

Between Individual and General History: Godwin's Seventeenth-Century Texts

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*I*n his 1832 Preface to the Standard Authors edition of *Fleetwood*, Godwin still speaks of the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) as his “favourite work,” even though its ideas had fallen into disrepute after the closing down of dissent in the later 1790s and the Regency period. It is often argued, moreover, that the utopianism of *Political Justice* was rebuked, perhaps renounced, in *Caleb Williams*, where Godwin brought the “metaphysical dissecting knife”¹ of individual history to bear on all idealisms, disclosing in them a heart of darkness that he continued to probe through the brooding, misanthropic characters that reviewers associated with his novels. In this paper I want to argue that if *Political Justice* and *Caleb Williams* form a textual pair, a similarly doubled and doubled-back relationship exists between Godwin’s historical novel *Mandeville* (1817) and *The History of the Commonwealth* (1824-1828), both of which texts are set in the civil war and interregnum period from 1641 to the Restoration. In his essay “Of History and Romance” (1797), Godwin says of this period in English history:

The period of the Tudors is a period of base and universal slavery.... The period of the Stuarts is the only portion of our history interesting to the heart of man. Yet its noblest virtues are obscured by the vile jargon of fanaticism and hypocrisy. From the moment that the grand contest excited under the Stuarts was quieted by

the Revolution, our history assumes its most insipid and insufferable form. It is the history of negotiations and tricks, it is the history of revenues and debts, it is the history of corruption and political profligacy, but it is not the history of genuine independent man.²

It is worth noting that the period of the Stuarts *includes* the Restoration, the period of Godwin's third seventeenth-century text on Milton's nephews, even though both *Mandeville* and *HCE* stop just short of the accession of Charles II. But the major part of this paper is concerned with the dialectic, or negative dialectic, between the civil war texts. Like all Godwin's novels, *Mandeville* is an "individual history," in this case set within an immensely complicated historical contention that is pushed into the background, but is crucial to understanding the novel. Curiously, the text includes no Republicans, as the antagonisms of the day are internalized on the Royalist side, decentered from the opposition of King and Parliament, and further internalized in Charles Mandeville's disturbed psyche as the site of a body that is "the inscribed surface of events [...] totally imprinted by history, and the process of history's destruction of the body."³ The English "Revolution" itself is also nowhere present in the novel. Instead, the narrative is book-ended by two ex-centric uprisings. The first is the Irish Rebellion of 1641, in which the infant Charles' parents perish in the massacre of Protestant settlers at the house of the Irish rebel Sir Phelim O'Neile, where they are being kept prisoner. Mandeville, the "only one" who escapes (M 19-20),⁴ is saved by his Catholic nurse, but taken from her by the severe Hilkiah Bradford, chaplain of the garrison, who then installs himself as the boy's tutor in the forlorn castle of his uncle Audley in England. The second uprising is the rag-tag assault that Mandeville himself leads on the marriage coach bearing his sister Henrietta and his rival, the apostate Clifford, who has recently inherited a fortune by converting to Catholicism. The greater part of the novel is taken up with Mandeville's "eternal war" on his classmate Clifford (M 124), the darling of the Royalist side and the epitome of all perfection in the public eye. Though more one-sided, since

Clifford seems remarkably free of all malice, the "inter-destructiveness" of Clifford and Mandeville (M 141) resembles that of the pair Caleb-Falkland. Clifford escapes unharmed from Mandeville's assault, but Mandeville is severely disfigured. The novel ends with Mandeville traumatically yet triumphantly contemplating his face in a mirror, on the eve of a Restoration whose domestic version he has refused in disfiguring the reconciliation figured in the marriage of Henrietta and Clifford. For this marriage of a Presbyterian brought up (by adoption) as an Anglican, to an Episcopalian turned Catholic, is the very symbol of the settlements and expedencies at the heart of the Restoration.

Godwin had intended to write a novel beginning with the Irish Rebellion and ending with the Titus Oates conspiracy in 1678, when Mandeville would have been fifty. This text would have continued well into the Restoration. But instead he breaks off the text when his protagonist is just short of twenty-one, with a more obscure and private act of resistance that signifies the (almost) coming of age of history as the site of a permanent abortion.⁵ For while writers as different as the "whig historian" Hume (HR 300) and the radical Thelwall are committed to narratives of progress, Godwin is uneasy about restorations and unions that purport to resolve underlying contradictions. If *HCE* can be opposed to Hume's *History of England*, Mandeville contests Scott's conscription of the historical novel in *Waverley* into a form of nation-building. Godwin had read Scott's novel in 1815-16, and *Mandeville* uses the same technique of what Lukács calls "the mediocre hero," in which the narrative is focalized through a character who is somewhat to the side of world history.⁶ *Waverley* economizes the losses of history within a discourse of improvement that puts war in England's past, thus supporting the common view that associated Britain with evolution and France with revolution. But *Mandeville* goes back a century earlier to England's beheading of her own king in 1649, and to a period of dissension before the invention of Great Britain in 1707. This earlier time is then drawn back into the present through Godwin's return to Ireland in 1641 as the infancy of his protagonist, the infancy of British history

itself. For the resonance between the Irish Rebellion of 1641 and the Irish Uprising of 1798, the prelude to Britain's constitution as a "United Kingdom" in 1800, reminds us of the violence underlying all acts of union and settling of disputes, public or personal.

Indeed, in a bitterly masochistic conclusion which is worth quoting at length, Mandeville compares his wound to the brand set by West Indian planters on their slaves, thus assuming the inverse of his own family's privileged position among English planters in Ireland, and linking Ireland, his own abjection, and the colonialism of his own time in a circle of injustice:

I had received a deep and perilous gash, the broad brand of which I shall not fail to carry with me to my grave. The sight of my left eye is gone; the cheek beneath is severed, with a deep trench between. My wound is of that sort, which in the French civil wars got the name of une balafre. [...] The sword of my enemy had given a perpetual grimace, a sort of preternatural and unvarying distorted smile, or deadly grin, to my countenance. [...] My situation was not like what it had hitherto been. Before, to think of Clifford was an act of the mind, [...] now I bore Clifford and his injuries perpetually about with me. Even as certain tyrannical planters in the West Indies have set a brand with a red hot iron upon the negroes they have purchased, to denote that they are irremediably a property, so Clifford had set his mark upon me, as a token that I was his for ever. (325)

By contrast *HCE*, the major prose work of Godwin's later career, is a revisiting of *Political Justice*, insofar as it begins with the "virtuous men" who "made the visionary attempt to establish a republic in England."⁷ "They were a set of men new in this country," Godwin tells us, who did not become "wholly extinct till the Revolution in 1688," but whose "extinction may be referred to the period of the Restoration" (*HCE* I.5-6). Godwin's history, like his novel, ends on the verge of the

Restoration, which was rendered "inevitable" by the death of Cromwell (HCE IV.608). But though Cromwell could not but die at some point, the failure of the English Revolution, as Godwin sees it, was "inevitable" only by a certain contingency. Why did Godwin write this chronicle of the English Revolution (as distinct from the "commonwealth") after *Mandeville*, as if reversing the deconstruction of *Political Justice* by *Caleb Williams*, but in the more sober mode of "history" or practice? For *HCE* can fairly be described as a "general history," but in a Foucaultian sense to be discussed later, rather than in the form Godwin critiques at the beginning of "Of History and Romance," where he opposes "general" to "individual" history. Taken together the individual and the general history asymptotically approach what Jon Klancher calls "the unavailability to modern Britain of its own revolutionary moment."⁸ General history, in the multifocal, untotaled form that Godwin presents it, defuses and confuses the ideological binary of the struggle between King and Parliament, even as it keeps open the desire behind the broader Revolution that produces both the Commonwealth and the Protectorate as experiments. At the same time, as he moved between Enlightenment prose and Romantic literature, Godwin would become increasingly interested in fanaticism in the broader form of misanthropy. It is this fanaticism of character in the individual history of *Mandeville* which, despite the failure of the English Revolution and of Mandeville's maladroitness against the union of Clifford and Henrietta, gives a particular urgency to the unfinished project of deconstruction with which the novel's ending leaves us.

But before turning to Godwin's seventeenth-century texts it is necessary to say something about his larger historiographical project and the critical-dialectical apparatus he provides for approaching it in his seminal essay "Of History and Romance." In 1821 Godwin published a *History of Greece* for the Juvenile Library under the pseudonym of Edward Baldwin. In historical sequence it is preceded by the *Pantheon* (1806), which he considered part of the heroic age or fabulous period of Greek history, and is followed by *The History of Rome* (1809), also for

the Juvenile Library. That there is a quasi-systematic project here which unfolds over more than two decades, and that the children's histories were not just products of financial exigency, is evident from Godwin's evocation of the *Pantheon* fifteen years later in *The History of Greece*. In the *History of Greece* he explains that "Next [...] to the history of our own country" Greece, whose history he would rather separate from that of the Egyptians, Carthaginians and other ancient peoples, is the most "worthy of our curiosity."⁹ The history of England, surveyed in two children's books (1806, 1810), begins in more detail with *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1803), which takes up the fourteenth century, including John of Gaunt and the "Manners, Opinions Arts and Literature of England" in that period. The next stage had already been covered in Godwin's second novel, *St. Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (1799). In between *St. Leon* and *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century* (1817), Godwin wrote "Fragment of a Romance," to which he alludes in the Preface to *Mandeville* but which was not published till 1835, and in which the hero has the "faculty" or "infirmity" of "falling asleep for twenty, thirty, or a hundred years at a time" (M 7). The legend of the seven sleepers of Ephesus to which Godwin alludes here, however, is not just a trope for the continuations and second chances that we see in *St. Leon*. It is also a figure for repression, as when Godwin uses it in 1795 to describe those who fall asleep, awaken and expect nothing to be changed.¹⁰

Continuing with Godwin's history of England, as a more neutral counterpoint to *Mandeville* he produced *The History of the Commonwealth* (1824-28), at the end of which he gestures toward a history of the Restoration, but begs off writing it himself (IV.608). That gap is filled by two earlier texts. Godwin read several works of late seventeenth-century history for *Fleetwood* (1805), on some of which – Burnet, Clarendon – he later drew for *Mandeville*.¹¹ But *Fleetwood* domesticates the restlessness of the negative that surfaces in the civil war period within the private sphere of a sensibility uneasy with itself. In the public sphere, the *Lives of Edward and John Philips, Nephews and Pupils of Milton* (1815) also deals with an earlier part of the long

Restoration. The *Lives* is situated in a period of "negotiations and tricks," but it is also anchored in its reference to Milton, an absent hero of the Republican period. On Milton, Stanley Gardiner, the leading nineteenth-century historian of the Stuart monarchy and interregnum, writes: "Milton's theories on government were no better suited to the actual of the day than the Lady of the 'Comus' would have been at home at the court of Henrietta Maria, or the Archangel Raphael in the Long Parliament."¹² Godwin, we can surmise, would have agreed. Hence Milton is sheltered from the *Lives* just as the commonwealth-men are inadequate to the turbulent world of *Mandeville*. There is also a short history of Lady Jane Grey and her husband (1806), young pawns in a challenge to the Elizabethan monarchy. This challenge cannot yet be consolidated into a "sign of history," as Kant says of the indeterminate yet powerful role of the French Revolution;¹³ but it does figure an interruption, a deviation without a clear future.

As we survey this list, it seems that Godwin was writing a history of England in bits and pieces, prefaced by a history of the classical world, and that he makes forays into this large project through biography, romance, general history, individual history, histories for children, and most importantly literature. It is as if through these shifts in genre, he wants to reflect, inconclusively, on the differences opened up by different optics, although broadly speaking ancient history is simple and iconic and modern history more complex. The republican moment is a (dis)appearing motif in this long history. For Roman history is traced only from the time of its legendary kings to the end of the republic. The history of Greece too is followed only up to the "time in which it was reduced to a Roman province" with a corresponding extinction of "the arts of imagination and elegance,"¹⁴ which are similarly ineffectual in the Renaissance Italy of Mary Shelley's *Valperga*, and out of step with the literature that the Romantics actually wrote.

Finally British history is also followed only up to the apostasy of the Commonwealth in the career of Cromwell, as Godwin never writes the history of kings. Instead the period of the Restoration is approached

obliquely through the “minor history” of Milton’s nephews, a term I adapt from Deleuze and Guattari’s term “minor literature,”¹⁵ and which also describes *Mandeville*. For significantly, although he takes up various lives of Milton as part of the genealogy of his own work, Godwin did not produce a life of Milton *per se*, because he could not write a monumental history that would institutionalize Milton through a legacy that could have included his Republicanism, his views on marriage, his resistance to institutions, and his *Areopagitica* as a version of Godwin’s own “Choice in Reading.” Monumental history, as Nietzsche says, gathers up exemplary figures from the past to create a “highroad for humanity through the ages,” and makes history, even radical history, a form of what Godwin calls institution. It reassures us with “the knowledge that the great thing existed [...] and so may be possible again.” In the service of this mission it “bring[s] together things that are incompatible and generalize[s] them into compatibility.”¹⁶ By contrast, for Godwin it is precisely these incompatibilities that are the motor of the unfinished project of deconstructing institution: a word by which he does not just mean political and civil institutions, but the very act of reifying discourse as dogma.¹⁷

As conspicuously, Godwin writes his history out of order. *The History of Greece*, though he had struggled to write it earlier, was completed relatively late. Greece cannot be foundational; it can only be revisited through the optic of nostalgia, at the “present moment” when the Greeks, “unsupported and alone,” are engaged in the struggle for liberty that also occupies Shelley’s *Hellas* (1822).¹⁸ The asynchronicity between the order of history and the order in which Godwin writes it makes the general field of this history what Deleuze and Guattari, in their discussion of minor literature, call a “rhizome” or “burrow” that “has multiple entrances [...] main doors and side doors” with different “rules of usage” and “locations”:

We will enter, then, by any point whatsoever; [...] no entrance is more privileged even if it seems an impasse, a tight passage. [...] We will be trying only to discover

what other points our entrance connects to, what crossroads and galleries one passes through to link two points [...] and how the map of the rhizome is modified if one enters by another point.¹⁹

Thus the individual history of Mandeville is one point of entry into the seventeenth century, which Godwin enters from another point seven years later when he begins publishing *HCE*, and as we shall see, from yet another point when he publishes the final volume on Cromwell in 1828.

More theoretically, the "Essay On History and Romance" is itself just such a burrow with many entrances. Written for a second edition of *The Enquirer* but not published in Godwin's lifetime, the essay begins with a contrast between "general" and "individual" history (HR 291-95). It appears to follow a dialectical argument that proceeds, by a series of metonymic substitutions that forget the initial distinction, to valorize "romance" over "history" (299). But in fact Godwin sets up a complex series of binaries that overlap, supplement and ultimately deconstruct each other: from individual versus general history, to ancient versus modern history, to romance versus history, and in a reversal of values, history versus romance. As the near end of this series, the "eulogium" of romance (301) is no more than a trans-position in a speculative process generated by an essay that is paradoxical and provocative rather than definitive. The result is that the essay does not so much choose between the terms of its title, as put a variety of approaches to history in play, causing us to "turn" the subject around in "a thousand ways" and examine it "in every point of view."²⁰

More specifically, Godwin begins with the distinction between individual and general history, aligning the first with singularity and contingency, while associating the second, which is "the study of mankind in a mass," with probability and the discerning of regularities or recurrent patterns (HR 291-93). Attributing the respectability of general history to a level of detail that makes it dry and difficult, Godwin opts for the study of individuals, and insists that he is "not contented to observe" an historical figure "upon the public stage" but would rather "follow him

into his closet” (294). Here the contingency of individual history also becomes a source of possibility, allowing us to imagine “such conjunctures and combinations [...] as, though they have never yet occurred, are within the capacities of our nature” (293). This modulation from contingency into possibility then allows Godwin to invisibly substitute for the distinction between individual and general history a new binary of ancient history, which is full of “men of a free and undaunted spirit” (295), and modern history, which is “monotonous” and “blight[s] in the bud every grander and more ample development of soul” (295). Insofar as ancient history is thought to be full of “fables,” while “the history which comes nearest to truth, is the *mere* chronicle of facts, places and dates” (297, emphasis added), Godwin then raises the question of which is truer: fact or imagination. Ancient history is thus displaced by romance. Hence, by a sleight of hand we have now passed from individual history, which had claimed to be more complex than general history, to a binary in which “history” (no longer distinguished as individual or general) is opposed by this bolder and simpler “romance.” This allows Godwin to reverse the priority of history over romance, claiming that the “writer of romance” is the “writer of real history,” while “he who was formerly called the historian” is simply a romance writer “without the ardour, the enthusiasm” of his rival. (301).

But then at the very end of the essay, Godwin suddenly casts doubt on the “sagacity” he had attributed to the writer who studies individuals rather than events (293): “To sketch a few bold outlines of character is no desperate undertaking; but to tell precisely how such a person would act in a given situation, requires a sagacity scarcely less than divine” (301). So now it is the romance writer who is insensitive to contingency, and the historian whose empiricism makes him at least passively open to it: “Here then the historian in some degree, though imperfectly, seems to recover his advantage upon the writer of romance. He indeed does not understand the character he exhibits, but the events are taken out of his hands and determined by the system of the universe, and therefore, as far as his information extends, must be true. The romance writer, on the

other hand, is continually straining at a foresight to which his faculties are incompetent, and continually fails" (301).

Rather than concluding the essay, this *volte face* sends us back to discrepancies at the beginning which suggest that Godwin's dismissal of general history had been more double-edged than it seemed. For transecting and confusing the broad opposition between romance and history is the role of "particulars" or "subtle peculiarities" (292, 294). General history is on both sides of this matter. On the one hand it is a "dry and frigid science" because the knowledge it generates is "confounded" in "a labyrinth of particulars" and cannot rise "to the dignity of principles" (292). On the other hand, Godwin complains that general history focuses on "the causes that operate universally upon masses of men" and ignores the way these forces can be "turned aside in their operation by the varying character of individuals" (291). It reduces events to predictable patterns or regularities. This is also to say that general history does produce principles, even if they are synthetic *a posteriori* and not *a priori* principles (293); or to go even further we could say that principles ignore particulars. It is because he is so committed to particulars that Godwin valorizes individual history, not just because of the singularities that reside within it but also because of their effect on the reader or spectator, which allows it to be a "genuine praxis upon the nature of man" (297). Thus,

We go forth into the world; we see what man is; we enquire into what he was; and when we return home and engage in the solemn act of self-investigation [...we] produce the materials we have collected abroad, and, by a sort of magnetism, cause those particulars to start out to view in ourselves, which might otherwise have lain for ever undetected. (293)

In fact it is through these chemical affinities between characters and readers that those new "conjunctures and combinations" (293) occur which make individual history transformative, though not in straightforward ways. But then, in a further discrepancy, if particulars or

singularities are what make individual history superior to general history, and if romance then takes the place of individual history in the essay's moving army of metaphors and metonymies, it is on the ground of particulars that *romance* is finally judged wanting: "To sketch a few bold outlines of character is no desperate undertaking; but to tell precisely how such a person would act in a given situation, requires a sagacity scarcely less than divine" (301). The writer of romance is thus deficient because he cannot see "those minute shades in a character that would modify its conduct" (301). Indeed, taking Godwin's own children's histories as an example, one could describe the writer of romance as producing "historical abridgments, in which each point of the subject is touched upon only" (294). By contrast, the historian, we are told at the end, is careful about particulars. Even if his work is dry and frigid, then, it can provide the conditions of possibility for discerning that "single grain of sand" which can potentially alter the entire "motion" of the earth and "in process of ages, diversif[y] its events" (301).

As important as "particulars" are to unsettling a binary logic is the topos of grasping events in a "mass." General history studies "masses" of men and is therefore without individuality. Composed as it is of details, it "will supply [the reader] with no clear ideas. The mass, as fast as he endeavours to cement and unite it, crumbles from his grasp" (292). If we want to understand history, we must not consider "society in a mass, but must analyse the materials of which it is composed" (293). And yet the word mass is also used of romance: "the noblest [...] species of history [...] is] a composition in which, with a scanty substratum of facts and dates, the writer interweaves a number of happy, ingenious and instructive inventions, blending them into one continuous and indiscernible mass" (298). We might then want to revisit the particulars of Godwin's dismissal of general history as a "mass" that "crumbles" from our "grasp, like a lump of sand" (292). For perhaps the disintegration of the unifications attempted by general history, which are produced by that history's wealth of detail, can potentially release the grain of sand, the particular that changes the course of interpretation.

What emerges from these conjunctures or disjunctures in the essay is a certain value that Godwin sees in general history: a value that is indeed borne out by his own practice. On the one hand Godwin eschews general history as a "universal science," which he associates with the Enlightenment historians Voltaire, Hume, and Robertson (294, 296). On the other hand, general history seems to converge in certain respects with individual history's disclosure of particulars, suggesting that it needs to be thought beyond the already shifting terms laid out in the essay. After all, when Godwin attributes "true economy" to a "history which, expanding itself through several volumes, treats only of a short period" (294), he could as well be describing his own *HCE*. Interestingly, Foucault also uses the term "general history" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969): "Total history," he argues, "draws all phenomena around a single centre [...] a meaning, a spirit;" whereas general history "deploy[s] the space of a dispersion." The distinction overlaps with the more well-known one that Foucault makes two years later in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" between history and genealogy, though the terms general history and genealogy are not quite identical. For genealogy, which Foucault practices but does not extensively theorize, is a diachronic term, while general history, in the spirit of the *Archaeology*, describes a dispersion that operates across a more synchronic space. General history, as perhaps the condition of possibility for genealogy, shares with it the quality of being "gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary": it "operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times." Total history "compose[s] the finally reduced diversity of time into a totality fully closed upon itself," insisting strongly on various unities: "vast unities like 'periods' or 'centuries'" which operate at the expense of "ruptures" and "interruptions," so as to "reconstitute the overall form of a civilization [...] the 'face' of a period."²¹ In effect, what Godwin describes as "history" in the essay partakes of both categories, leaving him, in his historiographic practice, to disentangle a more truly "general" history from the total history he begins by opposing to individual history.

We can approach Godwin's seventeenth-century texts within this tetrahedron of terms that includes romance, total history, individual history, and general history in the Foucaultian sense. For the seventeenth century from the interregnum to the "Revolution" of 1688 was the focus of almost all Godwin's writing from 1815-28, though interleaved with discussions of how Britain should respond to renewed prospects of war and discussions of Ireland's relation to the question of population, which make clear the contemporary urgency of this earlier period in Britain's history. In short, Godwin made several entries into British history through side doors with different rules of usage and location, but my aim here will be to focus on the interface, or as Foucault puts it "the interplay of correlation and dominance"²² between his seventeenth-century texts.

Of these the earliest is *The Lives of Milton's Nephews* which, unlike the novels, consists of a pair of individual histories written in the third and not the first person. As such, the lives are in a certain way also general histories, but in the diachronic mode of "genealogy" which produces what Foucault calls singularities.²³ The pivotal text in the set is "Godwin's most remarkable and original novel" *Mandeville*.²⁴ a "minor history" in the traumatic form of a first-person novel which breaks open narratives that read British history progressively as moving from the Glorious Revolution, through the union of England and Scotland as Great Britain in 1707, to the constitution of Britain itself as a "United Kingdom" after the defeat of the 1798 Irish Uprising. For Deleuze and Guattari minor literature is not literature written in a minor language but arises from a minor position within a major language, it is a "minor practice of major language" which therefore has a "high coefficient of deterritorialization." Moreover, everything in it is charged with a "political immediacy," such that "a whole other story is vibrating" within an individual history, which for purposes of this essay will mean taking up the popular culture of the time, the religious fanaticism threaded through the novel, as a "line of escape" that connects individual and general history in a negative dialectic.²⁵ Finally, as the last in this seventeenth-century series there is Godwin's massive *History of the*

Commonwealth. Apparently Godwin had wanted a younger colleague to write a single volume "called the Lives of the Commonwealth Men."²⁶ But when he came to write *HCE* six years later it was no longer focused on individual heroes, but became a general history with no clear pattern, concluding with a fourth volume subtitled *Oliver, Lord Protector*, which stands both in and apart from the rest.

HCE is everything Godwin criticizes in general history: it is a "labyrinth of particulars" in which the reader gets lost, and it is "dry and frigid" in its detail (HR 292). Although it contains individuals (such as Pym, Hampden, Coke, Vane, and Essex), there are so many of them that, with the exception of Cromwell, they fail to stand out; their individual histories are introduced, interrupted, and resumed across a period of two decades, in which Godwin largely moves from 1641-59, but also loops back and forth between different years, as if scratching over and recopying a document several times. As general history in a Foucaultian sense, *HCE* is precisely the opposite of universal history, being an aleatory probing of what cannot be generalized into compatibility. Why did Godwin dedicate so much of his time to this gray and meticulous history, for which he was given access to new state papers?²⁷ Or what is the interface between this text and his much more powerful if claustrophobic novel? We will answer this question first on the level of content, but then in terms of three historiographical procedures: singularity, horizon, and "series."

First, we should point out that as a late resumption of *Political Justice* *HCE* is not about a lost republican moment. As Godwin says at the outset, England was not "sufficiently ripe for a republican government; it may be that a republican government would at no time be a desirable acquisition for the people of this country" (*HCE* I.6). Indeed as Rowland Weston puts it, Godwin "downplays the *revolutionary* nature of the republicans' activity, insisting that, in exceeding his prerogative, the King had created a revolutionary situation that the republicans then inherited and attempted to manage according to their more evolved political lights."²⁸ Unlike Godwin's classical histories, *HCE* therefore

does not end but begins with the republican moment. Or put differently, *HCE* does not culminate in the defeat of republicanism but thinks with and beyond it. The republican heroes Hampden and Pym die in 1643, and their successors are “Vane, St. John, and Cromwel” (I.16-17). Of Cromwell, Godwin later says that he “broke this party in pieces [...] he drove the firmest and most enlightened among them by main force from the helm of the state” (III.562). The difference between the iconic status that Godwin briefly confers on these men – a “set of men new in this country” who became “extinct at the Revolution in 1688” (I.5) – and the more complex, incoherent world in which they act is like the difference between Godwin’s histories of Greece and Rome for the Juvenile Library and the adult histories of modern Europe. Or it is like the difference between the poet Clare in *Caleb Williams*, the one “person who could most effectually have moderated the animosities of the contending parties” (96), and the intestine warfare between the novel’s antagonists that follows his death. Not surprisingly, Clare, a figure of romance sketched in “a few bold outlines of character” (HR 301), is too ideal to survive beyond the novel’s initial chapters.

HCE, then, is not about a lost republican moment which can only be an object of nostalgia. Rather it conveys this moment into the larger field of the “English Revolution,” and is the positive (if unfulfilled) side of an unfinished project of deconstruction that is both contested and pushed forward by the trauma of *Mandeville*. It is too simple to say that *HCE*’s “focus is on the rule of parliament as a successful outcome of a revolutionary experiment.”²⁹ The battle of King and Parliament, the Long Parliament, the Commonwealth, and even the Protectorate itself, are all among the “experiments” (IV.597), or for that matter “expedients” (IV.587), produced by this period. The possibility of an entirely new kind of sovereignty not based on heredity is also among the conjunctures and combinations that occur in *HCE*, in particular because of the text’s silent dialogue with Mary Shelley’s historical novel *Valperga* (1821), set in the early Renaissance. In *Valperga*, which Godwin had edited for publication, the small republic ruled by Euthanasia falls victim to the

larger politics of nation states that emerges around the hero of the subtitle, Castruccio Prince of Lucca. Like Cromwell, Castruccio, an orphan, comes out of nowhere to become a Prince in the Machiavellian sense. But on his sudden and premature death his small empire falls back into "its primitive insignificance."³⁰ Shelley's ambivalence toward Castruccio and her epitaph on him are echoed in Godwin's concluding eulogy of Cromwell: "if he had lived ten years longer, the system of his rule would continually have grown more firm and substantial, and the purposes and ideas to the accomplishment of which he had devoted all the powers of his soul, would not have been antiquated and annihilated almost as soon as they were deprived of his energies to maintain them." A curious statement indeed: that at the age of sixty, Cromwell had not lived "to the established period of human existence" (IV.607-8). But it is explained by Godwin's earlier claim about the shortness of Cromwell's "reign," which lasted five rather than twenty years (III.564-65), and by his point that the "life of a man who purposes to found a new dynasty, is essentially different from that of a prince who succeeds to an hereditary throne" (IV.566-67). For as critical as Godwin often is of Cromwell, the fourth volume presents him in a different light: as having compromised his principles, but also as having shown concern for the poor, reformed the law, protected the universities, and many other progressive accomplishments.

But this is not to say that Godwin finally endorses the singular, authoritarian leader, even in the theoretically sophisticated way that Georges Bataille in "The Psychological Structure of Fascism" valorizes the "heterogeneous" over the "homogeneous" individual produced by hereditary monarchy.³¹ Commenting on the contingency of Cromwell's death, Godwin says that its result was "most favourable for the adherents of the house of Stuart," but not for those who desired "a new race of kings" *nor* for the "friends of a republican government." Cromwell's "reign" is part of a feedback loop in which its defeat unravels, thwarts, and in some oblique way forwards ideals that Godwin, unlike Thelwall, cannot confidently see being implemented through the extension of the

republican model to the nation state. In other words, the possibility of a republic threaded through *HCE* forms a horizon for traversing the phantasm that it is through the many obstacles that make this idea(l) a simplification in the real world. For *HCE* does not tell a story with an origin or an end but opens an historical field that is *in medias res*, and in which we can also place Godwin's novels, despite their contrary emphasis on necessity and fatality rather than "experiment" (*HCE* IV.603). The comments of Mary Shelley's later contemporary Jacob Burckhardt on his own historiographical method are useful here. Distinguishing his work from that of Hegel (for whom he retains considerable respect), Burckhardt says that he takes "transverse sections of history in as many directions as possible," rather than constructing "the longitudinal sections" typical of the "philosophy of history current hitherto"³² A history such as Godwin's, "which, expanding itself through several volumes, treats only of a short period" (*HR* 294), is just such a transverse history, in contrast to the "longitudinal" form taken by the individual history of Mandeville.

Characteristic of this transversal history is that it has nothing to do with "system" or "theodicy," that it "coordinates" rather than "subordinates" events, and that in Foucault's words, it thus avoids the "metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and indefinite teleologies."³³ In short, transverse history does not operate on the assumption that "between all the events of a well-defined spatio-temporal area [...] it must be possible to establish a system of homogeneous relations," relations of "analogy that show how [events] symbolize one another," through what Jameson, following Althusser, calls an "expressive" rather than "structural" causality in which they all express the same central core.³⁴

Given that it is a transverse rather than a longitudinal general history oriented to predictable, recurrent patterns, *HCE* is interested in the particular or *singularity* that prevents us from settling too easily into a standard narrative. As an example we can look at Godwin's account of the King's implication in the multi-pronged Irish Rebellion, which is the

traumatic inaugural moment of *Mandeville* and the subject of several pages in *HCE*. The Rebellion unleashed a slaughter of Protestants, including in the infamous Portnadown Massacre (HCE I.238-39); the number killed, which may have been 4,000, was exaggerated to the tune of 150-200,000³⁵ and became a key event in Protestant historiography. Charles was suspected of having given a commission sanctioning the Rebellion to one of the ringleaders, Sir Phelim O'Neile, a detail glossed over in the novel but described in some detail in *HCE*. The commission gave "full power" to Charles' Catholic subjects in Ireland, "to assemble and consult together with all diligence" and "use all politic ways to possess themselves, for the king's use and safety, of all forts, castles, and places of strength, except such as belonged to his loving subjects the Scots [whom he then thought himself on the point to bring over to his side], and to arrest and seize the goods, estates, and persons of all the English Protestants within that kingdom." Charles, according to Godwin, imagined that in the Irish "he should acquire a machine perfectly adapted and tractable to his purposes" of "reducing the inhabitants of the master-island to the despotism he loved" (HCE I.224-32). But the result was a coordinated rebellion throughout various parts of Ireland. The intentions of King, Parliament, and rebels alike went awry, unleashing anarchy. Interestingly, the *Encyclopedia Londonensis* associates anarchy, or "want of government; a state in which every man is unaccountable," precisely with the civil war period.³⁶ Though Godwin, who is often associated with anarchism, is ambivalent about the term, it is no coincidence that a thinker committed to "the right of private judgment" should have been so fascinated by this period in Britain's history.

Most apologists for the Restoration, as the first step in a history that closed off the anarchy of the civil war period and led to the Glorious Revolution, considered O'Neile's commission a forgery. As Godwin notes, "so incessant has been the industry of the Royalists on this head, from the hour of the Restoration of his son, that their labours have been crowned with a success altogether surprising" (HCE I.225-26n). Hume, though not to be identified with Clarendon, insists that "Sir Phelim

ONeale, having found a royal patent in Lord Caufield's [sic] house, whom he had murdered, tore off the seal, and affixed it to a commission, which he had forged for himself."³⁷ But Godwin goes to unusual pains to prove the authenticity of the document in a footnote extending over five pages; indeed he is quite irritated at Hume's "worthless partiality to the race of kings that Scotland sent to reign over us."³⁸ The commission curiously bore the seal of Scotland, not England. Turning on its head the argument that this proved it was a maladept forgery, because the seal of Scotland would have been worthless in Ireland, Godwin argues that it would "have been much easier to have found in Ireland a patent with the great seal of England, but almost impossible to find one with the Scottish seal." Thus the document must have been issued by Charles, because "he was in Scotland at the time of the date of the commission; and, which is more, the great seal of Scotland was not at the time in the keeping of a proper officer" (HCE I.226n). In conclusion, Godwin insists that it was no coincidence that the "Irish rebellion broke out, after forty years' peace" precisely when the queen had embarked for the continent to "procure, by the sale of her jewels, arms and ammunition to maintain the war against parliament" (230n).

Why is Godwin so concerned with this episode and with establishing Charles' culpability? Prior to the Restoration Milton had also held Charles responsible for the rebellion and massacre, but his aims are straightforwardly positive; the episode is fodder for his anti-monarchism, and in *The Reason of Church Government* he takes the Puritan position that the Irish were a group of savages.³⁹ Milton's blind republicanism mirrors that of independents like Pym, who also had no understanding of Ireland,⁴⁰ which in *Mandeville* is the inaugural trope for everything in history that resists settlement. But for Godwin the episode is what Foucault describes as a singularity: whereas a "genesis [is] oriented towards the unity of some principal cause" with "multiple descendants," a genealogy tries "to restore the conditions for the appearance of a singularity born out of multiple determining elements, of which it is not the product but the effect."⁴¹ As a singularity, the matter

of the forged commission performs the negative work of unsettling both the anti-monarchist and the Restoration narrative, without providing a narrative of its own. It reminds us how far Britain was and is from being a united kingdom when even its King was operating against "his" country, albeit with results that meant he was operating against himself. By extension, it unsettles the discourses that underpin other prostheses such as the Restoration or the Hanoverian dynasty. The singularity of this episode makes us aware that power operates without a center, as Foucault has taught us. As important, the forged commission brings Ireland to the fore as the symptom of an underlying incoherence in the symbols of unification that underwrite Britain's self-imaginings.

HCE is a tangle of such singularities which can be made "intelligible," but not "according to any principle of closure." For a singularity can be accounted for in terms of "relationships of interactions between individuals or groups" which are "in perpetual slippage from one another," but not by recourse "to the nature of things."⁴² If the work performed by the analysis of the forged commission is negative, Cromwell is a positive singularity: Cromwell opens singularity to possibility, hence Godwin's characterization of him in the language of romance. For Godwin's opening account of Cromwell echoes the language of his essay three decades earlier, as he writes that "the fertility of [Cromwell's] conceptions [...] was incapable of being exhausted," and that "we seek in romance, for characters" like him, only to find "a real personage, whose exploits do not fall short of all that the wildest imagination had ever the audacity to feign" (*HCE* IV.vii). Yet after *St. Leon*, which is contemporaneous with "On History and Romance," Godwin can write romance only under erasure. That point is made in *The History of Rome*, where he echoes his earlier essay (*HR* 292) in justifying his omission of the "dry and repulsive details" of "history" on the grounds that youth "is not the period of criticism and disquisition." But Godwin then adds, "If these narratives are to be destroyed, let that task be reserved for a riper age, when books of the plan and size of the present are no longer applicable."⁴³ The life of Cromwell, then, is a kind

of romance, but given the size and detail of *HCE* it is also the systematic “destruction” (even in a Nietzschean sense) of that romance. What survives is the singularity of an individual whose actions are not the product of multiple determining elements but their “effect,” a word that Godwin also uses when he says that the meaning of a text resides in its effect on the reader, which can only be ascertained “by the experiment.”⁴⁴ Indeed the life of Cromwell is not a romance. This fourth volume is just as much a “History” as the others, in the sense that Godwin defines history: namely as full of “dry and minute information,” and as scrupulously impartial in taking up evidence from all sides (*HCE* I.x, 6). But the mention of romance provides a *horizon* within which we can continue to reimagine “the perhaps visionary attempt to establish a republic in England” (IV.vi).

By writing an individual history in *Mandeville*, a pair of individual histories in general form in *The Lives of Milton's Nephews*, and a general history that we are briefly invited to see as not foreclosing on “romance,” Godwin's seventeenth-century texts construct a field in which the English Revolution can be viewed on different scales and in different series. As Foucault says in discussing the work of Georges Canguilhem, one can distinguish between “the *microscopic* and *macroscopic* scales of the history of the sciences”: “on each of the two levels,” in Godwin's case the individual history of *Mandeville* and the general history of the Revolution, “a different history is being written.” Likewise, within this general field we are allowed to consider the “effects of shifts, different temporalities, and various rehandlings.” Godwin's changes of genre, in other words, allow us to ask “in what distinct totalities certain elements may figure simultaneously; in short, not only what series, but also what ‘series of series.’”⁴⁵ What does it mean to consider the Restoration as the end of a series in *Mandeville*, but then to re-place it into the middle of another series in another text? In the novel the impending event of the Restoration functions as a repression of the political unconscious. But in *The Lives of Milton's Nephews*, the *period* of the Restoration marks a transition from Milton's rectitude to a temporizing in which John Philips,

a shady character like St. Leon, turns his Miltonic education toward new forms of knowledge, continuing the legacy of his uncle's divorce tracts in his life, even as he betrays Milton's principles. What does it mean, conversely, to consider the English Revolution at the macroscopic level of *HCE* and in the "closet" of Mandeville's passions, which are themselves overdetermined by the religio-political environment of the time? For the English Revolution is not just the history of King and Parliament that Godwin singles out as the major thread in *HCE*. As Christopher Hill, argues, it includes a "third culture": "the lower-class heretical culture which burst into the open" in the 1640s,⁴⁶ and which was not the culture of the literate and enlightened. It is through this minor history that the unfinished project of political justice also emerges, warped and dis-figured by fanaticism, yet for that reason persisting beyond its normalization and betrayal by the more straightforward conflict of King and Parliament that is coopted by the career of Cromwell. And it is here, to cite Deleuze and Guattari, that "another story" vibrates in Mandeville's individual history, which opens *HCE* itself in a different window.

I will therefore approach this question of series and sets that open, even as they foreclose on, other possible worlds by turning to *Mandeville*. But since I have written elsewhere on the novel,⁴⁷ I take up just one element: the novel's religious politics and the fanaticisms that not only characterize the civil war period but also form the very structure of Mandeville's psyche. It would be easy to argue that by transposing Mandeville's history into the broader series of *HCE* we are placed on a path to some future enlightenment. For as always Godwin makes the protagonist of the novel "his own historian."⁴⁸ But he also insinuates into Mandeville's narrative a historically later voice that makes favorable comments on Cromwell (80, 110), analyses religio-political history (80-81), alludes to women's exclusion from education, and expresses doubts about the faith placed in kings (79). This voice, which is not so much superimposed on as layered under Mandeville's paranoia, lets us stand outside his psyche and think how the events of the novel might figure in

a different series with a different temporality: that of *HCE*. However, it is also important to proceed in the other direction, by reading the English Revolution through its anamorphic distortion in the traumas of Mandeville's life. For the "grand contest" that is the motivating horizon of Godwin's passion for the seventeenth-century is lost in *HCE* which, while not "the history of negotiations and tricks" (HR 297), is overwhelmingly detailed. That contest, displaced from one between Parliament and King into one between Mandeville and Clifford, lends an urgency to the novel that we miss in the more dispassionate history of *HCE*. For *HCE* traces a series of conflicts between King and Parliament and within Parliament itself; and conflicts, as Derrida says in commenting on Kant, are not war. Conflicts are eventually "solvable": war is "savage" and "implies no recourse to the law," where by contrast a "conflict is a regulated, foreseeable, and codifiable antagonism," subject to arbitration.⁴⁹

But throughout the narrative Mandeville portrays his struggle with Clifford in terms of war, the "absolute war" that Godwin's contemporary Carl von Clausewitz espoused with a perversely absolute idealism. Absolute war is war without compromise: war in which there is no peace "till one of the parties is overthrown." Mandeville imagines his "eternal war" on Clifford as just such a war: "I must kill him or he must kill me" (124, 106). "Real" war, by contrast, is a "shrivelled-up form of war," a kind of "diplomacy" or pseudo-truce that leads to a continuance of relations.⁵⁰ After the Ulster Rebellion the only military action that intersects Mandeville's life is the Royalist Penruddock Uprising: a petty skirmish in which, to his chagrin, Mandeville does not even participate, as rumors circulate about him and Clifford gets the commission instead. Yet throughout the novel, Mandeville sees his psychic wounds as the wounds of war (112, 123, 134, 141, 158, 217), until he literalizes the metaphor in the "deep and perilous gash" he sustains at the end, which he elaborately describes in terminology from the French wars of religion in the previous century (325). Other military metaphors also abound in the text, as when Mandeville writes: "I dug a deep foss, and threw up an

intrenchment, to cut me off from creatures wearing the human form" (93); or when he writes that his sister "cast down all the intrenchments and bastions" of his "wilful passions" and "entered with triumphant wheels the fortress of my heart" (158).

From the early reviews onward, Mandeville's misanthropy has been the object of judgment, and we are either asked to condemn him or to see Godwin's artistry as flawed because we do not do so.⁵¹ Clifford, by contrast, is generous and good, and floats with insouciance above the action. To be sure, nothing that Clifford does provides an adequate objective correlative for what John Gibson Lockhart, Scott's biographer, called Mandeville's "causeless aversion." But Clifford is a symptom, a fetish, the occasion for a genealogy of the morals into which we are insensibly interpellated. For example, why is Clifford's role in the cartoon episode "generous" (105)? In this crucial episode, a schoolboy microcosm of the pamphlet wars of the period and also the 1790s, a book of cartoons satirizing the King and Queen is found in the room of Waller, a contemptible boy whom Mandeville has befriended for no better reason than that he is not much liked. Waller puts the blame on Mandeville, who is sentenced to eat the book in a gross parody of the Eucharist, at which point Clifford throws the book into the fire. Clifford does spare Mandeville the nausea of eating the book, but why is he "generous" when he too automatically assumes that Mandeville is guilty? And why is Mandeville not generous in taking the blame for Waller (103)? The reason seems to be that Clifford conforms to a public opinion that is exposed to its own repressions by Mandeville's aversion from the cultural incorporation embodied in school, family, and party; or more simply, it is that Mandeville is not one of the group. The period of the civil wars was a period of anarchy in which existing structures lost their foundation. Within this general unsettling, Mandeville's absolute war against Clifford is a blind but powerful deconstruction for which Clifford himself is a mere alibi. By forcing us to know what the 'good' excludes, the supreme condescension even of its attempts to be understanding or pitying, as Mandeville's sister Henrietta tries to be towards her brother,

this deconstruction makes us feel the violence of the good as a form of normalization.

For as I argue elsewhere, Godwin's method in all his novels is to draw us into a "perverse identification" with characters who oppose what we expect to be the text's moral centre.⁵² Godwin is careful to set up this identification by providing some grounds for Mandeville's paranoia, in the cartoon episode, the denial of the secretaryship to him during the Penruddock affair, and the subsequent invective heaped on him by Lisle as a result of the false rumors that dog his life. But this identification is all the more perverse since Mandeville is not even politically from the same "side" as Godwin, so that with Godwin we must contort our feelings against themselves so as to know things as they are from the other side. Nor can we refuse this ethics of becoming another, since the narrative, though not written in the first person (as the voice is sometimes Godwin's), is *heard* in the first person, focalized through Mandeville. This is to say that Mandeville's case, the case he pleads for the pathology his case is, cannot be dismissed either on the grounds of circumstance or aberration. We could argue that his temperament has been formed by the traumas of his early life, pointing to the more normal Henrietta, who was sent to live with their mother's friends the Willises some months before the massacre. But perhaps gender shelters Henrietta from a Real that her brother must confront. Indeed Henrietta is from another world, either naive or enlightened, which may come to the same thing. Linked to pastoral and the Elysian fields (63), she is also made the mouthpiece for pontifications taken from an Enlightenment text: Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*. Moreover, Godwin draws attention to this anachronism through a footnote placed conspicuously at the end of Volume 2 (207) instead of a hundred pages earlier, where it should be. Alternatively, we could read the circumstance of the Irish massacre, the primal scene of Mandeville's traumas, as no more than a trigger for an underlying paranoid melancholia. But if we make of Mandeville a uniquely deviant case, then we ignore the inscriptive force of circumstance that makes character a symptom of culture. This inscription

takes root as pathology, but cannot be set aside as such, since pathology is the archive of a body "totally imprinted by history" and the locus of the "articulation of the body and history."⁵³

Early reviewers either ignored the historical background entirely, assuming the novel to be purely focused on Mandeville, or they saw it as superfluous. Thus *The British Review* complains that the "historical" and "fictitious" parts have "no close connection with each other": "Were the whole of [the Irish massacre] expunged, the story would lose nothing, though the book would be deprived of its best-written chapter."⁵⁴ But the point of the novel lies in this disconnection between the minor history that occupies the foreground, and the major events pushed into the background: events which are only symptomatically present on the fringes of the story, for instance in the tribalism at Winchester School after Charles' beheading, or as the wider Restoration context of the marriage between Henrietta and Clifford. This disconnection signifies the shape of trauma itself and the fact that something has gone missing which makes history itself illegible. For Mandeville is not removed from any social context, like the Byronic heroes with whom contemporaries compared him: his education, heredity, and affects bear the traces of multiple unsynthesized histories which he carries forward. Mandeville's experiences are not simply his, hence his memory of "the perpetual succession of flight, and pursuit, and anguish, and murder" in Ireland comes "mixed up [...] with incidents I had never seen, but which had not failed to be circumstantially related to me" (44).

Ireland's is one of those histories, often passed over as irrelevant in histories of England, but as central to Godwin as Scotland is to Scott. Godwin had written against the impending union of Ireland and Great Britain in 1786, and published the first edition of *Political Justice* in Dublin as well as London. In 1800, just before the Act of Union, he visited Dublin at the invitation of barrister and Irish patriot, John Philpot Curran.⁵⁵ Seventeen years later, *Mandeville* was dedicated to Curran, who had recently died, and on whom Godwin wrote a eulogy in *The Morning Chronicle*, describing him as one of the last of "the fellow-

labourers of Mr. Fox” who worked in “the cause of general liberty.” Then in 1821, Godwin again addressed the Irish situation as part of his debate on population with Malthus, reading the huge growth in Ireland’s population since the Glorious Revolution not as the cause but the symptom of a problem, and reminding us of the repressions on which Britain’s complacency after Waterloo are built. Linking Ireland to a revival of French ambitions, Godwin insists that its poverty and discontent are a world problem: “if our Government determine upon continuing the old system of coercion and irritation in Ireland, how frightful the prospect for universal humanity, as well as for the particular interest of this country.”⁵⁶

Ireland, to be sure, is the place where Mandeville’s parents are killed, which opens the boy to Hilkiah’s virulent anti-Catholic rants. And yet, returning to the plantations with which the novel begins, the last sentence, as we have noted, not only links Ireland with the issue of slavery in Godwin’s own day, but also inscribes that link in Mandeville’s own body as an archive of forgotten cultural and political histories. Indeed, one of the most striking passages in the novel curiously repeats an image Godwin had used of the relationship of Ireland and England many years earlier. Mandeville writes of the “inter-destructiveness” that binds him to Clifford:

Mezentius, the famous tyrant of antiquity, tied a living body to a dead one, and caused the one to take in, and gradually become a partner of, the putrescence of the other. I have read of twin children, whose bodies were so united in their birth, that they could never after be separated, while one carried with him, wherever he went, an intolerable load, and of whom, when one died, it involved the necessary destruction of the other. (141)

And in his 1800 “Letter to the People of Ireland,” urging them not to be seduced into a union with England, Godwin had written that there are

Few objects more calamitous or more unnatural, than the union of two countries circumstanced as I have

described. It is like that refined piece of cruelty, scarcely to be named by the tongue [...] of tying a living body to a dead one, and causing them to putrify and perish together.⁵⁷

In the repetition of this image, illogical as it might seem, Mandeville is subtextually aligned with Ireland as a victim of oppression. Hence the fact that the scenes of "flight, and pursuit, and anguish, and murder" after the massacre are for him "visionary scenes" that are somehow more exhilarating than his "monotonous" and "eventless" life in his uncle's house (44). And hence the drive that he draws from these half-memories of his infancy in Ireland, the place of his psychic birth, even if only as what Lacan calls a *corps morcelé*, a body in bits and pieces.

From this perspective it is not absurd to see the struggle of King and Parliament as anamorphically distorted by Godwin's novel into the struggle of Clifford and Mandeville. "Distorted," because there are no Republicans, no one from the side of Parliament, in the novel, as its French translator was the first to note.⁵⁸ This lopsidedness figures a skew in which, as Hans Kellner argues, history cannot be read or written straightforwardly. It can be grasped only by getting the story crooked, since "To see the text straight is to see *through* it – that is, not to see it at all except as a device to facilitate knowledge of reality."⁵⁹ And "*anamorphically* distorted," because the distortion itself is a kind of correction. Anamorphosis is commonly defined in Godwin's own time as a term in "Perspective and Painting": "a monstrous Projection; or a representation of some Image, either on a plane or curved Surface, deformed; which at a certain distance shall appear regular, and in proportion."⁶⁰ Anamorphic reading, then, responds to the symptomatic distortion of reality by trying to grasp the potential for things as they should be across their expression in, and deformation by, things as they are.

So there are only Royalists in the novel, a curiosity that the French translator happily takes as yielding the case to the King's party. But to begin with, Mandeville's affiliation with the Royalists is itself arbitrary:

coming from an unaligned family, he becomes a Royalist while a mere child, and only to vindicate himself after the cartoon episode (112). His Royalist position is already perverse, a twisting, a “stubborn attachment” to the means of his subjection.⁶¹ Moreover, unlike Clifford’s family which is Episcopalian, Mandeville’s is Presbyterian; indeed, this is why suspicion falls on him and Waller in the cartoon episode. For if Church government reflected and underwrote political structures and was a site for their renegotiation, the Presbyterians devolved authority to numerous elders or presbyters, whereas the Episcopalians placed bishops firmly under the authority of the Archbishop, analogically guaranteeing the authority of the King. The Presbyterians, we are told in the novel, followed a “middle and temperate course” (M 37), which is to say they initially supported Parliament but became alarmed at the results and shifted to the Royalist side. Interestingly, Godwin goes farther in *HCE*, commenting that “the Presbyterian system [...] was in many respects well adapted to foster republican sentiments” (I.80), and even linking the Presbyterians to the Levellers (I.58).

“Presbyterianism” as a political position is thus unpacked by Godwin in two different ways: one aligning it with and the other distancing it from republicanism. In *HCE* the Presbyterian “system” is a progressive one, a position also taken by the *British Encyclopedia*, which traces a line from the Presbyterians of the civil war period to the Dissenters of Godwin’s own time.⁶² But in the novel the Presbyterian position, although they were the initial “stirrers of the war between the king and parliament” (81), eschews the extremes of monarchism *and* republicanism, which is to say that it fears the damage caused by traumatic change, which led Burke, whom Godwin deeply respected, to write against the French Revolution. The “wounds” suffered by Mandeville in the loss of his parents as a result of Britain’s colonial policies, in his stubborn adherence to the Royalist side, and conversely in his resistance to Clifford’s royalty, are all evidence of this damage. It is the deeply negative dialectic of this entwinement of progress with trauma that makes Godwin in *Mandeville* decide not to embody opposition to

things as they are in the forms available to it – namely those of Republicanism – but to withhold it, to (dis)figure it, in the damaged life of someone from the other side: a Royalist but also a Presbyterian.

As important to the negative dialectic that *Mandeville* introduces into Godwin's history of the seventeenth century is the sectarianism of the period. For among the most striking differences between *Mandeville* and *HCE* is the novel's constant evocation of religious divisions: beginning with the rebellion of Irish Catholics that opens the text, continuing through Hilksiah's obsession with Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and concluding with the final wounding of Mandeville, in which he is aligned both with the branding suffered by negro slaves in the West Indies and with the tortures detailed by Foxe. The novel, moreover, is studded with the names of martyrs, religious conspirators, and minor sects: Albigensians, Waldensians, Fifth Monarchists, Quakers, Trappists, even Cabbalists. These sects are mostly mentioned by Hilksiah, who is fascinated by their multiplicity and masochistically bonded with their persecution, but they are sometimes also part of Mandeville's lexicon of metaphors (M 43, 129). Interestingly, in the latter case the references to religious difference cross between Protestant and Catholic, sharing only the fact of their suppression. By contrast, fanaticism and enthusiasm have no role in *HCE*. Though Godwin sees religious parties as crucial to understanding the conflict of King and Parliament, he is concerned with church government as a blueprint for political government. His analysis is thus limited to the major groups – the Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Puritans – and only as groups whose religious structures generated a spectrum of political allegiances.⁶³

Why this large range of religious reference that is not in *HCE*? In his lectures published in *The Tribune* (1795), Godwin's friend John Thelwall sees fanaticism as the major reason why the English revolution failed, where its French equivalent is about to succeed. Thelwall therefore constructs a narrative that is no less an "Enlightenment" narrative on the Jacobin side than the histories of Hume and Scott. For Thelwall, the English Revolution was spoiled by two things: the fact that

intelligent Republican thinking was limited to a small number of educated men, which then allowed Cromwell to usurp power into his own hands, and the religious fanaticism of the masses:

There was, however, a very *active spirit* of another kind among the people. They had light indeed (inward light) which, though it came not through the optics of reason, produced a considerable ferment in their blood, and made them cry out for that liberty, the very meaning of which they did not comprehend. In fact, the mass of the people were quickened, not by the generous spirit of liberty, but by the active spirit of fanaticism.⁶⁴

Godwin might have agreed in 1797, when he wrote that the virtues of the Stuart period were obscured “by the vile jargon of fanaticism and hypocrisy” (HR 297). But in the novel these minor histories bring to light both a body of ideas and an emotional register missed by progressive histories like Thelwall’s or even Godwin’s *HCE*. For Thelwall the English Revolution resulted in the Restoration and both were “calamities”: the Glorious Revolution accomplished more, but left some unfinished business, including Ireland; the French Revolution, however, provides a firm basis for progress that allows us to put 1649 in the past, as Whig and Tory historians also do. Godwin was more ambivalent about the French Revolution, but in going back to the English Revolution as he does in *HCE*, he too writes a reasonable and enlightened history, in which the promise of this singular moment, cut off before it could take hold, is to be carried forward in the political imaginary. *Mandeville*, however, returns differently to the period around 1649, to explore what mainstream history leaves out: the resistances, in both a political and psychoanalytic sense, that are traumatic and for that very reason generative for history as a negative dialectic. And sectarianism is at the heart of these resistances, which call in question not only the prematurity of 1649, 1660 and 1688 as ends of history, but also, depending on whether we favor the Whig or Jacobin narrative, that of 1816 or 1789.

The English Revolution, as Christopher Hill argues, was by no means limited to the conflict of King and Parliament, but was the scene of a "popular heretical culture, which rejected the ideas both of court and established church, and of orthodox Puritanism." The *Encyclopedia Londinensis* says of this period that "every month produced a new scheme or form of government," a thought echoed by Hilkiah (M 57): "Enthusiasts talked of nothing but annulling all the laws, abolishing all writings, records, and registers, and bringing all men to a primitive level. The Jewish history presents numerous instances of anarchies in that state, usually denoted by this phrase, that 'in those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.'" ⁶⁵ The views of what Hill calls this "third" culture, which had an uneven access to print, were characterized by anti-clericalism and a strong emphasis on the Bible "as interpreted by the individual conscience." They "were often expressed crudely, jumbled up with magical and prophetic ideas," and cannot be reduced to "organizational coherence." To be sure, this mass culture is not the widely disseminated enlightenment that Thelwall somewhat dubiously attributes to Revolutionary France. But as Hill points out, no less a figure than Milton moved between the second (or orthodox Puritan) and third cultures. ⁶⁶ Enveloped in the superstition and fundamentalism of the third culture, and in the very structure of forms such as Congregationalism, are radically democratic ideals that are the beginning of Godwin's social theories and his emphasis on "the right to private judgement." For the creeds of the Levellers and Diggers, and the various heresies that fascinated other Romantics like Mary Shelley in *Valperga*, were tied up with calls for social justice, both class and gender. And the minor sects that are part of the lexicons of Hilkiah and Mandeville are by no means all fanatical or intolerant. In other words, in the sectarianism of the period "something not yet made good pushes its essence forward," to quote Habermas on the utopianism of Ernst Bloch. ⁶⁷ On the other hand, the Irish Catholics, reduced to a minority even as they remained a majority in their own country, are also part of the religious contention that resonates in the background of the novel. This is to say

that if the minor histories of the period harbour the germs of a future political justice, they are also the scene of the injustices and diseases that mobilize sectarianism and disfigure it as fanaticism, and which are by no means as securely in the past as we might think.

Hilkiah, a patchwork character, is the channel for much of this third culture, including its views about the equality of all men (55-56), its resentments, and its intense fanaticism. A descendant of the Protestant martyr John Bradford, his clothing and severity lead one to think of him as a Puritan (45), but his interest in “cabalistical divinity” and obsession with the number 666 make him a far from orthodox figure (51-52). He appears to have no personal investment in the political issues that preoccupied the parliamentary Puritans or the theological radicals. But he transmits a voyeuristic excitement at living in the midst “of the confusions of a civil war” (57), as well as an almost perverse identification with the revolutionaries and assassins he purports to denounce. Indeed, as he rants against Popish plots by Ravallac, Balthasar, and the Gunpowder conspirators, or rants on behalf of Protestant martyrs, these differences are confused and fused in the sadomasochistic fascination with violence and the position of the outsider that characterizes his interest in both sides of the religious divide (48, 50-51). As a symptom of his culture and a character who is in all ways dislikeable, Hilkiah nevertheless injects a dark urgency into the first volume of the novel. His very incoherence suggests the unfinished, unprocessed nature of what minor history transmits to the future; indeed that is partly why it cannot be properly integrated into mainstream history. His prophetic passion and anger are his legacy to Mandeville. But his virulent anti-Catholicism indicates how this legacy comes forth warped and convoluted by everything that has not yet been set right in the culture’s various attempts at the expedencies and restorations that repress underlying contradictions.

Hilkiah is a more sociohistorically specific development of the resistance to enlightenment that Godwin first took on through Bethlem Gabor in *St. Leon*: what Godwin in his essay “Of the Rebelliousness of

Man" (1831) calls "the *fomes peccati*, the black drop of blood at the bottom of the heart."⁶⁸ But Gabor is a paper character, so unequivocally malign that he poses only a theoretical obstacle to St. Leon's schemes of improvement; it is as if Godwin as St. Leon knows he ought to take account of someone like Gabor and find the kernel of value in him that he can't. Hilksiah, by contrast, is the animus and animating principle that separates Mandeville's non-conformity from that of his uncle Audley. Wounded and misanthropic like his nephew, Audley withdraws into himself after his father separates him from his beloved Amelia. Audley's melancholia, or hypochondria as it was then called, is part of a cultural inheritance archived in Mandeville's being. Yet Audley's retreat from things as they are is ineffectual. While his nephew has "hatred [as his] ruling passion," Audley stands beyond him as "a celestial spirit," but is "unequal to contention," "sinking, as without power of resistance, under any thing that presented itself in the form of hostility." It is, then, from Hilksiah that Mandeville draws his energy. Not that he is attached to his preceptor in any positive way: "Most men, after this ample confession, will be surprised when I add, that I scarcely loved Hilksiah. I am ashamed of the perverseness of my own heart when I speak it" (54). Indeed Mandeville feels a "rooted aversion of heart" from "this good man": "I came to regard him as my evil genius, poisoning my cup of life"; "In my dreams the character of Hilksiah always came associated with painful sensations" (59, 61, 69). Yet at the same time Hilksiah's influence works itself "deeply into the substance" of the boy's "character," (55, 69), even as Mandeville tells us that he also "retain[s] the principle of rebellion entire, shut up in the chamber of my thoughts" (59).

In the *Constitution of Literature*, Lee Morrissey suggests that taking notions of publicness and democracy back to the seventeenth century yields a different notion of the public sphere from the current Habermasian model of liberal consensus and communicative rationality derived from the eighteenth century. More specifically, he focuses on the 1640s, "a decade that has been described both as 'an information revolution' and 'the central trauma of English history.'" According to

Morrissey, the 1640s, with its explosion of print comparable only to the 1790s, and its use of satire, tropological, “obscurantist,” coded and secret writing, yields some of the most “inventive, and deformative models” of reading we have seen. In its context, such writing is “radically democratic”: “‘literary devices’ whereby one can say one thing and mean another are ways of saying anything” under conditions where this is, “strictly speaking, not allowed.” This reading and writing are then closed down by the eighteenth century’s resistance to reading (in the sense of Paul de Man’s “resistance to theory”), and its association of a free press with the violence of the civil wars. The result is the institution of “literary criticism” as a discipline of taste dedicated to controlling meaning to ensure the “social stability” whose loss Hobbes so feared in *Leviathan*.⁶⁹ In this “Great Forgetting [...] of the earlier expectations of readers and reading,” the Enlightenment comes to prefer “the propositional to the tropological, or the grammatical to the rhetorical,” or consensus and clarity to dissensus and difficult writing. In returning to the civil wars for a political history of reading – a war that according to Eliot “has never been concluded” – Morrissey therefore opposes to Habermas’ “unfinished project of modernity” an “unfinished project of deconstruction,” which carries forward a model of dissensus that precedes and provides the political context for the consensual public sphere that Habermas derives from eighteenth century Britain.⁷⁰

For all his emphasis on the right to private judgment, Godwin’s prose does subscribe to this enlightened publicness. Even an essay such as “On the Rebelliousness of Man” tries to be wise and balanced, a tone that was tied up with the emergence of the essay form. But Godwin’s novels make a strong intervention in this literature of consensus, allowing us to contest a common reading of the Romantics through the Regency rather than 1789. Thus Anthony Jarrells, for example, claims that Britain’s “bloodless” revolution of 1688 as a way of transcending the dissensions of the civil wars found its delayed completion in Romanticism. According to Jarrells, the Glorious Revolution produced no major literature of its own but became a *point de repère* for those

terrified of 1789, resulting in the depoliticized category of "literature" as a way of resisting and containing "the dangerous effects of print."⁷¹ Critics like the one in *The British Review* who assailed Godwin for lack of "taste" and for failing to conform to eighteenth-century models of *belles lettres* completely missed the point of his novels.⁷² These novels are full of misanthropes for whom paranoia, as Thomas Pfau puts it, has an "emphatically analytic quality," being an "an urgent, counterfactual narrative bent on stripping the real of its deceptive symbolic veneer."⁷³ For through the confessional form of his narratives, Godwin makes literature the place of "the absolute secret." And through the brooding resentful characters for which Byron became famous but which Godwin invented, he gives literature "the *right to say everything*," a right Derrida also gives to deconstruction, in specifically opposing the term "literature" to *belles-lettres*, and tying it to "a certain noncensure."⁷⁴

This is to say that another story resonates in Mandeville's private history, which is not just Mandeville's but Godwin's story. This story has to do with government and reading as issues opened by the third culture. In the cartoon episode, the prevalence of "parties" at Winchester school, and the placing of Mandeville in a "receptacle for lunatics" (143) that we should not be tricked into associating with the humane psychiatry that came in a hundred years later, Godwin indirectly engages issues of government, censorship, and what can be said or thought. Winchester, in particular, is a critique of government in code, demonstrating in miniature both the confusion of what Hume called "real" and "personal" parties,⁷⁵ and the tyranny of assemblies and associations that Godwin analyzes in *Political Justice*. Insofar as the Enlightenment is anachronistically projected onto the "treatment" of Mandeville by Henrietta and Mrs. Willis, who put a more humane gloss on what is happening by taking lodgings near the madhouse at Cowley,⁷⁶ we may also read in the margins of the novel a critique of the enlightenment and the subtle forms of emotional institution it promotes. The sectarianism of the century preceding the Enlightenment also raises an issue of reading: it can be understood only by getting the story crooked, otherwise we

dismiss it as superstition. Thelwall read this sectarianism grammatically, but Godwin asks us to read it tropologically, both as the concealed trace of something not yet made good, and as a “thought from the outside,” whose value lies in a negativity aimed against discourses of the inside like government, consensus, and “politics.” For sectarianism is war, where politics is a euphemism for the irritable but contained management of conflict.

Mandeville has no ideological stake in this sectarianism; hence he lives on, albeit anonymously, after the Restoration. But fanaticism works itself into the substance of his character as misanthropy, which is also a thought from the outside. When Hilkiah dies in the middle of Volume 1 and Audley at the end of Volume 2, the novel’s dissident energies are left to be channeled through Mandeville. Yet Mandeville is ill at ease with Hilkiah. Inheriting a spirit of dissension from him, he also retains the principle of rebellion against his tutor, “shut up in the chamber of my thoughts” (M 59): that rebellion that Godwin would later define in his essay “Of the Rebelliousness of Man” as “the not being at home.” Clifford is the epitome of someone who is always at home, breathing “his native air [...] in a castle which is his in full propriety.” But Mandeville is “never satisfied”; he is driven by “a desire to be something that we are not, a feeling that we are out of our place, and ought to be where we are not.”⁷⁷ To understand why Godwin focalizes the emotional topology of the period through Mandeville requires a doubly tropological reading both of fanaticism and its displacement into Mandeville’s misanthropy.

We began by suggesting that *HCE* is a more sober resumption of *Political Justice*, standing to Godwin’s fourth major novel as *Caleb Williams* does to *Political Justice*. But if the very fact that Godwin could still write *HCE* after *Mandeville* lets us think the latter’s damaged history in a new series, it is the disfigured close of the novel, with its sense of something brutally unassimilated, that provides the passion to move that project forward. For the ongoing relation that Godwin constructs between literature as the place of the “absolute secret” and his political

prose makes "political" justice a matter of much more than government, reminding us that "institution" for Godwin goes beyond public institutions, to an ethos that deforms the private and personal, "insinuat[ing] itself" into the arts and even into "our most secret retirements."⁷⁸ And the doubled back relation between *HCE* and *Mandeville* makes the achievement of this justice a project of ongoing deconstruction and not just enlightenment. It is not possible in the light of *Mandeville* to construct a romance about what might have happened if Cromwell had lived ten years longer (HCE IV.605), except as an imaginary horizon. Such a narrative would be a romance of modernization. But the novel's ending tells us that the seventeenth century lives on in the present in ways we have yet to understand. Interestingly the last paragraph is all about the resistances of reading:

I had received a deep and perilous gash, the broad brand of which I shall not fail to carry with me to my grave. [...] My wound is of that sort, which in the French civil wars got the name of *une balafre*. I have pleased myself, in the fury and bitterness of my soul, with tracing the whole force of that word. It is *cicatrix luculenta*, a glazed or shining scar, like the effect of a streak of varnish upon a picture. *Balafre* I find explained by Girolamo Vittori, by the Italian word *smorfiato*; and this again – I mean the noun *smorfia* – is decided by 'the resolute' John Florio to signify [...] a mocking or push with one's mouth. The explanation of these lexicographers is happily suited to my case, and the mark I for ever carry about with me. The reader may recollect the descriptions I have occasionally been obliged to give, of the beauty of my person and countenance. [...] When I first looked in my glass, and saw my face, once more stripped of its tedious dressings, I thought I never saw anything so monstrous. [...] The

sword of my enemy had given a perpetual grimace, a sort of preternatural and unvarying distorted smile, or deadly grin, to my countenance. [...] Even as certain tyrannical planters in the West Indies have set a brand with a red hot iron upon the negroes they have purchased, to denote that they are irremediably a property, so Clifford had set his mark upon me, as a token that I was his for ever. (325)

Mandeville was criticized at the time because of its “elaborate” style full of metaphors – one could say its resistance to grammatical reading: a tropology that is particularly tied up with war and wounds. The novel’s ending in particular was rebuked for its “*surgically* technical” language: “in the midst of [the protagonist’s] severe affliction, he disentangles a point of etymology with all the elaborate coolness of a scholiast.”⁷⁹ But this is to read literally, to miss the bitterly ironic and shifting tone of the passage, whose pedantry is the very cicatrix of which it speaks, a tightening and drying of the skin over a wound. War and wounds were a subject of increasing interest during the early nineteenth century, and wounding, which escalates from the figural to the literal through the course of the novel, is not only a trope. It is also a figure for the tropological itself as a covering of an inside: a turning away or toward that must be turned back on itself. Metaphor, according to Ortega y Gasset, “substitutes one thing for another – from an urge not so much to get at the first as to get rid of the second.”⁸⁰ But if so, the cicatrix as the scar of this euphemism, this turning away, is the laying bare of the substitutions that inform even the most grammatical propositions and the wounds they cover over – a laying bare that is in turn its own form of covering.

The tone of this passage is therefore elusive, at once disturbing, perverse, and exhilarating. It must be turned back on itself, read again and again, not just for *Mandeville*’s resistances but for our own resistances to what does not agree with traditional criteria of “beauty” that makes us want to turn away from an ending that is too hard to face.

For it is not possible simply to dismiss Mandeville as disturbed, since in the references forward to slavery as well as backward to the French religious wars, Godwin's voice is subtly underlaid in Mandeville's, intertwining general and individual history. At the level of general history the passage presents the impossibility of reading in a straightforward manner from past to present, as the inter-imbrication of Ireland with slavery in the nineteenth century and in the commonwealth period (HCE IV.172-73) makes the past a figure for and dis-figuration of the present. Just as the past cannot be decisively separated from the present, so too Clifford's triumph ("I was his for ever") cannot be read at 'face' value, as the master is now symbolically tied – indeed tied by marriage – to the slave, as a living body is tied to its own putrescence. Hence the curious sense of triumph, the sense that he will wait it out, which accompanies Mandeville's utter defeat. In the recesses of individual history, the passage presents Mandeville reading his face when the "tedious dressings" have been removed to reveal the unvarnished truth behind the symbolic veneer. But even that truth can be grasped only tropologically and rigidly through the commentaries of lexicographers. Tropologically, because the passage functions as a series of substitutions, turning from French to Latin to Italian, as if to emphasize something that remains withheld. Yet at the same time, even where there is no face to read except the one effaced by its articulation, this reading, in the stubborn and self-circling tautology of glossing one foreign word by another, is also about the figure Mandeville still makes. That figure is "like the effect of a streak of varnish upon a picture," a trace committed to the future, a cicatrix *luculenta*, a Real or *jouissance* that remains barred from symbolization, carrying forward a dark energy that has yet to be deciphered.

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Notes

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¹ Godwin, Preface to the Standard Authors edition of *Fleetwood* (1832), in *Collected Novels and Memoirs of William Godwin*, 8 vols., ed. Mark Philp (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1992), Vol. 5, ed. Pamela Clemit, 7, 10.

² William Godwin, "Essay of History and Romance," *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, ed. Mark Philp, 5 vols. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1993), Vol. 5, ed. Pamela Clemit, 296-97. Hereafter cited parenthetically in the text as HR.

³ Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 148.

⁴ References are to *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England* in *Collected Novels and Memoirs of William Godwin*, Vol. 6, ed. Pamela Clemit. Hereafter referred to parenthetically in the text as M.

⁵ At the time abortion did not mean the termination of a pregnancy but "an untimely or premature birth of a foetus, otherwise called a miscarriage" (*The British Encyclopedia or Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, Comprising an Accurate and Popular View of the Present Improved State of Human Knowledge*, ed. William Nicholson, 6 vols. [London: C. Whittingham, 1809]). Godwin also wrote an essay "Of Intellectual Abortion," amongst which he includes works by Shakespeare and Richardson (*Thoughts on Man* [1831; rpt. Teddington: Echo Library, 2006], 31-39).

⁶ Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 34, 40.

⁷ William Godwin, *History of the Commonwealth from its Commencement to the Restoration of Charles the Second*, 4 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1824-28), IV.vi. Hereafter referred to parenthetically in the text as HCE.

⁸ Jon Klancher, "Godwin and the Genre Reformers: On Necessity and Contingency in Romantic Narrative Theory," *Romanticism, History, and the Possibilities of Genre: Re-forming Literature, 1789-1837*, ed.

Tilottama Rajan and Julia Wright (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 32.

⁹ Edward Baldwin [Godwin], *History of Greece from the Earliest Records of That Country to the Time in Which It Was Reduced Into a Roman Province* (London: M.J. Godwin and Co, 1821), v-vi, 1-2, 4-5.

¹⁰ "They are like the seven sleepers, that we read of in the Roman history, who, after having slumbered for three hundred years, knew not that a month had elapsed, and expected to see their old contemporaries..." (Godwin, *Considerations on Lord Grenville's and Mr. Pitt's Bills, concerning treasonable and seditious practices, and unlawful assemblies*, in *Political and Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 2, ed. Mark Philp, 155.

¹¹ Pamela Clemit, "Introductory Note," *Fleetwood*, in *Collected Novels and Memoirs*, V.v.

¹² Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *The Fall of the Monarchy of Charles I. 1637-1649* (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1882), II.205.

¹³ The phrase is Lyotard's, but is based on Kant's reference to "an intimation, a historical sign (*signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, prognostikon*)" (Lyotard, *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, trans. Georges van den Abbeele [Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988], 161-71; Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. Mary J. Gregor [Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 151).

¹⁴ Godwin, *History of Greece*, 1.

¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

¹⁶ Nietzsche contrasts monumental with "critical history," which "break[s] up the past," and judges and condemns it in ways that are "unjust," so as to create a clear pathway for the future – not something that Godwin does either (*The Use and Abuse of History*, trans. Adrian Collins [Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957], 12-15, 20-21).

¹⁷ On "institution" as "discourse" in Foucault's sense see Tilottama Rajan, *Romantic Narrative: Shelley, Hays, Wollstonecraft, Godwin*

(Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 117-18.

¹⁸ Godwin, *History of Greece*, iii. There are two versions of the Preface, both dated November, 1821 and both printed in 1822. Interestingly, in the longer version Godwin does not begin with the struggle of the Greeks and Turks cited here; omitting the contemporary reference altogether, he begins: "Mr. Baldwin proposes with the present volume to take his final leave of that class of young persons, for whose amusement and instruction his publications were intended" (2). In this version, the title page is also slightly different and includes the phrase "for the use of schools and young persons." Under the publisher's name it also includes "City French and English Juvenile and School Library."

¹⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 3.

²⁰ Godwin, *Caleb Williams*, ed. A.A. Markley and Gary Handwerk (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2000), 179.

²¹ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan-Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 4, 9-10; "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," 139. The word genealogy is actually not used in *Archaeology* (1969), except twice in connection with Nietzsche (13). It is used in later works, but unlike general history is theorized only in passing.

²² Foucault, *Archaeology*, 10.

²³ *The Lives* has not received much attention. On this text, see my article "Uncertain Futures: History and Genealogy in William Godwin's *The Lives of Edward and John Philips, Nephews and Pupils of Milton*," *Milton Quarterly* 32:3 (1998), 75-86.

²⁴ Kenneth W. Graham, *William Godwin Reviewed: A Reception History 1783-1834* (New York: AMS Press, 2001), 312.

²⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 16-20.

²⁶ Godwin, Letter to Joseph Bevan (11 September 1818), in *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, V.337. Bevan was the person to whom Godwin had written his "Letter of Advice to a Young American" earlier in the year.

²⁷ Graham, *William Godwin Reviewed*, 431. Godwin himself

explains that the journals of the two houses of parliament were not put in print until 1742-67, and that he is therefore drawing on papers to which Hume did not have access (HCE I.ix).

²⁸ Rowland Weston, "William Godwin and the Puritan Legacy," *Nineteenth-Century Prose*, Vol. 39, Nos. 1/2 (2012), 430.

²⁹ Weston, 427. One must also remember that in *Political Justice* Godwin is by no means sanguine about "democratic" structures that valorize the decision of the majority over the right of private judgment, and that his conception of "rights" is negative, not positive.

³⁰ Mary Shelley, *Valperga: or, The Life and Adventures of Castruccio Prince of Lucca*, ed. Tilottama Rajan (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1998), 441.

³¹ Georges Bataille, "The Psychological Structure of Fascism," *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1930*, trans. Allan Stoekl et al. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 137-60.

³² Jacob Burckhardt, *Reflections on History*, trans. M.D. Hottinger (1943; rpt. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1979), 32-33.

³³ *Ibid.*; Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," 140.

³⁴ Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, 9-10; Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as A Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 27, 37-41.

³⁵ Godwin's figure is 40,000 "and by some computations five times that number" (HCE I.239); see also Hume (*The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution of 1688* [1778], [Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1983], V.345). Lawrence Eachard gives the figure of 40-50,000 (*The History of England from the First Entrance of Julius Caesar...* [London: Jacob Tonson, 1720], 513). However, according to Samuel Gardiner, at the time there were 100,000 Scots in Ireland, who "for the time [...] were spared," and 20,000 Englishmen: "On the whole it would be safe to conjecture that the number of those slain in cold blood at the beginning of the rebellion could hardly by any possibility have much exceeded four thousand, whilst about twice that number may have perished from ill-treatment" (*The Fall of the*

Monarchy of Charles I, II.313-14).

³⁶ *ENCYCLOPEDIA Londinensis, or, an Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences and Literature, etc....* Completed, Digested, and Arranged, by John Wilkes of Milland House. 6 vols. (London: J. Adlard, 1810), I.514. The *Encyclopedia* associates anarchy specifically with the period between the death of Cromwell and the Restoration, but the term can be extended to the whole period.

³⁷ Hume, *History of England*, V.546, and 571, Note [Z]. Gardiner is somewhat more coy: "That this document was forged there can be no doubt whatever; but it does not follow that it was not forged upon the lines of a real document sent from Edinburgh by the King to the Catholic Lords, authorizing them to seize the forts and use them against the English parliament" (*Fall of the Monarchy*, II.341). Gardiner nevertheless does not seem to want to affix blame to the King or Queen (II.342n).

³⁸ Godwin, "Letter of Advice to a Young American: On the Course of Studies it Might be Most Advantageous for Him to Pursue" (1818), in *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, V.327.

³⁹ Milton, *Eikonoklastes* (1649), *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, General Editor, Don M. Wolfe, 8 Vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1952-82), Vol. 3, 372, 383-85; *The Reason of Church Government Urg'd Against Prelaty* (1641), *Complete Prose*, Vol. 1, 798.

⁴⁰ See Gardiner, *Fall of the Monarchy*, II.101-2.

⁴¹ Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, 10; "What is Critique?" in *The Politics of Truth*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer and Lysa Hochroth, (New York: Semiotext(e), 1997), 57.

⁴² Foucault, "What is Critique?" 57-58.

⁴³ Edward Baldwin [Godwin], *History of Rome, From the Building of the City to the Ruin of the Republic* (rpt. London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1835), iv-v.

⁴⁴ Godwin, "Of Choice in Reading," *The Enquirer* (rpt. Edinburgh: John Marshall, 1823), 121.

⁴⁵ Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 4-5, 10.

⁴⁶ Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* (New York: Viking Press, 1977), 71.

⁴⁷ Tilottama Rajan, "The Disfiguration of Enlightenment: War, Trauma, and the Historical Noel in Godwin's *Mandeville*," *Godwinian Moments: From the Enlightenment to Romanticism*, ed. Robert M. Maniquis and Victoria Myers (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 172-93.

⁴⁸ Godwin, "Preface" to *Fleetwood*, 448.

⁴⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Eyes of the University: Right to Philosophy 2*, trans. Jan Plug et al. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 50.

⁵⁰ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. J.J. Graham, rev. F.N. Maude (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), 333-35, 345.

⁵¹ See, for instance, John Gibson Lockhart's review, which is one of the most sympathetic. Lockhart is in a way moved by the novel and the "whirlwind of terrors" that Godwin successfully creates, but also describes *Mandeville* as a "madman" and accuses Godwin of a lack of "dramatic talent: his personages are described, not represented." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 2 (December 1817), 271, 279.

⁵² Rajan, *Romantic Narrative*, 136-38; "The Disfiguration of Enlightenment," 179-81.

⁵³ Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," 148.

⁵⁴ *The British Review and London Critical Journal*, Vol. XI, No. XXI (1818), 116-17.

⁵⁵ Godwin, "To the People of Ireland: Letter 1," signed Mucius (1800), *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, Vol. 1, ed. Martin Fitzpatrick, 297-303.

⁵⁶ Godwin, "John Philpot Curran," *Uncollected Writings (1785-1822)*, ed. Jack W. Marken and Burton R. Pollin (Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1968), 463-64; "Ireland," *The Morning Chronicle* (25 December 1821), *ibid.*, 471-74.

⁵⁷ Godwin, "To the People of Ireland," 301.

⁵⁸ Jean Cohen, translator's Preface to *Mandeville: Histoire Anglaise*

du Dix-Septième Siècle, (Paris: Bechet, 1818), xv. Cohen, a monarchist, concludes that the omission of Republican characters reflects Godwin's recognition of the worthlessness of his own cause.

⁵⁹ Hans Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation: Getting the Story Crooked* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 4.

⁶⁰ Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopedia, or, An universal dictionary of arts and sciences*, 2 Vols. (London: 1728), I.84.

⁶¹ This is Judith Butler's phrase in her analysis of Hegel's master-slave relationship (*The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 31-62.

⁶² See the entry on "Dissenters" in *The British Encyclopedia*, n.p.

⁶³ Godwin does have one chapter on religious sects, dealing mainly with the Quakers and Ranters. But its place in *HCE* is merely episodic (IV.305-26). There is also a brief mention of the Diggers and Gerrard Winstanley as "indeed scarcely worthy to be recorded" (III.82): a curious dismissal given that Winstanley's communism could be considered one origin for Godwin's own views on property.

⁶⁴ John Thelwall, *The Tribune* XLIII (June 1795), 184-92.

⁶⁵ Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution*, 69; *Encyclopedia Londinensis*, I.514.

⁶⁶ Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution*, 69-79.

⁶⁷ Jürgen Habermas, "Ernst Bloch: A Marxist Schelling," *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 71.

⁶⁸ Godwin, "Of the Rebelliousness of Man," *Thoughts on Man, His Nature, Productions, and Discoveries* (London: Effingham Wilson, 1831), 111.

⁶⁹ Lee Morrissey, *The Constitution of Literature: Literacy, Democracy, and Early English Literary Criticism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 25, 17, 28, 9, 50, and more generally 1-53.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 191-94; T.S. Eliot, "Milton II," *On Poetry and Poets*

(London: Faber and Faber, 1969), 148; qtd. in Morrissey, 33.

⁷¹ Anthony Jarrells, *Britain's Bloodless Revolutions: 1688 and the Romantic Reform of Literature* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 7-14, 17-19. Jarrells notes the key role of the novel and essay in constituting the category "literature." His restrictive account of this category should really be attributed to the eighteenth century. Likewise Clifford Siskin's *The Work of Writing*, on which Jarrells draws, absorbs Romanticism into a long eighteenth century.

⁷² *The British Review*, 113, 118.

⁷³ Thomas Pfau, *Romantic Moods: Paranoia, Trauma, and Melancholy, 1790-1840* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 79.

⁷⁴ Jacques Derrida, *On the Name*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 27-28. Derrida also refers to "the right to deconstruction as the unconditional right to ask critical questions" ("The University Without Condition," *Without Alibi*, ed. and trans. Peggy Kamuf [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002]).

⁷⁵ Hume distinguishes between parties "founded on personal friendship or animosity among such as compose the contending parties," and "those founded on some real difference in sentiment or interest." He adds that quite often "parties, which have begun upon a real difference, continue even after that difference is lost." "Of Parties in General," *Political Essays*, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 34-35.

⁷⁶ When Mandeville collapses after Lisle turns on him, he is found by some laborers and taken to a madhouse at Cowley. Henrietta and her guardian Mrs. Willis collude in keeping this information from Mandeville's uncle, but take lodgings nearby and watch over his care. We may therefore have the sense that his stay in the asylum is curative. But "humane psychiatry" came in only around Godwin's own time, introduced by Pinel, Ferriar, and others; in the seventeenth century such institutions were custodial and not therapeutic. And Mandeville is quite clear about the violence inflicted on him, which brings back memories of

Ireland (144).

⁷⁷ Godwin, "Of the Rebelliousness of Man," 102-3.

⁷⁸ Godwin, *Enquiry Into Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness* (1798), ed. F.E.L. Priestley, 3 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946), I.4-6.

⁷⁹ *British Review*, 119; *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. X (January 1818), 408. The correspondent is responding to Lockhart's review in the previous issue.

⁸⁰ Jose Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Writings on Art and Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 31.

