on the periphery of European empire to an expanding imperialistic nation at the end of the 19th century, the organizing principles of statecraft and territory create and perpetuate inherent paradoxes that cannot be incorporated nor entirely excepted from the new nation. These paradoxes become the central problems of the novels identified in this study.

In its epistolary structure, Charles Brockden Brown’s *Edgar Huntly* demonstrates what Laura Ann Stoler terms an “archival form”: a “site of knowledge production” that contains imperial “principles and practices of governance” ("Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance"; Stoler, *Archival Grain* 20). Writing to his fiancée (who is also the sister of his murdered friend, Waldegrave) Huntly’s attempts to rationalize an irrational murder, and to contain the irruptive violence of the frontier. By focusing on constructions of space internal to the novel I attempt to separate it from the dominant historical narrative that labels it as “Early American.” In this approach the regions of Norwalk and Solebury are less State frontiers than wholly unmappable, uncontainable spaces that throw Edgar’s very identity into question. This disruption of territorialized spaces is further explored through Edgar’s sympathetic relationship with Clithero Edny who is a literal embodiment of the irrational and leads Edgar further away from the mastering narratives of Sarsefield. In examining Edgar’s multiple failed attempts to contain his narrative, I claim that Brockden Brown anticipates and deconstructs the teleological and unifying narratives of the State, instead demonstrating the actual diversity of interests that constitute the national populace.

More explicitly depicting the experience of one of the diverse revolutionary-era
settlements, James Fenimore Cooper’s *Wyandotté* dramatizes a microcosm of the connection between territorialization and State power. Cooper’s protagonist Willoughby explicitly connects the space of his settlement to the command of law (*nomos*), and I identify the relationship between space and law as emerging in three registers: the letter of Willoughby’s patent that establishes his claim to land; the built environment of the huted knoll, particularly the apertures in its security measures; and the unconventional “landscape” of the Willoughby family—particularly Mrs. Willoughby and Maud—each of whom are born with and marked by particular geographical attributes. Depicting a family that is more concerned with its own sovereignty than that of any State power, this often-overlooked Cooper novel historically decentralizes the Revolutionary War from nationalistic narratives of the US.

John Rollin Ridge’s *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta* needs to be examined in a similar manner: not as a breakout racial minority narrative in a longer arc of 19th US literature, but as evidence of the diverse potentialities and communities in the newly territorialized California. The State’s persecution of the hybrid character of Joaquin is a perceptible illustration of this argument: using the topography of the landscape as an immanent source of identity, Joaquin resists the State hegemonic scripting of his character. *The Life and Adventures* does illustrate the intimate relationship between archive and State legitimacy—but in an alternate history, where the archive is the actual space of California and the “State” of Joaquin’s gang resists the dominant narratives of nationalization represented by US interests. In this regard, my argument about *The Life and Adventures* is both historical and historiographical—highlighting the diversity of potential embodied in 1840s California and its relevancy to an understanding of the mechanisms of modern
statecraft.

My examination of two sections of Melville’s *The Piazza Tales*—“The Piazza” and “The Encantadas”—explicates most extensively the intimate connection between topographical ordering, the archive, and territorial capture. This chapter examines how frontier discoveries are captured by archive and used to rewrite history of the nation. As opposed to the claustrophobic Pennsylvania frontier of Brown, Melville stages these processes within spaces that are more global (or “heterotopic”) than locally containable, thereby demonstrating the inevitable limitations and shortcomings of the meticulous system of imperial recordkeeping. Melville’s “The Piazza” and “The Encantadas” engage these fantasies of empire by spinning archival narratives that question and challenge the proliferation of this imperial paradigm. In doing so, Melville exposes inconsistencies between republican idealism and its deployment of imperial expansionist policies, and anticipates 20th century perspectives of historical narrative and historiography.

Drawing attention to the critical perspectives that these authors bring to bear on their own historical moments, this dissertation argues that our contemporary assessments of historiography are less innovative and revolutionary than commonly claimed. Each fiction here argues for its own historical removal—an annulment from the narrative histories that champion a smooth serial progression over inexplicable diversity and irrationality. In one perspective, then, this dissertation is also an argument for fiction-as-fact: that unfolding the internal structures of a fictional narrative leads to a better understanding of the uncapturable remnants of history—the unassembled detritus at the feet of Klee’s angel. More than exposing “what actually happened” (an impossible task), these texts imaginatively expose our own tendency to overlay a teleological intentionality
The prairies exceeded in beauty any thing told in the tales of the Arabian Nights. On the edges of creeks there was a wild mass of flowers which looked more like Art than Nature, so profusely and fantastically were their vivid colors blended together. Their rich odor was almost oppressive. Every now and then we came to a kind of green island of trees, placed amid an ocean of purple, blue, orange and crimson blossoms, all waving to and fro in the wind. [...] The Missouri, in the distance, presented the most majestic appearance; and many of the real islands with which it was studded were entirely covered with plum bushes, or other shrubbery, except where crossed in various directions by narrow, mazy paths, like the alleys in an English flower garden; and in these alleys we could always see either elks or antelopes, who had no doubt made them. (1211)

Once again, this landscape is less nationally than it is imperially informed. Rodman is quick to correlate his perception of his surroundings to a global scale; invoking the mythical epic of One Thousand and One Nights while casting the resident “elks or antelopes” as nature’s artistic gardeners who transform the “narrow mazy paths” into “alleys in an English flower garden.” While certainly fantastical, this isolated landscape is mapped in relation to the emergent global culture of the early nineteenth century, and is habitually territorialized through its relativity to global-imperialism rather than the singularity of the
individual.

Further, as Rodman dramatizes the dangers of his encounters with the country’s residents, spatial topography is as influential as the actors themselves. While an encounter with the Sioux could certainly function as an example, this influence is perhaps most profoundly illustrated in the final chapter of the unfinished journal, where Rodman encounters two aggressive grizzly bears in a uniquely canyoned landscape. As in much of Poe’s fiction, the landscape here is singular—a series of terraced cliffs with interstitial “deep and narrow ravines” that appear “like gigantic columns standing erect upon the shore” (1251). The bears—“formidable creatures, possessing prodigious strength, with untameable ferocity, and the most wonderful tenacity of life”—materialize from the “thick underwood,” as if conjured up by the landscape itself. Further, Rodman explains, the beasts seem physically evolved to be bullet-proof, “unless shot through the brains, and these are defended by two large muscles covering the side of the forehead, as well as by a projection of a thick frontal bone” (1252). As Rodman and company battle with the grizzlies they slide down the terraced landscape, fighting to maintain ground on the ledges of the ravines. Consisting of a loamy clay substance, the terraced platforms are both hazardous and fortuitous, acting to group and separate the hostile parties: as a bear “tumble[s]” from one terrace to another, the focus of its aggression impartially shifts from character to character.

The voracious “tenacity” and violent drive of the grizzlies hold a mirror to the

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14 Rodman’s encounters with the Sioux are on pages 1224-1230 in The Journal of Julius Rodman.
15 This passage invites comparison to Lewis’s descriptions of the grizzly in his journals, where the bears similarly embody the tenacity of life and nature. See also Frank Bergon’s essay “Wilderness Aesthetics” (American Literary History, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring, 1997), pp. 128-161).
unprejudiced tumble of territorialization, as expressed through Greenhow’s assimilation of Rodman—a “headlong fury” to claim the journal in the name of the State. The success of Poe’s hoax is dialectic in nature: The Journal of Julius Rodman threatens hegemonic historical narratives while remaining narratively subsumable and malleable. Greenhow desires The Journal to be true because it provides an earlier, non-commissioned national claim upon western lands—a claim not associated with motivations of State. The Journal’s infiltration of the official archive of the Senate leads to larger claims about the ability of 19th century fiction to pull back the veneer of hegemonic historical narratives to expose the mechanisms of statecraft: Greenhow’s claiming of this newly discovered record of transcontinental exploration exposes the State’s ability to manipulate its cultural roots. As with the other texts in this dissertation, The Journal of Julius Rodman pushes beyond being merely a farcical addition to a wider genre of American letters to expose an alternative understanding of the way that history is shaped, and critically reflects upon the nature of historiography itself.
There is a moment in Charles Brockden Brown’s *Edgar Huntly, Or, Memoirs of a Sleepwalker* (1799) where, wandering in the Pennsylvania backcountry and faced with crossing a frigid river at nightfall, the protagonist pauses to surrender to “the necessity of repose.” Sheltering himself against the cold, he violently “thrusts” himself into a “rift, somewhat resembling a coffin in shape, and not much larger in dimensions.” Edgar constructs a “space” of this coffined recess, “stop[ping] the smaller entrance of the cavity with a stone, and […] heap[ing] before the other, branches lopped from the trees.” This coffin-like aperture is fittingly housed in a “cluster of cedars” that creates an over-arching “bower,” suggestive a sort of mausoleum or burial chamber (144/829).

Postcolonial and ecocritical scholars might interpret the erotic image of Edgar “thrusting” himself into this “propitious” aperture by remarking on tropes of patriarchal appropriation—those that narrate an auspicious and welcoming landscape that is advantageously and violently penetrated by an objectifying occupier.16 Yet the outcome of this penetration is not as openhanded as such readings might anticipate, and, despite its initial promise, the protagonist finds that this crevice only increases his vulnerability to the elements. Edgar’s violation of the land results in his transformation into a corpse: “my extremities were benumbed, and my limbs shivered and ached as if I had been seized by an ague,” he complains, “the posture I was obliged to assume, [was] unnatural and painful.” Admitting the inadequacy of the landscape’s offering, Edgar acknowledges the necessity of mobility as opposed to settlement: “Motion was the only thing that could keep me from

16 cf. Annette Kolodny.
freezing” he explains as he forgoes the presumed comforts of habitation to readopt his nomadic wandering.

The narrated detail of this particular hole in the rock and the measure that Edgar takes in folding himself into this coffined aperture highlight a specificity of experience that must be encountered first hand, not abstractly projected and prescriptively imposed from without. Edgar optimistically reads the land as offering succor and protection to the weary traveler; yet it this optimism is transformed to a realization that such a positioning is in itself “unnatural and painful,” a sort of living death. By folding his body into this crevice Edgar is figuratively conforming to the very inhuman contour of his surroundings, surrendering his own agency through this literal entombment. Edgar builds his own coffin in conjunction with the landscape, bringing to the fore the interplay between landscape and individual: this symbiosis implies not only the bending of the landscape to the will of the agent, but the bending of the agent to the constraints of the landscape. Moreover, it is the locality and its attributes—the wilderneses of Norwalk and lingering episodes of frontier violence—that deeply affect his perceptions of safety, shelter, and being in the world.

In his critically-infamous prefatory note to *Edgar Huntly*, Brown entertains the problems of the nation’s interior space, casting “incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the western wilderness” as “far more suitable ” for an American author than the “Gothic castles and chimeras” of the Europe (4). Eschewing the mythology and architectural iconography of the Old World for these more active “incidents” and “perils” of North America, Brown insists upon an intimate relationship between the “condition of the country” and “suitable” narratives. According to Brown, the purpose of such exceptional narratives is to unify and even nationalize a people behind a truly American tale (although
contemporary critics rightly question whether he accomplishes this stated goal. Being aware of such a possibility, the author acknowledges the role of his narrative as akin to that of an archive, which is, according to Jacques Derrida (1995), both “institutive and conservative. Revolutionary and traditional” (Archive Fever, 7). Brown views his novel as institutive of a new literature, revolutionizing literature to effect a new identity that is excepted from those of the Old World; in its assertion of its own revolutionary nature, and in its materiality as a written artifact, Edgar Huntly is able to conserve and maintain the mythology of the Revolutionary moment. That is, Brown sees Edgar Huntly as constituting its own literary tradition.17

This self-aggrandizing assertion is not unproblematic. Reflecting important trends in the field of American Studies, most recent scholarship on Edgar Huntly shies away from the novel’s prefatory claims of American exceptionalism, emphasizing instead the global-imperialist influences that crop up throughout Edgar Huntly.18 For example, Eric Goldman’s exceptional 2008 article “The ‘Black Hole of Calcutta’ in Charles Brockden Brown’s America” argues that “The identity crisis dramatized in Edgar Huntly is not reducible to uniquely ‘American’ problems in the sense of its post-revolutionary politics; instead, uncanny imperial analogues structure Edgar’s experience in the ‘western wilderness’”

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17 Derrida explains that “the technical structure of the archiving archive also determines the structure of the archivable content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event” (317). This is particularly relevant in the context of Brown’s preface, where it presupposes the novel’s significance prior to the novel itself; and, as we will see below, in the opening pages of the novel where Edgar is anxiety-ridden in his role as an archivist.
18 As Michael Warner cautions, a “nationalist impulse is an almost preinterpretative commitment for the discipline,” and can obscure some of the most salient and revolutionary elements of colonial texts (Warner, 50).
This turn toward imperial registers has been, well, *revolutionary* in Brown criticism; yet, as Goldman acknowledges elsewhere in his essay, the repudiation of teleological narratives of US nationalism does carry the hazard of overlooking elements that do not readily scale to the level of the global.

While distancing myself from a “post-revolutionary” reading of the novel, I do argue that *Edgar Huntly* exposes and critiques ideological mechanisms deployed by the State to concentrate power. *Edgar Huntly* is more explicitly concerned about exterior influences upon both the region and individual than a growing nationalistic sentiment. It is not that Brown is uninfluenced by his contemporary political environment, but rather that his political critiques transcend the post-Revolution moment to engage ideological mechanisms that fuel the ubiquitous spread of State power. Without removing its significant interrogation of the political, I suggest reading *Edgar Huntly* in a “prenational” context that arrives a little late on the scene—one that reconsiders colonial resistance as less a precursor to the inevitable development of the US nation than a symptom of increasing unrest regarding global colonialism. The term “prenational” is not to suggest that the events of the novel take place prior to the nation being created; rather, that the novel presents a number of possibilities that are obscured if we are examining it only in terms of a teleology that reads the revolt of colonists as leading to the formation of the

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19 Critiquing Emory Elliot, Paul Downes, and other critics that draw upon a “nationalistic paradigm” when engaging *Edgar Huntly*, Goldman’s article goes on to claim that although “Brown and his literary contemporaries imaginatively proposed an ambivalent policy of containment of the excesses of post-revolutionary America” by examining the conflict between Republican and Federalist legislators, the novel more accurately “expresses America's struggle with its prospective imperial identity in an international, global context of European imperialism” (Goldman, 558).

20 For a discussion regarding the importance of propaganda and narratives in dissimulating a unified picture of the nation, see Castronovo.
nation. I argue that *Edgar Huntly* reminds readers of the continuing uncertainties of the American project in 1785, and the mechanisms by which the State assuages those uncertainties.\(^{21}\) As we witness the possibility of Edgar’s narrative unraveling, so too do we witness the potential for those hegemonic nationalizing narratives to disintegrate.

Short of making an argument about Brown’s political sentiments at the moment of publication, *Edgar Huntly* intervenes and critiques the mechanisms that *structure* narratives of nationalism. It is the critique of these structures that informs my use of the word “State” instead of “nation”—for I am not speaking of intentions of particular politicians or players in the formation of the American government as much as I am the underpinning currents of the modern political. While at times my argument does rely upon a historical framing of the nation within Brown’s *Edgar Huntly*, the ramifications are more pertinent to the mechanisms of the modern State generally—particularly the connection between the unifying narratives that grow out of archives and the citizen’s material contact with the landscape. That is to say, my discussion has as much to do with a philosophy of the State as it does the historical period in which the novel was written; in this regard I join Chad Luck’s (2014) argument that Brown views fiction as a venue to “provide an imaginative framework in which high-minded philosophical discourse can be tested against the constraints of history and lived experience” (38). Consumed by anxiety, Edgar’s struggle to convey his adventures within a rationalized narrative and his obsession with topography and environments of Norwalk reflect and critique attempts by the State to actively narrate itself into being by constructing a paradigmatically “naturalized” and

\(^{21}\) 1785 is the “corrected” date for the actions of the novel, proposed by Newman in his article “‘Light might possibly be requisite’: Edgar Huntly, Regional History, and Historicist Criticism”
unified nation. “Outside” land is always on the cusp of becoming territory—being captured, homogenized, and neutralized through certain mythologies disseminated through narratives of ratiocination. Examining Edgar’s periodic obsessions over the subjective nature of narrative, his bouts of somnambulism, and his immersion within the landscape of the Pennsylvania frontier depict an individual torn between the influences of locality and the smoothly global space of empire (represented most overtly by Sarsefield). Moreover, the narrator’s own focus on minute details of local topography conveys a skeptical viewpoint regarding the rationalization and normalization of space under wider State regimes.

In his influential essay “Sleep-Walking out of the Revolution: Brown’s Edgar Huntly” (1996), Paul Downes briefly attends to the “gothic resonance” that emerges through the “revolutionary reorganization” of the landscape. According to Downes, “Norwalk conflates an archaic and a revolutionary challenge to principles of social and rational coherence,” and functions as a gothic reminder of “that which in democratic revolution is most disturbing to Enlightenment philosophy: its decentralizing and disembodied re-articulation of the relationship between power and its subjects” (424). Downes discovers in Edgar Huntly “the traces of an alternative democratic theory, one that met resistance on both sides of the political terrain of the 1790s,” highlighting the protagonist’s obsession with the “posited incompatibility between ‘order and coherence’ … and full representation,” or, “a perfect representative translation between the people and their (self-) government” (Downes, 415). As Goldman would argue, Downes illustrates the novel’s engagement with debates over federalism and representation, yet fails to push them outside of the teleology of nationalism (Goldman, 558). What Downes does draw attention to is how the specific
topographies of *Edgar Huntly* serve as repositories that highlight the factionalism of the Pennsylvania backcountry as resisting incorporation within an overarching national narrative.

Although Goldman, Downes, and other scholars do engage the spatial constructions of the novel, these features have yet to be reconciled with Edgar’s internal anxiety and misgivings as an archivist/narrator. The novel manifests limits of State influence in both the spatial and the subjective registers: the irruptive violence in the region of Solebury suggests its removal from the sphere of State rationalism; and Edgar’s attempts to record a rational narrative of this violence are tenuous at best, and are further tempered by his own anxiety. Through this relationship *Edgar Huntly* juxtaposes the mechanisms (or, as Edgar would say, a “triggers”) that interrelate the structuring of a narrative with the construction of space.

While my critique focuses on the structures and mechanisms of State that underlie national mythologies, this focus is not divorced from the novel’s historical milieu. Invoking Sartre, historian Ed White refers to the weak unification or homogenization of liminal State spaces as “seriality”: “an interactive gathering of reciprocal isolation,” where “understanding and action [are endlessly dispersed] across interchangeable and isolated actors” (34-35). White argues that “The serial countryside [of the Revolutionary Era] was

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22 More recently, Luck’s groundbreaking study of the constitution of property in *The Body and Property* (2014) claims that “Brown specifically invokes the philosophical discourses of sensational psychology and Enlightenment property theory in order to place them into meaningful conversation with one another and the history of Indian-settler conflicts in the region.” Moving alongside my assessment, Luck’s examinations of property and space in *Edgar Huntly* are channeled through the philosophy of embodiment represented by Condillac; here I aim to uncover how Brown views understandings of space as ideologically informed constructs.

23 The construction of space in a Lefebvrean sense. See the Introduction of this dissertation.
never a unified collective in the sense of shared and coordinated group action [...] Quiet possession was an effective form of rural economic and political security. But with the Revolution comes the formation of ‘parties’ strong enough to transform the neutral, secure isolation into a distressing dispersal” (51). As we see in Edgar Huntly, this “distressing dispersal” of frontier settlers across the vast area of Solebury is a very real challenge when attempting to cull an uprising of the Delaware Indians. Speaking of other similarly isolated communities, Gordon Wood explains the problematic picture of ruralities in a less abstract manner than White:

From the outset, the Federalists knew they faced difficulties in the newly acquired lands west of the Appalachians. The settlers were moving westward in massive numbers and their relentless search for land was bound to be resisted by the Indians who possessed it [...] The government anticipated drawing boundaries between the settlers and the Indians, [yet...] Americans’ desire for land was too great and the authority of the central government too weak to control the westward scramble. [... By 1780, v]arious separatist movements sought to take control of public lands and set up illegal governments within several of the states…” (Empire of Liberty 115)

These factions of separatists stand as a threat not just to the ability of Federalists to maintain the safety of their citizens, but to the ethos and solidity of the State generally. The failure of synthesizing rhetoric to throttle settlers’ disordered push westward would call into question the ability of ideology to unify the diverse interests of the settlers, less concerned with national unity than with self-interest. Immediately following the Revolutionary War the ramifications of population dispersal are at the very core of legitimacy, and therefore the emerging mythology of the nation itself; as White ruminates, if separatist groups are allowed to act independently within smaller localities, “How would scattered Indian populations be assimilated and mastered? How would orderly settlement be carried out, and rents collected? How would white settlers remain connected with the
political and cultural institutions of the seaport cities? How could serial dispersal serve as a means to resist administration?” (35). At stake is the rhetorical mythology that shapes public perception of the Revolution as a righteous act of State formation in the face of oppression, rather than the mere substitution of a new State for an old.

Rural populations on the physical and political fringes of the US remain a central challenge to State legitimacy throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, as Brown makes manifest in *Edgar Huntly*, these populations are empowered through an intimate contact with spaces that remain partially outside of the purview of the State—those spaces that have yet to be territorialized by synthesizing narratives of nationalism. Attending to this struggle between rural factionalism and the national mythologies that are more prominent in cosmopolitan areas offers a truer and more comprehensive image of the emerging modern State at the end of the 18th Century.24

Of course demographic diversity play another significant role in perceptions of regional and national unity. Colin Jeffery Morris suggests that, as commerce and republican “virtue” in the early republic grow perceptively entwined, Quakers (such as Brown) generally suffer “political and existential alienation,” finding “it enormously difficult to place faith in any alternative form of moral identity to virtuous citizenship” such as “the right to privatized pursuits of happiness and a shunning of the public sphere” (610-11; Schoenbachler, qtd. in Morris, 611). Paralleling the author’s own experience, Edgar’s cosmopolitan Quaker background insinuates a similar alienation; if we read Edgar’s cosmopolitan home as failing to produce the “natural political aristocracy and civic virtue more broadly” (as Morris reads Philadelphia), the protagonist emerges awash in an American

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24 c.f. Howe, Loughran, and White.
polity that wholly depends upon the mythology of a morally correct Revolutionary moment that leads inevitably to the formation of a strong centralized State (616). In this light, the crevice episode that opens this dissertation chapter foregrounds the novel’s interrogation of the relationship between citizen’s proper roles and the territorialized space of the nation. Although Edgar presumes “propitious” offering of the uncultivated frontiers he traverses, his recurrent isolation (his “shunning of the public sphere,” as Schoenbachler claims was the offering of postwar liberalism) reflects the very frayed sense of national unification that existed at the country’s edges (Schoenbachler, qtd. in Morris, 611). Even the most basic necessity of shelter is hampered by a very real material harshness, and is compounded by the vast distance between backcountry settlements.

Examining Edgar’s immersion within the physical landscape will expose the prominent role that manipulations of space play in the conservative narratives of State that reinforce national unity. Brown’s interrogation is launched from the perspective of a citizen attempting to abrogate the paradoxical environment of America at the end of the 18th Century; an environment where the irrationality he encounters within the claimed territory of the State is antithetically opposed to the virtuous citizen’s private obligations to civil society and moral rectitude (cf. Murison). Benedict Anderson claims that cultural narratives such as the novel and the newspaper construct the nation by circulating a unifying rhetoric replete with “characteristic amnesias”; similarly, Edgar strives to draw a direct link between his past inducements to action and the environment in which they have taken place by organizing and penning his letter to Mary Waldegrave, (Anderson, 204; also cf. Anderson, 34-35). That is, just as the State rejiggers historical narratives to assure the

25 Barnard and Shapiro’s argue Edgar’s cosmopolitan Quaker background on page x of their introduction.
formation of a nation, Edgar strives to congenitally develop and justify outcomes in his wider narrative *a posteriori*. By dwelling on the constitution of a recursive narrative *Edgar Huntly* draws attention to mechanisms of State formation and legitimation, including the restraints imposed upon a citizenry where identity conforms to one’s status as *either* American or alien (and therefore suspect). In this scheme, the immanent rights of the individual (those not beholden to any narrative, but only to his or her own beliefs) are in contest with the transcendent expectations of a newly nationalized citizen (as responsible for upholding a code of virtue and reason). In 1790 this relationship certainly invokes the essential struggle to rectify the aggrandizing narrative of a revolutionary history with its own somnambular narrative gaps. *Edgar Huntly* manifests these narrative gaps by placing the protagonist in direct contact with the *spaces* of the nation, not with the mechanisms of the State that led to its formation or its continued operation.

This chapter begins with an examination of Edgar’s anxiety as a writer and narrator, and relates this anxiety to the importance of narrative in State formation. I then examine how Clithero’s appearance disrupts Edgar’s faith in Enlightenment rationality, forcing the narrator to reevaluate familiar elements of the landscape in a new way. Next, I extend the critique of Edgar’s relationship to space to include his chase of Clithero through Norwalk. I then elucidate my claim that the infamous “pit scene” projects a model of citizenry that is empowered immanently through contact with its material surroundings. This chapter ends examining the letters that close the novel, noting their cynicism and their continuance of the narrative tension that is present throughout.

Finally, the ambiguities that Edgar encounters develop an interesting and perhaps not coincidental parallel between his own persistent efforts to correlate perceptions to
surroundings and the staying power of the novel within contemporary critical circles. Critical perspectives on the novel tend to hermeneutically synchronize a history that is perceived as either uniquely and exceptionally American, or illustrative of the United States place in the wider narratives of global imperialism. Yet, despite longings for a regulated and wholly rationalized narrative (by both Edgar and literary critics, it would seem), what is most prominent in the novel is the pairing of the unpredictable interjection of outside forces with the unreliability of Edgar himself. This is to say, while Edgar presents a fragmented and sometimes jarring procession of events, the source of such confusion stems from both the crisis of the individual in contact with the modern iterations of sovereignty and State power, as well as the impact of larger State prerogatives and bureaucracy upon the individual—it is simultaneously bottom-up and top-down. As Edgar obsessively attempts to construct a rationalized space—a space where landscape is logically connected to what occurs upon and across it—he is at the same time pressured to construct a correspondent identity that fits within a transcendent logic of sovereignty. In the author’s preface Brown introduces Edgar’s narrative as building an exceptional American subjectivity out of the singularity of the American environment—yet Edgar’s trepidations illustrate a distrust of that narrative.

Recalling and Arranging: Writing as Concretizing

In the opening pages of *Edgar Huntly*, the narrator-protagonist reflects upon the difficulties of composing a letter that captures the “drama [that has been] brought to an imperfect close.” “[F]orbear[ing] to grasp at futurity,” Edgar attempts to transpose

26 For discussions on the Elm, see Sidney Krause; the Walking Purchase, see Newman or Luck; the constitutional convention, see Downes.
precisely “the series of events, that absorbed [his] faculties, that hurried [his] attention, [and that] has terminated in repose.” As his later “repose” in the coffined recess will end with his return to “motion,” so is this “termination” of events disconcerting. Edgar questions whether his “perturbations are sufficiently stilled” to complete his task: “am I sure,” he asks, “that the incidents I am going to relate can be recalled and arranged without indistinctness and confusion?” (5).

*Edgar Huntly* immediately emphasizes the dilemmas of spatial and historical distance at the end of the 18th century. Spatially, Edgar is separated from his fiancé, and will soon be wandering the remote regions at the edge of the settlement of Solebury; historically, Edgar is tasked with rationalizing the traumatic experience of his friend’s murder despite its occurrence some months hence. Mirroring this separation from his audience and from his investigative objective, Edgar’s narrative voice—at this point seemingly ignorant of any audience—rambles into the first-person form of address that will comprise the bulk of the novel. The formal second-person singular (“thee” and “thou”) that populates the early pages of the text dissolves altogether, obscuring the novel’s epistolary form over the following two-hundred or so pages, until a rather abrupt closing and signature at the end of this first lengthy letter to Mary Waldegrave.  

This initial tonal shift is reinforced through simultaneous action: “fruitless searches for the author of this guilt [Waldegrave’s murder], [the] midnight wanderings and reveries beneath the shade of

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27 Arguably, reminders of this epistolary nature of the novel resurface in important places in the novel; for instance, immediately prior to the “pit” scene when Weymouth has arrived and claims Mary Waldegrave’s inheritance as money he had left in her brother’s trust. Repeating the trepidations of subjectivity found at the beginning of the novel, in this later moment Edgar will begin to reconstruct his subjective self. Such a reconstruction requires a reorientation on all levels—personal, textual and meta-textual—and jars the reader in a somewhat abrupt reintroduction of the direct addresses to Mary Waldegrave.
that fatal elm, were revived and re-acted” (7). This revival is presented in a blunt and straightforward manner:

I [again] heard the discharge of the pistol, I witnessed the alarm of Inglefield, I heard his calls to his servants, and saw them issue forth with lights and hasten to the spot whence the sound had seemed to proceed. I beheld my friend, stretched upon the earth, ghastly with a mortal wound, alone, with no traces of the slayer visible, no tokens by which his place of refuge might be sought, the motives of his enmity or his instruments of mischief might be detected. (7)

Faced with the daunting task of investigating the past, this active remembrance temporally maps Edgar’s past experience onto a contemporary moment (whether it be the present of his writing to Mary Waldegrave, or the present of our reading these letters). His senses are overfilled: Edgar hears the gunshot; witnesses Inglefield’s panic; hears Inglefield’s alarm; sees the servants; and, finally, “ beholds” his friend dying. Although his actions are to be arranged into a linear narrative, when revisiting “the fatal Elm” some months after the actual murder Edgar “reviv[es] and re-ac[ts]” the traumatic scene of Waldegrave’s murder that seemed lost to history.

We should pause to attend to the multiple folds of time here, and to remark on what we readers are experiencing through Edgar’s insistence on historical distance: namely, the creation of an authorized narrative that is, as Edgar realizes at the opening of the novel, manifesting its own authority by being recorded. Despite the task at hand—timelining his experiences—temporality is here fragmented and fluid. This narratively-organized sequence of events actually registers four distinct temporalities: 1) Edgar’s initial upwelling of emotions upon witnessing Waldegrave’s murder, 2) his reliving of those feelings when revisiting the Elm “some time” later, 3) his reiteration of such feelings (another moment of reliving) when writing to Mary Waldegrave, and 4) the contemporary
time of us (or Mary) reading the correspondence. Moreover, each node of time in this vivid scene registers Edgar bodily—there is his initial “witnessing” by active participation, there is the recurrence of physical affection when writing, and there is the novel as a material archive that contains his words.

At the center of Edgar’s sensational abundance, however, is a gaping hole where the agent or agents of these actions should be—where “no traces...no tokens” can inform the “motives of [the killer’s] enmity or his instruments of mischief” (7). While Edgar is to write his own history into “repose,” as it were, the lack of any material trace at the center of this perpetually relevant experience is troublesome. Although placed in a logical order and remaining relevant to Edgar’s reality across time (even from our readerly perspective), these events cannot be usefully contained into a causal narrative that justifies its occurrence, nor Edgar’s embarking upon his investigation. Even with the conclusion of the novel and the constitution of a master narrative from an archive of letters, Waldegrave’s murder that has so affected the protagonist across time remains unsatisfactorily explained.

Edgar’s authorial doubt draws attention to the mechanism that transforms the fluidity of subjective experience into a recorded, or a “reposed” history—a linear series of “spring[s] of action” that suggest history as a cumulative sequence of measurable events (3). A literal archive of letters, *Edgar Huntly* places its narrator’s editorial struggle on display. As an archivist, Edgar must “recal[l] and arrang[e] without indistinctness and confusion” the “incidents” in order to construct a palpable, material basis for future interpretation. As an archive of letters, *Edgar Huntly* exposes the inherent disjunction between subjective and objective experience: although the serialized construct of a written

narrative intends to overstep the distance between the author and the reader, becoming a perfect vehicle to convey “every horror and every sympathy which [the story] paints,” Edgar acknowledges editorial decisions that repress, censure, and exaggerate regardless of the audience. 29 To turn this schematic back upon our narrator, in the first pages of the novel Edgar introduces the same structure of sleepwalking that will drive action throughout the text: a body that is essentially detached from its motives—“sleepwalking” as it were—and is thereby subject to an outside power that is opaque to their understanding. Such “bodies” can be metaphorically understood multitudinously: as letters separated from their author’s intent; as a human somnambulist acting without deliberate agency; or as a national “body” unified through ideologically mythologies and perceptions of territorial continuity. The later anti-climactic discovery of Waldegrave’s murderer—a Lenna Lenape Indian killed during Edgar’s rampage—further illustrates the imbalance that our narrator must contend: while he is expected to “gain power over words” and write his history, it is immediately at the cost of “losing dominion over sentiments” (5).

Here we can see a trepidatious recognition of the morality implied in ordering any historical narrative. Edgar remarks that, despite his “deliberate and slow” relation of the events, “the incidents and motives which it is designed to exhibit will be imperfectly revived and obscurely pourtrayed [sic]” (5). By writing his story to Mary Waldegrave, Edgar creates a citable material record that freezes past events; accordingly, he recognizes a distance between his private “motives” for behavior and the interpretation of those motives by one reading his words. Transposing events from a subjective perspective into

29 One such instance is Edgar’s decision to censure Mary from knowing the reformed radical religious beliefs of Waldegrave by transposing and editing his letters prior to delivering them to her (EH, 89-90).
writing, Edgar transitions from being an individual privately justifying his motives and actions to a narrator at scrutiny in a wider community.\textsuperscript{30} The written word transforms a private subject into an existence that must be transmitted and ratified socially; Edgar must not only define for himself what has occurred, but also “struggle for so much composure as will permit my pen to trace intelligible characters” in order to convey it to another truthfully and without embellishment or censure.

Edgar writes that he must “disengage [his] senses from the scene that was passing or approaching” to “place in order the incidents that are to compose my tale” (5). Writing is a materialization of history, and Edgar’s letter to Mary Waldegrave marks the closure of his investigation into Waldegrave’s murder, and Edgar’s own transformative experiences. Again, the absolute materiality of the archive does not occlude it from interpretation—and this is Edgar’s largest fear: to record a subjective experience in narrative form upon a page is to mark it into matter as separated from the actor, to disseminate a material narrative and to thereby open it to the interpretive forces of ideology. This “sit[ting] down” is a similar restless “repose” that we see elsewhere in the novel, one that illustrates the paradox of a non-political archive: even after its transcription into materiality, history is \textit{never} closed, fixed, immutable, and unchangeable—it is endlessly interpretable and subject to the forces that function outside of it. Edgar’s written artifacts raise concomitant problems of any archive: the impossibility of collecting and cataloguing all things knowable, and the challenge of maintaining adequate malleability for future adaptation and maintenance of power. What are Edgar’s letters if not a means to power and control? A means of narrative? In this regard, the letters that constitute the text truly function as

\textsuperscript{30} This moves into a historiographical argument about the novel as well — for Edgar’s letter has already spawned generations of criticism.
letters: as artifacts around which a community is constituted, however diverse and tenuously connected.31

Understandably, then, Edgar exhibits an intense anxiety of archiving: a skepticism of the categorically limiting nature of a narrated history and the surrender of his individual agency from the events that have come, in his words, to “an imperfect close.” To our protagonist-narrator, the fantastical events of his narrative are too much in fluid motion to be reconstituted and rearranged into a meaningful way. The very mechanics of communication become a constrictive necessity for historical identification—in archiving a singular version of his tale, Edgar must surrender the very potentialities he has discovered that reach beyond the capabilities of language itself.32 By writing, Edgar constitutes factuality and fashions a history, as it were. The anxiety surrounding this archive of letters correlates to Edgar’s own struggle to grasp the separation between the actions of the somnambulist’s body as separate from the ratiocination of the mind.

Considering the interdependence of form and content in Edgar Huntly, further evidence of this archival anxiety comes through the epistolary voice and the trope of

31 Trish Loughran, in The Republic In Print (2007), explains the misinterpreted and disjointed nature of these communities of infrastructure in the early American Republic. In the novel at hand, while the text is a material object outside of Edgar, Mary Waldegrave, and ourselves, it is able to overstep the interstitial material divide and become the epicenter of a relationship between the parties. Each witness is able to maintain their individuality, but is simultaneously invested in the meaning that is constructed and endorsed through the text of the letters. While this meaning is constructed internally by ordering the narrated events into a serialized history, the letters simultaneously contain (and create) Edgar’s subjectivity within their meaning (much as a State is constructed through its archive). That is, the materiality of the text inoculates against an infinitely expansive subjectivity that would always outstrip any quantification (that of Clithero in the novel, for example).

32 This is an inversion, perhaps, of Derrida’s notion of “archive fever,” where there is a “feverish” compulsion to archive akin to Freud’s death drive. Here, Edgar holds a deep skepticism of the archival process and its permanence.
insecurity that marks letter writing throughout the text. Reinforcing the social situatedness of “the incidents that are to compose my tale,” Edgar acknowledges (or perhaps insists upon) his readers’ interest through a direct address, as if the audience were on hand for a personal conversation: “I need not call on thee to listen,” he writes, “the fate of Waldegrave was as fertile of torment for thee as to me” (italics added for emphasis, 6). At this moment, the identity of Mary Waldegrave (the intended reader of the Edgar’s epistles) is still unknown, and Edgar’s address appears directed to us—the foisting reader. The abruptness of this break in narrative distance evokes a similar emotive reaction as Edgar’s trepidation of archiving, and reminds the reader that they too should be aware of their own questionable actions in reading these letters not intended for them. Edgar forcefully demands that the reader—whether Mary or us—fully engage in his tale: “Thou wilt catch from my story every horror and every sympathy which it paints. Thou wilt shudder with my foreboding and dissolve with my tears. As the sister of my friend, and as one who honours [sic] me with her affection, thou wilt share in all my tasks and all my dangers” (6). As the reader will later discover, these concerns are not unwarranted: for just as this packet of letters turned novel has fallen into our hands, Edgar will recall instances of misplaced and misaligned correspondences, each with dire consequences (the loss of Mary Waldegrave’s fortune and the miscarriage of Sarsefield and Lorimer’s child being two obvious examples). With such consequences in mind, Edgar the writer is intensely aware that his correspondences only imperfectly convey his history, and can have an unanticipated or unsought-for impact upon any reader that may come across them.

In considering the communicative limits of his narrative, Edgar asserts that the most pure and truthful conveyance of his history would be a telling of the tale through
movements and actions of the body where “that which words should fail to convey, my looks and gestures would suffice to communicate” (5). Such contact between Edgar and Mary would nullify the need of any archival trace, and be a true and authentic communication uncorrupted by the dangers of interpretation. If the tale were related through living action rather than being transposed into dead “historical” writings, the events of the past would still be occurring—they would retain their openness and potential. Similarly, the actions of the body would be directly connected to the contemporaneous ratiocinations of the mind, and Edgar would be engaged with his audience through sympathy. Being spoken and not recorded, the narrative would remain within a synchronic timeline as fleeting and impermanent, and be malleable upon its next retelling. And, finally, such communication would occlude the possibility of the letters falling under unintended eyes, maintaining the organic link between the teller and the presumed audience.

This struggle exhibits Edgar Huntly’s relevance when seeking to understand the role of a material archive not only in the post-Revolutionary moment of America, but in the formation of any mechanism of State formation. Edgar Huntly interrogates, from a bottom-up viewpoint, how constructed histories covertly normalize a heterogeneous, diachronic world by leveraging imperatives of moral virtue against social inclusion.33 Edgar is wrought with anxiety when recording his experiences within the letters because he is essentially

33 This is the influence of an archive, whether perceptible or not, upon a populace: a force this is able to shape and control action through structuring ideology. As Derrida claims, “there is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory” (Archive Fever, 4). The control of the archive is the control of memory, and therefore the source of the power of State – its origin in itself. This mechanism is explored in greater detail in chapter 4 of this dissertation.
archiving an artifact susceptible to manipulation and politicization, usable in constructing differing narratives depending on its contextual deployment.

“This object had somewhat a mechanical influence upon me:” Clithero and the Elm

Examine multiple elements of landscape, my argument engages past critical analyses of various “centers” in Edgar Huntly. The novel tempts readers (and, demonstrably, critics) with a number of these feasible “centers,” whether event or icon, both internal and external to the text itself: most obviously are the murder of Waldegrave; the Elm; implications of the 1737 Walking Purchase; Sarsefield’s time in East India; Weymouth’s appearance; and the constitutional convention of 1787.34 Rather than identifying a single centralized or unified motif that would suggest an organized and methodical structure to the novel, I claim that these historical and iconographic elements should be recognized as symptoms of the wider, diverse, unquantifiable (or serialized) relations in the early Republic. Aligning myself with Edgar’s own skepticism regarding narratives, I propose Edgar Huntly illustrates a broader compulsion to identify and grasp any “center” against which irrationality can be steeled. In this manner, the only center to the novel is this compulsion to contain irrationality. Although physical artifacts, waypoints, themes and tropes all function at various times as references for orientation and navigation (for both Edgar and the reader), they do so only to be quickly passed over and forgotten—as if the reader is, at times, sleepwalking. I do not claim that Brown is attempting to

34 Sidney Krause identifies the Elm as “the crucial landmark from which action springs and nexus of the collision and divergence of major plot lines.” Andrew Newman claims the “Weymouth episode as not only the structural fulcrum but also the thematic center of the narrative” (329). Paul Downes notes that Edgar “encounters a topography that frustrates his desire for a center,” but does not extend this reading to the entire novel.
disseminate an ideal model of a nationalism or State inclusion, but rather that *Edgar Huntly* deconstructs the mechanism of narration that seeks to promote such unification. *Edgar Huntly* is most important as a novel that opens questions and leaves ambiguities; and is as much a commentary on an ideal of active politics as it is an aesthetic tool.

Edgar’s trepidations surrounding the possible manipulation or misconstrual of his narrative are further reinforced through its epistolary form, which deliberately invokes the material conditions of the country and transmission of his letters across distance. As Trish Loughran explains, the inconsistent (and sometimes non-existent) circulation of mail in the late 18th century is illustrative of the very fragmented and uneven nature of information exchange within the North American colonies and early republic. Lest we forget, the letters that comprise *Edgar Huntly* are intended for someone else, yet they have landed in our hands; that is, the very form of the novel illustrates what Loughran calls the “restrictive material contexts” of the 1770s, and the related unpredictable outcome of posted correspondence during this period (9).

As implied above, another way to read Edgar’s letter is as an attempt to annul the distance between the writer and his audience—to (unsuccessfully) flatten distance much in the way imperialism flattens distance.35 Edgar’s belief in the continuity of the nation is evinced by his continued insistence upon written correspondence (including the writing of the novel itself), even after he personally witnesses and records the unpredictable and sometimes-dire consequences that such correspondence can bring. While heterotopic moments of imperialism do infiltrate the spaces of Norwalk—most notably with the

35 This spatial normalization is usefully expounded upon by Goldman in his essay “The ‘Black Hole of Calcutta’ in Charles Brockden Brown’s America,” where he claims “Edgar Huntly finds in the western wilderness not the essence of America but, ironically, more marks of European empire and the United States’s entanglements with it” (557).
presence of Sarsefield and Clithero—the disjointed nature of correspondence in the novel insists upon an infrastructure that, at best, can be described as uneven and fragmented. Such a picture becomes even more apparent when we turn Edgar’s interactions with the landscape throughout his narrative.

Alongside the form of the novel, the Elm under which Waldegrave was murdered is an initial nexus that connects the materiality of Edgar’s writing to the materiality of the physical landscape upon which it occurs. As a novel may suggest a community of readers, the Elm functions as a site of orientation that affirms a rational epicenter to the disruptive violence of Waldegrave’s murder (Anderson 25). While Edgar is able to internally revive his experiences in a diachronic fashion, the Elm remains a materially locatable marker of the murder—an exteriorization of Edgar’s own desire for a more synchronistic and unifying narrative.

Unmistakable and distinct, the Elm is the most prominent physical element of the landscape in the entire novel. Edgar’s familiarity with “the bulk and shape of [the tree’s] trunk, its position in the midst of the way, its branches that spread into an ample circumference, [that make it] conspicuous from afar,” marks the Elm as a material archive grafted onto the landscape (8). The elm is a stalwart landmark against which Edgar can order the events that pertain to Waldegrave’s murder. The tree’s “position in the midst of the way” suggests to Edgar the importance of the murder itself; that the tree is still recognizably “conspicuous from afar” despite there being “time enough for momentous changes to occur” reinforces its relevance in his investigation. As if to ensure its very physicality and inscrutability as a point of orientation, Edgar is “impuls[ively...] bade [to] once more seek the Elm; once more to explore the ground; to scrutinize the trunk” (7).
Further, the tree’s palpability and physicality become a grounding point for Edgar’s own existence—so much so that he is physiologically substantiated within his body, and his “pulse throb[s] as [he] approache[s] it” (8). The steadfastness of the Elm is described as providing the structure against which all else is compared, making “the maze [of things] no longer inscrutable,” but ordered, logical and solvable (13). As with his recalling of physical sensations during Waldegrave’s murder, here Edgar is “irresistibly prompted to repeat [his] search” (8). Fittingly, Edgar abandons his intended route to cross the “trackless and intricate” backcountry to opt for the more controlled “private road” of the Elm (8).

As Edgar believes the Elm is a landmark useful in interpreting the inscrutable, to readers the tree gestures toward a similar metatextual context. As Sidney J. Krause has suggested, Waldegrave’s Elm evokes the Treaty Elm, “a central image in the founding of Pennsylvania and, specifically, Philadelphia—heart of the nation to be” (Krause, 464). Early in the 19th century this Treaty Elm would be a familiar icon, evoking the mythic political folktale of William Penn’s negotiations with the Delaware Indians for the purchase of their tribal lands.36 In both contexts the Elm becomes an emblem of ordering that recalls the land’s transition from a backcountry home of the Delaware Indians to being an ordered, meted, and presumably legally acquired piece of territory. Drawing on the novel’s gothic

36 Barnard and Shapiro also mention the Treaty Elm in the Hackett edition of Edgar Huntly (8). The particulars of the 1682 treaty—including whether or not such a meeting actually occurred—remain speculative, as Penn did not leave a record. Popular mythology, however, quickly adopted the story, and when the Elm was downed in a storm in 1810 hundreds of Philadelphians came out to pay their respects (Krause, 466). The history surrounding Pennsylvanian-Delaware relations subsequent to Penn’s death in 1718 is fraught with similar shady and “obscure” dealings, including the Walking Purchase in 1737, to which (according to Krause, Luck and others) the novel also alludes (467–8). The Elm is the subject of Benjamin West’s oil painting “The Treaty of Penn with the Indians” (1771-2). See also “The Walking Purchase” by H. A. Jacobson, and Friends and Enemies in Penn’s Woods by Pencak and Richter.
tropes, Krause claims that much like the history of the 1682 treaty between Penn and the Delaware Indians, in *Edgar Huntly* the “Elm is itself a shade” (469). Although histories both internal and external to the text seem to affirm this arboreal point of orientation, recurrent conflicts and land disputes between settlers and Delaware tribesmen throughout the 18th century—most famously the Walking Purchase in 1737—undercut the iconographic mythology of the Elm as an emblem of amicable colonial-Native American relations (Newman).37

In this regard, Edgar’s faith in the soothing stolidity of the Elm and its described “patriarchal” surroundings, where “Each farmer was surrounded by his sons and kinsmen,” are only half of the picture (the “shade” in Krause’s reckoning); the object casting this shade are the narratives that perpetuate such patriarchal mythologies and actually obscure the reality of Waldegrave’s murder (12).38 In synecdochically representing larger patriarchal schemes (as Edgar describes the region of Solebury), Waldegrave’s Elm and its historical counterpart stand as an illustration of the co-option of the landscape in inscribing

37 Taking place near the forks of the Delaware, where Solebury is located in *Edgar Huntly*, the 1737 Walking Purchase was an infamous land exchange between Penn’s heirs and the Lenna Lenape (Delaware), where the tribe agreed to sell a parcel of land calculated by the distance that a man may walk in a day. Under contentious circumstances, Penn’s walkers were able to capture an area of over a million acres (Newman). According to Newman and other critics, the fallout from the Walking Purchase is a key to examining the location of the action in *Edgar Huntly*.

38 Missing from this comfortable “patriarchal” ordering, of course, are the local inhabitants that are either tenets or servants of the farmers (such as Clithero), and the outlying (or interloping) Natives represented by Old Deb. Notably, these people comprise the social spaces that Edgar will explore in his narrative, and function as an easy target for accusation by a morally upstanding American citizen. Doubtless, Brown’s readers at the time of the publication would relate this accusation to the recent passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts. Jared Gardner further explores the overlap between the novel and the Alien and Sedition Acts in the article “Alien Nation: Edgar Huntly’s Savage Awakening.”
models of power. The Elm becomes a natural architectural feature of the landscape, projecting a hierarchical rationality upon the countryside, and acting as an emblem of a socially and topographically ordered space. The disruptive violence of Waldegrave’s murder as absolutely foreign in such an environment.

The materialization of the Irish-American immigrant Clithero underneath the boughs of the Elm is a direct affront to such systems of rationality. Recognizing the symbolic and historical gravity of the Elm both inside and outside of the text, one can understand Edgar’s associative reaction upon seeing Clithero digging beneath the Elm: that “This apparition [Clithero] was human,” and, because of its presence beneath the tree, “it was connected with the fate of Waldegrave, it [will lead] to a disclosure of the author of that fate” (8). Repressing the other, more nefarious iconography of the Elm—namely, the morally-questionable acquisition of Lenna Lenape (Delaware) lands—Edgar’s projection of Clithero’s guilt obscures the actual motive and agents of the murder. Even so, Edgar’s insistence upon a “foreign violence” is somewhat true, if viewed from the perspective of the

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39 Said differently, the belief in the Elm’s authority and authenticity retroactively creates its authority and authenticity. In Derridean fashion, the Elm functions as an “exergue”—an signifier that is both inside and outside of the text—and which always, as Derrida reminds us, “is at once an institutional and conservative; [r]evolutionary and traditional” (italics in original, 12). As an exergue, the archive (the Elm) is “visible to the outside” as an edifice, an emblem. Yet, being a collection of the knowable, its authority is manifested through its commanding visual presence (its architecture). Laura Ann Stoler describes it thus: All [modern understandings of the archive] are concerned with the legitimating social coordinates of epistemologies: how people imagine they know what they know and what institutions validate that knowledge, and how they do so. None treat the conventions and categories of analysis (statistics, facts, truths, probability, footnotes, and so on) as innocuous or benign. All converge on questions about rules of reliability and trust, criteria of credence, and what moral projects and political predictabilities are served by these conventions and categories. All ask a similar set of historical questions about accredited knowledge and power—what political forces, social cues, and moral virtues produce qualified knowledges that, in turn, disqualified other ways of knowing, other knowledges. (95)
State: it is the return of the displaced Native Americans that result in the irrational murder of his friend. “Surrounded by [Clithero’s] master’s domains,” the Elm is a perfect backdrop against which Clithero’s exoticism becomes most apparent. Accordingly, Clithero appears as an “apparition” that, in its ghostliness and its presence at the site of the murder, “possess[es] a powerful significance” and seems “calculated to rouse up [the] whole soul” (12).

Initially registered by his throbbing pulse, and his impulse to “once more [...] explore the ground” of the Elm, Edgar’s corporeal existence is transgressed by the upwelling of this indefinable soulful apparition. Hearkening to Edgar’s narrative struggles at the opening of the novel, the ghastly appearance of Clithero disarticulates Waldegrave’s Elm as a meaningful point of orientation. Clithero physically rewrites the meaning of the Elm by digging in the earth beneath, prompting Edgar to question, “Was it a grave that he was digging? Was his purpose to explore or to hide?” (9). Exhibiting the symbolic nature of the Elm, Clithero palimpsestually inscribes a memento mori of the finality Waldegrave’s death where there was once the potential for resolution—yet, it is a memento mori that lacks a body. Or, to say it differently, the struggle to balance events of the past with the present reemerges as the Elm is transformed from being a crime scene to be “explored” (suggesting the potential for evidence, and a solvable case), into a “grave” that can “hide” and obscure. While to Edgar the Elm seems to promise the resolution of his friend’s murder, in actuality it only conjures an apparition digging a grave.

Finally, Edgar’s insistence that Clithero is Waldegrave’s murderer exhibits a distinctly imperialistic paranoia regarding the foreign element that has cropped up on the
fringe of the Pennsylvania settlement.\textsuperscript{40} The “apparition” Clithero that appears under the Elm is a specter of previous imperialisms now cropping up on the new American soil; despite humble beginnings under an imperial regime, Clithero traverses and unites global-imperial landscapes. The very bodily presence of the Irishman hearkens heterotopically to Edgar—invoking the vastness of the world and the limitations of his understanding, but also demonstrating the impossibility of ever wholly leaving a place.\textsuperscript{41} Suitably, it is Clithero who recounts the wanderings of the East India trader Sarsefield (later unveiled as Edgar’s tutor)—the representative of the imperialistic hand of the British Empire. It is no coincidence that after Clithero’s own history is told—an impossible tale that subverts the strictures of social hierarchy upon which Edgar’s “patriarchal scheme” relies—Edgar delves further into the wilder spaces of Norwalk, increasingly called to interrogate the rational categories that he had unequivocally accepted as fact.

Edgar’s willingness to surrender to adopted models of ratiocination that emphasize State boundaries and foreignness illustrates how the reliance on iconic mythologies (such as the Elm) can actually eclipse the reality of experience (here the violence of Pennsylvania frontier life) by acting as a presumed center in an extremely decentered world.\textsuperscript{42} By transforming the icon of the Elm from symbolic evidence into a vacant icon of mystery, Edgar conjoins his exploration and understanding of physical space with the narrative

\textsuperscript{40} Goldman and Newman both meaningfully explore the invocations of global-imperialism within the text.
\textsuperscript{41} Foucault defines a heterotopia as a space that invokes other spaces in a non-hegemonic fashion. Here, Clithero’s birth in “the county of Armaugh” in North Ireland evokes 18\textsuperscript{th} century anti-British uprisings, aligning them to the recent Revolutionary War in America (Barnard and Shapiro, 26). Heterotopias are of particular interest when examining gothic literature because of the genre’s collapsing of space and time.
\textsuperscript{42} As White argues, “synthesizers” toil to contextually relate the diverse minority resistances of the frontier to the urban federalism movement, denying their plausibility as legitimate and worthwhile dissention.
iconography of monumental historical events, further compounding the anxiety in archiving his own experiences into a concretized form. As the associative meaning behind Penn’s Treaty Elm is distorted across the Eighteenth Century, so is Clithero’s presence able to rewrite the significance of Waldegrave’s Elm to suggest an alternate historical narrative. The impact of landscape upon Edgar’s understanding of historical narratives and State manifestations of power extends beyond the singular icon of the Elm to encompass his more intimate encounters with the irrational topography and geology of Norwalk.

“Moralizing Narratives or Synthetical Reasonings”: Rhetorical Strategies of Unification

“It may be suggested, that a people spread over an extensive region cannot, like the crowded inhabitants of a small district, be subject to the infection of violent passions, or to the danger of combining in pursuit of violent measures [...] It may even be remarked, that the same extended situation which will exempt the people of America from some of the dangers incident to lesser republics, will expose them to the inconvenience of remaining for a longer time under the influence of those misrepresentations which the combined industry of interested men may succeed in distributing among them.”

- James Madison, The Federalist Papers, #63

Edgar casts Clithero as the conspicuous foreign stranger that, by digging and literally undercutting Edgar’s understanding of social hierarchy, denigrates the rational and rewrites the symbolism of the Elm. Going forward from this revolutionary moment, Edgar’s attempts to “reason with” Clithero do not progress in a smooth and synchronous fashion, but are more aptly described as somnambular: meandering disconnected and disordered through a myriad of illogical landscapes, beholden to instances of irruptive violence, and raising as many questions as they solve.43 By the end of his letter to Mary, the

43 These somnambulant meanderings are not confined to the content of the narrative but are manifest in the novel’s form as well; chapters IV through VII of Edgar Huntly (nearly a fifth of its page-count) are surrendered to Clithero’s voice.
initial goal of avenging Waldegrave has been subsumed by an account of the irrational experiences of the sleepwalkers as they penetrate the backcountry of Norwalk. Where the Elm was a singular icon that reflected a larger hierarchy of order, Norwalk is a larger area that continues to dismantle the mythology of space that Edgar has embraced.

Described as “a space [...] exhibiting a perpetual and intricate variety of craggy eminences and deep dells,” the expanse of Norwalk suggests an ongoing fluidity of situated experience (67). As Chad Luck describes, Norwalk is “a kind of de facto frontier space separating ‘Indian country’ and the ‘English settlements’” where Edgar “repeatedly oscillates between moments of panoramic vision and moments of near blindness in which he must often rely on the sense of touch” (55; 42). Edgar’s tutor Sarsefield found these unconquered tracts particularly engaging, “partly from the love of picturesque scenes, partly to investigate its botanical and mineral productions, and partly to carry on more effectually that species of instruction which he had adopted with regard to me [Edgar], and which chiefly consisted in moralizing narratives or synthetical reasonings” (67). Opposed to the situated bodily mapping that Edgar performs, Sarsefield’s mental mapping imposes proper aesthetic, economic, scientific, and moral inclinations, assimilating, cataloguing, and archiving this frontier through the physical act of walking and exploring. The categorical impulses of Sarsefield correlate proper “moralizing narratives or synthetical reasonings” to the “picturesque scenes” and the “botanical and mineral productions” of Norwalk. This

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44 I would encourage a reading of “perpetual” as implying both adjectival and adverbial contexts: meaning both “never ending or ceasing” varieties of features, as well as a “continuously” reconstituted landscape, depending on perspective (OED).

45 The phrase “synthetical reasonings” is a direct reference to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, and is not unrelated to the construction of Edgar’s subjectivity. Kant defines synthetic reasoning in opposition to analytic reasoning through a relationship between a subject and a predicate: “Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A as something that
instructive viewpoint compounds the individual and the landscape, emphasizing a moral imperative to order and uncover the “reasonings” of the disjointed topography of space.\textsuperscript{46}

While Sarsefield asserts this process of transforming space into territory, his model cannot entirely repress the “perpetual and intricate” topologic inconsistencies that Edgar encounters in following Clithero through Norwalk. In Edgar’s description, we see the mythologizing language of mapping run up against the unassailable irrationality of the backcountry:

The hollows [of Norwalk] are single, and walled around by cliffs, ever varying in shape and height, and have seldom any perceptible communication with each other. These hollows are of all dimensions, from the narrowness and depth of a well, to the amplitude of one hundred yards. Winter’s snow is frequently found in these cavities at midsummer. The streams that burst forth from every crevice are thrown, by the irregularities of the surface, into numberless cascades, often disappear in mists or in chasms, and emerge from subterranean channels, and, finally, either subside into lakes, or quietly meander through the lower and more level grounds. (67)

Although describing the region somewhat abstractly, Edgar speaks with a tone of familiarity and authority—from the stance of one who has thoroughly explored Norwalk.

While Edgar’s tutelage under Sarsefield “familiarized [him] with [Norwalk’s] outlines and most accessible parts,” there remains a vast swath of the landscape that baffles all

\begin{quote}
is (covertly) contained in this concept \textit{A}; or \textit{B} lies entirely outside the concept \textit{A}, though to be sure it stands in connection with it. In the first case, I call the judgment analytic, in the second synthetic” (\textit{Critique of Pure Reason}, A:6-7). By focusing on “synthetical reasonings,” Sarsefield is training Edgar to associate all he sees in the world with an implied ordering, where the combination of the subject and predicate implicate the synthesized result \textit{a priori}—before it ever appears (Rey).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{46}In his study of early American cartography and narrative, Thomas Hallock writes “Speculators and public officials would continue to define the interior in terms of how land should be used, and as their justifications for possession were easily challenged, the narratives that followed would always seem uncertain. The result would be more narrative and a continued search for rhetorical position in a still open frontier. It was a tension between the textualized West and actual experiences on the border region that would come to define writings about place in the revolutionary era” (55).
rationalization; that “could never be reached without wings, and much the only paths to which I might forever overlook” (67-68). The isolated nature of each singular hollow—relative, yet without “any perceptible communication with each other”—reflects a larger topography of rationality where “communication” (or relation) is imposed from outside. 47

As Paul Downes pointed out, the wilds of Norwalk are “temporally disjunctive” even the turn of the seasons (holding snow in the summertime) and the paths of streams seem utterly untraceable and unpredictable (424). Hearkening again to Edgar’s archival and narrative anxiety, the path through this topography is not straightforward and concatenate, moving in a narrative fashion; it is rather a disjointed and multifarious, where each hollow exists temporally separate from others. To grasp a truer topography of this backcountry Edgar must somehow abandon the social rigors and the rational categories that he has grafted onto the Elm to encounter his surroundings in an immersive, synchronic manner.

The trope of somnambulism in Edgar Huntly reflects this temporal synchronicity by separating the individual’s behavior from the guidance of reason, and forcing a present devoid of any historical context—a present that is not s point on the narrative arch of a longer story. Eschewing historical narratives (and the subsequent development of models), sleepwalking essentially transports the subject to an imposing and abrupt present, and challenges models of ratiocination by interrupting the logical succession of events. Existence in such a mode of being is in constant tension with itself: always in motion, changing and reconfiguring itself in situations that are always new at hand. By erasing periods of action, somnambulism functions as a barrier that obscures and interrupts

47 This aligns with Ed White’s notion of “serial dispersal” of communities in the early republic: a “an inactive gathering of reciprocal isolation,” explained in more depth above (White, 35). Similarly, this bridging between two isolated
Edgar’s epistolary narrative, as well as his individual narrative. This obscuration recalls and restates the difficulties of writing expounded at the beginning of the novel, and reinforces an oscillating tension among the way an event is experienced in a moment and then embedded within a historical narrative.

As a somnambulist whose “mind [is] sorely wounded,” Clithero plays the part of the disruptive, contagious, de-rationalizing infiltrator. The foreigner mysteriously departs (as ghosts are wont to do) from Inglefield’s homestead, “furnish[ing Edgar with] new incitements to ascend [Norwalk’s] cliffs and pervade its thickets”—to map anew the terrain of Norwalk outside of Sarsefield’s “synthetical reasonings” (emphasis added, 66). In setting out to search for Clithero, Edgar cites an “incumbent” responsibility to search out Clithero’s bones (his physical remnants) in the “deepest of [Norwalk’s] recesses...unvisited by human footsteps,” “to gather [Clithero’s bones] together and provide for them a grave...of which the performance was connected with a thousand habitual sentiments and mixed pleasures” (66). The inconclusive nature of Waldegrave’s murder is here dragged up afresh, and as Edgar cannot reconcile the “bloody and mysterious catastrophe,” he similarly cannot allow the matter of Clithero’s life or death to remain unresolved and unmapped—that is, unarchived (6). As with Waldegrave, here there is an impulsive drive of toward finality

48 Foucault reads the eighteenth-century cemetery as being interconnected to all parts of society—found in the center of town, a meeting place of all classes, and pluralistic in the mingling corpses and burial chambers. “It is from the beginning of the nineteenth century,” he continues, “that everyone has a right to her or his own little box for her or his own little personal decay, but on the other hand, it is only from that start of the nineteenth century that cemeteries began to be located at the outside border of cities”—as if death is no longer sacred, but abhorrent. The individualized bodies of the dead are to be shunned, as “proximity propagates death itself.” On the cusp of this shift in the “individualization of death,” Edgar is focused on interring Clithero’s body in its proper place, as his body is, Foucault would say, “ultimately the only trace of [his] existence in the world and in language.” Yet Edgar is acting not on behalf of Clithero at all, but in response to his own
and perfect closure, where Clithero’s remains will be brought to a state of rest, interred according to custom and tradition. These “thousand habitual sentiments” do not, therefore stem from any concern for Clithero’s life or soul—but from Edgar’s own “incumbent [duty].” Despite Clithero’s efforts to remove himself from the mapped, or *narrated* spaces of the world (living in self-inflicted exile; and appearing throughout the novel as a ghostly presence, a panther, or as Edgar’s double), Edgar’s “habitual” impulse insists upon interring the foreigner’s bones within a familiar, archival space of a cemetery. Earlier, Clithero had transformed the Elm from a place of exploration and investigation to a place of obfuscation; Edgar’s compulsion would inverse this by permanently marking the Irishman’s existence into the physical landscape—“gather[ing]” (or archiving) and containing death by locating it precisely within a sanctified (and locatable) place of repose. In one manner, Edgar would naturalize Clithero’s foreignness; in another, he would affirm Clithero’s corporeality.

Departing to discover Clithero’s body, Edgar reiterates the sequence of logic that led him to his “intention to re-examine” the immigrant’s presumed retreat much in the same manner as he is prompted to reexamine the Elm after Waldegrave’s murder: “I reflected that this [cave] had been formerly haunted by Clithero, and might possibly have been the scene for the desperate act [of suicide] which he had meditated. It might at least conceal some token of his past existence. It might lead into spaces hitherto unvisited, and to summits from which wider landscapes might be seen” (68). Edgar methodically sequences his train of thought, mapping its course against the landscape: 1) this cave is the logical moral dictates of burial: the interment of Clithero’s body would be an individualistic experience for Edgar, not for Clithero (Foucault, *Of Other Spaces*).

49 This reminds of the scene that opened this chapter, where it is Edgar’s living body that wishes to be interred and place to rest.
place to search for Clithero’s bones; 2) it could “conceal some token” of Clithero’s past; 3) and it may lead Edgar to a deeper understanding not of Clithero, but of Norwalk in general. Edgar’s motivation is far more material than sympathetic, as knowledge of Clithero is immediately attached to the “spaces,” “summits,” and “landscapes” he is exploring, and the opportunity to expand the spaces that Sarsefield’s “moralizing narratives and synthetical reasonings” have already archived.

In practice, however, Edgar’s explorations become increasingly unsettling to his rationalistic view of the world, and he is forced to acknowledge the diachronic disjunction between his current, more deliberate pursuit of Clithero, and his previous headlong chase:

As I descended the rugged stair [down which Clithero had previously led me], I could not but wonder at the temerity and precipitation with which this descent had formerly been made. It seemed as if the noonday light and the tardiest circumspection would scarcely enable me to accomplish it; yet then it had been done with headlong speed, and with no guidance but the moon’s uncertain rays. (68)

Edgar’s approach to the space of Norwalk presumes a predictable temporal and spatial regularity that is challenged by his difficulties in traversing the landscape, and draws attention to the volatility of encountering the world first-hand. It is actually Edgar’s “headlong” abandonment of the “tardiest circumspection” that opens the “spaces hitherto unexplored”—Edgar admits, “none of [my previous excursions] had led me wider from my customary paths” (68). In this and other passages, the metaphor of darkness is used to suggest the subject’s immersion in the absolute present, divorced from historical models of rationality: here, the “noonday light” of Edgar’s familiar models of reason moves slowly forward, while the “uncertain rays” of the moon enable “headlong speed.” Mirroring the projection of light from a source outwards (the sun, in this example), Edgar imposes visions
of organization and procession upon his surroundings, inadvertently creating the very
“shades” that he encounters in the landscape.

This outwardly luminous projection of knowledge is short-circuited, however, when Edgar arrives at Clithero’s cave without a lantern. "Light might possibly be requisite" to traverse this cave, he reflects; yet “Caution might supply the place of light” (68). Denied the ability to project his understanding upon his surroundings (as a light from a lantern would), Edgar is forced to map his surroundings corporeally through absolute immersion in his environment:

I proceeded with the utmost caution, always ascertaining, by outstretched arms, the height and breadth of the cavity before me [...] Presently the wall on one side, and the ceiling, receded beyond my reach. I began to fear that I should be involved in a maze, and should be disabled from returning. To obviate this danger it was requisite to adhere to the nearest wall, and conform to the direction which it should take, without straying through the palpable obscurity. (69)

The wall figures as Ariadne’s thread able to lead Edgar back to the familiar, illuminated world outside of the cave. The wall also serves to carry this outside world forward into the cave, and to maintain Edgar’s “adher[ence]” and “conform[ation]” to at least a semblance of rational progress and narrative linearity.\(^5\) The darkness of the cavern creates a tension between the lack (or, the “vacuity”) of a “moralizing narrative or synthetical reasoning” and the absolute tangibility of the wall on the other—the term “palpable obscurity” punning on the interconnectivity the two.

To proceed further into the cave, Edgar is forced to abandon his conformation to the wall and strike out into the “palpable obscurity,” his “path bec[oming] more intricate and

\(^5\) Chad Luck persuasively argues that this scene “effectively sets up a contrast between vision and touch that is central to debates among [...] sensational psychologists.” This debate, Luck claims, resurfaces later in the pit scene as well.
more difficult to retread in proportion as [he] advance[s]."51 The elaborate path taken through the cave relies entirely upon touch; and as the landmarks change from the solidity of a wall to the “edge of [a] cavity,” Edgar abandons the guiding linearity of the cavern wall to an immersive three-dimensional space that requires immediate experiential adaptation. Losing the diachronic timeline of the cavern wall (that traces where he has come from), this abandonment complicates the “retreading” his steps. Edgar is not creating a repeatable model, or narratable history, through this series of movements: because of the embedded situatedness of each action—its physical specificity and uniqueness—the path he adopts is not only untraceable, but also utterly unknowable. These tangible struggles within the darkness suggest singular instances separate from any rationally formed model—whether of science, nationality, moral citizenship, or even epistemology. Striving for any sort of precedent, Edgar “reflect[s...] that Clithero had boldly entered this recess, and had certainly come forth at a different avenue from that at which he entered” (69). As comforting as Clithero’s traversal seems, Edgar remains in the dark, unable to directly follow his forerunner’s movements, and effectively isolated. Navigating a space that exists outside familiar models of ratiocination, Edgar’s exploration of the cavern necessitates a severance from all traces of historical narrative, an erasure of the path behind him in order to swell in the synchrony of the present.

As the Elm symbolically invoked paternalism and rationality, the space of the “chamber” that Edgar emerges into topographically manifests the narrator’s isolation and historical interconnectivity with Clithero. The complex natural architecture is excruciatingly detailed over the course of a page, and is so exceedingly intricate that it is

51 The phrase “palpable obscurity” will be again employed when Edgar falls into the pit after his own sleepwalking escapade. See Section IV of this document.
difficult for Edgar to translate from “image” to “words.” Its most prominent feature is also

its most architectural, and should be dwelt on:

I [Edgar] now turned my attention to the interior space. If you imagine a
cylindrical mass, with a cavity dug in the centre [sic], whose edge conforms
to the exterior edge; and if you place in this cavity another cylinder, higher
than that which surrounds it, but so small as to leave between its sides and
those of the cavity a hollow space, you will gain as distinct an image of this
hill as words can convey. The summit of the inner rock was rugged and
covered with trees of unequal growth. To reach this summit would not
render my return easier; but its greater elevation would extend my view, and
perhaps furnish a spot from which the whole horizon was conspicuous. (71)

Despite his inclination toward “a spot from which the whole horizon was conspicuous”—
one that would render the topography mappable—Edgar’s geometric language betrays the
challenges of even “imagining” such a space. As coldly calculative as he attempts to be in
describing his surroundings, the reader is provided only with “as distinct an image of this
hill as words can convey.” Importantly, this unlikely topography emotionally affects Edgar,
and he reminisces that “sanctity and awe environed it, owing to the consciousness of
absolute and utter loneliness.” The singularity of its features and its isolated location lead
Edgar to muse on his divergence into this non-archivable space: “It was probable that
human feet had never before gained this recess, that human eyes had never been fixed
upon these gushing waters,” he writes, “I was probably the first who had deviated thus
remotely from the customary paths of men” (71). The emphasis (once again) on his
straying from “customary paths” marks not only a wandering within the backcountry, but
his own utterly singular way of perceiving and ordering the world, ostensibly separate
from any preconceived constructions or politically unifying fabrication. Thoughts are
marked with a concrete correspondence to surroundings, and “While musing upon these
ideas” Edgar finds their match in the “fantastic shapes and endless irregularities” of “rocks
which confined and embarrassed” the course of a stream. Each rock is irreplaceable by any other, and “fantastic[ally]” and “irregular[ly]” do not fit into any category of ratiocination or mode of archivization.

Following this stream with his eyes (and its counterpart within his thoughts), Edgar broadens this reading of the surrounding world to question the place of the human: the role of the individual in constructing meaning out of—and in dwelling among—the physically distinct space of the landscape at hand. While this inquiry proceeds deliberately and logically, by “passing from one to another of these [rocks],” it is not through the application of a rational model, or the bending of the landscape to fit a precedent or narrative, but from an attitude that privileges adaptive perception over mere conformity. When Edgar’s “attention lighted […] as if by some magical transition, on … an human countenance!” he is taken aback that such a mode of individualism could admit any semblance of community: “My station was accessible by no other road than that through which I had passed,” he reasons, “and no motives were imaginable by which others could be prompted to explore this road. But he whom I now beheld was seated where it seemed impossible for human efforts to have placed him” (71). Here, even as he claims singular ownership over a unique “position,” Edgar still struggles to understand the contrast between Clithero’s absolute isolation and the community represented by the Elm’s “patriarchal scheme.” Defying rationality, Clithero is again exhibited as uncanny—appearing through a “magical transition,” yet still a generic “human countenance.” Even upon identifying this “human creature” as Clithero, Edgar insists upon the immigrant’s harrowing savagery:

[Clithero’s] scanty and coarse garb had been nearly rent away by brambles and thorns; his arms, bosom, and cheeks were overgrown and half concealed
by hair. There was somewhat in his attitude and looks denoting more than anarchy of thoughts and passions. His rueful, ghastly, and immovable eyes testified not only that his mind was ravaged by despair, but that he was pinched with famine. (72)

Edgar’s narration dehumanizes Clithero, isolating him as primordial and alien, possessing an irrational mind that struggles with “more than anarchy of thoughts and passion.” And here again we have the importance of vision as a marker of enlightenment rationality; Clithero’s appearance “denote[s]” his state of mind, and his “immovable” eyes “testify” to his madness. Shouting “Man! Clithero!” Edgar verbalizes the primitive equivalency that he perceives (italics in original, 72).

What remains after the debasement of Clithero is a very primitive humanistic connection that hearkens to Edgar’s desire to reach beyond language when initially reflecting upon writing to Mary Waldegrave. “If words were impotent, and arguments were nugatory,” Edgar reflects,

[Y]et to sit by [Clithero] in silence, to moisten his hand with tears, to sigh in unison, to offer him the spectacle of sympathy, the solace of believing that his demerits were not estimated by so rigid a standard by others as by himself, that one at least among his fellow-men regarded him with love and pity, could not fail to be of benign influence. (73)

Edgar’s reflection draws attention to the discrepancy between the “rigid...standard” that the individual imposes upon himself when placed within the strictures of civic virtue. What is important here is the assertion that these strictures are never absolute, but, despite their seeming weight and sway within civil society, remain malleable and interpretable. When faced with such a “spectacle” of humanistic connections as “silent” sympathy, for instance, communication between individuals can actually be effected on a deeper level than artificially and hierarchically codified principles. Edgar regards this “spectacle of sympathy” as communicative without language—tangible and outwardly manifested
through a tear that can be touched, lent sound through the sigh, and creating a sheer “spectacle” that is visually palpable. Sympathy becomes a tool to bodily convey signals of understanding, to create a sort of emotional landscape that is as readable through the senses as the landscape of Norwalk.

Clithero’s exoticism—previously a mark of suspicion—is here reevaluated as a sign of his being human, and diversity becomes a way of asserting a connection rather than an exhibition of distance. Edgar’s transition from a reliance on an engrained model of ratiocination to being affected by his immediate surroundings, betokens a fundamental disconnect between the narratives of State legitimacy and the interpersonal connections of individuals: namely, must a State be tethered to an artificially unifying ideological structure that unites citizens through a fabricated and politicized history? Or, alternatively, can a State be constituted in a fashion that preserves an autonomy of diverse and vastly different cultures and histories? As Edgar searches to comprehend the unique individualism of Clithero, he is also struggling to align his own moral individualism with the constitutive requirements of political communities—particularly within the parameters of citizen-identity, civic virtue, and territory. Scrutinizing Edgar’s contextual reasoning when advancing through the darkened cave, and his willingness to sympathize with Clithero challenges the categorical truths that shape and define the ideological rationality of the contemporary State.

From Somnambulism to Self-Cannibalism: Critiques of National Narratives

“Why has government been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice, without restraint.”

52 This seems to be Brown’s challenge to the Alien and Sedition Acts (1798).
“But it is the reason, alone, of the public, that ought to control and regulate the government. The passions ought to be controlled and regulated by the government.”
- James Madison, *The Federalist Papers* #49

“You must risk much, by indispensably placing trusts of the greatest magnitude, into the hands of individuals whose ambition for power, and aggrandizement, will oppress and grind you. Where, from the vast extent of your territory, and the complication of interests, the science of government will become intricate and perplexed, and too mysterious for you to understand and observe; and by which you are to be conducted into a monarchy, either limited or despotic;”
- George Clinton, *The Antifederalist Papers* #14

We can see through these two excerpts from *The Federalist* that a primary impetus for the centralization of power within the Early Republic was precisely to reign in and control the “passions” of its citizens. In both cases, these “passions” are juxtaposed directly to “reason”—in Madison’s iteration “reason” is a by-product of a “public,” an organized citizenry, and which Hamilton pairs with a generic “justice.” “Reason” here presupposes an underlying structure of metered and measured behavior, whether dictated through a collected body of citizens, or through underlying principle of “justice.” Said differently, for reason to exist there must be an established narrative of State against which the passions are to be measured—a historical model of proper conduct and virtuous action to influence “the public” through restraint of passions.

As most contemporary historians will admit, the construction of a narrative history plays a foundational role in State formation and accruement of power. As Edgar’s anxiety at the opening of the novel depicts, narratives fracture synchronic experiential time into the diachronic by synthesizing of the multitude of different flows of time into an authoritative concatenation.53 Writing up to the first instance of his own somnambulant wanderings,

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Edgar again reiterates the difficulties in succinctly and precisely relating the events: “One image runs into another,” he writes “sensations succeed in so rapid a train, that I fear I shall be unable to distribute and express them with sufficient perspicuity. As I look back, my heart is sore, and aches within my bosom” (106). Rather than a piling up narrative events into a narrative model of history—one that reflects a rationalized structure that would betoken the centralization of power called upon by Madison and Hamilton—the images are blurred, and “sensations” come in flashes, flipping past in an unordered jumble. In “distribut[ing] and express[ing these sensations] with perspicuity,” Edgar “conform[s] to the dictates of reason.” In doing so, however, Edgar sacrifices his passions, and the “complex sentiment of distress and forlornness” that accompanies such a diminution of sensation (106). Upon examining his situation, and attempting to reconstruct events in a manner that would conform to the narrative dictates of reason, his only conclusion is that “the past was too much in contradiction to the present, and my intellect was too much shattered by external violence” (107).

And here again emerges the novel’s intimate relationship to the State formation of a “republican” nation—for how can we have a nation constituted on rights and autonomy of the individual, yet still shape its history in the form of a unified narrative? Ordering is a moment of violence, where the subject is forced to meld perception and experience into a form that is recognizable and expressible to another.54 The only way to remain in such a model of subjective individualism is to simultaneously be assaulted by and to counterattack these staccato moments: to open up to the unregulated sensations and their emotive

54 Another way to say this is that Edgar is forced to collect and mark his emotive and physical experiences, and then to assemble them into a defensible narrative—he is forced into the role of a state archivist.
correspondents. As Edgar surrenders further and further to the immediate circumstances around him (as he opens himself to the materiality in which he is immersed), his ability to perceive, interact with, and influence his surroundings increases. As a writer (or an archivist), however, Edgar must necessarily contain and redistribute sensations onto the page in a linear fashion. Yet, by definition the somnambulist exists only outside of the dictates of reason and the logicality of narrative, and can only be experienced passionately and violently without any ordered registry of reason or adherence to an extant model. To convey the fleeting sensations of the moment is to contain it within the confines of ideology—“The incapacity of sound sleep,” as Edgar reminds us, “denotes a mind sorely wounded” (11).

With this consideration, let’s turn to the often-examined pit scene, where the protagonist wakes in total darkness, bruised, with no recollection as to how he came to be there. While able to recall falling asleep—“remember[ing]...the instant when my thought ceased to flow, and my senses were arrested by the leaden wand of forgetfulness”—upon waking Edgar is “conscious, for a time, of nothing but existence.” This mere state of existence is “oblivion,” remote from “the information which [his] senses afforded [him],” “disconnected with the loco-motive or voluntary power” (107). Stripped of orientation, Edgar’s reconnection with his body is “so slow and so faint” that it results in a jumbled temporal order that erases linear history, where “the past [is] too much in contradiction with the present,” relegating him to an existence that is entirely spatial and immediate, and forcing him to build a world outward through only his sensory perceptions.55 The separation between body and consciousness constitute a blank slate where Edgar will

55 Again Chad Luck reads this scene in a complimentary manner, emphasizing the hierarchy of sensory perceptions. See The Body of Property, page 45.
reconstruct himself according to his passion-driven experiences with Clithero and his wandering in the illogical spaces of Norwalk.

Deprived of an immediate history out of which to construct a rational explanation of his current state, Edgar turns to the physical features of the space in which he is immersed. Upon awakening, his senses seem regressed: his first perceptions are primitive and base, entirely related to the position of his body, as if his corporeal existence was now all that he is and the limits of his own body are somewhat foreign to his understanding. His emergent consciousness seeks to explore these limits, to know his own corporeal boundaries in order to discover how to relate to his surroundings. This begins with a connection between a reflection on the mechanics of breathing itself, how it integrates and incorporates the outside world into his body, and how that body is situated in his surroundings: “The element which I breathed was stagnant and cold,” he mechanically explains, “The spot where I lay was rugged and hard. I was neither naked nor clothed—a shirt and trousers composed my dress, and the shoes and stockings, which always accompanied these, were now wanting” (107-8). Edgar’s placement within his body, whose extremities are the evidence of existence, mark his immersion within the world in some capacity, and is the only way to orientate his being. While he remains alive, breathing and feeling, Edgar is here entombed within harsh natural surroundings, the “rugged and hard” cavern and the “cold” still air. Note that he is “neither naked nor clothed,” but is in a tenuous state between these civilized polarities, and defined only in a negative relation to them.\(^56\) His want of shoes and

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\(^56\) Both “naked” and “clothed” reference a relationship to social perceptions of the human body – “naked” meaning “lacking in something, bare, inadequate” (OED). To say that Edgar is neither of these suggests a redacted third term of “nude” or “natural,” a state prior to any social mores or norm. It also reminds the reader of Clithero’s state when discovered in the
stockings mirror his first encounter with Clithero at the Elm (who at that time was also “half naked”), but also the Indians he will encounter at the beginning of the next chapter, whose ornamented moccasins “immediately suggested the suspicion” of their identity (9; 115). Each of these subjects—the sleepwalking Clithero, the Lenna Lenape, and now Edgar—are defining existence in a naturalized manner, growing out of their immediate material conditions and surroundings rather than a constructed and applied national narrative of categorization.

Recalling his earlier sojourn in the cave when trailing Clithero, Edgar has wakened “immersed in palpable obscurity,” and must “totter and stagger” through a “vacuity” that surrounds him. The inability of his senses to evaluate and comprehend his surroundings allows the external factors of the cave overstep and control his body: “My eyes, however, were opened” he writes, “but the darkness that environed me was as intense as before.” The immediacy of Edgar's sensory perceptions challenge his investment in State ideologies, narrative histories, and models of being. In order to reconnect with his body Edgar must rebuild his surroundings through mapping them bodily, by marking the topography through interaction rather than projecting an ascribed understanding of the world:

Proceeding irresolutely and slowly forward, my hands at length touched a wall. This, like the flooring, was of stone, and was rugged and impenetrable. I followed this wall. An advancing angle occurred at a short distance, which was followed by similar angles. I continued to explore this clue, till the suspicion occurred that I was merely going round the walls of a vast and irregular apartment.

The utter darkness disabled me from comparing directions and distances. This discovery, therefore, was not made on a sudden, and was still entangled with some doubt. My blood recovered some warmth, and my muscles some elasticity; but in proportion as my sensibility returned, my pains augmented. (108)

recesses of Norwalk earlier, found in “scanty and coarse garb had been nearly rent away by brambles and thorns” (72).
As when chasing Clithero earlier in the novel, Edgar is relegated to tracing the extremities of the space through the extremities of his body, somatically mapping his existence by his placement in the world around him. Edgar is again faced with a situation where models of reason are inapplicable; he can only perceive this cavern only through his immersion in it. The comparative features of “directions and distances” that would be relationally employed in such a survey are mentioned only in their obscurity, creating a scene of “suspicion” and, ultimately, a violent perpetual “discovery” that is juxtaposed to the stepped, regulated, restrained progress of a more scientific method. The perpetual circulation of Edgar around the extremities of the cavern, and discoveries that are “entangled with doubt,” further suggest the tenuous nature of this new subjectivity.

As this new identity gradually emerges from the darkness, Edgar employs other methods of exploration. He probes the space not only with his physical body, but the extension of his voice as well, sounding the cavern to delineate its dimensions, “knowing that sound is reflected according to the distance and relative positions of the substances from which it is repelled” (109). Echolocation functions doubly here: both sounding the space around Edgar after he has wakened in the pit, yet also recalling experiences of his earlier sojourn into the cavern to trace Clithero’s path. In echolocation, sound not only emanates outward from the subject, but returns to the subject to reflect the world out of reach—it maps the space of the cavern, yet also centers Edgar in relation to “the substances” that surround, allowing him to recognize and (like an echo itself) reflect upon his own experience of “halloo[ing]” the pit the day before.57 In lieu of a serialized history—

57 Interestingly, and perhaps itself an instance of a retroactive rejiggering of historical narrative, this previous sounding of the pit is only mentioned after Edgar’s his
a narrative developed from or around an archive—Edgar adopts a method of orientation that necessarily privileges his immediate sensory perceptions over any historical or nationalistic construct. That is, rather than relying on an external hermeneutic of understanding and comprehension—one outlined and informed by political and social ideologies—Edgar’s “sensibility” is entirely “in proportion to” his physical discomfort. In this way, this scene is an echo of Edgar’s initial desire to convey his narrative immediately to Mary Waldegrave, to forego any anxiety associated with archiving and recording a history.

While this new mode of immediacy-in-action may seem entirely empowering in a political sense, the absence of history is jarring and unsettling, especially as an interruption to a straightforward and linear narrative. Reinforcing the pervasiveness of ideologically-tinged histories, Edgar identifies the metaphorical disjunction within his own narrative, explaining “the author of my distress and the means he had taken to decoy me hither were still incomprehensible.” This leads to a questioning of consciousness altogether, for skepticism is more comfortable than the alternative of meaningless existence. Edgar comes to question if “I was still asleep, and this was merely a tormenting vision, or madness had seized me, and the darkness that environed and the hunger that afflicted me existed only in my own distempered imagination” (110).

Stripped down to a point of base existence that remains outside of any system of reason, Edgar’s urges are played out through a scene of self-cannibalism that illustrates the destructive nature of a mind lacking boundaries. The exploration of this subjective dark world begins with Edgar’s very visceral act of “[tearing] the linen of my shirt between my somnambular fall, not when it would have occurred the previous day.
teeth and swallow[ing] the fragments.” Then, moving inward, Edgar feels “a strong propensity to bite the flesh from my arm” (110). The recursive interaction with and consumption of the outside world is emphasized in this moment that equates externalized violence with self-incorporation—where the individual holds the fantasy of being wholly self-sustaining and free from any boundaries, including that of his own urges for sustenance.

Self-cannibalism stands as an attempt to create a mode of existence wholly removed from ideological influence by turning to the most intimate material substance (the flesh of his body) to garner power and energy. Yet, in a political sense, there is a double-feedback loop here: while the experience of a violent bodily hunger legitimizes and encourages violence in the world around the subject in order to procure sustenance (even if it is upon the body of the subject himself), the incorporation of the corporeal self through the auto-cannibalistic ingestion of clothing and flesh fails to satiate bodily necessity in a sustainable manner. As opposed to being subject to an externally imposed ideology or controlling narrative of State power—one explicitly intended to “restrain” the individual passions (as Hamilton espouses in the Federalist #15, for instance)—self-cannibalism falsely promises a nurturing of oneself without being beholden to any externality. Here the individual hedonistically follows his own desires, and remains autonomous, garnering sustenance from his own being. In self-cannibalism there is a power inherent in the very materiality of the individual to rule over itself. Of course, one can see the circular logic: while free to consume or reintegrate the body in a closed, self-interested system, such an existence is self-destructive and non-regenerative. As with any closed system, it is utterly impotent.
Editors Barnard and Shapiro claim that Edgar’s subsequent fortuitous discovery of “an Indian Tom-hawk” in the chamber “condenses the character’s ‘unconscious’ lapse into automatized revenge violence” (108n5). Considering the political undercurrents of the text, I suggest that this discovery more directly reflects Edgar’s reevaluation of the stable “patriarchal” surroundings, as represented by the Elm in the opening pages of the novel. Edgar’s reliance upon his own senses over external ideologies challenges his earlier fantasy of Solebury and environs as a rational region infused with patriarchal harmony. Edgar’s “intellect [...] which has been] shattered by external violence” conjures the tom-hawk, a symbol that better reflects the reality of irruptive frontier warfare, and a presage of Edgar’s own external dissemination of violence.\(^58\)

The emergence of the “savage” panther from the gloom of the pit reiterates Edgar’s own earlier emergence from unconsciousness, and becomes a target for the outward manifestation of violence:

> ...I cast my eyes wildly and languidly around. The darkness was no less intense than in the pit below, and yet two objects were distinctly seen. They resembled a fixed and obscure flame. They were motionless. Though lustrous themselves, they created no illumination around them. This circumstance, added to others, which reminded me of similar objects noted on former occasions, immediately explained the nature of what I beheld. These were the eyes of a panther. Thus had I struggled to obtain a post where a savage was lurking... (111)

There is a duality of violent tendencies in this encounter: the panther is certainly a representation of the unmediated violence and savageness of nature—a reality that is as plaintive as the standing “flame” of its eyes; yet the animal also becomes a target for Edgar’s own violent actions, a violent other. Thrown at the panther from a distance, the

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58 This deposition of the Elm as a “center” in the novel will be reinforced again later with the appearance of Sarsefield’s fusil, a symbol of imperialist conquest in India.
Tom-hawk is a means of projecting influence outward, beyond the boundaries of the body and the destructive eddy of self-cannibalism.59

Acknowledging that his “hunger had arrived at that pitch where all fastidiousness and scruples are at an end,” Edgar imitates the wild animal’s feeding behavior, gorging himself on “the yet warm blood and reeking fibres of a brute” and thus fulfilling his earlier stated desire to “[rend] some living animal to pieces.” (112). To justify the savage act of eating the panther’s raw flesh, Edgar asserts a disconnection between “a view” to quell his hunger and the ideological restraints of civilization. Importantly, he is profoundly affected in a manner that resembles the hunger pangs he is compelled to relieve: “Had I fore-known the pangs to which my ravenous and bloody meal would give birth, I should have carefully abstained, and yet these pangs were a useful effort of nature to subdue and convert to nourishment the matter I had swallowed” (113). These pangs are recognized as necessary for existence, and reflect internal (physiological and mental) effects of his contact with the world. The ingestion of the “matter” of the panther is a literal incorporation of that symbol and what it represents into Edgar’s emerging character.

59 See the weapon as compared to the tool in Deleuze and Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*: “The tool [as compared to the weapon] is much more introceptive [sic], introjective [sic]: it prepares a matter from a distance, in order to bring it to a state of equilibrium or to appropriate it for a form of interiority. Action at a distance exists in both cases, but in one case it is centrifugal and in the other, centripetal. One could also say that the tool encounters resistances, to be conquered or put to use, while the weapon has to do with counterattack, to be avoided or invented” (395). And later: “The tool is essentially tied to a genesis, a displacement, and an expenditure of force whose laws reside in work, while the weapon concerns only the exercise or manifestation of force in space and time, in conformity with free action. The weapon does not fall from the sky, and obviously assumes production, displacement, expenditure, and resistance. But this aspect relates to the common sphere of the weapon and the tool, and does not yet concern the specificity of the weapon, which appears only when force is considered in itself, when it is no longer tied to anything but the number, movement, space, or time, or when speed is added to displacement” (italics in original, 398).
Each expansion of sensory perception in Edgar’s emergence from the pit is accompanied by an expansion in consciousness: we have moved around our emerging subject’s body, from breathing, to eating, and, finally, “torments of thirst.” This thirst is characterized as an “evil” that must be valiantly conquered by his own action: “My invention and my courage were anew bent to obviate this pressing evil,” Edgar explains, “I reflected that there was some recess from this cavern, even [accessible] from the spot where I now stood.” As Edgar continues his attempts to create himself anew, as an individual subjectivity freed from the influence of ideological control, he further plumbs his senses: in addition to seeing and identifying the panther’s eyes, he now “attend[s] to a sound, which, from its invariable tenor...seemed like the murmur of a running stream” (italics for emphasis, 113). Failing to reach this stream, however, Edgar is met with another moment of “despond[ence],” and again turns to self-integration as a means to supply his desires:

My exertions produced a perspiration, which, while it augmented my thirst, happily supplied me with imperfect means of appeasing it. This expedient would, perhaps, have been accidentally suggested; but my ingenuity was assisted by remembering the history of certain English prisoners in Bengal, whom their merciless enemy imprisoned in a small room, and some of whom preserved themselves alive merely by swallowing the moisture that flowed from their bodies. This experiment I now performed with no less success. (113)

This memory introduces an interesting and somewhat problematic relationship between what Edgar had believed to be a wholly original, independently American subjectivity and a

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60 Chad Luck’s insightfully discusses the connections between Edgar’s sensory perception of the spaces of the pit and the philosophy of Condillac and Lefebvre. See The Body and Property, page 50.
lingering “accidentally suggested” influence of imperialism. Even as Edgar is slowly remaking himself in his emergence of the cavern, seeming to divorce himself from the smoothly continuous and regulated history that was embraced earlier in the novel by exploring a new construction of subjectivity that effects and is affected by its unique surroundings, the invocation of this historical anecdote of empire suggests that no matter the degree of separation the trace of imperial conquest has already entered into and, through the trope of self-incorporation, actually “preserves” American subjectivity.

This is not, however, to dismiss Edgar’s emergence from the pit as inconsequential when examining how Edgar Huntly seeks for an outside to the ideologies that inform the imperial State. Although Edgar does carry an embedded imperialistic history into the spaces he is exploring, by relying on his own senses and immersed experience of those spaces he is yet attempting to construct an extremist form of individualism and self-reliance that reacts against the imposition of restraints from strictures born outside of the self. Presumably, Edgar’s recall of the Bengalese prisoners suggests that this desire for an autonomous existence outside of ideological strictures is already anticipated by those strictures themselves. Such anticipation is borne out in the remainder of the novel, where Edgar is driven to go on a murderous rampage of maniacal revenge not against the icons

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60 See Eric Goldman’s 2008 article “The ‘Black Hole of Calcutta’ in Charles Brockden Brown’s America: American Exceptionalism and India in Edgar Huntly” (in Early American Literature 43:3). Goldman claims Edgar Huntly is “a novel that is preoccupied with the question of American identity at a particular moment during its historical development and that uses recent British experiences in India as geopolitical coordinates for that identity” (568). That is, even the backcountry of Norwalk is not immune to the reach of the organizing hand of British imperialism. By directly calling into question Brown’s profession in the “Prefatory Note” (that Edgar Huntly is exceptionally American in its depiction), the “Calcutta” essay further obscures authorial intention, inversely “internationaliz[ing] the allegory of American identity in Edgar Huntly and link[ing] it to pre-revolutionary British history” (559).
of State such as Sarsefield, but the representatives of the irrational outside to ideology—
the nomadic Lenna Lenape and Old Deb.

It is also important to remember that as with the rest of the tale, Edgar’s sojourn in
the pit is a construction of the past—a writing of history that tends to align fortuitous
instances of manifestation with the desires that are fulfilled by those manifestations.
Edgar’s archival anxiety is renewed with the interjection of “the history of certain English
prisoners in Bengal”—for even when a somnambulistic lapse has severed his own
historical narrative, the unconscious insists upon interjecting narrative associations to
imperial history. Additionally, as Edgar can convey this narrative in any manner in which
he chooses, he here writes into it a bizarre sort of cause-and-effect symbiosis between
desire and environment. Edgar’s confessions of his tabooed desires to self-cannibalism
(expression of “passions,” as Hamilton and Madison would identify them) seem to exclude
any models of acceptable action as dictated by civic virtue and reason, yet he manages to
narrate them in a fashion to fulfill his expressed desires.

Certainly the pit scene is the central transition in the novel, and also makes apparent
the pairing of the recirculative notion of the self—where power for action is produced,
maintained, and sustained immanently—with the manifestation of State power across
global narratives of imperialism. It is certainly no mistake the prominence of
somnambulism is diminished in the latter half. Sleepwalking separates the body’s actions
the conscious mind—yet, as Edgar cannot but help recall the English prisoners in the
foreign prisons of Bengal, the body will always remain a prisoner to engrained ideology. In
both prisons, however, the mind is forced to acknowledge the body’s placement within the
wider world—for although one may bite his own flesh and drink his own liquids, neither option would be wholly sustaining.

“*A Drama Brought to an Imperfect Close*”

As the pit scene futilely envisions a way of being in the world uninfluenced by paradigms of ideology, the anti-climatic conclusion to the novel reinforces this wholeheartedly. Within the last pages of Edgar’s long letter, Waldegrave’s murder is vicariously and dismissively solved as a by-product of lingering Indian-settler violence. In the light of this reminder of the impetus to both Edgar’s letter and his trip to Norwalk, the pursuit of Clithero and the bouts of somnambulism and violence—that is, the alternative narrative track that comprises the bulk of his tale—seem entirely subsumed as Edgar claims “justice” delivered to the murdered Waldegrave (187). The precipitous closure of Edgar’s meandering narrative and the quick and seemingly tidy resolution of Waldegrave’s murder leave the reader to wonder after the significance of Edgar’s pursuit of Clithero, and the exercise of recreating himself after his interment in the cave. While encountering (and inciting) spurts of irrational violence, Edgar’s own revolutionary moment—much as the revolutionary moment that has come to mark the birth of America—has no lasting impact on his day-to-day concerns.

Shifting to an examination of the historical milieu of the novel, one can see how *Edgar Huntly* informs a broader understanding of methodologies deployed to scaffold State unity and maintenance of power—the overarching conversation of this dissertation—by turning to the struggle between the isolated, locally constituted communities of backcountry Pennsylvania (such as Solebury) and the nationalizing narratives espoused by
cosmopolitan and aristocratic Federalists. Edgar’s quest for a new subjectivity freed from the bounds of ideology, are coopted into and lost within the larger narrative of the murder; accordingly, the “republican” elements of this ideal individually-defined subjectivity are co-opted into an rhetoric of nationalism that will become ubiquitous by the mid 19th century (Mercieca, 19-20). Historian Ed White explains the political impetus behind federalization in the Revolutionary Era and beyond:

[T]he original synthesizers become politically powerful when they fuse into effective formations the groups and classes that are otherwise too scattered and vague to be acted upon; they mobilize a general mood, a set of disconnected, unrealized private citizens; they crystallize inchoate social forces and direct them toward attainable goals; they clarify, symbolize and elevate into practical structures the mingled groups that stir within the society. The synthesis is an idealized federalism, and like the federalists the synthesizers overestimate their achievements; like the federalists, they betray a deep theoretical hostility for that which cannot be easily synthesized; like the federalists, they realize that an important part of the battle for order is simply to keep insisting that order exists. [...] To put it crudely, federalism is not an historical subset of the “nation”: the (U.S.) “nation” is a development within a federalism with roots in the top-down managerial project of colonization. In this framework federalism is a movement of a long eighteenth century, a movement of colonial origins and a movement extending beyond the revolution. (10-11)

Backing up White’s assertion, historians such as Trish Loughran and Jennifer Mercieca, remark on the uneven nature of nationalism in the Early Republic, and the fictionalizing narratives employed to create the illusion of a unified and coalesced state during and following the constitutional convention (see The Republic in Print and Founding Fictions, respectively). As Edgar adds explanation and episodic shape to his narrative (however unsteady and erratic such a structure might appear), so federal synthesizers sought to assuage their detractors by identifying them as either “localized versions of national phenomena, or, worse, as so many symptoms of a broad unrest to be registered by the urban centers” (White, 2).
To expound further on White’s metaphor, *Edgar Huntly* manifests these uncontainable “symptoms” as the bodily anxiety of one seeking to escape the influence of State narratives of rationality and ideology. Understanding the global-imperial registers of the novel and its criticism of narrative historiography generally, *Edgar Huntly* identifies the processing of experience into a smooth and rational narrative as a familiar of imperial colonialism and the agglomeration of State power. Edgar periodically challenges such a system by insisting on a bodily situatedness that privileges experiential individualism over impositions of exterior categorization. This resistance is most apparent through Edgar’s ranging across the fluid space of Norwalk and Solebury, and the problematic irruptive moments of violence that occur in the latter half of the novel. Yet, Edgar’s exploration and attempts to redefine the Pennsylvania backcountry are still infused with markers of global-imperialism—most prominently Sarsefield’s fusil and prisoners in Bengal—that suggest the impossibility of ever wholly escaping the rationalizing ideologies of the State.

The tenors of exceptionalism that Brown espouses in his preface to *Edgar Huntly* call for a symbolic severance of America from the Old World in an attempt to erase and outstrip a historical relation that fails to reflect what the author views as “new springs to action, new motives to curiosity” (3). The parallel between Edgar’s emergence from the pit and the construction of a distinctly American identity is a beginning to this examination. Much like the construction of a newly formed “American” citizen, Edgar’s rebirth begins with a slow and painful emergence from the “oblivion” of the surrounding landscape, separate from any cultural history or nationalistic allegiance. In the decade prior to the publication of *Edgar Huntly*, Federalists pushed the debates regarding citizenship from a “liberal naturalization act requiring only two years of residency for free whites” in 1790,
through a stricter Naturalization Acts of 1795 requiring residency of five years, to the Naturalization Act of June 18, 1798, which, as Gordon Wood explains,

(...) extended the period of residence required before an alien could apply to become a citizen from five to fourteen years, compelled all aliens to register with a district court or agent appointed by the president within forty-eight hours of arrival in the United States, and forbade all aliens who were citizens or subjects of a nation with which the United States was at war from becoming citizens. (Empire of Liberty 249)

Placed in direct contrast to Clithero (whom, despite his time spent immersed in the backcountry of the American frontier, is denied citizen-status and immediately identified as a foreign threat), Edgar’s status as an American citizen is unquestionable—although, as suggested earlier, his responsibilities in fulfilling such a role are increasingly challenged.

In terms of the modern State, where power is said to be manifested immanently, Edgar’s crisis of individuation can be read in the struggle to define the term “republicanism.” Seeming to grow out of the most elemental of rights—those attached to the body of the citizen—and constructing an outward political agenda under the pretext of the individual, republicanism retrospectively becomes a “keyword” whose shifting definition becomes a rhetorical screen for controlling power in the new nation, annulling any possible escape from the power of the State in coopting resistances (Mercieca, 21-22).

We can certainly see this in Madison and Hamilton’s interpretations of the term as necessitating the government’s act of restraining of the “passions” of the individual while espousing a universally proper model of “reason,” and can arguably view the ending of Edgar Huntly as reflecting this similar recasting of political identity. If we view Edgar’s emergence from the pit as a reach toward a truer principle of republicanism—where the mere body of the citizen, and not its function within a State, is the basis of rights—the end of the novel depicts an anticlimactic reabsorption into the mechanism of the social and
political apparatus. The ascension of this mechanism is arguably the source of Edgar’s archival anxiety in the first pages of the novel.

After closing Edgar’s long letter to Mary Waldegrave, Brown concludes the novel with three much shorter letters: two from Edgar to Sarsefield, and one from Sarsefield to Edgar. These letters are notable in their contribution to the plot as artifacts that, while read by readers, circulate amongst the characters and provide a narrative perspective that is not Edgar. The two letters from Edgar warn his old tutor of Clithero’s intention to visit Mrs. Lorimer (Sarsefield’s wife), in the hopes that the husband can prevent the presumably dangerous meeting. The third is a response from Sarsefield admonishing Edgar for writing him in the first place, and explaining that Lorimer’s discovery of the second letter precipitates the premature birth and death of their child and “immanently endangered” her own life. Admonishing Edgar’s “rashness” in acting “in direct opposition to my [Sarsefield] council, and to the plainest dictates if propriety,” the British ex-patriot urges Edgar to be “more circumspect and more obsequious in the future.” Finally, the novel closes with an account of the drowning of “this wretch” Clithero, who was being transported to “the care of a hospital” under Sarsefield’s watch, “a province which required an [sic] heart more steeled by spectacles of suffering and the exercise of cruelty, than mine had been” (194).

With the flurry of letters that end of the novel, the individualism of Edgar—a by-product of his exploration of the landscape and contact with the foreigner Clithero—is effectively reabsorbed into a controlling and overarching rationality of a State not so different from those in the Old World, as represented by Sarsefield. The capture containment of the “lunatic” Clithero—who can impose justice outside of government by his self-exile, in spite of his individual “passions”—suggests that the most purely
“republican” individual has been successfully absorbed within the fold of an overarching code of reason. Sarsefield escapes scrutiny by a government wrought with the fear of outside influence upon its populace, and reinstates of a “patriarchal” hierarchy that Edgar found so influential at the beginning of the novel. One could argue that the death of Lorimer and Sarsefield’s child—a child of this new American aristocracy “with whose future existence so many pleasures were entwined”—reflects a skepticism regarding the future prospects of this relationship between aristocracy and governmental influence. The anticlimactic resolution to the mystery of Waldegrave’s murder—the discovery that he was murdered in a routine episode of frontier violence, and not (as with Amos Watson in Brown’s novel Arthur Mervyn) involved in some grand scheme of global-imperial relations—is immediately overshadowed by Clithero’s suspect exoticism and Sarsefield and Lorimer’s misfortune.

Essentially, then, Edgar Huntly explores and critiques the role of constructed narratives—whether the letters the protagonist pens to Mary, the mystery of Waldegrave’s death, the foreigner Clithero’s account of his relationship with Lorimer and Wiatte, or the underlying narratives of State that perpetuate expansion into the wilds of Pennsylvania and the displacement of the Lenna Lenape—in influencing and shaping the perception of the world. Additionally, these narratives become entirely pervasive and inescapable, informing even the most deliberately independent of actions, and infiltrating the most corporeal of desires. Edgar’s anxiety of archiving and his reluctance to bring his story to a point of “repose” is justified in two significant ways: first, as we see early in the novel, narrative can never wholly contain his sympathies and inducements for action; and second,
narratives are malleable, and can be manipulated and applied in unanticipated methods and circumstances, and distorted to bolster unintended doctrines of rationality.
Apertures in the History of the Borders:

Cooper’s “Strictly True and Just” Revolutionary History in Wyandotté

Jost Trier’s research has made recognizable once again the orientational character of original words. This is especially true for words like "ridge" and "gable" and the word-groups for "house," "fence," and "enclosure." "In the beginning was the fence. Fence, enclosure, and border are deeply interwoven in the world formed by men, determining its concepts. The enclosure gave birth to the shrine by removing it from the ordinary, placing it under its own laws, and entrusting it to the divine." The enclosing ring - the fence formed by men’s bodies, the manring - is a primeval form of ritual, legal, and political cohabitation. In the further course of our investigation, it will prove quite fruitful to refer to this realization that law and peace originally rested on enclosures in the spatial sense. In particular, it was not the abolition of war, but rather its bracketing that has been the great, core problem of every legal order. - Carl Schmitt, Nomos of the Earth, 74

Understandably, James Fenimore Cooper’s Wyandotte (1843) has been read as restaging elements of his earlier novel, The Pioneers (1823): both novels have at their center a patriarchal settlement on the frontier and depict the radical desire for a redistribution of power. While Cooper’s earlier Leatherstocking episodes narrate the exceptional frontier experiences of an America in transition from a colonial backcountry to the beginnings of the industrial revolution, Wyandotté takes the inverse angle by restaging the Revolutionary War as an event that fractures and splinters established communities, with a ripple-effect beyond the shores of the American continent. This is not to say that Cooper’s familiar elements of historical romance do not appear in Wyandotté; but that, instead of depicting an incident in the narrative teleology of an emergent nation, the novel prioritizes the history of a local space and a community with sundry and divided allegiances. Even in Cooper’s time the Revolution is inserted within the narrative of nation-building, overlooking and thereby further obfuscating the disparate motivations and uncertain outcome of the era. Cooper’s exercise in corrective history subsequently exposes

62 cf. McGann, Nevius.
mechanisms of State formation by invoking archival documents that support such narratives, and also offers an example of a historical incident that does not fit within the arc of these narratives. Through the downfall of his protagonist Captain Willoughby, Cooper further illustrates the hazards in unerring trust of the stolidity of a historical narrative of State. Cooper’s complaint is that the narrative of the Revolutionary War has been habitually rewritten, and now conceals some elements of its “true” history; accordingly, Willoughby's fatal flaw lies in his failure to trace and adapt with these shifting narratives of State.

Due to Wyandotte’s somewhat obscure place within Cooper’s canon, it may be of benefit to briefly sketch the general plot and premise of the novel. Retired “ancient officer” of the kings-army Captain Willoughby determines to take possession of a land grant “in order to pass the close of his life in the tranquil pursuit of agriculture, and in the bosom of his family.” The parcel of land is chosen with the advise of a “half-outcast” Tuscarora Indian chief—a familiar to the king’s military known as “Nick” or “Saucy Nick” (later in the novel we learn that Nick is the titular “Wyandotte”) (8). Captain Willoughby and Saucy Nick choose a plot of the New York backcountry that features a 400-acre beaver pond with a rocky island at its center. Equipped with a band of workers from all backgrounds of Euro-colonial life, Willoughby drains the pond and builds a “part house, part barrack, part fort” on the former island, naming it “the huttaed knoll” (38). The Captain’s son Major Robert Willoughby brings news of the Battle of Lexington and the “open rebellion” against King George, marking what will come to be known (outside of the novel) as the beginning of the American Revolution. While the battles of the Revolutionary War never come to the Willoughby’s isolated New York valley, there is a factional rebellion against Willoughby led by a laborer and “Connecticut man” Joel Strides. Infused by haughty rhetoric of
republicanism, this force of American dissidents—many of whom are Willoughby’s former workers—besiege the hut and kill most of the Willoughbys and those loyal to the family. Captain Willoughby himself is killed by the Tuscarora Nick / Wyandotté, consummating a long-festering retribution for a lashing the Indian had received years prior. The surviving Willoughbys—Robert and his adopted sister Maud—are married, thereby culminating the subplot of their forbidden love. They return from England to the Knoll nineteen years later to hear of Nick’s confession to murdering the Captain’s, and the Tuscarora falls dead upon its relation. The novel closes with a brief remembrance of Captain Willoughby by his son Robert.

Emphasizing the non-nationalistic spatial elements of the novel, I make three related claims about Wyandotté. My initial claim is that Cooper recognizes an intimate relationship between spatial interaction and governance. Using Willoughby’s settlement and development of the huddled knoll, Cooper rewrites the relationship between American land and law to constitute an alternate, non-nationalized historical frame. Further, I claim that apertures in the knoll’s security infrastructure mirror the modernization of sovereignty, particularly the erosion of the inside/outside binary as States adapt to global imperialism. These apertures are illustrative of the blind spots in Willoughby’s political philosophy, which insists upon a historical narrative of State that has been eroded past the point of relevancy. Finally, I claim that the constitution and evolution of the Willoughby family problematizes the transition from the schemes of hierarchical patriarchy and inheritance of the colonial era to the more decentralized and pervasive distribution of power in the Revolutionary Era.

Most often, Wyandotté’s title is mentioned under-the-breath in larger discussions of
Cooper’s more critically-popular work—The Spy, or Satanstoe, or The Pioneers—and then as thematically connected to the work at hand (as either a frontier novel, or a historical fiction of the Revolutionary Era). Arguably, Edgar Allan Poe’s fanged 1843 review of Wyandotté receives as much critical attention as the novel itself.\(^{63}\) When the novel has been examined within more contemporary circles, such discussions have largely overlooked the how the “spaces” of Wyandotté—the terrain and landscape, the architectural constructions, the structural space of the family, and the larger geographic situatedness of settlements—underpin these historiographical interventions. This said, in his book Cooper’s Landscapes (1976), Blake Nevius gives the novel perhaps its most prolonged critical treatment, isolating the novel’s engagement with “landscape gardening”—what he identifies as a “significant exception” to the “general account of the progress of the art [of landscape gardening] in America” (71). Alongside Poe, Nevius reads Wyandotté as “anachronistic” in its execution, both structurally and, through a somewhat obsessive attention to trends in landscape gardening, thematically. The result certainly elucidates the imperial elements of Cooper’s own interest in gardening, but fails to effectively explore how such an interest informs the intersection between the physical landscape and the evolving political landscape throughout the novel.

Still relying on the historical context in terms of the developing nation, Warren Motley’s The American Abraham: James Fenimore Cooper and the Frontier Patriarch (1988) argues that Cooper’s conflation of frontier-family patriarchalism to governmental structure is a central motif across the author’s career. Convincingly, Motley claims that alongside Tocqueville and Crévecouer, Cooper believed that the “laws of inheritance” that “treat the

\(^{63}\) Cf. Arac, 14; Lasley.
family as the basic economic unit of society” should remain at the center of the American political institution. Yet, attaching this discussion to national development overlooks the fact that Willoughby himself is not particularly interested in developing a strong centralized government, and is more apt to argue for regionalized power distribution similar to colonial governorships.

In his historical approach to the sources of Cooper’s Wyandotté, James Pickering claims that the novel depicts “a type of warfare as unique in the annals of American history as the legendary struggles between Cow-boy and Skinner in the Neutral Ground of Westchester”; one that, when compared to the contemporary historians of Cooper’s era, seeks to correct “the erroneousness of the assumption that the Revolution is to be interpreted solely as a struggle between high-minded patriots and unprincipled Tories” (Pickering, 122; 127). While it is true that Wyandotté proposes an important alternative to the narratives of heterogeneous nationalism that (still) characterizes the historical memory of the Revolutionary Era, its “warfare” should be situated not only within the “annals of American history” but within the context of America’s diverse transnational past as well. Gordon Wood reminds us that “the Revolutionary generation was as cosmopolitan as any in American history,” and “not obsessed, as were some later generations, with separating America from the broad course of Western Civilization” (Empire of Liberty, 544). That is, historically speaking the Revolutionary War was hardly a venture of those who felt that America was exceptional and should be entirely severed from Europe. Rather, this hegemonic narrative of the exceptionalism of the Revolution is constructed through backward glances, and with a view to create a smooth arc of American development to the contemporary moment. (As Edgar’s archival anxiety in Edgar Huntly suggests, history is
always assembled *a posteriori*, from the perspective of repose.) Although depicting an isolated settlement in the backcountry of the North American continent, the warfare is less “Cow-boy and Skinner” than it is a self-interested uprising that adopts the undefined identity of an "American" and conservative isolationist. Despite Willoughby’s fantasy of isolationism (and Pickering’s insistence upon it), the “type of warfare” that *Wyandotté* depicts is only possible within the context of a global empire that compounds the situatedness of the settlement and its people within the wider intercontinental networks mirrored in the characters’ own cultural diversity. To this point, the spirit of American exceptionalism that Pickering identifies is portrayed most prominently through the antagonist Joel Strides, who, crying false patriotism in a new cause, betrays the Willoughby family and has a large role in the downfall of the Hutted Knoll.

Jerome McGann importantly claims that Cooper’s corrective tone is illustrative of “the historical tensions” in *Wyandotté*, and evinces “the influence of Charles Brockden Brown” (128). Much as Sarsefield’s insistence on the logical ordering of the landscape in *Edgar Huntly*, Willoughby attempts to order and control the growing chaos of imperialism by fashioning himself a yeoman and adapting his surroundings to his mode of living. Yet (and again similar to Edgar’s tutelage under Sarsefield), Willoughby desires to preserve the ordered hierarchy of authority he enjoys under British society—precisely the system that gives way to his caretakers’ revolt. “[Cooper’s] fictions do not 'include' the histories that pervade them,” McGann suggests, but rather "expose so completely the system, and the limits, of their illusions—factual, ideological, aesthetic" (130). I claim that the “factual, ideological, [and] aesthetic” illusions that Cooper meaningfully engages are reflected through his construction of space and the family in particular, and seek to correct the
hegemonic narratives of State that change the diversity of interests of the American Revolution into a simple battle between two parties.

A complication of this narrative of two warring parties is identified overtly in the author’s preface, where Cooper names Wyandotté as a historically corrective exercise that addresses the imbalance between the enlightenment ideals of the individual and those hierarchical mainstays of an old-world aristocracy:

Although the American revolution [sic] was probably as just an effort as was ever made by a people to resist the first inroads of oppression, the cause had its evil aspects, as well as all other human struggles. We have been so much accustomed to hear everything extolled, of late years, that could be dragged into the remotest connection with that great event, and the principles which led to it, that there is danger of overlooking truth, in a pseudo patriotism. Nothing is really patriotic, however, that is not strictly true and just; any more than it is paternal love to undermine the constitution of a child by an indiscriminate indulgence in pernicious diet. That there were demagogues in 1776, is as certain as that there are demagogues in 1843, and will probably continue to be demagogues as long as means for misleading the common mind shall exist. (3)

For Cooper, the common mind is constantly encountering the demagoguery of a misleading historical narrative, and it is his patriotic duty to dispel the general public’s understanding of the American Revolution as an event that smoothly produces a unified national identity. Accordingly, the events in Wyandotté overlap the Revolutionary War without directly engaging its historical narrative—the novel takes action by decentering the nationalizing narratives that orbit “that great event.” Cooper focuses instead on the concurrent “history of the borders [which] is filled with legends of the sufferings of isolated families” (3). Prior to the opening of the first chapter of the novel, Cooper deliberately links the virtues of an alternative (and in the author’s mind, a “strictly true and just”) history to a remapping of regional backcountries in terms of the future nation—that is, he uses interpretations of the
space of the continent to draw out an alternative, truer history.

Even the novel’s title and subtitle eschew America as an entity altogether: “Wyandotté” being the tribal name of Saucy Nick, and the subtitle “The Hutted Knoll” referring to improvements of the protagonist Colonel Willoughby’s colonial British land patent. In his preface Cooper frames the novel for his contemporary readers by setting the patriotic narrative of the Revolution as a point of scrutiny; yet the dual references in the title emphasize the event from a vantage point prior to the American state. Cooper locates his “truth” in the major transformations within the novel—specifically the conversion of the “wilderness landscape” into a hierarchized community, and the evolution of the (Willoughby) family as a social unit that informs a political perspective—over the narrative of a unified uprising against British oppression. Alongside the violences of hierarchy and physical struggle are the violences of history and its State archive that rhetorically unify all events into the singular “American Revolution”—those documents and narratives that preserve the parceling of the land while congealing such micro-regional events and private citizens into a larger teleological narrative of State development. Wyandotté examines the State as a product of historical rhetoric and revision, where archives agglomerate the many smaller conflicts and interests under the heading of a “revolution.”

“Such a Way as a Surveyor can Find It” – Archiving the Hutted Knoll

Although the bulk of Wyandotté narrates the history of a single colonial settlement in the wilderness of New York, the novel opens with a focus on the continent’s spatial attributes, desiring to correct a “wide-spread error on the subject of American scenery.” Cooper explains that while the scenery of “that portion of the American continent which has fallen to the share of the Anglo-Saxon race [...] has exceptions that carry charms...to the
verge of loveliness,” when compared to “the terrific sublimity of the Alps, the softened and yet wild grandeur of the Italian lakes, or to the noble witchery of the shores of the Mediterranean, this country is apt to seem tame, and uninteresting as a whole.” More bluntly, when referring to any scenery on the American continent, the word “grandeur” is, Cooper asserts, “in nearly every case, misapplied” (5). Deliberately comparing the decidedly un-exceptional landscape of America to the sublime vistas of Europe, this corrective tone engages the romanticized regionalism of Cooper’s novels while also emphasizing fictive narratives of territorial exchange between Native Americans and whites. Here the accrual of territories in the American continent by the “Anglo-Saxon race” is a passive enterprise, where land—sublime or not—“fall[s] to the share” of whites without conflict and as if teleologically intended or divinely ordained. Engaging these “wide-spread error[s]” simultaneously invokes those who might accept such narratives, and illustrates the more deeply rooted connection between the white’s agglomeration of land—a foundational right in the coming nation—and the subsequent unifying nationalistic narratives that give way to a retroactive exceptionalist attitude.

Having twice set the frame of the novel as an intervention into patriotic frontier histories—first in the author’s preface, and again in the first lines of the novel—the story of the Willoughby family commences with the procurement of land, dispersed to the Captain for service in the British military during the Seven Years War. Cooper reminds his readers of their potential familiarity with the “district” through previous works, although his purpose this time is to “return to it now, less with a desire to celebrate its charms, than to exhibit them in a somewhat novel, and yet perfectly historical aspect.” This perfect history is not accomplished, however, by examining the land-patent that “lies before us”—a
physical document marked 1769 that details the boundaries and entitlements of
Willoughby’s estate, and containing “an Indian grant annexed, which is a year or two
earlier” (Cooper, 6). As the patent reflects only the Hutted Knoll’s archivable history—the
documented procurement of the place, a transfer of land recognized by a State—it is left to
the novelist as a cultural historian to fill in a more complete image of the history of the
settlement. Like the embroidered “A” found in Hawthorne’s customs-house, this dumb
artifact laying in front of Cooper cannot, by its own volition, fully relate the “true and just”
history of the district of Willoughby’s patent; rather it only relates the histories of patents
themselves, or, as McGann calls them, “the legal forms authorized by the white colonial
order” (136). Yet, in its very materiality it provides a trace of the buried history, evidence of
a history not yet told or acknowledged.

Before moving beyond these documents of the white colonial order, we should
remark on their importance to Cooper’s project, most notably its milieu. Dated 1769, which
“may be taken as a mean date for the portion of country alluded to, some of the deeds being
older, and others still more recent,” the patent is a historical marker of land procurement
that, through its very physical presence, still holds pertinence in 1843, over seventy years
and a revolution later. The correspondence of pre-Revolutionary “extinguished” Indian
titles to “our own” demonstrates the importance of settler expansion, State land
management, archivization, and the displacement of Native Americans in the contemporary
moment.64 Although Willoughby’s grant seems merely a transference of a parcel of land
from tribal hands into white’s, there is an implied injustice in a “grant cover[ing] a nominal

64 McGann argues that Wyandotté’s identity as a Tuscarora connotes the tribe’s
displacement from their native lands in Virginia in 1713, and their impending
incorporation into the Iroquois Confederacy in 1815. (“Fenimore Cooper’s Anti-Aesthetic,”
133)
hundred thousand—and a real hundred and ten, or twenty, thousand—acres of land” being “effectually ‘extinguished’” with “a few rifles, blankets, kettles and beads” (Cooper, 6; McGann). In his sarcasm, Cooper documents an anachronism implied in this method of territorial capture—namely, the presumption of a “territoriality” in the first place. That is to say, the extinguishment of the State-recognized “Indian right” is so effectual precisely because such a “right” is only created upon its extinguishment.65 As there exists some method of interchange for such a delimitation (a physical quantification) to occur, the State retroacts its questionable quantification of this non-territorialized space through this mechanism of capture. In sketching this “extinguish[ment],” Cooper simultaneously emphasizes the destabilizing influence of non-territorialized spaces upon State power and regularity (which must have an identifiable outside, or, in the case of Wyandotté a “wilderness frontier”). Expanding influence into the claimed (but unregulated) territory of the interior wildness, the granting of land patents to former soldiers and other wealthy purchasers was an effective means of controlling the popular imagination while also projecting colonists’ desire for ownership of interior lands of the continent. It is no mistake, then, that such arrangements between grantees and the State generally required the surveying and mapping of territory, a formal delineation and detail of border regions.

James Schramer has remarked on the shift from Cooper’s “concern about what we would now refer to as American ecology” in The Pioneers (1823), to “concerns about American democracy” in Wyandotté. These concerns regarding American democracy, however, should not be seen as entirely at odds with their precursors, and Cooper takes early measures to demonstrate a connection between the two. Arguably, the recognition

65 Cf. Schmitt, Agamben.
and definitions of property rights as presented within the novel are of central importance as they can serve as a measure of government authority under different State regimes, and decide who controls American ecology—the landowner or the State. Take one example from the first chapter, where the narrator remarks on the innate inefficiencies of patent laws by both “our monarchical predecessors” and “our republican selves.” Under both apparatuses of State (each having “the same facilities” according to Cooper), individual patentees are legally restricted to a grant of one thousand acres. Under each regime—republican or monarchal—this stricture is easily circumnavigated and “render[ed] a dead letter” through collective efforts. Cooper cites as an example “The patent on our table” that corresponds to Willoughby’s land claim, “being for a nominal hundred thousand acres, contains the names of one hundred different grantees, while three several parchment documents at its side, each signed my thirty three of these very persons, vest the legal estate in the first named, for whose sole benefit the whole concession was made” (7). Cooper makes it clear that such collective action can happen under colonial or republican governments, and that challenges exist within the border regions among “these exiles,” whether American or British (8). Although immediately noticeable to one examining the document, the fraudulent act appended to this title does not challenge its legitimacy within the records of either State; because it is manufactured retroactively the continuity of the archive is always indifferent to political orientation. That is, despite their fraudulent claims, the documents have been set in a historical narrative that proclaims and protects their authority—they have taken their place in an authorized archive that remains unchallenged, and if it were not for the prodding of Cooper’s narrator, would remain an unquestionable evidence of a wider, accepted historical arc.
This is not to suggest that the push westward and the agglomeration of territory was smooth, measured, and without attendant challenges for both the colonists and the State; as Montesquieu and anti-Federalists warned, the State must always balance the advance into frontier areas against the over-extension of power. The British *Proclamation of 1763*, intended to regulate settler-native relations along a single plane, and to structure the settlement of western lands, “strictly forb[ade ...] all our loving subjects from making any purchases or settlements” west of the Appalachian range (*Proclamation of 1763*; Wood, *American Revolution* 22). After the Revolution, American Federalists would confront similar challenge to settle the western territories in a deliberate and calculated manner (Wood, *Empire* 114). The bureaucratic restrictions meant to check and control westward settlement were, of course, largely ineffectual, mostly due to the remoteness and amount of land under restriction. Yet this is not Cooper’s point. In examining the British grant system from the perspective of his mid-nineteenth century readership, Cooper writes a sketch of land procurement likely familiar to his contemporaries, identified as having the “same propensities [...] as our republican selves” in defrauding the State of “a nominal hundred thousand acres” instead of the thousand entitled to any single person (7). Here the Revolutionary War is written not as an event in the upheaval of an unjust and overbearing government, but as a mere substitution of one set of figureheads for another.

Through these parallelisms between the British and Cooper’s contemporary moment, *Wyandotté* nods to both the pre-Revolutionary and mid-nineteenth century contexts, suggesting that although the regime has changed methods of territorial capture

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66 This is an interesting moment of the closure of the frontier—a type of territory that is not given to Native Americans, but is simultaneously taken off the map for colonists; a deterritorialization of sorts.
and strategies of imperialism remain similar. Cooper argues for a shift away from the artifact-based, archaeological (or archival) history represented by the colonial documents in front of him, supplanting them with a “somewhat novel, and yet perfectly historical aspect” where the central, organizing elements are socially and spatially defined—namely, the human interactions with the geographical space of the knoll.\textsuperscript{67} If we merely trace the history of the British patent document, we remain within the archival structure of the State and its associated narratives, and cannot hope for a “true” history. Similar to Willoughby, who will mount a “bold strike against the wilderness,” the novel Wyandotte draws on registers of factuality outside of an ancillary archival record—those of the family homestead rather than the patent or the nation.

Cooper further challenges State intelligence and faith in archival records by mismatching the geographic location of the property against the recorded land grant. After being surveyed, Willoughby’s property “did not take its place on the maps of the colony, though it took a place; the location given for many years afterwards being forty or fifty miles too far west” (italics in original, 12). This mis-location of the patent is matched by a similar mis-quantification, where “the six thousand two hundred and forty six acres of ‘Willoughby’s Patent’ were subsequently ascertained to contain just seven thousand and ninety two acres of solid ground.” Although the land of Willoughby’s patent is archived as a portion of the Colony of New York, its (mis)location suggests a space that is excepted from

\textsuperscript{67} This again suggests a parallel structure between Cooper’s \textit{Wyandotte} and Hawthorne’s \textit{The Scarlet Letter} (1850) (including the prefatory “The Customs House”). As the first chapter of \textit{Wyandotté} uses Willoughby’s grant to detail the history of land patents in colonial and early America, so Hawthorne provides a material artifact—an anchor from which the more personal history of Hester Prynne and the history of Salem. I would argue that where Cooper sees the connection between “a bygone time with the very present” a “fitting” element of romance, Cooper sees this “romantic” element as essentially missing from our understanding of history generally (\textit{The House of Seven Gables}, 4).
the colony. This mis-mapping is not a particularly singular or “novel” peculiarity, Cooper informs us, as “surveys of all new regions being liable to similar mistakes” (12). Further, these colonial mis-measurements are quickly correlated to flaws in territorial archives as well, an exampled contemporary estate “losing some miles that run over obtrusively into another colony...[as a consequence] a ‘patent’ has been squeezed entirely out of existence, between the claims of two other grants” (12). Plot-wise, these mis-mappings and mis-measurements do not develop a significant role; yet, perhaps their lack of momentousness can actually be an argument for their significance: for they further establish an undeniable link between the British colonial system of property archive and its contemporary in 1843.

If, as Benedict Anderson claims, the map is an essential icon in the creation of a national narrative, here we are examining a narrative that is dubious at best; if the map itself is openly fabricated and of questionable validity, the repute of the beneficiary State is in question as well. Sharing the numerated specifics of the property parcel in question, Cooper insists that the individual homesteader or patentee would not overlook such a calculable disconnect between the “maps of the colony” and the terrain itself, and nor should the reader.

Despite its appearance in State property archives, Willoughby's patent is largely inconsequential to the colonies or, later, the nation. Cooper reminds his readers that the “mountainous region [of the interior of New York]...was a wilderness in 1775, [even though] the colonial governors had begun to make grants of its lands, some twenty years earlier” (italics added for emphasis, 6). This rusticity is reinforced later in the text when the Captain remarks “My estate is a small body of wild land; my influence extends little beyond this Beaver Meadow; and is confined to my own household and some fifteen or twenty
laborers...” (italics added for emphasis, 64). Further undermining the authority of these grants, Cooper maintains that the region remained largely independent even at the date of his narration (1843): “Titular manors exist, in a few instances, to this day, where no manorial rights were ever granted,” he writes,

...Some of these manorial houses were of so primitive an appearance as to induce the belief that the names were bestowed upon them in pleasantry, the dwellings themselves being of logs with the bark still on them [...] early impressions and rooted habits could easily transfer terms to such an abode, and there was always a saddened enjoyment among these exiles, when they could liken their forest names and usages to those they had left in the distant scenes of their childhood. (8)

This passage emphasizes the sheer irregularity of this mechanism of territorial capture, despite the seemingly authoritative titles of these manors. Such manorial titles masquerade the properties as being legitimized in the manner of old-world estates, replete with a suzerain and the backing of a State elite. In reality, however, the rusticity and rurality of these properties betray them (to the sadness of their inhabitants) as isolated from the purview of the commonwealth. Similar to the unapproved establishment of these hardly-manor-houses and their associated “forest names,” the memories and histories of their “exiled” inhabitants are also unofficial and unrecorded, so they remain largely un-archived, essentially unbound to any State whatsoever. Willoughby’s own “family settlement” is located in “what was then a very remote part of the territory in question” (8). The property’s relative location on the frontier is detailed by tracing the course of the travellers from an already mapped location into the hinterlands:

After finding their way to that Cananderaga, mistaking it for the Otsego [...] they wormed their way, through the Oaks, into the Susquehannah, descending that river until they reached the Unadilla, which stream they ascended until they came to a small river, known in the parlance of the country, by the erroneous name of a creek, that ran through the Captain’s
new estate. (12-13)

This is not the narrator of Melville’s “The Encantadas” reaching beyond the horizon line to triangulate his location against global-imperial landmarks. Mapping here takes place through physical procession—by moving bodily from the known into the unknown. Despite the specificity of the passage, even those making the journey proceed with an element of imprecision, mistaking one body of water for another, and misclassifying a “small river” as a “creek.” The passage proceeds not through a birds-eye overview of their movements, but in a procession that highlights the challenges encountered by travelers on the ground. Focusing on specific settlers—providing them names and detailing a specific encounter with the backcountry—Cooper inverts the viewpoint of the detached historicism that would rather provide a narrative overview of territories and the smooth unfurling of nationalism throughout the region.

The serial (mis)location of Willoughby’s land patent establishes a new ordering of land—a new nomos, in the Schmittian sense of the word, where earth becomes the source of the authority practiced upon it. Both Willoughby and Cooper are quick to turn to the intimate relationship between law and land to claim their own supremacy: Willoughby means to establish his own structure of patriarchal law through his act of land-appropriation, and Cooper is attempting to reshape the structure of history by his own appropriation of Willoughby’s patents some seventy years later. Yet in his stalwart insistence upon a particular mode of land appropriation and governance, Willoughby fails to identify the shifting nature of history as Cooper describes in the opening pages of

68 See the opening of Schmitt’s Nomos of the Earth, where he explains that the law is connected to the earth in three ways: “She [the earth] contains law within herself, as a reward of labor; she manifests law upon herself, as fixed boundaries; and she sustains law above herself, as a public sign of order” (42).
“Sellin’ beaver when he all run away” – Landscape and Ecological Teleology

Although challenging the homogenizing narrative of a smooth transition from colony to nation, Willoughby does rely upon enlightenment rationality in his belief in a ineluctable progression of backcountry wilderness into colonized agricultural settlement. Despite the “vast wildernesses” that surround the Hutted Knoll, the action of the novel is intensely claustrophobic. In the words of Captain Willoughby, the knoll and its 400 acres of arable land function “as an island, a colony” that synecdochically represents a utopian amalgamation of new and old world values—a sort of social experiment on the fringes of both the British Empire and the American Revolution. Although Willoughby views the land as fated for cultivation and tillage—readily opening its fecundity to the ingenuity of the frontiersman—he fails to understand its permeability within the context of the world outside; for the land is not an island nor colony, it is merely a homestead.

The “improvement” of the land itself can be read as an extension of agrarian idealism in the early US, and, importantly, extends beyond the Anglo, or even the human, sphere. Nick, and then Willoughby, narrate the homestead as a natural evolution of land improvements that begins with a beaver dam, and culminates with a farmstead. The land of Willoughby’s patent is not written as an untouched, virginal wild, prior to the Willoughby’s procurement, but is cast into a teleological narrative that compounds ecology and industry. Relating this narrative of land development, Nick suggests the Captain’s agricultural scheme is the next logical step in the progression:

“Do you mean there is an old beaver-dam destroyed?” asked the captain, pricking up his ears; for he was too familiar with the woods not to understand the
value of such a thing.

“No destroy—stand up yet—good as ever—Nick dere, last season.”

“Why, then, do you tell of it? Are not the beaver of more value to you, than any price you may receive for the land?”

“Cotch him all, four, two year ago--rest run away. No find beaver to stay long, when Indian once know, two time, where to set he trap. Beaver cunninger 'an pale face—cunning as bear.”

[...

“And the land around it—is it mountainous and rough, or will it be good for corn?”

“All sugar-bush—what you want better? S’pose you want corn; plant him. S’pose you want sugar; make him.” [sic] (11)

Already we can see Willoughby's naivety; the Captain does not see the longer narrative of improvement that Nick perceives—the Indian knows that his white associate should be looking for a pond, not a clearing. But why does Cooper have Nick—the representation of “savage” America with his “basilisk-like eyes”—suggests the industrious improvement of removing the beaver dam and thereby clearing the land with a view to cultivation (9)? That is, why cast a fallen Indian chief as a mouthpiece of republican agrarianism? A product of “frontiers, or the lines, as it is the custom to term the American boundaries,” Saucy Nick is pantomiming whites’ justification for the seizure of Indian land, and the Captain is cast as the unenlightened. The Captain’s understanding of “value” does not encompass the Tuscarora’s willingness to give up his hunting grounds, which would have some “value” greater than any “price” that anyone could pay. By belonging to neither white nor Native American communities, Nick stands as an insider and an outsider in both—he is willing to “sell” the rights that the Captain grants him, even though such rights have no juridical or political backing beyond the rights of discovery—the same rights that whites used to
disenfranchise Native Americans (McGann, 137). Realizing that his usage of the land is at an end, Nick proves the knowing (white) frontier capitalist, able to take advantage of the Captain’s desire to use the land differently. The land is less an investment for Willoughby than it is a place to keep — a *home* that is much more accessible than the shores of his homeland. In this regard, Nick plays the opportunist much more than Willoughby, and names his prowess in terms such of a speculative sale: “sellin’ beaver when he all run away” (11). In this exchange, land, much as labor, is seen in terms of use-value, even by the reptilian intelligence of Nick.

Nick’s scheme suggests the backcountry is moving along an arc of use that will culminate with white ascendancy, perceptible and understood by the “half-outcast.” Just as beavers left an impact upon the forest, rotting out the trees and their stumps and readying the land for an easy transition into prime bottom-land, turning the “forty skin” of beaver into a profit (and thereby exterminating their former bearers), Nick’s hunting readies the beaver pond for the next natural stage of its usage (11). The development of the land follows a natural series of improvement, and a comfortable narrative is grafted onto the otherwise terrifyingly unhistorical space of North America—a teleology whose culmination is the establishment of the Hutted Knoll and its aspect of agricultural and social idyll.

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69 McGann explains this scene well: “Nick makes a white argument for land rights that, in a white perspective, he has no right to advance. According to this argument, based on the so-called discovery doctrine, land sovereignty follows upon the fact of discovery. But the discovery doctrine is a priori "extinguished" for the Indian, since it was specifically laid down as a white, Christian claim against lands inhabited by heathen aboriginals. When Nick appropriates the argument, then, he implicitly attacks the very ground of white claims to sovereignty over American land. Thus, while Willoughby seems entirely satisfied with Nick’s reply—he does not demur or react at all—we are anything but satisfied with his satisfaction. A truly (so to say, whitely) savage irony plays about this claim asserted by the Tuscarora "savage," as Nick is regularly called in the book. But the irony goes right past Willoughby, who has clearly internalized this long-standing white argument about land rights” (McGann, 137).
Without realizing it, or more likely willfully ignorant of it, Willoughby is cast as the next step in that process. Further, refusing to acknowledge this avenue of thought, the Captain removes any actions that may be morally reprehensible, intentionally genocidal, or cruel. The advantage is self-serving: there is no innocence that is challenged or lost in this schema; white agrarian settlement and its associated social structures are already latent within the fate of the landscape, and come as naturally as the beaver first erecting the initial dam.

This teleology is continued with Willoughby’s possession and improvements of the patent; the first of which is to strike “a bold stroke against the wilderness, by draining the pond, and coming at once into the possession of a noble farm, cleared of trees and stumps [...] compressing the results of ordinary years of toil, into those of a single season” (13). The compression of years of human labor into a single “blow” against a dam contributes to the perception of a culmination of the land’s purpose. As time advances, Cooper conflates Captain Willoughby’s actions with perfecting upon nature:

[H]ere and there a few acres had been cleared on firmer ground, at the margin of the flats, where barns and farm buildings had been built, and orchards planted; but, in order to preserve the harmony of his view, the captain had caused all the stumps to be pulled and burnt, giving this place the same air of agricultural finish, as characterized the fields of the lower land.

[...] The meadows were green with matted grasses, the wheat and rye resembled rich velvets, and the ploughed fields had the fresh and mellowed appearance of good husbandry and a rich soil. The rich shubbery, of which the captain’s English taste had introduced quantities, was already in leaf, and even portions of the forest began to veil their sombre mysteries with the delicate foliage of an American spring.

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70 As the symbiosis between the agriculturalist and the terrain cannot be ignored here, “wilderness” in this case can be most directly defined as “uncultivated land,” referring to the unimproved land of the pond and its surrounding area—not in the sense of “desolate” or moral wasteland (OED).
The site of the ancient pond was a miracle of rustic beauty. Everything like inequality or imperfection had disappeared, the whole presenting a broad and picturesquely shaped basin, with outlines fashioned principally by nature, an artist that rarely fails in effect.

[...And, speaking about the improvements upon the knoll, above the pond:] What was unusual in America, at that day, the captain, owing to his English education, had avoided straight lines, and formal paths; giving to the little spot the improvement on nature which is a consequence of embellishing her works without destroying them. (43-45)

In *Cooper’s Landscapes*, Blake Nevius importantly dwells on the influence of the English landscape gardening style on both Cooper and the ex-pat Willoughby (71-81). I’d rather focus on Willoughby’s (and Cooper’s) insistence on such deliberate yet *complimentary* terraformation on the cusp of the frontier, a transportation of the old country onto the fringes of the frontier. The Hutted Knoll is founded in seclusion from the metropole and colony, yet does seek to maintain cultural relevance. Accordingly, each improvement in this long (yet still redacted) description is paired with a its compliment in natural surroundings; rather than “[tearing] violently a plantation” as will Faulkner’s Sutpen, Willoughby simply augments and escalates the natural aesthetics of the land through his agricultural pursuits (*Absalom, Absalom*, 6.). The land is significantly changed, but is less a “bold strike against” the wilderness (as the draining of the pond was described), than a harmonious “delight” to the “husbandman’s heart.” For example, with the necessity of a “brush fence” (an improvement “protested against” by his men as “an indispensable accessory to civilization”), Willoughby acts in a manner to maintain the natural surroundings of the knoll, “the boundary of felled trees and brush [is] completely concealed in the back-ground of woods” in a sort of naturally-aided landscaping (*Wyandotté* 30). The modifications to the parcel actually serve to balance the wilderness, causing “inequality or
imperfection to disappear, the whole presenting a broad and picturesquely shaped basin,”
as if to contain the settlement, and cordon off the plot from the outside world. So, although
Willoughby does “improve” upon the patent, providing it with some markers of industry
(as fitting a settlement of “considerably more than one hundred souls”), he simultaneously
“embellish[es nature’s] works without destroying them” (45). The Huted Knoll is not so
much a plantation intended for economy and commerce as it is a method of encoding a
landscape that enforces a particular type of citizenry—one attuned to the sovereign
powers of the Captain as a model of the benevolent patriarch.

“Part House, Part Barrack, Part Fort,” yet No Protection

The isolated aspect of the patent promotes such an experiment—there being fifty
miles of “absolute wilderness” between the hut and marks of civilization, and “quite a
hundred [miles] of tangled forest, or of difficult navigation” (19). This isolation is
emphasized by both narrator and protagonist to insulate the Willoughby community, and
suggests a sort of utopian project that would reflect the diversity of the colony at the time.71
The spatial orientation of the knoll, with Willoughby’s “hut” on a high point at the center of
the drained pond and the labor-force scattered throughout the lower grounds, replicates
this hierarchical scheme, while also lending some insight to its challenges. This topology
exemplifies Willoughby’s perception of himself as a modern sovereign, and his trust in
particular narratives of Statecraft: he exists at the pinnacle of the hierarchy, while defining
and excepting himself from its strictures.

The hut on the knoll, designed to be “part house, part barrack, part fort,” attempts to

71 Not dissimilar to Cooper’s later novel, The Crater (1847).
insulate Willoughby’s through securities correspondent to each of its three roles: as a stable domestic establishment; as a military garrison for the surrounding settlers; and as an outpost of civilization and order within the wilderness (39). The isolation and spatial layout of the hut’s environs betoken its replication of contemporary demographics and praxis of a political theory that protects against the external enemy and constitutes a sphere of sovereignty. Believing an attack by Indians is the only possible threat, it falls to Willoughby to convince Wilhelmina that the cordoned-off, seemingly secured space within the palisades of the hut will ward off any “marauding part[ies]” that might pass by. Upon closer examination, however, this interior/exterior binary is shot through with apertures and holes that prove the permeability and malleability of the seemingly rigid structures. Attention to these apertures leads one to reconsider the structure of sovereignty within Wyandotté: the delineation of the space of the knoll and the Captain’s neglect in securing its internal defenses marks Willoughby’s failure to perceive the shifting nature of ideological narratives.

Accordingly, the logic of distance that Willoughby employs when arranging the inhabitants of the knoll operates well under the imperial model where space is conquered by proximity to centers of power and political banishment is a tactic of control. In this scheme, the Hut stands at the center, on a hill, with, “here and there a log cabin [...] nearly buried in the forest” beyond the field below. As power is figuratively centralized, so the sovereign here sits at the center of his subjects, and would collect his subject under his umbrella of power, barracking them in the instance of an attack.

Willoughby’s utopian community is populated with “men of different colours, statures, ages, dresses, countries, habits and physiognomies, making it a sort of epitome of
the population of the whole colony, as it existed at that time” (230). In true colonial fashion, these “inhabitants of the manor, or the estate of the Hutted Knoll,” are each categorically archivable:

[They] might be divided into three great physical, and we might add moral categories, or races, viz: the Anglo-Saxon, the Dutch, both high and low, and the African. The first was the most numerous, including the families of the millers, most of the mechanics, and that of Joel Strides, the land-overseer; the second was composed chiefly of laborers; and the last were exclusively household servants, with the exception of one of the Plinys, who was a ploughman though permitted to live with his kinsfolk in the Hut. (83).

This passage establishes Willoughby’s imperialistic blending of Jeffersonian agrarian idealism (where the yeoman-farmer stands as a local authority in the true Republican sense) with ideals of the Federalist party that proposed a centralized leadership led by the wealthy. Sarsefieldian in nature, Willoughby’s hierarchy is informed not only by its enlightenment inventory of souls within “physical” and “moral categories,” but also by its leader’s privileged intellect, “the consequences of education, habits, manners, opinions, and sentiments that were hidden from those who not only had no perception of their existence, but had no knowledge whatever of the qualities that brought them into being” (83). His categorizing mind believes that even in these Revolutionary times the “reverence for rank and power” remains so intact that the strict racial lines that separate blacks as “rude, but simple beings” remain insurmountable and concrete (176). In some ways, Willoughby is Cooper’s creation of the benevolent British colonial ruler: well-intentioned in the management of his people and exercising the wisdom of colonial relations garnered from his privileged British education; yet unable to perceive the evolving nature of self-interested politics, or to believe in a malleable and shifting historical narrative where threats come from within the colony rather from the outside.
Accordingly, Willoughby's governance establishes segregative notions of proximity and containment, where industrial workers, husbandmen, and domestics each live in proximity to their roles in society. The segregation of workers is accomplished along the lines of race and class, with race being the superior or less surmountable barrier.72 According to Willoughby, race is the insurmountable barrier—the black servants are kept spatially proximal to the hut, and there is an increased intimacy between the Willoughby family and these household servants. This spatial relationship inversely visualizes the political clout of each category: the description moves from the detached industrialists and overseers that live at the fringe of the forest, to the yeoman "laborers" that work the flatland surrounding the hut, finally mentioning the slave-domestics that work inside its palisades. Although it would seem that the teleological track of the land tends toward cultivation, such a track does not account for the historical powers latent in its inhabitants. By keeping the industrialists—those empowered by both the Federalist ruling class and the republican leveling of social hierarchy—spatially distant, Willoughby is presumably able to maintain his influence amongst the domestics and laborers (Wood, 101).

Following the reasoning that any attack would come from forces outside of the colony, the site of the hut is selected with defenses in mind—"for dwelling so far from any post, and in a place so difficult of access, something like military defenses were merely precautions of ordinary prudence." Well, the hut and its infrastructure are imbued with the potential for security—even down to the construction of the "massive [leaves of the gate], being framed in oak, filled in with four-inch plank, [that] might have resisted a very

72 This seems a Jeffersonian scheme, where race is embedded within the very being of a body, and cannot be separated. See the "scarf-skin" passage in Notes on the State of Virginia (145).
formidable assault.” Whereas the construction of the wall and palisade is supervised by Willoughby, “the heavy job of hanging [the gates] had been deferred to a leisure moment, when all the strength of the manor might be collected for that purpose” (37). These gates—to be the only aperture designed into an otherwise secure “massive wall of stone […] a hundred and fifty feet in length and six feet in height”—are left in place, never hung, awaiting a collective and unified effort of the community (31). Described as “indolent sentinels,” the leaves of the gate reflect Willoughby’s relaxed confidence in traditional models of security where enemies would only be external to the community. Willoughby’s reliance upon collective effort to finalize the fortification of the hut demonstrates his misplaced faith in colonial principles of centralized protection, where outposts of civilization stand as collectives against encroaching wilderneses or savage others.

Willoughby’s utopian vision of the community as holding innate deference to hierarchy again marks his separation from (and vulnerability to) the challenges of republican models of State—namely those where power is immanently drawn from the populace and transferred upward to the State.

This failure can be read elsewhere as well. Further marking the deterioration of the Captain’s deliberate standardization of spatial, social, and racial separation, even early descriptions of his categorizing schema contain a notable exemption to its rigidity: the literal “exception of one of the Plinys, who was a [black] ploughman though permitted to live with his kinsfolk in the Hut.” In this calculation Pliny belongs more firmly to that “great physical” category of race than to any bodily labor he might perform; with the body of Pliny, race is able to cross the physical and political barriers erected between the industrialists, the yeomen, and their Captain. The exceptional status of Pliny is reinforced
later in the text, upon the captain’s sojourn outside of the Knoll to rescue his son Bob from Joel Strides and his rebels. Here the black ploughman is elevated to an almost blasphemous level, when, “in virtue of his years, and some experience in Indian warfare, succeeded to the command of the garrison, in the absence of its chief.” Arguably, this position of command would completely horrify many white readers; indeed, such horrification is addressed by insisting the black’s ascension is “contrary to the laws of nature.” This odd ascension is immediately followed by a frantic explanation as to how the fort is still able to (technically) maintain its rigid hierarchy:

Had there remained a male white at the Knoll, this trust never could have devolved on him, it being thought contrary to the laws of nature for a negro to command one of the other colour [sic]; but such was not the fact, and Pliny the Elder succeeded pretty much as a matter of course. Notwithstanding, he was to obey not only his particular old mistress, but both his young mistresses, who exercised an authority over him that was not to be disputed, without doing violence to all the received notions of the day. (297)

In this state of exception—where there remains no other white male upon the knoll—the ascension of Pliny is a normative move, “a matter of course.” Yet, how is Pliny the Elder able to hold a position of authority “without doing violence to all the received notions of the day”? Because Pliny’s ascension is accompanied by a similar ascension of the white females in the hut. The whiteness of the “mistresses” Mrs. Willoughby, Maud, and Beulah is compounded with the maleness of Pliny to create a conglomerate equivalent to Willoughby himself. Suspending the doctrine of a localized patriarchal hierarchy, Willoughby inverts his “natural” hierarchy so that those at the bottom (such as Pliny and the women) are figuratively empowered without being literally empowered.73 In all reality, violence actually is done to the “received notions of the day”—those being Willoughby’s hierarchal

principles of class, race, and gender—yet, with a perceived crisis outside of the hut, the internal upheaval appears to be business as usual. As this episode of exception illustrates, the containment and maintenance of ideologically-driven categorical hierarchies becomes the central challenge for Captain Willoughby, and his power dwindles as its stability is threatened from by the fervor of republicanism that crops up in the new world, manifested both socially and spatially.

Moving beyond these overt symbols of insecurity, there are numerous instances of covert exit and ingress past the hut’s fortifications that suggest the emergent porosity of the new State. For instance, there is the episode where, wishing to avoid the interested eyes of potential rebels, Major Willoughby is hoisted up cliffs and through an open window, the servants believing he is a “big baste of a hog” (165). There is also an obscured “sally-port” through the palisaded walls created by the future catalyst to the insurrection, Joel Strides. This secret passageway becomes an important element of boundary-porosity for both sides of the conflict, allowing the Willoughbys to covertly save Robert from the rebel captors and the rebels to storm the interior of the Hut. In this manner, even after the gates are mostly hung there is still the possibility of traversal and upheaval through alternative passages. The security of the home, the military complex, and the frontier outpost are each shown to be permeable and fragile, despite the best intentions of their founder and governor.

Considering the permeability of this fortified edifice, one can read the hut and its security as a barometer marking the transition from British colonialism (where a localized hierarchy is reinforced by its emulation of the metropole) to an American republicanism that mythologizes the manifestation of political power within the industrious individual. With the revolutionary transition toward the modern State, however, the relationship
between the interior and exterior of the State is increasingly indistinguishable; accordingly, schemas of security that formerly relied upon the establishment of a cordonned-off, secured community actually imply a relationship to the openness that surrounds that community.\(^{74}\)

In Willoughby's case, this evolution in sovereignty is best explained by the rebel-of-the-interior Joel Strides, who even seems to warn his patriarch of the changing tide: "It's all very true, captain," Joel quips, "the house would seem to be a good deal more safe like, if the gates were up; but, a body don't know; sometimes gates be a security, and sometimes they isn't. It all depends on which side the danger comes" (90). As long as threats to the community advancing from without, the traditional state-enemy divide remains intact and Willoughby's power remains secure. However, Willoughby's model of sovereignty fails in the newly flattened or smoothed political space of the modern State, where power is manifested by the individual rather than the passed down from on high.\(^ {75}\) This is illustrated most directly by Strides' own "hopes, calculations, and even projects [...] that never would have originated with men of the same class, in another state of society; or, it might be said, in another part of the world":

The sagacity of the overseer had long enabled to him to foresee that the issue of the present troubles would be insurrection, and a sort of instinct which some men possess for the strongest side, had pointed out to him the importance of being a patriot. [...] It is not probable that Joel's instinct for the strongest side, predicted the precise confiscations that subsequently ensued, some of which had all of the grasping lawlessness of a gross abuse of power, but he could easily foresee that if the owner of an estate should be driven off, the property and it's proceeds, probably for a series of years, would be very apt to fall under his own control and management. Many a patriot has been made by anticipations less brilliant in these [...] (106-7)

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\(^{74}\) The exceptional crisis itself is grown within the power structure that gives rise to the sovereign (Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 5). See also Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 38.

\(^{75}\) Saucy Nick knows this, and is able to use the apertures in material barriers to his advantage, moving in and out of the palisades undetected.
With these new “instincts” of self-advancement, we should revise our reading of the spatial layout of the knoll-colony. Threats are no longer relegated to the exterior of the State, but, as the entitlement of individual interests are privileged over those of the community, can now be born within. This new reasoning shakes the ideological strictures that are in place, and ultimately fractures the patriarchal logicality of governance. Joel Strides’ self-interest aligns with the apertures in security to suggest that factionalism can, with the rise of republican individualism, infiltrate even the most remote, secure, and deliberate projects, and to challenge them from the inside out. From this perspective, the insurrection of Joel and company is the manifestation of just such a threat; for even in constructing the palisades and hanging the gates Strides maintains these apertures that will play an integral part in demonstrating the false bifurcation of interior and exterior. It is fitting, then, that the figure of Strides simply disappears from Cooper’s narrative after the insurrection is sprung. There is account of his death, and no account of his leaving the huted knoll for other climes—for he simply fades into the one of the narrative apertures of the Revolution as if he never existed at all.

It seems that every barrier in *Wyandotte*—racial, social, political, or geographical—implies its own permeability and elasticity, and this is reflective of what Willoughby espouses as the central dilemma of Republican egalitarianism. While Willoughby ostensibly appears to be the arbiter of the Hutted Knoll’s security, in actuality it is the control and knowledge of these apertures that constitute true power, manifested by the ability to disrupt or suspend the normalized hierarchy. Willoughby’s education, breeding, and confidence in leadership fails to comprehend his precarious reliance on homologous politics of his built society. Interestingly enough, it is Mrs. Wilhelmina Willoughby—the
representative of America’s tumultuous past—who is the most uneasy about the unfinished gates. Willoughby’s failure to fulfill his repeated promises to his wife mirror his own inability to see history as malleable and shifting; his refusal to see the instability of his relationship with Joel Strides and the American rebels, as well as his murderer, the Tuscarora Nick / Wyandotte are symptoms of this larger obstinacy. In this regard, it is the space of America and its representatives—the “Connecticut man” Joel Strides, the Native American chief Wyandotte, and even the colonial-wife Wilhelmina—that perceive (and in two cases exploit) the very real and fatal apertures in the Captain’s scheme.

Economies of Incest and Nationalism - Impotence and the New American Empire

The superiority of the Captain’s intellect and its apparent liberalism is again reinforced by his ability to lead his unconventional family of two continents and multiple lineages. Warren Motley argues that Cooper’s belief in patriarchal government is similar to the ideals of Tocqueville: that in Wyandotte the “laws of inheritance—in other words, those laws treat the family as the basic economic unit in society—should ‘be placed at the head of all political institutions; for they exercise an incredible influence upon the social state of a people’” (5; embedded quote from Tocqueville). Considering the centrality of the family in the schema of the new frontier plantation, one could read the elevated and protected aspect of the hut to reflect Motley’s assertion. We have already seen how the spatiality of the Hutterd Knoll—particularly its apertures and holes—reflect and problematize the ability of the State to control of populations; the Willoughby family structure similarly problematizes such governance. Exchanging his family’s urban home in Albany for the wilderness homestead, Captain Willoughby’s social experiment conjoins the familial-hereditary tradition of his British forbears with his wife’s alternate (American) colonial
narrative. The Willoughby's flexibility in both relocation and constitution redefines the family unit in a manner that emphasizes the transitioning nature of sovereignty from the rigid hierarchical schemes of hereditary estates and rights to the more modern distribution of power in decentered democratic-republican regimes.\(^7\) Reflecting larger social demographics, however, this is not to say that all members of the family are modernized--for such would suggest that the historical narratives of the Revolution do capture its entire history, undercutting Cooper's intentions in writing the novel.

The Hutted Knoll as a “family experiment” is entwined with the same tripartite structural amalgamation of the “part house, part barrack, and part fort,” reflecting the trifurcated social anatomy dictated by Willoughby's hierarchical rule as father, commander (or “Captain,” as is his monogram in the novel), and pioneer. When examined alongside the external threats to the community—primarily those of isolation and insurrection touched on above—the Willoughby family is shown to be a problematic ideal for effective governance, one with as many “apertures” as the palisaded walls that surround it. Despite the strength of Captain Willoughby’s integrity and his intention to do right by his family and their familiars, when transported into the new American political landscape the conventional model of the old-world family becomes impotent and ineffectual.

In discussing the role of the family in Wyandotté, one must acknowledge two separate-yet-parallel registers: 1) its patriarchal structure, with Captain Hugh Willoughby at its head, followed by his son (Major) Robert Willoughby, his daughters Beulah and Maud

\(^7\) This is not to say that hierarchy is abandoned in the modern iterations of sovereignty. Where in the colonial models of sovereignty power was transferred hierarchically through bequest (as if power is transcendent to the individual), modern iterations of sovereignty views power as immanent, manifest through the ability of the individual to navigate, manipulate, and suspend the hierarchies external to oneself.
(who is adopted), and finally his wife Wilhelmina, (an “American” born in the colonies); and

2) the “family” as a correspondent iteration of the State, a microcosm of the transition from
monarchal to a representative republic. At the opening of the novel, the regimes of State
and the Willoughby family seem parallel: Captain Willoughby is married to both the
American continent (represented by his American wife, as we discuss further in a moment),
and the crown (being granted a patent for his duty in the King’s army, and securing his son
a commission within the King’s livery). His son Robert’s commission in the aptly named
“Royal Americans” ties this inheritor to both the continent and the crown in a similar
amalgamated manner by continuing the family’s tradition within the royal guard, yet also
branching into a specifically “American” identity within those corps (18). The daughters of
Willoughby—Beulah and Maud—are introduced in a similar cross-cultural mode, each
“receiving what was then thought to be a first rate American female education,” yet also
marked by an innate “purity of dialect...ascribed to the fact that their father was an
Englishman by birth and their mother an American of purely English origin” (18, italics in
original). And, although Captain Hugh Willoughby is the patriarchal figurehead of this
family, arguably it is the soft-mannered Wilhelmina who is its lynchpin that melds the
American and British heritages that Cooper seems to idealize. In order to fully understand
how the family dynamic connects to both the American and British political registries, we
should momentarily focus our examination on her.

Despite Wilhelmina’s “purely English origin” (meaning she is of “purely” Britannic
lineage), she is introduced as “an American wife”—a counterpart to Willoughby’s John Bull-
ness—that provides him a stake as a legitimate colonial continentalist (8). “[T]horoughly
loyal in her heart—meaning loyal as applied to a sovereign—” Wilhelmina is a colonial
subject, yet also distinctly American through her birth and upbringing (80). This “Americanness” should not be confounded with the home-land colonialism of Willoughby, however, as it is rather written upon her identity through more than just her Britishness: being named after her Dutch god-mother, there is an undeniable glimmer of that other American colonial power. Wilhelmina’s Dutchness subtly supplants the widespread Puritanical American narrative with one more liberal and cosmopolitan. Cooper constructs Wilhelmina as a literal embodiment of the multifaceted colonial history of the New World, and subtly suggests a narrative of American colonization that is a deeper-rooted alternative to the British, and holds a oft forgotten history. In this regard, Wilhelmina is more rightly described as colonial than British. Thus, Willoughby’s wife suggests his cultural bridging of his Britishness with the wider colonial American history, and secures his heir’s and heiress’ claims to being naturalized “Americans”—an identity that is important if we are to scrutinize the “demagogues” that proliferate the dominant narrative of the Revolution (as the author suggests in his “Preface”) (3).

As Wilhelmina “Americanizes” Willoughby through her longer colonial background, she also enables her husband to withdraw from the king’s service and act out a distinctly American life on the frontier. Wilhelmina is not a central figure within the novel, but functions only in relation to her husband’s role within the family and the community at large; yet her important economic contribution to the Hatted Knoll project conveys Cooper’s reassessment of British patriarchy, conveying a relation between family and government that, while familiar to structures of inheritance brought from the old world, is distinctly American in practice. When Motley claims that Cooper is concerned with the centrality of the family within the structures of State, he fails to recognize the importance
of Wilhelmina’s inheritance in the family dynasty and its role in the patriarchal rise of Captain Willoughby. Wilhelmina’s inheritance is immediately linked to the openness of American space and its hereditary diversity, and the Captain’s actions in claiming such space in a very American fashion. It is no mistake that in the same “season” that Willoughby begins work on the Hutted Knoll, “the summer of 1765, Mrs. Willoughby inherited some real estate in Albany, by the death of an uncle, as well as a few thousand pounds currency, in ready money. This addition to his fortune made the captain exceedingly comfortable; or, for that day, rich; and it left him to act his pleasure as related to his lands” (42). Coming from an uncle that aptly remains hidden, Wilhelmina’s inheritance does not follow the typical hereditary path of father to son, but passes from the unnamed uncle to a woman, indicating the increasing complications of colonial families: being ostensibly structured upon a strong patriarchal organization, yet actually supported in a less traditional fashion.

Wilhelmina’s story hearkens to the familiar romance-novel trope of the unnamed benefactor, generating yet another instance of American hybridity. Shifting the trope to the American side of the Atlantic, the metropolitan space of the colonial Albany home is traded for the frontiers of Cooper’s America, the New York backcountry, again an Americanization of this inheritance. As Willoughby has taken his American wife, so too does he trade urban landscapes associated with Europe for the open spaces of this new continent, adapting his familial structure in the process.

Of course the most evident emblem of the family’s unconventional make-up is the adopted Maud (Meredith) Willoughby, and her eventual marriage to her adopted brother Robert. Similar to Wilhelmina’s heritage, Maud’s unconventional place within the family illustrates the changing nature of established social structures on the new continent, and
some of the problematic results of such changes. The daughter of Captain Willoughby’s deceased partner-in-arms, Major Meredith, Maud’s place within the family is problematically flexible, moving from sister to love-interest as the plot advances. The incestuous overtones that haunt the relationship between Maud and Robert Willoughby mirror the malleable logic that marks the transition between political regimes. Where, through his sympathy for the American cause, Robert Willoughby stands as a liberal model of the system of British hierarchy, Maud Meredith-Willoughby implants the apertures of the fort’s security into the family. Although Major Willoughby cannot survive in a political climate where the sovereign is both inside and outside the state and history is frequently rewritten to justify current regimes, Maud is able to act as both sister and wife, switching between roles as it fits her interest, and even conjuring up a fortune from her lost history.

Cooper seems nervous about the illicit undertones of Maud’s relationship to Robert, and, while attempting to assuage any concerns by emphasizing the lack of blood relations between the siblings, actually further problematizes this romance by insisting upon their being raised in such a close manner. Maud is unequivocally accepted by the family, and is “managed” by the Captain and Mrs. Willoughby, insuring

...that neither they themselves, Beulah, nor the inmates of the family or household, ever thought of her, but as of a real daughter of her nominal parents [...] Maud alone, of all in the Hut, remembered her birth, and submitted to some of its most obvious consequences. As respects the captain, the idea never crossed her mind, that she was adopted by him; as respects her mother, she filled to her, in every sense, that sacred character; Beulah, too, was a sister, in thought and deed; but, Bob, he had so changed, had been so many years separated from her; had once actually called her Miss Meredith—somehow, she knew not how herself—it was fully six years since she had begun to remember that he was not her brother. (71)

Maud’s place in the family is torn between the supportive familial intimacy of the domestic sphere, and her independence from the Willoughbys that would enable her to become
romantically engaged with her adopted brother Robert. Her romantic attraction to Robert, however, threatens not only her own identity as Maud Willoughby (as she is referred to throughout the novel), but also the identity of other family members as well—particularly Beulah, who must qualify and adjust her own definition of sisterhood in order to maintain her own familial role. As Maud is gradually realizing her feelings for Robert, both Beulah and Maud redefine the family by separating *familial* ties from *blood* ties:

“That I [Maud] am *not* his [Robert’s] real--true--*born* sister!”

This was the first time in their lives, either [Maud or Beulah] had ever alluded to the fact, in the other’s presence. Beulah turned pale; she trembled all over, as if in an ague; then she luckily burst into tears, else she might have fainted.

"Beulah--my sister--my *own* sister!" cried Maud, throwing herself into the arms of the distressed girl.

"Ah! Maud, you *are*, you *shall* for ever be, my only, only sister." (71)

Here the definition of “sister” is maneuvered away from being blood-born to the same parents (as would be traditional in a hereditary estate), to encompass an individuals’ assertion of the ownership of the term and the person it refers to. Beulah is Maud’s sister because Maud owns her as such—“my *own* sister.” In a similar manner, Maud is granted a similar status by Beulah, being identified as “my only, only sister”; for if Buelah was to follow this new logic of the family, *any* close female could be her “sister,” suggesting the openness of such designations. The prioritization of affinitive sibling “ownership” over consanguinity includes Maud within the domestic family, where a living parentage is identifiable, while conveniently excluding her from cultural taboos.

This ownership of siblinghood between the consanguineous and the adopted Willoughby is doubly enforced when it is revealed that Maud is herself independently wealthy (reinforcing this as a romantic trope within the novel); indeed the fortune seems to assuage any reservations held by the narrator or Beulah. The Merediths, being “at least,
as honourable [sic] a family as the Willoughbys” leave their daughter “Five thousand pounds, in the English funds” put under the care of the Captain, and invested in a manner that “quite doubled the original amount” (73). In a similar manner that Captain Willoughby benefits from Wilhelmina’s inheritance, so too does his son Robert benefit from Maud’s inheritance that is cared for by his own father. This is to say, that by marrying his sister Robert is entitled to the Meredith inheritance that had passed through his father’s hands in a similar manner as his own military appointment. While Beulah insists that Maud is her “only, only sister,” Bob will stake his claim upon Maud through courtship rather than affinity, emphasizing the distinct duality of Maud’s character as if to insist upon her distance from him:

"Maud Meredith is not my sister," he said, earnestly, "though Maud Willoughby may be. Why is the name Meredith [upon this gift]?
"As a retort to one of your own allusions--did you not call me Miss Meredith, one day, when I last saw you in Albany?"
"Ay, but that was in jest, my dearest Maud. It was not a deliberate thing, like the name on that sash."
"Oh! jokes may be premeditated as well as murder; and many a one is murdered, you know. Mine is a prolonged jest." (Italics in original, 101)

Certainly in the case of Maud, jokes can be as premeditated (and as deadly) as murder—for Maud’s “Willoughby” will be cast off, with the death of the Captain and Mrs. Willoughby, freeing Robert to marry Maud Meredith. Calculated differently, both Maud and Robert (and Cooper) must create a way that one can be both inside and outside the Willoughby family structure at the same time; maintaining her relationship with her adopted parents and sister, while able to maintain a marriageable distance from her brother.

Maud’s ability to remain both inside and outside of the Willoughby family aligns her with other transitory figures in the text such as Joel Strides, and more significantly, the Tuscarora Nick (Wyandotté). Although not recognized by Captain Willoughby as such, Nick
can be read as the master of traversing both the security and the social barriers of the hut, and is included within the very structure by his exclusion from it as a “savage.” The novel associates Nick’s Indian name “Wyandotte” with the foundation of the hut itself, and (as mentioned earlier) his understanding of the white’s systematic disenfranchisement of Native Americans is the source of Willoughby’s patent. Further exhibiting his own adaptability, Nick also combines slaying the patriarchal head with the murdering of history—his motive for murdering Willoughby is the latter’s frequent reminders of the Tuscarora’s previous humiliation. While Willoughby insists on a historicized rebuff against the Indian; by slaying the Captain, any reminders of this embarrassing past are relegated to an unspoken, and eventually forgotten history—or so Wyandotté believes. When unable to save all, it is fitting that Nick hides and protects Maud, and not the blood-derived Willoughbys, in the storeroom—for she is as excluded and included as he is.

The distance between Maud Meredith and Maud Willoughby ebbs and flows throughout the novel, and it is significant that Robert and Maud’s romance is never revealed to Beulah, Mrs. Willoughby, or Captain Willoughby. This marriage is rather symmetrical, as Maud’s mixed identity within the Willoughby clan reflects Robert Willoughby’s own relationship to country and continent (being a Briton born in the colonies). If Joel Strides stands as a new model of American individualistic interest that is able to traverse the evolving politics of the State, Maud and Robert pivot the opposite way, After the death of all other Willoughbys, Robert and Maud take advantage of the new openings to them, escaping any overt scrutiny for their desire to marry. In a manner, their marriage is an attempt to reconstitute the Willoughby family; to turn back the traces of Maud transitioning from Willoughby to Meredith, to Willoughby again, and, further, to
reestablish the family’s aristocratic and patriarchal roots. Accordingly, their only course of action is to run back to the hereditary estates and baronetcies of the Old World, from whence the major tropes of their relationship had been drawn.

In a reflective manner, the shifting terms of sovereignty as sketched in the topographies and securities of the Hutted Knoll cannot abide the vestiges of Old World patriarchy at the core of Maud and Roberts’ relationship, and banishes it to the shores of Britain. Surviving the insurrection at the knoll, Buelah’s American husband Colonel Beekman and their son Evert perish from grief rather quickly and abruptly within the closing pages of the novel; and at the close of the book the knoll itself only holds those characters that remain unsettled between the poles of dichotomies—namely the Tuscarora Nick, who is rather unsatisfactorily Christianized and confesses to murdering the patriarch Willoughby; and the Irish immigrant turned Indian-scalper Michael O’Hearn, who remains its one truly “American” (read: problematically conflicted) creation.

By tying together these spaces at the end of the novel—the location of the knoll in accordance to the nation; the hybridity of the knoll as fort, barracks, and house; the apertures in the hut’s presumed security; and the new malleability of the family—Cooper sketches the persistence of apertures and erasures in dominant narratives of State, suggesting that the failure to recognize and adapt to these changes amounts to obsolescence. Certainly, Cooper’s corrective narrative itself seems shot through with holes, drawing as much on tropes of romanticism as on historical isolationism. Typically hidden behind the archival histories of land patents and the nationalistic history of the Revolutionary War, such apertures more truthfully reflect the “strictly true and just” histories of the era. The narrator that examines “Willoughby’s patent” at the opening of the
novel remarks on all that the patent fails to tell us about the estate; in *Wyandotté* Cooper conveys one of those true histories, contributing to a more complete understanding of the Revolutionary era as holding potentials outside of American unity. Perhaps Cooper’s most significant contribution to a new historiography is his turn toward topological history—a history of a place that provides an archive that is markedly different from the archives of social histories. Willoughby’s is a far more rudimentary form of politics, where the control of—and even contact with—space is intimately entwined with the law and the means to power. This politics believes the populace can be managed through reflective management of space; yet it fails to account for the changing relationship between topologies and political power, namely the erasure of the interior/exterior binary within sovereignty. The retreat of the Willoughby clan back into the regimes of the old world demonstrates its impotence in the face of this new global-imperial sovereignty—one that ignores regional difference and heterogeneity.
“There were two Joaquins:” The Divided Politics of
John Rollin Ridge’s The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta

Critics engaging John Rollin Ridge’s 1854 novel The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta, the Celebrated Bandit of California (hereafter The Life and Adventures) have consistently cited its author’s racial identity and political and tribal history as integral to understanding the novel’s protagonist. Such readings are presaged by the “Publisher’s Preface,” which is quick to mark the text as notable “aside from its intrinsic merit...when it is known that the author is a ‘Cherokee Indian,’ born in the woods—reared in the midst of the wildest scenery—and familiar with all that is thrilling, fearful, and tragical [sic] in a forest-life” (Ridge, 2). According to the preface, the novel becomes “an opportunity to estimate the character of Indian Talent,” essential evidence of a racially-bound literary propensity existent alongside the “great warriors, and powerful orators” already “produced” by American Indian culture (Ridge, 2).

In a similar vein, The Life and Adventures is an almost too-ideal artifact for the more contemporary culturally-minded critic. Penned by a Cherokee political refugee, the novel’s Mexican immigrant-outlaw protagonist exacts racially motivated revenge upon the “American race” in the immediate wake of the Mexican-American War. Interpretations of The Life and Adventures have not neglected the correlations between the Mexican-American hero-bandit and the novel’s cultural assimilationist author.77 John Carlos Rowe, 77 Rowe surveys such approaches in his essay “Highway Robbery: ‘Indian Removal,’ the Mexican-American War, and American Identity in ‘The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta’”: “In his seminal reading of Ridge’s novel, Louis Owens argues that ‘Ridge transforms himself and his bitterness against the oppression and dis-placement of Indians’ into his Mexican character, Joaquín Murieta, using the novel as ‘a disguised act of
for instance, argues that "Ridge's novel resolves the conflicting and traumatic experiences of his personal history as a Cherokee, of the U.S. conquest of California in the Mexican-American War, and of the social disorder in California during the Gold Rush in a narrative organized around the myth of progressive individualism." By highlighting this "personal history as a Cherokee" Rowe arguably perpetuates preface's cultural accounting; and although he calls for "a new category of literary value," it is merely to "account for works [like The Life and Adventures that are] of little intrinsic aesthetic interest that nevertheless bring into sharp relief historical and ideological issues crucial to the formation of dominant cultural values." (150). Yet the danger of such "categor[ies] of literary value" is their dismissal of those most important uncategorizable elements of the texts—those very elements that although they eschew (some) critics' "intrinsic aesthetic interests," remain significant in by their very existence outside of such interests.

Mark Rifkin also addresses Rollin Ridge's tribal politics, asserting that the "possessive individualism" and ideological embrace of capitalism needs to be reassessed not as an "equivalent to a desire for [Cherokee] assimilation to the U.S." (as Rowe would

appropriation, an aggressive and subversive masquerade.' In his brief account of Ridge's novel in The Cambridge History of American Literature, Eric Sundquist characterizes it as a 'double-edged' narrative that 'may be understood to be Yellow Bird's own indirect statement about the justification for revenge against whites felt by American Indians, whether in California, Georgia, or Oklahoma'" (Rowe, 154). Rowe's own argument relates "the conflicting and traumatic experiences of [Ridge's] personal history" and Ridge's endorsement of "progressive individualism" to the novel's depiction of "the [lingering traces of the] US conquest of California in the Mexican-American War, and [...] the social disorder in California during the Gold Rush" (Rowe, 150). One could also turn to David Sandell (2003), who "addresses colonial history, the underlying dynamics of nineteenth century Mexican and United States political relations, and John Rollin Ridge's biography to articulate Mexican and American frontier mythologies" (1). One notable exception to this criticism is Mark Rifkin, who resists the temptation of a biographical perspective, focusing instead on imagistic interpretations of violence and blood and its relation to nationalism. Rifkin's perspective is perhaps the closest to my own.
argue), but as “a vision of collectivity organized around capitalist ideologies and a distinct Cherokee polity” (43). Rifkin’s most salient point is that the novel’s “metaphorics of blood” function to extend the Mexican-American War, creating “an allegory for U.S. Expansionism” that “questions the process by which the country claims to have internalized various peoples and places” (28-29).

Taking Rifkin’s perspective a step further, I propose to examine this process of internalization more closely by treating the novel as a literary text rather than evidence in a biographical reconstruction of authorial motivation. It is not, of course, that Ridge’s history should be ignored or downplayed; such scholarship has led to an important understanding of the author’s personal politics and correlations between the persecution of Hispanic and Native American populations during the mid-nineteenth century. As Timothy Powell has suggested, however, to focus too closely on the author’s engagement with emergent nationalistic narratives is to ignore the dismantling of such binaries through the amalgam figure of Joaquín (58-59). Concentrating on the construction of Joaquin’s character and the interplay between the bandits and their surroundings brings into focus how ideologically dictated identities affect and shape Murieta (and, by extension, Ridge). The problem is not that correlations between Ridge and his protagonist do not exist, but that the obsession of the critical eye in aligning the actions of the fictional banditti with Ridge’s personal and political history and racial persecution has thus far significantly overshadowed other prominent features of the novel, such as the role of California’s diverse geography and topography, the place of minority populations and other communities, and the efforts to bring these diversities under State control.
In examining the ways that Murieta’s bloody campaign extends the Mexican-American War beyond the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, Rifkin’s essay importantly addresses another problematic rendering of the text’s historical moment. While the political inclinations of Rollin Ridge undoubtedly inform his fictional rendition of Joaquín Murieta, such readings typically cast the Mexican-American War and the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo as a singular revolutionary moment where California emerges as a wholly formed state seamlessly captured within a unified America.\textsuperscript{78} Similar to my examinations of Edgar Huntly and Wyandotté, which seek to divorce those novels from the teleological narratives of the Revolutionary War, I claim that The Life and Adventures blatantly rejects what Trish Loughran calls the “national narrative of continental union,” instead depicting early 1850s California as far more fractured and discordant than literary historians would have us believe, and as containing a myriad of potential futures separate from the narratives of nationalism. Through Murieta’s own readings of a national “character,” The Life and Adventures lays bare hegemonic mechanisms of categorization and racial hierarchy that complicate the ideals of a democratic meritocracy. In The Life and Adventures, the contested spaces of California hold multiple potentialities and diverse possibilities that, when attended, lead to alternatives of governance and citizenry.

Warning against “a simplistic binary analysis of Ridge’s novel that immediately assumes an ideological alliance between the romance’s Cherokee author and its Mexicano

\textsuperscript{78} In my introductory chapter I differentiate between the terms “State” and “nation,” declaring “the State is less a singular identifiable entity (as Anderson speaks of a nation) than a concentration of power that is constituted through the agglomeration of physical space” (8). The mechanisms of the State seek to develop a sense of nationalism—a feeling of belonging and common identity across a controlled region. Because in this chapter I frequently engage the annexation of California, I will also be using the lower-case term “state,” as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “any one of a number of political units which together make up a nation having a supreme federal government” (OED).
protagonist,” Timothy Powell claims that *The Life and Adventures* draws into focus Rollin Ridge’s belief that the mechanisms of “democratic inclusion and racist exclusion” are a foundation for establishing an “American character” (Powell, 54). Eschewing such binaries as inclusion/exclusion and author/protagonist, *The Life and Adventures* critically engages the larger divergent mythologies of American nationalism: that of a meritocratic-derived opportunity for social advancement (essentially the roots of the “American dream”), and that of a racially benign national identity. Murieta is innocently duped by both of these myths at the outset of the novel, and is called to revenge with a motivation of correcting these inequities.

To this end, intrinsic elements of the text present California less as a homogenized and normalized space of national order than as a demographically and geographically diverse region controlled by regional beliefs and cultures. A figure like Murieta is illustrative of what historian David Gutiérrez describes as a larger movement that culminates not with integration of minorities into an American culture, but with the

[...] development of a new sense of community based on a common Mexican cultural heritage and the common experience of racial prejudice in the United States; [...] Mexican Americans were able to transform Anglo Americans’ efforts to stigmatize them as racial inferiors into a positive strategy of self-affirmation as Mexicans in American society. (37)

Ridge’s California is heterotopic in population and geography, with Chinese, Germans, French, Indios, Mexicans, African-, and Anglo-Americans populating the urban, agricultural, mountainous and desert landscapes of the state. Focusing solely on the recognizable political binary of inclusion/exclusion would oversimplify the shifting regional, fractionalized spaces of the novel, and overlooks the a global microcosm of California’s imperialism: its unsurveyed backcountry, its sprawling distances, and its communicative
and navigational challenges that hearken to the new state's own isolation at the end of the continent. In addition to resistances of California Mexiques, surviving communities of California Indians resisted national incorporation as well, often taking to arms against local law enforcement and State military with tragic consequences. As California's transition from contested space to national territory is not as simple as redrawing national boundaries, so we cannot read *The Life and Adventures* as simply reducing identity to the familiar categorical binaries of racial and/or national inclusion or exclusion. When examined as an literary artifact that participates within the uncertain milieu that gave rise to it, rather than an event in the broader narrative of 19th century nationalism, *The Life and Adventures* identifies the limits of the State's imposition of a broad and generic juridical apparatus to function and maintain power on the fringes of the frontier, and the inadequacy of any molded national “character.”

What I propose is an examination of the novel’s narrative and figurative elements in concert with the myriad “remnants” that remain contested in the space of California: those

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79 In 1851 in San Diego Antonio Garra organized and headed a collection of Indian militants from a number of tribes in protestation of taxes levied against tribes living on Don Juan Warner’s ranch. Betrayed by a rival tribal leader, Garra was executed by the State of California on January 17, 1852 (Bradley, 8). See, for reference, the “Short Overview of California Indian History” on the *California Native Heritage Commission* webpage: “The newcomers sometimes met organized Indian resistance. In 1850 a Cupeno chief named Antonio Garra Sr. organized local Southern California Indians to resist an illegal tax imposed upon San Diego Indians by the county sheriff. Sporadic attacks upon both Americans and some Mexicans by Garra’s followers resulted in a massive crackdown on Indian communities. Soon a rival Cahuilla chief captured Garra and turned him over to the authorities who promptly hung him and several of his followers. In 1851 several mountain Miwok tribes offered armed resistance to the hoard of miners overrunning their territory. When one tribe destroyed a trading post owned by an American who kept at least 12 Indian ‘wives’ a paramilitary militia was formed and aggressively attacked Indians throughout the southern mines area. Eventually this group calling itself the ‘Mariposa Battalion’ breached the unknown granite fortress of the valley of Yosemite. A ruthless campaign against the Yosemite Indians resulted in the capture of their Chief Teneya and a temporary exile to the San Joaquin River ‘Indian Farm.’”
histories and people that are unable to be easily assimilated into the larger State narratives, and are thereby included within State archives only through their deliberate exclusion. While the novel does map the aftermath of the Mexican-American War, it is not in terms of an emerging stolid nationalism or the assimilationist politics of its author. Joaquín and his gang perceive the topography of the state of California as evidence of alternate imperial constructs of law and social prejudice. Using the environment as an archive, these polities remain imperialist in nature, and are thereby shot through with hegemonic ideologies. Yet, while this new imperialism cannot entirely forego the limiting prejudices of ideology, it does stand to illustrate how the body of Murieta, comes to represent the fragmented of early California.

Initially, the character of Joaquín Murieta stands as an iconic figurehead and a vestige of a time prior to State territorialization—a time when the space was ordered through individual acts of violence rather than through legal strictures and categorical prejudices. Joaquin and his banditti rely on alternate method of archivization attached to the figure of Joaquin—a heterogeneous composite of identities that in his very composition resists reductive synthesis within an overarching State. Although seeming an ideal citizen, the State’s rejection of Murieta devolves the presumably mastered territory of California into an illogical maze of guerrilla warfare and sanguinary revenge, demonstrating how imperialist unity creates by its very structure its own enemies.

This said, there is a noticeable separation between what Joaquin’s body and banditry represent, and his political imperialism, which calls for a strong centralization of power that will curtail the rampant injustice and prejudices he encounters when he arrives

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80 Rifkin claims that the novel’s depiction of gore is illustrative of the extension of the Mexican-American War (Rifkin, 28).
in California. Rather than conflicting with his irrational banditry, I claim that these political views create the perfect environment for the symbolic openness of his character. That is, the mechanism of political exclusion that ideologically informs Murieta’s politics creates the ideal backdrop that brings into focus the banditti’s violent irrationality. In a similar manner, Murieta is at odds with the State’s proclaimed “American character,” and is cast as a “natural production of the social and moral conditions of the country in which he lived”: a by-product or remnant of that national character itself.

In historical context, Joaquin’s criminal notoriety, political, and racial exclusion reinforce his representation as a radical force that persists after the United States’ capture of California at the end of the Mexican-American War. While the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo guarantees the protection of property and civil rights during the period of the novel’s action (1850-1853), California’s Hispanic population would not be fully recognized as citizens until an 1870 Supreme Court decision (Howe, 810). Reflecting and reacting to such exclusions, Murieta’s outlawry inverts the exceptional characteristics of social and legal structures in California during this era by creating an alternate community that is empowered not by legal strictures and State edicts, but by their surroundings. In The Life and Adventures such exceptions can be read across a range of spatial registers: at the novel’s outset Murieta is repeatedly displaced from land claims, and spends the remainder of the book traversing the vast geography of California. Subsequently, Joaquín’s character is an aberration that reflects the tenuous and uneven nature of State influence within California, and essentially operates upon the State from outside, maintaining a level of economic and social freedom greater than any recognized citizen (white or otherwise).

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81 The state’s Native American population fared even worse, not being granted any rights to citizenship or property and seen generally as “obstacles to progress” (Howe, 810).
Paradoxically, Murieta is central to the cultural formation of California because he is racially excluded from the social, legal, and moral constructs of an “American character”—that very category that he initially identifies as so attractive and that his political views seek to correct.

As in my chapter on Melville’s Piazza Tales, here I examine the varied conceptual framework that informs spatial relations in The Life and Adventures—the way that space is designed, constructed, depicted, encountered, and understood. I expose a multifaceted assemblage of topographical and geographical elements that, while evaluating the identity and interplay of protagonist Joaquín Murieta with the physical space of California, also demonstrates the uneven and irregular capture of territory by sovereign State powers. I argue that alongside the figure of Joaquin, the spatial logic of The Life and Adventures can be read as an alternative archive that resists State power by aligning an alternate politics of governance and identity with the physical environment of California. Murieta, his banditti, and the sympathetic narrator, characterize and interact with the spaces of California in a fashion that favors fluidity, movement, and improvisation. Depicting fluid and situational relationships to space, The Life and Adventures convenes imperial, national, factional, regional, economic, and individual contexts to destruct racial and class constructs, and critique the juridical normalcy that reinforce those constructs. Murieta’s malleability throughout the text overtly confronts and pushes back against any scripting of race or character, reaving open the presumably captured territory of California.82

To explore these claims, I begin by unpacking the character of Joaquin as a composite of parts that remain unquantifiable under the categorical logics of imperialism.

82 “Reaving” here meaning “robbing and marauding,” yet also implying its association with “river,” something that cleaves the landscape into fragments (OED).
This unquantifiable aspect pervades not just his racial body, but his name as well. I then move to examine the protagonist’s deconstruction of the “American character,” an ideal for young Joaquin. Having discussed elements of the bandit that are arguably challenging the categories of imperial archives, I then examine the poem embedded in the text. This poem proposes to use the landscape of California as inspiration for a revisionist politics. This, however, is problematic, as such a politics would, I argue, simply reconfigure existing prejudices, and thereby reinstate an unjust imperialism. Turning toward the figurative elements of Joaquin’s character—specifically his representation in the media and the perception of his character across public spaces, I illustrate how his characteristic inconsistencies bring into focus the fragmentation of identity under any imperial regime. This last point is gruesomely illustrated by examining the circulation of Joaquin’s head after it is severed from his body.

“There were [more than] two Joaquíns” – Multiplicities of Exclusion

Murieta is introduced as “a Mexican born in the province of Sonora of respectable parents and educated in the schools of Mexico” (8). (The redundancy of this sentence ties Murieta to Mexico doubly, and is perhaps its most salient point: Joaquín is initially identified as an upstanding Mexican.) Well educated, the future bandit grows “tired of the uncertain state of affairs in his own country, the usurpations and revolutions which were of such common occurrence,” and enters the US with the explicit yearning for stability (8).83

Rehearsing iterations of the American Dream, Joaquín initially desires to participate in the

83 Perhaps deliberately overlooked by the narrator, there is an explicit irony in this statement as the US has recently militarily “annexed” all of Texas, New Mexico, and California. Under Mexican control, Alta California saw a number of usurpations of power in the 1840s as well (cf. Stockton, 76).
opportunities of the expanding nation to the north—the goldfields, the agricultural prospects, and the homesteading spirit. After a series of racially motivated affronts, Joaquín turns rogue and begins his tear up and down the California countryside, stealing horses and robbing miners of their diggings. Multiple bounties are disseminated, and wanted posters issued, but Joaquín is always a step ahead, often killing pursuers in moments of braggadocio and shedding American blood “whenever and wherever an opportunity occur[s]” (14). In response, the state of California dispatches a party of rangers led by Harry Love, who traps and kills the bandit in a northern California wasteland. Murieta’s head is removed and preserved in alcohol (as is his lieutenant’s three-fingered hand), and sent to Sacramento for identification purposes.

Within the first page the novel, John Rollin Ridge establishes Joaquin Murieta’s celebrity within a number of fictional and factual communities, ranging from intercontinental to local. Prior to being named within the text, the protagonist is universalized as “a man as remarkable in the annals of crime as any of those renowned robbers in the New or Old World...the Rinaldo Rinaldini of California.” Murieta is identified in a cadre of mythic proportions that would doubtlessly be favorable to his characteristic pride. Yet, and as will become a theme within the novel, Murieta’s inclusion in the “annals of crime” exclude him from any actual or fantasized community of the State—those he most desires to be part of.84 This aside, the narrator is compelled through a gesture of pseudo-patriotism to “contribute [his] mite,” for Murieta is “a part of the most valuable history” of

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84 In West of the Border: The Multicultural Literature of the Western American Frontiers (2000), Noreen Groover Lape writes of the dualism of the “trickster technique” of Ridge (and Murieta) throughout the novel, where such contrapuntal messages as this inclusion and exclusion to “systematically frustrat[e...] any attempts to make the story an allegory” (83).
the “early history of California” (2). How is it that Murieta is denied any claim to citizenship or national affiliation, and yet stands as an iconic figure of California? Instead of establishing Murieta’s inclusion through State categorization—through citizenship or his participation place within a social community—the introductory paragraph registers the yet-to-be-named Murieta in terms of his spatial arenas: as a world-renowned criminal, a regional historical icon, and byproduct and icon of the “social and moral condition of the country in which he lived.” That is, although Murieta is never included within its citizenry, he runs across the state and interacts with its environment in a manner that forces his inclusion in its history.

This odd inside/outside amalgam of space is mirrored by the multifaceted identities of Joaquín himself, as his racial and national identities exhibit the slippage between State power and the categorical identities ascribed through State archives. The narrator’s naming of the bandit speaks not of an individual, but of a mélange: “There were two Joaquíns,” the narrator explains, “bearing the various sur-names of Murieta, O’Comorenia, Valenzuela, Botellier, and Carillo—so that it was supposed there were no less than five sanguinary devils ranging the country at one and the same time” (7). These two “sanguinary devils” traverse vast swaths of country to disrupt commerce and economy across California, shifting their names and identities frequently enough to be counted as more than two in the eyes of the State. While the celebrity of Joaquín Murieta progresses from the global to the regional, the name “Joaquín” is here expanded and multiplied in a gesture that further universalizes the bandit rather than individuating him. Moreover, as Joaquíns are here multiplied they are also diversified, fractured beyond the Hispanic surnames of Murieta, Valenzuela, and Carillo, to include what has been called the
“Irishization” of “O’Comorenia,” as well as the European (French? or Irish?) “Botellier” (Jackson, XXI). This prismatic identification of Joaquín should not be dismissed as a fictional device deployed to embellish and emphasize of the bandit’s pervasiveness; Ridge’s source for this list of names (including the corruption of O’Comorenia) is a state-issued order that was signed by California Governor John Bigler on May 17, 1853, charging Captain Harry Love to “capture the party or gang of robbers commanded by the five Joaquíns whose names are, Joaquín Murietta [sic], Joaquín O’Comorenia, Joaquín Valenzuela, Joaquín Betellier [sic], and Joaquín Carrillo, and their banded associates” (“California State Militia”; Jackson, XXI-XXII). These Joaquíns are tallied in an expansive rather than restrictive enumeration: Love is not searching for one Joaquín, nor even five, but “the party or gang of robbers” that these Joaquíns “command” including an unspecified number of “their banded associates.” That is, the multiple names and bodies of “Joaquín” diffract Murieta’s identity across a swath of personages that cannot be quantified or contained by the State’s archival apparatus; it violently blows apart the systems of containment, multiplying countable bodies and riding over racial categories. Joaquin here collects and multiplies identities in a fashion that directly opposes the quantification and containment of errata performed by State imperial archives. This is not to say that Joaquin wholly escapes the pervasiveness of imperialistic ideologies—as we will see momentarily the bandit champions such ideologies himself. Rather, the introduction of this conceptual anti-archive pushes beyond the alternative models of imperialism that Joaquin presents across the novel, and provides the groundwork needed to understand the significance of Murieta’s death and dismemberment.
The juridical source of these multiplied Joaquíns betrays the State’s propensity to associate ethnic difference with criminality, and reflects a broader failure to manage the diversity it has legally inherited with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. John Henry Jackson’s introduction to The Life and Adventures explains that while “an offer [of bounty by the State] might lead eager individuals to bring in any Mexican they might be able to bushwack, and since no one knew exactly what ‘Joaquín’ looked like, it would be difficult to know how to pay a reward” (XXII). That is to say, the juridical decree intended to contain “Joaquín” identifies him in any Mexican male that can be “bushwhacked,” spreading increased chaos and violence, and inadvertently empowering the actual Joaquín Murieta by publicly disseminating the Mexican’s exception from State-derived social, racial, and criminal categories. The State itself demonstrates the fallibility of these categories as means of quantification. As a singular bandit is exponentially increased—turned into “two Joaquíns,” then “five sanguinary devils,” and then an entire “party or gang of robbers”—the use of race as a means of containment and quantification actually increases the bandits’ pervasiveness.

Importantly, both of these defining attributes of identity—the worldly celebrity of Joaquín and the multiplication of his name—disturb the foreignness that is essential to State narratives of national inclusion and the maintenance of a sovereign boundary. Throughout The Life and Adventures, Joaquin attempts to annul these hierarchies of State ideology by drafting a new model of imperialism based off of more immanent, spatial relations. As will be seen, however, such models inevitably reconfigure hierarchy without eliminating it, and inevitably replicate the violence done to those persecuted. Moreover, if State ideology remains totalizing and inescapable, how does Joaquín become an emblematically challenge the archive, where rationalization and quantification are
shattered rather than enforced? In a seemingly paradoxical fashion, this fragmentation emerges from Joaquin’s own practices of heterogeneous categorization, suggesting it is an inevitable by-product of the hierarchies themselves.

“The Honor and Dignity of the Title” – Deconstructing an “American Character”

In Pursuing the American Dream: Opportunity and Exclusion Over Four Centuries, Cal Jillson defines the “American Dream” as “the spark that animates American life [...] the promise that the country holds out to the rising generation and to immigrants that hard work and fair play will, almost certainly, lead to success,” and that “All who are willing to strive, to learn, to work hard, to save and invest, will have every chance to succeed ad to enjoy the fruits of their success in safety, security and good order” (7). Even in this cursory definition, then, this dream is adaptable to many ends. Across the 19th Century the American Dream transitions from the idyllic agrarianism of Crevecoeur, to the more property-centric Jeffersonian definition, to the model of free enterprise and cut-throat capitalism by the westward gazing business barons and venture capitalists (Jillson). Such ideological fluidity is perhaps the State’s most potent weapon in constituting a normative nation; as political scientist Jennifer Hochschild writes “the emotional potency of the American Dream has made the people who were able to identify with it the norm for everyone else...those that do not fit the model disappear from the collective self-portrait” (qtd. in Jillson, 8). The fantasy at the center of The Life and Adventures validates the perspective of one “that do[es] not fit the model,” and extends that perspective to the point of organizing a sub-community, however unsustainable.
To understand how *The Life and Adventures* resists narratives of California’s seamless incorporation into the US national body, it is important to trace the evolution and iterations of national narratives that motivate Murieta’s character throughout the novel. Murieta’s initial “enthusiastic admiration of the American character” does not necessarily reflect an unwavering sentiment for American nationalism. Instead, I propose that this initial enthusiasm establishes a normative stereotype of national identity—reinforced by State rhetoric and ideology—that is deliberately challenged throughout the remainder of the novel. As if lifted from an advertisement of America’s exceptionalist character, Murieta’s initial perception of the United States is as a bastion of moral stolidity and orderliness:

> At an early age of his manhood [...] Joaquín became tired of the uncertain state of affairs in his own country, the usurpations and revolutions which were of such common occurrence [...] Disgusted with the conduct of his degenerate countrymen and fired with enthusiastic admiration of the American character, the youthful Joaquín left his home with a buoyant heart and full of the exhilarating spirit of adventure. (8)

On the immediate heels of the Mexican-American War, Joaquin is already associating this “American character” with the space of California, thereby suggesting the new state is a result of unguided, teleological historical progression. In Joaquin’s iteration, California is a natural addition to the US that functions as a balanced counterpart to the chaotic and capricious violence of Mexico and “his [own] degenerate countrymen.” That a foreigner voices this rhetoric emphasizes the power of the emergent historical narratives of national expansion; and, conversely, how elements that do not readily curtail into these narratives are quickly dismissed as anomalistic and labeled “degenerative.” This molding of the individual into a national caricature argues that the systematic homogenization of the resident population is one outcome of US imperialistic territorial capture. More specifically,
a definition of this “American character” is ostensibly justified as the culmination of a
historical movement toward a liberal, tolerant and predictable society, viewed as free from
“usurpations and revolutions.” The idealism of this American character is furthered by
Joaquin’s own “enthusiastic admiration” for Americans and his “exhilarating spirit of
adventure”—attributes that could certainly merit his acceptance into the national fold. Yet,
regardless of the popular rhetoric surrounding this national character, inclusion holds no
regard for individual merit or liberty. Instead, merit and liberty are described through
Joaquín’s un-locatable markers of identity: his initial willingness to participate in the new
western American economies (of mining, agriculture, and gambling); his racial otherness;
and his unrestrained interactions with his surroundings (in both a human and territorial
sense). Joaquin’s anomalous identity is placed against the dialectic binary of the State—as
being either acculturative, or as essentially foreign and inassimilable.

In accord, the narrator acknowledges the very anomalous elements that structure
the American character as racially exclusive, describing the newly nationalized space of
California as a “country [...] then full of lawless and desperate men, who bore the names of
Americans but failed to support the honor and dignity of the title.” Inverting the
multiplication of names upon Joaquin’s body, disconnecting American’s “names” and the
“honor and dignity of the[ir] title ['American']” enacts the exclusion of the racial non-
national in the place of the characteristic non-conformist. It is not that these “lawless and
desperate men” are actually *misnamed*; rather, the “names of Americans” are attached to
the bodies of *any* white men that populate California. This bodily attachment overrides any
action that they might commit, and the names adhere. Despite violation of the legal and
moral creeds that are associated with their title, these men remain “American” and (again
as Joaquín’s case) benefit from the associative properties. What is brought into focus, then, is the inflated reputation of the “American” overall.

Investigating this comparison of names, the attributes of an “American” is markedly different from the Mexican “Joaquín,” whose associated identity (and, by the end of the text, very body) is fragmented and dispersed. In this regard these Americans—whom (to Joaquin) presumably represent a stolid, unchanging identity steadfast in conviction and fairness—function in direct contrast to Joaquín’s naturalized foreignness. That is to say, while the name “Joaquín” becomes a means to persecute and prosecute any racial other in the name of State justice, the name of “American” adheres to white males regardless of whether they are exceptionally upstanding and devoutly dedicated to “honor and integrity.” This comparison should also be extended to the spatial elements of the novel, of course: as “American” is reflective of a formed nation that has a particular character bound to its people, contained within a boundary, “Joaquín” is adaptable to any brown male body—it is defined through its heterogeneity. Accordingly, we will later see Joaquin and his band striking in fluid fashion, traversing across boundaries, and moving about the state unhindered.

Initially, The Life and Adventures flagrantly fetishizes this transcendent national character in a manner that would make even the most devout members of its nationalist collective look mild. Joaquin believes these so-called “Americans” will maintain the stability

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85 This articulation of title as property interestingly predates the discussion of race as property that will be juridically established forty-five years later in the Plessy v. Ferguson. Here, the titles “American” and “Joaquín” hold certain associated properties of reputation, the same way that the bearer of “whiteness” will become an owner of a particular reputation (cf. Harris). Interestingly, even in The Life and Times the exteriority of the body itself (and not its actions) is the location of these properties: “Americans” are American because they are not ethnic others; and “Joaquins” are fugitives because they are exteriorly identifiable as Hispanic males.
and liberalness reflected in the *Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo* and in the nationalist rhetoric of the period; yet they become a symptom of the broader deterioration of a non-exclusive American Dream. This is especially apparent when placed against the backdrop of a multicultural California that is fecund with mineral and agricultural wealth, but is yet starved for opportunities for ethnic advancement. While the projections of certain (idealized) models of justice and honor certainly aid in the process of nationalization, Joaquín comes to realize that such characteristics of a nation are less integrated with its citizenry than hegemonic State rhetoric would suggest. Importantly, Murieta’s idealism is eroded by multiple acts of emotional terrorism and bodily trespass that prove racial identity more somatically attached than any national character.

Louis Owens argues a parallel between the series of affronts against Joaquín in the novel, and those against “the agrarian Cherokees who had obligingly made room for Europeans and tolerated generations of abuse in the Southeast” (Owens, 37). While Owens’ interpretation evinces reverberations of discriminatory seizures across Ridge’s biography and novel, it does not relate these reverberations to the structural mechanisms of larger narratives of State expansion and the development of national sentiment. It is most curious, for instance, that Murieta enters the United States with a desire to benefit from the exceptional attributes of the American character and the opportunities associated with national expansion. Keeping in mind Murieta’s initial fantasy of the “American character” and its association with the expanding territory of the nation, each trespass is interpretable as a challenge to the rhetoric of this exceptional character and an interruption of Murieta’s pursuit of one or more aspects of the American Dream.
In the initial affront to Murieta’s fantasy, the migrant is run off his “mining residence in which he had domiciled his heart's treasure—a beautiful Sonoran girl,” subsequently “ravished before his eyes” (9). Similar to those Americans that he idealizes, Joaquin’s entry to California is motivated by the pursuit of the resources that made its annexation so tragic to Mexico (Howe, 814). Both land-claim and mistress (her a “treasure” that is “domiciled”) are properties to be “inviolably respect[ed]” under the rights of property outlined in Articles VIII of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. In violating the sanctity of the domestic “residence” and the “treasure” stored therein, these men force Murieta to shift his belief in the benevolence of the American imperialist to a more belligerent figure of conquest. As the narrator articulates, the Indios and Hispanics of California are treated “no better than conquered subjects of the United States,” reflecting a more subversive ideology of property and individual rights than that written in the Constitution and the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Both documents serve as archives that politically justify and define the limits of State power, and, by extension, function to reflect the “American character”; yet the hollowness of the promise of the sanctity of property exhibits the facetiousness of such documents. While archives are perceived as the source of transcendent ideals—those that would define the exceptional character of Americans, for instance—here Murieta comes to understand that this transcendent status of the archive also marks its separation from the day-to-day lives of its subjects.

86 From Article VIII of Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo: “In the said territories, property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States.”
As if Murieta's internal constitution is coming to reflect others’ distinction of his racial status, the narrator proclaims that “the soul of the young man was from that [first] moment [of persecution] darkened.” While this breach of the individual is certainly significant, however, it fails to effect an external change. Met with persecution as a miner, Joaquin revises his engagement with the American dream, invoking the even more primeval American ideal of agrarian democracy and the agriculturalist-citizen. Maintaining his honest and lawful lifestyle, the immigrant moves further north, “cultivating a little farm on the banks of a beautiful stream that watered a fertile valley far out in the seclusion of the mountains.” Predictably attacked once again for being a “vile Mexican intruder,” Murieta still maintains his morality, although his soul is increasingly at hazard; as the narrator explains “the iron so far [had not] entered his soul as to sear up the innate sensitiveness to honor and right which reigned in his bosom,” the persecuted Mexican “resolved still to labor on with unflinching brow and with that true moral bravery” (10-11). This “true moral bravery” is still, despite physical trespasses, couched in the belief of the infallibility of the “American character”—the ideological mythology of an upstanding morality as being attached to national affiliation and identity. There is, at this point, still no perception of the distance between State doctrines (both written and perceived) and the actions of subjects—each is yet a microcosmic embodiment of the nation.

The narrator again reassures readers that “there is no departure from rectitude” when Joaquin’s “very pleasing exterior [...] and gay and lively in disposition” make him a successful Monte dealer in Murphy’s Diggings (12). With this new profession Joaquin has surrendered any claims of the miner or the farmer to landed citizenship and property, and lives with his “exterior”—a marker certainly of his race—in full view. Relying on the
marketable attractiveness of his body emphasizes its separation from any inherent rights; and accordingly the third and final affront to Joaquín does not concern any claims under a farcical landed democracy, but rather brings into view the juridical racism of the nation:

The animal [lent to Joaquín by his half-brother] proved to have been stolen, and being recognized by a number of individuals in town, an excitement was raised on the subject. Joaquín suddenly found himself surrounded by a furious mob and charged with the crime of theft. He told them how it happened that he was riding the horse and in what manner his half-brother had come in possession of it. They listened to no explanation, but bound him to a tree, and publicly disgraced him with the lash. They then proceeded to the house of his half-brother and hung him without judge or jury. It was then that the character of Joaquín changed, suddenly and irrevocably. Wanton cruelty and the tyranny of prejudice had reached their climax. His soul swelled beyond its former boundaries, and the barriers of honor, rocked into atoms by the strong passion that shook his heart like an earthquake, crumbled around him. Then it was that he declared to a friend that he would live henceforth for revenge and that his path should be marked with blood.

(12-13)

The “sudden and irrevocably change” from upstanding, law-abiding individual to “liv[ing] henceforth for revenge” occurs at this moment of misapplied and contorted mob justice. Already Joaquín and his mistress have been chased from two separate homesteads (a mining claim and a farm); already she has been raped and he has been beaten; but it is the hanging of Murieta’s half-brother outside of any organized system of justice—an ultimate display of “wanton cruelty and the tyranny of prejudice” even in the ostensibly leveled juridical system—that changes Joaquín “suddenly and irrevocably.”

Murieta’s outrage stems from the visible nature of these final persecutions: the “public” disgrace with the lash and the lynching of his brother “without judge or jury” demonstrate that even in the most public of moments the idealized “honor and integrity” of the imagined “American character” is a farce. While Joaquín’s transformation has thus far been identified as internal (his “soul darken[ing]”), the narrator now promises its physical
manifestation as a path “marked with blood.” The revolution in Joaquin’s character wells up from his soul, which “swell[s] beyond its former boundaries,” as if moving from being something held inside to reaching beyond and outside of the body. The incident of public shaming and mob-justice illustrates the newly nationalistic space of California as privileging the stability of racial and social hierarchies over juridical stringency and normalcy. That is, the infallible and stolid archives of juridical rights are actually false evidence, overpowered by the very material effects of prejudiced and violent individuals. The “American character” as a upstanding moral individual is now a hollow and false ideal, or is more truthfully defined as a bigoted and exclusionary force that applies to only those that fit an ideologically-informed mold.

The physical elements of Murieta’s internal revolution warrant attention, and hearken to his growing trust in the external physical landscape of the region over the ideological doctrines of the State. His soul oversteps its “former boundaries” to materially atomize the “barriers of honor” through the concrete metaphor of a destructive earthquake. This temblor is dually significant: first, if the racially motivated mob-justice in California remains unchecked this geologic phenomena hearkens a moral judgment; second, the inward torment of Joaquin’s injured soul actuates a physical reaction, leveling any barriers that impede the bandit’s reign of terror. That is to say, while the earthquake destroys the honor of Joaquín, rendering him morally blameless, it also symbolically frees him to manifest his own violence against the imperialistic engine of the State and to proffer his own brand of imperialism. He now roams the countryside without topographical impediment, establishing a linkage between his new moral character and the landscape
itself—one that violently and irrationally supplants the categorizing and regulative juridical structures posited by the State for an alternative model of imperialism.87

“Imperial midst the smaller hight”: Transcendent Sovereignty and the California Landscape

In his landmark study *Black is a Country*, Nikhal pat Singh significantly identifies the “performative” elements of narratives of American exceptionalism and universalism, where such rhetorics “seek to produce what they purport to describe.” Singh claims that while such narratives previously cited America’s “religious tolerance and the absence of feudal distinctions of birth and rank,” more modern iterations are “fashioned from the story of racial and ethnic inclusion” (19). Arguably, *The Life and Adventures* illustrates the disillusionment between these contrapuntal narratives, placing at its crux doctrines that seem to suggest American tolerance while its protagonist is born out of racial prejudice. Most significantly, Murieta’s transition from enthusiastic nationalist to racially motivated killer challenges the cooption of racial inclusion narratives as an exceptionalist rallying cry for the American project. As one intimately connected to the place he inhabits, Joaquin views the solution to his disillusionment as mapped onto the space of California.

Attending to fantasies of an exceptional American character and the national myth of success by all hard-working individuals, *The Life and Adventures* exposes the instability and capriciousness of the juridical system that on the surface safeguards liberty and justice regardless of race. No calculated political revolutionary, Joaquin’s campaign is motivated by racial retaliation, fueled by elements of fantasy and the picaresque, and drawn from his

87 There was a sizable earthquake in San Francisco in 1838, at least ten years prior to Rollin Ridge’s arrival. It is unknown if Rollin Ridge ever experienced an earthquake prior to writing *The Life and Adventures.*
initial misreading of America. As argued above, the crimes against Murieta early in the novel stand as a demonstration of how racial injustice is proliferated by both the market economy and the citizen-subject compact of a homogenous (white) patriotic community (Singh, 25). As he abandons the dream of becoming a propertied citizen underneath the “sovereign law”—a dream that would place him as the acknowledged master of a certain domain of the land—Joaquín embraces and maintains the inverse reality of being an absolute outsider to the State (the racial-role he is cast by the State, and the true reality of the failure of nationalism in the milieu of 1850s California). Although accepting and embracing this new identity, Murieta still clings to the fantasy of a rationalized system of justice and an all-encompassing definition of a nationalized code of honor. To Murieta’s reactionary understanding, California is a land where the hollow, unenforced laws must be undermined in order to be rebuilt stronger. While Joaquin attempts to engender a model of human relations that is drawn from the landscape, however, it remains overwritten by the language of hegemonic imperialism, and still suggests a confused racial hierarchy. This final point reinforces the pervasiveness of ideological ordering—for if it is not the Mexican at the bottom of the hierarchy it will be another racial or class minority.

It is, of course, ironic that Murieta’s criminal rebellion against the injustices of State is initiated in protest to the lack of juridical stability—and such a disparity is no doubt significant. Despite its hierarchical and transcendent structure, Murieta’s ability to adapt to the spatial topography of California into a model of strong centralized governance simultaneously manifests a decentralized terrorism that impacts a broad spectrum of communities across California. When examined, there is a revolutionary motivation behind the chaos, blood, and gore of Murieta’s campaign: while the brigand initially claims to be
acting solely for the purpose of revenge, he cultivates a methodology of governance that both undermines and mirrors that of the State. Murieta’s rebellion attempts to propagate an organic, symbiotic existence to the material topography of California, yet this inspirational source for the regulation of justice comes to reinforce alternative hierarchies of imperialism, informed by similarly exclusive ideologies to those he has encountered.

We can further understand this propagation by examining the acts of deterritorialization Joaquín will deploy in dismantling State-spaces of California—those incidents where spaces of the State are coopted, deconstructed, and reconstituted to a (presumably) new end—and how his band reincorporates social, political, and geographic territorialities in an alternative, although familiarly imperialistic fashion.\(^8\) Joaquin reinterprets the State’s tenets of sovereign law, property rights, and a uniform “American Character” through a malleable code of honor that is applied on a case-by-case basis. As opposed to the abstraction of State laws to be imposed from without upon a territorial region, Murieta’s tenets of action are rather regionally distinct, influenced by features of the geography and landscape. Accordingly, counter-measures taken by the State to curtail, master, and subdue Murieta’s disruptions of commerce and property are generally superfluous and ineffectual.

\(^8\) “Deterritorialization,” as Deleuze and Guattari explain, is the freeing of elements from an established assemblage in anticipation of reterritorializing them into new assemblages. This can be a perpetual process in a sort of feedback loop, where deterritorialization and reterritorialization are always switching and anticipating one another (or constantly “becoming” the next iteration of territorialization) \((A\ Thousand\ Plateaus,\ 10)\). In \emph{The Life and Adventures}, Murieta’s reterritorialization is unsustainable, and cannot enter a “circulation of intensities” that perpetuates this process—this is why the end of the novel is so frayed, and why Murieta’s body is dismantled and set on display as a trophy of State stability.
As the local landscape is reflected in Murieta’s soulful transformation from migrant settler to bandit, the included poem “Mount Shasta, As Seen From a Distance” illustrates Murieta’s ideal of a strong overarching judiciary system that would abrogate the prejudices and bigotry of smaller-minded Americans while still allowing the farmer and the miner their hard-earned success. That this poem is channeled somewhat abruptly through the narrator’s voice (although attributed in a footnote to Rollin Ridge’s pseudonym “Yellow Bird”) suggests it as an important prop in the textual landscape that emphasizes a specific and meaningful ideology. It is also significant that in the title Mt. Shasta is “seen from a distance,” as Murieta himself is kept at a distance from the rights of the American character, and apparently remains unable to see its imperfections. It is not so much the details of the mountain that draw Joaquin’s attention, but its significance as an identifiable feature in the broader landscape:

Behold the dread Mt. Shasta, where it stands,
Imperial midst the lesser hight, and like
Some mighty and unimpassioned mind, companionless
And cold. The storms of Heaven may beat in wrath
Against it, but it stands in unpolluted [sic]
Grandeur still; and from the rolling mists up-heaves
Its tower of pride, e’en purer than before. (23)

This icon of the landscape is an archive—a piece of physical evidence that is here interpreted to justify and act as a model of governance. The natural landscape of the country reflects the overarching and long-reaching (the “imperial”) hand of a “pure” power, uncaring to the “storms of Heaven.” In its looming presence upon the landscape below, the mountain is apprehended with “dread,” imposing its “unimpassioned mind, companionless and cold.” The sublimity of this mountain is here morphed into a mode of governance that ignores the republican circuit of immanent sovereignty in lieu of a model of transcendence,
where power is channeled and transposed from the size and ferocity of the mountain.

Shasta becomes a topological metropole, “up-heaving” its “tower of pride” beyond all visual obstructions, overshadowing those at its base. This imperial mountain archive, then, metonymically represents the reach of a strengthened federalized presence that dwarfs the individual and smaller communities in its shadow. It is as if such a geological topography should inevitably spring a correspondingly inert and stolid legislature, one that rises up “imperial in hight” and is not swayed by the tempestuous nature of the “human foot” that cannot even “stain its snowy side” (24). The result of such a strong and far reaching “sovereign law” is a prosperity that is aptly correspondent to Murieta’s earlier fantasies of State inclusion:

[...] Well might [Shasta] win communities so blest
To loftier feelings, and to nobler thoughts—
The great material symbol of eternal
Things! And well, I ween, in after years, how,
In the middle of his furrowed track, the plowman,
In some sultry hour, will pause, and, wiping
From his brow the dusty sweat, with reverence
Gaze upon that hoary peak. The herdsman
Oft will rein his charger in the plain, and drink
Into his inmost soul the calm sublimity [...]  
And well this Golden State will thrive, if, like
Its own Mount Shasta, sovereign law shall lift
Itself in purer atmosphere—so high
That human feeling, human passion, at its base
Shall lie subdued [...]” (24)

Murieta’s stint as an agriculturalist is revisited, but this time he is thriving under the “great material symbol of eternal things,” the “sovereign law” that lords over the “base” influences of “human feeling [and] passion,” claiming authority proportional to its impressive geospatial aspect. Although laborers are “subdued” in their feelings and passions, the plowman, the herdsman, and perhaps the Mexican miner in Murphy’s Diggings, show a
deep “reverence” to the transcendence of this sovereign law that is embodied within the edifice of Shasta, a visible archive.

The fundamental point of notice here should be the sheer materiality that is tied to this mode of existence; the contact between the yeoman and the soil, and the looming omniscient shadow of the “dread Mt. Shasta” that (much like the house that gives rise to Mt. Greylock in Melville’s “The Piazza”), has “day by day, and age by age, def[ied] each stroke of time,” and naturally precedes the humans that it lords over. Shasta’s authority as an archive is never created or discovered—rather, it is innate and natural, and has always been.89 To the speaker, the very spaces of California suggest a naturally powerful, transcendent sovereignty that draws authority from the “purer atmosphere” of ideals, and imposes those strictures upon its materially dependent communities. “Mount Shasta, As Seen From a Distance” becomes a sketch of the battling topologies played out in *The Life and Adventures*: the banditti’s adherence to a larger and seemingly more naturally just law, touted here as purer than the more immanent absolute individuality of “human feeling [and] human passion” that inevitably gives rise to bigotry and prejudice.

Yet this poem also illustrates the ironies embodied within the character of Murieta: that his rebellion adopts guerrilla tactics and plunders weaker and underrepresented minorities. And this once again illustrates the trap of ideology: *even though Murieta’s ideal is to control and curtail unpredictable bigotry, the omniscience of a strong centralized government inevitably compounding homogenization and erasing local diversities*. In this regard, Ridge does not develop Joaquín Murieta as an anarchist, but rather as holding a strong belief in the sovereignty of both the law and the individual, and the teleology of

89 See discussions of the formation of the archive in the Melville chapter.
space. Although believed to be enacted alongside (or outside) of any State apparatus per se, Murieta’s politics champion a similarly transcendent power structure—albeit one that is immanently perceptible: that is, it can be seen in the environment although it cannot be affected through individual action.

As outlined from afar in “Mount Shasta, as Seen from a Distance,” an intricate relationship exists between the bandit and his surroundings, which enables and even justifies his marauding. The interjection of this poem into the biographical mode of The Life and Adventures—for it is somewhat interruptive and jarring—affiliates the geographic features of the landscape and the movements of Murieta. Further, Murieta uses the landscape to situate, justify, and preserve his own freedom, and to persecute the unjust, and to enact his racialized revenge upon the unworthy Americans.

From the poem forward, it is difficult to distinguish whether the landscape of The Life and Adventures is constructed around and responds to the character and clan of Joaquín, or the character, clan and actions of Joaquín are respondent to the landscape. Such ambiguity is suggested in the brigands’ natural fortress Arroyo Cantoova:

...A fine tract of rich pasturage, containing seven or eight thousand acres, beautifully watered, and fenced in by a circular wall of mountains through which an entrance was afforded by a narrow gate or pass, at which a very formidable force could be stayed in their progress by a small body of men...From the surrounding eminences, an approaching army could be seen for a long way off. This region was, in one respect in particular, adapted to the purpose for which it was chosen, and that is, it abounded in game of every kind: elk, antelope, deer, grizzly bears, quails, grouse, and every species of smaller animals most desirable for food. (28)

Just as “Joaquín knew his advantages” when measuring the California countryside, here his choice of headquarters shows a similar conglomeration of wilderness and domesticity. As the civilized marks of the houses stand stark against the forgiving and enveloping
wilderness, here the wilderness provides a site of innate domestication, complete with a
natural livestock corral and a guarantee of “fence[d]” and “gate[d]” security. These natural
features adopt a similar role to that of an archive in State formation; namely, acting as an
arkheion—“a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates”—
that concentrates and focuses the righteousness of their power (Derrida, 2). That Arroyo
Cantoova is “particularly adapted to the purpose for which it was chosen” further suggests
the region’s teleological purposiveness, where the natural fortress comes into being
alongside the bandits themselves.

The existence of such a unique and welcoming topography also naturalizes the path
of Joaquín in the most literal of terms, and soon finds him and his mistress in a sort of
edenic bliss, “roofed by the rich foliage of the trees and reclining upon a more luxurious
carpet than ever blossomed, with imitative flowers, beneath the satin-slippered feet of the
fairest daughters of San Francisco” (28). There emerges a contest, or perhaps a parallelism,
between the wealth of the cities and the natural abundance of the Arroyo. Joaquín and his
mistress Rosita become the image of a reclaimed balance between the natural and the
human, even more “luxurious” than the “imitative” goods of their urban counterparts. This
critique is reinforced later, in a scene that recalls a feast at a royal court:

The busy cooks hurried up the fires, and the fresh venison and bear meat was
soon smoking on the irons and emitting a most delicious savor, such as
tempts the appetite of a hardy pioneer. Broiled quails and grouse, sweet and oily [...] were hanging in front of the blaze, suspended by their necks [...] The
hot coffee steamed up from the hot pot with a most stimulating effect;
everything was spread forth in superabundance [...] at a signal from the
cooks, who were also the waiters, forty fierce and hungry brigands sat down
and, with the utmost expedition consistent with respect for their leader,
made havoc among the victuals [...] Generous wines stood sparkling in their
midst with which scarcely any refused to refresh themselves. (71)
This grand and detailed catalogue of “victuals” writes the richness of a camp not of desperate men running from the law, but of a natural royalty feasting upon the abundance of their situation. The diversity of trade goods from around the globe is placed alongside the plenty of local game, suggesting the blending of the indigenous and the foreign. All the opulence of a gentrified city-dweller is spread before the banditti; in addition to the wild bounty of California (venison, bear, quail, and grouse), there are exotic and luxurious trade-wares of sparkling wine and coffee. The sheer “superabundance” of the spread is doubly emphasized when Murieta’s captain Valenzuela arrives with “a portion of his band,” and the “circle [is] enlarged, the cooks went to work afresh, and soon the whole banditti…were seated at the ample banquet” (71). Here the alternate lifestyle of bandit resistance is able to fulfill Joaquin’s earlier fantasies of domesticity without the prejudices inherent within the market economy and national affiliation. Yet this is not an economy freed from the influence of imperialism: this distinction between the genuine luxuries of nature and those imported to urban centers suggests a maintenance of the global economy, where both subject and place are erased in a homogenous marketplace of dislocated goods.

Yet this opulence also further establishes the relationship between the archival landscape and Murieta as an interpretative extension of that archive: as the benevolent landscape gives rise to the Murieta regime, so too is its plenty purposed for their maintenance. The archive is meant, Derrida explains, to both shelter and conceal itself, this too is the purpose of Arroyo Cantoova in relation to Murieta—to shelter and conceal, and, through this security, to maintain the right to create an alternative law (Archive Fever, 3). There is no explanation here of the source of these goods, and, as would be suggested throughout the remainder of the novel, one can only assume that it is at the violent expense
of another. As much as Murieta is drawing on the landscape for his ascension, he is also projecting upon it the very imperialistic hierarchy he is rebelling against.

There is more to the succor and safety that the landscape offers than a comparison of natural luxuriousness to urban opulence. Throughout the novel Murieta touts a freedom of (economic, social, and topographical) mobility that seems at odds with the archival role of a domicile that shelters and protects power. If we consider, however, how Murieta’s security is dependent upon mobility, there emerges a correlation between the navigable landscape and that of an archive. The text is quick to point out that the successes of Joaquín are dependent upon an intimate, almost symbiotic relationship between the bandit’s mobility and the natural and social geography of California:

...the country was so well adapted to a business of this kind—the houses were scattered at such distances along the roads, the plains so level and open in which to ride with speed, and the mountains so rugged with their ten thousand fastnesses in which to hide. Grass was abundant in the far-off valleys which lay hidden in the rocky gorges, cool delicious streams made music at the feet of the towering peaks, or came leaping down in gladness from their sides—game abounded on every hand, and nine unclouded months of the year made a climate so salubrious that nothing could be sweeter than a day’s rest under the tall pines or a night’s repose under the open canopy of heaven. Joaquín knew his advantages. (15)

The space of California provides not only shelter and safety, but with grasses, “delicious streams,” and abundant game, also provides nourishment and rejuvenation. Able to traverse the “rocky gorges” and hear the stream-made music, Joaquín is intimate with this landscape; but, knowing “his advantages,” he also is cognizant of his own place in regards to it. Suggesting this, the scattering of houses and roads—signs of increasing settlement into the interior of California, and the expansion of State infrastructure—are understood as another natural attribute of the landscape that provides for the cause of Joaquín. Further, the “unsettled conditions of things” and the accompanying “lonely and
uninhabited...sections through which the roads and trails were cut” provide a particular advantage to the bandits (18-19).

Further mirroring the diversity of landscapes that support Joaquin, a number of “large rancheros who were secretly connected with the banditti, and stood ready to harbor them in times of danger and to furnish them with the best animals that fed on their extensive pastures” (19). These “wealthy and highly respectable individuals” that support and aid the bandit reflect the culturally diverse distribution of materialized wealth—in land and livestock—across California immediately following the Mexican-American War.90 Such benefactors are added alongside the landless Mexican fugitives that constitute Joaquin’s closest compatriots (two of whom—Three-Fingered Jack and Joaquin Valenzuela—are identified veterans of the Mexican-American War), and a slew of localized informants that crop up in the mountain towns and Spanish missions up and down the state. The lack of infrastructure along California’s disparate highways become the focal point for the bandits to amass and move capital, and Spanish Missions and abandoned mines become alcoves of safety. What is sketched here is an network that is held together not by a rigid or elaborately regulated infrastructure of information exchange, nor even physical connections such as roads, but rather a dependency on the challenges of physical space and material distance—a community that is constituted by their “scrupulous silence” more than their common attributes (19).

Initially Joaquin employs this mobility to escape racial persecution and to outstrip the regulations and agents of the State; subsequently, as the leader of an alternative State,

90 See for example, Mariano Vallejo, a future state senator and participant in the California constitutional convention, who lost most of his landholdings to burdens of entitlement despite rights guaranteed under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (Howe, 810).
his mobility establishes a similar ideological hierarchy to that he is rebelling against. Providing what his editor deems to be the novel's "chief merit"—"the reliability of the ground-work upon which it stands"—the narrator meticulously and sometimes overbearingly "mention[s] [certain] localities as being the harboring places of Joaquin" (5). While ambitious (and perhaps more fictionalized than readily admitted) this "service" projects a strikingly vast map of Murieta's campaign. The resulting tale depicts "scenes of murder and robbery [that shift] with the rapidity of lightning...At one time, the northern countries would be suffering slaughters and depredations, at another the southern, and, before one would have imagined it possible, the east and the west, and every point of the compass would be in trouble" (15). At the culmination of the first winter of marauding Murieta retreats from the mountains of Yreka to drive "two to three hundred horses which had been collected at their winter rendezvous down through the southern portion of the state into the province of Sonora" (27-28). Even if Joaquin's "winter rendezvous" is in Arroyo Cantoova (located somewhere between Tejon and Pacheco passes), this is a truly astounding distance, well over a thousand miles. Rides of equal length are frequent in the novel, and the rapidity of Murieta's movements are disorienting to the most attentive readers. This is to say that Murieta's range across California is incredible at best, and performs a flattening of distance similar to the narratives of State formation and unification.

Acting as an enemy to one State while establishing another, Joaquin and company turn one great challenge of westward expansion back upon its purveyors: the occupation and control of the vast areas of the west from a central government in the east. As a figurehead of this new model of imperialism, Murieta himself becomes a sort of archive
that collects and coopts meaning from his surroundings, organically rejiggering his justifications for action to be less based on codified documents (such as the Constitution or Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo) than the situation and environment at hand. In this regard, Joaquin’s violence against the diversity of the California populace acts as an alternate mode of census, collapsing distance through the unprejudiced taking of life and the novel’s depiction of a circulating print culture. It is this circulatory trope that gives rise to the ultimate disruption of ideological categorization at the end of the novel.

“A Pretty Good Knowledge”: The Media and Social Landscapes

In Imagined Communities, Benedict Anderson claims that the novel and the newspaper are engines that broadcast the “same, clocked, calendrical time” to a “sociological organism,” manifesting “a precise analogue of the idea of the nation” (26). Being a reporter, Rollin Ridge was doubtlessly sensitive to the circulation of newspapers in his adopted home of California, and inserts them into his narrative as means of collapsing distance and disseminating information. Ridge presents the newspaper as both a source of the validity of his tale, and a point of contact between the State and Murieta; the first mention of a newspaper in the text, the Marysville Herald of November 13, 1851, is excerpted in the novel, reporting: “Seven men have been murdered within three or four days in a region of county not more than twelve miles in extent” (21). As if to validate the author’s sources, this account draws attention to the micro-regional impact of the bandit, this “horrible state of affairs” reported by the paper evidences that “the entire country [around Marysville] rung with the frequent, startling, and diabolical murders.” Acting as physical waypoints of the bandit’s movements, local newspapers become a way to collect
the outlaws’ movements across territory into a instant material history—an archive that transforms these diverse and isolate events into a narrative stamped with a time-code. As Anderson would attest, Murieta’s increased presence in print manifests his reputation as a common enemy of the State, and thereby strengthens the unification of the populace.

But to focus only on the newspaper’s ability to strengthen sentiments of American unification, however, would ignore what Trish Loughran identifies as its “materialist corollary: a sense of scatteredness or dispersion-across-space” (10). While newspapers intend to cleanly archive the extent of Murieta’s banditry in a calendrical timeline, the regionalism of reportage works counter any State-regulated narrative, and actually reinforces the openness embodied within the territory of California. Because newspapers essentially disseminate information publicly—without the same prejudices as, say, law enforcement—Joaquín is able to benefit from their information as well, and turns his publicized persona to his advantage at multiple points in the novel. As the bandit’s crew is spread out in small bands across the state, the press provides “a pretty good knowledge of what his followers were about [...because they...] made a very free use of his own name in the accounts of these transactions and handled his character in no measured terms” (30).

The papers aid the bandit in two ways: they inform him of his band’s movements through the reports of their crimes; and, much as his name and identity are multiplied at the beginning of the book, they broaden his impact on the state community at-large. This first office is reinforced later in the book, when, reading the Los Angeles Star, Joaquin learns one of his captains, Reyes Feliz, “was hung two days ago by the people of Los Angeles” (53). The paper has an immediate impact upon Joaquin, whose “sight seemed suddenly blasted” when he reads the news. Yet, the impact is not a result of the temporal immediacy of the
event itself, but its coming to knowledge two days after Feliz’s execution. The newspaper, in this case, has a most profound impact upon the reader because it is not simultaneously consumed by all (what Anderson would call the “mass ceremony” to beat the paper’s “obsolescence [...] on the morrow of its printing”). In this regard, the paper’s circulatory materiality actually marks the very real challenges of distance and the isolation of social landscapes in California (Loughran; Anderson, 35).

As regional newspapers attribute local crimes and murders to the bandit, print culture further imbues Murieta with a sense of omnipresence. Reinforcing Joaquin’s ability to traverse across the extreme distances of the State, the sensationalism of the reportage obfuscates and scatters the bandit’s identity, dissipating and multiplying his perceived presence amongst the isolated regions of California. While Joaquin the man may hold certain political views, these reputed Joaquins who are sensationalized across the State are only known in their status as an anti-hero: his attempts to reestablish a new model of imperialism are entirely obfuscated in the same acts of violence through which he attacks the State.

Moreover, this celebrity eclipses the body of Joaquin himself, enabling the bandit to have some degree of anonymity. Coupled with a use of “different disguises” when riding in “the various outbreaks in which he had been personally engaged,” in an interesting iteration of hiding-in-plain-sight Murieta is “disguised the most when he showed his real features” (30-31). Reflecting his desire to supplant the State rather than destroy it outright, by wearing disguises Joaquin manipulates and controls the circulation of information within the broader community. His “real features,” are as hidden behind a façade of violence as are his politics—for no one reading the paper or examining a wanted poster
would know the bandit’s appearance or philosophy. Take, for instance, the moment when a brazen Joaquín rides through the streets of Stockton:

One fine Sunday morning, while the bells were ringing for church in the goodly city of Stockton, and well dressed gentlemen were standing at the corners of the streets, marking with critical eyes the glancing feet and the flaunting dresses of the ladies who swept by them in the halo of beauty and perfumery, a fine-looking man whom they had never seen before—having long, black hair hanging down to his shoulders and a piercing black eye—rode through the streets, carelessly looking at the different objects which happened to attract his attention. So finely was he dressed and so superbly was his horse caparisoned that, without seeming to know it, he was observed of all observers. (66)

This rare description of urban life depicts a refined, civilized, and “goodly” community that is in the dutiful throes of piety—a stark contrast to the uncivilized spaces of the mountain towns where Joaquin was persecuted earlier in the novel. The “well-dressed gentlemen,” and the “perfumery” and “ flaunting dresses” of the women ostensibly denote a city connected to the larger network of trade, and thereby information and news. This economic topography of Stockton is reinforced momentarily when Murieta “ascertain[s] one evening that a schooner would go down the slough, bound for San Francisco, on board of which were [...] heavy bags of gold dust” (68). Overall, then, Stockton is presented as a prosperous city far from isolate in regards to manners, taste, wealth, education, or economy. Joaquin, the “fine-looking man” in the passage, is as home within this scene as are the others—indeed he is “Observed of all observers” as being an exemplary Stocktonian, not a notorious bandit.

The emphasis on media circulation continues as the Joaquin’s attention is drawn to a wanted poster dispatched by the “citizens of San Joaquín County” advertising “Five Thousand Dollars Reward for Joaquín, dead or alive.” In a similarly public distribution as that of the newspaper, this official wanted poster is put on full display on the side of a
“house, upon which were posted several notices,” (including items “For Sail” [sic]). This gathering point of the community functions as a central point of commerce, a point of exchange between residents, not unlike the supposed function of the newspaper in unifying consciousness (Anderson). Yet in spite of this very public effort to identify the bandit, Joaquín remains faceless until he defaces the poster by identifying himself, writing “I will give $10,000. – Joaquín” (68). While a certain recognition of the name “Joaquín Murieta” has permeated the broader culture of California and created a community unified in their terror, when the genuine article presents itself the community is less congealed and complete than believed. That is to say, although sensational and widespread during his time, Murieta’s violence is still detached from perceptions of his person.

The revolutionary element to Murieta’s story is certainly not located within the character’s political beliefs—for the are merely a refiguring of the oppressive ideologies present at the beginning of the novel. Rather, I suggest the significance of Joaquin Murieta is this ability to display the fractures of the system at hand, even as he is still captured within it. It is when Murieta’s politics separate from his actions that he is able to transition from being an archive to utterly challenging and destructing archives. If an archive works to collect, sort, congeal, and order the world into comprehensible narratives, Murieta’s non-conformity grows out of those narratives to demonstrate their fabrication and inadequacies. This is why, I believe, Joaquin must desire an overarching and powerfully federated State—to exhibit its own inadequacies.

In his “Introduction” to the novel Joseph Henry Jackson identifies Murieta as quintessentially “California’s folk hero” (Jackson, xx). This categorization of Murieta teems with irony, as the wanton and irrational terrorism of Joaquin could hardly distill such
heroism. And let us admit, it is only the display of the head of Joaquín that enables this tale to endure. Far more effective than the wanted poster in drawing in the public, Rollin Ridge explains “The head [of Joaquín, preserved in alcohol], was carried for exhibition over a large portion of the State and thoroughly identified in every quarter where its owner was known” (156). As if jesting its owner, the public display of this once-obscured countenance in such a grisly fashion becomes a central mythologizing event that does more to unify a State population than the State’s attempts to curtail the violence, or, indeed, the “sovereign majesty” of the stolid and unchanging Mount Shasta. Certainly the head of this “Joaquin” is adopted as an emblem of the State’s ability to contain and control extraneous elements, finally metonymically attaching the banditry of Joaquin Murieta to a single head, wholly captured within a glass viewing jar, labeled, and coopted to further the perception of State unification. That is, it becomes an archive replete with a mythological narrative that is coopted by the State.

Yet, the head of Joaquin also remains a powerful emblem of resistance to archivization. Despite all the trappings of containment and cooption, those “superstitious and ignorant” citizens still found it significant “that the moustache of the fearful robber had grown longer since his head was cut off” (156). The narrator, ever vigilant in maintaining his credibility, explains that this relates to “the phenomena which death presents in the growth of the hair”; yet, this is perhaps another wink to the State’s insistence on categorical finality. Even beyond death, Joaquin Murieta is associated with resistance and uncontrollability, and as the disembodied and non-political reputation of Joaquin circulates after his death, so too does this. Even as a legend beyond the grave, Joaquin’s very
corporeality outstrips the logic of the State, and puts on display the very material inadequacies of its structures.
Looming behind any discussion of Melville and archives is the Sub-Sub-Librarian, that “painstaking burrower and grub-worm of a poor devil” who collects the “extracts” of whaling texts that open *Moby Dick* (1852). Much as the whale oil is extracted from a beast whose carcass is dissected and dismembered, this Sub-Sub-Librarian burrows to extract the “random allusions to whales” from their contexts from a menagerie of sources ranging from the “sacred to the profane.” Extracting these “higged-piggedly whale statements,” the Sub-Sub (and Melville, arguably) rescinds previous contextualized meanings to reprioritize in each the whale, and creating through this aggregation a new cumulative meaning (*Moby Dick*, x).

The Sub-Sub is the archivist, and Melville’s attention (and derision) of such a figure betokens the centrality of archivization that runs throughout his work. As we are warned at the opening of *Moby Dick*, this Sub-Sub’s work is not to be taken as “veritable gospel cetology” (*Moby Dick*, x). Yet, in collecting and assembling these “random allusions” at the opening of the novel, Melville draws attention to his own acts of assembly that rewrite meaning through narrative: in undercutsing this figure of the archivist Melville reminds his reader to be wary of the manipulative narratives that he is producing. Understanding *Moby Dick’s* Sub-Sub Librarian as an archivist, the novel is interpretable as an archive manically assembled by Ishmael, who is exacting his “substitute for pistol and ball” by going to sea. Much as Edgar in *Edgar Huntly*, Ishmael’s tale is a product of his own brooding over death—“a damp drizzly November in [his] soul,” where he “involuntarily paus[es] before coffin warehouses, and bring[s] up the rear of every funeral I meet” (1). This “itch for
things remote” (including those that test the limits of mortality) seeks to outstrip the finitudes and logicalities of the land; or, as Wai Chee Dimock claims in Empire for Liberty (1989), a “project [...to] locate an island of immunity [...] Untouchable and immaculate, eternally enclosed and eternally secure”—a transcendent empire that reorganizes even the relationship between life and death (110).

With the figure of the Sub-Sub, Melville is putting on display the archives of his own prose, drawing further attention to the fabricated narratives that are central to not only every text we read, but also the wider ideological structures that pervade daily life. Yet, it would be a mistake to treat the archive separate from its very material bases; first and foremost archives are places of accumulation, storage, and security—factories that process the matter and data of the world to align with the internal cultural narratives of the State. In this regard, archives function at the very boundaries of the State by keeping at bay the illogicality of the world outside territorial borders. Engaging this tension between security and frontier, Melville’s later The Piazza Tales (1856) examines archivization as a process that retroactively narrates State legitimacy (thereby strengthening national unity) while simultaneously justifying and authorizing further territorial acquisition. In its very arrangement Melville’s The Piazza Tales is another of the Sub-Sub’s archives—a assemblage of texts and sketches each seemingly unrelated to one another, yet collectively unified under the structural guise of the piazza in the collection’s title. As the Sub-Sub Librarian appropriates passages from other texts and reorganizes them to privileging their mention of whales, the stories of The Piazza Tales are gravitationally centered around methods of archivization as strategies for balancing internal State security and outward expansion. If Melville’s project in Moby Dick is largely, as Dimock claims, to locate a space
of immunity, by the time of *The Piazza Tales* he has realized its persistent materiality and its intersections with the political backdrop of US imperialism.

**Archive, Architecture, Archipelago**

Michael Rogin argues that a tacit yet problematic backdrop to Melville’s work is the compounding of the aggressive territorial expansion of the US in the mid-nineteenth century and the divisiveness of slavery (*Subversive Genealogy*, 21).\(^9^1\) Most importantly, Rogin proves that Melville was intimately aware of such “divisions in American life” because they existed within the author’s own family. Although far from diametric, these societal divisions were strongest between traditionalists who believed in the transcendent authority of State and family genealogy (as exists in an empire), and those that saw freedom (or “liberty”) as a right immediately attached to the individual (Rogin, 21-22). Wai Chee Dimock identifies a similar conflict in the rhetoric of Jefferson’s “empire for liberty”—where freedom becomes is attached to imperialistic expansion and the promise of plenty of individual space—correlating it to Melville’s “terms of authorial sovereignty,” which “evoke the nation’s territorial acquisitions to image forth a writer’s literary achievements” (Dimock 9-10). In both accounts, Melville’s writing is historically and politically situated to

\(^9^1\) Rogin argues that Melville populates his writing with his family’s own political and personal histories. Take, for example, Melville’s brother Gansevoort Melville and his cousin Guert Gansevoort. While Gansevoort Melville—a Christian missionary whom influences depictions of similar characters in *Typee* (1846)—is representative of the “democratic, imperial, national self [that] rejected inherited aristocratic distinctions with higher spiritual meaning” and thereby “embraces Manifest Destiny”; Guert Gansevoort turned to the “traditional authority” at sea, “transferring personal symbols of hierarchy and deference from family to [a] secondary institution.” As Melville was certainly aware, the institutions of “slavery and family as well as wage labor and trade were legitimated neither by traditional hierarchy nor by expansionist nationalism,” creating a knotty problem for the novelist to tackle in his romances (22-23).
engage conflicts between discourses of liberty and imperialism; or, said differently, rights of the individual and the territorial expansion necessary for sustaining an imperialist State. The paradoxical solution for this conflict is, as Dimock explains, to associate the increase of territory with the spread of liberty, a turn that continues to resonate in more recent iterations of US imperialism.

In the decade between 1845 and 1855 Melville would write and publish the bulk of his oeuvre and the US would increase its landholdings by one-third. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) alone added land that would later constitute Texas, California, Nevada, Arizona, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Oklahoma, and New Mexico, and demonstrated the very real threat of slavery fracturing the tenuous national unity depicted in State narratives (Rogin, 103). Remnant disputes from the Monroe Doctrine—specifically those regarding international rights to the Oregon territory in the mid-1840s—led John O’Sullivan to reiterate in 1845 his earlier proclamation that it was America’s “manifest destiny” to spread republican democracy across the continent, further cementing the bond between narrative strategy and the outward thrust of the nation. This becomes, of course, yet another self-fulfilling narrative of codependent national unity and expansion, where, as Dimock explains, “to be ‘manifest,’ America’s future must become ‘destiny’—which is to say, it must be mapped on a spatial axis, turned into providential design” (15).

No lightening-rod marks the problematic equivocation of liberty with territorial expansion quite as profoundly as the tenuous mid-century legislation regarding slavery. As territorial borderlines new states and “territories” are projected in abstract swaths upon a nonconforming landscape, new legislation invents increasingly abstract and specialized definitions of citizenry and subjectivity that shape frontier and domestic politics. Dimock
explains that "[b]y the 1840s, to discuss any territorial question, such as California’s admission to statehood or disposition of another territories won by the Mexican War, was to engage in the debate over the justice and limits of slavery" (28-9). Such debates are not reserved for mere discussion, of course, but are codified in era legislation as well. The Compromise of 1850 admitted California as an undivided free state, allowing the non-agrarian territories of New Mexico and Utah decided the issue at the ballot box; yet the included Fugitive Slave Act imposed a national edict proclaiming that escaped slaves be returned to their masters regardless of the state in which they were caught (Potter 100-101, 122). The Compromise of 1850 is one demonstration of a narrative that attempts to reconcile expansionist policies with republican sentiments. Indeed, the term “compromise” might be a reductive yet useful way to consider the malleability of the national political and territorial space; where men “free” in one environ or the eyes of one citizen would be marked as “fugitive” in the locale or eyes of another.

From the perspective of the State, the historical narratives that buttress national unity must concurrently justify America’s imperialism and expansion. As a process,
archivization normalizes and homogenizes the newly discovered with older narratives, reaching back into and essentially rewriting history to fulfill the impulse of normativity under the auspices of the State. In this regard the archive is both progressive and conservative, constantly expanding yet able to do so while preserving its; it is both a product and producer of history. The power of the State lies in holistically connecting the elements of its archive into a smooth narrative of solidarity. This act of fabricating interconnectedness leads Laura Ann Stoler to refer to “archiving as a process rather than to archives as things [... to look] to archives as epistemological experiments rather than as sources” (Stoler “Colonial Archives,” 87). With this challenge in mind, Melville’s “The Piazza” and “The Encantadas” can be read as dogmatic narratives that interrogate the relationship between the physical contents of the archive and its more active, “epistemological” role in defining national unity—a role that is more ideological in nature than mere recordkeeping. As will be examined momentarily, the representation of architecture in the frame-piece “The Piazza” hearkens to the collection and cataloguing of knowledge that accompanies imperial expansion and the related fantasies and fictions that reciprocally give birth to and are grown out of archivization. In “The Piazza,” the architecture of the building becomes a means to expansion, suggesting that the archive itself is a driving force behind imperialism. Similarly, the archipelago of the Galapagos Islands in “The Encantadas” draws together disparate assemblages into a collective, a sort

94 Thomas Richards correlates fantasies of archive and Empire in the early 20th century British novel in The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire. He interestingly asserts that “Knowledge itself not as the supplement of power but as its replacement in the colonial world” (3). Here I am claiming that fifty years prior to the 20th century Melville is similarly examining a relationship between American imperialism’s employment of archivization to encompass and control a variety of frontiers.
of geographical archive. Both of these tales depict the management, interpretation, and incorporation of frontiers while simultaneously demonstrating the limitations of such endeavors.

Benedict Anderson would argue that while such archives are inevitably rooted to physical edifices of “knowledge”—libraries, museums, and halls of records most familiarly—their scope overreaches these sites to become the core principles around which State unity is erected. As empire relies on the fantasy that the world can be encompassed and ordered, the archive operates on a similar principle of unity in knowledge, where all knowledge falls neatly into an organized system that can be pieced together, learned and controlled (Richards, 11). In this epistemology, the world exists in stasis: all parts are present, approachable, and already operating at the extent of their capacities, and are stagnant and unchanging except as we understand their relation to one another. Although scientific and geographic understanding is constantly evolving, the principle of the archive is authoritative, stolid, and unchanging—it exists precisely as it is, and maintains its authority as another element is discovered and integrated, seamlessly continuing on as “knowledge.”

Anderson insists upon a smooth space of State authority that is created and maintained by broader narratives of nationalism, yet Melville’s “The Piazza” and “The Encantadas” draw focus beyond the purview of the archives of the State to what I call

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95 The hierarchical aspect of the prefix “arch-” or “archi”, meaning “chief,” “principal,” or “first in authority” is significant in considering the relationship between the archive, which is a means to State authority, and the archipelago, which organizationally conglomerates disparate islands into a mapped and navigable collective (OED). Derrida explains that “archive” comes from the Greek arkheion, “a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates,” connecting the architecture of such a structure to the hierarchy of State.
“remnants” of archivization. Considering this, it is perhaps more useful to frame my inquiry with Trish Loughran’s challenge to Anderson in *The Republic in Print*, where she claims that the infrastructure required for nationalizing narratives to be disseminated is actually fractured and uneven, and demonstrates the similarly fragmented nationalism of the early republic. Loughran’s summation of material circulation during the “Age of US Nation Building, 1770 – 1870” (as the subtitle of *The Republic in Print* reads) examines period diaries, journals, and travelogues to argue that “[t]he nation, such as it was, was simply less legible—more literally speaking, less available—as a mode of affective affiliation than were the state, the county, and the village” (italics in original, 12). In Loughran’s perspective there are “fragments,” or irregularities that do not fit into these intermittently circulating narratives of homogeneity. Whereas Anderson describes mechanisms that produce narratives of national unification, Loughran demonstrates how the material circulation that is essential to these mechanisms are part of the wider fantasy of national unity.⁹⁶

Both “The Piazza” and “The Encantadas” develop and explore these “fragments” or remnant irregularities and eccentricities that are, by their nature, resistant to archivization. By presenting these rogue elements within their own narratives, Melville asserts that their exclusion from an official archive does not mark their triviality; that oftentimes they open to sites that, while existing outside of familiar discourses of power, are more important and telling than those sanctioned by the ministers and interpreters of the archive. Melville’s engagement with these remnants is a critique not only of nation-building and empire, but of the manipulations of space and identity that are central to the formation of any state.

⁹⁶ Loughran writes “Anderson’s formulations about imagined communities rely on a similar fantasy about the ability of print to erase local differences and to install, in their place, a formal homogeneity, whether in fact or in feeling” (14).
“The Piazza”: The Architectural Archive

As developed in the “The Piazza,” and echoed in other structures throughout Melville’s The Piazza Tales, architecture draws into focus the connection between the territorialized structured internal space of the State and the outward projection of an imperialism that normalizes and homogenizes irregularities of non-conformed space.97 “The Piazza” opens with the narrator’s attention to a glaring “deficiency” in his farmhouse—the lack of a piazza from which to take in the picturesque countryside. Although the farmhouse is described as “old-fashioned,” its deficiency is not in its existent architecture, layout, or construction, but in its interaction with the surrounding landscape, its interface with the world. Emphasizing this point, the construction of his piazza becomes the culmination of a history of the country farmhouse, providing a vantage point for “the country round.” The narrator explains that the house outstrips all anticipations of the builder by organizing and supplying meaning to the world surrounding:

Whoever built the house, he builded better than he knew; or else Orion in the zenith flashed down his Damocles’ sword to him some starry night, and said, "Build there." For how, otherwise, could it have entered the builder’s mind, that, upon the clearing being made, such a purple prospect would be his?—nothing less than Greylock, with all his hills about him, like Charlemagne among his peers. (621)

The builder of the house is unknown and unnamed, yet still participant in a mythology alongside Orion and Damocles, one much larger than that of a mere builder. The house

97 Scott Kemp remarks on the rhetorical positioning of “The Piazza” within the wider context of The Piazza Tales: “What makes "The Piazza Tale" unique in the context of the other stories in the Piazza Tales collection (1856) is that it was written exclusively to introduce the collection, and as an introduction it anticipates in rhetorical purpose many moves Melville makes in the other tales.”
itself stands as a historical edifice that along with the mythological history of the building, as reiterated by the narrator at the time of the construction of the piazza (and, by extension, the writing of this tale). Looking back, there emerge two possible consummative events: either the miraculous choice of this spot amongst thousands of others; “or” a divine flash where the hair that held Damocles’ sword broke and blindly inspired the architect to build upon a particular spot, without anticipation of the “purple prospect” of a view of Mount Greylock.98

The invocation of Charlemagne, Orion, and Damocles—ancient yet diverse references—insinuates a divine intervention or teleologic destiny. Through these allusions the narrator reinforces the grandeur of the house and piazza, while also penning a retroactive narrative or prehistory to the revolutions that will take place in “The Piazza.” This act of colonization functions to collect and bring into focus the surrounding space (including the once hidden, but now impressive aspect of Mount Greylock, personified as Charlemagne); but this occurs only after its construction. The house is inserted into history through an imperial viewpoint that places the edifice in conversation with the familiar accepted mythologies of Damocles, Orion, and Charlemagne, while simultaneously

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98 From Greek legend, the tale of Damocles is relevant in adding gravity to the history of the house as spun by the narrator. A pandering courtier, Damocles exclaims that King Dionysius is a man of authority and influence, and therefore extremely fortunate. The king offers to trade places with Damocles, allowing the latter to sit on his throne and experience his fortune, but has a sword hung by a hair above the head of the courtier to exhibit the danger inherent in his power. After sitting under the sword and feeling the anxiety of impending peril of the man upon a throne, Damocles desires to immediately return to his original status of courtier. While here remarking on a flash of inspiration for the builder of the house, Damocles’ legend is also significant as an inference of the abrupt nature of interruptive events that can never be predicted. There is arguably a similar anxiety at work in the tale of “The Lightening-Rod Man.”
collecting and ordering the surrounding uncaptured wilderness of Mount Greylock.\textsuperscript{99} This insertion demonstrates how such an authoritative aesthetic (or a \textit{nomos}, a law) can be applied only in hindsight—“for how otherwise would it have entered the builder’s mind?” the narrator asks.\textsuperscript{100} A culmination of all before, the house becomes an archive that, in this backward glance by the narrator, provides false evidence of an event against which all time is measured. There is no time perceivable before the house, when Greylock remained hidden—it is perceptible only after the house has been built, when Greylock is synonymous with Charlemagne. Notice too that there is no actual origin story, no naming of the architect or his commissioner, but rather a mythology that is assembled in hindsight through arbitrary association.

The diversity of mythological referents in the narrator’s description creates a historical web that reinforces the significance of the house in terms of powerful and

\textsuperscript{99} Again, see Pratt’s \textit{Imperial Eyes}: “Travel books, [Pratt] argue[s], gave European reading publics a sense of ownership, entitlement and familiarity with respect to the distant parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested in, and colonized...They were, [Pratt] argue[s], one of the key instruments that made people ‘at home’ in Europe feel part of a planetary project; a key instrument in other words, in creating the ‘domestic subject’ of empire” (3).

\textsuperscript{100} Deleuze and Guattari “are compelled to say” regarding the origin of the state “that there has always been a State, quite perfect, quite complete. The more discoveries archaeologists make, the more empires they uncover. The hypothesis of the \textit{Urstaat} seems to be verified: ‘The State clearly dates back to the most remote ages of humanity.’ It is hard to imagine primitive societies that would not have been in contact with imperial States, at the periphery or in poorly controlled areas. But of greater importance is the inverse hypothesis: that the State itself has always been in a relation with an outside and is inconceivable independent of that relationship. The law of the State is not the law of All or Nothing (State societies or counter-State societies) but that of interior and exterior. The State is sovereignty. But sovereignty only reigns over what it is capable of internalizing, of appropriating locally. Not only is there no universal State, but the outside of States cannot be reduced to "foreign policy," that is, to a set of relations among States. The outside appears simultaneously in two directions: huge worldwide machines branched out over the entire \textit{ecumenon} at a given moment, which enjoy a large measure of autonomy in relation to the States but also the local mechanisms of bands, margins, minorities, which continue to affirm the rights of segmentary societies in opposition to the organs of State power” (360).
recognizable symbols. That is to say, other than in the narrator's own “fancy” (which we will witness running free later in the tale), there is no traceable correlation between Damocles, Charlemagne, Orion, and the house or its piazza. This repopulating of the past is further reinforced by equating the foundation of the house as the “Kaaba, or Holy Stone,” aligning the earthly piazza with a mysterious, exotic and divine authority, and centering or anchoring the house itself as a destination to be visited by “social pilgrims” (621). This sacrilegious equivocation of the foundation of the house with the iconic and prehistoric Kaaba Stone imposes the nomological nature of the archive (which founds State authority) as more powerfully unifying than the spiritual pursuits of religious pilgrims (Stein, 316). It also aligns this constructed history with a physical edifice of domesticity, marrying the authority that is inherent in these historical symbols with a brick-and-mortar house, a place of dwelling. In this way, the house serves to emblematically domesticate this region of the world—to construct it as familiar, comfortable, and welcoming, and to banish any foreignness beyond its boundary. As with the State, the definition of the house relies on a clearly demarcated border between the inside and outside.

While the farmhouse is made sacrosanct through its relative history, the piazza is built on the very fringe of history, “somehow combining the coziness of in-doors with the freedom of out-doors [...] for the convenience of those who might desire to feast upon the view, and take their time and ease about it” (621). This technology of leisurely “feast[ing]” comfortably extends influence of the house, creating a safe vantage for the frontier beyond the boundaries of the interior. In this way, the piazza conglomerates security (in-doors) and liberty (out-doors), enabling a passivized subject that perceives the surrounding world yet remains susceptible to the State. This reliance on the “tranquility and constancy” of “the
easy-chair” is a far remove from the more purposeful dedication of generations “of old, when reverence was in vogue, and indolence was not.” “The piazza and the pew”—each arguably venues for a supplicant reception—have replaced “the Cathedrals” and the dedicated and immediate connection of “worshippers of a higher power” (622). These two new edifices of reception inhabit the threshold between the home or the soul and that of the larger world beyond (in both a worldly and spiritual sense); as passive, both pew and piazza welcome and embrace a filtration of experience, a ratified aesthetic.

While providing a point from which to interpret physis, the location of the piazza as both interior and exterior prevents placing one in direct contact with the world. That is, this architecture always exists at the threshold between interiority and exteriority—a place to “inspect your thermometer” or other technologies that mediate contact with the outside (emphasis added, 621). The piazza becomes a portal between the un-narratable outside of the State and its constructed interior. Similar to the way that an archive produces power by creating the place of the State within a historical narrative, so the piazza places the house (a place that shelters, a home, oikos) in the world surrounding it (nature, physis). Being an active rather than a passive boundary, the piazza interiorizes and naturalizes those elements that are favorable to its viewpoint, while simultaneously defining the outside—those remnants that are not able to be captured.101

101 Derrida defines the root arkhe as meaning both “commencement and commandment.” To Derrida the archive is the place where things commence—where they are given a beginning, where their source is marked or certified—and the site that commands, where authority and law is produced. Oikos here points toward the house or home of the archive: the place that “shelters” it and gives it authority and power (as “thesis, tekhne, or nomos,” as law or creation) against a non-hierarchized nature or the world (physis). Similarly, Foucault writes that “The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they
The interstitial space of the piazza further serves as a manicured face of the archive, drawing in elements of the outside world by inserting them within the narrative of the house. Accordingly, the topology surrounding the house is sketched from two significantly different perspectives—one from the piazza and one from outside the house altogether: “The circle of stars cut by the circle of mountains,” the narrator reflects, “At least, so it looks from the house; though when upon the mountains, no circle of them can you see.” As a narrative outcropping of archives, the piazza seems to allow the viewer to freely interpret his or her immersion within the expansive “circle of stars”; yet, stepping beyond the boundaries of the property—away from the influence of the house and its extension—the stolidity and “constancy” of this single, official, sanctified location is exposed. The piazza view, the narrator realizes, contains an ordering of the world that limits and distorts the reality surrounding it (even if that view is taken from a seemingly eccentric and exposed piazza upon the northern side of a house in the Hearth Stone Hills). This fabrication of situatedness effectively buffers and masks the limitations of the house—that its authority is self-generative and non-pervasive, and creates a teleological “meaning” for the imposing sublimity of Mount Greylock and the wilderness surrounding the house.

Importantly, “The Piazza” demonstrates how pervasive and non-descript such inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents; but they are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities; that which determines that they do not withdraw at the same pace in time, but shine, as it were, like stars, some that seem close to us shining brightly from afar off, while others that are in fact close to us are already growing pale” (Archaeology of Knowledge, 145-6)

cf. Derrida, 12. Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari explain “the State itself has always been in a relation with an outside and is inconceivable independent of that relationship. The law of the State is not the law of All or Nothing (State societies or counter-State societies) but that of interior and exterior. The State is sovereignty. But sovereignty only reigns over what it is capable of internalizing, of appropriating locally” (360)
influence can be. As a process archiving can be said to influentially affect any threshold between the inside of the state and the outside, softly homogenizing the difference between the interior and the exterior of the State. With activation of archiving in mind we should not be reading *The Piazza Tales* in terms of built and established “nations” (that is, not in a “limited [...and] finite” scope as Anderson would propose), but as a critical engagement with more nuanced mechanisms of State that far precede the formation of a nation (Anderson, 7). As Dimock suggests, one such mechanism is able to overcome a paradox, and to associate the increase of territory with the spread of liberty. In this iteration, the piazza/archive relies on the exterior of the State to create the perception of a surplus of space (an acknowledgement of a remnant) that functions as a promise for “freedom” or “liberty”.103 (And let’s not overlook the irony that both these terms are rhetorically associated with the interior of the State as well...) In its own frame-story *The Piazza Tales* identifies the relative and shifting logics that inform these outward gestures of capture. As the archive by design annuls illogical remnants by inserting them into a “proper” (read: “authorized”) place in a narrative, so the piazza functions as an aesthetic filter that incorporates the outside into the inside by providing a fitting vantage.104

As is the piazza is the outer boundary to the controlled space of the house, it is also the limit-point of the illogicality of the outside as well. Gazing from the piazza means that one is still grounded within the extension of the house; yet the view is always comparative. As the magnificence of the view of Mount Greylock did not exist until the house was

103 Deleuze and Guattari explain that in essence any interior / exterior relationship—even those in “primitive” cultures, such as language—fundamentally manifests a State structure (428-429).

104 For comparison see Leslie Ann Stoler’s examination of sentiment and the marginalia in Dutch colonial documents in *Along the Archival Grain*, where these remnants are incorporated albeit as resistances.
erected, so the “freedom of the out-doors” is not realized (indeed, it arguably does not exist) until placed alongside the “coziness” of the piazza. The piazza becomes the lens through which the subject sees the world beyond, and through which this imaginative journey takes place. The viewer is able to see beyond the piazza only in a limited fashion, and in viewing the world from the architectural overhangs and supports of the piazza, his own harbored condition is reflected back upon himself. In the narrator’s mind the placement of the piazza is rationalized to the upmost, each point of the compass being scrutinized and dissected according to its offerings. The narrator’s decision to build a “winter piazza” on the north side of the house identifies his own idiosyncratic tendencies, and incites his neighbors to break “into a laugh:” “Wants, of winter midnights, to watch the Aurora Borealis,” they suppose, “hope he’s laid in good store of Polar muffs and mittens!” (623). Yet, it is his unconventionality that leads the narrator away from his neighbors and into a “fairy land” that allows him to evaluate the piazza itself from the exterior. Fittingly, this journey begins with its own remnant, an “uncertain object” sighted from the piazza:

...mysteriously snugged away, to all appearance, in a sort of purpled breast-pocket, high up in a hopper-like hollow, or sunken angle, among the northwestern mountains—yet, whether, really, it was on a mountain-side, or a mountain-top, could not be determined; because, though, viewed from favorable points, a blue summit, peering up away behind the rest, will, as it were, talk to you over their heads, and plainly tell you, that, though he (the blue summit) seems among them, he is not of them (God forbid!), and, indeed, would have you know that he considers himself—as, to say truth, he has good right—by several cubits their superior, nevertheless, certain ranges, here and there double-filed, as in platoons, so shoulder and follow up upon one another, with their irregular shapes and heights, that, from the piazza, a nigher and lower mountain will, in most states of the atmosphere, effacingly shade itself away into a higher and further one; that an object, bleak on the former’s crest, will, for all that, appear nested in the latter’s flank. These mountains, somehow, they play at hide-and-seek before one’s eyes. (624)

This “uncertain object” is an anomalous element that is inadmissible, inassimilable, and
inexplicable to the narrative framework of the piazza and the perspective of the narrator. Reflecting his internal journey, his prose rambles in varied attempts to quantify this unknown, moving from the “object,” to the personification and confused anti-hierarchy of the mountains, to recognizing the effect of the piazza upon his own interpretation. Yet, despite attempts to describe and pin-down this anomaly and its location, this ramble only increases its indistinctness. Unable to shake the comfortable elements of archivization, the landscape is described in terms of catalogued storage—as a both “breast-pocket” and “hopper-like hollow” holding the object. The organizational attributes of the piazza are unable to assimilate the natural grandeur of these mountains “with their irregular shapes and heights,” and—as evident through the frequent punctuation breaks and the fragmentation of this long sentence—there is a level of franticness that seeks to understand the hierarchic logic that contains this anomaly. Despite an insistence on hierarchy, the object remains generally unlocatable—whether it is on “a mountain-side, or a mountain-top” remains unresolved. The narrator recognizes a distortive aspect in his vision, where the object itself becomes (at least from his current position) unknowable. By the final phrase, the “object” is forgotten, and the mountains themselves—the backdrop against which the anomaly was measured—become the shifting and fleeting element, regressed to a childish game of “hide-and-seek,” invoking the narrator to come and join them. We have seen how as an extension of the house, the piazza aligns sites in a logical manner, hierarchizing them according to relevancy and import and further insulating its own validity and authority; in a similar manner the piazza’s exteriority is manifest with this new “uncertain object.”

With this trope of cross-boundary connectedness in mind, it is significant that “The
Piazza” is a journey piece, where the narrator ventures away from a constructed environment to discover an outside perspective that alters the way he understands (or misunderstands) his home. The “uncertain object” (later discovered to be Marianna’s hut) is described aptly in state of reflection: “paint[ing]” a mole on the hillside, “glow[ing] like the Potosi mine,” “a golden sparkle,” a “gleam, as of a silver buckler” (625). Similar to the way that the piazza itself draws the interior of the house outward, this casting back of light off the mountainside draws the narrator outward in his mind. The point becomes “one spot of radiance where all else is shade” that appears only “under certain witching conditions of light and shadow,” manifesting in the narrator an anxiety that cannot isolate, identify, or categorically capture its essence (624). Accordingly the narrator adopts the language of fantasy terming it a “fairy land” and, although we learn at the end of the tale that it is only an imaginative journey, the spot is to be explored in imperialist fashion by “launch[ing] his yawl.” The increasing indistinctness of the object draws the narrator’s attention away from the homogenized passivity of the piazza, becoming the impetus moving beyond its walls.

Following this point further, the artificial journey to Marianna’s cabin comes to reflect the narrator’s position within the insulated space of the piazza. Drawing attention to the narrator’s filtered perspective, Marianna creates characters from the shadows of the things outside of her hut, lamenting their disappearance as the outside world changes. She constructs a world out of “shades,” where the narrator realizes “shadows are as things” and are confused for reality. Marianna perceives a “shaggy shadow,” for example, as “a large, black newfoundland dog” named “Tray”. Despite his reluctance, the narrator is himself implicated in these perceptions—“it is not unlike a large, black Newfoundland dog,” he admits after Marianna’s suggestion. In examining these fanciful musings, the narrator
begins to peel back the implications of his own journey and perceptions:

“Yours are strange fancies, Marianna.”
“That but reflect the things.”
“Then I should have said, ‘These are strange things,’ rather than, ‘Yours are strange fancies.’”

To emphasize, it is not that Marianna’s fancies that are strange, but that the “things” beyond her purview are actually estranged. Marianna insists that these shades are both reflective and independent of the estranged objects that cast them. For instance, the “shadow of a Birch” was one of these shade characters, yet when the tree is “struck by lightning” and its wood cut and stacked, to Marianna “the buried root lies under [the wood]; but not the shadow” (631-632). She identifies these shadow-creatures while her “eyes rest but on [her] work,” knowing by rote and habit that the shadow Tray exists simply because “this is his hour” (632). In both instances she believes she is in direct contact with the world, yet—ironically bringing his own misperceptions into focus—the narrator recognizes an ulterior narrative framework that filters and interprets the world for her. Inversely, in reading these “lifeless shadows [...] as living friends,” Marianna reflects the narrator’s own outward gaze from the piazza that similarly misconstrues the constructed and filtered world as raw and pure. Thought of differently, the narrator is seeing Marianna’s archival narratives from an exterior perspective, separate from the rhetoric of the State that informs her viewpoint.

Accordingly, when Marianna suggests, “you watch the cloud,” the narrator corrects “No, a shadow; a cloud’s, no doubt—though that I cannot see” (italics for emphasis, 631). These creations become a point of disconnect between the narrator who insists on their existence as fancy, and Marianna who sees the shades as the things themselves. In this iteration the shade cast by objects is something separate from them – if the object retains its essential mass, it does not necessarily retain its shade. Implicating his own equivocation
of fancy-and-thing, the narrator grows increasingly uneasy and agitated, as his fantasies of
Marianna’s fairy land have by extension been exposed as a fancy:

Have you then, so long sat at this mountain-window, where but clouds and
vapors pass, that, to you, shadows are as things, though you speak of them as
of phantoms; that, by familiar knowledge, working like a second sight, you
can, without looking for them, tell just where they are, though, as having
mice-like feet, they creep about, and come and go; that, to you, these lifeless
shadows are as living friends, who, though out of sight, are not out of mind,
even in their faces—is it so?  

It is so, though Marianna “never thought of it.” Marianna’s “familiar knowledge, working
like a second sight” is not the product of intensity and dedication but of habit and ritual—of
comfort in a controlling narrative bolstered by her equivalent to the “piazza and pew.”
Familiarity and stasis have shaped her seemingly unconventional thought; yet her’s is as
stifled as the narrators, beset by hidden agendas of conformism and stolidity. Oblivious to
his own congruent symptoms, the narrator prescribes further passive submission to “the
[hop] pillow and the prayer” in order to battle such depression:

Through the fairy window, she pointed down the steep to a small garden
patch near by—mere pot of rifled loam, half rounded in by sheltering rocks—
where, side by side, some feet apart, nipped and puny, two hop-vines
climbed two poles, and, gaining their tip-ends, would have then joined over
in an upward clasp, but the baffled shoots, groping awhile in empty air,
trailed back whence they sprung. (633)

This passage connects with the narrator’s earlier reflections while at the piazza; a hidden
menace that has corrupted the outward splendor of his own garden:

[...] I could not bear to look upon a Chinese creeper of my adoption, and
which, to my delight, climbing a post of the piazza, had burst out in starry
bloom, but now, if you removed the leaves a little, showed millions of strange,
cankerous worms, which, feeding upon those blossoms, so shared their
blessed hue, as to make it unblessed evermore—worms, whose germs had
doubtless lurked in the very bulb which, so hopefully, I had planted [...] (626)

The infestation that makes the creeper “unblessed evermore” reemerges in this later
“baffling” of the “upward clasp” between the hop shoots, further cementing the correlation between the characters. Sourced to the “very bulb” that engenders the creeper the “cankerous” worms are manifest only with the maturation of the vine, just as the discontinuities of the piazza / archive can only be seen from a historical distance. The cankerous worms are themselves a symptom of the passivity of these characters – their willingness to accept the façades of the refracted world as true and unfiltered.

Gesturing to the gleam of the narrator’s far-off piazza, Marianna suggests that the only happiness to be gained is “to get to yonder house, and but look upon whoever the happy being is that lives there” (634). The parallelism of the two characters is complete. As the narrator recognizes that Marianna imaginatively erases the actual distance between object and shadow, the piazza’s effect of filtering the outside world comes into focus. Struck with the conundrum of identifying with either Marianna’s refracted fairy land or the manufactured historical significance of the piazza, the narrator realizes that each is structurally one in the same. As the narrator’s imaginative leap turns the gleam of Marianna’s roof into a land of fairies, for Marianna the gap between the shadow of things and things themselves is bridged by these “fancies.”

This equivocation of place (here, the piazza and Marianna’s hut) initiates a gesture that Melville evokes again and again in The Piazza Tales: the imperial narrative to take the unfamiliar and make it familiar; the tendency of the archive to identify, invent, or fabricate elements-in-common in order to deflate the distinctness and singularity of the fantastic. This is the inevitable culmination of any imperial narrative: the outward journey that is driven by the desire to incorporate and master the anomalous also perpetuates the limited paradigm that actually produces these anomalies. This outward drive does not require
movement and activity, but caters to those that, as the narrator earlier remarked, “take their time and ease about it.” Indeed, as we discover in the final paragraphs of “The Piazza,” it does not require one to move at all.

The final revelation at the end of the tale—that the narrator never actually steps foot off of the piazza—serves to illustrate the limiting nature of an imperial perspective upon its subjects. Similar to Marianna, the narrator dreams of a far off dwelling and occupant without ever venturing to experience it—indeed he creates it from the materials at hand in his archive: the gleaming oddity on the mountainside, the rotting Chinese creeper, and the regular shadows that fall daily upon the piazza. Despite his insistence in overstepping his imperial boundary by “launching his yawl,” he can never create anything that is absolutely unrelatable and original. Put another way, the remnant that becomes a way to transport the narrator beyond the logically regulated world of the piazza only succeeds in building an iteration of the piazza abroad, a reflection of the position of the narrator himself. The fanciful world outside only exists in a frontier setting that lapses into a repetition of the archived material of the piazza as soon as it is captured. By closing his tale with Marianna’s plea to meet the inhabitant of her far off fairy land, the narrator draws attention to the redundancies in his tale, and, declaring he will “[launch his] yawl no more for fairy-land,” rejects his own inclinations to take any imaginative leap. As the motif of shading and doubling between the piazza and Marianna’s hut, this term “yawl” folds exploration and narrative together in a dialectic relationship that both defines and subjugates nations and frontiers. Attuning to this dialectic, Melville here connects the exploration of frontiers (here, “fairy-lands”) with the nationalizing narratives that are generated by imperial archives and fuel outward expansion (as represented by the piazza).
Here it might serve to more closely examine the two figures of Charlemagne and Marianna (or, Marianne). Although the tale takes place in Massachusetts, its two most prominent emblems are unequivocally French. While Charlemagne recalls the height of the Carolingian Empire, Marianne embodies the French Republic, particularly the tenets of “liberty” and “reason” French Revolution of 1789 (Agulhon). Marianne, then, as she appears later in “The Piazza,” should emerge in the revolutionary moment that interrupts the imperial legacy of Charlemagne, displacing the manufactured, mythological histories of the country farmhouse. Yet, no such revolutionary rupture occurs. The dissipation of the narrator’s fairy-land at the end of “The Piazza” marks the utter artificiality of the reflections and shadows that he and Marianna have been trusting; from his position within the empire, “truth comes in with darkness […] No light shows from the mountain” as the narrator “walk[s] the piazza deck, haunted by Marianna’s face” (634). Here the true nature of the view from the piazza is revealed, and the narrator’s fantasy of tripping to fairy-land becomes better understood as a narrative from within the archival construct rather than an external incitation to revolution. That is to say, the revolution that Marianna embodies only turns the narrator back toward the very imperialist State structures he is trying to outstrip.

The perception of truth within the imperial construct is not a surrender to the fancies that bridge the gap between the things and their shadows, but the shades themselves. The correlation between the artifacts on the piazza and those at Marianna’s hut render the imperialistic desire to assimilate the exotic with the comfortable through archivization. It is when darkness annuls all shadows that this assimilation is shown to be more a shade than a reality. Marianna’s face haunts the narrator because it does not assimilate to his “box-royal,” his “amplitheater,” despite the piazza’s “illusion so complete”
Melville’s empire is one cursed by the constraints of epistemology and perception, where all we are given to categorize are mere shadows and reflections of our own state of affairs, and we only end up “pac[ing] to and fro” on our piazzas, forever haunted by a true and “real” face which can never be known (634). The nature of categorization and archivization feeds its own perpetuation and imperialistic reach; in order to catalogue (and thereby manifest) power, there must be a perpetual source of the uncategorized.

Opening *The Piazza Tales*, “The Piazza” centralizes what Melville perceives as the relationship between subjects and the overarching narrative structures (house and piazza) that are controlled by and buttress the State. More than drawing attention to this dynamic, “The Piazza” labors to expose the entrapping nature of archivization, its inherence within any State, whether empire or republic, and the impossibility of any attempts to function outside of it. As boundaries are shifted outward, or fairy-lands are discovered and explored, these narratives must be shifted to adopt new spaces, categories, and phenomena that aid in maintaining their invisibility from the internal vantage of the subject. Similar to the shadows outside of Marianna’s hut, whose source the narrator “could not see,” there is a dynamic reconstitution internal to the archive that is reflected only as shadows within the narratives of State. Anticipating and manipulating the tenets of visibility, this hidden repositioning protects and optimizes the State’s authority and redirects the energy of its

105 Foucault explains that “...it is not possible for us to describe our own archive, since it is from within these rules that we speak, since it is that which gives to what we can say — and to itself, the object of our discourse — its modes of appearance, its forms of existence and coexistence, its system of accumulation, historicity, and disappearance. The archive cannot be described in its totality; and in its presence it is unavoidable. It emerges in fragments, regions, and levels, more fully, no doubt, and with greater sharpness, the greater the time that separates us from it: at most, were it not for the rarity of the documents, the greater chronological distance would be necessary to analy[z]e it.” (*Archaeology of Knowledge*, 146-7)
subjects away from the state itself as an outward expansion, a “frontierism” in search of
new specimens, as the narrator seeking to capture the “unknown object.”

Melville’s frontiers—whether social, geographical, scientific, or otherwise (say, islands, a ship, law dockets, or a fairy-land)—demonstrate the pervasiveness of structures of “knowledge” that empower the State. They are, more bluntly, a symptom of archivization. As demonstrated in “The Piazza,” the act of archiving narratively reorganizes a border into a space that is at once both structured and foreign, both familiar and unprecedented. Melville marks this archival infection in the frontier encounters that are staged throughout The Piazza Tales, presenting evidential hitches where the veneer of the archive becomes snagged and the fabrication of narrative becomes apparent. By critically inverting the archival engine of imperialism, Melville exposes the role of frontiers in the self-perpetuation of an internal imperial authority.

In opposition to the smooth appearance of imperial narratives, Melville provides no overarching uniformity to The Piazza Tales. Certainly the tales are connected subversively, but there is no apparent repetitious or recurrent imagistic element, no tropes or motifs that resound or echo in this collection. The incongruous make-up of The Piazza Tales—an anti-archive of sorts—demonstrates the limitations of logical quantification and archivization, and the necessity of the archival system to extricate that which does not fit within its categories. In relation to the tales it contains, the name of the collection reinforces the artificiality of the piazza in fantasizing about continuity of the State and its frontiers. The increasingly complicated and dynamic relationship between the subject and the expanding world—which is one point where imperial power repeatedly breaks down—comes to infect this anti-archive, and leaves the subject as frustratingly pacing his piazza as the
narrator of “The Piazza.”

The Infectious Nature of the Archive: “The Encantadas”

While “The Piazza” illustrates parallels the manufacture of historical continuity through archivization and the justification of State imperialism, “The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles” deconstructs the fabrication of catalogue-based archives themselves. My general reading of “The Encantadas” focuses on an obsessed narrator who seeks, through a series of ten “sketches,” to contain, quantify, collate and relate the archipelago to those that cannot experience it first hand. The diversity of the sketches provide different models of cataloguing and classification, and emphasize the infectious and virulent nature of archiving as an act, and the subsequent inevitable shortcomings of any such system of quantification. Beyond deliberate and intentional, the narrator’s impulse to catalogue and contain the Encantadas is compulsory and inexorable, and betrays an irrepessible need not just to fit artifacts and phenomena into established categories, but to find new ways of imagining containership and packaging of knowledge.

As Denise Tanyol (2007) has argued, the narrator’s approach is diametrically opposed to the taxonomic projects of the other famous archivist of the “Gallipagos.” Although Darwin’s theories of evolutionary principles would not be published until 1859 in *The Origin of the Species* (six years after the publication of “The Encantadas” in *Putnam’s*, and three after publication of *The Piazza Tales*), it is known that Melville purchased *The Voyage of the Beagle* in 1847, and its influence on his writing has been explored somewhat
Examining *The Voyage of the Beagle* and “The Encantadas,” Tanyol convincingly claims that in contrast to the scientific approach of Darwin Melville “wrests the Galapagos from the grasp of the naturalist, revealing that the marvels of the world are not to be easily mapped, counted, and classified” (Tanyol, 244-245). “The islands, in Melville’s account,” Tanyol claims, “thus defy the sort of classification-as-preparation-for-occupation that texts like Darwin’s promote” (255). While I agree with Tanyol, I think that “The Encantadas” should be examined within the framework of *The Piazza Tales*, especially in the purview of the introductory tale “The Piazza.” Certainly “The Encantadas” responds (either directly, or indirectly) to Darwin’s *Voyage of the Beagle* and the role of the naturalist-as-colonizer; yet, if we attend to the critique of scientific taxonomies that Tanyol in “The Encantadas” as part of Melville’s broader interest in imperial narrative and its contribution to State formation, the significance of archiving as an active means of imperialism is brought forward. Amidst this larger critique emerges a certain archival franticness in the narrator of “The Encantadas,” an obsessive tendency that strives at any cost to contain and package the islands for an imperial readership. As a site that outstrips the colonizing gestures of imperialism, the Encantadas both defy and, through opposition, define imperialism for Melville.

“The Encantadas” is written pseudonymously under the name of Salvatore R. Tarnmoor, and each “sketch” is prefaced with unattributed poetic verses. Each of these substitutions—both name and word—retain traces of the familiar: Salvatore R. Tarnmoor masks Melville, but also recalls the artist Salvatore Rosa; and, while a majority of the

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106 In addition to Tanyol’s excellent essay, Eric Wilson connects Darwin and Melville’s taxonomic systems further by examining the ways that *Moby Dick* anticipates *The Origin of the Species* in “Melville, Darwin, and the Great Chain of Being” (2000).
unattributed verses are familiar from Spenser’s *The Fairie Queene*, small portions are rewritten to pertain to Melville’s isles (Engels, 350).107 These traces of other texts mark the disparate nature of “The Encantadas” as a collection of “sketches” located amongst a wider artistic catalogue of artists including Spenser and Rosa—yet another instance of the author’s own active archiving. As the verses of Spenser’s poetry and Rosa’s paintings emotively interpret their subjects, embracing an aesthetic reliant on complex allegories (the legacy of which will challenge the later movements of empiricism and rationalism), so too will Melville (or, Tarnmoor) interpretively “sketch” the Encantadas, demonstrating the failure of a categorical rationality to wholly contain the archipelago.

As a travelogue of Tarnmoor “The Encantadas” intends to capture the essence of the isles, transporting such knowledge back to an imperial center. In imperial travel literature, the writer functions as a scout compartmentalizing and relating (or narrating) the essentials of an exotic frontier into a system that is familiar and comfortable.108 Indeed, this is the initial impulse of the Tarnmoor. Judging by its title, “The Isles at Large,” the first sketch of “The Encantadas” would presumably provide an overview of the archipelago. The sketch seems to open with just such a goal in mind, as the narrator describes the islands through a figurative positioning: by scattering “five and twenty heaps of cinders dumped here and there in an outside city lot [and] imagin[ing] some of them magnified into

107 Salvatore Rosa is an interesting reference, Engels suggests, for his distinct, non-pastoral landscapes. Other verses are from Spenser, *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie, Mother Hubberds Tale*, Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher’s *Wit without Money*, Thomas Chatterton’s *Mynstrelles Songe from Ælla* and Williams Collins’ *Dirge in Cymbeline*. (Non-scholarly source: http://www.galapagos.to/texts/spenser.htm) Denise Tanyol interestingly reads “Tarnmoor” as “conjur[ing] up not only the mountain tarns or lakes of Scandinavia (with their light-skinned people) but also the dark wasteland of the English heath and the dark skin of the Moors” (256).

108 Cf. Pratt’s discussion of Linneas’ cataloguing system in *Imperial Eyes*, especially her reiteration of Foucault on page 28-29.
mountains, and the vacant lot the sea” (767). Yet rather than locate the islands within a mappable familiarity this “city lot” metaphor reinforces the islands’ singularity and ability to outstrip any relative comparison short of an “imaginative” leap outside any archival narrative. While the relation between a city lot and the isles manufactures a correspondent topography (similar to the relation between the piazza-farmhouse and the “unknown object” in “The Piazza”), it also serves to illustrate the flattening, homogeneous workings of empire.\(^\text{109}\) As the house in “The Piazza” is able to insert itself into history in relation to Charlemagne and the Kaaba Stone, so here we have the narrator attempting to insert “The Encantadas” into the familiarity of his imperial culture. Yet instead of bringing imperial logics to bear on the islands, in “The Encantadas” we witness an inversion of imperial conveyance where the narrator transports the illogicalities and eccentricities of the...

\(^{109}\) See Foucault’s Of Other Spaces: “There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places - places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society - which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias. I believe that between utopias and these quite other sites, these heterotopias, there might be a sort of mixed, joint experience, which would be the mirror. The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there. Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back toward myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am. The mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there.”
Encantadas back to the imperial center. The resulting collection emphasizes the elusive and unparalleled nature of the islands in a text is not unlike the islands themselves: a collection of “sketches” supposed to make a whole, yet collecting the enchanted and unlikely snippets and landscapes that are ultimately unable to be contained and compartmentalized. Circulating throughout, however, is a struggle directly related to that in “The Piazza”: namely, how to incorporate and contain a frontier topology within an archival system; how to logically and reasonably map and traverse frontiers toward the unknown; or, for us as readers, how to map and traverse these meandering and fanciful “sketches” of text that are “wavering” against the controlled, interiorized space of empire that the narrator is attempting to impose (770).

In contrast to the passive deference to imperialism exhibited by Melville’s Sub-Sub and the narrator of “The Piazza,” Tarnmoor struggles tenuously between methodically categorizing his surroundings and a surrender to the fantastical romance of these anomalous islands. The result is a eccentric taxonomy that (working counter to Darwin’s scientific method or Linnaeus’ taxonomy) values the tales of the Dog King and Chola Widow as much if not more than tables of population, measurements of beaks, and maps of orientation. By collecting and adapting these tales from the historical (imperial) narrative of the scientifically-archived Galapagos, Melville is laying forth an alternative form of history that relishes in openness and, much as the shores of the islands being battered by sea foam, performs a constant revision of itself. This is a history without a human timeframe—an openness of death without the ending of life. A central concern of this process of collecting, then, is how to capture and convey without freezing and destroying
that un-capturable element; in effect, how to consign the islands within the space of empire by ordering them in such a way to enter into an imperial narrative.\footnote{Derrida explains further: “Consignation aims to coordinate a single corpus, in a system or a synchrony in which all the elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration. In an archive, there should not be any absolute dissociation, any heterogeneity or secret which could separate (secernere), or partition, in an absolute manner. The archontic principle of the archive is also a principle of consignation, that is, of gathering together” (14).}

The verse from Spenser’s \textit{The Faerie Queene} that prefaces “Sketch First: The Isles at Large” introduces this wavering imprecision. Tarnmoor, through Spenser’s verses, warns the reader against any feeling of orientation or security, cautioning that “whosoever once hath fastened / His foot thereon may never it recure / But wandreth evermore uncertaine and unsure” (764). This is a bizarre moment of reverse-colonization, where the typical gesture of landing on and claiming an island is inverted, and the voyager is instead the one who is claimed. The curse of Spenser’s voyager is explicitly \textit{anti}-imperial: he hazards being forever infected by a meandering without resolve, wandering outside of any knowable or even inhabitable spot.\footnote{The \textit{Faerie Queene} was written during Spenser’s time in Ireland, where he worked as a secretary for Lord Grey—a notoriously violent English colonial governor. The poem itself was written to gain court favor, and did gain Spenser a pension of £50 a year (Kaske, 209-210). Much has been written on Spenser’s sympathetic view of English imperialism in Ireland (where he held a 3000 acre estate), the poet’s problematic morality, and the colonialist sentiment in \textit{The Faerie Queene}; see, for instance, Andrew Hadfield’s \textit{Edmund Spenser: A Life} (2012), Elizabeth Fowler’s “The Failure of Moral Philosophy in the Work of Edmund Spenser” (1995), and Joan Fitzpatrick’s study on colonialism and gender in \textit{Irish Demons} (2000).} This sentiment is repeated in Tarnmoor, who, by the end of the first sketch cannot “restrain the admission” that when sitting in the nature of the Adirondack Mountains, he oftentimes “recall[s], as in a dream, my other far-distant rovings in the baked heart of the charmed isles.” Even more profound is the “optical illusion concerning the Gallipagos” manifested “especially at revels held by candlelight in old-fashioned mansions [...] the ghost of a gigantic tortoise, with ‘Memento * * * *’ burning in
live letters upon his back” (768). The islands here not only haunt the pensive Tarnmoor when “far from the scenes of towns and proportionally nigh to the mysterious ones of nature,” but also in the heart of empire itself, in the wealth and opulence of an old-world mansion. Rather than orienting and conquering the islands, the imperial voyager is inversely cast as the victim of a repetitious dislocation that replaces the comforting elements of a categorical narrative with the “uncertaine and unsure” sketches of these islands.

Beyond infecting the agents of empire, the structure of the archipelago defies empiricism, challenging the topologies and geographies that are the cornerstone of imperial expansion. Topographically, the archipelago is an unpredictable, vagulous site whose currents and tides make it “impossible for a vessel from afar to fetch up with the group itself [...] yet, at other times [...] irresistibly draw a passing vessel among the isles” (769). This combination of attraction and repulsion gives the islands a living, breathing essence that is not mappable—an organic topology that is as tenuous and drifting as ships attempting to catch them. The islands are in a constant unresolved internal tension that is in turn projected outward: on the one hand the “unreliable” wind and tide and the “apparent fleetingness and unreality” contribute the lingering “long nourished persuasion that there existed two distinct clusters of isles in the parallel of the Encantadas;” on the other, the “special curse...that to [the isles] change never comes; neither the change of seasons or of sorrows” (768-770). One is up against an unnavigable vivacity of movement; the island chain itself is unsettled, agitated to the point of appearing doubled to those that attempt to approach; and Melville’s sketches are loosely fitted, themselves wavering in relation, tied only through their unchanging internal relation. Here, neither the interiority
of the isles (as an unchanging place outside of time), nor its exterior counterpart (as a place outside of the logics of space)—nor the conglomeration of the two—can be captured or contained by logical or rational means.

Again contrasting to the narrator in “The Piazza”—who ventures into a frontier only to find familiar imperial trappings—Tarnmoor in “The Encantadas” presents a wholly alien, non-human site:

It is to be doubted that any spot of earth can in desolateness, furnish a parallel to this group. Abandoned cemeteries of long ago, old cities by piecemeal tumbling to their ruin, these are melancholy enough; but, like all else which has but once been associated with humanity, they still awaken in us some thoughts of sympathy, however sad. Hence, even the Dead Sea, along with whatever other emotions it may at times inspire, does not fail to touch in the pilgrim some of his less unpleasurable feelings. (764)

Here the narrator once again turns the gaze of the explorer homeward, immediately (and irresistibly) running through any iota of civilization that might parallel this place: “abandoned cemeteries” and “old cities”; even turning to the metaphysical “thoughts of sympathy” that arise in the “pilgrim” that might visit such places—even those that are long past, and of which we only have remnants. Yet, this fantasy of a parallel human experience is immediately inadequate as any trace of the human is too much of a residue to match this level of separation. Invoking both colonial settlement and the Kaaba Stone of “the Piazza,” the “pilgrim” of “The Encantadas” is held permanently at bay, constantly wandering, and never allowed to settle into the comfort of the center. However grim and melancholy, there is no relative element of the Encantadas; to Melville’s narrator, the essence of the archipelago is always unobtainable, and falls short even in metaphorical construction. The isolate “spot of earth” of the Encantadas is only defined through the negative, directly opposing those sites “once associated with humanity.” The foreignness of the archipelago is
absolute and permanent, marked as a site that is always outside of imperial reach, even beyond a sense of frontier. To approach the Encantadas is to approach the absolute limit of imperialism, here painted as approaching a death unattached to humanity or life. There is a sense of suspended tension, where any examination of the Encantadas only uncovers elements that stretch beyond the familiar imperial knowledge systems, demonstrating limitations more than their pervasiveness.

The relationship between the diversity of these “sketches” and the territorializing elements of empire is illustrated through the active terrain of the isles’ shores, where the rocks and the current perpetually converse and change themselves. Rather than quantifiably mapped and delineated, these shorelines are presented as living and churning beings: “tumbled masses of blackish or greenish stuff like the dross of an iron furnace, forming dark clefts and caves here and there, into which a ceaseless sea pours a fury of foam, overhanging them with a swirl of gray, haggard mist, amidst which sail screaming flights of unearthly birds heightening the dismal din” (769). As a collection of islands, the archipelago eludes the comfortable topographical model of containment by being in constant fluctuation. The clash of waves and rock accomplishes its own sort of writing: the waves sculpting the “clefts and caves” while the rocks atomize the waves into the “haggard mist.” The alliteration is remarkable, and externalizes the very relentlessness of the eternal process. Industry and landscape are melded, but in a very primordial fashion, where it is actually the residue of production—the “dross of an iron furnace”—that is creating the new boundaries of these islands. The swarming of the masses of birds (their “screaming flights”) similarly relate to this externalization: like the dross that is the refuse of the smelting process this noise becomes nothing more than a cacophony that is absolutely outside of
interpretation. It is in this fluidity across time that the archipelago is able to contain the remnant “dross” that was always out of the purview of the piazza.

As the narrator in “The Piazza” desired to solve the irrationality of the “uncertain object,” Tarnmoor too desires to contain the island’s “enchanted” aspect by narrating its bizarre history. In resistance to the isles’ peculiarities, this becomes the overt purpose of the “First Sketch”: to account for “the bestowal of this name”—this “appellation, enchanted.” Such a counter-enchantment would enable the narrator to present the unimaginable and fantastic to his audience in a logical and rational way, and is perceived in the narrative’s focus on the island’s name (and on accounting and collecting data sets, as we will see in a moment). Naming the isles and the sketches of them “The Encantadas; or Enchanted Isles” balances an exoticness that must, after all, be accounted for—not only are they enchanted, but also foreign, alien and translated for the detached audience. The conglomerate of these diverse tales into a single package, delivered to those who can only comprehend the vagueness of the islands through imagining “five-and-twenty cinders” requires a translation of both word and circumstance that can somehow preserve this exoticness despite its translation homeward.

The two sketches pertaining to the Rock Rodondo envision the islands within a broader geography of empire (and echo the Sub-Sub Librarian’s textual appropriation and re-signification of whale excerpts). Inclusive collection being paramount, the narrator axiomatically states, “to go up into a high stone tower is not only a very fine thing in itself, but the very best mode of gaining a comprehensive view of the region round about.” Initially

112 Let us not forget that the tortoises inspire the islands “other Spanish name,” Galapagos. It is always a “Spanish name,” and no doubt significant that Melville prefers the descriptive “enchanted.”
this towering rock “fully participat[es] in that enchantment which pervades the group, when first seen afar [being] invariably mistaken for a sail.” Yet, the narrator take pangs to logically explain away its enchantment: “Here and there were long birdlime streaks of a ghostly white staining the tower from sea to air, readily accounting for its sail-like look afar” (emphasis added; 776, 777). This explanation not only “accounts” for the sail-like appearance of the rock, but also accentuates the willingness—or even desire—of the viewer from afar to project the familiar onto the unknown: the figure of a vessel onto the natural spire.\(^{113}\) The assumption of the mariner is here shown to preclude other more enduring possibilities—in this instance that it is merely a rock marked with guano and not associated with any trace of the human. Recognizing the rock as sail further reinforces the double-ness of the archipelago: for already it meanders throughout the Pacific, and at one point was thought to be two different island chains. Here the islands disguise or mask themselves as a waypoint for observation, mapping, orienteering, or even colonization. If the Rodondo Rock remains a sail rather than a tower, no bearings can be measured against it, and no naturalist would take interest in it.

Tarnmoor’s classifying imagination continues in his observations of the ornithological striations in the tower. The “tenants of the tower serially disposed in order of their magnitude,” he argues, “dominating one another in senatorial array” (778). In a moment of imperial exuberance that perhaps nods toward previous visitors to the Galapagos, Tarnmoor declares, “I know not where one can better study the Natural History of strange sea-fowl than at Rodondo.” Despite Tarnmoor’s confidence, this natural history

\(^{113}\) Interestingly, what the rock “contains” (including its status as a vessel) is entirely external to itself: the birds roosting on the rock, but also the panoptic external view that is afforded one from its peak. This is in fact antithetical to its “containing” anything—every aspect of Rodondo Rock is, like the bird guano, outside of itself.
is not one so readily hierarchized; inhabited by penguins, even the initial shelf of this seemingly regimented fowl colony undermines any hope of a naturalized categorization, and more firmly betrays the anthropocentric tendencies of the narrator:

Erect as men, but hardly as symmetrical...Their bodies are grotesquely misshapen; their bills short, their legs seemingly legless; while the members at their sides are neither fin, wing, or arm. And truly neither fish, flesh, or fowl is the penguin; as an edible, pertaining neither to Carnival nor Lent; without exception the most ambiguous and least lovely creature yet discovered by man. Though dabbling in all three elements, and indeed possessing some rudimental claim to all, the penguin is home in none. (775)

The narrator shuffles through many modes of consignation: moving from symmetry, to anatomy, to liturgy, to aesthetic. Failing to fit any anthropic categorization, the penguin is thereby deemed “grotesque” and “outlandish,” and exhibits its own refusal, or exception from, the soon-to-follow fowl hierarchy.¹¹⁴ If they exist in a “senatorial array,” then the penguin must reflect the narrator’s misgivings on the lower classes. The penguin becomes a true outgrowth of the island chain, having appendages that are ghosted—the “legs seemingly legless”—much as the island’s own boundaries are frequently created and destroyed.

As Tarnmoor continues to provide a description of a rationalized colony atop the Rodondo, its “full counterpart [of] finny hosts which peopled the waters at [the Rodondo’s] base” depict a contrasting organically heterogeneous “multitude”; a “honey-comb of grottoes, affording labyrinthine lurking places for swarms of fairy fish.” Although the fishes’ organismism is recognized, it is immediately hemmed by the narrator’s view of the inhabitants as “novel,” and (as was the “unknown object” off the piazza) the singularity of these fish are reconstructed into an associative league with the fairies of “The Piazza.” Their disregard for humans, which could be readily interpreted as mere unfamiliarity, is

¹¹⁴ This conversation would be interesting to compare to Poe’s similar discussion in Pym.

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transformed into a “nameless fearlessness and tameness.” Once again the narrative attitude tends toward rational compartmentalization, and the narrator cannot but think of methods of containment and exhibition: “many were exceedingly beautiful;” he explains, “and would have well graced the costliest glass globes in which gold-fish are kept for a show” (776).

The distance between the wilds of the Encantadas and the homes of the imperial subject is effectively collapsed by the injection of worth, value, and aestheticization: the multitudinous of exotic inhabitants of the Redondo are quickly adopted into imperial culture, marked as luxury commodities that could very well adorn the “revels held by candlelight in old-fashioned mansions” where Tarnmoor is haunted by the tortoises of the Encantadas.

This imperial collapse of distance also influences the “prescription” to ascend the Redondo Rock: “Go three voyages round the world as a main-royal-man of the tallest frigate that floats; then serve a year or two apprenticeship to the guides who conduct strangers up the peak of Teneriffe [sic]; and as many more, respectively, to a rope-dancer, an Indian Juggler, and a chamois” (780).115 Doubtlessly meant to draw attention to its own fabrication, Tarnmoor presents an internship of gestures that are seemingly unrelated to each other, and, more importantly, to the site on hand (now meaningfully transformed into a “tower”): they each are foreign, exotic, diverse and eccentric. This regimen identifies the view from the rock alongside other sires of imperial conquest—Tenerife and India—as well

115 Foucault: “Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place. Either the entry is compulsory, as in the case of entering a barracks or a prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications. To get in one must have a certain permission and make certain gestures. [...] There are others, on the contrary, that seem to be pure and simple openings, but that generally hide curious exclusions. Everyone can enter into these heterotopic sites, but in fact that is only an illusion—we think we enter where we are, by the very fact that we enter, excluded.”
as the vehicles of that conquest—the frigate. In a similarly imperial gesture, the immediate archipelago becomes approachable through remote topological anchors in a worldwide map:

Never heed for the present yonder Burnt District of the Enchanted Isles. Look edgeways, as it were, past them, to the south. You see nothing; but permit me to point out the direction, if not the place, of certain interesting objects in the vast sea, which, kissing this tower’s base, we behold unscrolling itself towards the Antarctic Pole. We stand now ten miles from the Equator. Yonder, to the east some six hundred miles, lies the continent, this Rock being just about on the parallel of Quito. (780)

This rant effectively transforms experience into topology: as if in order to comprehend the view from atop the rock, it must be relative to other views, experiences and locales. The “place of certain interesting objects” is immediately relatable to one standing atop Rodondo in an active “unscrolling” that marks the location of the Encantadas in orientation to other familiar places on a map. Again, the exotic and uncontainable are rendered mappable: rather approaching this space as it was singularly described in the “The Isles at Large” (emphasizing their “apparent fleetingness and unreality”), the archipelago is ably integrated in immediate relation to the surrounding world. The Rodondo is captured in heterotopic organization of imperialism, where its pinnacle is privileged (closed to one who has not yet accomplished the specified internship, and inaccessible to those whom the island does not allow to approach). Yet, the rock is at the same time catalogued alongside other locales that are not necessarily related to the Encantadas. The islands are essentially defined through a relation with something that they were previously at odds with.

Despite Tarnmoor’s insistence upon the island’s imperial logicality, the Encantadas are discovered through an irrational leap of exploration that echoes the yawl-launching
fantasy of the narrator of “The Piazza.” Shirking conservatism and “superstitious conceit” the explorer Juan Fernandez discovered the isolated isles by riding the wider span of trade winds off South America, “boldly venturing the experiment...of standing broad out from land” (782). While Tarnmoor had earlier claimed that access to the Encantadas was difficult because of tidal patterns and the islands’ elusive topography, here the narrator admits the archipelago’s openness to those who cast off of convention and superstition. While a representative of imperialism, Juan Fernandez is at the same time one who “stand[s] abroad” from the comforting dependability of contained and mapped territories. Similarly, the Encantadas are an odd conglomeration between the absolute openness of “the vast sea” (the unknown sea of Juan Fernandez and, as Tarnmoor notes, “De Gama before him with respect to Europe”), and the homogenizing empire that flattens difference through fabricating relation and annulling the unique.\(^{116}\) This heterotopic connection between sites, where two diverse and unrelated locales are associated through the annulment of difference, is the fundamental tactic of imperial expansion, and a primary function of archivization. The initial leap of illogicality that leads De Gama and Fernandez to “stand broad out from land” is historically coopted as a tactic of capture that creates

\(^{116}\) Foucault, from the “Preface” to The Order of Things. “Perhaps because there arose in its wake the suspicion that there is a worse kind of disorder than that of the incongruous, the linking together of things that are inappropriate; I mean the disorder in which fragments of a large number of possible orders glitter separately in the dimension, without law or geometry, of the heteroclite; and that word should be taken in its most literal, etymological sense: in such a state, things are ‘laid’, ‘placed’, ‘arranged’ in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a place of residence for them, to define a common locus beneath them all.” [...] “The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theater brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another; thus it is that the cinema is a very odd rectangular room, at the end of which, on a two-dimensional screen, one sees the projection of a three-dimensional space...”
heterotopic spaces. As Tarnmoor illustrates atop the Rock Rodondo, once discovered these spaces are relationally inserted within the archive, further bolstering the imperial narrative and fabricating new connections between the State and the formerly exotic. Operating within this mechanism, the narrator does not explain beyond the mere occurrence itself why Juan Fernandez has worked against the defined trade routes and survived—it is only in hindsight, after establishing “new tracks,” that such a gesture is valorized and narrated as a “discovery” (782).

It is through spatial, historical, and temporal mapping that the archive shifts the Encantadas from illocality to being “not quite so remote.” Having through his imperial gaze “settled our relative place on the sea” by “such distant references” as the Antarctic and the equator, the narrator can now turn to “consider” the local topography. This task imposes significance and meaning onto the illogical: projections of “familiar diagrams” onto the landscape to “illustrate” or relationally define (783). The isles are portrayed as having some sense of language to be read by one from the accomplished perspective atop Rodondo—a significant meaning behind their interrelations with each other:

Narborough and Albermarle [isles] are neighbors after a quite curious fashion. A familiar diagram will illustrate this strange neighborhood:

\[
\begin{align*}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Narborough and Albermarle} \quad \text{are neighbors after a quite curious fashion.} \\
\text{A familiar diagram will illustrate this strange neighborhood:}
\end{array}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cut a channel at the above letter joint, and the middle transverse limb is Narborough, and the rest is Albemarle. Volcanic Narborough lies in the black jaws of Albemarle like a wolf's red tongue in his open mouth. (783)}
\end{align*}
\]

Despite the narrator’s initial insistence, this “familiar diagram” of a mirrored “E” does not adequately present the relationship between the two isles: in addition to the flipping of the alphabetic glyph, the illustration requires further “cutting” and manipulation until it is
Alternatively presented as the wolf-and-tongue image that closes this passage. Yet the narrator is still compelled to provide an illustration, guiding his readers’ senses to aptly “illustrate”—to create a bridge to something “familiar” even when one might not be immediately apparent.\footnote{Although I cannot claim to have stood on top of Rock Rodondo (I am still working out my internship with the Indian Juggler...), peering at a map one sees only a vague resemblance to the glyph that the narrator offers. Of course, this is from an alternate perspective.} The figure of the wolf is conjured out of the sea by the failure of the runic symbol to adequately illustrate significance. Notably, this is the second mention of the wolf in The Encantadas: earlier it is told that “Man and wolf alike disown [the islands]...No voice, no low, no howl is heard.” This earlier mention of the nonexistence of the wolf on the islands speaks further to the projective influence of the narrator: even in its use as a diagrammatical emblem the image of the wolf overlays a certain familiarity to this non-sequitur. The connection between writing and mapping could not be made clearer, and the abstract illustration of the relationship between the isles of Narborough and Albemarle is here concretized for the readership at home. It is as if the positioning of the islands in such a figuration cannot not be significant in some fashion.

Having marked the isles’ relationship textually with a concrete glyph, rendering them readable and quantifiable, the narrator (summoning his inner Sub-Sub Librarian), is “now” able to

\[\begin{array}{l}
\text{Men,} \quad \text{none.} \\
\text{Ant-eaters,} \quad \text{unknown.} \\
\text{Man-haters,} \quad \text{unknown.} \\
\text{Lizards,} \quad 500,000. \\
\text{Snakes,} \quad 500,000. \\
\text{Spiders,} \quad 10,000,000. \\
\text{Salamanders,} \quad \text{unknown.} \\
\end{array}\]
Devils, ........................................... do.

Making a clean total of .................. 11,000,000.

Exclusive of an incomputable host of fiends, ant-eaters, man-haters, and salamanders.

This “statisti[cal]” table recalls other American exploits that conjoin natural history and imperialism with “estimates made on the spot.” The exclusion from this calculation of “an incomputable host of fiends, ant-eaters, man-haters, and salamanders,” (and even their quantities being labeled as “unknown”) parallels the impossibility of surveying any “unknown object”—of designing a statistical analysis of any element undiscovered or unanticipated. Although Tarnmoor has not seen any “ant-eaters,” “man-haters,” or “salamanders,” it does not mean that none exist here—these are marked as an anomaly in this inconclusive survey, a placeholder of all that cannot be captured through statistical calculus. While the “round numbers” provide an element of quantifiable comfort, the figures are so large to be inestimable in a quick survey, and to overwhelm anyone envisioning just such a place. Tarnmoor draws attention to the arbitrariness of all such “reliable estimates” by including these fantastic unquantifiables, yet still closing the table with “a clean total.” (Yet, a clean total of what, exactly?) Although this total may be “clean” enough to provide a rough sketch for the imperial center, coupled with the reading of the islands-as-glyph above it actually and archly illustrates the arbitrariness of all such “estimates,” whether mapped, charted, or tabulated.

The narrative arc of “The Encantadas” follows that of exploration and colonization: Tarnmoor transitions from the “desolation” and “emphatic uninhabitableness” of the first

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118 For example, Jefferson’s comparison of large mammals in Notes on the State of Virginia (Query IV).
few sketches, through the collection of scientific data and topographical bearings in the
middle Rodondo sketches, to more humanistic or sympathetic tales of island inhabitants in
the final sketches. In contrast to the clean cold numbers of the naturalist, perhaps the most
humanistic translation of the archipelago is attempted in “Sketch Eighth: Norfolk Isle and
the Chola Widow,” where a widowed woman is stranded for years upon an island with only
her dogs for company. Fittingly, as Tarnmoor travels further from the center of the desolate
archipelago its harshness dissipates. Norfolk Isle, where the Chola Widow’s sketch takes
place, is “sequestered from the rest” of the inhospitable isles, and despite its association
with the Encantadas becomes “a spot made sacred by the strongest trials of humanity,” not
nature (793). No longer are we examining the embodiments of perpetual death and
creation, or the natural elements or topographical aspect of the archipelago, but now have
transitioned (through the tale of the Dog King and the mutineers of Charles’ Island) to the
“sacred[ness]” created by human “sympathy.” All that surrounds the fate of the Chola
widow is tinged with the touch of the human, and the previous overbearing focus on the
hostile landscape and imposing unearthliness of the islands is subsumed by the touching
emotions of the widow at the moment separation from her dogs at the end.

The tale opens with an echo of Marianna’s “unknown object” from “The Piazza,” here
only seen by a chance glance by an inebriated sailor:

…the seaman who heaved with me at the windlass paused suddenly, and
directed my attention to something moving on the land, not along the beach,
but somewhat back, fluttering from a height.

In view of the sequel of this little story, be it here narrated how it came to
pass, that an object which partly from its being so small was quite lost to
every other man on board, still caught the eye of my handspike companion.
The rest of the crew, myself included, merely stood up to our spikes in
heaving, whereas, unwontedly exhilarated, at every turn of the ponderous
windlass, my belted comrade leaped atop of it, with might and main giving a
downward, thewey [sic], perpendicular heave, his raised eye bent in cheery
animation upon the slowly receding shore. Being high lifted above all others was the reason he perceived the object, otherwise unperceivable; and this elevation of his eye was owing to the elevation of his spirits; and this again—for truth must out—to a dram of Peruvian pisco, in guerdon for some kindness done, secretly administered to him that morning by our mulatto steward. Now, certainly, pisco does a deal of mischief in the world; yet seeing that, in the present case, it was the means, though indirect, of rescuing a human being from the most dreadful fate, must we not also needs admit that sometimes pisco does a deal of good? (794)

As with Marianna’s “unknown object,” it is a shift in perspective that leads to this discovery—not only through the elevation of the seaman by leaping atop the windlass, but also the “dram of Peruvian pisco” that “elevat[ed] his spirits.” This pisco—itself an exotic beverage to Tarnmoor’s readership—is provided by the singular “mulatto steward” aboard the ship, himself singular in this ethnic tale. Each of these “lifts” of the seaman is arguably a product of imperialism: the ship and its rigging, the liquor (itself a product of Spanish imperialism in South America), and the mulatto steward—are associatively embedded within the wider construct of global imperialism, and are conglomerated upon the deck of the ship, only then bringing into view the unknown object, in this case the handkerchief of Hunilla, the Chola widow, herself a “half-breed Indian woman of Payta in Peru” as similarly exotic as Marianna in her land of fairies (794-5).

Introducing Hunilla, whose name perhaps references the sheer exoticness of the Huns, there is a moment where Tarnmoor reflects “It is not artistic heartlessness, but I wish I could but draw in crayons; for this woman was a most touching sight; and crayons, tracing softly melancholy lines, would best depict the mournful image of the dark-damasked Chola widow” (794). This aside recalls Meriwether Lewis’s similar reflection in his Journals upon first seeing the falls of the Missouri River:

after wrighting [sic] this imperfect description I again viewed the falls and was so much disgusted with the imperfect idea which it conveyed of the
scene that I determined to draw my pen across it and begin again, but then reflected that I could not perhaps succeed better than penning the first impressions of the mind. I wished for the pencil of Salvator Rosa, or the pen of Thompson, that I might be enabled to give to the enlightened world some just idea of this truly magnificent and sublimely grand object, which has from the commencement of time been concealed from the view of civilized man. But this was fruitless and vain. (155)

Here Lewis, as does Tarnmoor, provides a proper and practical use for the artistic pencil: to document the fantastical discoveries of exploration that words cannot convey. The invocation of Rosa again echoes Tarnmoor's own desire to script for the “enlightened world” the sublimity of the isles. As with the proper role of the “pew and the piazza” in “The Piazza,” here the artist is charged as an archivist alongside the naturalist and explorer.

Hunilla is entrapped by a trick of commerce where, in exchange for passage to and from the island, she and her brother and husband would provide both money and the promise of one hundred tortoises, deemed to be “one hundred hostages” securing their trip home. During her long tenure upon the island Hunilla witnesses the death of her brother and husband in a sketchily built catamaran in an oddly staged scene, “peer[ing] out from among the branches as from the lattice of a high balcony” as if “an oval frame, through which the bluely boundless sea rolled like a painted one [...] Death in a silent picture; a dream of the eye; such vanishing shapes as the mirage shows” (796-7) This theatric episode doubles the voyeuristic aspect of the reader in such tragic tales, and even Hunilla becomes detached and distant from this tragedy, excused as “so distant from her blasted bower and her common sense of things, that Hunilla gazed and gazed, nor raised a finger or a wail. But as good to sit thus dumb, in stupor staring on that dumb show, for all that otherwise might be done” (797).
As isolate from civilization as Tarnmoor emphasizes in his earlier sketches, Hunilla develops alternate systems for the most regulated of empirical measurements, most famously a “piece of hollow cane,” used to count time:

Circular lines at intervals cut all round this surface, divided it into six panels of unequal length. In the first were scored the days, each tenth one marked by a longer and deeper notch; the second was scored for the number of sea-fowl eggs for sustenance, picked out from the rocky nests; the third, how many fish had been caught from the shore; the fourth, how many small tortoises found inland; the fifth, how many days of sun; the sixth, of clouds; which last, of the two, was the greater one. (800)

Time here transitions from the traditional meters of days, (based in tens instead of sevens), to measuring time bodily through diet, and finally through isolate experience itself—days of clouds or of sun that would be meaningless except to Hunilla herself (or, perhaps Marianna). Hunilla has become totally isolate from the logics of civilization that had first inspired her tenure upon the island, and had left her stranded there. Hunilla’s reintroduction to civilization is no kinder than her abandonment by them, however, as the same agents of commerce and empire that abandoned her are doubled in Tarnmoor’s captain and his crewmates upon rescuing her. She is repeatedly talked over and interrupted by the ship’s captain, and then Tarnmoor who, in the end, ventriloquizes the remainder of her tale:

"There were more days," said our Captain; "many, many more; why did you not go on and notch them, too, Hunilla?"
"Señor, ask me not."
"And meantime, did no other vessel pass the isle?"
"Nay, Señor; —but—"
"You do not speak; but what, Hunilla?"
"Ask me not, Señor."
"You saw ships pass, far away; you waved to them; they passed on; —was that it, Hunilla?"
"Señor, be it as you say." (800)
Hunilla here sacrifices her own voice, so long detached from the records of civilization, and the only true authority upon what has actually been measured on the reed, and has it subsumed by a master narrative of the captain’s speech. She does not admit that “it is as you say,” but rather “be it as you say,” suggesting that the record of this text should show that it is as the agent may write it.

Hunilla’s tale recalls Spenser’s opening verse at the beginning of the first sketch of “The Encantadas”—the impending distortion of reckoning and perception of anyone who steps foot on the shores of the enchanted isles. Tarnmoor explains that the charmed topography of the island archipelago is inverted when examined by “one upon the shore, [to whom the isles] appear invariably the same: fixed, cast, glued into the very body of a cadaverous death” (770). The definition of death here is not of finality and calm, but rather a living “body” of putrescence and decomposition that lingers intact and enduring, upon which “ruin itself can work little” (768). These zombified cadavers are elsewhere embodied as the island tortoises, accounted for as “wicked sea officers, more especially commodores and captains”—men who had once indulged and profited in the human movements of commerce and empire, but now left as perpetual remnants upon the inhospitable rocks (768). Just as the islands are “fixed, cast, and glued” in a sort of timelessness, yet they still meander throughout the ocean and continually create land through volcanic eruptions, death upon them is part of a cycle, a perpetuated “dwelling upon these hot aridities” of both “lasting sorrow and penal hopelessness,” “wonderful longevity,” and “dateless, indefinite endurance” (768, 771). The transformed tortoises are in a constant tremulous existence between life and death, perfect vehicles in motion and stillness that are self-perpetual and fulfilled. As Hunilla’s tale emphasizes these cadavers become the very commerce of empire,
being used to barter for her own life with the captains of imperialism. Their task (or curse) is to be an eternal archivist, inscribing whatever they run over or up against without purpose or intention, to mark through simple “hopeless toil” the “vitreous inland rocks worn down and grooved into deep ruts by ages and ages of the slow draggings [...] in quest of pools of scanty water” (768). In addition to this eternal task, the tortoises themselves are similarly palimpsestically inscribed:

[B]lack as widower’s weeds, heavy as chests of plate, with vast shells medallioned and orbed like shields, and dented and blistered like shields that have breasted a battle, shaggy, too, here and there, with dark green moss, and slimy with the spray of the sea. These mystic creatures, suddenly translated by night from unutterable solitudes to our peopled deck, affected me in a manner not easy to unfold. They seemed newly crawled forth from beneath the foundations of the world. Yea, they seemed the identical tortoises whereon the Hindoo plants this total sphere. With a lantern I inspected them more closely. Such worshipful venerableness of aspect! Such furry greenness mantling the rude peelings and healing the fissures of their shattered shells. I no more saw three tortoises. They expanded -- became transfigured. I seemed to see three Roman Coliseums in magnificent decay. (770-1)

It is not only that the tortoise shells are marked by “rude peelings” and “fissures,” but that these gashes are gained through their own marking of the island, and stand out as evidence of their contact. Their writing of this natural archive of the islands is reversed back upon them and carried with them at all times. The narrative must be told from two sides: one on the surface of the island, along the paths carved by the wanderings of the tortoise, and secondly upon the shell of the tortoise itself. The discovery of these marks is immediately transformative not only to the tortoises (now “three Roman Coliseums”), but also to the narrator:

As, lantern in hand, I scraped among the moss and beheld the ancient scars of bruises received in many a sullen fall among the marly mountains of the isle— scars strangely widened, swollen, half obliterate, and yet distorted like those sometimes found in the bark of very hoary trees, I seemed an antiquary
of a geologist, studying the bird tracks and ciphers upon the exhumed slates
trod by incredible creatures whose very ghosts are now defunct. (771)

Here again the narrator’s impulse to make meaningful any inscription, to find anthropic
importance in every marking, to always read or even project a familiar archive even when
he is able to admit that “they seemed hardly of the seed of earth.” The narrator himself
goes through the transformation from archaeologist studying defunct empires to a
gleologist reading the ciphers of “defunct” ghosts. Although time may begin to erase such
scars, the naturalist or the historian can always write the meaning of these marks into a
narrative, no matter how “ancient”. History here starts with the presumed similarity of the
Roman Empire, and then expands to encompass the longue durée, a history that
outstretches any narrative encompassment, any imperial timeline. This mode of thought a
continuing embodiment of a death that is a constant, one slowly accumulating and evolving
rather absolute and final. In this equation, death is as dynamic as life, constantly growing
and digesting, reconstituting the relationships between the elements of the Encantadas. If
archivization requires the filing and categorizing the dead pieces of information into its
appropriate place, keeping them close at hand in case they should be needed, this becomes
a natural archive. To the narrator, their counterparts are the very imperial narratives
constructed from the dead matter catalogued in the archive; the tortoises are the historians
of the Encantadas, timelessly scratching their narrative onto the islands themselves. By
substituting perpetuation, lingering, and limbo in lieu of a quantifiable and recordable
singular eventhood of death, the tortoises’ existence overreaches any state (or even
human) narrative. If existence is as a tortoise “butt[ing] like a battering-ram against the
immovable foot of the foremast, and still striving, tooth and nail, to force impossible
passage,” or, a “drudging impulse to straightforwardness in a belittered world,” the
narrative that emerges is much longer and slower than any that Tarnmoor can comprehend. It is a straightening of a narrative that pushes forward despite its feathered edges, and its pre-history (the time prior to it having “crawled forth from beneath the foundations of the world”), is entirely lost—left to be created and fabricated as the origins of the country house in “The Piazza.”

While sketching for the reader the history of the country farmhouse in the opening pages of “The Piazza,” the narrator both creates and historicizes an authoritative presence inherent within the structure of the State. Functioning as an narrative lens, the architecture piazza skews the world in an exercise that is both spatial as well as nomological: the narrator’s perspective of the outside is born out of and perpetuating authority; a vantage from which the outside is made inside and the inside is turned outside. This new archivist arguably oversteps Melville’s Sub-Sub Librarian, who is introduced as one who accumulates extracts, and was generally too feeble to be politically motivated. More than describing this phenomenon, it is variably enacted and challenged in “The Encantadas,” an alternative archive where the narrator is caught between his role in imperial expansion and his own failure to contain all that his experience encounters. When read in conjunction, “The Piazza” and “The Encantadas” foreground the remnants of the State process of archivization and capture—those elements that fall outside of the means of control that the state is reliant upon. These remnants, by their exclusion from the State, both define and challenge its authority, and suggest alternative means of quantification that supersede any legislative or political entity. In this existence outside of the State, rather than narratives of identity and history, the singularity of experience and encounters with the anomalous are the defining attributes of any site or individual.
Appendix I:  
Introduction - Works Cited


Appendix II:
Chapter I - Works Cited


Appendix III:
Chapter II - Works Cited


Appendix IV:
Chapter III - Works Cited

“California State Militia and National Guard Unit Histories - California State Rangers.”


Jillson, Cal. Pursuing the American Dream: Opportunity and Exclusion over Four Centuries.


Appendix V:  
Chapter V - Works Cited


Kemp, Scott A. “‘They but reflect the things’: Style and Rhetorical Purpose in Melville’s ‘The Piazza Tale.’” Style. 35.1 (2001) 50-78.


