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Robert Louis Stevenson within Imperial Precincts: A Study of Literary Boundaries and Marginalised Voices

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Contents

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Abstract:

R.L. Stevenson within Imperial Precincts: A Study of Literary Boundaries and Marginalised Voices

This thesis has two primary functions. Firstly, it seeks to challenge the prevailing critical under-rating of Stevenson's fiction during much of the twentieth century. I aim to add fresh impetus to what are relatively recently established changing critical perceptions of the author, elevating Stevenson beyond the marginalised labelling of 'adventure writer', which had perennially pursued his work from his death in 1894. Secondly, it is my intention to consider the role of Stevenson as an early writer of embryonic anti-colonial literary responses to the imperial world, examining fiction which crossed literary as well as geographical boundaries and entered new precincts of a Victorian life which was dominated by the conquest of the globe. Primarily, this thesis considers, almost exclusively, Stevenson's fiction. Some use is made of two essays, 'The Pentland Rising' (1866) and 'Father Damian' (1890), due to their usefulness in illustrating a clear link between Stevenson's early and later writing in terms of his concerns for and sympathetic portrayals of marginalised voices. I am also aware of that the concerns of my thesis could have been taken further via the study of Stevenson's non-fiction, particularly via his travel writing. I have, nonetheless, chosen to focus almost exclusively on the thematic concerns of marginalisation in his fiction, given the undervaluing of his work in relation to his status as a major writer who challenged and criticised matters of imperialism. For similar reasons, I have chosen not to examine extensively Stevenson's responses to religion in his fiction. This could easily occupy a complete thesis in its own right, but I have limited my consideration of religious aspects to those of relevance to the treatment of marginalised voices and populations.

I argue unambiguously that Stevenson can be regarded as a writer who constantly relates to marginalised populations and individuals, seen in his Scottish fiction, his adventure stories, and that of a writer at a source of imperial life in the South Seas. Stevenson's concerns for the marginalised emerge when he considers the violent past of Scotland, with his strong focus on the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellion. I have deliberately chosen not to focus extensively on *Kidnapped* (1886) in my consideration of the author's responses to Culloden but have instead subjected the sequel *Catriona* (1893) to close scrutiny, while referring to the earlier texts when required. *Kidnapped* has already been subjected to much critical discussion elsewhere; *Catriona* less so. And the study of the later novel takes into account the context of Stevenson's South Seas residency and the impact this had upon his perceptions of Scottish

history and the plight of marginalised voices. Of the author's South Seas fiction, as this thesis also considers in detail, Stevenson's sharp critique of the imperial project is written from his own colonial experience. I argue that Stevenson's response to Scotland's post-Culloden landscape was sharpened and enhanced by his experiences when in exile in Samoa. But, as demonstrated in chapter three, there is evidence of a colonially critical approach to be found even in his early adventure novel, *Treasure Island* (1881)

For the purposes of this thesis the term *precincts* is selected for its connotations of geographical boundaries and areas, both of which apply to the experiences of Stevenson's career. There are several sharply contrasting precincts identified in this thesis: the precincts of the Scottish past; the island precincts of the author's earliest novel, *Treasure Island;* the imperial precincts of London, the centre of the imperial project seen in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) and the overtly colonial precincts of Stevenson's South-Seas fiction. I focus closely on Stevenson's literary responses towards the Imperial Precincts of his existence and marginalised voices of oppressed cultures and populations, both in the Scotland he left behind and beyond its borders and boundaries. I also aim to prove that these seemingly different elements of Stevenson's life- Scotland and the South Seas- are inextricably linked, with his exile making a profound impact upon concerns about the marginalised already evident in his earliest writings.

Introduction

> Robert Louis Stevenson has been one of the most elusive writers in the English language. Conventional critical approaches generally look for a degree of categorisation: to feel comfortable with an author a label is considered necessary. […] We think we know him. Yet he has elicited a variety of evasive responses from serious readers: coy praise, effusive keenness, puzzled irritation, reluctant acknowledgement. And even in the case of praise and enthusiasm there has often been a dismissive element, which has come sometimes from those who have been content to accept his curious, tributary position in British literature without much enquiry.[1]

So wrote Jenni Calder as editor of *Robert Louis Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* (1981), a critical collection inspired by an academic symposium in Edinburgh. This important volume marks a clear turning point in what had, as I shall show, previously been a repetitive series of complacent and severely limited critical responses to Stevenson. With some occasional exceptions, such a low-level of assessment had become part of an accepted view of the author. Literally, he became subject to critical boundaries, rendering him no more than a talented boys' adventure writer, a position which remained virtually unchallenged through most of the twentieth century.

Chapter one addresses the nature of criticism directed at Stevenson in the first half of the twentieth century, where initially intrigued and curious reviews of his work in the late nineteenth century were eventually surpassed by a succession of complacent assumptions which relegated both Stevenson and Scottish literature in general to the margins of literary seriousness. This chapter is not concerned with reading Stevenson directly but is instead an examination of the responses of critics to the readings of Stevenson which have been made public. In short, this chapter sets up my argument that Stevenson was one of the first authors to address seriously the effects of colonialism via fiction. I argue that Stevenson was an anti-colonial writer at the heart of the colonial process, writing from the colonised South Seas. In particular, I am indebted to Paul Maixner for his collation of contemporary Victorian criticism, where the distinctly different nature of Stevenson's work seemed to unsettle the definitions of the genre which encapsulated the Victorian era: the Adventure novel, with its sense of exotic travel and territorial and material gain. I also consider three strands of twentieth-century criticism: from F.R. Leavis comes damnation by virtual omission; and from within Scotland itself, a distinct relegating of Stevenson to the margins of serious Scottish

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[1] Jenni Calder, *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981) p.1

literature for most of the first half of the twentieth century. The third element is the critical break-through which emerged in tandem with an undoubted renaissance of Scottish literature, and responses to literary tradition and heritage, developing, as I shall demonstrate, from the early 1980s and beyond.

Chapter two traces the progress of Stevenson's pre-occupation with the fate of the marginalised, examining his earliest published essay 'The Pentland Rising' (1866) where his concern for the lost voices of the past is first heard. This theme is extended in my examination of the short story 'Thrawn Janet' (1881), a key section of *Weir of Hermiston* (1896) and a short non-fictional example, Stevenson's letter on 'Father Damien' (1890) where the fate of the marginalised in society is taken to the extremes of a leper colony in a colonial, South Seas setting. Also there is the first of several comparisons between the cultural impact of Walter Scott's historical fiction and Stevenson's much darker vision of post-Culloden Scotland. In no way diminishing Scott's stature as pivotal figure in Scottish literature, I consider how the same subject matter is given a far 'edgier' treatment by Stevenson in his portrait of a fractured, dispossessed nation held together by a darker national narrative than that depicted by Walter Scott. This chapter's role is to show that the extent of Stevenson's concern for the silenced voice of the individual was not something which suddenly developed upon reaching Samoa. It was a continuous thread which appears in his earliest publication through to his final works, and was deepened as a result of his life experiences in the colonial context of Samoa.

Chapter three features a close analysis of Stevenson's first novel, *Treasure Island* (1883), an embryonic example of Stevenson's tendencies as a colonial critic and as a fiction writer warping the boundaries of the supposed adventure genre within which he operated. This was a text perennially subject to a level of criticism which failed to move beyond the label of 'boys' adventure novel'. My intention is to challenge this limited perception and elevate the novel towards a reading of more subtle interpretation, wholly consistent with the highly-critical and anti-colonial approach demonstrated more clearly in the author's later years. I examine the key Stevenson symbol of the island, used in several places in his fiction, where isolation removes the boundaries associated with the lifestyles of his cast of characters, with the 'higher' figures rendered indistinguishable from the pirate crew. Here, I consider Alan Sandison's ideas of Stevenson as embryonic modernist author. I identify too some of the early colonial critique included in his work which would become far more direct in his later

fiction, such as 'The Ebb Tide' (1894) and 'The Beach of Falesa' (1892), which are also assessed elsewhere in my thesis.

Also examined are two of Stevenson's arguably most important works, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) in chapter four and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) in chapter five, where I consider the impact of the Imperial world upon the London of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Hyde*, and the wide geographical precincts of *The Master of Ballantrae*. Like its author, *The Master of Ballantrae* moves beyond the boundaries of Scotland across both seas and continents, examining the post-Culloden contours of Scottish identity as Stevenson pursues his theme of a fractured, disembodied nation. In *Jekyll and Hyde,* my analysis centres upon the argument that Stevenson creates far more than merely a famous example of the Victorian Gothic horror. Stevenson sets the tale right in the epicentre of Empire, exposing the civilised surroundings of upper-middle-class London to the full glare of the city street-lights, creating a contemporary, urban Gothic which stirs fear of the unknown and the 'savage'. It brings imperial unease uncomfortably close to the centre of the civilised world. In *The Master of Ballantrae,* my focus expands to Stevenson's fictional response to Scottish history, a key element of his treatment of the Scottish historical novel, as pioneered by Walter Scott, and sharply re-defined by Stevenson, which would develop throughout his career. Central to my analysis is Stevenson's use of narrative voice. Competing narratives in *The Master of Ballantrae* are constantly vying for position in a tale of deep national unease. Subsequently, in its latter stages, this thesis follows Stevenson's own path in examining his responses to a colonial world he experienced principally via his key South Seas texts, 'The Beach of Falesa' and 'The Ebb Tide'. The chapters on *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Jekyll and Hyde* examine the extent of Stevenson's initial narratives which take on a colonially critical viewpoint: the impact of colonialism beyond the shores of the British Isles in *The Master of Ballantrae* and the close proximity of fog-bound London as a product of the imperial project.

Chapter six examines two further key novels produced during Stevenson's exile in the South Seas: 'The Beach of Falesa' (1892) and *Catriona* (1893). 'The Beach of Falesa' is one of Stevenson's most important colonial texts, and provides an impression not only of attempts at colonial control, but also the abject *failure* to command completely the populations under imperial jurisdiction. In subject matter and geography, both of these texts might seem on the surface to be many miles apart, but this chapter argues that the concerns for marginalised causes are closely connected, and Stevenson's colonial critique extends to Scotland and the

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threat to marginalised culture as a direct result of his South Seas experiences. *Catriona* provides what is described as a highly politicised extension of the 'dark national narrative', already evident in *The Master of Ballantrae* which moves far beyond the shadow of Walter Scott and his approach to the historical novel in relation to Scotland and its successful integration into the unified British state. As I shall argue, Stevenson's approach is far bleaker and darker in response to the post-Culloden landscape. *Catriona* examines the fractured discord keenly felt by Stevenson within a country adjusting to the post-union and Culloden environment. And it is principally through Stevenson's concentration on marginalised voices of suppressed individuals that he achieves this wider image of a Scotland in transition as it moved from the state of civil war to the settling of the country into the union. The images of Highland tragedy made famous in Scott's *Waverley* (1814) are replaced by a far darker and bleak social and political Scottish landscape.

Chapter seven is devoted to a comparison between key works of Stevenson, Joseph Conrad and Graham Greene: 'The Ebb Tide' (1893) *Lord Jim* (1900) and *The Quiet American* (1955). This will prove to be a fruitful area in the study of Stevenson, especially since it is now acknowledged in academic circles (as exemplified in this chapter) that these diverse writers are very closely connected in terms of responses to the colonial world. This chapter aims to prove, by direct comparison with these writers, how false the omission of Stevenson as a serious colonial critic was in twentieth century literary discourse. Famously, F.R. Leavis included Conrad as one of only four favoured novelists (Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Conrad) in his *The Great Tradition* (1948). The status of Stevenson as an early anti-colonial writer is certainly enhanced when compared with his more celebrated near-contemporaries, Conrad and Greene. Academic interest is certainly now evident in the study of Stevenson and Conrad in particular. Linda Dryden, Stephen Arata and Eric Massie's 2009 collection of critical essays, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad: Writers of Transition* are the most recent, and very welcome additions to a growing body of work which re-defines the literary relationship between the two authors.

The final chapter examines a wide range of cinematic responses to Stevenson. In effect, in a similar manner to chapter one, I am considering different *readings* of Stevenson, rather than reading Stevenson himself. Here, it is considered whether or not cinematic interpretations and depictions have run parallel to the developing literary criticism outlined earlier in the thesis. Cinematic responses- to some extent- also adapted to the political and social context of the late twentieth century, and the changing perceptions of Stevenson's work. Also examined is

how the cinema of the latter half of the twentieth century, which also often presented diverse and thoughtful examinations of Stevenson's writing, may well in some cases have contributed to the poverty of critical approaches towards his fiction. Film directors latched on to the adventure narratives of his more famous novels, particularly *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped.* This had a dual effect: the maintenance of Stevenson as a famous author, but also the maintenance of his reputation as a boys' adventure writer. The cinema did, however, occasionally display a perceptive approach to Stevenson's work, in one case a full decade before the tide of criticism seemed to turn. The 1971 adaptation of *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* is a stark and violent case in point. As this chapter argues, the viciousness of the post-Culloden responses to rebellion are bluntly displayed, as are the contradictions in a Scotland engulfed in a state of civil strife. This chapter shows how, to some extent, the cinematic treatments move with the relatively new discovery of the darkness and seriousness evident in Stevenson's fiction.

This thesis will conclude that Stevenson's writing should be elevated to a position of deserved seriousness in terms of his dark depictions of Scotland, his treatment of the marginalised and- perhaps above all- his embryonic (and largely ignored) anti-colonial tendencies, evident from some of his earliest writings. By examining a wide range of criticism from the late Victorian period to the present day, the mistaken impression, which endured for the best part of a century after his death, of Stevenson as merely a skilled and popular boys' adventure writer is challenged. Equally, via a close analysis of an extensive range of primary Stevenson texts, I challenge perceptions of the seriousness of his writing, uncovering many features of his fiction which place him among the finest and most perceptive literary figures of his age.

Chapter One:

Reading Stevenson: Beyond the Boundaries of Scottish Perspectives and Critical Receptions of Stevenson and Victorian Literature.

Robert Louis Stevenson's place in the realms of Scottish and world literature has suffered from a lingeringly limited sense of his fiction's stature and identity. A gathering momentum of more favourable and engaged criticism has, however, emerged in recent years, beginning to redress the balance of Stevenson's diminished literary reputation. The writer was frequently neglected and misunderstood as a literary figure, particularly in his native land during the first half of the twentieth century. *Treasure Island* (1883) appeared on the mental list of his works which the populace at large had and has 'heard of' and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) has of course entered the general cultural vocabulary of the adult world, with the term 'a Jekyll and Hyde personality' being widely used in daily discourse.

The vast majority of Stevenson's texts, despite the widespread fame still afforded to him, have remained critically elusive. Stevenson seems, to some extent despite some notable academic interventions from the mid-twentieth century onwards, to have suffered the same fate as Robert Burns and, in particular, Walter Scott as national literary figures who have arguably been read as diminished literary exemplars of a diminished culture. One of the most famous examples of diminishing returns for Burns and Scott comes in Edwin Muir's poem 'Scotland 1941', where he describes them collectively thus: 'And mummied house-gods in their musty niches/ Burns and Scott, sham bards of a sham nation'.[1] They exist, in Muir's terminology, within a stagnant vacuum which lauds them as key components of a false and suffocating Scottish culture. The tide, however, seems to have turned in terms of Stevenson's literary reputation alongside the status of Scottish literature itself. I would argue that 1980 would be an apt starting point to date a renaissance in the study of Stevenson, within a continually evolving national consciousness, driven by comparatively radical political and social changes in Scotland, culminating in a noticeable resurgence of Scottish Literature.

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[1] Edwin Muir, 'Scotland 1941' in Scott, Tom, ed., *The Penguin Book of Scottish Verse* (London: Penguin Books, 1970), pp 428/429

Stevenson's work was largely dismissed, often by simple omission, in the early twentieth century by three major schools of thought: the leading figures of the Modernist movement, well-known and highly-influential critics such as F.R. Leavis and leading figures of the Scottish Renaissance, particularly Hugh MacDiarmid. This thesis argues throughout that Stevenson was an innovator and a clear precursor of the Modernist movement in literature or, at the very least, as Alan Sandison suggests, that 'Stevenson shows his affinity with emerging Modernist sentiment by his restless, life-long experimentation and his refusal to have his aesthetic defined for him by "the tradition" '[2]. Sandison goes on to consider Stevenson's comparable position with the later Modernists as follows:

> He is, however, in very respectable Modernist company again when he declines to repudiate that tradition altogether. When Ezra Pound wrote
>
> > Tching prayed on the mountain and
> >
> > > Wrote MAKE IT NEW
> >
> > On his bathtub
> >
> > > Day by day make it new
>
> He glossed the meaning of the Chinese characters from his imperative as 'Fresh, now; to renovate, to improve or renew the state of'. He thus stresses *renovation* as well as innovation. Eliot picks this up when, two years later, he declares in a lecture: 'The perpetual task of poetry is to *make all things new*. Not necessarily to make new things.'[3]

Sandison relates to a central concern of this thesis in terms of what critics of the early twentieth century seem to have ignored in Stevenson's fiction: that he was a clear innovator of the genres of fiction; that his work was continuously experimental; and- as I argue in detail- that he was a precursor to both the Modernist movement *and* an early critic of the colonial world in his fiction. Alan Riach also points out in his chapter 'Treasure Island and Time' from *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography* that Stevenson's earliest full novel, considered in detail in chapter three, was already utilising a fragmentary sense of narrative mixed with a dichotomy between the supposedly 'child' status of the novel juxtaposed with the distinctly serious or 'adult' nature of much of the darker elements of the plot:

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[2] Alan Sandison, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism* (London: Macmillan, 1996) p.82
[3] *Ibid,* p.*83*

These matters underlie *Treasure Island.* In the book's narration and multiple narrators, switching from the adult Jim to the youthful Jim, then to the narrative of the adult Dr Livesey and then back to Jim, we are witness to a range of interpretive strategies. We witness different kinds of experience, different kinds of judgement, different kinds of sense.[4]

Riach's assessment of *Treasure Island* can, as I demonstrate throughout this thesis, be transferred to several examples of Stevenson's fiction, where certainties of genre and narrative are constantly distorted, refined and fragmented. Stevenson's narratives lack the security of certainty, be it between worlds of the adult or the child, or the colonial island landscape upon which Stevenson 'settles' this most unsettling of novels. Supposed certainties become blurred around the edges; and the reader is never allowed to have the solid ground of narrative certainty beneath his feet. Riach goes on to state that:

 The word 'unsettled' is doubly pertinent if one considers the meaning of settlement in the colonial world. A colonial settlement is an investment of authority, an imposition from abroad or in hierarchical terms 'from above'. Stylistically, Stevenson's writing itself sometimes seeks to attempt to avoid the imposition of such authority.[5]

As I will go on to demonstrate in several chapters of this thesis, Riach's points on both the fragmentary nature of many of Stevenson's fictional narratives and his attitudes towards colonial hierarchy and authority became increasingly important in his work. Nonetheless, despite recent critical revisions of his fiction, literary criticism of the early twentieth century certainly appears to have become stagnantly negative towards Stevenson. H.L. Mencken wrote the following in 1924:

 I can detect no passion for Stevenson among the men and women who are actually making the literature of today. There are hot partisans among them for Joseph Conrad, for Hardy, for Meredith, for Flaubert, for Dostoevsky and even for Dickens, but there are none, so far as I am aware, for good Louis.[6]

 Mencken's words neatly summarise a general early twentieth-century dismissal of Stevenson's work as a serious writer. He suggests that Stevenson can be regarded as no more than a lightweight and popular author, a writer who carved out adventure tales, and one who could not be regarded as being among the best literary figures. He belonged instead to a

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[4] Alan Riach, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) p.95

[5] *ibid, p.99*

[6] David Daiches in *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* op. cit., p.141

somewhat discredited and bygone Victorian period of fiction in the modern, thrusting, post-Great War Modernist literary world. Mencken concludes by suggesting rather robustly that Stevenson 'never got beyond the simple revolt of boyhood […] the result is an air of triviality hangs about all his work and even, at times, an air of trashiness'.[7] Many more recent critics have, as we have seen, registered a far different opinion of Stevenson's impact as an embryonic modernist. Alan Riach, for example, suggests the following:

> One might sketch the character of the Modern Movement by saying it began in the 1890s, in fin-de-siècle Europe, heralded by Robert Louis Stevenson and Oscar Wilde. Stevenson's dark, psychotic stories, his bohemianism and Francophilia, his internationalism, travelling to France, and then across America and into the Pacific, and finally his sense of strangeness in language, the poise of his work, are all prophetic tendencies in the major writers of the Modern Movement.[8]

Like Mencken, many critics of the early twentieth century failed to recognise what Riach points out above, the ground-breaking nature of Stevenson's darker manipulation of what might initially appear to be the adventure fiction genre and, as I will argue, the distinctly colonially critical nature of works previously considered only fit for consumption as boyhood adventures. His manipulation of the adventure genre is particularly striking, as I will go on to examine in chapters 3 and 5 on *Treasure Island* and *The Master of Ballantrae.* Alongside *Kidnapped,* each of these novels present a far darker manifestation of the genre than has been generally recognised.

  These are just a few of many examples considered in this thesis in relation to the rejection of Stevenson's fiction by serious literary criticism in the early twentieth century and beyond. This thesis argues that Stevenson did indeed 'make all things new, not necessarily make new things'. From Stevenson's earliest fictional successes, we can see high levels of innovation and constant distortions of what appear to be conventional genres- particularly with regards to 'adventure'- which seem to have been almost completely ignored for at least the first half of the twentieth century, an imbalance which recent revisionist criticism, and this thesis, seek to redress.

    One of the first collections of revisionist Scottish analysis of Stevenson was published in 1981 with *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* edited by Jenni Calder, the result of the

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[7] David Daiches, op. cit., p.141
[8] Alan Riach, op. cit., p.125

bringing together of a group of prominent academics for a conference in Edinburgh in 1980. This book examines a range of familiar Stevenson texts, but at the same time considers Stevenson as a political author, examining the impact of his exile, which resulted in the more overtly imperially critical context of his later South Seas writing. The most recent publication to place Stevenson as a key figure in Scottish literature, *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature* (2012) also suggests that 'in the past three decades, Scotland has witnessed a remarkable literary resurgence', referring to the wide array of prominent Scottish authors who rose to prominence from the early 1980s onwards.[9] And it is indeed from this later period of the twentieth century where mature and probing academic scrutiny of Scottish literature and a strongly revisionist outlook began to emerge. Carruthers and MacIlvanney have pointed out that the commonly perceived academic belief that a distinct Scottish cultural identity was unable to flourish or even exist properly, given the fractured nature of the whole notion of 'Scottishness', began to alter in the 1980s:

> The 1980s saw a rejection of the rhetoric of deformity and fragmentation that until then had been the house style of Scottish cultural analysis. Scottish culture (and the very phrase risked oxymoron) was viewed as shattered, fissured, radically split-between Scottishness and Britishness, emotion and intellect, Highland and Lowland, Scots and standard English[…]From Edwin Muir in the 1930s to Tom Nairn in the 1970s, this vision of Scottish cultural debility held more or less undisputed sway.[10]

What this meant for the reputation of a writer like Stevenson was that his work, created at the highest point of *British* identity of the imperial Victorian age was, so the assumption is made, subsumed within a much larger, far more culturally confident generalised world of *English* literature in its wider sense, while at the same time revealing a lack of any Scottish confidence in its own culture. For Stevenson, this meant, ultimately, relegation in terms of later criticism and certainly banishment from any sense of a tangible Scottish tradition. But it is this lack of a coherent Scottish culture which has been re-visited by academics from, as Carruthers and MacIlvanney point out, the 1980s onwards: 'As a result of this revisionist drive, the cultural fragmentation earlier writers deplored was recast throughout the 1980s and 90s as vital, invigorating diversity'.[11] If we consider that the Victorian period of imperial growth did *not* mean a complete stagnation of Scottish Literature, then a thorough revision of

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[9] Gerard Carruthers and Liam MacIlvanney (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012), p.10
[10] *ibid*, p.10
[11] *ibid,* p.10

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Stevenson as a serious Scottish writer becomes a more than viable option. Yet this refreshing critical position has only emerged following a lengthy period of entrenchment which de-valued the impact of a distinctly Scottish culture upon the wider British Empire.

It was during the late Victorian period- the quintessentially British period of global influence- that Stevenson flourished as an author in terms of literary and financial success. Ironically, this also largely accounts for his diminished literary reputation in the twentieth century. The mid-to-late nineteenth century was the greatest period of expansion in terms of territory in the British colonial project, leading to seismic demographical shifts, directly affecting the lives and culture of Scotland as a country and Scots in general as part of an ever-expanding empire. An already well-established Scottish diaspora was swelled by the ranks of Scots making good within the widening precincts of imperial influence. As Tom Devine points out:

> Between 1825 and 1938, over 2.3 million people left Scotland for overseas
> destinations. When the estimated 600,000 who moved across the border to England
> between 1841 and 1911 are included in the total it is little wonder that Scotland can be
> regarded as the European country of emigration over this period. [12]

Thus, in tandem with this 'boom' period of emigration and empire, the reading habits of whole populations, driven by economic growth, education and the rise of literary serialisation in newspapers and magazines gave rise to a period of unprecedented power for the written word as the available readership expanded enormously. For Stevenson, this provided a potentially huge reading audience, which he took full advantage of.

We can now consider some more of the critical responses towards Stevenson's work prior to the revision of opinion of the last 30 years. The pendulum of opinion on Stevenson's worth and merit as a serious author certainly continued to swing in the years after his death, but what of the opinions of some contemporary commentators? Paul Maixner's *Critical Heritage* (1981) provides a rich supply of examples of highly-engaged reviews of Stevenson's fiction. Criticism of *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) in particular provides the most compelling contemporary considerations for a modern reader. A pattern emerges of the difficulty found by some of his contemporary critics in categorising Stevenson's tales. *The Master of Ballantrae* was generally praised, most notably by Henry James, who declared in a letter to Stevenson quoted in Maixner that 'The intensest throb of my literary life, as that of many

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[12] Tom Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora, 1750-2010* (London: Penguin, 2011) p.85

others, has been *The Master of Ballantrae-* a pure crystal, my boy, a work of ineffable and exquisite art'.[13] This is perhaps an indication that the writer, fully immersed in his South Seas setting, was reaching his artistic peak. This is further highlighted by a lengthy review of November 1889, which emphasises the change in perceptions of at least some contemporary critics. Reviewer Mrs Oliphant stated that 'fiction, like the other arts, is following new laws, and we are reminded on all sides that cycle is over and another has begun to describe the unfailing round which separates the ages […] let us then with humility study the art of fiction upon its new lines, and see what is given to us by the new school'.[14] Oliphant goes further when she alludes to the idea that Stevenson's literary prowess set him apart from others, and would make the idea of 'copying' him impossible, and that 'no mere style could commend the astonishingly painful fables in which Mr Stevenson is most strong […] and which no training can confer'.[15] Oliphant goes further by stating that the power of Stevenson's fiction, certainly his later works, goes well beyond the scope of 'boys' adventure stories' when she comments: 'It is strong meat for men[…]here all is uncompromising, tragic, a deadly struggle all through'.[16]

One can detect a tone of dismissal in some comparisons which have been made between Scottish authors of the past and other, more highly acknowledged figures of 'English' literature, perhaps best exemplified by F.R. Leavis's *The Great Tradition,* containing- as I examine below- his comments on both Walter Scott and Stevenson. Before I subject some of the words of Stevenson's detractors to closer scrutiny, it is important to note that there have, in the relatively recent past, been several refreshing exceptions which have considered a very different sense of Stevenson's impact, influence and importance. Adding to Riach's *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography* quoted above, one can consider the recent publication of *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson* (2010), edited by Penny Fielding, an example of a critical text which provides a fittingly wide range of critical studies on Stevenson. In the wake of Calder's *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* the list of probing and convincing criticism also includes the following: Alan Sandison's *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism* (1996)*;* Roslyn Jolly's *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific* (2008) and the range of critical essays included in

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[13] Paul Maixner, *Robert Louis Stevenson, The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul ltd, 1981) p.32.
[14] *ibid,* p.360
[15] *ibid*, p 362
[16] *ibid*, p.362

Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury's *Robert Louis Stevenson: Writer of Boundaries* (2006). Critical consensus prior to the 1980s would in general imply that Scotland as a nation became distorted in terms of its culture and literature, swamped by and subsumed within the burgeoning Empire, subservient to the dominant partner, England. Stevenson, based on such assumptions, is a prime example of the Scot belonging to a disembodied nation with no distinctive literature. Critics such as T.S. Eliot and Edwin Muir, two highly influential figures in twentieth-century literature, were convinced that this was a barren Victorian period for Scotland's literature. T.S. Eliot and Muir's opinions run deep throughout the more recent revisionist criticisms of Stevenson. Time and again, Muir's opinions form a basis for both negative and revisionist perceptions of Scottish literature. In T.S. Eliot's opinion, 'we suppose not only a corpus of writings in one language, but writings and writers between whom there is a tradition'.[17] And in Muir's *Scott and Scotland,* the author adopted a similar position to Eliot on the impossibility of a truly Scottish literature:

> A Scottish writer who wishes to achieve some approximation to completeness has no choice except to absorb the English tradition, and […] if he thoroughly does so his work belongs not merely to Scottish literature but to English literature as well. On the other hand, if he wishes to add to an indigenous Scottish literature, and roots himself deliberately in Scotland, he will find there, no matter how long he may search, neither an organic community to round off his conceptions nor a major literary tradition to support him. [18]

Muir's views on Walter Scott and tradition claim a distinct lack of an indigenous literature which seems to have forced Scott both to 'invent' one, and to feed from the already dominant literary tradition of 'English' literature. He argued that 'Scotland did not have enough life of its own to nourish a writer of his scope; it had neither a real community to foster him nor a tradition to direct him'.[19] According to Cairns Craig, this idea that 'Scotland does not have a continuous tradition and cannot maintain sensibility in its full complexity' has been a millstone around the neck of Scottish literature for much of the twentieth century.[20] Cairns Craig is a dissenting voice in the face of this prevailingly negative outlook of Muir and Eliot's views of Scotland. Their sense of its culture and literature is of a floundering in a no-man's-land of cultural vacuity. Craig considers T.S. Eliot's thoughts on the contributions of peripheral nations to the governing body of English literature where he observes that 'not being one of the five or six- at most- great organic formations of History with a capital H

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[17] Quoted in Cairns Craig, *Out of History* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1996), p.14
[18] *ibid*, p.14
[19] Edwin Muir, *Scott and Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1982), p.3
[20] Cairns Craig, op. cit., p.14

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there can be, for Eliot, no Scottish literature.'[21] The suggestion by Eliot is that Scotland, being something of a 'sub-culture' of the dominant England, plays only a minor role amidst that 'organic formation' which is English literature, the 'inheritor of the traditions of classical culture and medieval Catholicism' [22] from which all 'true forms of literature' emerge. One might also add Muir's contribution to this debate, where he stated that 'I began to wonder what he (Scott) might have been, given his genius, if he had been born into a genuine organic society such as England, or even into a small, self-sufficient state like Weimar'.[23] Cairns Craig's robust and witty analysis becomes most entertaining and perceptive when he quotes the views of Eliot:

> And I am of the opinion, that the benefits which Scottish, Welsh and Irish writers have conferred upon English literature are far in excess of what the contribution of all these individual men of genius would have been had they, let us say, all been adopted in early infancy by English foster-parents.[24]

Again, Craig suggests that the relegation of the smaller countries' literatures to that of minor subsets of the larger English body of work fails to provide any real insight into possibilities of the complexities and variety of Scottish writing and ability to function within a distinct and separate culture. In other words, to attempt to write in a Scottish tradition, according to Edwin Muir, was impossible, as there was no real culture; no real tradition; and, certainly, there was no tangible country. Muir suggests that 'a Scottish writer who wishes to achieve some approximation to completeness has no choice except to absorb the English tradition.'[25]

Argued throughout this thesis is that Stevenson's literary output was very much a part of a thriving Scottish literature which takes full account of Scotland's dichotomy as a nation, but also as a dispossessed entity within the Union and Empire. Stevenson was especially successful in adapting to the geographical changes in his own circumstances, but nonetheless retained a deep attachment to Scotland as a potent source of material for his writing. Stevenson was able to write successfully in a wide range of genres as an essayist, political commentator, reviewer and, of course, novelist. As a Scotsman abroad, rather than provide a diluted version of Scottish literature, he was- as this thesis will demonstrate- at the forefront of a critical response to both Scotland within the empire and the plight of the marginalised. This is evident in three of his most powerful texts written in exile: *The Master of Ballantrae,*

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[21] Cairns Craig, op. cit., p.14
[22] *ibid,* p.14
[23] Edwin Muir, op. cit., p.3
[24] Cairns Craig, op. cit., p.16
[25] *ibid*, p.16

(1889), the dark and politically-driven *Catriona* (1893), and the unfinished *Weir of Hermiston* (1894), all clearly focussing on and re-assessing Scotland's past in the light of Union and Culloden. It can be argued that it was the fact of Stevenson's exile which gave a sharper edge to his examination and depiction of a divided, disembodied nation within the larger British state. Unlike in Walter Scott's post-rebellion world of *Waverley* (1814), which sought to bring the historically isolated Highland culture into the mainstream world of the Union after the sympathetic depictions of the Jacobite tragedy, there is no sense of progress or optimism in the Scotland of Stevenson. Scott has his novel's hero, Edward Waverley marry Rose Bradwardine, albeit with his anguish of the violence of the Jacobite rebellion in close proximity, in a highly symbolic union of character which epitomised the author's vision of eventual calm, progress and unity after the painful internecine conflict. There is no such equilibrium in the fractured depictions of Stevenson's Scotland, with the discomforting sense of an unreconciled post-Culloden settlement evident in both *Kidnapped* and the later *Catriona.* These post-Culloden tales amplify the complicated cultural ethos inherited by Stevenson of a country haunted by the violent attack upon one important element of its own culture in the past, while at the same time fully committed to the Victorian imperial drive.

Alison Lumsden, commenting on *The Master of Ballantrae,* states that 'images of cold and age within *The Master of Ballantrae* reinforce a sense of sterility that is in turn mapped onto the Scotland that Stevenson portrays as a consequence of the historical events that underpin the narrative'.[26] Unlike the settled positivity of Walter Scott's version of post-Culloden events in *Waverley,* Stevenson's fictional version is far bleaker, seen in particular in *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Catriona*. For Stevenson, political agitation was elsewhere in a period of stagnation. His main concrete political interests came not from Scotland, but from his adopted South Seas. Politically, Stevenson is something of an enigma. Christopher Harvie describes him as a 'conservative, admittedly of a fairly visceral sort' and poses the question: 'why didn't Stevenson tackle the social realities of Scotland of his own day?'[27] It would take a separate thesis to examine the politics of Victorian middle-class, university-educated Scots at this time. But there is no doubt that his political tendencies were aroused by the mobility of the colonial world. This experience produced a range of characters frustrated within a sterile post-Culloden landscape and eventually enduring beyond its shores and boundaries. Alan

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[26] Alison Lumsden, *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010) p.75

[27] Christopher Harvie, *The Politics of Stevenson* in Jenni Calder, ed., *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* op. cit., p.124

Breck in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona,* James Durie in *The Master of Ballantrae,* two characters at least resembling the stereotypical image of romantic heroes, are among the strongest examples of characters existing in dramas which have lost their relevance beyond the events of Culloden. Their ambitions in Scotland are constantly thwarted by both setting in time and place and the characters around them. Robert Keilty in *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure* (1965) develops this point when he describes two of Stevenson's strongest characters (James Durie in *The Master of Ballantrae* and Adam Hermiston of *Weir of Hermiston*) as follows:

> Ballantrae and Hermiston are born into a world of small people-simpering, pious, effeminate members of a watered-down race, unwilling and unable to stand up to them with the physical and emotional force they demand. Bravery turns to recklessness, strength to brutality, perseverance to inflexibility, and justice to persecution. In each book, the protagonist seems a throwback from an older, more heroic time, who, by accident of birth has been cast in a tribe of pygmies which provides no natural outlet for his extraordinary potential. Instead, its little members taint and corrupt his ancient virility with their own meanness.[28]

Keilty's observations can be considered broadly with much of what Stevenson creates in terms of depictions of Scotland in his fiction. The critic makes a convincing and important point by highlighting the idea of these characters being 'throwbacks'. But from a more heroic time? Contrary to Keilty's description above, these strong, 'virile' characters are, in the shape of James Durie and Alan Breck, somewhat dishevelled and, certainly in the case of James Durie, discredited relics in settings which are constantly at odds with their seemingly heroic characters. Stevenson provides an alternative vision of the Scottish heroic mythology surrounding James Durie's role in Culloden and the Jacobite rebellion in *The Master of Ballantrae,* which is examined in detail in chapter 5 of this thesis. Rather than representing a dearth in Scottish literary culture, Stevenson provides an image of a disembodied post-Culloden Scotland but one which presented a sense of continuity in Scotland's culture and literature. While the country itself had greatly altered, it had simply adapted to the changes wrought upon it in the colonial and imperial late-Victorian context.

As part of the *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* critical text of 1981, Jenni Calder considers the effects of Stevenson's Calvinist background, suggesting that, rather than acting as a barrier to the flourishing of the literary imagination, his response and experience proved

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[28] Robert Kiely, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p.198

quite the reverse, with Calvinist influences inflaming and inspiring, rather than dampening, the creative mind:

> He never doubted the value of story-telling. This concern was heightened by his Calvinist background. Calvinism not only saw the workings of the imagination as an indulgence but relied heavily on the power of words, the emotive qualities of language, to communicate an awareness of sin and commitment. Brought up on the Old Testament, on tales of Covenanting martyrs, and on ingredients of a profound folk tradition Stevenson could scarcely have avoided being intensely aware of the force of language over human behaviour and belief.[29]

If one were to consider only a small number of Stevenson's works, we can see that, in some ways, this Calvinist background enhanced rather than restricted Stevenson's outlook, given the constant moral questionings of his characters and narratives. This is evident in *The Master of Ballantrae*, *Kidnapped* and *Catriona.* In each case, the continuous friction between a romantically-tinted Catholic, Jacobite past and predominant Presbyterian reality is writ large in a range of characters and situations. Yet Stevenson uses this cultural division as a lingering metaphor of Scottishness which serves to enhance his visions of the country. It is obvious that Stevenson's upbringing did little to restrict his wide-ranging and culturally varied creative powers. Gerard Carruthers in '"Creation Festers in me": Calvinism and Cosmopolitanism in Jenkins, Spark and Gray' makes the point in his chapter's opening lines that 'The Calvinist inheritance of Scottish literature is not a parochial burden. Rather, as a survey of post-war Scottish fiction demonstrates, the Calvinist imagination is a means by which Scottish literature may obtain a broader, cosmopolitan viewpoint on human existence'.[30]This is certainly the case with Stevenson, as his sense of morality, discussed elsewhere here, was anything but restricted by his background, yet made extensive use of his own sense of Calvinist critical morality in a wide range of his writings and in his 'South seas' works. His own knowledge of religion, morality and its effects on the human psyche are evident in these starkly different cultural settings.

Amidst a broadly negative twentieth-century critical picture one can consider some further examples of more sophisticated, mature analysis of Stevenson's fiction. David Daiches produced a study of Stevenson which argues against the critical tone of inferiority surrounding the author's literary reputation in the early part of the last century. For this, Daiches deserves much credit for being one of the first to break away from the prevailing

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[29] Jenni Calder, *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1981) , p.9
[30] Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie and Alastair Renfrew, eds., *Beyond Scotland* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004) p.167

sense of limited stature professed by the Modernists, the Scottish Renaissance and the 'Great Tradition' espoused by F.R. Leavis. He begins by pointing out a familiar theme, that Stevenson had, by the mid-point in the twentieth century, been side-lined as a minor writer of children's adventure fiction. His text, *Robert Louis Stevenson, A Revaluation* (1947) paved the way in subsequent years for other critics to mount a more concerted attack upon existing critical approaches. And Daiches subsequently provided his own contribution to the resurgence of Stevenson criticism after his original *Revaluation* to the same critical volume *via* his 'Stevenson and Scotland' chapter. Daiches was writing from what he perceived as a bleak and negative stage in Stevenson's literary critical legacy. His assessment concludes with what he saw as Stevenson's position in the literary world: 'The Stevenson cult which arose after his death has almost died away, and he is now considered largely as a rather precious essayist and a writer of adventure stories'.[31] Daiches started a process of re-awakening in the analysis of Stevenson as a serious writer rather than as a literary celebrity. Most importantly, he resurrected some of Stevenson's least-known works for mature and scholarly scrutiny. Given the extent of recent revisionist criticism of Stevenson's fiction, Daiches does, perhaps, indulge in a limited consideration of Stevenson's perceived faults in the narrative structure of *The Master of Ballantrae,* particularly its ending, but his summation of the relationship between the novel's narrator, Mackellar and The Master, James Durie is both apt and convincing. Daiches first suggests that 'The Master himself is one of the most effective studies of the hero as villain that English Literature has produced' and then goes on to chart the significance of the text as a key indication of the development of Stevenson as a writer, suggesting a rise in the stature of Stevenson's characterisation from his earliest novel, with The Master being described as 'Long John Silver given psychological reality and subtlety'.[32] It would be left to later critics, such as Calder and Sandison to go beyond Daiches's ground-breaking investigations into more of the structural subtleties, colonially critical and modernist tendencies of Stevenson's work. What Daiches provides is some limited, but extremely valuable scrutiny of lesser-known texts, providing scope for further serious considerations of Stevenson's work by other critics which were to follow. His analysis of *Catriona,* for example, leaves virtually untouched the layers of political intrigue and dark national symbolism inherent in abundance in the text. He does nonetheless begin to consider this neglected, yet important historical depiction of a disjointed Scotland. Daiches,

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[31] David Daiches, *Robert Louis Stevenson, a Revaluation* (Glasgow: William McLellan, 1947) p.1.
[32] *ibid.*, p.*81*

discussing the differences between the original *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* suggests that 'it was thus in many ways a different Stevenson who returned some seven years later to write a sequel to the book',[33] but does not dwell on the darker political implications of the older, more experienced David Balfour. The furthest he goes is to suggest that 'Stevenson had moved further from the pattern of adventure as originally laid down in *Treasure Island* as he did in *Kidnapped'.[34]* Daiches hints at the clear differences between the earlier works and *Catriona,* but he seems perplexed by this 'patchy book' in terms of its political, post-Culloden overtones. He considers some aspects of the importance of Stevenson's South Seas fiction, albeit without the careful scrutiny of the anti-imperial Stevenson unearthed by later critics, and a focal point of several chapters in this thesis. There is brief consideration of the beneficial impact upon Stevenson's writing as a result of travel and exile, but Daiches does not consider the colonial contexts within which the author operated. What Daiches does highlight, however, is the sharp change in both atmosphere and characterisation in relation to what he sees as Stevenson's greatest work, *Weir of Hermiston.* Daiches notes 'how different the villains in 'The Ebb Tide' from Long John Silver or even *The Master of Ballantrae*- this fact in itself is an indication that Stevenson had come to some sort of parting of the ways in his career'.[35] This moderate beginning, yet important revaluation of Stevenson in general also takes into account an emerging factor of later twentieth-century analysis, when he makes a brief comparison with Stevenson's near-contemporary, Joseph Conrad stating, in respect of 'The Beach of Falesa' that 'the adventure story is here refined to a high degree of social and psychological subtlety without losing its quality as an adventure story, a feat which, of Stevenson's contemporaries, only Conrad could emulate and surpass'.[36] Again, without wishing to seem over-critical of his aim to elevate Stevenson's critical reputation, Daiches only scratches at the surface in terms of radical revaluation. But credit must be given to Daiches as the tide would turn in later years, with deeper considerations of Stevenson, including from Daiches himself, as a pioneering critic of the imperial world in his fiction and certainly beyond the ken of much literary criticism in the first half of the twentieth century.

Despite the initial steps of Daiches in re-assessing Stevenson, and the resurgence of criticism of Scottish literature in general from the early 1980s onwards, the marginalisation of Scottish authors of the Victorian period of Empire has remained a feature of Scottish literary

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[33] David Daiches, op. cit., p.85
[34] *ibid*, p.87
[35] *ibid,* p.146
[36] *ibid*, p.15

criticism for a number of reasons. As Gerard Carruthers puts it, for some writers their 'face does not fit with the traditional ideological predilections of Scottish criticism towards nationalism and socialism'.[37] Carruthers cites the case of Allan Massie, whose work was 'sometimes of the Scottish locale, but the problem is that, arguably, his finest work is elsewhere'.[38] Massie's case could easily be substituted by a range of Scottish writers: late Victorian author Arthur Conan Doyle, John Buchan and more recently perhaps, William Boyd, all spring to mind. At times it seems easier to forget that these writers were from Scottish backgrounds at all. Crucially, their own personal backgrounds place them into the category of those whose 'face doesn't fit' in another way. They are, it can be argued, too middle class and/or too 'English'. Returning once again to the influence of Edwin Muir on Scottish literary criticism, Massie himself provides the introductory paragraph of the 1982 re-issue of Muir's *Scott and Scotland.* Massie concludes his introduction by challenging the whole concept of what constitutes Scottish literature in terms which can be directly utilised in the study of Stevenson and, indeed, any other author who falls foul of the rigidity in much Scottish literary criticism. He suggests that 'problems' in relation to Scottish literary criticism 'can only be understood by considering Scottish Literature historically [...] it cannot be solved by writing poems in Scots, or by looking forward to some hypothetical Scotland of the future. That is the problem in the simplest terms I can find for it and it appears to me that Scots criticism has largely ignored it'.[39] This approach is echoed by Carruthers in his introduction to *Scottish Literature* (2009) which cites the importance of a 'new approach' to criticism and analysis of Scottish literature to elevate it beyond what seems to be the neglect of twentieth-century critics. He states that: 'If we are to be less concerned than we once were with "tradition" and "continuity" and fixed national cultural characteristics or modes of expression, we might also more easily begin to subject Scottish literature to new approaches'. [40] 'New approaches' here suggests that a similar approach already granted to more 'established' and recognised literary cultures, in particular that of 'English' Literature, should be applied to Scotland beyond narrow perspectives in order to 'move the discussion of Scottish literature forward and away from simply the concerns of "nationality" or "Anglo-Scots relations" '.[41]

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[37] Gerard Carruthers, *Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p.171
[38] *ibid,* p.171
[39] Edwin Muir, *Scott and Scotland, op. cit.*, pp 4 and 5.
[40] Gerard Carruthers, *Scottish Literature,* op. cit., p.3
[41] *ibid,* p.3

Amidst a series of unfavourable twentieth-century critiques, attention is now turned to another highly-influential literary commentator, F.R. Leavis. His *The Great Tradition* elevates Joseph Conrad as a prominent novelist, but relegates Stevenson to the position of minor literary figure. Jenni Calder considers W.W. Robson's question as to why Leavis left Stevenson out of his list of 'great' writers and concludes that 'The answer may be that he simply forgot him'.[42] Perhaps a more accurate explanation would be that Leavis simply hadn't read very much of Stevenson's work or, indeed, that of Walter Scott to whom he also makes unfavourable reference. Leavis states that 'He (Scott) was a great and intelligent man; but not having the creative writer's interest in literature, he made no serious attempt to work out his own form and break away from the bad tradition of the eighteenth-century romance.[43]

Leavis's opening lines are certainly provocative: 'The great English novelists are Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad- to stop for a moment at that comparatively safe point in history'.[44] He goes on to provide his dismissal of Walter Scott and Stevenson, both banished quite literally to a footnote, and Stevenson damned with faint praise which consists of the following:

> Of his (Scott's) books, *The Heart of Midlothian* comes the nearest to being a great novel, but hardly *is* that: too many allowances and deductions have been made. Out of Scott a bad tradition came. […] And with Stevenson it took on 'literary' sophistication and fine writing.[45]

Leavis's legacy of criticism goes beyond the 1948 publication of his *The Great Tradition.* As recently as 2000, Michael Alexander in *A History of English Literature* repeats the relegation of Stevenson to a writer of 'minor fiction'. He writes the following, echoing the earlier stance of Leavis:

> Robert Louis Stevenson was once famous enough to be known as RLS, but the legend has faded a little. […] *The Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde* (1886) is a good read, but, like the horror of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), disappoints adult re-reading. Later short stories, 'The Ebb Tide' and 'The Beach at Falesa', are lighter and more stylish anticipations of early Conrad.[46]

Not only does Alexander incorrectly state the title of 'The Beach of Falesa', he also produces the lazy assumption of Stevenson's inferiority to Conrad, examined in detail in chapter seven

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[42] Jenni Calder, *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* op. cit., p.10
[43] F.R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition,* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008), p.14
[44] *ibid*, p.9
[45] *ibid,* p.14
[46] Michael Alexander, *A History of English Literature,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), p. 316

of this thesis. He also offers no evidence for his assertion that *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is nothing more than a 'good read'. Like Leavis before him, Alexander relegates Stevenson to a 'footnote' of his 'history', and celebrates Conrad without question in his solitary reference to Stevenson.

Cairns Craig provides a suitable riposte to such unquestioning assumptions when he both quotes and challenges F.R. Leavis's generally accepted views on the 'high' figures of literature: 'The great English novelists are Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad':- English? An American expatriate and a Polish seaman whose first foreign language was French?'[47] Craig provides a convincing alternative view to Leavis when he reverses the critic's opinion:

> Try, for instance, to reverse this procedure: imagine if we were to claim that Dickens' *Hard Times,* for instance, was really a work of Scottish literature because it is so influenced by Carlyle; or that *Wuthering Heights* really belongs with the nineteenth-century Scottish novel because of the influence of Scott and its evident closeness, in narrative technique, to Hogg's *Confessions*.[48]

 In following Craig's ideas on Scott and Scottish literature in general, it is possible to challenge such well-established views of Scottish authors. Douglas Gifford also challenges the views of another Scottish literary heavyweight, Hugh MacDiarmid. This leading figure of the Scottish renaissance of the 1920s dismisses Stevenson's contribution to Scottish culture in a similar manner to Leavis's 'footnoting' in *The Great Tradition.* He quotes, without question, in *Contemporary Scottish Studies*, Robert Angus from the periodical *The Scottish Nation,* who stated that 'the novel in Scotland is today limited to a few followers of the Stevenson-Neil Munro tradition'. [49] He also makes use of a letter from William Jeffrey, who states that 'The literary urge of the Scot towards an imaginative life of action reached its zenith in the novels of Sir Walter and its decline in the novels of Stevenson, Munro and Buchan.'[50]MacDiarmid uses these references as part of a general dismissal of Scottish literature, as well as summarising the prevailing sense of negativity surrounding Stevenson's fiction. Gifford confronts MacDiarmid's sweeping dismissal of Scottish Victorian literature when he writes that, 'Unlike modern criticism, which recognises thematic and formal linkage between Scott, Galt, Hogg, Stevenson, Brown and MacDougall Hay, MacDiarmid does not

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[47] Cairns Craig, op.cit., p.18

[48] *ibid*, p.47

[49] Hugh MacDiarmid, *Contemporary Scottish Studies* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1995) p. 350

[50] *Ibid,* p. 274

discern any tradition in nineteenth-century Scottish fiction. He questions the worth of the "Stevensonian spirit and tradition" carried on by Buchan and Crockett. One wonders how many and how much of the authors he assesses he had read'.[51] Gifford continues his consideration of the dominance of this prevailing atmosphere of cultural inferiority in his chapter in *Beyond Scotland: New Contexts for Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature* where he cites the important contributions of Scottish literary heavyweights like Edwin Muir:

> Too often theories such as Muir's Scottish version of T.S. Eliot's theory of English cultural 'dissociation of sensibility', or the negative fall-out from Gregory Smith's and MacDiarmid's concept of 'Caledonian anti-syzygy', suggesting a lack of a conjoining tradition in Scottish culture and literature. Or one might look to the later ideas of critics like David Daiches and Kenneth Simpson as to the recurrent crises of creative identity in many Scottish writers from Ramsay, Fergusson and Burns through Boswell, Scott, Hogg and Stevenson, to Davidson, Munro, and Gibbon- and even MacDiarmid- seem to me to imply unique Scottish failure. Instead we should recognise how confrontation and articulation of what Muir called 'the predicament of the Scottish writer' can result in innovative and effective creativity.[52]

Gifford's challenging of a sense of 'unique Scottish failure' could easily be applied to another relatively recent critic's views on Stevenson. Andrew Noble's *Robert Louis Stevenson* (1983) falls in to the same trap of automatic 'rejection'. In this collection of critical essays, published just a year after Calder's *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* Noble states the following:

> In these essays, we have consequently sought to perceive Stevenson, as he saw himself, in a comparative context. It is a context in which he almost always fares badly. Consciously modelling himself on Poe, Hawthorn, Dostoevsky, Twain, Scott, Charlotte Bronte and, in his Pacific stories, Herman Melville, he usually emerges from such encounters discredited.[53]

Noble's statement contradicts directly the possible idea of a fresh approach. In the example just cited he announces Stevenson's secondary status in the first few pages of the book, drawing on a wide list of authors to support his assertion of their superiority. Noble is dismissive of Stevenson's place among serious literary figures, and sees only a Scottish writer attempting to emulate other, generally 'English' authors rather than considering any possible validity in the claim for Stevenson as a major Victorian writer. This critic, like so

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[51] Douglas Gifford, 'Re-mapping Renaissance in Scottish Literature' in Carruthers, Goldie and Renfrew, op. cit., p.30

[52] *ibid*., p.18

[53] Andrew Noble, ed., *Robert Louis Stevenson* (London: Vision Press, 1983), p.8

many relatively recent critics of Stevenson, ignores the stature and quality of the colonial fiction pioneered by Stevenson and later developed by Conrad in more favourably-received texts such as *Lord Jim* (1900) and *Heart of Darkness* (1899).

Noble follows the hypothesis adopted by Muir, making extensive use of the latter's views in the introduction to his 1982 collection. The critic does provide some useful considerations of Muir's ideas, but fails to provide depth in his analysis. For example, Noble quotes Muir's comments on Stevenson's style:

> He sweated over words, but the more laboriously he studied them the more superficial he became, and to the end his conception of an English style remained that of a graceful and coloured surface for his thoughts and sensations. Below this were concealed, as pieces of unresolved matter, almost an irrelevancy, the plots of his novels, his knobbly or too smooth characters, and his thoughts which he never had the courage to face.[54]

Noble merely provides this direct quotation from Muir, and lazily offers no opinion of his own as to the validity of Muir's statement. Indeed, all that Noble's use of Muir seems to do is to substantiate the former's own earlier claims that Stevenson's work was unworthy of a fresh consideration, and that Muir, and MacDiarmid (and, ultimately, Leavis) were correct. Again, this begs the question as to how much of Stevenson's work had ever been considered in any depth by many of his critics. Even a cursory consideration of *The Ebb Tide* for example, hardly an example of a 'graceful and coloured surface', provides a pertinent example of Stevenson's diversity as a writer of critical colonial fiction. Noble's assessment, with Muir's readings behind him, was as follows:

> It would be pleasant and, certainly, much easier to report that in such manifestly crafty hands what we have generally discerned is a subtle evolution of the adventure story; that, covertly, Stevenson freights it with a depth of psychological complexity and truth different in principle from that characteristically found in that genre. Sadly this is not the case in the majority of our analyses.[55]

Noble's collection includes 'Forms of Evasion', a chapter written by Peter Gilmour on The Ebb *Tide* and *The Beach of Falesa*. As a substantial element of his analysis of *The Beach of Falesa*, Gilmour relies heavily on an examination of the narrator Wiltshire. Yet, this character is one of many of Stevenson's narrative voices shaped by heavy irony. Gilmour's line of

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[54] Andrew Noble, op. cit., p.9
[55] Peter Gilmour, 'Forms of Evasion' in Andrew Noble, op. cit., p.10

argument does not deviate from the idea of Stevenson's *failure* in the text, reflecting unfavourably on Stevenson's attempts to deliver 'something serious'.[56] Gilmour misreads completely Stevenson's narrative irony:

> So Wiltshire thinks of the Kanakas as children, with the sense of adventure and threat that children have. Against the charge that Stevenson too considers the natives to be like children it can be argued that the narrator is Wiltshire and not Stevenson. But there is nothing in the South Sea island stories to counter the view that, for Stevenson, the natives were simple, passive, incapable of effective resistance.[57]

Gilmour's assertion that 'Put contentiously, Stevenson's appetite for adventure stories, in which a boy-scout worthiness triumphs over shabbiness, led him to misrepresent the natives, to sentimentalize them, to dodge the challenge of staring them full in the face',[58] again fails to recognise either the historical or cultural context in which the story was written, and the subtleties of this highly ironic narrative format which will be examined in chapter six.

'The Beach of Falesa' is far from being a text which evades the reality of colonial life. Again Gilmour's analysis is weak, given that he attempts to view the plot and characters via a modern context and ignoring the key factor of its original setting in time and place. No account seems to have been taken of either the context of the language or the narrative style adopted by Stevenson. Gilmour's conclusion is that 'this is very far from Conrad and Melville'.[59] He has completely misread Stevenson's intentions, seemingly ignoring the use of ironic narrative used by Stevenson. His continuous reference to Wiltshire's 'racism', using Wiltshire's references to his own children as 'half castes', serves little purpose other than to highlight the contextual misreading of the piece, especially when he describes the last paragraph of the novel, suggesting that 'There is a disturbing last paragraph, in which Wiltshire's racism is allowed to surface'. [60] It is 'disturbing' in the sense that Wiltshire remains true to character, central to Stevenson's clear depiction of a none-too-insightful and blunt colonial character. Despite the reference just cited, Gilmour adds to his flawed critique by stating that Stevenson avoids the race issue throughout. The critic states that the central usage of the relationship between Uma and Wiltshire 'has allowed Stevenson to remain

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[56] Peter Gilmour, op. cit., p.191

[57] *ibid,* p.192

[58] *ibid*, p.192

[59] *ibid,* p.194

[60] *ibid*, p.194

within the adventure story genre. It has allowed him to proceed as if race were not an issue'.[61] The fact that Wiltshire is so casual in his comments on 'half-castes' without in any sense realising the implications of his thoughts provides a far stronger ironic criticism up his or her own mind, without the didactic interference of narrative direction. To the modern reader, the ironies seem perhaps clearer as we have an unenlightened contemporary character- 'racist' in modern terminology- experiencing the colonial world at first hand. It is by no means an avoidance of the issue of race. Stevenson uses Wiltshire to highlight the ironic nature of the colonial confusion surrounding the white settlers' relationships with the colonised. Wiltshire's desire to 'know where I'm to find the whites' for his daughters to marry performs Stevenson's ironic critical function of presenting a blunt critical narrative very well indeed. We see issues of race clearly, but through the eyes and mind of a narrator rather clumsily making his way through the exotic colonial landscape and interacting with 'the natives'.

Perhaps an even stronger example of ironic colonial narrative is to be found in 'The Ebb Tide'. Gilmour also examines this text in his essay and reaches similarly negative conclusions:

> The issue of race has not been ignored, as it is in *The Beach of Falesa*, but because the native population has conveniently been reduced by smallpox to four, it does not figure. […] Any racial problems are of the past. The vision is still well short of Conrad and Melville. […] Indeed, the view of native cultures which seems to emerge in these stories is oddly close to the colonial presumption that natives are inferior, without effective power, significantly stirred only through contact with the white man.[62]

Gilmour again dismisses the factors from which Conrad would later derive much praise: a focus solely on the behaviour of the colonial characters within the colonial setting. In effect, rather than ignore the plight of native populations, Stevenson highlights their marginalised situation by a sharply critical focus on the colonisers.

Douglas Gifford's 1981 essay on *The Master of Ballantrae* in Calder's *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* provides an apt final illustration of the wider failure of Edwin Muir to recognise the deeper, allegorical meanings of much of the Scottish literature the latter chooses to criticise. Indeed, he goes as far as to suggest that Muir's failure runs deep,

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[61] Peter Gilmour, op. cit., p.194
[62] *ibid,* p.200

challenging another prevailing assumption about Walter Scott as an example of a 'sentimental romantic':

> I find it poignant and regrettable that Muir failed to apply the implications of his theory to the matter of his study, to Scott. Possibly dissociated by this time from Scotland himself, Muir failed to see that Scott did not always suffer a failure of creative and critical awareness. He further failed to see that Hogg, Galt, Stevenson, Brown and MacDougall Hay did not fall victim to the divisive and degenerative forces of Scottish Materialism, Grundyism, and sentimental Romanticisation, but rather used them as materials for satire and exposure, albeit in apparently anachronistic guise.[63]

Gifford's analysis here strikes at the heart of the flawed criticism of Scottish fiction of the first half of the twentieth century. He goes on to add that Edwin Muir's criticism of Douglas Brown's *The House with the Green Shutters* (1901) merely added to his repertoire of failure in relation to his own country's literature by concluding that 'if a writer like Muir could miss the deeper meanings of Brown's novel, it is not surprising that he and critics of Stevenson should miss the deeper meanings of *The Master of Ballantrae'*.[64] Gifford states that 'Muir, like his contemporary Grassic Gibbon, regularly and powerfully made Scotland the scapegoat for his personal displacement and unhappiness, as in "Scotland 1941", with its sneering dismissal of "Burns and Scott, sham bards of a sham nation" '.[65] It will be demonstrated in this thesis that Stevenson, as a prominent Scottish writer of the late nineteenth century, provides a Scottish authorial voice even in times of a widening Scottish diaspora. For Stevenson in particular, the influence of his experiences of the wider world would prove to be pivotal in his success as a writer in his own lifetime. But success did not necessarily mean a strong critical heritage. As Jenni Calder points out, it took some 'lonely pioneers' in the late twentieth century to elevate partially Stevenson from an under-rated, undeserved literary reputation.[66] I intend to add to this elevatory process surrounding Stevenson's reputation in the following chapters.

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[63] Douglas Gifford, op. cit., p.69
[64] *ibid,* p.69,
[65] *ibid,* p.29
[66] Jenni Calder, op. cit., p.1

**Chapter Two: Robert Louis Stevenson and Marginalised Voices: 'The Pentland Rising',
'Thrawn Janet', 'Father Damien' and *Weir of Hermiston***

Throughout his career, Stevenson developed a deep concern for and pre-occupation with the
fate of marginalised populations or cultures. Within the colonial context, this took the form of
cultures undergoing control by a more powerful entity directly witnessed by Stevenson.
Depictions of the plight of marginalised peoples formed a distinct pattern in his literary
output during the thirty years of his published work, ranging from his earliest published piece
'The Pentland Rising' (1866) to his more expansive and mature fiction, written during his
height of creativity in the South Seas. The spaces of colonial conquest do not exist solely in
foreign climes, however. His attention also turns back to the precincts of the past and
searches deep within the Highlands of his own country and those affected by the crushing of
the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion and its aftermath, and in the seventeenth century the 'killing
times' of the Covenanters. This chapter examines four different examples of Stevenson's
wide repertoire, which challenged and crossed between the boundaries of fiction and non-
fiction: his early essay on 'The Pentland Rising' (1866)*;* his short story of religion,
superstition and a host of lost voices, 'Thrawn Janet' (1881); a letter written when the author
was fully established as a Samoan resident, 'Father Damien: an open letter to the Rev. Dr
Hyde of Honolulu' (1890) and a key section involving the trial and hanging of a marginalised
character Duncan Jopp from Stevenson's unfinished final novel, *Weir of Hermiston* (1896).
These are four seemingly disparate texts, but they serve to show the extent of Stevenson's
literary concern for the plight of the marginalised in a variety of circumstances. In examining
these texts, I will demonstrate how the concern for the marginalised individual in a variety of
contexts and settings remained constant throughout Stevenson's career.

In two of the texts examined in this chapter, one would search far to find more striking
examples of humanity at the extreme edges of marginalisation: seventeenth century Scottish
Covenanters, isolated by virtue of religious persecution and a South-Seas leper colony,
expelled by disease. Stevenson's strong interest in cultures at the very edge of civilised
society was therefore present in the early stages of his career as a writer and in his later years
as a mature, serious author in the South Seas. Roslyn Jolly sees the links between
Stevenson's early years as an Edinburgh Law student and his later South Seas writing in
relation to Stevenson's legal thinking in *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific* where she
notes the lasting impact upon the author:

His Scottish legal education also benefitted him when he came to examine 'questions of race and civilisation' in the Pacific, because it incorporated a comparative dimension lacking from other, more monolithic legal cultures[…]This was one of many ways in which the mixed influences of Scotland's history helped Stevenson to make sense of the multiple frames of cultural reference juxtaposed by nineteenth century expansion: it gave him the habit of comparative thought which pervades *In the South Seas.*[1]

Jolly's suggestion is that it was Stevenson's position as a Scot existing within the precincts of the expanding imperial world in the South Seas, but with a cultural background of physically estranged Scotland, which granted him access to a unique position as colonial landowner and critic. In short, his migration to Samoa was as a direct result of colonisation, but he seemed sufficiently detached from the excesses of colonialism to allow his strong sense of marginalised voices and threatened cultures to grow within his writing. A sense of concern for lost, marginalised culture developed and continued throughout Stevenson's career, allowing him to develop frequent comparisons between the historical past of a Scotland absorbed within the United Kingdom and his own South Seas present. In both instances, he witnessed the constant threat to pockets of unique, ancient cultures and voices from growing imperial absorption.

There is no doubt that Stevenson's criticisms of the impact of colonialism extended in some respects to his own country. Manfred Malzahn suggests a close affinity with the disembodied and colonised races which strengthens Stevenson's literary depictions of a politically inert and detached Scotland, so clearly evident, as demonstrated later in this thesis, in *Catriona, The Master of Ballantrae* and, ultimately, *Weir of Hermiston.* Malzahn states that 'If a politically disembodied Scotland remained distinct from and distinguishable to the rest of the world, its chief mode of existence was that of a collective voice, given public utterance by individuals such as Burns, Scott or, indeed Stevenson'.[2] The author's exile acted as a catalyst for his own literary reactions to the imperial world in the South Seas *and* as a sharp influence upon the depictions of his own country. However, Stevenson's vision of post-Jacobite Scotland is far more pessimistic and dark than that of Walter Scott. Scott held a fascination for the romantic figures of an extinct culture of the Highlands, so evident, as Ian Duncan has shown, in his

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[1] Roslyn Jolly, *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific* (Farnham : Ashgate Publishing, 2009) p.39
[2] Manfred Malzan in Ambrosini and Dury, eds., *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Boundaries* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006) P.158

triumphant involvement with the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822, where 'Scott wrote to Highland landlords exhorting them to bring their traditional "tail" of kilted and armed retainers, and published a pamphlet instructing gentlemen attending the Grand Ball at George Street Assembly Rooms to wear 'the ancient highland costume.'[3] With the past safely buried, and absorbed within what Duncan calls 'The Invention of National Culture',[4] the symbols of a violent and fractured past become part of an anodyne early nineteenth-century 'present', where the only element sustaining Scotland as a country was not political power, but a clearly identifiable culture, including literature itself. In other words what developed was a fictional culture enshrined in physical, written fiction. Walter Scott's vision is of a useful and usable past, cleared of the fracturing violence of the previous century, and ready to embrace the new Scotland as a fully-functioning cog of Great Britain. Stevenson, however, saw a country ill-at-ease with itself, and lacking in the progress and improvement depicted in Scott's *Waverley* in particular. Julia Reid presents the following observations on the historical fiction of Scott and Stevenson: 'His (Stevenson's) historical novels unsettle the progressivist anthropological narrative by exploring critically the effects of the 1707 Act of Union on eighteenth-century Scotland' and that 'Scott was nostalgically attracted to Scotland's independent past. However, taking his cue from the Scottish Enlightenment writers, he celebrated the 1707 Anglo-Scottish union as ensuring Scotland's increasing Anglicisation.'[5] In Stevenson's Scottish fiction we do not find a succession of improvements and progress in Scotland. On the contrary, he presents a country continuously divided, ruled by religious-dominated rhetoric, and one which sits dispossessed of most of its central powers within a burgeoning Union and Empire, where the voices of the past continue to echo in a present devoid of optimism.

This pessimistic outlook upon Scotland's past began early. In Stevenson's first published essay 'The Pentland Rising' (1866), he charts the doomed journey of the already thoroughly marginalised and isolated Covenanters on either the pitiful field of battle, or the gallows of Edinburgh. Stevenson's immersion in Covenanting tales provided by his childhood nanny, Alison Cunningham, perhaps supplied the initial subject matter of the piece. Yet, as Alison Lumsden argues below, the text is arguably something more than just a boyish diatribe on the evils perpetrated upon one small section of the population in the past. This essay can be seen

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[3] Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: the Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007) P.4

[4] *Ibid,* p.47

[5] Julia Reid, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Science, and the Fin de Siècle* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) p*.122*.

as a dress rehearsal for the historical fiction to follow. As Alison Lumsden points out, 'In beginning his literary career in this way, Stevenson announces his interest in Scottish history; by choosing a Covenanting theme he aligns himself with Scotland's earlier writers of historical fiction John Galt, James Hogg and most notably Walter Scott'.[6] Stevenson's attitude towards the fate of the Covenanters is made abundantly clear in the opening stages of the essay when he writes 'Two hundred years ago, a tragedy was enacted in Scotland, the memory whereof has been in great measure lost or obscured by the deep tragedies which followed it'.[7] The sources used by Stevenson in this essay show both the financial and physical power of the State over those citizens who chose to follow the field-based pulpits of the ousted ministers. Substantial and crippling fines imposed upon the dissenting worshippers, coupled with potential evictions, are well-documented, with Stevenson highlighting the 'drunken privates' imposed and quartered upon an unwilling population and the 'stealing of bread to feed their dogs'.[8] Stevenson's listing of soldierly abuse, when 'bibles, clothes and household goods were seized upon', religion was 'blasphemed' and principles were 'shocked' gives the modern reader a close perspective of the extent to which the cherishing of religious freedom so dominated the lives of this rural population. [9]

It is in the third chapter of 'The Pentland Rising' where we glimpse the embryonic stage of Stevenson's mastery of narrative, with his powerful and atmospheric depiction of the march of the Covenanting rebels. When they reach Bathgate, the atmosphere of the essay becomes more than just mild colouring of historical sources. He writes:

> 'The cry of "Horse! horse!" and "Mount the prisoner!" resounded through the night-shrouded town, and called the peasants from their well-earned rest to toil onwards in their march. The wind howled fiercely over the moorland; a close, thick, wetting rain descended. Chilled to the bone, worn out with long fatigue, sinking to the knees in mire, onward they marched to destruction'.[10]

Stevenson re-creates a sense of the trudging hopelessness of the Covenanter marchers as 'onward they went again, through the wind, and the rain, and the darkness- onward to their defeat at Pentland, and their scaffold in Edinburgh' and thus the bedraggled group 'halted for

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[6] Alison Lumsden, 'Stevenson, Scott and Scottish History' in Penny Fielding, ed., *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.70

[7] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Pentland Rising' in *Lay Morals* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1918), p.89.

[8] *ibid*, p.90

[9] *ibid,* p.92

[10]*ibid,* p.101

the last time'.[11] The reader develops the sense of tragedy about the march, and about the fate inevitably awaiting them. Gone, momentarily, are the stern images of religion which surround this sect. We are left with the tragic pathos of death awaiting a shabby group of doomed fanatics battling for their own deeply-held religious beliefs.

Stevenson saves the most poignant and atmospheric elements of his narrative for the scene of the battle itself. Rullion Green is a quiet landscape, surrounded by Pentland beauty, and this killing ground of 1666 is depicted by Stevenson in sensuous splendour. He writes: 'The sun cast golden lights and blue shadows on their snow-clad summits […] bathing with rosy splendour the leafless, snow-sprinkled trees'. [12] The powerful detail of this depiction of natural wintry beauty contrasts sharply with the carnage which follows. Stevenson utilises the beauty of the Pentlands as a means of enhancing the horror of the cruelties inflicted on those who dared to oppose the Crown's imposition of religious worship. The battle scene became 'an amphitheatre of heather and bracken', which again juxtaposes recognisable Scottish natural imagery with the mangling of human lives to follow.[13] Beyond this prelude to the killings comes Stevenson's colder aftermath, where he calls upon Daniel Defoe as both defence and justification of his writings, quoting Defoe's distaste for the events at Rullion Green:

> It was nothing but what the tolerable oppressions of those times might have justified to all the world, nature having dictated to all people a right of defence when illegally and arbitrarily attacked in a manner not justifiable either by laws of nature, the laws of God, or the laws of the country.[14]

It seems the young Stevenson felt the need to add weight to his own sentiments by employing the words of Defoe, himself the product of Presbyterian stock, and a well-documented early eighteenth-century dissenter. Stevenson adds his own closing epitaph on the Covenanters and poses a final thought for the reader, asking them to consider 'the fashion of the day to jeer and mock […] their old religious views' and the 'chilling silence on their bravery and their determination' as they fought for 'life and liberty, for country and religion, on the 28th of November, 1666, now just two hundred years ago'.[15] What we find in this conclusion, youthful and unsubtle though it may be, is the determination to resurrect these

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[11] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Pentland Rising' in *Lay Morals,* op. cit., p.102
[12] *ibid,* p.104
[13] *Ibid,* p.102
[14] *ibid,* p.113
[15] *ibid,* p.113

lost, mocked, marginalised voices, subjected to the full brutality of the law, the established church, the crown and the state.

One finds little by way of academic analysis of this embryonic essay, but it marks an important beginning in Stevenson's literary journey through Scotland's troubled history. John Cairney writes that this 'slight work is really little more than a collection of Covenanting quotations accompanied by juvenile comment' and that this 'quaint, spindly little item has accrued considerable value today as a literary curiosity'.[16] However, it can be argued that the value of this essay is what it points towards in Stevenson's future, when these early historical writings grew to fruition. Alison Lumsden suggests that later works are 'pre-empted in his early essay 'The Pentland Rising' when Stevenson suggests that the events he describes are forgotten precisely because they were only a precursor to darker and more tragic events in Scotland's story'.[17] Like the events Stevenson describes as a sixteen-year-old, his later novels *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Kidnapped* would indeed focus on the 'deeper tragedies' of the eighteenth century. In many ways, this first published essay was, as Lumsden suggests, a rehearsal for Highland settings particularly in his later fiction. In considering Stevenson's settings for *Kidnapped,* Lumsden returns to the scene on the morning of the battle at Rullion Green, noting the following:

> This formulation of the Highland landscape, as one inscribed with memorials of death and tragedy is again one that Stevenson rehearses (here in a lowland context) as early as 'The Pentland Rising'. Here he describes the scene on the morning of the battle at Rullion Green: 'Insooth, that scene was fair, and many a yearning glance was cast over that peaceful evening scene from the spot where the rebels awaited their defeat; and when the fight was over, many a noble fellow lifted his head from the blood-stained heather to strive with darkening eyeballs to behold the landscape, over which, as o'er his life and cause, the shadows of night and of gloom were falling and thickening'.[18]

I make no claim that Stevenson's first essay was a profound piece of writing. But what 'The Pentland Rising' does achieve is, in embryonic from, to present what would become a considerable aspect of his writings which led to his greater Scottish historical works, displaying a strong sense of the plight of doomed cultures. The essay may well be a 'slight work', but there is an intriguing sense of what was to come later in his career, especially in

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[16] John Cairney, *The Quest for Robert Louis Stevenson* (Edinburgh: Luath Press Limited, 2004), p.17

[17] Alison Lumsden, op.cit., p.73,

[18] *ibid*, p.75

Stevenson's fictional political and historical examinations of Scotland in the eighteenth century. In effect Stevenson, like Walter Scott in *Old Mortality,* commemorates a battle and a cause long-forgotten, but paves the way for his Jacobite fiction which followed. Douglas Mack also examines the idea of the essay being a precursor of Stevenson's later colonially critical fiction. He writes the following:

> Indeed, Stevenson's first published work, 'The Pentland Rising' (1866), is a sympathetic account of one of the Covenanters' most important attempts to assert the rights of the people by force of arms. […] Nevertheless, the legacy of the Covenanters[…] works alongside Bohemian rebelliousness in the shaping of a man who turned out to be entirely ready in his final years to question aspects of the operation of Imperial power.[19]

Ultimately, one dwells on this short first piece primarily to demonstrate the beginning of Stevenson's life-long examination of the plight of the marginalised individual in the face of oppressive forces. Initially, he looks to Scotland's past, but this would develop logically as his experiences of travel and colonial life influenced his later fiction. 'The Pentland Rising' is therefore important as a first step towards the mature writer which Stevenson would become.

Stevenson's interest in 'lost' or marginalised voices is subsequently expressed in the short story 'Thrawn Janet' (1881). Rather than depict a culture under direct threat, Stevenson instead employs a narrative shift to provide a platform for a multi-voiced rural folk tale which his initial formal narrator introduces. The vast majority of the narrative is presented from the viewpoint of an elderly villager of Balweary who tells the dark and distinctly Scottish supernatural tale of witchery and a satanic presence in an isolated Presbyterian stronghold. Initially, in 'Thrawn Janet', the reader is presented with the voice of educated eloquence, subtly embodying the early presence of the tale's protagonist, The Reverend Soulis, who arrives fresh from the civilised environs of Edinburgh in, as we are told, 1712. Stevenson's narrative begins some fifty years after the events of the story, and depicts the much-altered, severe, almost stereotypically dour and extreme isolated Presbyterian figure of Soulis, punctuated by fearsome scriptural interjections and a sense of terror amidst this rural village. The first narrator tells us, for example, that Soulis was a 'severe, bleak-faced old man, dreadful to his hearers, he dwelt in the last years of his life, without relative or servant or any

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[19] Douglas. S. Mack, *Scottish Fiction and the British Empire,* op. cit., p.174

human company under the Hanging Shaw'.[20] The younger version of Soulis has been completely transformed by his experiences of rural Balweary when the story opens. Stevenson's villagers in the end are given the minister they seek, not the young man 'wi nae leevin experience in religion' who appeared fresh from the College in his first days of ministry.[21] To lend his tale a sense of palpable authenticity and to provide a powerful sense of atmosphere, the formal English of the narrative opening gives way to that of 'one of the older folk' (or, perhaps more accurately a series of older villagers over the 50-year span of the story) retelling the tale 'over his third tumbler' of Balweary's minister.[22] At once, the reader is compelled to suspend their disbelief and enter into a lost world of the broadest old Scots, saturated with heavy religious superstition and hysteria, developing a familiar theme in Scottish folklore and literature: the pursuit of The Devil or, in this case 'the black man' in all his manifestations.

This is a tale with ironic narrative twists which provide a further layer of 'marginalised' characterisation in an already culturally and historically marginalised setting, contrasting directly with Soulis's College life in Edinburgh. What we find here is a tale where the 'moral victory' of the villagers is clearly identified with the destruction of Janet, a product from hell itself, it would seem, and the disappearance of the 'black man' from Balweary. What is most compelling about this tale is the undoubted ambiguity of the behaviour and morality expressed by the narrative, especially the attempted drowning of Janet, re-told by our enthusiastic local voices and the growing wildness of the rhetoric as 'their minister' proves himself as the tale builds towards a finale of 'exorcism' and martyrdom. In the early stages, the villagers, already possessing deeply-set and long-held prejudice against her, launch a vicious attack upon the completely marginalised scapegoat figure of Janet M'Clour. In their righteous fury they 'clawed the coats aff her back, and pu'd her doun the clachan to the water o'Dule, to see if she were a witch or no, soum or droun'.[23] It is the outsider, Soulis himself who responds to the villagers' behaviour and recognises the severity of the hysteria of this eighteenth-century lynch-mob, interjecting on her behalf: 'Women,' says he (and he had a grand voice), I charge you in the Lord's name to let her go'.[24] The villagers are dispersed, but

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[20]Roderick Watson, ed., Robert Louis Stevenson, *Markheim, Jekyll and The Merry Men* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1995) p.10

[21] *ibid*, p.10

[22] *ibid,* p.10

[23] *ibid,* p.12

[24] *ibid,* p.12

it is from this point that the psychological terror of the narrative for Soulis begins. The catalyst to the villagers' physical attack is Janet's new position as house-keeper to the minister. Recommended by the Laird, the villagers immediately intervene:

> When folk tauld him that Janet was sib to the de'il, it was a' superstition by his way o' it; an' when they cast up the Bible to him an' the witch of Endor, he wad threep it doun their thrapples that thir days were a' gane by, an the de'il was mercifully restrained. [25]

Filled with the prejudicial atmosphere of the surroundings, the isolated minister is drawn ever-closer to the superstitious nature of Balweary. The first indication of the supernatural dominance of the narrative comes when Janet is described as a being transformed: 'For there was Janet comin' doun the clachan- her or her likeness, nane could tell- wi' her neck thrawn, an' her heid on ae side, like a body that has been hangit, and a girn on her face like an unstreakit corp'. [26] In his mind, or at least the version of it conjured up by our increasingly triumphant narrator, Soulis becomes preoccupied with the supernatural elements of the villagers' beliefs. Janet's role as possessed corpse is introduced, and the narrative then turns its attention to the classic, satanically Scottish, image of 'the black man'. Soulis's first encounter with the 'black man' heralds an epic battle with the anti-Christ. The 'black man' emerging from the 'auld kirkyaird' which was 'consecrated by the Papists before the blessed licht shone upon the kingdom', suggests a further layer of entrenchment among the fierce narrative as a two-pronged attack is suggested: the dangers of lingering Popery, and the Devil himself, with the sub-textual implication that the two are inextricably linked.[27] The brevity of the dismissive reference to a form of worship now eradicated suggests a further layer of Catholic marginalisation to add to the extremely marginalised Covenanters of *The Pentland Rising*. Stevenson's narrative works in a subtly ironic manner here. Rather than a population being marginalised, the narrative of Balweary villagers acts as the chief element of marginalisation, with Janet M'Clour, Soulis and the banished Catholic remnants of the past suitably suppressed by the powerful psyche of the village.

In 'Thrawn Janet' we are instructed to judge the moral victory of our exhausted minister and view the reasons why he appeared as the fearsome, haunted figure presented at the outset. The final scene, where Janet is depicted as a zombified satanic possession, provides the

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[25] Roderick Watson, ed., op. cit.*, p.13*
[26] *ibid,* p.14
[27] *ibid* p.*14*

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reversal in Soulis's character shown at the beginning of the story. By this stage, the narrative has moulded Soulis into the type of minister so desired by the village:

> Mr Soulis was feared for neither man nor de'il. He got his tinde- box, an' lit a can'le, an' made three steps o't ower to Janet's door […] There was a fower-posted bed wi' auld tapestry; an' a braw cabinet o' aik, that was fu' o' the minister's divinity books, an' put there to be out o' the gate.[28]

Significant here is the transformation of Soulis into the minister which suits the village. There is now no need for the 'book learnin […] wi' nae leevin' experience in religion' of Soulis's arrival. Instead, we have the type of minister of almost Covenanting fanaticism, one who was 'like their forebears of the persecution, wi' a Bible under their oxter an' a speerit o' prayer in their heart'.[29] The tremendous exorcism climax comes as Janet is reduced to ashes upon Soulis's commanding oratory: '"Witch, beldame, devil!" he cried, "I charge you, by the power of God, begone- if you be dead, to the grave- if you be damned, to hell."'[30] Janet's demise is quickly followed by the rapid disappearance of the 'black man' as he flees across the countryside, sighted by many a keen-eyed local. The book-learning of the College has indeed been banished, replaced by the fiery rhetoric desired by this isolated, superstitious village. Perhaps, on a sub-textual level, Stevenson's ironic reference to the Reformation's 'blessed licht' and the ground formerly held by the 'Papists' hints at a further narrative irony of another silenced, marginalised culture engulfed by the prevailing wind of righteousness; a wind which the Reverend Soulis could not resist. And it is a repeated pattern in Stevenson's fiction. In Scotland, in the Lowlands and Highlands, as in the South Seas with endangered traditions, the fates of silenced, threatened cultures is consistently examined. Ultimately, we are left with a thoroughly ambiguous tale where there seem to be five marginalised entities: the isolated, superstition-driven community of Balweary; the Reverend Soulis himself; the 'Auld Scots' narrative, a language continually eroded by the power of uniform, formal English; Janet M'Clour, a marginalised and discarded individual; and the silent 'Papists', completely absent from the story bar a brief 'footnote' to their existence, potentially included in the eradicated 'anti-Christ' nature of the tale itself. 'Auld Scots', zombified, Satanically-possessed corpses, graveyards, exorcisms and superstition: an irresistible combination to a

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[28] Roderick Watson, ed., op. cit., p.18
[29] *ibid*, p.10
[30] *ibid*, p.18

Victorian readership, but one which seems to penetrate somewhat deeper into the darker sides of Scottish culture and its ancient pre-occupation with religion and superstition.

There is a haunting glimpse of Janet M'Clour in Stevenson's 'Heathercat' (published posthumously in 1897) a late, unfinished work, where a different narrative voice presents a starkly contrasting vision of the young Janet some thirty years before her 'demise' as the later 'thrawn' haunted and hunted eponymous character. She is described as 'a big lass, being taller than the curate; and what made her look the more so, she was kilted very high. It seemed for a long while she would not come, and Francie heard her calling Haddo a "daft auld fule" and saw her running and dodging him among the whins and hags till he was fairly blown'.[31] This carefree image of the youthful Janet and her friendship with the curate presents a sharp contrast to the haggard, almost deformed later character and the darkness and superstition narrated by the un-named villagers of 'Thrawn Janet'. Her relationship with the curate provides distinct parallels with the later incarnation of Janet, living in the manse with the Reverend Soulis in her 'possessed' state, complete with the suffocating insularity and superstition of the village to which the moderate young Soulis would eventually succumb. In addition to this glimpse of Janet's earlier character, Stevenson also provides further insights of another layer of Scotland's turbulent past which he started in 'The Pentland Rising', with the lost voices of the Covenanting tales of Stevenson's youth continuing to permeate his writing. 'Heathercat' is set in the 1680s, 'during the 'Killing Time', those terrible last days of the Covenanters.'[32] Stevenson's depiction of a conventicle provides a powerful insight into the Covenanting mind-set. His narrative describes the 'siege' mentality of the last remnants of the sect:

> They were the last of the faithful; God, who had averted His face from all other countries of the world, still leaned from Heaven to observe, with swelling sympathy, the doings of His moorland remnant; Christ was by them with His eternal wounds, with dropping tears; the Holy Ghost (never perfectly realised nor firmly adopted by Protestant imaginations) was dimly supposed to be in the heart of each and on the lips of the minister. And over against them was the army of the hierarchies, from the men Charles and James Stuart, on to King Lewie and the Emperor; and the scarlet Pope, and the muckle black devil himself, peering out the red mouth of hell in an ecstasy of hate and hope. 'One pull more!' he seemed to cry; 'one pull more, and it's done. There's only Clydesdale and the Stewartry and the three Bailiaries of Ayr left for God.[33]

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[31] R.L. Stevenson, 'Heathercat', in *Lay Morals, op.* cit., p.323
[32] *ibid*, p.26
[33] *ibid,* p.323

The 'last remnants' they may have been, but the intensity of the extremist, insular mentality of the village of Balweary shown in 'Heathercat' remains in the tale of 'Thrawn Janet' set some thirty years later. These are strong examples of the voices which haunt the tales of 'Thrawn Janet' and 'Heathercat', where only momentary snatches of dead voices can be heard. Janet's voice, from the strength of her youth, is reduced to the babblings of a 'possessed' dead shell. The narrative in 'Thrawn Janet', overheard in the village inn, is itself a collection of fragmented half-truths, superstitions, and third-hand rumours. Ghostly remnants of a further bygone period are, as we have seen, provided by reference to the 'Papists': long gone, and safely eradicated from the narrator's post-Reformation world and the village itself. Like the image of the young Janet, internally and externally destroyed by superstition or possession, the Reverend Soulis is transformed into the 'severe, bleak-faced old man' following performing of the exorcism upon Janet. Our narrator, in effect, retrieves far more than he knows of the voices of the past. The triumphant tone of victory over evil which ends the tale serves the reader well in presenting a series of ironies. Voices are presented, eradicated, discharged and altered in a complex unravelling of the past within the tight, seemingly simple superstitious tale of possession and exorcism. Julia Reid comments:

> Soulis's transformation into the austere cleric described in the introduction suggests that educational and religious progress, as embodied in his initial progress, is illusory. It indicates the enduring potency of fanatical superstition. His conversion to the Covenanters' Manichaean vision of salvation for the Elect and Hell for the Damned figures the power of Scotland's intolerant past to haunt the present.[34]

It can be argued that, again, there is no attempt to romanticise the past in a tale dominated by a wide array of competing voices in a country where the seemingly natural progress of enlightenment only masks a nation subtly infused with pessimism, division and dark human nature. The word 'thrawn'comes into play here, and not just in the sense of 'twisted': it serves to show also the word's other meaning, 'persistent'; how the persistent nature of the superstitions of the past, and the darkness of human nature clings to both Soulis and the village of 'Thrawn Janet' despite the presence of the enlightenment figure of the younger Soulis when he first appears in Balweary. And it is this sense of national pessimism which permeates Stevenson's fiction, especially in his depictions of Scotland in its post-Union and Culloden state.

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[34] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.122

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Stevenson's literary concern for marginalised voices remained a prominent feature of his final act of writing, the unfinished *Weir of Hermiston* (1894) set this time in the heart of Edinburgh. With the central characters being Lord Hermiston, at the top of the Scottish legal profession, and his son Archie, Stevenson presents a far different framework of isolation and marginalisation within the uppermost levels of Scottish civil life. One of the most haunting passages of all of Stevenson's fiction is the chapter devoted to the fate of 'Duncan Jopp', an exceedingly wretched minor character who, like many of the marginalised *dramatis personae* employed throughout his fiction, remains silent to the end, enduring the publicly theatrical humiliations of the courtroom for an un-named crime which brings further ruinous exposure at his pre-ordained scene of public execution. This silence adds enormously to the shocking impact for the reader as his certain fate is played out amidst the powerful theatricality of the Edinburgh courtroom, centre of establishment power in this most civilised of city settings. In the case of Duncan Jopp, we see the full utilisation of establishment power: the ruling elites, surrounded by the trappings of power and theatricality of the courtroom stifling the voices of an underclass destined to be held up as an example to the citizens of this mini 'state-within-a-state'. The only vestiges of power left within Scotland dwell within the legal system, and it is that system which we see in full flow as the setting moves from the rhetoric of the courtroom examined below, to the swelling crowds of the execution itself. One arena makes way for the 'public theatre' of death, perhaps the solitary, concessionary outlet (but not for Jopp) for the voices of the population silenced by the undoubted power of the legal establishment.

Stevenson dwells upon the absolute power of establishment entities in Edinburgh, an establishment which of course included Stevenson among its membership, despite his antagonistic reaction to the abuses of power so often evident in his writings. In Archie, we see a youth, like Stevenson, firmly attached to a middle-class, Presbyterian background, with Archie's father an immensely powerful member of the legal establishment. Add to this the powerful landscape of Edinburgh, with its air of permanence and solidity, and one sees the figure of Archie as an individual observing the full might of a unified establishment dealing with a wretched, doomed individual in the figure of Duncan Jopp, another voice about to be-quite literally- strangled. This embodiment of an Edinburgh underclass is given no voice even in his hour of doom, silenced by the booming rhetoric of the firmly-entrenched legal elite. In the courtroom of *Weir of Hermiston,* the full force of the legal establishment is the foundation

of the solidified landscape of the city. Duncan Jopp's purpose is singular: he is there to be 'hangit', a silent character in a twisted drama.

The presence of the doomed Duncan Jopp is minimal. No dialogue is afforded to the 'panel', as he is described by 'my Lord Hermiston', a deliberate and highly-effective historical reality which serves only to illuminate the horror of the scene.[35] For horror it is, and Stevenson makes full use of the cruelties of the extinguishing of a human life, and the brutal preface to the act itself. Jopp's crime is never disclosed, only the ambiguous references to the 'disgrace and vice and cowardice' of the accused are mentioned.[36] The reader's immediate attention is drawn solely to the legal process of execution, and the impact upon this most silent and crushed of marginalised figures. Stevenson's prose compels the reader to be moved by the descriptions of Jopp: a 'whey-coloured, misbegotten caitiff' who 'glanced about the audience in a sudden fellness of terror, and now looked in the face of his judge and gulped'.[37] His depiction of the condemned man ends with reference to a matter of trivia so horrendous in its context that it might remain embedded in the reader's mind long after the book has been closed. Jopp is described thus:

> There was pinned about his throat a piece of dingy flannel; and this it was perhaps that turned the scale in Archie's mind between disgust and pity. The creature stood in a vanishing point; yet, a little while and he was still a man, and had eyes and apprehension; yet a little longer, and with a last sordid piece of pageantry, he would cease to be. And here, in the meantime, with a trait of human nature caught at the beholder's breath, he was tending a sore throat.[38]

Mangled indeed is the throat of Jopp in his inevitable public execution as this all-too-human figure is subjected to the pleasure of Lord Hermiston, with the obvious physical throttling and silencing of Jopp to follow. Lord Hermiston is a bleak and severe example of Stevenson's characterisation, almost certainly fuelled by his interest in the real-life Lord Braxfield, shown in his 'Some Portraits by Raeburn' in *Virginibus Puerisque* who 'left behind him an unrivalled reputation for rough and cruel speech'.[39] Stevenson notes his role as presiding judge at the political trials of Muir and Skirving in 1793 and 1794: a brutish defender of the Law and the British constitution which was, in Braxfield's words 'the best

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[35] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae and Weir of Hermiston* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2008) p.243
[36] *ibid*, p.244
[37] *ibid,* p.243
[38] *ibid,* p.243
[39] R.L. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque,* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1889) p.214

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that ever was since the creation of the world, and it is not possible to make it better'.[40] Thus Braxfield and Hermiston can be seen as Scottish establishment figures who, in Stevenson's eyes were legally sanctioned figures of oppression of marginalised figures. And make no mistake, Stevenson sees a highly-politicised legal figure in the shape of Lord Hermiston, just as he did with Braxfield. Both figures, real and fictional, brandished the only separate power left in Scotland, the power of the Law.

Duncan Jopp fits the bill of the oppressed and marginalised perfectly. In the character of Jopp we see a prime example of the throttling of voice which was to feature so prominently in Stevenson's work. His underclass figure's words are literally strangled by the violent rhetoric of the Edinburgh courtroom, with Lord Hermiston's solidly-constructed legal world deeming the actual words of such a doomed 'rascal' irrelevant, and the figure himself subject only to the mockery of Hermiston's courtroom. This strangulation of voice can be extended beyond Duncan Jopp to young Archie himself. Archie's voice, arguably, becomes strangled by both the words of his father, his own reactions and eventual capitulation, and his departure from the Edinburgh setting. Archie's brief denunciation, examined below, represents a *failure* of voice in that his protest is short-lived; his voice is stifled by the physical presence of his father, and the establishment codes under which Archie has been brought up. It is tempting, inevitably, to consider Stevenson's own experiences: brought up in the same establishment setting as Archie; a witness to the machinations of the Scottish legal world; an often fraught relationship with his father; and, perhaps most compellingly, an 'escape' beyond the boundaries of his existence to a new setting. For Stevenson, it was Samoa by the time he penned *Hermiston*; for Archie, his family's rural property, distancing himself from the paternal grip.

In the Edinburgh setting of the first section of the novel we see, through Archie's eyes, an impenetrable hardened mixture of legality and Old Scots (again, a feature of the judgements of the real-life figure of Braxfield) to reveal a stark metaphor of a nation which, in itself, has little voice, but what voice it has within this theatre of Law it uses with devastating brutality. Lord Hermiston's viciously hardened theatrical crushing of the 'panel' in the courtroom only adds the *coup de grace* to the pre-determined outcome:

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[40] R.L. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque,* op. cit., p.214

> And in the course of sentencing, my Lord had this *obiter dictum*: 'I have been the means, under God, of haanging a great number, but never just such a disjaskit rascal as yourself'. The words were strong in themselves: the light and heat of detonation of their delivery, and the savage pleasure of the speaker in his task, made them tingle in the ears.[41]

And thus is Duncan Jopp sent off to perform his second piece of public theatre on the Edinburgh gallows, silenced by the inevitable verdict deemed necessary for a crime deemed unnecessary to name. It is at this stage that Stevenson's Archie reaches new levels of rebellion against his father's role and demeanour. However, an interjection of realism from the author forbids his character to be overtly heroic, or consistently defiant, another thread which runs through his 'boyhood' characters across a range of his fiction. His act of public defiance comes as he witnesses the 'brutal instant of extinction, and the paltry dangling of the remains like a broken jumping-jack. He had been prepared for something terrible, not for this tragic meanness. He stood a moment silent, and then- "I denounce this God-defying murder," he shouted; and his father, if he must have disclaimed the sentiment, might have owned the stentorian voice with which it was uttered'.[42] Yet, following his further denunciation of his father's role in the judicial process at the University 'Spec', Archie capitulates, but in a way which is certainly recognisable to the reader, and goes to the crux of Stevenson's position as writer, product of Edinburgh, son, and member of the establishment he was at pains to argue against. And one can equate this with some of Stevenson's characters in other key texts. David Balfour in both *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* is perhaps the most striking example of a 'boy' figure who rebels against the prevailing established powers, but who cannot avoid the stark reality that he is a *part* of this process. Stevenson does not provide the role of hero of Romance for this rebellious youth. It is the acceptance of Archie's position, and his painfully contradictory admiration of the power of his father that speaks volumes, in an admittedly exaggerated manner, of similar tensions in Stevenson's own life. Archie's feelings towards his distant father change markedly as he accepts his eventual 'banishment' from Edinburgh to Hermiston and, ironically, adopts something of the positional power and loftiness of his father in the new role of country squire of the family's ancestral home. His father announces that 'there's just one thing that's possible that ye might be with decency, and that's a laird. Ye'll be out of hairm's way at the least of it. If ye have a rout, ye can rout among the kye; and the maist feck of the caapital punishment ye're likely to come across'll be guddling

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[41] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Weir of Hermiston,* op. cit., p.244
[42] *ibid,* p.246

trouts'.[43]Archie Weir finds himself in a similar position where his individual stance fails, and he accepts a form of numbing, impotent defeat in the face of his father and the power of the state. He accepts the 'verdict' of his father in a conversation with Lord Glenalmond, stating that 'I have made a fool of myself, as I said in the beginning, and I have gone back, and asked my father's pardon, and placed myself wholly in his hands- and he has sent me to Hermiston'. [44] In Stevenson's fictional Scotland, we see a country, brutalised by its past, but capable of harsh brutality against the individual. Archie Weir's character is faced with the inevitability of the defeat of the individual voice in the face of overwhelming odds. As ever in Stevenson, the youthful hero never maintains his heroic stance; and in some discomfort, they become a part of what they resisted. The uncomfortable admiration is shown at the end of Archie's meeting with his father, who has by now become acquainted with his son's non-conformist outlook on life: 'At every word, this sense of the greatness of Lord Hermiston's spirit struck more home; and along with it that of his own impotence, who had struck- and perhaps basely struck- at his own father, and not reached so far as to have even nettled him'.[45] Again we can see in young Archie echoes of Stevenson's own experience of self-imposed 'banishment' in his eventual home in Samoa, playing the multiple and ambiguous parts of celebrity writer, landowner, critic and coloniser.

Departing momentarily from the three distinctly Scottish texts examined above, I now turn to a far different depiction of marginalised cultures within the later colonial experiences of Stevenson. His indignation and contempt towards the treatment of marginalised and silenced cultures by a dominating elite is starkly illustrated in 'Father Damien: an open letter to the Rev. Dr Hyde of Honolulu' (1890) in a response of controlled fury against what he saw as the casual complacency of both colonial rule and the hypocrisy of organised religion. These were subjects upon which, by this stage of his career, he was well-qualified to offer an influential opinion. And it is again to the idea of silenced, marginalised voices that Stevenson turns in his defence of Father Damien, a Catholic priest whose own immersion within a leper colony and subsequent death undoubtedly marginalised himself as one who has veered well adrift of the establishment world of Hyde. Stevenson's letter is, in effect, his attempt to rescue Father Damien's dead voice from the living pen of the Reverend Hyde. In 'Father Damien', he takes this a step further, using the advantage of his Presbyterian upbringing to

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[43] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae and Weir of Hermiston,* op. cit. p*.255*
[44] *ibid,* p.258
[45] *ibid*, p.255

full effect, and pitting himself against an individual of 'his own sect'. Quoting the Rev. Dr. Hyde's letter back at him in full, Stevenson turns his ire not on a particular religion *per se* but on the use of religious office as a means of passing judgement, in this case on the moral criticisms aimed at the eponymous priest, and in its role as an instrument of the colonising process. The main academic interest from this digression from Stevenson's fiction is twofold: the ways in which the letter crosses any perceived boundaries between fiction and non-fiction, and the undoubted use of competing, multifarious voices in the posthumous defence of Father Damien.

Stevenson begins with an almost disarming tone, but soon moves towards the bluntness of his point-by-point denunciation of Hyde: 'Your letter to the Reverend H.B. Gage is a document which, in my sight, if you had filled me with bread when I was starving, if you had sat up to nurse my father when he lay a-dying, would yet absolve me from the bonds of gratitude'.[46] Stevenson's attack upon Hyde is strengthened as he continually plays his strongest hand. This is his own background, and 'common ground' with Hyde, when he states that 'you belong, sir, to a sect- I believe my sect, and that in which my ancestors laboured- which has enjoyed, and partly failed to utilise, an exceptional advantage in the islands of Hawaii' and 'Your sect (and remember, as far as any sect avows me) is mine'.[47] He is also at pains to depict his own personal doubts about the testimonies he would hear about Damien (who died of leprosy amidst the colony he served) and admitted that 'I was besides a little suspicious of Catholic testimony; in no ill sense, but merely because Damien's admirers and disciples were the least likely to be critical […] and the facts set down above were one and all collected from the lips of Protestants who had opposed the father in his life'.[48] This acts as a highly effective early weapon in the letter, presenting the 'shared voice' of a Presbyterian upbringing to, in effect, substantiate Stevenson's credentials and legitimate right to challenge the views expressed by the Reverend Hyde. There is no attempt to pit one sect against another here, but Stevenson's alignment with the work of Damien (whom he never met, although he visited the 'Lazaretto' to see and hear for himself about the work of Damien) stems purely from the work of an individual against brutally cruel odds, and what he saw as the self-satisfied 'missionary' safely housed in his 'pleasant parlour in Beretania Street'.[49] Stevenson makes use of Hyde's comfortable location as part of his counter-argument, citing

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[46] R.L. Stevenson, 'Father Damien' in *Lay Morals,* op. cit., p.67

[47] *ibid*, pp.70/71

[48] *ibid,* p.79

[49] *ibid*, p.75

Hyde's lack of contact with either Father Damien's location or the voices and first-hand accounts of the people who knew him:

> You may ask on what authority I speak. It was my inclement destiny to become acquainted, not with Damien, but with Dr. Hyde. When I visited the lazaretto, Damien was already in his resting grave. But such information as I have, I gathered on the spot in conversation with those who knew him well and long: some indeed who revered his memory; but others who had sparred and wrangled with him, who beheld him with no halo, who perhaps regarded him with small respect, and through whose unprepared and scarcely partial communications the plain, human features of the man shone on me convincingly.[50]

There is also no attempt to present Damien as a clean-living 'saint' in response to Hyde's descriptions of him as a 'coarse, dirty man, headstrong and bigoted'.[51] Instead, Stevenson depicts all of the faults he could find, and utilises a variety of supporting voices and methods of narrative to counteract the singularly one-sided viewpoint of the Reverend Hyde. Stevenson presents the viewpoints of several people who knew Father Damien from a series of diary entries. One stated that: ' "He was a good man, but very officious," says one. Another tells me he had fallen (as other priests so easily do) into something of the ways and habits of thought of a Kanaka; but he had the wit to recognise the fact, and the good sense to laugh at it. A plain man it seemed he was; I cannot find he was a popular'.[52] His construction of character, therefore, is deliberately impartial, and the series of voices he uses presents a picture of a flawed, very human figure who did indeed fit some of the harsher descriptions given by Hyde; but Stevenson turns these back upon Hyde by offering them as voices in *defence* of Damien, even offering his own suspicions of 'Catholic testimony' to remind the recipient of his letter about Stevenson's own Protestant background, and close connection to the basic elements of the religious morality offered by Hyde. It was, ironically, the defending voices that were both critical of Father Damien as a man, yet served to enhance the overall image of a distinctly human character, with all the failings one might expect. Stevenson goes on to point out that, far from being built upon Catholic testimony, this re-building of Damien's character, flaws and all, in fact came from 'the lips of Protestants who had opposed the father in his life. Yet I am strangely deceived, or they built up the image of a man, with all his weaknesses, essentially heroic, and alive with rugged honesty, generosity and mirth'.[53]

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[50] R.L. Stevenson, 'Father Damien' in *Lay Morals,* op. cit.*,* p.74
[51] *ibid, p.75*
[52] *ibid*, p.77
[53] *ibid*, p.79

Stevenson ultimately narrows his focus on the human sacrifice of a priest who died for his cause, and views this sacrifice without the blinkered views of religious or moral intolerance which blight the dismissive brevity of Hyde's letter, which provided such a heavy denunciation from a figure, in Stevenson's eyes, merely performing the role of a 'man of God' in a plush residence far away from the reality of leprosy and filth in which the target of Hyde's invective lived and died.

Stevenson's argument builds up to a crescendo of courtroom rhetoric as the two chief competing voices are pitted head-to-head in a step-by-step and passionate final defence of Damien. He takes each of Hyde's points in turn, and, again, uses much of his own affinity with the 'sect' of Hyde as part of his armoury. For example:

> Damien was *coarse.*
> It is very possible. You make us sorry for the lepers, who had only a coarse old peasant for their friend and father. But you, who were so refined, why were you not there, to cheer them with the lights of culture? […]
> Damien *was not sent to Molokai, but went there without orders.*
> Is this a misreading? Or do you really mean the words for blame? I have heard Christ, in the pulpits of our Church, held up for imitation on the ground that His sacrifice was voluntary. Does Dr. Hyde think otherwise?[54]

These examples of the chorus of voices, many emanating from within the realms of church rhetoric instantly recognisable by both Stevenson and Hyde, provide a strong impact for the reader in the resurrection of an extinguished voice, like that of Duncan Jopp in *Weir of Hermiston* unable to speak for itself, and the counter-acting of a complacent voice of establishment in the shape of the Reverend Hyde. With this in mind, it is worth quoting Stevenson's final lines in full: 'Well, the man who tried to do what Damien did is my father, and the father of the man in the Apia bar, and the father of all who love goodness; and he was your father too, if God had given you grace to see it'.[55] Of all the ironies, this one is perhaps the most potent, where Stevenson was dealing with a 'live' issue, not an historical tale of the Scottish past, using his own Presbyterian credentials to offer his withering attack on a voice of the complacent establishment.

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[54] R.L. Stevenson, 'Father Damien' in *Lay Morals*, op. cit., p.81
[55] *ibid,* p.86

Far from indulging in debating the merits of one sect against another, Stevenson's concerns for the possibilities of the human spirit far outweigh the narrow parameters of religious or political doctrine. He did, after all, spend much of his career escaping from the boundaries of form and narrative; and physical boundaries, in both writing and geography, were constantly crossed during his career. The four texts considered above, separated by both time and form, offer an insight into not only the ability of Stevenson to utilise a wide repertoire to appeal to readerships, demonstrated more clearly, perhaps, in his longer fiction, but his own realisation of the power of the written word in an age of growing mass publication. Constant in these four very different texts, and in many of his other important works, are strong representations of the voices of marginalised peoples. This is a feature which was to preoccupy persistently Stevenson's writing from the earliest Covenanters' essay, to his famous *Treasure Island* to be considered in the next chapter of this thesis, through to his great, unfinished *Weir of Hermiston.* This recurring use of voice reveals Stevenson's developing pessimism in a rapidly-changing world where cultures were swept aside in the name of Imperial progress. Stevenson saw the stark effects of early globalisation upon the cultures he lived among, producing a bitingly bleak portrayal of the disembodiment taking place in colonial spheres, and in the already disembodied, divided Scotland of the past and present. From his earliest days as a writer, we can already see the embryonic colonially critical author in action, even as far back as his 1866 depiction of the doomed Covenanters in the Pentland hills.

Chapter Three: *Treasure Island* : Lost Voices of a Boyhood Adventurer

  It is perhaps to an unlikely source that I now turn: *Treasure Island* (1881), the quintessential 'adventure novel', Stevenson's first mature and fully-developed commercial fictional success. It is undoubtedly a central text in any analysis of his fiction, but is also one which has proved to be the principal means by which the 'boys' adventure' label became synonymous with his fiction. Nonetheless, this most famous of Stevenson novels is pivotal to any argument that Stevenson was, from some of his earliest publications onwards, a writer with distinctly critical tendencies towards the colonial process of acquiring territory, prior even to his Samoan residency. This chapter considers *Treasure Island* in three stages: firstly in terms of a contextualised definition and illustration of the Victorian Imperial Adventure Novel; secondly, a scrutiny of critical responses to the text; and, finally, a close reading of the text in terms of its anti-imperial, boundary-transgressing potential and significant use of a marginalised cast of rudely rustic pirates. In this embryonic tale of colonial conquest and foreign plunder, the reader can view, in miniature, the crux of the Victorian imperial project: a constant growth-industry which, in itself, generates the exciting potential of both exotic travel and material gain. In this respect, *Treasure Island* is a key text in the examination of Stevenson's increasingly radical approach to what might appear to be a conventional addition to a boys' adventure genre already well-established in the Victorian literary world. Stevenson chose to write a dark and warped depiction of the colonial ideal of the adventure novel. All of the ingredients for an adventure romp amidst enticing imperial precincts are here: pirates; buried treasure; an exotic island setting; and the stirring enthusiasm of a youthful hero. But the final results of the fiction are far from an idealised image of British manhood and territorial conquest.

  Treasure Island was Stevenson's first novel. Published in 1881, in serial form, and 1883 in its more familiar full-novel status, it seems an apt text to use as a 'test-case' in the examination of the stature of his writing. The novel bestowed fame upon the author, as well as the reputation as merely a boys' writer, however internationally successful he was, which the text eventually created for him. If Stevenson both re-invented and subverted the adventure genre, with Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1856) being, perhaps, the most famous example, it is important to outline and define exactly what constituted this distinctly Victorian literary form born of the Imperial age. Stevenson clearly wrote well beyond the

boundaries of such fiction; the mistaken generalised critique of *Treasure Island,* however, has often placed him firmly within the realms of the Victorian adventure genre. A convincing definition of this genre comes from Patrick Brantlinger who states the following:

> Like emigration narratives, adventure fiction is typically focused on the future: crossing frontiers and exploring new territories, the white heroes are pathfinders for the Empire and Civilisation. Almost always, civilisation is equated both with the supposed superiority of the white race and with colonisation by white settlers. Like James Fenimore Cooper's final Mohicans, indigenous peoples in most imperialist adventure fiction must give way to the white invaders of their territories. Though the 'dying savage' is often treated with sentimentality, his demise is typically viewed as inevitable and as making room for progress- that is, for civilisation on Western terms.[1]

This broad-ranging definition is certainly apt in relation to the structure and cast of *Treasure Island*, but Stevenson's homage to the genre steers away from depicting any form of superiority among the sea-faring invaders of the empty island setting. Patrick Brantlinger points out that 'much imperialist adventure fiction was written for boys, and often features juvenile heroes, like Marryat's midshipmen. Seafaring was an integral part of imperialist myth-making […] Marryat's young sailors also rule every roost they light upon, whether on shipboard or dry land as in *Mr Midshipman Easy* (1836)'.[2] The ultimate boy-adventure novel is Ballantyne's *The Coral Island,* (1856) with its thoroughly upright cast of adventurous boys taking to the high seas and romping their way through a series of scrapes before departing with the ringing endorsements of the natives in their ears as they sail off back to their homeland. Ralph, narrator adventure-boy, provides the reader with a mouth-watering image of what awaited him in the South Seas, as well as a glimpse of what they left behind as they sailed away from their Pacific paradise:

> But of all the places which they told me, none captivated and charmed my imagination so much as the Coral Islands of the South Seas. They told me of thousands of beautiful fertile islands that had been formed by small creatures called the coral insect, where summer reigned nearly all the year round; where the trees were laden with a constant harvest of luxuriant fruit; where the climate was almost perpetually delightful; yet where, strange to say, men were wild, bloodthirsty savages, excepting in those favoured isles to which the gospel of our saviour had been conveyed.[3]

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[1] Patrick Brantlinger, *Victorian Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009) p.30

[2] *ibid,* p.31

[3] R.M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island* (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1993) p.7

Young Ralph Rover provides a first-hand definition of what a typical adventure novel of the period should consist of: outlandishly beautiful surroundings; tropical warmth; bountiful, exotic food and animals to hunt; and, of course, the element of danger in the shape of an indigenous cast of darkened savages, ripe for taming in the ways of the Western World. Yet, when we encounter Stevenson's island, it turns out, apart from the marooned Ben Gunn, to be completely empty in terms of population and lacking in exotic beauty. Jim Hawkins' description serves only to mark the clear distinction between the two boy-adventurers, with the overwhelming lack of excitement adding to Stevenson's re-drafted treatment of the genre:

> The appearance of the island when I came on deck next morning was altogether changed. Although the breeze had now utterly ceased, we had made a great deal of way during the night, and were now lying becalmed about half a mile to the south-east of the low eastern coast. Grey-coloured woods covered a large part of the surface. The even tint was indeed broken up by streaks of yellow sandbreak in the lower lands, and by many tall trees of the pine family, out-topping the others- some singly, some in clumps; but the general colouring was uniform and sad.[4]

This telling passage from chapter XIII, 'How my Shore Adventure Began', is a prime indication of the deeply pessimistic tone and mood created by Stevenson which counteracts the traditional format of excitement and boyish delight delivered by Ballantyne. The lack of colour and a landscape empty of the wild and exotic scenery perhaps anticipated by the reader increases the sense of distancing from the basic adventure novel format.

In comparison with Ballantyne's setting, Stevenson's narrative shows the distinctly ironic approach to what appears at first glance to be a simple adventure tale. What makes *The Coral Island* such compelling reading, however, is the complete lack of irony in Ballantyne's tale, with the childish excitement of discovery and conquest running parallel with the adult world's increasingly profitable colonisation of large tracts of the planet at an ever more rapid pace. Stevenson then utilised and re-assembled this same level of initial adventure and excitement in *Treasure Island*, with his adult cast filling and re-defining the boyish roles laid out by Ballantyne. In this example from the early stages of *Coral Island*, the boys and Peterkin in particular, review their newly-discovered island base:

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[4] R.L. Stevenson *Treasure Island, Centenary Edition,* Wendy R. Katz, ed , (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), p.81

> 'Do you know what conclusion I have come to?' said Peterkin. 'I have made up my mind that it's capital- first rate- the best thing that ever happened to us, and the most splendid prospect that ever lay before three jolly young tars. We've got an island to ourselves. We'll take possession of it in the name of the King; we'll go and enter the service of its black inhabitants. Of course, we'll rise naturally to the top of affairs. White men always do in savage countries.'[5]

This, of course, echoes the same breathless excitement, albeit very temporary, when one considers the mid-twentieth century homage to the adventure genre, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), written almost a century later, which warps both genre and characters into a post-apocalyptic nightmare version of Ballantyne's text. *The Coral Island* itself is enormously entertaining, even as one's eyebrows are raised at the extremities of colonial behaviour towards the colonised; but taken in its context, the language of the characters is only exaggerated by the youthfulness of the participants. The sentiments in the novel are decidedly adult and true. Upon his departure, after the adventures have ended, *The Coral Island's* Ralph mournfully notes the departing voices of the tale as the islanders provide a touching send-off: 'Just as we passed through the channel in the reef, the natives gave us a loud cheer; and as the missionary waved his hat, while he stood on a coral rock with his grey hairs floating in the wind, we heard the single word "farewell" borne faintly over the sea'. All-in-all, according to our plucky boys, a job well done, and thoroughly British too, with the 'beautiful, bright green coral islands of the Pacific Ocean' fading triumphantly into the background.[6] To the modern eye, it is perhaps easy to find risible such overtly imperialist adventure fiction, but, as ever, context is the key to understanding why these novels were written, and why they became such popular material. One can cite the rapid growth in involvement and employment in the imperial project itself and the intended 'boys' market' for such fiction. All the elements of Stevenson's *Treasure Island* complying with the adventure genre do seem to be here: boy adventurer (Jim Hawkins); crossing of geographical boundaries by sea; triumph of good over bad and plenty of thrilling action. Here, however, the similarity between the two texts ends, as Stevenson re-creates and moulds his own personal version of the genre while doggedly maintaining the stock features of the adventure genre format.

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[5] R.M. Ballantyne , *The Coral Island* op. cit., p.16
[6] *ibid, p.268*

The template of the adventure novel was not confined to the Victorian age. In the post-WWII years of the 1950s, William Golding's grasp of the same border-crossing, sea and island-bound adventure plot of imperial boyhood novels is seen in the aforementioned *Lord of the Flies.* He would go so far as to resurrect the names of two of Ballantyne's characters, Ralph and Jack, to present a warped, darkened and violent narrative of post-apocalyptic disaster and mindless violence as the British boys self-destruct in an orgy of blood-lust in the author's post-war island setting. Like Stevenson, Golding uses an empty island setting filled with recognisable English characters from somewhat differing social groupings. Both writers then go on to deconstruct the boundaries and hierarchies of the Western world they came from in a sharp riposte to the conventions of adventure fiction. Golding then resurrects the names of *The Coral Island, Treasure Island* and Arthur Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons* (1930) as textual voices speaking directly to his own characters. His twentieth-century boys' minds have already been infused with these tales of the past, and they find themselves placed firmly on a setting already made familiar and formulated by their own school-boy readings. But Golding subverts it into his mangled frenzy of childhood disaster and social breakdown. Golding's version of 'Ralph', amidst his initial excitement upon landing on the island, stimulates memories of childhood adventure stories among his young contemporaries:

> Ralph went on.
> 'While we're waiting we can have a good time on this island'
> He gesticulated wildly.
> 'It's like in a book.'
> At one there was a clamour.
> 'Treasure Island'-
> 'Swallows and Amazons'-
> 'Coral Island'-
> Ralph waved the conch.
> 'This is our island. It's a good island. Until the grown-ups come to fetch us, we'll have fun.'[7]

Golding's boy characters align themselves with their own interpretations of the fictional boy adventure heroes of the past. This, of course, disintegrates rapidly within Golding's fictional, post-apocalyptic nightmare as the vacuum created by the lack of adult law and societal structure leads to a total collapse and descent into what they themselves would deem 'savagery', the reverse of the behavioural patterns our boy-heroes in Victorian fiction were designed to present. Of course, Golding's own boy characters, already immersed in boyhood

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[7] William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p.33

adventure fiction, see only the basic outline of their own personal adventure when they land upon their own island setting. Unlike Ralph, Jack and Peterkin of *The Coral Island,* they succumb to the brutal realities of human self-preservation and basic existence without the safety barriers of society, including murder and primitive forms of worship, when normal societal boundaries and hierarchies are removed. This is also a pattern already examined by Stevenson, in a far more subtle manner in his own version of the supposed adventure romp of *Treasure Island,* with the island setting altering the behaviour patterns set in stone in their lives upon the British mainland.

The navy officer at the end of *Lord of the Flies* again alludes to Ballantyne's novel when he attempts to equate their little adventure with his fictional namesake: 'The officer nodded helpfully. "I know. Jolly good show. Like the Coral Island." '[8] Unlike *The Coral Island* the boys have not behaved in the required fashion, displaying Golding's microcosm of a world on the cusp of total nuclear self-destruction. Stevenson's version of the adventure formula, examined below, anticipates Golding's obvious pessimism by 73 years, but shows a similar tendency to Golding's extreme version, with societal boundaries replaced by the baser instincts of survival and plunder. Given the links of setting and plot between them, all three of the texts above 'speak' to each other in highly ironic and starkly different ways. Ballantyne's boys are boundlessly irrepressible and thrive upon the exotic dangers of the high seas and tropical island life, leaving in an undoubtedly triumphant manner. On the other hand, Stevenson's treasure-hunters operate in a much harsher world of murder, violence and a powerful piratical subculture, where, in the end, the finding of the treasure becomes a secondary outcome of the plot.

Golding's charting of the descent into 'savagery' in *Lord of the Flies* contains its own 1950s form of heavy post-war irony and context with the return of 'civilisation' in the shape of the naval officer. For the boys, he represents a symbol of safety; but he is also a symbol of the military destruction of a society already crushed by warfare. This offers the reader some debate on where the 'savagery' lies: tribal chanting, ritual murder, or the complete annihilation of mankind by 'civilised' nations. In *Treasure Island* the reader is also provided with a return to the civilised order of both class and language, but the gaining of the treasure raises its own questions of morality on the part of the victors. It is safe to say that, unlike

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[8] William Golding, *Lord of the Flies,* op. cit., p.224

Ballantyne's adventure boys, Stevenson's Jim Hawkins and Golding's cast of exhausted infants have no wish to return to a life on the high seas or on any other island other than their own. While Jim Hawkins vows never to return to 'that accursed island'[9], Ballantyne's cast thirst for more adventure, and are re-launched in a series of other tales. As Patrick Brantlinger rather wittily points out:

> Ballantyne was an equally prolific author of juvenile adventure fiction; his bestselling Robinsonade, *The Coral Island,* appeared in 1858, as did *Martin Rattler*; or, *A Boy's Adventure in the Forests of Brazil.* Ralph Rover and the other boy-heroes from *The Coral Island* travel to Central Africa for an encore in *The Gorilla Hunters* (1861), where they merrily gun down numerous specimens of the recently-discovered giant ape.[10]

Stevenson's characters in *Treasure Island* harbour no such desire to repeat their dark experiences. There is no such riotous return for the mature narrator Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island* as he states firmly that 'Oxen and wain-ropes would not bring me back to that accursed island'.[11]

    Coral Island can be seen to have acted as a form of blueprint for Stevenson's tale. It is, however, apt to suggest that Stevenson utilised the bare bones of the adventure genre and added his own highly-successful and subversive flesh, just as Golding did in the mid-twentieth century. *Treasure Island* has, in its own right, spawned a whole popular vocabulary of piratical phrases: Long John Silver's parrot's 'Pieces of eight' immediately springs to mind, as does 'Shiver my timbers', the stock pirate exclamatory remark. The novel even comes complete with its own haunting musical accompaniment, with the repeated refrain of 'Fifteen men on the dead man's chest, Yo- ho- ho and a bottle of rum' punctuating the text. This provides a recurring image of the tale for the reader, sealing a somewhat warped sense of unity within the pirate 'community', with its own codes of behaviour, laws and music.

    There can be no doubt that Stevenson intended to attract the attentions of a youthful readership for *Treasure Island*; and this in itself presents an undoubted caveat for any potential critic of the piece. The novel's initial publication, serialised in the children's magazine *Young Folks,* provides unambiguous proof of at least one section of the intended

[9] R.L Stevenson, *Treasure Island, op. cit.,* p.208
[10] Patrick Brantlinger, op. cit., p.33
[11] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., p.208

readership. Critical receptions of the novel have, like much of Stevenson's fiction, been varied in terms of academic scrutiny. David Daiches' 1947 volume of critical essays was billed as a revaluation of Stevenson's work, and certainly adheres to the conventional notion of the text as a boys' story. His analysis of *Treasure Island* seems, however, to act as a somewhat tentative *review* of the text rather than a completely fresh consideration. Daiches has, it could be argued, taken the model of the adventure story rather too literally, and he does no more than equate it to *Treasure Island* as one might attribute to a reviewer of Ballantyne's earlier novel. In describing Stevenson's text several times as a 'pure adventure story' written with 'a constant eye on a boy's imagination', avoiding a deeper analysis, Daiches misses much of the narrative and ironic subtleties of the tale's outcome.[12] Daiches does, however, argue that the treasure 'serves only as an excuse for the story' and that it is 'something of an anti-climax', given the book's title.[13] This is undoubtedly a missed opportunity to re-consider properly what the novel is when he comments on the power of attraction which the treasure itself holds over the entire cast of characters:

> In the pure adventure story, however, the thing sought has no such influence over the story as a whole. The treasure of *Treasure Island* does not attract only pirates or swaggering adventurers: it attracts both good men and bad pirates, honest sailors, a doctor, a squire, and a respectable youngster…Its final attainment comes as something of an anti-climax- part of it (the bar silver) is even deliberately left behind. And as for the disposal of the treasure, the matter is dismissed by the author in a sentence: "all of us had ample share of the treasure, and used it wisely according to our natures".[14]

Whilst giving credit to Daiches for his revaluation of Stevenson's fiction in general, Daiches perhaps fails to grasp that the narrator of the story is subverting the very genre he is a part of, as the title of the book becomes no more than a quickly-spoken footnote in terms of importance. The irony here is that the hero's triumph is not recognised by himself, and he is left only with the haunting dreams and phrases of the real crux of the novel, Long John Silver, not the material silver which they set out to acquire as part of their determined search for treasure. Jim's reactions to the spoils of adventure singularly fail to provide a ringing endorsement of the thrill of adventure. Quite the reverse in fact: Jim attempts to banish all thought of the island from his mind as the story concludes, and his dreams are permanently haunted by the cries of Silver's parrot proxy.

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[12] David Daiches *R.L. Stevenson: A Revaluation,* op. cit., p.34
[13] *ibid,* p.34
[14] *ibid,* p.34

Daiches also comments on the division of characters into 'good men and bad', assuming that this was Stevenson's intention. It could, however, be argued that Stevenson's narrative is ironic enough to allow an alternative interpretation, and that these characters cannot be thus labelled. The characters, after all, have one singular aim in mind: to find the treasure. Does Stevenson, therefore, elevate the morality of the 'good' characters to legitimise their pursuit of the treasure? With law and civilisation on their side, Livesey and Trelawney certainly have a class-based social advantage over the lawless pirate mob. But, fundamentally, they are also after the riches which the treasure, wherever it came from, can bring.

The moral compass of this novel certainly seems clear enough to the characters themselves, but it is here that Stevenson's subtle ironies begin to weave themselves into the fabric of the plot. Livesey and his compatriots display no qualms in their actions towards treasure, but it is only by way of the class divisions of the society from whence they came that allows their treasure hunt to be seen as legitimate. At the same time, the outlaws are given no such luxury. In fact, the excitement which the reader would expect to come from the boyish narrative of Jim emanates directly from the top of this hierarchy when Squire Trelawney and Livesey begin their plans for travel and treasure:

> 'Livesey,' said the squire, 'you will give up this wretched practice at once. To-morrow I start for Bristol. In three weeks' time- three weeks!- two weeks- ten days- we'll have the best ship, sir, and the choicest crew in England. Hawkins shall come as cabin-boy. You'll make a famous cabin-boy, Hawkins. You, Livesey, are ship's doctor; I am admiral. We'll take Redruth, Joyce, and Hunter. We'll find favourable winds, a quick passage, and not the least difficulty in finding the spot, and money to eat- to roll in- to play duck and drake with ever after'.[15]

 Trelawney's words are central to my argument on how the hierarchical structure of this novel operates. Class dictates that what is ostensibly an identical mission of either pirate or establishment character (they are all chasing treasure after all) is rendered legitimate by the establishment roles assigned to Trelawney and his class on mainland Britain. Trelawney, in effect, becomes an ironic version of the boyish verve shown by Ballantyne's characters in *The Coral Island,* while Jim, the boy-narrator, remains comparatively passive in the midst of

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[15] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., p.44

pre-voyage fervour. Trelawney was certainly correct about one aspect: Jim Hawkins would arguably prove to be the most famous cabin-boy character ever created.

The island setting as a literary device provides its own boundaries, alien to those experienced by the characters in their 'other' world. Daiches correctly points out that when the novel reaches the island, 'The arena has been cleared of all superfluous characters and scenery'.[16] It is at this point where Daiches could, however, have gone further. It seems clear that this also removes any of the boundaries which the laws and conventions of society would assert over the characters, removing the veneer of rank and position which could be used on the established, class-based mainland setting, where the accepted veneer of 'good versus bad' characters is removed in singular pursuit of treasure on a neutral stage. Daiches attempts to present an overall argument that the novel supplies a 'skirmish between the forces of good and evil- presented rather as "our side" versus the others in true adventure story style'.[17] This assertion can be challenged by arguing that Stevenson's narrative, setting and characterisation, presents a much more subtle and ambiguous set of morals. The pirates live by their own codes and laws; the civilised world in turn by their own, and the novel's main performer, Long John Silver, is able to move deftly between these two worlds. On the island, these worlds are, for once, inextricably linked as societal boundaries are removed in the creation of the crew from a novel already pushing beyond the conventions of adventure genre.

One more recent critic has considered the position of the novel within the adventure genre. In an otherwise convincingly-argued essay, Stephen Heath in 'Psychopathia Sexualis: Stevenson's Strange Case' isolates *Treasure Island* as a text firmly placed in 'The generically enclosed world of the adventure story', suggesting in relation to *Jekyll and Hyde* that *Treasure Island* is somewhat separate from Stevenson's later work, lacking in the psychological sophistication of his 1886 novella.[18] Perhaps so; but an examination of the fluctuating and fluid character of Long John Silver alone would- at least to some extent- challenge this assertion, given the sub-textual complexity of Stevenson's creation. In another recent analysis, Wendy R Katz states the following:

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[16] David Daiches, op. cit., p.45

[17] *ibid,* p.45

[18] Stephen Heath, *Psychopathia Sexualis,* in Colin McCabe (ed), *Futures for English* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988) p.97

Among adults, *Treasure Island* has never lacked admirers, several of whom understood from the start that this book would find a readership among mature as well as young readers. Henley's unsigned notice in *The Saturday Review* (8 December 1883), incomparably generous and celebratory, observes that 'it is a book for boys which will be delightful to all grown men who have the sentiment of treasure-hunting and are touched with the true spirit of the Spanish main'. Given the late nineteenth-century enthusiasm for romance, activist heroics, and- on the ideological front-Empire, the welcome reception of *Treasure Island* is hardly surprising.[19]

Considering some contemporary reviews, other commentators' reactions to the text are equally compelling. In one early unsigned *Academy* review (1 December 1883) the writer states the following:

> Mr. Stevenson has treated a well-worn theme with freshness. His story is skilfully constructed and related with untiring vivacity and genuine dramatic power. It is calculated to fascinate the old boy as well as the young, the reader of Smollett and Dr. Moore and Marryat as well as the admirer of the dexterous ingenuity of Poe […] Mr. Stevenson's buccaneers are not of the heroic age that Kingsley sang; they know nothing of pleasant isles in the glowing tropic seas […] They cannot inspire the most enthusiastic youth with a desire for the return of the glorious age of buccaneering […] Their profession is not set forth in a dangerous halo of romance, nor are their deeds made alluring through a familiar moral process by which crimes are mitigated with the milk of sophistry.[20]

This early review perhaps suggests that commentators had begun to recognise a distinct difference within the structure and characterisation of Stevenson's fiction: the lack of 'romance', of 'moral process' and of 'heroics'. These are three areas which one might normally attribute to the conventional conception of the adventure genre, but which are noticeably absent throughout what is undoubtedly a far darker tale than criticism of much of the twentieth century would be prepared to admit. The reviewer here emits a favourable curiosity over a text which does not quite fit the conventions of the genre, but at the same time undoubtedly does fit some form of altered mould of adventure tale.

Another 'unsigned review', this time from the *Graphic* of 15 December 1883, hints again at the perplexing freshness of Stevenson's approach to fiction when the reviewer suggests, in response to his own question on the qualities admired by Stevenson's readership, that it is

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[19] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., p.xxix, preface by Wendy R. Katz
[20] Paul Maixner, *Robert Louis Stevenson: the Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul,1981) p.128

'something for which it would almost appear criticism has yet to find a name'.[21] Again, another early anonymous reviewer is intrigued by Stevenson's unconventional approach to apparently conventional forms of literature. He goes on to state further that 'this was a bold experiment, this resuscitation of tales of buried treasure in the Spanish Main, the mutiny, the buccaneer, the stockade, and the miraculous boy who does everything and always succeeds. Yet under Mr. Stevenson's masterly touch everything becomes new'.[22] This reviewer then goes further by suggesting that Stevenson's characters, particularly those of a piratical persuasion, were 'all creations, living, lying, swearing, murderous miscreants, as different from the sailors of Marryat and Ballantyne as any suit of clothes from a breathing man'.[23]

Another convincing recent analysis comes from Robert Irvine's chapter 'Romance and Social Class' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson* (2010) where the critic examines the social hierarchy of the text, suggesting that the social structure is presented and developed in a manner every bit as important as the main adventure plot. He states, in relation to Jim's role as principal narrator, that 'there is more to *Treasure Island* than Jim's actions, and the reader's vicarious participation in those actions. There is also the world of the adults whom Jim accompanies on the voyage, and this is a world split by class division, between the gentlemen leading the expedition, and the men who, initially at least, follow.'[24] Irvine makes the valid point that the novel ends and begins with the imposition of social class and hierarchy, at first with the confrontation early in the novel between Black Dog and minor narrator Dr Livesey, stating that 'The upright doctor refuses to recognise his antagonist as a social equal, not even to the extent of turning to face him as a physical threat. And this in itself forces the drunken sailor to back down, accepting his own subordination to the gentlemen'.[25] This active subordination of one level of characters to another is one of the key sub-texts of the novel, and Irvine also notes that a hierarchy is subsequently challenged, defeated and restored as the plot unfolds through its geographical scene-changes. The scene itself creates an intensity between the 'two worlds' at a very early stage in the plot, but provides a key to Stevenson's use of voices throughout the text.

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[21] Paul Maixner, *op. cit.*, p 140
[22] *ibid*, p.141
[23] *ibid,* p.141
[24] Robert P. Irvine, 'Romance and Social Class' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.28
[25] *ibid*, p.29

Within the tightly-bound hierarchy of the English mainland, the sunken voices of piracy via the Black Dog/Old Sea Dog/ Bill/The Captain have surfaced within the walls of the 'Admiral Benbow'. But the voice of authority and rule, in the shape of Dr Livesey, silences the performance of the old pirate using simply the language of the law granted to him as both Doctor and Magistrate. Livesey's refusal to be silent when the signal given for one of 'The Captain's drunken stories, is met with piratical fury:

> The Captain glared at him for a while, flapping his hand again, glaring still harder, and at last broke out with a villainous oath: 'Silence there between decks!'
> 'Were you addressing me sir?' says the Doctor; and when the ruffian had told him, with another oath, that this was so, 'I have only one thing to say to you sir,' replies the Doctor, 'that if you keep on drinking rum, the world will soon be quit of a very dirty scoundrel!'[26]

Livesey knows he is on safe ground and delivers, in the face of the Old Sea Dog's potential violent riposte, a killer blow of his own: ' "If you do not put that knife this instant in your pocket, I promise, upon my honour, you shall hang at the next assizes" '.[27] 'The Captain' is instantly silenced, as he is well aware of the boundaries of existence between his world and that of the establishment. He finds, in a haze of rum-induced glory, a willing and captive audience in the locals at the 'Benbow'; but that brief security was removed the instant the voice and language of the law entered into his temporarily-established performance space.

Irvine is, perhaps, correct in his considerations of the impact of social hierarchies; but he might also have considered the undoubted power of the marginalised characters' abilities to exist beyond the normality of life and inhabit their own strong and mysterious sub-culture of language, laws and music, mentioned above. This subterranean, parallel world certainly does exist in the text, and Stevenson makes full use of it throughout the novel, running counter to, and just below, Jim's narrative until he too becomes a somewhat ambiguous 'go-between' from one level to another. At this juncture, we can see a clear reference by Stevenson to his developing critique of the colonial world and ability to maintain a marginalised cast of characters who work to subvert the imposition of a hierarchical structure. With this in mind, in the novel's early stages provides the reader with the swift imposition of the piratical

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[26] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, op. cit., p.15
[27] *ibid,* p.15

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mysteries upon Jim at the Admiral Benbow. The affinity between the two characters, and the effects of Silver's personality, are instant. As Jim fondly recalls of his first meeting:

> On our little walk along the quays, he made himself the most interesting companion, telling me about the different ships that we passed by, their rig, tonnage, and nationality, explaining the work that was going forward- how one was discharging, another taking in cargo, and a third making ready for sea; and every now and then telling me some little anecdote of ships or seamen, or repeating a nautical phrase till I had learned it perfectly. I began to see that here was one of the best of possible shipmates.[28]

Jim's affinity with the sub-culture beyond the novel's social hierarchy is clear, and Silver's own subliminal power exudes from his early presence in the story. The reader, like Jim, is drawn to the colourful dangers of Silver's world, and the staid hierarchical power of Trelawney and Livesey pales in comparison. The influence of Silver permeates the entire text, with the novel memorably ending with his voice by proxy of Silver's constant companion, his parrot. This provides a dominant memory following the anti-climax of the treasure hunt and the return of the remaining re-established social hierarchy of the tale to the mainland following the disarming ambiguities of the island itself. Perhaps Irvine's most convincing point comes from his summary of the role of social structure when he suggests that: 'The story of *Treasure Island* works to preserve the social hierarchy that the gentlemen represent, but the naturalness of the gentlemen's authority is simultaneously undermined by the ease with which Silver threatens to appropriate it'.[29] Irvine's analysis suggests a possible comment by Stevenson on the emerging challenges toward Victorian social 'norms'. Certainly, Irvine is correct in concluding that the social structure is maintained; but he also latches on to the unease and darkness of the text, and how this social order fails to impose a form of equilibrium upon the novel's outcome. And the ambiguities of behaviour exhibited by the upper characters in their pursuit of treasure seem to blur the image of a dominant, morally superior social order.

Thus far we have seen that the unusual approaches to Stevenson's moulding of the adventure story are more evidently recognised by several of his contemporary critics. It would seem to have been a perplexing novel to its first readers and very difficult to categorise via the critical tone of the time. That much of the negative twentieth century criticisms of

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[28] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., pp.55/56
[29] Robert P. Irvine, op. cit., p.29

Stevenson's fiction went relatively unchallenged left, however, a considerable chasm, allowing critics such as Alan Sandison to redress the balance. His chapter on 'Treasure Island: the Parrot's Tale' from *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism* considers the critical problems of the novel in terms of the complexities of genre and how to approach a novel historically deemed as a children's tale:

> It has been said (by *Punch)* that to attempt a serious critique of P.G. Wodehouse is to take a spade to a soufflé. Alistair Fowler at the end of a penetrating analysis of *Treasure Island,* and perhaps mindful of Punch's scorn, similarly cautions readers against breaking a butterfly on the wheel, or making it walk the plank. Yet Stevenson's attitude to his texts is a sophisticated one and part of his perfectly evident relish in writing derives from his gleeful participation in subverting his own text.[30]

Sandison's idea is one which can readily be applied to several examples of Stevenson's fiction- *The Master of Ballantrae* is the most obvious example of what initially appears to be an adventure tale but which is thwarted at every opportunity by his characters and his plot: certainly an apt description of the structure of *Treasure Island.* Many examples of genre subversion and manipulation, particularly seen in *The Master of Ballantrae,* can be found throughout his fiction; and heavy narrative irony is a prime asset to Stevenson's constant crossing of boundaries and 'gleeful participation' in his flexible approach to his literary creations. 'The Merry Men'*,* for example, presents itself at first as a 'boyhood adventure' on the Hebridean island of Aros, yet becomes a warped tale of madness and religious mania despite the narrative certainty displayed by young Charlie Darnaway, a considerably more nauseating, moralising narrator than the bold Jim Hawkins of *Treasure Island.* But *Treasure Island* itself, as Daiches argued, *is* undoubtedly a boys' tale of gripping adventure. The basic ingredients of a world of piracy and life on the high seas provide as clear an example of the adventure genre as one could find; but it is also so much more than that, and operates on a considerable array of different layers. Chiefly, it revolves around a complicated world of voice, counter voice, 'subaltern' secret worlds, and competing narratives between the piratical 'underworld' and the establishment characters of Livesey and his compatriots. They become unwitting fictional guardians of a genre constantly disrupted by Stevenson and his disparate cast.

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[30] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.50

Nicholas Daly's chapter 'Popular Literature at the Fin de Siècle' in *Modernism and Colonialism, British and Irish Literature*, 1899-1939 (2007) provides further consideration of *Treasure Island* in relation to the growth of Empire and the parallel growth of mass readerships in an emerging global market. His analysis is tentative at times in terms of Stevenson's available fiction- 'The Ebb Tide' or 'The Beach of Falesa' would certainly have been more fruitful in comparison with 'modernist' responses to the Imperial Project. However, Daly does provide convincing consideration of a further different reading of *Treasure Island.* He begins by citing the easiest interpretation of the emerging adventure genre, but quickly suggests there is much more on offer from Stevenson in particular in this his most adventurous tale, giving some consideration to the clear ironies of Stevenson's narrative:

> It is tempting to see the adventure romances as providing a series of celebratory myths of empire for a mass audience, in counterpoint to the more complex, ironic, and demystifying proto-modernism of, say, Conrad, aimed at a smaller and more discerning audience suspicious of the enthusiasms of empire and jingoism. Such a polar model does not, however, adequately describe the terrain of late Victorian literary production.[31]

Daly perhaps tentatively suggests that Stevenson was a 'partial exception' to writers 'placed outside the history of modernism', in effect showing that Stevenson was certainly doing much more than merely providing swashbuckling entertainment. [32] What Daly does consider, however, is that in *Treasure Island* the voice of the author becomes part of this emerging process of adapting to the global possibilities inherent in the sale of books to a world-wide readership. In short, part of the treasure provided by the book is the income derived from the multiple sales desired by the author. He quotes one of Stevenson's letters to W.E. Henley where he wrote that his 'story for boys' would have 'more coin in it than any amount of crawlers'.[33] Daly then suggests that 'Stevenson's genuine ambitions as a children's writer should not blind us to the fact that at least some of his defensiveness about his new generic direction stems from an awareness that it is not just the children's market he is courting but a more general mass readership'.[34] This is, perhaps, another useful line of thought in supporting my earlier suggestion that Stevenson's novel can, and should, be read on several different

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[31] Nicolas Daly 'Colonialism and Popular Literature at the fin de siècle ' in Richard Begam and Michael Valdez Moses (eds.), *Modernism and Colonialism* (London: Duke University Press, 2007), p.21
[32] *ibid,* p.*21*
[33] *ibid*, p.24
[34] *ibid*, p.25

levels at the same time, and no harm comes to the undoubted enjoyment of the text via this moderately analytical approach. Daly also suggests that *Treasure Island* as a microcosm of the emerging global market, and our relationship with it, provides an apt consideration of the novel in relation to the possibly more obvious modernist approaches from the turn of the twentieth century onwards: 'Treasure, then, comes to function as a sign of the novel's semi-allegorical treatment of the new relations of author and the mass market. Nor is it the only sign: Jim Hawkins finds himself on board a ship, the *Hispaniola* that seems to provide a microcosm of the class structure of Victorian Britain'.[35]

   Treasure Island is a novel which resonates with the voices of Stevenson's characters in a highly competitive game of class divisions on an obscure island where the subaltern voices of the pirate world compete with the refined language of the ruling elite. As Daly suggests, this is a text which also contains the competing voice of the author in the uncharted waters of mass publication. This theme is also discussed by Wendy R. Katz, when she considers the editorial history of the text, and how its eventual success was as a result of Stevenson's own stringent re-writes following its original publication in *Young Folks*. In particular, Katz notes that it was via revisions to the 'diction' and portrayal of key characters which made a notable difference to the success of the post-serialisation of the novel: 'the 'triumphal manner' (from a letter to his parents, 1883) was largely thanks to the alterations RLS made to the *Young Folks* serial in preparation for the first edition. Changes in diction made for a more precise delineation of character, while deletions achieved a cleaner, livelier style.'[36] Katz points out that the voice and character of three central characters stand out: Jim Hawkins was given more 'depth' to 'make credible the resonant voice of the adult Jim recalling his youthful adventures' and Livesey, whose dialogue revision 'not only improves the style but suits the unadorned forcefulness of the doctor's character'.[37] Nonetheless, the figure that stands out for Katz as the most cunning of all voices in the text, Silver, became the most enduring of all Stevenson's creations; and Katz again suggests that the close attention to both voice and audience is central to the novel's success:

> Silver, the character who complicates the novel's tone, also undergoes a change in 1883. His dialogue becomes more artfully cunning than that of the sea cook of *YF,* more precisely keyed to the pirate's audience. In *Young Folks,* Silver flatters the

[35] Nicholas Daly, op. cit., p.27
[36] Wendy R Katz (ed) in *Treasure Island,* op. cit., p.xxv
[37] *ibid*, p. xxvii

young pirate Dick by telling him he is 'as smart as paint'. For the first edition, RLS retains the seductive line but has the duplicitous and self-incriminating Silver use it also on Jim. Silver is also made more menacing in the 1883 text, in particular in his murder of the innocent seaman. [...] These and other changes from the serial to the book publication reveal a meticulous, tireless, and impressively attentive author.[38]

From a tale of some simplicity comes a whole variety of competing voices, real and imagined, which combine to make *Treasure Island* into the large-scale literary success Stevenson hoped it would be. It was indeed his earliest treasure, carefully and subtly drawn, and all providing the basis of a multi-layered, yet at the same time, an adventure novel which put Stevenson on the world map as a celebrated author in this burgeoning commercial period of late Victorian literature.

In terms of the durable quality of *Treasure Island,* Katz concludes her introduction to the 1998 centenary edition of the novel by further suggesting that one of the most neglected factors in the text is indeed that of 'voice', specifically the undoubtedly subaltern voice of piracy which competes with both the brief intervention of Dr. Livesey, the central Hawkins narrative and the adventure plot itself. As a clear example of the subversive nature of Stevenson's characters, Katz cites the subterranean world of piracy, with Silver at the helm, as a reason for the long after-life of a simple tale of a map, an island, and a treasure hunt. All of these elements are warped by the presence of Long John Silver, an assorted mixture of pirates and sailors, and a noisy parrot. It is the pirate crew which gives the novel its undoubted substance, especially via the fascinating character of Silver, one of Stevenson's finest and most intriguing performers in his fiction. The pirate sub-culture is the key element to the novel's success, and elevates it above the solitary classification of merely 'adventure' novel. Katz states:

> At the level of ideology, *Treasure Island* depicts a stable social structure being challenged from beneath by the rum-addled, impatient, and ill-educated rabble who practise a crude but intriguing democracy in a parallel counter-world. The pirates represent a counter-culture. They quarrel among themselves, but there is a sense of order to their lives: they meet in council, discuss their problems, and vote on their leadership. They divide the pirate spoils. They follow the rules of their own society. These pirate voices are new, perhaps conceived from Johnson's *History,* unusual, colourful and vigorous; despite their primitive vulgarity, they demand to be heard.[39]

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[38] Wendy R. Katz, op. cit., p. xxvii
[39] *ibid*, p. xxxvii

Jim Hawkins is already a character deeply intrigued by the whiff of the pirate sub-culture's voices he has experienced by the time he first meets Long John Silver, who is in his persona as landlord of the 'Spy-glass'. The bond between them, at least according to our youthful narrator's memory, was immediate, with Jim's vision of Silver being far-removed from the low-life figures of the pirate world he has encountered at the 'Benbow': 'I had seen the captain, and Black Dog, and the blind man Pew, and I thought I knew what a buccaneer was like- a very different creature, according to me, from this clean and pleasant-tempered landlord'.[40]

Alan Sandison cites the 'bravado' of the play-acting of Silver, and also adds Alan Breck's *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* escapades in addition to James Durie in *The Master of Ballantrae* to the equation of performer characters in Stevenson's fiction.[41] It is not long, however, until Silver, like his fellow-adventurers in these other novels, changes his performance to suit his audience when he becomes a part of the treasure-hunting cast. And Silver is by far the most successful of Stevenson's performers, captivating, by a variety of means, most of the characters he encounters, particularly Jim Hawkins. In chapters 10 and 11 of the novel, the voices of the subaltern sub-culture are revealed, firstly in the almost casual reference to the pirate song, that key plot device which signals the warped yet strong unity of the secret pirate world. This music frequently punctuates the text; and when the ship is being loaded for the forthcoming voyage, the signals are clear to hear through the pirates' music and the emerging of the famous piratical tongue:

> 'Now, Barbecue, tip us a stave,' cried one voice.
> 'The old one,' cried another.
> 'Ay, ay mates,' said Long John, who was standing by with his crutch under his arm, and at once broke out in the air and words I knew so well-
> 'Fifteen men on the dead man's chest'-
> And then the whole crew bore chorus:-
> 'Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!'
> And at the third 'ho!' drove the bars before them with a will.
> Even at that exciting moment it carried me back to the old 'Admiral Benbow' in a second; and I seemed to hear the voice of the captain piping in the chorus.[42]

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[40] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit.*,* p.53
[41] Alan Sandison, op.cit., p.65
[42] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island* op.cit.*,* p.62

But there is no terror in the youthful mind of Stevenson's Jim here, recalling his initial reactions to the familiar chant. The great intrigue already planted in the mind of Jim in the 'Benbow' re-ignites, as they set out for their thrilling voyage to the 'Isle of Treasure'[43] with no hint of anything other than boyhood adventure to occupy his thoughts. But what Stevenson gives here is the code, the signal, which alerts the others of his fraternity that past experiences, and pirate laws, lurk just beneath the surface on a ship hired and governed by a class beyond the world of piracy. Silver's presence as the commanding voice in the mind of our narrator is made clear at this stage: 'All the crew respected and even obeyed him. He had a way of talking to each, and doing everybody some particular service'.[44] Here, we see the actor in full flow, manipulating his potential allies with the voices required in each individual case. For Jim, the manipulation lies in overt flattery, and it certainly has an impact, as his genuine fondness and respect for Silver grows.

It is only when, in chapter 11, the boundaries of communicable voice disappear while Jim is hidden within the 'apple barrel' that the voice of the brooding sub-culture can be heard; and the carefully-tailored persona of Silver, at least in Jim's eyes, is unravelled. Fear rapidly erodes Jim's naivety as, for the first time, the dangers of this mix of sharply opposed yet hidden voices become apparent: 'It was Silver's voice, and, before I had heard a dozen words, I would not have shown myself for all the world, but lay there, trembling and listening, in the extreme of fear and curiosity; for from these dozen words I understood that the lives of all the honest men aboard depended upon me alone'.[45] In effect, this is a 'back-stage' glimpse of the pirates' fraternity in full council. It is a masterstroke of Stevenson's to utilise the seemingly trivial hiding of Jim to unveil the plot and language of the thus far hidden pirate world. For Jim, the fascination of this underworld continues, but personally, it is a disaster. Jim momentarily becomes aware of the slipping façade of the performer as the words used to flatter and captivate himself are used on another youth:

> 'But now, you look here: you're young, you are, but you're as smart as paint. I see that when I set my eyes upon you, and I'll talk to you like a man.'
> You may imagine how I felt when I heard this abominable old rogue addressing another in the very same words of flattery as he had used to myself.[46]

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[43] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., p.62
[44] *ibid*, p.64
[45] *ibid*, p.66
[46] *ibid,* p.68

Silver is a consummate actor indeed, but Jim comes to realise that there is a limit even to the repertoire of this magnificent character, and the brutal reality of experience becomes a part of Jim's sphere of existence. But, unlike James Durie in *The Master of Ballantrae*, the meticulous planning, and subtle manipulative dexterity of Silver ultimately succeeds; and Jim's fascination for Silver never diminishes.

For Jim Hawkins, the secret sub-culture of the pirate world proves fascinating and inescapable even in the novel's most violent moments amidst Silver's instinctive and quite shocking acts of pirate murder. Here is the full sub-culture of piracy revealed: the spontaneous brutality meted out to anyone who stands in the way of the powerful, determined Silver seems to run parallel with the subterranean use of language and pirate codes. In this world, such acts are deemed not unusual; for Jim Hawkins, the acts form part of the complete fascination he has for Silver and his conflicting, contradictory persona. Alan Sandison provides a compelling analysis of one of the most violent episodes in the text involving the characters of Tom, within our vision and Alan, somewhat 'off-stage' occur almost simultaneously, providing a double-edged dose of murderous reality for the astonished Jim. Sandison alludes to the aforementioned fascination for Silver:

> Nothing could be clearer than that Silver's enticement of Jim to share in his potency exerts an almost irresistible appeal for the adolescent[…]It is no wonder, then, that Jim is ambiguous in his attachment to, and admiration of, Silver, even after the latter's exhibition of his brutal lust for murder. What he has to do is to escape Silver's powerful temptation and find his own way to the empowerment that goes with manhood.[47]

This is the enticement which began with the early intervention of the pirate world into Jim's life of normality in the 'Benbow', and the reader shares in Jim's growing fascination for a subaltern world defying the boundaries of normality which might be imposed by a writer working within the full framework of the adventure genre. Sandison uses the murder scene to exemplify his point that the novel is a very different version of the genre indeed, and uses only the barest bones of the adventure format. He states that 'The high point of Silver's fascination for Jim is to be seen in an incident which seems to exceed the parameters of a boys' adventure story, though it is arguably the best piece of description in the whole book'.[48]

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[47] Alan Sandison op.cit., p.67
[48] *ibid,* p.66

What is so compelling about this scene is the suddenness of the violence and the possibility that Silver's act is one which provides him with intense satisfaction. Again, this is an almost 'off stage' scene, overheard by Jim as he hides in a thicket. The language and actions of the sub-culture world are in full flow, unhindered by any boundaries of the formal, law-driven society within which they have operated. Of course, the island setting further reduces boundaries from the rigidity of the mainland, but here the voices and actions of the scene are completely unhindered; and the impact for the reader is all the more profound due to the stripping away of the façade of normality.

Jim encounters another of Silver's flattery speeches, one which is well-rehearsed, and normally most effective as he attempts to persuade Tom to venture into the world of the pirate:

> 'Mate,' he was saying, 'it's because I thinks gold dust of you-gold dust, and you may lay to that! If I hadn't took to you like pitch, do you think I'd have been here a-warning of you? All's up- you can't make nor mend; it's to save your neck that I'm a-speaking, and if one of the wild'uns knew it, where'ud I be, Tom- now, tell me, where 'ud I be?' [49]

This is Silver in full flow, just at the cusp of the pirate world and, for poor Tom, the very edges of the language of 'normality'. For it is when Tom hears the death-shrieks of one of his companions, Alan, and he denounces Silver, that the full fury of the piratical codes, and Silver's violent edge, is catapulted forth for the reader. The most astonishing part of the novel's plot for the reader is the subsequent killing of Tom. Firstly, his back is possibly broken by Silver's instinctive flying crutch. Silver then pounces upon Tom's crushed frame to plunge his knife deep into him in a scene of almost animalistic slaughter, revealing a darker, vicious side to our multi-faceted pirate: 'Silver, agile as a monkey, even without leg or crutch, was on top of him next moment, and had twice buried his knife up to the hilt in that defenceless body. From my place of ambush, I could hear him pant aloud as he struck the blows'.[50] 'Agile as a monkey' depicts a character in full command of his environment. This is a natural act in the world of Silver: like wildlife, he pounces to survive, to maintain his commanding presence. His survival instinct, as he moves between different audiences, is the key to his success as a character. In this scene of brutality, Silver's act reminds the witnesses

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[49] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island* op. cit, p.88
[50] *ibid*, p 89

of the power he holds. It is a telling scene in my argument that this novel is anything but a simple boys' adventure.

Sandison describes this stunning murder as being 'more like a sexual assault'.[51] He also cites Wallace Robson, who states: 'The obvious force of this scene lies in Jim's identification with the victim; its less obvious force is the secret participation of Jim (because of his *closeness* to Silver) and hence the reader'.[52] The reader becomes both as fascinated and appalled as Jim. It is here that Jim realises the crossroads he now faces, where the old world of normality, law and custom does not operate, and where his own tenuous grip on the world he left behind hangs in the balance between the violent undercurrent of piracy and the relative law-abiding calm of England. But even here the reader is forced to face up to a much wider picture of whether the world of conformity exists any longer within the context of the tale and the island setting. After all, the purpose of Jim, Trelawney and Livesey, the principal figures of the 'normal' world, is to obtain treasure by misbegotten means. The only difference between them and the pirates is the legitimacy which control, law, government and language provides. They are after the same goal as the pirate mob, and the question arises of who decides the moral high-ground upon Stevenson's desolate island setting, given the temporary evaporation of normal social hierarchy.

Silver's ability to charm his audiences and change instantly into the subaltern underworld of the pirate proves successful in terms of his survival and moderate financial gain. As Sandison states, 'He masks his duplicity by a handling of language so adroit that it makes words his accomplices in the grossest of deceptions'.[53] Such is the powerful nature of the character that by the time we arrive at the final chapter, Silver has already re-gained his position among the establishment cast of Livesey and Trelawney. These establishment figures are treated to Silver's final performance:

> 'John Silver,' he said, 'you're a prodigious villain and imposter- a monstrous imposter, sir. I am told I am not to prosecute you. Well, then, I will not. But the dead men, sir, hang about your neck like millstones.'
> 'Thank you kindly, sir,' replied Long John, again saluting.[54]

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[51] Alan Sandison op. cit., p.66
[52] *ibid*, p.67
[53] *ibid,* p.77
[54] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island* op. cit, p.202

Gone are the instinctive language and brutal codes of piracy. Instead we are left with the voices of subservience and the control of the ruling classes amidst a population of servility, linking the text right back to the scene with Livesey at the 'Benbow', where his legal threats were more than enough to snuff out the story-telling of the early chapters. The dominance of the novel does, however, lie with Silver: the language of the sub-culture haunts the mature figure of Jim Hawkins in later life; and the novel ends with the words of the ancient parrot, with 'Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!' reverberating around the mind of Jim during his 'worst dreams'.[55]

Thus, the marginalised voice, returned to its place among the rigid class structures beyond the reductive effects of the island setting, cannot be snuffed out as the novel reaches its anti-climactic ending, with the real focus being not on the re-establishment of the safety of the mainland and the ruling elite, but the lingering voices of a world which exists out with the text, voices which, for a short while, illuminated the impressionable mind of the young Jim. The narrator can retreat into the safety of his own post-island world. Jim is able, even after all that he saw, to muse that Silver 'perhaps still lives in comfort with her (his Negress) and Captain Flint. It is to be hoped so, I suppose, for his chances of comfort in another world are very small'.[56] Stevenson's triumph here is that we share Jim's hopes for one of his greatest creations.

Silver is the central character of fascination for the reader and, indeed, the matured Jim Hawkins, principal narrator of the tale. Jim is hooked immediately by the language and sheer terror of the pirate world via Black Dog's arrival at the 'Admiral Benbow'. Despite his protestations about never wishing to set foot again on the island in his lifetime, the echoes of Silver, and his parrot side-kick, remain with him to haunt him in his dreams. Jim is haunted by the thrill of adventure; the lure of the exotic and unknown; and dreams of the world which he temporarily occupied. Ultimately, Jim is haunted by his unshakable bond with Long John Silver. But, over and above the thrill of adventure, and the terror of violence, it is the undoubted bond between Jim and Silver which is the real core of the text: not the adventure plot; not the large and disparate *dramatis personae;* and certainly not the treasure itself. Alan Sandison makes this point clearly when he states that 'the relationship between Jim and Long

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[55] R.L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit*.,* p.208
[56] *ibid*, p.208

John is at the very heart of the book and in its sophisticated nature shows us just how remiss it is to think of *Treasure Island* as a "mere" adventure story for children'.[57] Silver epitomises the balance between the surface world of semi-respectable society and the nether regions of a sub-culture with its own customs, laws and languages. He is a character of such sub-textual subtlety and intrigue that he manages to operate within both worlds. He is a consummate performer on a multiplicity of stages in the text, whether in his tavern, on the high seas, controlling his audiences and on the island itself. He is a masterfully subtle creation who, ultimately, shuffles off the novel's coil with something of a quiet triumph, with sufficient 'treasure' and having skilfully manipulated his way through the various escapades of his disparate travelling companions. This successful dominance of the character in the novel's plot and his popularity are perhaps best illustrated by Stevenson himself in his 'Fables' (1902), where he permits both Silver and Captain Smollett a brief respite from the plot to discuss in 'The Persons of the Tale' the merits of authorship and characterisation. Silver sums up his impressions of the author's treatment of his character as follows:

'What I know is this: if there's such a thing as a author, I'm his favourite chara'ter. He does me fathoms better'n he does you fathoms, he does. And he likes doing me. He keeps me on deck mostly all the time, crutch and all; and he leaves you measling in the hold, where nobody can't see you, nor wants to, and you may lay to that! If there is a author, by thunder, but he's on my side, and you may lay to it!'[58]

Treasure Island marks another stage in Stevenson's development as an author, dealing in the marginalised voices of the piratical world at the same time as providing a cast of deceptively superior beings from a world dominated by social and class hierarchies. The colonial world of exotic travel and material conquest are writ large within the boundaries of a seemingly conventional boys' adventure story; but the subtleties of narrative and characterisation provide strong evidence of the emerging colonially critical writer. The plunder of exotic lands, seen in a far different light in Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* falls flat in the novel's concluding pages, and already we see the blurring of boundaries which would come to dominate Stevenson's later fiction, directly influenced by the colonial world he would come to live in. Stevenson's re-working of a familiar adventure genre in *Treasure Island* becomes his earliest fictional consideration of the dominant Victorian passion for colonial gain. It is by the empty symbolism of the island, and the failure of the search for

[57] Alan Sandison op. cit.,p.60
[58] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Persons of the Tale' in *Fables* (London: Aeterna Publishing, 2010), p.2.

treasure, which presents the author's initial step as a writer who would become increasingly critical of the colonial process.

Chapter Four: *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*: Stevenson's Imperial City Horror

T*he Strange* Case *of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) bestowed upon Stevenson further fame as an author following the success of *Treasure Island* three years earlier. The novella's title also became cemented as an instantly recognisable term in the English language. It is the role of this chapter to examine the centrality of this celebrated novella in relation to the imperial context of Stevenson's fiction. Considered here is the use of London and its city precincts as a key metaphor of Empire, violence, and the suppression of the marginalised which permeates the text. As shown below, Stevenson's London-based gothic offers a further insight into his credentials as a colonially critical author. The novella provides a threatening backdrop of the 'outside' bearing down upon the centre of the imperial project, with fears of the unknown permeating the seemingly safe 'West End' of the empire's principal city.

Perhaps equal in fame only to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897)*,* products of the nineteenth-century fascination with the Gothic genre, it is also the most famous of 'horror' stories, with the blurred outlines of the plot at least familiar to many due to numerous film adaptations of the novella. Jekyll takes a foaming, steaming chemical concoction; Jekyll plunges behind a table, or disappears from the screen; and Jekyll ultimately appears as the hirsute deformity that is his alter-ego, Hyde, seen in countless film adaptations. In her biography of Stevenson, Claire Harman goes as far as to suggest that 'the story is now so embedded in popular culture that it hardly exists as a work of literature', and that the actual reading of the book 'spoils the story'.[1] In other words, the pre-conceived ideas on the plot of the text are so thoroughly grounded in the popular imagination that the intricacies of Stevenson's prose are left behind, resulting in the popular myth of a horror story dominated by the image of the monstrous Hyde. Sandwiched between *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*, *two* texts equally fully-embedded in the popular imagination, the enduringly iconic horror-status of *Jekyll and Hyde* is certainly a considerable achievement for a tome of seventy pages in the current Penguin edition.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde remains a hugely popular text over a century after its publication. It is a tale which provokes many more questions than it provides project

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[1] Claire Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson, a Biography* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006) p.301

his or her own interpretation onto events which are constantly *hidden,* as the alter-ego Hyde's name might suggest. Stevenson's tale is modern in the sense that it is based not in a traditional Victorian Gothic setting, but at the heart of the bustling imperial precincts of London, the heart of the British Imperial project. The use of London as setting is also the key to unlocking this tale as much more than a conventional Victorian horror story.

This psychological impact upon characters, and their relationships within the communities in which they operate is a feature of several other examples of Stevenson's fiction. The extreme claustrophobia of 'Markheim' (1885) is an apt precursor to *Jekyll and Hyde.* In this short story, psychological horrors run parallel with physical brutality in an obscure shop in an equally obscure London setting, with the mental intensity greatly enhanced by the shop's rigid boundaries. The shop's enclosed space quickly begins to represent the darkest chambers of the eponymous character's tortured mind. In 'Markheim', Stevenson utilises images of light and darkness, so successfully rendered in *Jekyll and Hyde,* to establish the claustrophobic psychology of a tale which, at first glance, appears supernatural but which is, arguably, a finely-tuned examination of the mental torture of the perpetrator of a vicious, unprovoked crime.

Stevenson sets the tale in the daylight streets of an unspecified part of London; but it is the 'mingled shine and light'[2] of the shop interior which creates effects which have echoes of the contrasting darkness and light of his *Jekyll and Hyde.* In contrast to his more famous tale, Stevenson depicts the full violence of the murder of 'the dealer' and uses the subtleties of light, or lack of it, to create a substantial moral frame within the confines of this meticulously-constructed story and the cramped setting itself. After the grotesquely simple image of the dealer as he 'struggled like a hen' after being stabbed by Markheim, Stevenson encloses the murderer within the shroud of the following description:

> The candle stood on a counter, its flame solemnly wagging in a draught; and by that inconsiderable movement the whole room was filled with noiseless bustle and kept heaving like a sea; the tall shadows nodding, the gross blots of darkness swelling and dwindling as with respiration, the faces of the portraits and the china gods changing and wavering like images in water. The inner door stood ajar, and peered into that leaguer of shadows with a long slit of daylight like a pointing finger.[3]

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[2] R.L. Stevenson, *Markheim, Jekyll and the Merry Men* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2001) p.209
[3] *ibid,* p.212

Here, the moral compass of the tale is directed by the complete isolation of the central character alongside the intense personification of the darkened interior of the shop. The single candle creates the 'leaguer of shadows' which act as a 'pointing finger' of guilt at the savagery of the crime, and the increasing psychological disintegration of the murderer's mind.

Only after the moral 'resolution' of the story, when Markheim in effect sacrifices himself when he stops his descent into further horrors after his encounter with, arguably, his conscience, does light engulf the narrative and the personified figure of his conscience: 'The features of the visitor began to undergo a wonderful change: they brightened and softened with a tender triumph, and, even as they brightened, faded and dislimned'.[4] In this intense and intricately-structured narrative, the eponymous murderer reaches a brilliantly-illuminated moral resolution, where his soul has undergone a thorough examination before emerging from the shrouds of his own murderous darkness. In *Jekyll and Hyde,* however, most of the characters are desperate to silence, suppress or lock away- quite literally in the case of Utterson and his safe- all of the secrets of the tale in order to protect themselves from the scandal which might befall them. Whereas Markheim emerges into the light to face, inevitably, the gallows for his crime, *Jekyll and Hyde's* cast would wish all of the truth to remain firmly behind closed doors, under the cover of darkness, or sealed in an envelope deep within the safe of trusty lawyer, Utterson.

Above all else, *Jekyll and Hyde* is a novella of concealment, silence, suppressed behaviour and a deep middle-class, professional angst which inhabits the characters who dominate this most intricate of Stevenson's powerful array of complex narratives. Yet, if we look just beyond the boundaries of London's clearly-defined, brightly-lit streets, the colonial world which should be elsewhere and foreign lurks everywhere, as a tangible threat to this centre of imperial power. In a similar manner, Bram Stoker's *Dracula,* published eleven years later, brings the fear of the 'other' to the shores of Britain, this time in Whitby, as Transylvanian Gothic transports itself to the Yorkshire coast, far from its origins. Conan Doyle also made use of villains emerging from the outer edges of the empire in his Sherlock Holmes stories: Dr Grimesby Roylott in 'The Speckled Band' (1892) being one example, bringing back with

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[4] R.L. Stevenson, *Markheim, Jekyll and The Merry men,* op. cit., p.225

him from a troubled and violent colonial life a deep knowledge of poisonous Indian snakes for murderous purposes against his step daughters. English born, the doctor returns a twisted, violent creature, seemingly warped by his colonial experiences.   In effect, Stevenson's city becomes a microcosm of the Empire itself, with- as demonstrated below- the central, stable image of London's West End surrounded by perceptions of uncivilised colonial outposts of the East End, and the nightmare world of subsequent real-life horror in the 'Ripper' murders of the East End's Whitechapel in 1888. Robert Mighall also suggests that Stevenson could be described as the first 'psychogeographer',[5] such was his ability to create deeply psychological characters and plots which run parallel to the intensity and impact of his locations. He also makes two significant points about Stevenson's ability to subvert established genres for his own purposes, citing both the setting of *Jekyll and Hyde* in particular and the multiple narrative voices in his assessment of the novella. Mighall states that the novella 'dispenses entirely with the distancing devices of the traditional gothic- set "over there" in Southern Spain or "back then" in the near or distant past. It is set in London in the present day, and situates horror *within* a respectable individual , with its vision of evil reflecting on a much broader section of society than had perhaps been hitherto suggested in popular fiction'.[6]

Contextually, Stevenson's tale follows a logical sequence of demographical movement in the imperial age, as well as mirroring the growth in literary readership in the second half of the nineteenth century. Arguably, this is a compelling addition to the sense of the tale being very much a part of the colonial equation, with the Empire's centre becoming ironically uncontrollable when it should be the epitome of stability. Julia Reid suggests that the rapidly-expanding city grows as a threat in the tale, with 'its portrayal of seedy Soho life' with its threat to the 'civilised' population being 'intensified by its proximity to the West End',[7] further blurring the boundaries which are trampled over just as completely as the young girl in the glaringly floodlit opening scene.

The threatening tone of the novella is evident from the opening pages. In this first example of the novel's violent undercurrent, Utterson's friend Enfield reports the following incident:

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[5] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (London: Penguin 1996) p.xxxi, introduction

[6] *ibid,*.p.xvii

[7] Julia Reid, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Science and the Fin de Siècle* (London: Palgrave Macmillan) p. 94

> All at once I saw two figures: one a little man who was stumping along eastward at a good walk, and the other a girl of maybe eight or ten who was running as hard as she was able to down a cross street. Well sir, the two ran into one another naturally enough at the corner; and then came the horrible part of the thing; for the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground.[8]

This incongruous scene of violence begs an immediate series of questions for the reader, chiefly the reasons behind the child's presence in a well-lit area at three in the morning, and what was Enfield himself doing there? Stevenson's use of light and darkness becomes a major and highly-potent instrument of illumination in several areas of *Jekyll and Hyde.* The imperial city, complete with extensive street-lighting, becomes the expanded backdrop for the un-named crimes of Hyde, as well as depicting the city itself as a tangible theatre of terror. Events previously shrouded in private darkness become starkly public, as 'Hyde' begins to overcome the 'Jekyll' character in a sweeping metaphor of increased psychological deterioration. Popular perceptions place the criminal world in the murkier, darker regions of city dwelling; but, in this modern Gothic tale, the crimes are presented in the full glare of the lamps of London, illuminating the vicious theatricals of a world previously hidden.

Linda Dryden points out that in conventional gothic fiction, the dark cloak afforded by the night allows the 'gothic monster' to develop the dark as 'the domain of the "other," camouflaging identity and criminal activity'.[9] Stevenson, subverting conventions, deals with light in a startlingly modern sense, pouring the new, electric light upon the activities of Hyde, the 'urban monster' who 'leaves the streets of low-life London to attack citizens in or near their own homes'.[10] For the first of two explorations of light in the text, one need look no further than these opening pages of the first chapter, 'Story of the Door', where the 'child trampling' incident takes place, in full view of Enfield, himself 'coming back' from 'some place at the end of the world' he found himself in. Enfield remarks that 'my way lay through a part of town where there was literally nothing to be seen but lamps. Street after street, and all the folks asleep- street after street, all lighted up as if for a procession and all as empty as a church.'[11] Enfield's comments suggest the eerily unnatural effects created by the electric lights, with the repeatedly stark images of ambiguous location adding to the distinctly unsettling and glaring illumination, as well as the strange and jarring 'empty church' simile.

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[8] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* p. cit., p.7
[9] Linda Dryden, op. cit., p.259
[10] *ibid,* p.258
[11] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p7

This unusual image is seen by Sandison as an example of the 'spiritually empty' [12] nature of the streets depicted on the opening pages. The simile is, however, appropriate to his means here. The church buildings as empty, worthless symbols equate closely with the streets, emptied of their 'day-time cast'. But the church is a symbol of stability and order in this city, and certainly a key element of the imperial project, given that Christian missionaries were so prevalent wherever colonial conquest took place. And it is the close proximity of the violence to the well-lit precincts of London that Stevenson uses to great theatrical effect, drawing an audience at three in the morning to witness the deed.

As Dryden suggests, 'Light, daylight, moonlight, or artificial light, is the enemy of the evil-doer; yet lamplight illuminates Hyde's trampling of the child, moonlight his murder of Carew'.[13] Dryden's summary of its use aptly reflects the growing illumination within Jekyll that he can no longer contain his brutal urges under the cover of darkness, or even under the cover of a traditionally murky setting like Soho. The use of lighting to illuminate the growing sense of violence in the novella seems to develop further the idea of the city itself as an uncontrollable entity, a microcosm of a world increasingly dominated by Empire, but with the lack of ability to control it. She notes that 'on entering the "upper" world of the well-to-do, the mists roll away, city spaces are floodlit, and the light shines on Hyde's violence, a "horror to heighten horror". Hyde's crimes, the trampling of the child, and the murder of Carew, occur under the lamplight designed to reduce crime or enable its detection'.[14] In other words, to keep out the 'other', or the 'outcast' London. The action is brought uncomfortably close to home, and the relative comfort of traditional gothic narrative, which should be safely placed in some foreign exotic location, is removed with, literally, the flick of a switch to light up the supposedly secure respectable London location.

There is another very subtle use of lighting which, perhaps, highlights another unspoken aspect of the text: that of the plausibility of the Hyde character and his closeness to both Jekyll (being his monstrous alter-ego) and the respectable classes which the respectable professionals of the novella's cast represent. The deep ambiguity of the text is brought out into the open by images of light, with the sub-textual suggestion being that the action of the novel is brought into obvious close proximity with the city's 'respectable' areas just as the

[12] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.227
[13] Linda Dryden, op. cit., p.258
[14] *ibid,* p.260

supposedly dark acts of the city's 'outcast' underworld are too close for comfort for those of the 'establishment' classes. This, in turn, suggests further vague outlines of the unspoken behaviour of the upper echelons of this tale, where so much remains *unsaid*.

The novella's opening pages serve several further functions as well as establishing the theatricality of the setting. The murkily delineated city expanses provide sub-textual questions to which the reader is never offered a final, definitive answer. The respectable boundaries surrounding the world of 'the lawyer, Utterson' are carefully laid out, suggesting a deceptive nature in the 'safety' of this privileged existence. The emphasis on Utterson's profession is an important factor, with '*the* lawyer' suggesting his standing in the upper echelons of his segment of London, bound by the defining lines of his profession, and the security which such a role suggests. As stated by Reid above, Utterson's position as lawyer frames the opening narrative as a form of 'court record', or a statement given by a client to his lawyer. But, as the dense opening paragraph unfolds, Stevenson begins to solidify the boundaries of the character. We are given mildly suppressed images of his 'backward' sentiment, his 'austere' nature, and 'though he enjoyed the theatre, he had not crossed the door of one for twenty years'. At first glance, this countenance of safety in portraying Utterson's demeanour contains many of the elements which proceed to be magnified in the novella. Stevenson presents images of respectability provided by Utterson's legal role, and denial of desired activities in a world where appearances are crucial, yet wholly deceptive.

Alan Sandison highlights the importance of this deceptively subtle opening when he states that 'The opening words of the novella set the complacency before us as a world of upper-middle-class professionals, closely knit, self-regarding, secure in their society's approbation: "Mr Utterson the lawyer"; the definite article says it all.'[15] Middle class anxiety is quickly swept aside by the introduction of Utterson's friend, 'distant kinsman' and 'man about town' Richard Enfield.[16] The complacency mentioned by Sandison disperses as the reader is invited to question, very subtly, this establishment world of respectable professionals, which, eventually, leads to the crux of the tale: the disintegration of Jekyll, his medical background representing the highest symbol of upper-middle-class professionalism. Here, in these early exchanges, we see the first tantalising glimpses of 'Hyde' in full violent action. Almost as an

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[15] Alan Sandison, op.cit., p.251
[16] R.L.Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p.6

aside, we are introduced to the first suggestively sub-textual element that of Utterson's solid character foundations contrasted with Enfield's unstated motives and unexplained activities.

Following the rough treatment meted out to the young girl, it is clear that this is no ordinary low-life criminal. Hyde is seen clearly to be a member of that same class inhabited by Enfield, quite possibly making a furtive retreat from a similar escapade to that of Enfield himself. Enfield obtains the cheque for reparations away from the scene. He also openly discusses the 'scandal' which they could easily make, which would 'make his name stink from one end of London to the other', which is not the last recognition of potential scandal affecting the professional male characters of the tale.[17] Hyde's response is equally part of the 'gentlemen's club' tone of their dialogue. In effect, one of their own 'caught out' in a vile act, and wishing 'to avoid a scene'. They recognise one of their own sort when they see one, hence the sense of an agreement between equals to move away from the disgruntled, angry crowd of 'harpies', as the female mob is described, ready to take revenge against the child-attacker. And it is here that the reader is given the first tantalising glimpse of deeper, unspoken subtexts, when Enfield refers to the 'place with the door' as 'Blackmail House', and both Enfield and Utterson, knowing the identity of the 'drawer of the cheque' agree 'never to refer to this again'. [18]

The incident with the child is quickly forgotten, and both characters indulge in what seems an automatic reaction to the crime, given what is undoubtedly recognition of something amiss *within* their own ranks. As Jane Rago suggests, the language used by Hyde is also that of Enfield, with any whiff of 'scandal' being swiftly dealt with by the two members of what seems to be Hyde's rank (Enfield and the Edinburgh doctor) as they 'close about him to protect him from the wild, harpy-like women'.[19] There would be no requirement to deal with someone from the lower orders in such a manner. The reader assumes that swift retribution, and the immediate attendance of the Police, would be the immediate reaction. However, Enfield and the doctor, as Rago again puts it, 'buy silence'[20] from the now virtually insignificant girl's marginalised family in order to preserve something recognisably similar to themselves, despite their protestations of disgust towards the loathsome Hyde. Sandison also

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[17] R.L.Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde ,* p.10
[18] *ibid,* p.10
[19] Jane V. Rago, op. cit., p.280
[20] *ibid*, p.280

notes that the common denominator in both incidents of violent extremism is not the horror of the attacks themselves, but 'scandal', the 'common fear of exposure', noted even by Hyde in the opening chapter.[21] Indeed, when Utterson suggests, after confronting Hyde, that his response is 'not fitting language' after Hyde's suggestion that Utterson has lied about Jekyll telling him of Hyde's identity, we see further evidence of closeness in terms of status between what should be, if the plot of 'good versus evil' was to be upheld by the author.[22] It is not, and we are given this fresh scene of almost knowing familiarity between the two men for the short period of their meeting. It is only afterwards that Utterson's narrative searches for a condemnatory note when he attempts to describe 'this creature'.[23] Prior to this, Utterson indulges in some soul-searching, adding further fuel to the already well-established notion that the 'otherness' commonly associated with Hyde is indeed something disturbingly close to this professional, male-oriented world. As well as pointing out that in Jekyll's past 'he was wild when he was young',[24] Utterson also ponders over his own past, suggesting that it was 'fairly blameless'. Yet, there is enough ambiguity in the bachelor lawyer's own past behaviour for him to suggest that 'he was humbled to the dust by the many ill things he had done, and raised up again into a sober and fearful gratitude by the many that he had come so near to doing, yet avoided'.[25] Stevenson's characterisation of Utterson clearly leads the reader towards the closeness of both Utterson and Hyde in terms of class and behaviour.

Ambiguous class boundaries had, as we have seen, been used by Stevenson among the disparate cast of *Treasure Island,* where Trelawney and his fellow establishment figures are drawn into behaviour patterns identical to that of the low characters. We see in this earlier novel a similar device used by Stevenson to even starker effect in *Jekyll and Hyde.* The great leveller in *Treasure Island* is, in the end, the island itself; the great leveller in *Jekyll and Hyde* is London. In both cases, boundaries are so blurred and class distinctions temporarily absent, that the reader is faced with multiple ironies and ambiguities. In *Treasure Island,* the role of each character dissipates with the lack of definable architecture while upon the empty island: the only thing separating the 'elite' from the 'rabble' is the law of the land and class position. In *Jekyll and Hyde,* Stevenson undoubtedly uses these ambiguous distinctions of behaviour when presenting Enfield and Utterson as leading figures of the establishment.

[21] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.254
[22] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p.16
[23] *ibid*, p 17
[24] *ibid*, p.17
[25] *ibid,* p.17

This blurring of boundaries is illustrated in the second use of the setting for the earlier violent child-assault when Utterson confronts Hyde. Using an extension of his earlier street-lighting metaphor, Stevenson's stark illumination of the child-trampling scene is now replaced by a more subtle, gas-lit version. In effect, this is the stage set where crime is *meant* to happen, and where 'Hyde' has made his home. The tone is one of calm, compared to the frightful harshness of the opening scene, and a similarly unusual, jarring simile alerts the reader to a distinct purpose on the writer's part. As we have seen, the strange and desolate silence of 'as empty as a church' [26] described the streets of the earlier attack upon the girl, but this is replaced by the rather more elegant 'streets as clean as a ballroom floor'.[27] The scenes are undoubtedly designed to be linked, as are, it can be argued, the characters, so sharply divided between a sense of 'good and evil' in our first encounter with Jekyll's alter-ego. Sandison points out that the 'light is less intense' and the empty church image alters subtly to become a rather ill-fitting yet softer image, throwing a far different light on proceedings.

Utterson's interaction with Hyde, far from being adversarial, becomes the dialogue of two strangely equal characters. Utterson's perceptions of Hyde being somehow linked to Jekyll grants his address to Hyde a sense of propriety which eluded the same character after the violence of the opening scene. Indeed, Utterson goes as far as stating that, 'We have common friends', alluding to Jekyll, linking the characters further, as Utterson, of course, has no idea about the true nature of Hyde's 'relationship' with Jekyll. [28] The dialogue develops in this short scene with disarming calm, as Utterson addresses Hyde in a manner reserved for a friendly introduction prompted by a mutual acquaintance. Utterson respectfully states: 'I am an old friend of Dr Jekyll's- Mr Utterson of Gaunt Street- you must have heard my name; and meeting you so conveniently, I thought you might admit me'.[29] Stevenson has deliberately created two broadly similar encounters, firstly with Enfield, then with Utterson which, I believe, places all three characters on something of an equal footing. Stevenson presents a momentary mingling of the subterranean, marginalised outcast world which appears within the sanitised precincts of Utterson and Enfield. Yet, both of these characters temporarily

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[26] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p.7
[27] *ibid,* p.14
[28] *ibid*, p.15
[29] *ibid.,* p.15

admit Hyde to their world by virtue of the currency and passport of Jekyll's name, and, in effect, by speaking the same language.

Sandison alludes to this perception of the writer's tactics when he states:The fact that it is Utterson and Enfield as well as Hyde who emerge out of the darkness to play their roles under the lights makes night-stalkers of all three and is another example of the blurring of the edges between presumed good and evil entities which characterises *Jekyll and Hyde.*[30] Add to the equation the geographical proximity of the violence to the worlds of the respectable, the returning from the 'world's end' by Enfield, the eerily comfortable dialogue between Utterson and Hyde, and the subtle stage-lighting for this far less intense scene, and the reader can see a coherent purpose to Stevenson's understated approach. The blurred boundaries remain a subject beyond conversation among the novel's narrators; but blurred they undoubtedly are.

Deeply embedded within the novella is the unanswered 'sub-plot' involving the nocturnal behaviour of 'establishment' characters. Returning to the opening scene of *Jekyll and Hyde*, the sexual edge and sense of respectable characters returning from a trip to the 'outcast' East is unavoidable. Some form of brothel-bound debauchery is almost automatically inferred; but this does not seem to constitute a dangerous undercurrent in the worlds of Utterson and Enfield. How this event transpired, and what is going on seems forgotten in the rush to apprehend the fiendish perpetrator. In a letter from G.M. Hopkins to Robert Bridges published in 1935, Hopkins suggests that 'the trampling scene is perhaps a convention: he was thinking of something unsuitable for fiction'.[31] Dryden suggests, as do several other critics, that Stevenson was hinting at the extremities of child prostitution in 1880s London. In this, Stevenson draws a possible further discomforting parallel with Enfield himself. Alluding to possible Victorian reactions to the opening scene, Dryden suggests that 'the contemporary reader would have thought of sadistic relationships with child prostitutes as among the possible vices that Jekyll/Hyde indulged in during his nightly forays into the nether world of London'.[32] Dryden extends this to the returning Enfield, from the 'end of the world', suggesting a 'possible affinity with Hyde in vice'.[33]

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[30] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.228
[31] Paul Maixner, op. cit., p.229
[32] Linda Dryden, op. cit., p.254
[33] *ibid,* p.255

Sandison also draws attention to the casual references to Enfield's 'man about town' life juxtaposed with the brutal scene which he unfolds before Utterson. He ponders whether Stevenson is deliberately toying with the character's name, description, and the vague geography of his movements when he asks 'why this flaunting of his nocturnal habits, and why be so teasingly reticent about telling his kinsman where he's been? Is Stevenson having a little joke, telling us in code that Enfield has been to Chelsea, part of which was (and is) called World's End? (Not so much of a joke, perhaps, when we recall the unsavoury reputation of Chelsea Gardens after dark.)'[34] The term 'World's End' was of course already familiar to Stevenson as this also referred to the outer-limits of the Old Town of Edinburgh, a scene very familiar to the writer's younger days as an Edinburgh undergraduate. The possible illicit sexual liaisons alluded to at this point in the novella form another intriguing element, with the sub-textual possibilities of the criminalising of homosexuality hovering in close proximity to the tale. Again, one can consider the idea of a submerged, marginalised and forbidden underworld of Victorian society hidden amidst an age which resorted to enduring legal means to suppress the voices of a sub-culture (especially that of the outlawed homosexual) which would identify its own enduring codes and language, just as Stevenson's piratical cast did in their own sub-culture of *Treasure Island*.

Sandison also casts some doubt as to whether or not Enfield was, in fact, travelling in the *same* direction as Hyde, adding to the idea of some form of affinity between the two characters, although this is an affinity which the class of Enfield's ilk would deny. And the glossing over of Enfield's nocturnal habits forms part of this denial. There can be no doubt, however, that in this earliest meeting between Enfield's world and that of Hyde there is a recognition of some kind of warped kindred spirit, noted by Enfield in his references to Hyde as 'my gentleman'. There is absolutely nothing to link Enfield's 'man about town' persona with child prostitution. Dryden's point perhaps ventures too far beyond the scope of the text, however much the title may suggest *at least* the indulgence in *adult* brothels. But what Stevenson does do is provide a close comparison with the act taking place in this public, well-lit street (even at 3a.m.) and the unspoken nocturnal dalliances of Enfield and his class, which are never exposed to the reader and thus must remain among the novella's many concealed things. The violence of this pivotal child-trampling scene brings into sharp focus

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[34] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.232

the fact that within the precincts of Stevenson's city labyrinth, the worlds of the respectable classes are close to the darkness of un-named vices; and the darkness through which much of the 'action' in this novella only partly comes to light as the plot unfolds.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is a text which continues to perplex readers as to what it is actually about. It can be read as Gothic horror, a novella of deep psychological intensity or a daring examination of repressed male sexuality. Or can it be read as a thorough examination of the inherently degenerative nature of the great city at the high-point of the vast imperial project? Perhaps the answer is all of these and more. Arguably, like the reading of *Treasure Island* or *Kidnapped,* perceptions depend upon the reader, as we are presented with a text of many layers and an unspoken sub-textual narrative which dominates the plot. Julia Reid cites the text's 'simplification in popular culture',[35] and that 'the tale was thus interpreted in terms of a timeless struggle between good and evil, or read as a Christian parable of God and Devil'.[36] Recent critics have, as Reid states: 'resolutely re-historicised the novella, examining how its imagination of psychological disintegration engages with a host of *fin-de-siècle* concerns'.[37]

It is to these concerns that I now turn: those unspoken elements which linger in both the subtext and in the reader's mind. Citing two recent academic studies, by Stephen Arata and Robert Mighall, Reid presents their 'compelling examined' ideas as centring on the 'subversive participation in degenerationist discourses, interpreting Hyde as representing the threat of deviance, returned to haunt the middle-class psyche which constructed it'.[38] This can be seen as a sense of deviance which the British governing classes sought to legislate against. This takes us back to the locational aspects of the city discussed earlier, and the theatricality of the lighting as the middle-class respectability is haunted by the encroachments of seemingly external foulness.

With this in mind, it is important to examine some aspects of this middle-class angst towards the threat of the 'other' which permeates the text and leaves many questions unanswered. The world of Utterson and his class, invaded as it is by the threat and reality of

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[35] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.93
[36] *ibid,* p.94
[37] *ibid,* p.94
[38] *ibid,* p.94

violence, my 'colonialism in reverse' theory, is itself a world of curious contradictions and, of course, the catalyst for the violent undercurrent, and indeed the voices of a world they seek to suppress, comes from *within* their ranks. Jane Rago cites this aspect of the text as an important source of identity*,* with Hyde's identity being subject to what she terms the 'medico-juridico-scientific' world's attempts to categorise Hyde. The crucial factor of the identity of the novella's antagonist is, as Rago points out, uncomfortably close to the core of this civilised, professional and middle-class elite when she states that 'the transgression of Hyde lies not in his otherness but rather in his sameness'. [39] In other words, Hyde is most clearly *of* this class, and is not a primitive beast from beyond the boundaries of the professional classes' safe havens of London, making his existence all the more terrifying for the respectable West End city-dwellers. The primitive beast, supposedly from the outcast world of the East End, in fact is already among them in the West End civilisation.

If we are to pursue Rago's thesis to its natural conclusion, the ironic sense of the protection of Hyde must, automatically, transfer to Jekyll himself, given that the close connection between the 'two' characters becomes clear almost immediately. The centre of civilisation indeed, protecting itself from the potential invasion of the 'other'. This persona of protector falls upon Utterson, taking on the role of late-night Victorian detective in the second chapter 'Search for Mr Hyde' where the possible, feared subtext of potential homosexuality is presented in the first of two main areas in the text, the second being the murder of Carew. Again, in a similar manner to the calm, gentlemanly dealings with Hyde seen even under the circumstances of the violent attack in the opening chapter, Utterson seems to recognise immediately an equal. Utterson's conversation leads towards the recognition of their ironic equality, given that they 'have common friends' and that Hyde 'must have heard my name' after repeating it, and his title to Hyde as 'Mr Utterson of Gaunt Street', suggesting that he certainly believes that Hyde must move in similar circles and at least know others of his class, given his already discovered 'closeness' to Jekyll.[40]

Jekyll and Hyde, then, offers far more to the modern reader than merely an intricately-crafted plot with fog-bound London streets as its atmospheric backdrop. It is a tale haunted by the fear of the unknown, rooted firmly amidst the chaotic terror of the city as a burgeoning

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[39] Jane V. Rago 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, a "Men's Narrative" of Hysteria and Containment' in Ambrosini and Dury, op. cit., p.277

[40] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Hyde, op. cit.,* p.15

Victorian entity itself. It also offers a deep psychological examination of the self and identity, and there are many possible subtexts of human behaviour in the hidden city.

The plot takes place entirely within the surroundings of Victorian London, where the fears of the unknown and uncontrollable city are on the doorstep of that civilisation itself. Andrea White, in 'Allegories of the Self and Empire', notes that 'In the nineteenth-century European imagination, the capital cities served to justify the imperial excursion as beacons of light and oases of civilisation, although increasingly late Victorian and early-twentieth-century cities-London especially, were represented as places of urban pathology, poverty, crime and violence'.[41] In a similar manner, Linda Dryden goes so far as to suggest that the reality of the teeming population growth in Victorian London was seen as a discernible threat to the civilisation and Empire of which it was the undoubted centre. But it is the centre which can no longer control the behemoth that is the growing enormity of the city in the age of empire. Dryden states that 'the East end became "Africanised" in the popular imagination, and the Ripper reportage helped to concretise the sense of the "otherness" of the poorer parts of East London […] It is not unreasonable to conjecture that this allusion is to a place characterised by an "otherness" borne of the largely non-British community of the East End'. [42] The 'Ripper reportage' refers, of course, to the gruesomely infamous and co-incidental East-End murders which made Victorian London so notorious during the late 1880s. Stevenson's text quickly became inextricably linked to these tales of horror.

The brief description which follows of the outer-edges of the city and its inhabitants can be viewed as a form of allegorical reference to the burgeoning colonial world which the empire has created. Ironically, it is seen here as part of the threat to the very civilisation which created it. After the slaying of the peer, Sir Danvers Carew, by Hyde, the description of Soho, as Utterson and an accompanying police officer search for the villainous killer, encapsulates this 'other world' nature of the middle-class terror. The area is described as follows:

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[41] Andrea White, 'Allegories of the Self and of Empire', in Linda Dryden, Stephen Arata and Eric Massie, eds., *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad: Writers of Transition* (Texas: Texas Tech University Press, 2009), p.76
[42] Linda Dryden, 'City of Dreadful Night' in Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Boundaries* (Wisconsin, Wisconsin University Press, 2006) p.255

> The dismal quarter of Soho seen under these changing glimpses, with its muddy ways and slatternly passengers […] like a district of some city in a nightmare. As the cab drew up before the address indicated, the fog lifted a little and showed him a dingy street, a gin palace, a low French eating house, a shop for the retail of penny numbers and twopenny salads, many ragged children huddled in the doorways, and many women of different nationalities passing out, key in hand, to have a morning glass.[43]

The displaced remnants of colonial territorial gain are cast in the margins of the capital's society, where the appearances of respectability withstand the ragged outskirts of this teeming population. Ultimately, in this inverted 'colonial outpost', with the threats from beyond its boundaries upon the centre of the empire, complete with its incongruously-placed community of misfits, stands the house inhabited by 'Hyde', a far distance from the good doctor's own area of the respectable professions and society. One might argue that the human products of Empire scattered around the dimly-lit margins of a detached land, are outcasts in the extreme, completely disconnected with the firm and respectable landscape of Utterson's class. Yet, the connection between the classes is there nonetheless, as the East End provides the cover for the nocturnal activities beyond the respectable façade of their normal lives of the cast of West End characters. It is thus possible, in a broad sense, to view *Jekyll and Hyde* as much as product of the imperial project as Stevenson's directly colonial *The Ebb Tide,* with the centre of the Empire under threat from within via the character of Hyde, the poisoned offspring of the very civilisation his respectable alter ego represents. This is far from a depiction of a horror-figure in Hyde representing a threat from outside. It is a threat from within in every sense: Hyde himself represents the suppressed, marginalised voices within all of us.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde depicts a tangible sense of inverted colonialism. My contention is that we find a city under threat, perceived as a place of safety and security at the heart of empire. But this is also a city facing challenges at its doorstep from this sense of 'otherness', of the brutalities associated with other, uncivilised cultures, not comfortably associated with the behemoth that is the city. Its boundaries groan under the sheer numbers of an entity unable to control itself, somewhat akin to the character of Jekyll/ Hyde himself. Thus, the chief symbol of the solidity of the Victorian Empire must be seen as London; but it is the London of Stevenson's novella which is anything but safe. The

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[43] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op cit., p 24

'soundness' of the Victorian project is challenged and subverted by Stevenson in this and several other examples of his later South Seas fiction and writings.

In *Jekyll and Hyde,* the basis of civilisation, the imperial city as the centre of the race, is warped via the growing sense of the city as a befouled entity. Jekyll himself can, therefore, be seen as a pivotal reflection and literary symbol of degeneration at the most respectable level. Andrea White, quoting from the text, cites examples of this reflective characterisation when she suggests the following:

> Jekyll sees identity as a "fortress", suggesting his perceived vulnerability to threats and the need for vigilance against armed assailants, that which has been repressed and excluded in the identity's construction. The assault Jekyll fears is Hyde's, but the enemy is already within the gates, turning Jekyll's fortress as a respectable, temperate gentleman into a "city of refuge", where as a "cavern" serves the "mountain bandit", he will be safe from the scaffold, fear of which helps "buttress and guard" his "better impulses". Jekyll's fortress of respectability becomes Hyde's city of refuge. [44]

We can extend our vision beyond the boundaries of character and city to the whole idea of British imperial superiority and safety. As Dryden suggests, 'a Victorian belief in the essential "soundness" of the British race becomes, as a result, seriously undermined by the possibility of a suppressed Mr. Hyde skulking in each individual'.[45] Nicholas Daly also considers the closeness of *Jekyll and Hyde* to fears over the protection of the imperial project. He points out that 'as critics have noted, a number of phrases seem to link Hyde to a sort of imperial recoil, as if England has been invaded by the dark forces that were supposedly opposed to the civilising mission. Much, for example, has been made of the scene in which Hyde clubs to death the elderly Member of Parliament, Sir Danvers Carew'.[46] Adding that several critics have noted the threat of Irish Fenian attacks on prominent political figures such as Frederick Cavendish, chief secretary of Ireland, and their depiction as something akin to 'Frankenstein's monster and shillelagh-wielding ape-men', Daly's assertion seems apt.[47] He states convincingly and rather ironically that 'Colonial violence is perceived by the coloniser to emanate from the colonised, to derive from their primitive, bestial nature- to be the

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[44] Andrea White, op. cit., pp 78/79
[45] Linda Dryden, op. cit., p.255
[46] Nicholas Daly 'Colonialism and Popular Literature at the Fin de Siècle' in Michael Valdez Moses and Richard Begam, eds., op. cit., p. 30
[47] *ibid,* p.30

opposite, that is, of the modernity of the colonial power'.[48] And this is recognisable in the character of Hyde, whose bestiality, shrouded as it is in mystery, is shown in the two key acts of brutality in the novella, namely the trampling of the child and the killing of Carew. The problems inherent in Stevenson's text are derived, of course, from *within* the very circles the empire would wish to protect. Hyde, as I shall demonstrate, is a product of the elite civilisation which his alter-ego Jekyll seeks to protect; and even Hyde himself is knowingly recognised by several characters as a member of this elite.

I argue throughout this thesis that Stevenson's fiction continually searched for ways of subverting established genres. *Jekyll and Hyde* undoubtedly follows such an innovative path, with the gothic format being moulded into a new, modernised version, setting the tale firmly in a contemporary London whose general topographical features, familiar via its prominent landmarks to his readership, are shrouded in a dense labyrinth of fog. The fog acts as both an atmospheric horror backdrop and a method of concealment. To the novella's readers and characters, these solid features are rendered unrecognisable. Stevenson's experiences of the dark underbelly of city life were honed in his own native Edinburgh; but for the purposes of his radically different version of gothic, and indeed of the imperial world, he rejects his home town as the most suitable setting. This novel needed as its setting something far bigger, more chaotic than the tiny Edinburgh precincts of his youth. *Jekyll and Hyde'*s sub-textually darkened world, therefore, has a sound basis in reality for the writer, and leaves ample scope for the reader's own perceptions of what remains essentially *unsaid* about the nocturnal habits of his characters in this supposedly secure environment. Prostitution, or at least sexual activity in general becomes the most obvious answer to the undisclosed activities in the mind of the reader. There is an undoubted element of unstated sexuality and self-repression which, while remaining unspoken and shrouded by society's own rigid self-repression, is inescapably evident in the text.

Stevenson, of course, was not the first to focus attention in literary form upon the emergence of the city in its mammoth Victorian scale. Dickens's fiction, for example, presents a plethora of dark, city-based narratives, such as those seen in *Bleak House* (1852) and *Oliver Twist* (1837). Dickens explored his own version of a threatening city landscape which in the mid-Victorian period, lent itself to fictional depictions of the city beyond the

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[48] Nicholas Daly, op. cit., p.30

civilising control of the elite. However, as Sandison has stated, Stevenson's image of the city went beyond the already well-established Victorian literary image of gargantuan metropolis. In Sandison's view, 'Stevenson has a particular talent for de-familiarising and he applies this to the streets of the city in a way that brings him closer to the manner of Conrad and other Modernists than to, say, Poe's or Dickens's way of depicting the city'.[49] Stevenson combines his own potent brew of the city as a scene of psychological terrors and physical violence. The drama of reality via the equally famous 'Whitechapel Murders' and the Hyde-like murderous subterranean character of 'Jack the Ripper', developed an additional fictional world around the identity of this hidden iconic figure spawned by the sprawling Victorian metropolis.

Linda Dryden refers to the uncomfortably close nature of 'life imitating art' by citing contemporary references to both text and killings, beginning with W.T. Stead in his consideration of child prostitution in *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* (1885) who 'first suggested a Jekyll and Hyde parallel in the Ripper murders, which prompted a rash of similar allusions to Stevenson's novel'.[50] Furthermore, Dryden provides several newspaper references adding to the hysteria of the Ripper reign of terror in 1888, including an article in *The Globe* of the same year which considered that 'Life- or rather death- was imitating art', because the 'obscene Hyde' took no more 'intense delight in murder for murder's sake than did the Whitechapel assassin'.[51]

In terms of enduring popular perceptions of the text, the nocturnal carnage epitomised by the well-documented savagery of the Ripper cases provides a further parallel with the idea of a modern Gothic fiction being swiftly replicated in the full grim reality and discomforting proximity of indiscriminate slaughter under the cover of darkness in the great metropolis. In this case, the illumination of the crimes in the *text* are given the floodlit glare of the electric lighting of 'safe' London. In Stevenson's prophetic tale, the traditional gothic backdrops of far-off Spanish castles or centuries long since passed are replaced by a more potently effective tale at the very nerve-ends of Victorian realities as well as providing one of the most enduring Victorian images of the threatening dangers of and to the metropolis. Indeed, in an astonishing parallel with Stevenson's story, the *actual* Whitechapel murders bear an uncanny resemblance to the fiction penned only three years earlier. Stephen Heath in 'Psychopathia

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[49] R.L. Stevenson, *Markheim, Jekyll and the Merry Men, op. cit.,* p.222
[50] Linda Dryden, op. cit., p.154
[51] *ibid.,* p.154

sexualis: Stevenson's Strange Case' points out that the location of the 'Ripper' killings did indeed provide the 'place at the end of the world' for an Enfield or an Utterson'.[52] The disturbing mirror-images of fiction to fact echo further from the period when Heath alludes to the police investigation, which included the use of a medium in an attempt to track down the perpetrator of the obscene slayings. R.J. Lees, the medium, 'came to a halt in front of an impressive mansion. [...] The chief inspector was crestfallen. The house they were facing was the home of a fashionable and highly respected physician'.[53] As Heath concludes, 'the point here is that Stevenson gets it right- the imbrication of the male sexual, the criminal, the medical, the terror at night in the London streets, as an available reality for the contemporary imagination'.[54] Thus, the elevated social status of Jekyll was replicated in a possible suspect of the crime, just as the press made obvious connections with the stage version of the novel.

The 'Ripper' case also adds to my contention that Empire, and the influences of imperial expansion, permeate the pages of Stevenson's text, and the realities of the Whitechapel murders themselves. In *Jekyll and Hyde,* the 'dismal quarter of Soho' becomes the epitome of the threatening 'other', the darker side of London, where this 'district of some city in a nightmare' is populated by 'many women of different nationalities' near the home of 'Henry Jekyll's favourite'. [55] Here is an illustration of the city as colonial microcosm, with the teeming population interspersed with the human products of empire just beyond the boundaries of the West End civilisation. In the reality of the Ripper case which followed, one need only look at the list of 'suspects', real or imagined to glean the fear of the 'other' or, as Robert F. Haggard puts it, the 'threat of outcast London'. He notes that 'The Whitechapel murders provide a case study of sorts. The reactions of the West End mirrored the debate over 'outcast London' and the fear of social revolution on the part of the poor of the East End. The reactions of the East End reflected the ingrained prejudices against foreigners, Jews, the police and upper-class society'.[56] Haggard then takes this idea of prejudice a step further when he discusses the general nature of the suspects for the Ripper murders:

[52] Stephen Heath, *Psyhopathia Sexualis: Stevenson's Strange Case* in *Futures for English* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988) p.105

[53] *ibid,* p.105

[54] *Ibid,* p.106 (citing F. Archer, Ghost detectives: crime and the psychic world).

[55] R.L. Stevenson, *Jekyll and Hyde,* op. cit., p.247

[56] Robert F. Haggard, 'Jack the Ripper as a threat of outcast London' in Alexandra Warwick and Martin Willis, eds., *Jack the Ripper, Media, Culture, History (*Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 197

By an examination of the sorts of people who were suspected of committing the Whitechapel murders, one can get a sense of the racial prejudices and class tensions that were very much a part of Victorian life. The police and press exhibited a strong suspicion of foreigners and Jews from the beginning of the investigation. One writer commented in 1891 that Whitechapel 'harboured a cosmopolitan population, chiefly Jews, many of whom were decent hardworking folk though others were the very scum of Europe'. There was a widely held suspicion that Jews were involved in the killings.[57]

The real-life events which followed on from Stevenson's fiction therefore present the same barriers even *within* the East End. In the novel, the West End establishment seek to halt the outsider, outcast 'other'; in real-life, this threat was a tangible element of popular feeling, gossip and news bulletins. Stevenson erects the same protective barriers around his fictional city to attempt to control what was evidently becoming uncontrollable: the city at the heart of empire.

In the text itself, the idea of the horror of discovery of a darker element to human behaviour causing a shocked response in established society can be seen in the immediate aftermath of the vicious Carew murder case, the most extreme scene of violence in the novella. This is an attack by Hyde so vicious in its intensity that 'the bones were audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway'.[58] Utterson the lawyer is summoned by the police to identify the 'incredibly mangled' body of the elderly parliamentarian. After identifying the corpse as Carew, the police officer's reaction is that of a stunned realisation that a crime of low-life proportions has materialised not in the shabby undergrowth of the East End or Soho, that 'outcast' element of London, but in a location of 'respectability' and was perpetrated upon a member of the highest levels of the governing class: ' "Good God, sir," exclaimed the officer "is it possible?" And the next moment his eye lighted up with professional ambition. "This will make a deal of noise," he said. "And perhaps you can help us to the man." '[59] The sub-textual panic of potential public exposure is developed further in the aftermath of the Carew murder, where the 'aged and beautiful gentleman with white hair', seen by a maid in 'a house not far from the river' was savagely beaten and murdered in 'an ape-like fury' by the Hyde she had recognised, given that he had 'once visited her master and for whom she had conceived a dislike'.[60] Evidently, Carew had no compunction about stopping to converse with Hyde, and

[57] Robert F. Haggard, op. cit., p.205
[58] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p.21
[59] *ibid*, p.22
[60] *ibid,* p.21

the calmness which preceded the attack is made clear by the maid's recollection that 'the older man bowed and accosted the other with a very pretty manner of politeness'.[61]

Again one can consider the reasons for the older gentleman's late-night wanderings, his 'accosting' of Hyde and the brutal savagery of the attack itself. The savage, frenzied nature of the attack is considered further by Heath, who suggests that it is the very nature of the violence which suggests a further, warped manifestation of suppressed male sexuality, citing sexologist Krafft-Ebing, who described such animalistic violence as 'Lust-Murder', sexual murder in which killing replaces the sexual act, and which sexologists will describe in Jekyll and Hyde terms: 'the sexual murderer does not know the sinister, bestial drive to kill that lies dormant within him, to come to life at the first opportunity'.[62] An extreme theory perhaps, but, in the absence of any explanation for the bone-crunching severity of the killing, Heath's interpretation, backed by contemporary late-Victorian sexual theory, offers at the very least some form of conjecture for the crime.

However, the reactions to the crime swiftly move away from the victim, and scandal must be avoided. Sandison also notes that the use of the word 'scandal' in relation to this most foul of violent murders is 'enough to revive speculation as to just why the "aged and beautiful gentleman" had found himself accosting a young stranger […] in a moonlit lane not far from the river when all he'd gone out to do, apparently, was post a letter'.[63] Again, the narrative cloak descends upon the scene, as the rather obvious questions about this curious and savage killing remain unasked, rather than unanswered. But further questions remain: did Carew recognise Hyde, and was it Stevenson's intention to introduce another potential blackmailing theme? And the master of the maid-witness, whose denial of being an 'intimate' with Hyde strikes one as nervous evasion, even if we aren't given this un-named character's direct response: why on earth would Hyde visit him, even if he had, as the master later claimed, 'only seen him twice'? [64] This seems to suggest a *further* edge to the potential blackmail theme, as yet another character is unable to properly describe the mysterious Hyde, apart from some un-named 'deformity'. As Sandison points out, 'it is hard to dispute this view (of homosexual blackmail) given the nuances of the narrative, that this is the direction which the reader is being

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[61] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p.21
[62] Stephen Heath, op. cit., p.103
[63] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.254
[64] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* op. cit., p.23

invited to follow'.[65] Stephen Heath is certainly convinced that Stevenson must have had the culturally ingrained suppression of male sexuality in mind, given the total absence of any meaningful female character, and the obsession with secrecy. Stevenson himself stated that 'people are so filled full of folly and inverted lust that they can think of nothing but sexuality'.[66] Heath's retort is that 'if people *are* so filled full of folly and inverted lust, this must be central for what Hyde represents.'[67]

Sexuality in Victorian Britain and sexual law were the direct by-products of the age of Empire. They were the ultimate symbol of marginalised voices in a world obsessed with the veneer of respectability. In the 1880s in particular, law began to dominate the sexual boundaries of the population to an extraordinary degree. Laws on prostitution, the age of consent and homosexuality dominate the decade particularly, as Ronald Ham puts it, in 1885:

> The climax came in 1885 (the *'annus mirabilis* of sexual politics') with the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 'to make further provision for the protection of women and girls, and the suppression of brothels and other purposes'. The Act introduced a summary (and effective) procedure for action against brothels. It was the end of an era in the history of prostitution.[68]

In relation to Stevenson's confined topography of the city, the criminalisation of some aspects of human sexuality makes for an intriguing additional consideration of the novella's plot. The laws were passed, including the 'Labouchere amendment' which 'made illegal *all* types of sexual activity between males (not just sodomy as hitherto), and irrespective of either age or consent', a year before Stevenson's novel.[69] The act created in effect the 'Blackmailer's charter' which existed in law until 1967 and banished a subset of the population to a subterranean world, unspoken as befits the love that dare not speak its name. Whether one can relate this possible strand of interpretation to the character of Enfield is another matter, but the recurrence of the possible idea of thoroughly repressed sexuality, especially perhaps to a modern reader, renders this idea a constant and concrete undercurrent in a novel of repeated secrecy.

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[65] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.254
[66] Stephen Heath, op. cit., p.94
[67] *Ibid,* p.94
[68] Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: the British Experience* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991) p.65
[69] *ibid*, p.71

Steven Heath argues the case for the predominance of male sexuality in a virtually female-free zone in the novella. Whether Stevenson specifically refers to male homosexuality and the obvious, now legally-driven, reasons for self-repression is a debatable point. Enfield's nocturnal activities mentioned above could certainly be interpreted via an endless list of potential misdemeanours. But there are plenty of subtle, and perhaps not so subtle, hints and signals provided by the author in this regard. Hyde as a mysterious young male companion of Dr Jekyll, for example; or the unremitting bachelorhood of the entire male *dramatis personae* of the tale; or, indeed, the murder of Carew and the immediate reactions to the crime. Sandison suggests that, given the extent to which homosexuality was criminalised, with the Labouchere amendment, this 'makes the reticence and furtiveness of Utterson and his circle seem even more suggestive' and, indeed, creates the inevitable underground marginalisation of any form of homosexual activity.[70] Even those seemingly beyond the scope of marginalised forces find themselves subjected to a form of self-marginalisation within a world dominated by the need for a veneer of respectable existence.

The restrictive passage of legislation provides a distinct imperial aspect to the boundaries of the novella, adding a hidden edge to the behaviour of the 'West End' characters. Robert Hyam, commenting on the effects of these new sexual laws, argues that 'although sexual opportunity was generally reduced in Britain, the empire continued to provide for traditional expectations, at least where white wives had not penetrated in significant numbers' and that 'the worst result of the late Victorian campaign was the silence which descended over all aspects of sex, producing the most appalling ignorance'.[71] In terms of *Jekyll and Hyde,* this adds to the enclosed feel of the text, where the unseen, nocturnal habits, *beyond* the boundaries of respectability become the desired, secretive haunts of the respectable. The East End, in effect, becomes the dark, uncharted 'outcast' of this imperial London microcosm. The restraints of the respectable heart of the imperial project can only be challenged beyond the boundaries of the West End, providing a model in miniature of the Victorian experiences of Empire. As the restrictions on sexual behaviour of the Victorian city-dweller take hold- and the constant secrecy and suppression of the text supports this thesis- the inhabitants of the West End are forced to move beyond their own boundaries for sexual gratification where their behaviour remains beyond the gaze of their own kind. In effect, those at the centre of the

[70] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.253
[71] Robert Hyam, op. cit., p.71

imperial world look to the outcast city, the 'other' of the East End, the colonial territory in my model of the city as imperial microcosm. Hyam considers the sexual freedoms afforded to those who lived abroad in a variety of imperial outposts as having 'an enlarged field of opportunity' as 'greater space and privacy were often available, inhibitions relaxed'.[72] What we see in Stevenson's text is the idea of sexual opportunity in miniature, and in reverse, where the act must be hidden by and safely enclosed within the very rigidity of the boundaries of the respectable city.

When the novella reached the cinema, all notion of possible homosexual subtext was jettisoned; but at least the 1931 version, directed by Robert Mamoulian and starring Frederick March, had a distinct, pre-censorship sexual frisson about it. The possible homosexual sub-text was removed and firmly replaced by two female characters. Jekyll's rather bland but well-connected fiancé and a convincingly brash music-hall singer called Ivy, eventually savagely killed by 'Hyde', provide an element absent in Stevenson's novella. In the film, Jekyll is torn between conventional love and marriage within his own 'caste' and the murky, raucous underworld of lower London, represented by Ivy. Hyde, when March's glorious transformation is completed, resembles the 'ape' creature mentioned in the text. Despite the cinematic plot-changes, the heavy sexual element is there nonetheless. It is the fact of the incongruous inclusion of femininity which renders the film's interpretation somewhat conventional compared to the possibilities of the novella itself.

Jane Rago suggests that one of the main narrative functions of the text is to suppress, by writing, or, indeed, not writing about Hyde, and to ensure that the identity of the character, and his crimes, whatever they may be, are kept well hidden from public view. As she puts it, 'The threat of self-implication that surrounds the professional world that Hyde poses is the crux of the narrative structure of the text'.[73] The 'self-implication' is the internal tainting of one class by the perceived behaviour of some alien, outer and lower class found to be pre-existing within the 'threatened' class itself. By denying the reader direct access to the exact whereabouts of the deviant behaviour and its participants, the 'public' of the novel, the middle-class professional domain of Utterson et al, is kept, as far as is humanly possible, 'in the dark', as they desperately attempt to silence the possibilities of public scandal. This is

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[72] Robert Hyam, op. cit., p.88
[73] Jane V. Rago, op. cit., p.277

also noted by Stephen Heath, who points out that the actual story itself, in terms of plot, is minimal to the overwhelming dominance of narrative concerns. Although the story starts with *another* story, told by Enfield, Heath states that 'nothing that follows, however, goes quite so simply and the reader is surely struck by the extent to which the story is overrun by its narrative, the latter strangely present as what the story is about'.[74]

In this re-working of the gothic genre, the gothic plot itself becomes a victim of the narrative grip held by Utterson but assisted by the epistolary interventions of other narrative contributors such as that of Doctor Lanyon's narrative and, in the final chapter, Jekyll himself as the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde is exposed. Lanyon's final words reveal the horror of his realisation that Hyde and Jekyll are one and the same: 'The creature who crept into my house that night was, on Jekyll's own confession, known by the name of Hyde and hunted for in every corner of the land as the murderer of Carew'.[75] Apart from the two obvious acts of violence, and the discovery of Hyde's body, much of the actual tale, which is supposedly a story of horror, remains off-limits. The suppression and control exerted by the characters of *Jekyll and Hyde* becomes the immediate and dominant reaction. And the fear of scrutiny is constant in the text. An early example of this suppressive tendency comes at the end of the first chapter, when Utterson and Enfield conspire to close the door on any further reference to Hyde and the incident, just when the reader is relishing the prospect of finding out the identity of the 'cheque drawer'. The reason Utterson already knows the identity of Hyde's financial source is Jekyll's will, the first of a series of enclosed, sealed documents not intended for public consumption. The knowledge he now possesses is clearly an unwanted burden. On return from his meeting with Enfield, the narrative records his dissatisfaction as follows: 'This document had long been the lawyer's eyesore. It offended him both as a lawyer and as a lover of the sane and customary sides of life, to whom the fanciful was immodest. And hitherto it was his ignorance of Mr Hyde that had swelled his indignation; now, by a sudden turn, it was his knowledge'.[76] The frequent use of letters and documents in the plot is a constant reminder of the desire to silence any impending scandals and, indeed, acts as a symbolic means of silencing the marginalised voices of a microcosmic imperial world scuffling at the doorstep of urban respectability. Nothing is spoken of in public, and all

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[74] Stephen Heath, op. cit., p.95
[75] R.L. Stevenson, *Markheim, Jekyll and The Merry Men*, op. cit. p.277
[76] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, op. cit.,* p.11

of the important information remains hidden on paper, secreted into the hands of Utterson to conceal.

After the Carew murder, Utterson is given possession from Jekyll of a letter written by 'Hyde'. Rather than give it up as evidence in the case, Utterson shows the letter to his clerk over dinner. The clerk notices the resemblance in the writing to that of Jekyll. Utterson quickly suppresses all further discussion and 'locked the note into his safe where it reposed from that time forward'. The process continues unabated: Lanyon's terrified missive where the truth about Jekyll is eventually released is initially presented to Utterson in yet another sealed envelope which was 'not to be opened till the death or disappearance of Dr Henry Jekyll'.[77] The novella concludes also via two separate documentary narratives, all in the possession of Utterson, ready to be suppressed forever and thus preserving the enclosed nature of the novella's overall narrative. It is metaphorically placed in an envelope itself at the tale's conclusion. As Sandison puts it, when analysing the secrecy of the 'coterie' of the professional world, 'their communications, too, testify to the same preference for concealment, as enclosures are wrapped in enclosures ending, more often than not, enclosed in Mr Utterson's safe'.[78]

Time and again throughout the novella, Stevenson alerts the reader to the ambiguities of his characters' cloistered world and their attempts to keep the whiff of scandal at bay. It is Utterson's fears for the reputation of his friend Jekyll which force him to turn his attention back to Hyde following his own temporary self-examination. He turns *upon* Hyde's character, suggesting, or hoping that he 'must have secrets of his own: black secrets by the look of him; secrets compared to which poor Jekyll's worst would be like sunshine'.[79] If anything, this sounds like the potential language of blackmail referred to by Enfield after the earlier child – trampling, something to pin on Hyde, which would render him *not* an equal member of their class. Yet again we are provided with an unspoken matter, with the reader left to speculate on a further silence, even if it is mere conjecture on Utterson's part. Yet he leaves the starkest, most sexually potent reference to the last in this chapter when he notes that 'It turns me cold to think of this creature stealing like a thief to Harry's bedside; poor Harry, what a wakening!'[80]

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[77] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* op. cit*.,* p.33
[78] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.254
[79] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, op. cit.,* p.18
[80]*ibid,* p.18

Stevenson provides the strongest allusion to possible sexual blackmail here: why 'bedside', when 'door' or 'house' would suffice? At the very least intimacy is suggested: here is a young male whom Utterson suspects of having easy and intimate access to the private quarters of Jekyll's home; but Utterson's remark suggests that of a possible lover, and a disreputable blackmailing one at that, ready to devour his inheritance, given that Utterson was, at this stage, well aware of its contents. And within the legal framework of this text, it seems a reasonable supposition that Stevenson may well have had the proximity of the 'blackmailer's charter' of illegal homosexuality in mind.

In the end, our characters think that nothing else will suffice than to close down or suppress possible reactions to the killing, avoiding potential scandal. In the final stages, Hyde/Jekyll, with scandal dominating the minds of all concerned and Stevenson's narrative, is given the same treatment but, ironically, by Jekyll himself, who 'seals' his own narrative, ending his own identity by way of his own pen, and Hyde, who becomes his own physical self-destroyer. The story concludes with Jekyll's narrative, two chapters after the discovery of Hyde's body: 'Here then, as I lay down the pen and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end'.[81] What Jekyll does here is perfectly consistent with the format of this *strange* piece: he has enclosed himself and his identity within yet another document, and by, in effect, closing ranks, he puts the final seal upon this urban gothic tale, the voices and details of which other characters have spent the entirety of its textual lifetime trying to seal and suppress. Therein lies the hope of the imperial city to enclose any tangible threat from the metaphorical colonial savagery of the East End, to put it in a box and control it. At the very centre of the imperial project, the fear of the 'strange' of the novella's title remains dangerously close and the marginalised voices of the age of empire linger on the doorsteps, and within the collective psyche, of the dominant classes, themselves marginalised by their own laws, fears of scandal and the unknown. Stevenson's complicated and claustrophobic text presents the London as the centre of an imperial project troubled and uncertain at its very core.

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[81] R.L. Stevenson, *The Strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* op. cit., p.70

Chapter Five: The Master's Wanderings: *The Master of Ballantrae* **as Novel of Transition**

 From the central imperial London setting of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* I now consider the expansive colonial precincts of Stevenson in exile. The author's travelling lifestyle and eventual permanent exile had a profound effect upon his literary output in terms of both his anti-colonial credentials and his approach to Scotland in fiction. This is best illustrated via a close analysis of one of Stevenson's greatest and most overtly historical Scottish novels, the dark and brooding representation of a familiar and dramatic period in Scottish history: *The Master of Ballantrae*. For Stevenson, this novel marked a personal period of transition, being written initially in the Adirondacks in 1887 before being completed while in Tahiti and Hawaii in 1889, prior to his final settlement in Samoa. It is argued in this chapter that the travelling experience of Stevenson, and his radical re-working of the historical novel format, gives this text a distinctly critical outlook on the colonial world, combining both his knowledge of Britain's growing role as an imperial power with a sense of the suppression of the Jacobite Rebellion and Highland culture of an irrevocably fractured nation or, as Julia Reid puts it, 'Britain's "external" and "internal" Empire, shown here in the post-Culloden landscape of 1745 and beyond'.[1] Stevenson's novel provides a sharp depiction of the state of Scotland both at home and beyond its shores in the wake of Culloden.

 The Master of Ballantrae is a novel which challenges and transgresses boundaries, both geographical and literary, in a far more substantial manner than Stevenson's previous works and which uses multiple and hugely ironic forms of narrative voice. The writer moves us from the enclosed precincts of the House of Durrisdeer, with the Culloden disaster in the background, to the colonial wilderness of North America, via a brief episode in India. Stevenson provides a stark, fictional image of a most unromantic and divided post-Culloden Scotland, a historical setting in time of much of Stevenson's Scottish fiction. In an approach echoing the geography of Walter Scott's success with *Waverley* in 1814, Stevenson provides a vastly different perspective of shifting landscapes from Scott's comparatively geographically narrower precincts of Jacobite conquest and failure. Fuelled by his own self-imposed exile, Stevenson creates an image of a Scotland adapting to the new circumstances

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[1] Julia Reid, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Science and the Fin de Siècle,* op. cit., p.135

of the firmly re-established British state. Ian Duncan suggests that Stevenson's fiction was guided and shaped by his determination to leave behind the boundaries of traditional formats due, in essence, to the changing world around him. He suggests the following:

> In *The Master of Ballantrae* and *The Wrecker* we see Stevenson adapting to the episodic format of magazine publication for a new, post-novelistic kind of fiction, a planetary narrative which seeks to represent the modern 'world system' in its historical ascendancy- as opposed to the political, moral and aesthetic geographies of region and nation that comprise the traditional domain of the novel.[2]

We can make an obvious comparison with the earlier Walter Scott novels such as *Waverley* in this sense, where the geographical shift remains firmly rooted on turbulent British soil, whereas *The Master of Ballantrae* is scattered across several seas and continents, ending in the barren wasteland of America. This idea of 'scattering' is not confined to the geography of the text, but also the nature of the narrative itself, with the plethora of competing manuscripts and narratives vying for prominence amidst what would previously be regarded as a secure foundation of setting for historical fiction. Nathalie Jaeck suggests that 'Stevenson seems to be eager to dismember, to scatter the text, stigmatizing as an illusion the naturalist effort to barricade the text, to turn it into an authoritative and indisputable stronghold. Stevenson becomes a literary outlaw and opens a new, modern, literary way'.[3]

There is no doubt that in this novel, he who controls the narrative controls the history of this tale. The reader finds in *The Master of Ballantrae* only a chaotic, untrustworthy narrative compendium which, as I shall show, deals in different letters, manuscripts, voices, and frequent editorial intrusions from both the principal narrator Ephraim Mackellar and the fictional editor of the 'manuscript' itself. The reader is left with a tale which defies conclusion in terms of when the editing of the text stops, if indeed it ever does. The only sense of finality is in death, with the joint grave of both Durie brothers providing a twisted version of brotherly unity, and perhaps a metaphor of Scotland itself, uneasily existing within the Union. As Julia Reid suggests, 'This dark version of Scotland as an irreconcilably divided nation, in which divisions are not healed by the years, undermines the belief in Scotland's progress after the Union'.[4] Reid's comments go straight to the crux of this novel:

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[2] Ian Duncan , 'Stevenson and Fiction' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.15
[3] Natalie Jaeck, 'The Greenhouse versus the Glasshouse' in Ambrosini and Dury, eds., *Robert Louis Stevenson: Writer of Boundaries,* op. cit., p.48
[4] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.132

the debunking of the Jacobite myth, as enshrined in James's flamboyantly dashing renegade character. Reid also notes the progression made from the depiction of the Highland disaster of *Kidnapped* compared with the same subject matter in *The Master,* and that which would later be displayed in the sequel to *Kidnapped, Catriona*:

> As in *Kidnapped,* the divided nation is figured by a motif of exile and emigration. The narrative follows James's adventures in India and North America. Yet the perspective is different from that embodied in *Kidnapped:* the earlier novel evoked the suffering of Highlanders at the hands of the Hanoverian government, whereas *The Master of Ballantrae* exposes the sentimental myths propagated by Jacobitism.[5]

This is a novel in the very loosest sense of the term, physically contained and encountered within a preface. It is sealed in a 'secure' manuscript which is anything but secure and lacking in chapter numbers, leaving the reader with a sense of a genre dismembered. Ian Duncan goes on to assert in a broadly similar manner to Reid that *The Master of Ballantrae* 'sustains a withering critique of the nostalgic and idealising constructions of a lost Jacobite Scotland which flourished in Scott's wake'.[6] Alison Lumsden notes Jenni Calder's suggestion that Stevenson's protagonists found themselves in a 'landscape that had become alien and defamiliarised' and that the differences between Scott and Stevenson's images of history are inevitable as 'by the 1880s the relationship of human activity to landscape has changed'.[7] She also notes William Gray's suggestion that both *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Kidnapped* show 'a Scottish identity divided against itself' with, as Lumsden puts it, 'Scott's apparent aesthetics of reconciliation having given way to one of Stevensonian division'.[8] Lumsden, while accepting these differences, goes further by suggesting that there is, despite the wide uncertainties presented by Stevenson in his depictions of Scottish history, also an undoubted closeness between the two writers. This can be explained by the rapidly changing perspectives of Scotland within an expanding empire as experienced by Stevenson.[9] Lumsden concludes her analysis by drawing a comparison which suggests that the overall ambitions of both Scott and Stevenson were to ensure that 'the past is best kept alive through some thought or emotion or some act or attitude that shall be remarkably striking in the mind's eye. His

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[5] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.132
[6] Ian Duncan, 'Stevenson and Fiction' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.23
[7] Alison Lumsden, 'Stevenson, Scott and Scottish History' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.73
[8] *ibid,* p.73
[9] *ibid,* p.85

(Stevenson's) novels, consequently, stand as memorials to Scotland's past, reminding us of what should not be "lost or obscured" within it'.[10]

Lumsden's view is certainly a convincing one. Stevenson chose historical events as readily as Walter Scott, but there the similarity ends. Stevenson was writing for and from a very different world, and it is his 'world view' which engenders a fresh version of the tradition pioneered by Scott. *The Master of Ballantrae* goes beyond the simple idea of an historical novel and is a text heavily influenced by a changing global context in terms of the expansion of the British state via imperial territorial gain, and the stagnation of Scotland as a political entity. Stevenson's central approach comes from his status as an emigrant abroad, constructing his own Scottish themes from afar. By way of contrast, Scott's stance from *within* focuses on his version of the more positive impact of the after-effects of the 1745 rebellion on Scotland as a nation progressing and modernising within the politically strengthened Union. In *Waverley* this is starkly illustrated via a concluding symbolic marriage which metaphorically unifies the characters after the smoke of battle and defeat has drifted away, thus displaying Scott's view of ultimate Hanoverian progress within the union.

A much emptier, disillusioned and disembodied version of post-Culloden Scotland emerges from Stevenson in terms of the depictions of a Scotland he saw as being polluted by the myths of the past. Julia Reid notes Roderick Watson's stark assertion that 'Stevenson reveals the Jacobite romance as a cancer at the heart of Scottish culture'. [11] But this is the foundation upon which an enduring sense of Scottish cultural identity was built: an internally-created and long term tartan mythology which solidified during the Victorian era and beyond. Nonetheless, despite the enormous differences in approach between these two giants of Scottish Victorian literature, the same desire which gripped Scott remains undiminished in Stevenson's Scottish works. Love of country is in no way diminished in Stevenson, but his approach is to question and to challenge a troubling social and political history. Lumsden, in a similar line of argument to Nathalie Jaeck above, also states that Stevenson's narrative complexity 'leaves readers with no stable ground beneath their feet'.[12] The inference here is that *uncertainty* abounds in relation to Stevenson's Scotland, whereas *certainty* binds Scott's comparatively romanticised Highland uprisings and defeat in his own

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[10] Alison Lumsden, op. cit., p.85
[11] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.132
[12] Alison Lumsden, op. cit., p.77

creation and maintenance of a Scotland in danger of disappearing from the nation's conscience. Indeed, a recent Advanced Higher question for Scottish sixth year pupils posed an apt task in relation to Stevenson's approach towards his vision of a Scotland very different from the equilibrium created by Scott in *Waverley*:

'"*Stevenson's view of Scotland is of a divided nation, of a nation not at peace with itself.*" In the light of this assertion, discuss Stevenson's presentation of Scotland in *The Master of Ballantrae* and in one or two short stories'.[13]

For Stevenson, romantic elements of the Scottish past become a deconstructed, jaundiced depiction of what had appeared to be a sterile *status quo* of Scotland's history. His text positively rebels against staid, unflinchingly nostalgic depictions of the actual rebellion. As Ian Duncan suggests, 'The critical anatomy of "Scotland" in *The Master of Ballantrae* marks its author's repudiation of the Romantic nation, the ideological matrix of the novel after Scott. Stevenson writes a kind of fiction attuned, instead, to the dispersed, disjointed conditions of modern historical life'.[14] Stevenson presents a country shrouded in a past of uncertainty and divisions as the last battles on British soil are fought out. In comparison to Walter Scott's depiction of major Scottish traumas, the main element in *The Master of Ballantrae*- the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion- is re-enacted 'off-stage', far distant from the South-West precincts of Durrisdeer, adding to the somewhat warped vision of the conclusions reached by Scott's cast of warring factions. Alison Lumsden's description that the reader has no 'stable ground' in *The Master* is evident from the opening pages of, firstly, the 'preface' and then the first 'chapter' of the manuscript left by Mackellar. Here is a most deceptive beginning, with a literary device described by Stevenson himself as being 'a little too like Scott'[15] used to provide a deceptive sense of genre which never transpires. In fact, the first radical hint of Stevenson's deception comes in his deconstruction of a Victorian idea of adventure. In the preface, the reader is lured towards a misty-eyed nostalgic theme of Scottish tragedy. All the ingredients are there: the '45; 'lamentable deaths' and the mystery surrounding the suppression of this hundred-year-old manuscript. The unsuspecting reader prepares himself for an adventurous plot among the Highland heather with the Jacobite insurgents, but Stevenson kills this false façade of genre with almost immediate effect. After six pages, the eponymous hero is 'dead'; we see nothing of the promised rebellion; and the

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[13] SQA Advanced Higher English paper, 2012
[14] Ian Duncan, op. cit., p.23
[15] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae* op. cit., p.229

Durie family has divided itself in a most un-romantic manner. They hedge their bets with both sides to ensure that- whatever the outcome- some favour could be found with whomsoever was victorious. In effect, the deceptive content contained in this initial narrative, pieced together from various sources prior to Mackellar's arrival some three years after Culloden, is unceremoniously dumped, along with all ideas of conventional adventure narrative both by Stevenson and his fictional narrator and editor.

The Durie family is part of the deceptive quality of the opening stages, and the grandest deception of all is perpetrated by the family itself. While Mackellar is gleeful in his uncovering of James's discredited spy role later in the novel, he brushes over the family's own adherence to *both* sides during the rebellion itself. As Douglas Gifford has pointed out, 'the entire novel is based on a piece of duplicity: namely, the fact that the house of Ballantrae (like many others of the day) chose to solve the delicate problem of sending one son out with the Jacobites and keeping another at home as loyal to the established crown'.[16] Mackellar's delight in shattering the last vestiges of James's romanticism as a government spy is another deception in itself, with the family having already indulged in the overall national deception by sending one son to either side. The family itself, by courting favour with both sides, could hardly be described as a symbol of support for dashing Jacobite romanticism.

Stevenson uses the Durie family as a form of Scottish national microcosm and I believe Gifford's point can be taken further here. In a sense, Mackellar's gleeful condemnation of the Master surrounding his duplicitous spying career can be seen as mythologising the whole concept of the Jacobites and Culloden, so much a part of the Victorian penchant for romanticised Scottish history and tartan paraphernalia. Mackellar's unreliable sources of various servants and locals from Durrisdeer provides the material for the creation of the background narrative for the period prior to his arrival and subsequently the formulation of a myth, where the Master 'was cried up for a saint'.[17] Mackellar then conveniently forgets the family's own pragmatic, yet rather shabby and unromantic role immediately prior to the Jacobite uprising. In effect, the family readily adapts itself to the reality of both the pre-and post-Culloden landscape. Mackellar, after helping to expose James as a 'government spy'

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[16] Douglas Gifford 'The importance of *The Master of Ballantrae'* in *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland,* op. cit.*, p.81

[17] R.L Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*, op. cit., p.17

goes as far as to describe James as 'the discredited hero of romance,'[18] a further allusion to the Master's strangled role in a novel which rebuts all sense of romanticised adventure. Yet the family he devoted himself to, that rock upon which he became 'a loving servant of the House of Durrisdeer' provides a glaring irony right at the heart of his narrative by their deception to cover both outcomes of the rebellion.[19]

In the novel, considered in detail below, the reader is estranged from the idea and image of a romantic Scotland ravaged by violence and brimming with heroism. Instead, we have a deep sense of unease, with a constantly fractured narrative that inhabits and grips the world of the Durie family, entrenched within Durrisdeer and the stagnant Scottish post-Culloden political landscape. Nowhere amidst the tightly-controlled boundaries of his Durrisdeer setting does Stevenson provide a romanticised portrayal of either Highland or Lowland landscapes or, indeed, of the American colonies in the latter stages of the novel. Instead we, like the ill-fated Durie family, are trapped within the narrative, based in the House of Durrisdeer and immediate surroundings or lost in a wilderness beyond the narrative powers of Mackellar. Alternatively, the escape for the reader, into the initially stirring piratical world of the second chapter, on board the squalor of Teach's rough bark in the episodes of piracy, also leads to a stifled dead end. Eventually, the reader is released into the barren wastelands of Albany when the novel is transported to the American colonies.

In a challenge to conventional narrative, however, the early promise of an adventurous landscape of action is subverted, providing a claustrophobic and darkly static setting of the House of Durrisdeer and, thus, a Scotland in microcosm as a politically sterile nation. As Adrian Poole points out in his introduction to the Penguin edition, 'there is history and romance and tragedy' in the novel, but his version of that history takes on a very different hue from what even a modern reader might expect. [20] Stevenson had already utilised this heavily anti-romantic tactic in *Kidnapped,* where no respite from discomfort can be found for young Balfour or the reader in the wild Highland landscapes. Balfour's first experience of the wild uncharted Hebridean world is to get a severe dose of sea-food poisoning, before being dragged around a less-than-welcoming and comfortless land. This warping of the adventure genre, already well underway in earlier novels such as *Kidnapped* and *Treasure Island,*

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[18] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*,* p.89
[19] *ibid*, p.89
[20] Adrian Poole, introduction to R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.xii

extends to the dashing leading figure of The Master. He is a character whose romantic traits are frequently dashed, although at times succeeding temporarily with his variety of convincing performances throughout the novel.

Despite the deconstruction of both the romantic adventure genre and James's character, he dominates all forms of the narrative. The irony of Mackellar's seemingly unflattering depiction of James in the first chapter simply fuels the reader's desire for a clearer picture of this elusive figure. He is described as an 'ill man to cross'; 'a devil of a son'; and having an un-disclosed 'black mark' on his name; but, as Mackellar soon realised 'all the love was for the dead son.'[21] Indeed, Mackellar's first glimpse of James as he arrives home some eleven years after Culloden is akin to love at first sight: he is literally dazzled by the Master, 'a very handsome figure and countenance, swarthy and lean […] he had a mole, not unbecoming.'[22] Having spent so much of the early narrative unwittingly developing a character of attractively roguish hue via multiple narrative voices, Mackellar seems caught off guard even within his own carefully-orchestrated, first-hand account of his Durrisdeer experience.

But James is a creation of enormous falsity. His character is based on whatever audience he encounters, as he produces a series of 'performances' in a novel which never fully grants him the heroic status he seeks. His arrival from France, 'newly landed off from a dirty smuggling lugger' presents a carefully-manicured, fully dressed performer ready for his stage. Such is the extent of his costume, complete with 'a large diamond, clothes which were of a French and foppish design' and adorned with 'exquisite lace', one sees the travelling actor, complete with layers of costume fit for whichever role he chooses to play, with his props stored in the portmanteaus he appears with on the shore.[23] His costume seems of another age: Robert Kiely sees him as a 'throwback from an older, more heroic time, who by accident of birth has been cast into a tribe of pygmies which provides no natural outlet for his extraordinary power. Instead, its little members taint and corrupt his ancient virility with their own meanness'.[24] In effect, the reader is presented with a direct physical manifestation of the Scottish cultural icon: dashing, romantically Jacobite, and utterly false. There is certainly some merit to Kiely's assertion here, as there is no doubt that 'The Master' is either too big or

[21] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.3

[22] *ibid,* p.72

[23] *ibid,* p. 72

[24] Robert Kiely, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure,* op. cit., p.198

too incongruously counterfeit a character and performer to exist in Stevenson's version of the historical novel. The normal 'outlets' for such an exotic and glamorous character are frequently thwarted in the narrative.

Alan Sandison points out the importance of theatrical performance in the text, which can be seen in a variety of very public stages, such as the duel between James and Henry, the pirate adventures, and the further confrontation between the brothers in New York. Sandison states the following, suggesting that the 'plot', rather than being conventionally driven, is a series of performances:

> If not a story there *is,* however we read the text, a performance, and every now and then the text is frank about this-sometimes explicitly so as when Mackellar, watching the Master's strategy for tormenting his brother unfold, describes the way that it links it to the idea of play-performance: 'and the more the Master enjoyed his spiteful entertainment, the more engagingly, the more smilingly, he went!' So that the plot, by its own scope and progress, further confirmed itself.[25]

In effect, the novel is built upon a series of performances, mostly from James. Those mentioned above are only some of the plethora of performance spaces utilised by James as the text progresses. As Sandison also notes, the duel is 'that other theatrical scene on another carefully prepared stage'. [26] Yet the Master is also a master of improvisation. However improvisations cannot last forever, as we see throughout the text as James moves on to the next 'stage' to maintain his character, fake and theatrical as it is.

Adrian Poole agrees with Robert Kiely's assertion above when he suggests that 'When all is said and done, the Master is a brilliant fake […] Stevenson's novel analyses this kind of forgery through the charismatic figure of the Master, the "bonnie laddie" who goes out to fight for one side, comes back to spy for the other, and is never deflected for an instant from a single-minded devotion to himself'.[27] Somewhat akin to Alan Breck in *Catriona,* complete with suitably flamboyant Jacobite romantic hero costume, James is a character whose desired plot has already been written and dismissed by the author; and the deception in *The Master* is far starker as both Stevenson and his character toy with the reader, providing layers of false characterisation which is stripped away as the novel develops. A 'man of pasteboard' and a

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[25] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.312
[26] *ibid.*, p.313
[27] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*, op. cit., introduction, p.xv

character of 'vacuity' becomes Mackellar's assessment late in the text as they journey together to America.[28] But the brilliance of Stevenson's creation is in no way diminished by Mackellar's suggestions. If anything, this character, who leaps around the boundaries of genre, is Stevenson's radically theatrical triumph. Crucially, this 'man of pasteboard' can be seen as a direct ambassador for the post-Culloden culture of Scotland: a redundant image enduring beyond its allotted time. Stevenson's character is one of his finest creations; but it is a character which displays a parallel image of romantic fictional adventure and a sterile vision of Scottish culture.

James Durie is the eponymous 'Master' of the book's title. Such are the multiple forms of narrative stance and changing geographical locations and hierarchical shifts, however, that even the awarding of the title of 'Master' seems in dispute throughout the text. Principally, this can be seen in the subtextual manipulations of our narrator. Mackellar's most compelling act of gross manipulation comes in the epistolary flurry of correspondence prior to the Master's return. Firstly, he blurts out the damaging mathematics of Henry's enormous payments to his brother to keep him at bay in France, thus provoking Mrs Henry into immediate action. Mackellar announces that ' "God knows how we have sweated farthings to produce it," said I. "But eight thousand and sixty is the sum, beside the odd shilling. And if you can think my patron miserly after that, this shall be my last interference." '[29] As the Master heads for Durrisdeer, he maintains his servile innocence in it all, stating that 'I had made haste to send an answer to Colonel Burke, in which I begged him, if he should see the Master, to assure him his next messenger would be attended to. But with all my haste I was not in time to avert what was impending: the arrow had been drawn: it must now fly'.[30] Mackellar's narrative, having already provoked so many doubts and questions in the reader, due to the obvious manipulations he has already retrospectively exerted over the proceedings, begs only further questions here. Far from being desperate to keep the Master banished he, like the reader, is only too keen to see the dashing hero return 'in the flesh' to the bleak and sterile surroundings of Durrisdeer. Given Mackellar's extraordinarily deceptive narrative and constant editorial interjections, there is no doubt that one of Stevenson's undoubted strengths as a writer of fiction is his ability to provide carefully constructed and intricate narrative dexterity. Indeed, as I have suggested above, this novel can only be properly appreciated with

[28] R.L.Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.*156*

[29] *ibid*, p.67

[30] *ibid,* p.70

a recognition of Stevenson's highly-ironic and flexible approach, via the two main characters who provide it: Ephraim Mackellar and, to a far lesser extent, the Chevalier Burke, who, as I examine below, is given just enough room by the central narrative figure to provide the undoubtedly entertaining moments of this dark tale as he unfolds his narrative of grim piracy. Despite the secondary narrative, it can be argued that the entire narrative structure is sharply-controlled throughout by the author, with the obvious loosening of the boundaries of narrative in the 'wilderness' section becoming part of Stevenson's highly ironic approach to narrative voice. And the narrative fluctuations retain the fluidity of Stevenson's approach to the plot. Mackellar seems determined to create some form of warped equilibrium between himself and James which he can control in Durrisdeer, but competing narratives of the post-Culloden landscape eventually overtake his efforts. For Mackellar, there is no sustainable equilibrium for this fractured Scotland in microcosm. His sub-textual desire to control both the house and its inhabitants at Durrisdeer are thwarted.

Mackellar's 'manuscript', the loosely-designated novel which the reader encounters, begins with immediate irony. Most of the information given by our narrator is gleaned from a number of sources, mostly 'local gossip', and invariably about the central 'actor' in the drama, James Durie. It is only when Mackellar reaches the point where he encounters the family can some form of finely-biased clarity be seen. He does, however, establish his narrative credentials in the opening paragraph, with the constant use of the first-person-singular: 'I knew […] I was intimately mingled […] I have an authentic memoir […] I served him and loved him (Lord Durrisdeer-Henry)'.[31] All of this serves to bolster the feeling of authenticity already established by Stevenson's 'present day' characters in his brief preface, but already the reader can detect the controlled and controlling subtleties of this seemingly unwittingly ironic character.

When Mackellar presents his potted history of James, he presents a series of 'black marks' against his name, including the inevitable scourge of such a 'Holy Willie' figure, drink, womanising and brawling. Nonetheless, we are told that James 'took from his father the love of serious reading,'[32] certainly adding to the attractive early indications of character for James. And the ultimate unconscious irony comes in Mackellar's second-hand reference to a

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[31] R. L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*, op. cit., p.9
[32] *ibid*, p.10

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'very black mark' which Mackellar would not 'set down'.[33] Considering the felonies which he does choose to provide, this seems odd, and is certainly part of Stevenson's caricaturing of Mackellar as a living, breathing, sternly Presbyterian figure of distinctly Burnsian hue, always ready to protect the morals of the reader. (Later, Mackellar's own moral compass is somewhat diverted when he has murderous thoughts himself towards the Master on the sea voyage across the Atlantic). Certainly, the irony is completed, and, indeed, continued in the early stages of the novel when a direct comparison is made with James's brother, Henry, who is depicted as being 'neither very bad nor yet very able, but an honest sort of lad' and who was 'known among the salmon fishers in the firth'.[34]

The opening pages serve only to deliver the appetisingly dashing figure of the roguish James, in comparison to his dull and inconsequential brother. This unconscious 'flattery' of The Master by Mackellar, despite the narrator's constant attempts to prove otherwise, follows the family servant throughout the literal and metaphorical journeys of the tale. Further subtle 'proof' of Mackellar's unwitting flattery comes from his reported words of the 'old lord, eighth of that name' who said of his errant son 'I think you are a devil of a son to me […] you that has always been the favourite, to my shame be it spoken'.[35] These words are spoken by the head of the family prior to James's departure for Culloden, but echoed throughout the condemnatory second-hand narrative of Mackellar throughout the text. Mackellar can never quite shake off the somewhat shame-faced admiration of the character, despite his constant assertions to the contrary. Again, one can see an undercurrent of Stevenson's vision of Scotland here. The writer's vision of Scotland's culture always reveals this dichotomy, where the romanticism of the past always surrounds the stereotypical dourness of the Presbyterian nation. Mackellar's admiration for James echoes the place in Scottish culture reserved for the romantic past. This constant yearning for romance is inherent in the narrative as the reader often longs for the inevitable re-emergence of James to cut through the claustrophobia of Durrisdeer's dark walls. Again, the absence of a key romantic element can be seen via Mackellar's early narrative when the symbol of the missing pane of glass, an emblem of the missing (presumed dead) son is mentioned twice, initially when he remarks that: 'It was still daylight; and the first thing I observed was a lozenge of clear glass in the midst of the shield

[33] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*, p.10
[34] *ibid*, p.11
[35] *ibid,* p.13

in the painted window.'[36] The missing lozenge of glass indicates the 'shadow' of The Master which would haunt both the narrative and the character of Henry, James's oft-mentally-tortured brother.

Stevenson's masterstroke is undoubtedly the creation of the interventionist narrative of Mackellar. That skill is in no way diminished when the principal narrator transfers temporarily the narrative to the wilder prose of 'The Chevalier de Burke'. In accepting the premise that the Durie family provides a microcosm of a post-Culloden Scotland, this furiously competitive narrative can be seen as Stevenson's overall depiction of the constant editing of Scotland's past during the Victorian period. The narrative never settles, attempts to portray itself, via Mackellar, as morally authoritative over the history of the Durie family, but frequently exposes its darker undercurrents of failure and sterility.

Mackellar's editorship extends as much as is required 'for my own purpose', as he puts it, and stops the Irish narrative when matters become 'incompatible with the nature of either of the men'. In other words, when it ceases to be of use to his 'own purposes'.[37] Ironically, the fictional editor 'R.L.S.' puts a stop to part of Mackellar's narrative after he turns his attention to Henry's son, fearing that he would 'prove to be a second Master' in the 'Summary of Events during the Master's Second Absence' chapter. The editor intervenes by announcing that 'Five pages of Mr Mackellar's MS are here omitted. I have gathered from their perusal an impression that Mr Mackellar, in his old age, was rather an exacting servant'.[38] Stevenson remarks that Burke was a necessary implement which 'prepares the reader for the Master himself when he is to come upon the stage'.[39] This relates to the first re-emergence of James after his 'death', via Burke's equally theatrical account of life after Culloden for the Jacobite renegade. He later proves, as we have seen, to be a 'government spy', unmasked by Mackellar later in the tale. James does not *actually* appear until well into the third chapter, 'Persecutions endured by Mr Henry,' yet we have a character, and enduring post-Culloden cultural myth, already constructed by two main narrators, and multiple minor contributors to the overall manuscript. James can therefore be seen as an all-encompassing representation of

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[36] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.11

[37] *ibid*, p.59

[38] *ibid,* p.125

[39] *ibid*, p.235

how Scottish culture, in Stevenson's view, grew to represent itself: the national consciousness as narrative, sustaining a fluctuating image of a 'romantic' past.

Burke's narrative also carries with it the early promise of a very different genre, that of adventurous 'swashbuckling' piracy. This soon deteriorates into a violent scenario which Burke does much to lessen in severity by way of jovial Irish euphemism, especially in terms of the acts committed by himself, The Master and the crew on board the pirate ship. The narrative has been 'selected' and edited by the second moral voice of the text. This is further emphasised when Mackellar, the ultimate Scottish moralist, cuts short Burke's words at the end of the chapter, stating that 'I drop the Chevalier's narration at this point because the couple quarrelled and separated the same day'.[40] Mackellar's moral compass moves a stage further in his general and gradually controlling influence over the presentation of the tale and the assembled characters. This begs the question as to how much of Burke's narrative has been altered or edited by Mackellar, despite the principal narrator's assertion that he has published whole sections 'in full'. By the end of this brilliantly entertaining chapter, Burke has served his purpose, and the narrative is restored to the direct control of Mackellar. But even when it is supposedly beyond any interference from Mackellar, the reader, so used to questioning the reliability of the text, questions even this. Burke's written account was given, it is suggested, around 1789 after Mackellar 'wrote not long ago to Colonel Burke, now a Chevalier of the Order of St Louis, begging him for some notes in writing, since I could scarce depend on my memory at so great an interval'.[41] In effect, the input of the swashbuckling Irishman, peppered with references to his own 'romantic' dealings with The Master, unleashes the language of adventure narrative, but only until it is thwarted by both the action of the pirate plot and eventually, by incorporating Burke's material, by Mackellar himself. The pastiche of piracy is vividly expressed by Stevenson, and all play their parts superbly, even though it is a performance that cannot be sustained. The competing narratives are joined by the competing genres of the past and Stevenson's present, with language admirably suited to romantic adventure on the high seas.

What more could an adventure narrative ask for than 'Teach'? Possibly the most outlandish literary performance of them all, Teach is a fake amidst a novel of fake scenarios

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[40] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.59
[41] *ibid*, p. 32

and false characters, and one which is crushed by words alone. His entrance, complete with a chorus of pirates, is spectacular. The pirates 'sang and shouted as they pulled across to us, and swarmed in on our deck with bare cutlasses, cursing loudly. Their leader was a horrible villain, with his face blacked and his whiskers curled in ringlets; Teach his name; a most notorious pirate'.[42] Add to this the 'chewing bits of glass' and 'raving and swearing'[43] after killing one of his own crewmen and we have the epitome of all popular piratical images. But this is dashed, according to Burke, in an instant by James, whose simple statement 'have done with this play-acting' destroys the ludicrously inept Teach in front of his men, with James himself moving into full performance mode, complete with pirate dialogue. He takes control- and takes centre stage- with his power-grabbing line: 'And now mates, a word with you'.[44] James is able, amidst Burke's recollections, to inhabit completely the surface role of pirate to manipulate his new, fresh audience. So brilliant is his performance that he is able to command the wild crew and, at the same time, establish 'off-stage' dialogue with Teach to secure some form of deal beyond this temporary script of piracy. While the performance lasts, so too does the flattering image of The Master in full flow. Burke's narrative uses to great effect the narrative vocabulary of adventure.

Thus far, Mackellar's benevolent allowance of Burke's recalled narrative has provided a genuine image of a 'hero of romance'. Yet any semblance of a boys' romantic adventure story disappears, as the grimmest reality of The Master's dark side is presented to the reader. Burke's adventure narrative darkens accordingly when he says that 'twice we found women on board; and though I have seen towns sacked, and of late days in France some very horrid tumults, there was something in the smallness of the numbers engaged, and the bleak dangerous sea-surroundings, that made these acts of piracy far the most revolting' and that 'I could never proceed unless I was three parts drunk'.[45] The thinly-veiled references to unspeakable events- rape and murder- do, nonetheless, speak volumes to the reader here, destroying for the moment, any romantically inclined notions the reader may have about Stevenson's construction of character and piratical narrative. Certainly, when it comes to the descriptions of The Master's actions, Burke or Mackellar, or possibly both, make no attempt to disguise the murderous, cold-blooded actions of the previously 'gallant' James. The

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[42] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.37
[43] *ibid,* p.41
[44] *ibid,* p.40
[45] *ibid,* p.42

vicious killing of the pirate Dutton is related starkly, revealing the sudden cruelty of James, as he 'stabbed him between the shoulders' after feigning a rescue attempt when Dutton sank deep into the swamp.[46]

Yet the suspicions of the reader about editorial interference are aroused simply by recalling the youthful James's cruelty towards 'Wullie White the wabster', included in Mackellar's early collected tales of James, in this case from the servant Macconochie in 'Summary of events during the Master's wanderings'.[47] Mackellar carefully selects these vicious moments of James's character and exposes his darker side to the reader as part of his narrative depiction of The Master. Mackellar provides Burke's recollections of the self-deconstruction of James's own character when, stripped of performance pretentions, he cries ' "To think that I must leave my bones in this miserable wilderness! Would God I had died upon the scaffold like a gentleman!" This he said ranting like an actor; and then sat biting his fingers and staring on the ground, a most unchristian object'.[48] Stevenson's closeness, in some sense, to Walter Scott, in the terms suggested by Lumsden above, is again evident here. But it is this radically different slant on the creation of a seemingly romantic character which provokes a far different representation to that of a character like Walter Scott's Edward Waverley.

It is almost as if Stevenson presents a character desperate to transfer himself to another novel altogether. His new approach to the Scottish Romantic Historical novel has gone far beyond the scope of Scott's undoubtedly more conventionally romantic viewpoint and, indeed, beyond a plausible plot for James. Stevenson presents the first glimpse of the uncharted colonial landscape which would conclude the novel. In this scene, we see James as an outdated character lost in a landscape without audience or purpose. He is a character undoubtedly in search of his own place in a book which cannot sustain, or contain, such an incongruous creature. In Stevenson's fiction, this old form of historical character no longer fits the author's vision of Scotland's past. His status as émigré from Scotland certainly seems to have cemented Stevenson's approach which, in several ways, operates as a viable 'through line' from Scott's interpretation of Scottish history to Stevenson's own travel-oriented, reflective and bleaker look at a Scotland lacking in Scott's equilibrium of the post-Culloden

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[46] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*, p.49
[47] *ibid*, p.11
[48] *ibid,* p.57

Union. Stevenson's novel has adapted to the re-defining of Scottish literary boundaries in the age of Empire. In *The Master of Ballantrae* Stevenson moves beyond the cultural stagnation of the Jacobite romance, providing a barren landscape of a politically and culturally sterile nation.

Mackellar's early claim was to present his narrative like 'a witness in a court'.[49] Yet, as we have seen, Stevenson presents an infinitely flawed and unreliable form of narration which gradually presents a tale not only of The Master's dominating presence, but also of Mackellar's growing control and interference in events. He seeks to influence the behaviour of the family of which he is the 'servant' and, equally importantly, the narrative itself. To all intents and purposes, he is the director and puppet-master of events at Durrisdeer and beyond. Two clear examples can be seen in the later 'The Enemy in the House' chapter, when Mackellar is left in charge of the empty shell of Durrisdeer following the departure of the family to America. By this stage, the influence of Mackellar is far greater than that of The Master, it would seem, as he boldly states that ' "You will have bed and board, Mr Bally," said I. "I am permitted to give you the run of the cellar, which is pretty reasonably stocked. You only have to keep well with me, which is no very difficult matter, and you shall want neither wine nor a saddle-horse" '.[50] Mackellar seems more than happy with the maintenance of the Master/Servant relationship boundaries at this stage: control of the keys and the finances and, ironically, some form of control over The Master, for whom his admiration, thinly disguised earlier, is now apparent. It is as though Stevenson presents Mackellar as having his own sanitised version of complete control for one fleeting moment. This can be seen as Mackellar's attempts to sustain a controllable Master, like a controllable Scottish past, where the romantic Jacobite renegade can be viewed safely, without threat of violence. The close relationship between Mackellar and James is very temporary, and is dashed by the Master's decision to pursue his family to the American colonies. Without his servile role, Mackellar's place in the story, and his ability to control the narrative, begins to alter at the same time as his admiration for the Master grows. Proof of his growing admiration comes via his admission that 'For the matter of three weeks we continued to live together in the house of Durrisdeer: the beginning of that most singular chapter of my life-what I must call my intimacy with the Master'.[51] Stevenson refuses to let James settle down into an empty

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[49] R.L. Stevenson *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.19
[50] *ibid,* p.146
[51] *ibid,* p.148

symbol of existence, as Durrisdeer, empty of its inhabitants and purpose, must be seen to be. There are no rewards of glory in *this* Scotland or *this* house which lies discredited, with an equally discredited inhabitant, bereft of any of the rewards due to an 'adventurer' character devoid of all adventure. There remains no 'Miss Allison', no 'romantic' Scottish landscape and, crucially, no audience.

Amidst the final chapter in Durrisdeer, 'The Enemy in the House', exists the ambiguous character of Secundra Dass, 'Ballantrae's Hindu'.[52] We first encounter the enigmatic Indian in the short chapter 'Adventure of Chevalier Burke in India', where we are given a very brief glimpse of Burke's encounter with James prior to his return to Scotland for the final time. Secundra Dass is very much a background character, an enigmatic voice and physical presence from the far reaches of the eighteenth-century empire. But he is an important voice nonetheless, providing a potent example of the cultural confusions of empire which I have referred to frequently in this thesis. And, according to Mackellar's narrative he is an important character in the tale, and is first mentioned as follows: 'But I have to place here a second extract from the memoirs of Chevalier Burke, interesting in itself, and highly necessary for my purpose. It is our only sight of the master on his Indian travels; and the first word in these pages of Secundra Dass'.[53] He is an incongruous figure, brought from his native India to Scotland and then taken to the equally confused colonial landscape of North America at the novel's conclusion. Mackellar's first encounter with him came on his arrival with James in the final Durrisdeer scene, where he remarks to James that 'this time you have brought the black dog visibly upon your back'.[54] Mackellar's dismissive tone when recalling his first encounter with Secundra Dass is tempered by his earlier remark that 'if we had known some twenty years ago, how many calamities and sorrows had been spared!- that Secundra Dass spoke English'. [55] This refers to Dass's ability to listen to conversations about James, and relate them back to the Master, as he acted as a very subtle spy in moments of danger. When the Master's life is under threat from the 'dangerous adventurer' Harris, Secundra Dass is able to conceal his knowledge of English and spy on those paid by Henry to kill James. [56] Conversely, Harris himself 'was a proficient in several of the tongues of India',

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[52] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.130
[53] *ibid,* p.128
[54] *ibid,* p.134
[55] *ibid,* p.128
[56] *ibid,* p.138
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and 'each side had a spy-hole on the counsels of the other'.[57] Such is the confused colonial landscape presented by Stevenson as the novel draws to a conclusion that the voices and narrative becomes equally distorted and ambiguous. The sense of confusion is highlighted by Mackellar himself, when he presents a mixed narrative 'out of three sources', one of which comes from 'two conversations with Secundra Dass'.[58] We are given voices of India, glimpses of native 'Indians', of Mackellar and the trader 'John Mountain' as the novel's narrative becomes fragmented in the wilderness of the North American landscape, with Secundra Dass as clear symbol of a confused colonial setting. As we see below, Dass himself becomes a central character in the final pages of the tale.

When the action reaches the voyage to the vast expanses of America, culminating in the final chapter, 'The Journey into the Wilderness', Stevenson's fractured narrative takes a very different direction from the deceptive Jacobite romantic adventure earlier in the novel. It is here, when Mackellar's grip on his own narrative disintegrates, that Stevenson's further credentials as an embryonic colonially critical writer are displayed. We find a compelling depiction of empire, a vast entity which cannot be controlled, just as Mackellar attempts at controlling his own narrative of the post-Culloden Scotland fail. This thesis has already considered the uncontrollable city at work in the previous *Jekyll and Hyde* chapter. Here we see the uncontrollable continental land mass, beyond the narrative grasp of Mackellar. With his role as servant to a Scottish household gone, he enters his own personal wilderness.

Symbolically, we can see Stevenson's image of life beyond the boundaries of control in Scotland. The transition from Scottish shores to the vast wilderness of North America introduces the uncertainty of territorial expansion. David Daiches examines the transitional nature of the novel in his *Robert Louis Stevenson: a Revaluation* (1947). His analysis concluded in his aptly-titled chapter 'Transition' that 'it is difficult to see what Stevenson hoped to gain by splitting up the story among different narrators. It would have been far more effective, too, if the narrative had remained focussed on Durrisdeer and the Master's adventures were made known only through the manner in which he turned up at intervals at his ancestral home'.[59] For all that Daiches achieved by 'revaluing' Stevenson's work, he may have missed a major point which would add considerably to the title of his chapter. The

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[57] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*,* p.196
[58] *ibid,* p.194
[59] David Daiches, *Robert Louis Stevenson: a Re-valuation,* op. cit., p.84

splintered narrative of 'The Journey into the Wilderness' is a necessary and, in fact, perfectly apt device for the closure of this far-travelled embryonic colonial critique, as is the continuously competitive narrative of the text in general. When the novel leaves Scottish shores, the narrative is forced to change. It becomes free and unconstrained by the boundaries of Durrisdeer and, effectively, Scotland. The 'wilderness' becomes the unexplored narrative of both the text beyond the control of Mackellar, and perhaps that of Stevenson himself as he ventured towards the equally unexplored narrative of his own life beyond Scotland. But the narrative of empire and colonial expansion is more difficult to control, and this is what is arguably found in the novel's closing stages.

This is the subject matter, shorn of all romance, and brought into the glare of the very modern imperial world in which Stevenson existed, influencing his view of previously skewed romanticism of eighteenth-century Scottish history. His later overtly anti-colonial novels make clear his own troubled relationship with the imperial world. The latter stages of the exodus, as I will demonstrate, of the entire cast from the South-West of Scotland to North America is a clear move towards an increasingly-sharp critique of imperial certainties, as well as showing the multiple-directions taken by the Scottish diaspora after Culloden and beyond which, of course, was continuing during Stevenson's lifetime.

In the 'wilderness' section Mackellar loses control of the narrative, only sporadically being able to regain some grasp of the fast-deteriorating fate of the Durie family within the enclosed boundaries of colonial settlements and the vast expanses of the American wilderness. One such scenario is the colonial confrontation between James and Henry in New York after Mackellar's intimate sea-voyage with James. The setting is very theatrical, in fitting with the idea of performance space already utilised in the duel scene and the piracy episodes. But, tellingly, this is one of the few elements of the novel's latter stages which provides a clear view of the surroundings for the reader. The house is described as a 'very suitable mansion', in a fine garden, with an extraordinarily large barn, byre, and stable all in one'.[60] There is a very compelling reason for this. The idea of control of the landscape, and how a lack of physical control of colonised landscapes leads to the blurring of boundaries, is encapsulated in this encounter. A scene of gentrified and overtly theatrical colonial gathering develops, with 'the Governor upon one hand and various notables upon the other. My lady,

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[60] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p. 170

who was seated on the veranda, rose with a very pinched expression and carried her children into the house'.[61] Henry, complicit in the whole scenario, has made preparations for his brother's arrival. The scene comes complete with audience, for a rare public display of Henry's own performance skills, sharpened and enhanced almost to the point of matching James's own nature owing to his continued 'persecution' and haunting from The Master.

When Mackellar arrives, the scene which greets him seems as though from another, more genteel tale, noting that: 'It was here my lord was walking when I arrived; indeed, it had become his chief place of frequentation, and his mind was now filled with farming'.[62] The backdrop seems like a rural idyll of some English country gentleman instead of a colonial outpost. For a colonial outpost is exactly what it is: a controlled, safe area, free from 'natives', and designed to be a homely setting for the settlers. But this is a temporary facade which Stevenson exploits as he removes control from Mackellar as the final stages unfold, and the controlled landscape seen here gives way to a savage wilderness which breeds its own equally savage behaviour.

Julia Reid notes that, despite this brief interlude of Western control over a foreign landscape, absent of all traces of indigenous population, 'the narrative unsettles this comparative anthropological approach, questioning the European characters' assumptions that savagery is simply embodied by colonised or marginal peoples. As Fielding argues, the novel blurs class, national and racial identities'.[63] In this respect, the appearance of the Indian Secundra Dass, the white 'native trader' Mountain, and a plethora of scalpings introduces a counter-cast of supposed 'savage' characters in tandem with the established civilised Europeans, which would include, ironically, the thoroughly Scottish and British Durie family. Reid suggests that an 'anthropological hierarchy' is presented in the novel, whose characters 'undoubtedly interpret Scots, Native Americans, Indians and Africans as sharing a common savagery, and occupying an earlier stage of evolutionary development than those whom they understand as more civilised peoples'.[64]

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[61] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*,* p.171
[62] *ibid*, p.170
[63] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.135
[64] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*,* p.135

Despite this 'anthropological hierarchy' it is the supposedly civilised Europeans who arguably display 'savage' behavioural patterns. With the novel now loose on an uncharted continent, Stevenson challenges assumptions of the enlightened European and his superiority over the colonised. What we are given in the closing stages is a set of European characters who present behaviour no different to their supposed inferiors. An indication of the 'savage' actions can be seen in the first instance when Henry hires Harris and other 'desperate, bloody-minded miscreants' ultimately to kill James.[65] Mackellar relates the horror felt by Harris and his crew to the first of a series of 'scalpings': 'the gang were that morning as pale as a company of phantoms, for the pertinacity of Indian war (or to speak more correctly, Indian murder) was well known to all'. Yet, the task of this Western group of colonisers was to murder James on the orders and payment of Henry. In a scene echoing the behaviour of the 'higher' characters in *Treasure Island,* 'Some were for killing the Master on the spot; but Harris assured them that this would be a crime without profit, since the secret of the treasure must die along with him that buried it'.[66]

Mackellar, having already lost control of his own personal narrative, outlines the final section carefully, when he explains to the reader that 'here follows a narrative which I have compiled out of three sources, not very consistent in all points.'[67] As the narrative splinters and disintegrates, so too does Mackellar's futile attempt to impose his own will on a situation which he can no longer command, like the imperial landscape itself. The brief time he spends alone with James at Durrisdeer equates to the pinnacle of his achievement, with his command over both the house and a close relationship with the Master. One might argue that at this point, following all of his travails on behalf of Henry, he is granted exactly what he wants: Durrisdeer and the Master on his own terms. But all of this is snatched away, with the voyage to America with the Master proving to be his undoing in all senses of the word: narrative lost, house lost and, in the end both 'his' master (Henry) and The Master (James) beyond his physical and narrative control.

Mackellar seems lost beyond the boundaries of his Durrisdeer and Scotland. He is caught somewhere between the glamorous, dashing romance of James, with his almost supernatural presence, and his own stern pragmatically Presbyterian nature. It is a full eleven years after

[65] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*, op.cit.*,* p. 194
[66] *ibid,* p.195
[67] *ibid*, p.194

Culloden when Mackellar finally encounters James in all his glory, and it is Mackellar's great loss when he is parted from him prior to the final showdown between James and Henry. Despite Mackellar's protestations, the Master's attractive physical and verbal qualities captivate our narrator until the end, and he is certainly at his closest to anyone in the novel when on board the *Nonesuch,* despite his murderous thoughts. Thus, the post-Culloden Scotland's cultural dichotomy reveals itself again, forever in love with a past of high Jacobite romance.

But Mackellar cannot keep his own ideal of Durrisdeer on his terms. Echoing the movement of the Scottish diaspora after Culloden and beyond, this life of privileged servant to the landed gentry is yanked unceremoniously from him as James announces 'I am now to bid you farewell, and that forever. For now you go among my enemies, where all your former prejudices will revive.'[68] Mackellar has, as Julia Reid points out, been 'beguiled by the "brilliancy of the discourse". Temporarily, his narrow nature is broadened', and the boundaries so apparent in Mackellar's outlook to his role have been crossed to the extent that he 'finds himself becoming witty and expansive, symbolically copying his (The Master's) words'.[69] For Mackellar, the control he exerts over both narrative and, as he displays via his continuous use of the servant role, over the inhabitants of Durrisdeer disintegrates as soon as he is summarily dismissed by James after their voyage. If ever there was a clear depiction of a 'Satanic' figure in James, hinted at throughout the text, it is here, as the Master conjures up an image of the seductive tempter- 'with all the splendour of Satan in the *Paradise Lost'*- as Mackellar put it in 'The Enemy in the House', bringing the dour narrator to the very edge of almost supernatural Satanic captivity.[70] James issues his final lines to lure Mackellar when he asks him to 'Cast in your lot with me to-morrow, become my slave, my chattel, a thing I can command as I command the powers of my own limbs and spirit […] I must have all or none. But where all is given, I give it back with usury. I have a kingly nature: there is my loss!'[71] In effect, this is one of the final grand performances by James in front of a receptive audience. James's performance on this small stage represents the highest level of his seductive power in a text where his search for the perfect performance is constant.

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[68] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit.*,* p.169
[69] Julia Reid, op. cit., p.135
[70] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.139
[71] ibid, p.167

As the narrative takes the reader into the vast wilderness of the American continent, Mackellar goes on to outline a variety of sources as the 'adventure' part of the novel continues in an ambiguous and violent manner. In keeping with the fluid nature of the text's narrative, the 'witness in a court' statement in the early stages becomes both an empty promise and an extended metaphor of Stevenson's uncontrollable landscape. Despite Mackellar remaining as 'editor-in-chief', all details now seep through his editorship via characters regarded as part of the 'lower orders' of the novel, Secundra Dass- the Master's Indian- and Mountain, the white trader who becomes a virtual member of the indigenous American Indian population.

Stevenson's use of landscape as a leveller of human behaviour is clear in the final stages, and can be considered alongside similar tactics in *Treasure Island,* where the actions of the 'superior' establishment characters so closely echo those of the piratical 'low-life' as to make them indistinguishable from each other. Once again, like the higher characters of Trelawney and Livesey in *Treasure Island*, the colonial settlers follow the course of their surroundings and, quite literally, 'go native' in the pursuit of the Master, while the Master himself seems to be resurrecting a scene from *Treasure Island* itself as he leads his 'dregs of colonial rascality' in search of the treasures he buried after absconding from Teach's pirate ship on his last visit to the American colonies.[72]

On this note, it is clear that Stevenson fully intends to present a Master whose role has been completely exhausted and whose adventure genre character now falls upon distinctly infertile ground amidst unreceptive audiences. When his life is imperilled as the final journey continues, the same tactics used during his short spell of piracy are resurrected for this motley colonial audience; but his script is tired and without the sparkle of his earlier performances. He is reported to have attempted his seductive routine by 'addressing himself to each except Harris, finding for each (with the same exception) some particular flattery. He called them 'bold, honest blades,' declared that he had never seen a more jovial company, work better done, or pains more merrily supported'.[73] By this stage, James's repertoire can go no further. In the bleak colonial landscape this smacks of desperation and suggests the final resting-place of a character and genre which are no longer fit for purpose in Stevenson's narrative. And

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[72] R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.197
[73] *ibid*, p.200

this desperation is exemplified in the somewhat bizarrely half-supernatural, almost comic ending of the double-death of the brothers as they are buried together after almost simultaneously expiring. Secundra Dass had attempted to bury the Master alive in a method transported from his native India: ' "I tell you I bury him", said Secundra. "I teach him swallow his tongue. Now dig him up pretty good hurry, and he not much worse. You light a fire" '.[74] But it fails, as Dass announces that his methods could not work: ' "Too cold," said he, "good way in India, no good here" '.[75] Stevenson demonstrates the sense of a confused colonial landscape fused with that of the Scottish past. He uproots characters from India to Scotland and from Scotland to France and America, finally placing them in a wilderness beyond the control of either the characters themselves or of Mackellar's narrative. Secundra Dass may well be a minor figure in the novel's overall plot, but he symbolises the sense of colonial confusion developed in the novel's post-Culloden landscape.

Ultimately, in a novel dominated by James Durie, no treasure is ever found; no glorious finish is created for James, our Master-performer. We are left with an inscribed headstone for both brothers, united in symbiotic hatred in life, and cold clay in death. Secundra Dass provides Stevenson's final symbol of a novel sharing visions of Scotland's post-Culloden past and a developing sense of colonial confusion. His attempts to resurrect James after burying him alive in a manner used in India suggest a sense of the disorientation of colonialism, with cultures and language uprooted and placed in incongruous surroundings. In terms of the reasons behind the headstone as conclusion to the novel, it can be argued that Stevenson creates his own personal monument to an adventure and historical genre much-changed from the Walter Scott model and finally buried in Stevenson's finale. As Lumsden argues, 'His novels, consequently, stand as memorials to Scotland's past, reminding us of what should not be "lost or obscured" within it'.[76] But, as an embryonic colonial critique it can be argued that it goes further than being solely a form of Scottish memorial. *The Master of Ballantrae* is a careful creation of the colonial world enmeshed with the Scottish perspective of the post-Culloden landscape, which Stevenson would subsequently develop in *Catriona.*

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[74]R.L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae,* op. cit., p.217

[75] *ibid*, p.218

[76] Alison Lumsden, 'Stevenson, Scott and Scottish History' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.85

Chapter Six: Stevenson, Scotland and the South Seas: 'The Beach of Falesa' and
Catriona

For Robert Louis Stevenson, the precincts of his existence altered upon his permanent removal from Scotland to the South Seas. In terms of biographical boundaries, his Scottish precincts were left behind, and he entered a new area of life in the South Seas. The previous chapter on *The Master of Ballantrae* considered how Stevenson presented a Scotland of stagnation in its post-Culloden state, with the novel deconstructing the enduring images of historical romanticism. But this by no means suggests that Scotland as a source of literary inspiration was left behind upon his departure. This stage of Stevenson's career can be seen as a period of adjustment for the author, during a time which proved instrumental to the increasingly colonially critical nature of his fiction. Arguably, Stevenson's finest fiction was produced while living in the South Seas, as he examined the threatened cultures and ancient traditions exposed to the infringements of colonial expansion. Equally important, however, is how the colonial experience of Stevenson shaped his approaches to Scotland, and, in particular, his darker approaches to popular depictions of the Scottish past considered in chapters 1, 2 and 5. Examined in this chapter are one of his key texts written while resident in Samoa, 'The Beach of Falesa' (1892) and the sequel to *Kidnapped, Catriona (*1893). Both of these texts, in different ways, reflect the impact upon Stevenson of the direct experience of colonial life and renewed perspectives of Scotland.

There are perhaps even closer connections between 'The Beach of Falesa' and Stevenson's politically brooding and neglected *Catriona,* sequel to *Kidnapped* in terms of the seminal influence of the South Seas period upon his writing. Published just a year after his South Seas tale, *Catriona* depicts a Scotland struggling, as we have also seen in *The Master of Ballantrae,* to re-adjust itself after the defeat of Jacobitism and the reinforcing of the British state's governance of Union. In 'The Beach of Falesa'*,* the observational tone of the narrator Wiltshire reveals the impact of colonialism upon a South Seas island population. In *Catriona*, David Balfour's narrative provides a dark vision of a post-Culloden Scottish social and political landscape. The colonised populations of the Empire seem, in Stevenson's fiction, uncomfortably close to the experience of his own country's past, particularly the impact upon the ancient traditions and culture of Highland life. Carla Sassi makes this connection in *Why Scottish Literature Matters* (2005) when she notes the following:

In Scotland, R.L. Stevenson provides perhaps the most radical realisation of the potential identification between Scots and the colonised peoples […] *In the South Seas* (1889) contains a chapter which throws a more than metaphorical bridge between Scottish (Lowland and Highland) culture and the Marquesan one- a similar history, common features of social grace and sensibility and even (much less predictably) of language are highlighted by the author.[1]

Sassi goes on to quote from *In the South Seas*, where she notes Stevenson's conclusion that 'these points of similarity between a South Seas people and some of my own folk at home ran much in my head in the islands; and not only inclined me to view my fresh acquaintances with favour, but continually modified my judgement'.[2] To what extent did this 'modified judgement' directly affected Stevenson's later South Seas fiction? Douglas Mack examines this neglected and often misrepresented area, considering the historical and literary context of Scottish authors writing during times of imperial, post-Union growth. Indeed, on the publisher's 'blurb' of his text it states that 'Douglas Mack argues that such writers actively challenge the elite's Imperial Grand Narrative and demonstrates that Scottish fiction was active and influential both in shaping and in subverting the assumptions that underpinned the empire'. [3] Mack begins his scrutiny of Scotland's imperial literature by considering ideas of the subaltern voice, namely the idea that a dominating ruling imperial elite would always seek to suppress the subaltern voice of the native, with the interests of Empire at heart. Among a range of post-colonial critics such as Guha, Spivak and Said, Mack re-iterates the critique, espoused by Said, that the dominant culture will impose its own narrative framework on the presentation of colonial culture and, in effect, 'block other narratives from forming'.[4]

Mack switches his perceptions to the Scottish experience which, without offering any disrespect to any formerly colonised nations or cultures, is a compellingly more complex model. In its most basic form, he poses the question as to whether the 'dilution of one's cultural identity was a price worth paying in order to gain access to the rewards of Empire?'[5] As Katie Trumpner has stated, we can also consider whether Scotland, in terms of the impact upon Highland culture, subjected *itself* to some form of 'British internal colonialism'.[6] In effect, if one were to argue this viewpoint, the colonial elites were therefore prepared to allow

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[1] Carla Sassi, *Why Scottish Literature Matters* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 2005) p.94
[2] *ibid*, p.95
[3] Douglas Mack, *Scottish Fiction and the British Empire* (Summary on back cover of text).
[4] *ibid*, p.2
[5] *ibid*, p.7
[6] *ibid,* p.7

themselves to 'blend' in to a newly formed culture, suited to the rigours and riches of colonial involvement across the globe. This is a central theme of the political post-Culloden plot of *Catriona* and indeed *The Master of Ballantrae.* In the meantime, the 'subaltern' classes would seek doggedly to maintain their own, rather more ancient, cultural existence in the absence of any access to the perceived riches of the industrial and commercial opportunities afforded by Empire.

Before coming to Stevenson's texts, it is important to look back at the foundations of the Scottish responses to the changing world of post-Culloden, imperial Britain. Mack's examination includes a convincing consideration of the powerful trial scene at Carlisle in Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814) where two condemned Highlanders are tried in the full glare of public ridicule, resulting in their inevitable executions. He makes the point that the idea of a subaltern, marginalised voice is a complex one, with Scott, on the one hand, providing a stirringly loyal portrayal of Highland bonds in defiance of the scorn of the victors, while on the other hand, Mack questions whether or not the words spoken by the stricken figures were the authentic expressions of what such a character would say in such circumstances.

Scott's portrayal is undoubtedly sympathetic, as the final throes of the rebellion are acted out in microcosm in the court of the victorious establishment with the trial of Evan Dhu Maccombich and Fergus Mac-Ivor. Evan Dhu is afforded the mob-silencing dignity of expressing his loyalty and honour as he offers up his own life and others in defence of his clan chieftain: 'ony six o' the very best of his clan will be willing to be justified in his stead; and if you'll just let me gae down to Glennaquoich, I'll fetch them up to ye myself, to head or hang, and you may begin wi' me the very first man'.[7] Initially, the courtroom's mirth cuts through Scott's genuinely heroic character's words, but this is soon silenced by the judge and the final words of simple honour and honesty. As Scott's narrative concludes, 'There was no farther inclination to laugh among the audience, and a dead silence ensued'.[8]

Mack's assessment of this scene is the key to the understanding of the marginalised voice in Scott. He states that 'The people in the crowded court laugh at someone who is, in their eyes, a comic subaltern buffoon from a barbarous and outlandish region, a man who is barely

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[7] Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.9

[8] *ibid,* p.9

able to speak intelligibly, and who seems to be exhibiting a particularly transparent kind of low cunning'.[9] It is arguably obvious that Scott's depiction is anything but mockery, and the irony of the courtroom guffaws is crystal clear throughout the narrative. But this brings us back to Edward Said's concept of 'blocked narrative' mentioned above, and poses the question of the extent to which Scott imposed his own narrative of the British Union's equilibrium upon his *dramatis personae* of the previous century. Mack makes this point when he suggests that, again on the one hand, 'Scott's narrative is challenging reductive stereotypes about barbarous Highland Scotchmen by exhibiting a Highlander who is fully worthy of respect, in spite of the indecent laughter of the spectators at his trial'.[10] But, as Mack points out, Scott's narrative moves on to establish a British equilibrium of a settled land. The sentence is just, armed rebellion has ceased, and the sentences are duly carried out offstage. The reader, and the eponymous hero Edward Waverley, are spared the horrors of witnessing the execution.

An immediate parallel can be drawn with the courtroom scene in *Weir of Hermiston,* where the reader witnesses the full horrors of the execution process involving Duncan Jopp, outlined as part of Stevenson's concern for the fate of brutalised individuals in chapter two. The lack of focus on the execution itself is important if *Waverley* is to be regarded as a unifying, Unionist text supplying a narrative of equilibrium which avoids the excesses of post-rebellion brutality. In short, Scott's conclusion in *Waverley* comes with the ending of the tale as the savage suppression of the Jacobite insurgency peters out into a glowingly unified tale of marriage and re-established land-rights for at least some of the leading characters in his drama. Scott's love of country and ancient culture is clear to see, given the enormous impact he had upon the resurrection/ creation and maintenance of a dying Highland culture in the midst of the radically-changing British nation. *Waverley*'s happy marital conclusion created a fusion of Britain in Scott's microcosm, and his deliberate inclusion of a subaltern cast seems a clear part of this equilibrium given that, over time, the subdued Highlands became increasingly integrated within the new British state.

By the time of the publication of Waverley, Highland regiments played a full and important part in the British military forces. Mack poses the question: 'Could it be that, when

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[9] Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.9
[10] *ibid,* p.9

Evan Dhu speaks at his trial at Carlisle, what we are hearing is not an authentic subaltern voice but the voice of an elite ventriloquist?' and suggests that Scott's narrative could arguably have formed part of the 'master-narrative of British Empire'.[11] These points seem to pose further questions to the modern reader as to whether it would have been a realistic financial prospect for a writer such as Scott to create an entirely genuine subaltern-driven novel, given the context of his existence as novelist in the Britain of the early nineteenth century. Commercially, as well as culturally, one wonders whether this would have made any sense. Would the emerging mass-readership have gorged themselves upon Scott's novels with similar voracity if the marginalised voices of a defeated culture had dominated? Scott was certainly providing a vital link to a past which he saw as potentially disappearing in a rapidly-changing nation while accepting the *status quo* of a Scotland fully embedded within the British state.

There is nonetheless an on-going literary debate about Walter Scott's role in the depiction, preservation and indeed creation of Scottish culture in the early years of the nineteenth century. Caroline McCracken-Flesher's *Possible Scotlands* (2005) considers deeply Scott's relationship with the Scotland of the past and, indeed, the place of Walter Scott in the modern, rapidly developing Scotland of the twenty-first century and the 2014 Independence Referendum. She notes the following:

> Critics such as Pittock, Craig and Duncan temper their conclusions. Yes, Scott may have prevented Jacobitism from completing its role as an oppositional politics in Scottish history. Pittock notes, 'Yet there lurks a revolutionary instinct in Scott. There is a sense that the happy and comforting conclusions he provides are forced endings'. For Craig: 'Scott's characters end with their faces turned bravely towards a progressive (and apparently narrativeless) future, but at the opening of each new novel the future turns out to have acquired again the features of a barbaric past which, once more, has to be expunged from the kingdom of historical progress'.[12]

McCracken-Flesher poses a series of unsettling questions on the place of Scott in literary history; unsettling, that is, to preconceived ideas that he has been considered as 'The pro-British romanticist- as opposed to Burns, the Scottish real!'[13] Her provocative approach in the opening chapter of her text is clear when she states the following:

[11]Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.11

[12] Caroline McCracken-Flesher, *Possible Scotlands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.7

[13] *ibid*, p.7

How successful are we at imagining Scotland through Scott's signs and despite ourselves? At the moment of the new parliament, Scott's coining of multiple Scotlands, many pasts, and diverse subjects all projected into the future forced Tom Nairn to reconsider his critique: 'From the time of Walter Scott onwards, the roots of statehood were endowed with the glamour of a lost kingdom, and the tantalising sense of redemption which always informs nostalgia. Although mocked from the outset as wilful and unreasonable, this display-identity has in truth proved incomparably stronger than every one of its philistine adversaries […] the eclipsed state-land of the Scots has run beneath […] until ready to resume its interrupted existence'. *Possible Scotlands* suggests that by disliking, fighting with, and resisting the apparent but constantly shifting 'display-identity' offered by Walter Scott, Scotland has maintained a sense of self as difference. Now it moves energetically into the future that will ever be 'Scotland' but can never be the same.[14]

McCracken-Flesher considers that far from Walter Scott creating and thus almost 'freezing' Scottish history, he has in fact solidified the identity which would *continue* and develop even within the boundaries of a supposedly disembodied, redundant country, lost somewhere amidst Union and Empire. It is to Stevenson that we must look for both a challenge to Scott's vision of post-Culloden Scotland *and* the clear successor to a radical tradition which did not die as a result of the Union's settlement. Complex indeed are the questions raised in relation to Scott; and they become more so when we consider the fiction of the 'disembodied, exiled Scot' that was Stevenson during his period in the exotic colonial South Seas.

I now consider the place of Stevenson in any debate on the reactions of Scottish literature to Empire. Douglas Mack's choice of Stevenson's texts in order to examine the author's responses to his own experience of, and participation in, colonial life is compelling. As we have seen, 'The Beach of Falesa' seems an obvious choice, *Catriona,* perhaps, at first glance, less so. It is a novel of flawed promise in many ways, with the tight narrative of the Edinburgh, Bass Rock and Inveraray settings giving way to a seemingly careless and far less potent European landscape as the 'adventure' comes to a close, with its only fleetingly redeeming feature being the brief re-introduction of Alan Breck for a moderate final glimpse of his skirmish with Catriona's discredited father, James More. It is, nonetheless, important to note that the effects upon Stevenson's perceptions of Scotland are every bit as profound as his *direct* responses to the excesses of Empire. In short, their parallel themes, and integrated

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[14] Caroline McCracken-Flesher, op. cit., p.11

tone of oppression, are difficult to avoid, and link these geographically disparate texts together.

Not that Stevenson was by any means the first or only Scottish literary product of the Scottish diaspora. Gerard Carruthers points out that a formidable collection of Scottish authors had already become a part of a growing tradition of literature in response to the impact of colonial life from the eighteenth century onwards. In a theme which would feature heavily in colonial literature, he cites the final novel of Tobias Smollett, *Humphry Clinker* (1771,) as follows:

> Among its most striking material is the recounting of the adventures of the former British army lieutenant, Lismahago, among the native peoples of North America amidst whom he experiences both brutality and hospitality. One of the best fictional accounts in English of 'going native' in this situation, Lismahago reports on the incredulity and shocked piety among the native peoples in the face of proselytising Christian missionaries and their outlandish theology. Smollett's account, then, is not blind to failings in western colonization, though by no means condemnatory in general.[15]

Carruthers also alludes to Henry MacKenzie's tearful *Man of Feeling* (1771), which provided 'a depiction, fairly graphic for its time, of British cruelty in India though not from the position of particularly cogent critique and rather in the context of one of numerous situations exemplifying an unfeeling world'.[16] A general comment here would be to suggest that in these examples, in the relatively 'early' years of the Empire's existence, there was evidence that an embryonic colonially critical commentary in Scottish writing was already well underway. The examples above might be seen as *tentative* in terms of being strongly-condemnatory literary ripostes to colonial excesses, but there is a tangible response nonetheless, which does suggest some sense of awareness of marginalised voices of empire as a factor, even if these voices are not at the forefront of the characterisation of each author.

Context is the key to an understanding of literature conceived amidst empire, and it would be simplistic in the extreme to deal with colonial responses solely from a modern perspective in search of the lost voices of a hidden subaltern population. The responses to the colonial

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[15] Gerard Carruthers and Liam McIlvanney, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) p. 276
[16] *ibid,* p.276

world grew in stature and impact over the passing of the nineteenth century, and Stevenson's own contribution was considerable. Stevenson was certainly the most commercially successful and enduring of exiled authors, even though his distinctly South Seas texts are relatively obscure when compared with his other works. An important point for consideration here is how Stevenson deals with several key issues in relation to the whole idea of a marginalised, non-elite voice in his distinctly South Seas 'Beach of Falesa', and the rather more ambiguous complexities of post-rebellion Scotland shown in *Catriona.*

Stevenson's colonial fictions are important foundations for an examination of the impact upon the author in terms of not only his creative output, but also his interest in colonial politics and the threatened indigenous culture of his new home in relation to his writing. By focussing on these key elements from his South Seas years, consideration can at the same time be given to *Catriona,* the sequel to *Kidnapped,* written during Stevenson's permanent exile. This text presents a sharp and dark focus on the disembodied, politically sterile country he may have left behind physically, but to which he would continue to return in his writing. Stevenson, like Joseph Conrad, had the experience of both extensive travel to and life amidst the areas and diverse cultures subjected to colonial rule. His position as white settler in Samoa did grant him a number of significant advantages. Ann Colley points out in *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Colonial Imagination* (2001): 'That Stevenson should be so easily absorbed by the political life of Samoa is understandable if one realises that being a white person of some standing as well as a landowner in the islands automatically placed one in a position to meet people of influence'.[17] Colley notes also that, even before Stevenson decided to make Samoa his home, he was already set upon sending letters to *The Times* and by 1889 was 'well on the way to committing himself in a strenuous, time-consuming, and frequently frustrating campaign to rid Samoa of its irresponsible foreign officials and to try to reconcile the islands' warring factions'.[18] There is plenty of irony to be found in Stevenson's simultaneous position as valiant defender of native culture and colonial landowner. Yet, taken in the context of the time, Stevenson is again shown to take a clear individually critical stance on colonial matters. His colonial fiction, so rich in Samoan and South Seas cultural material, is prime evidence of this. His absorption and love of South Seas culture is aptly demonstrated in both the well-documented life of Stevenson and his fictional characters.

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[17] Ann C. Colley, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Colonial Imagination (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001),* p.138

[18] *ibid,* p.138

It has been argued throughout this thesis that Stevenson's fiction marks him as an important early author critical of colonialism, providing a very clear critical path for Conrad and others to follow. Following on from Mack's arguments above, it is also important to consider the impact of recent post-colonial criticism in general which, while not usually directly addressing Stevenson's critical stance, is a useful tool in re-examining the status of late Victorian authors and for Stevenson in particular, freeing his fiction from the boundaries imposed posthumously by his early twentieth-century critics. Post-colonial writers such as Edward Said provide a compelling general definition and exploration of the effects upon an exiled author. Yet for Stevenson, Said's ideas of the impact of exile seem to work in retrospective favour of the exiled Scot's fiction. Said describes exile as the 'unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home' and 'It is true that there are stories portraying exile as a condition that produces heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in a person's life. But these are no more than stories, efforts to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement'.[19]

Stevenson's experience, however, seems markedly different from Said's ideas of a compensatory culture of a writer yearning for his homeland. Far from being a 'crippling sorrow' to him, it would seem that his settling in Samoa gave him the ultimate catalyst of creativity required to spark into life his finest and final period as a writer in terms of his relationship within the new precincts of his existence and Scotland. Edward Said also suggests that 'for an exile, habits of life, expression or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus, both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally.'[20] Within this context, Said is correct in relation to Stevenson's experiences. One can detect the positive experience of Stevenson's reactions to this mixing of precincts, in the sense of both districts of existence and boundaries. It is due principally to his exile from Edinburgh that he was able to fictionalise his home town and Scotland itself in a far more sharply detached manner.

Given my earlier consideration of his treatment of marginalised populations from a young age, Stevenson's interest in matters political was not as a result of some startling epiphany

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[19] Edward W. Said in 'Orientalism' in Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, (eds), *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader, 2nd edition,* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006)Said, PC reader, p.439
[20] *ibid,* p.440

induced by his residential status in Samoa. Colley provides a reminder that Stevenson was, at the very least, politically knowledgeable and aware, given his extensive and well-documented background in Scotland as a student heavily involved with the various Edinburgh University Debating fraternities of the day and, of course, his training in Scots Law.[21] His sense of chagrin at the injustices forced upon oppressed cultural groups was, of course, nothing new. His first publication, as we have seen in chapter one on the crushing of the Covenanters in his essay on the Pentland Rising sets out his stall at an early age. During his time in the South Seas, this sense of injustice was clear, and the similarities between the two seemingly incompatible situations are striking: one long-standing, marginalised culture oppressed and subsumed into an alien and forced conformity, akin to his fictional focus on the Scottish Highlands (*Kidnapped, Catriona* and *The Master of Ballantrae)* and the haunting echoes of the fate of the Covenanters. But it is when he became part of the process of colonial South Seas life that the active stage of his political career began. This was a position which afforded him some tangible influence, given his position as celebrated author.

It perhaps may seem ironic that Stevenson's Scottish fiction written while in exile displays a deep sense of political and cultural impotence rather than the confrontational approach taken towards South Seas issues. Viewing at first hand the machinations of the governance imposed upon the South Seas islands by their various European overlords gave Stevenson direct access to South Seas politics, but also the respect of and influence over native Samoans. His involvement in politics can, perhaps, be equated with the oft-recorded Bohemian aspects of his life and character. As Colley points out, 'To follow Stevenson's political imagination is to trace the complicated course of a foreigner's trajectory abroad. The Stevenson who emerges is at once Scottish, British, English, and someone enamoured of the various cultures of the Pacific […] the political Stevenson materialises, at times, as a tenacious, legalistic, and even vindictive figure. His political imagination was as complex as the situations it engaged'.[22] This account succinctly sums up both the irony of Stevenson's advantageous position and his ability to influence, like, entertain, detest and embrace a wide cross-section of the South Seas population, which included government officials and missionaries alike, both of which could simultaneously gain favour with and fall victim to Stevenson's determined political and social interjections. The close proximity of the leading

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[21] Ann.C.Colley, op. cit., p.13
[22] *ibid,* p.13

players made social contact both inevitable and highly-desirable for the overtly social Stevenson, even when diametrically opposed to many of the policies foisted upon this series of foreign outposts by Western alien dogma.

Colley makes it clear that Stevenson was very much a central figure in this society; and his centrality did not solely adhere to the white governing minority by any means, pointing out that 'Stevenson did not have to go down to Apia to become enmeshed in its politics. At Vailima, visitors with various concerns were always coming and going: white residents, officers and men from the German, British and American warships - all with their various partisan concerns. White residents were, of course, not the only guests'.[23]

The problem with searching for marginalised and genuinely native voices in much of colonial Victorian literature is that you are unlikely to find them. In 'The Beach of Falesa', Stevenson does, however, supply native voice in abundance, principally via 'Uma', the eventual wife of the story's narrator, Wiltshire. Context is the key here. The pursuit of 'lost voices' could become a fruitless search, since few authors of the time would deem it either necessary or commercially viable to make use of a direct and unambiguous native in a colonial context. Uma, in her interaction with the rather unintelligent narrative of Wiltshire, provides a highly-ironic juxtaposition in terms of colonising/colonised characters.

The story depicts a complex use of voice throughout, with the dialects and languages of several cultures and creeds being used to weave an intricate tale of marginalised characters amidst the supposed colonial control imposed by white traders and missionaries on the picturesque surroundings of the South Seas. It is also ironic that considerations of exactly who are the marginalised characters become problematic, in the sense that the narrator himself becomes increasingly marginalised throughout the story, right up until the dramatic finale.

Wiltshire, the newly-arrived trader, 'marries' Uma, subsequently marries her again (properly), and induces a violent showdown with the nefariously cunning fellow-trader Case. As we shall see, as well as the violent end, something of a battle takes place between the superstitions and voices of the native culture, utilised by Case as a means of controlling the

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[23]Anne C. Colley, op. cit, p.141

local population by adopting their superstitions to his own ends, with the added advantage that he is able to speak the local language, giving him a voice in every camp. In addition to the two principal white characters, Uma's role, from her sham marriage to Wiltshire onwards, does much to highlight the narrator's heavily ironic utterances on race and indeed colonial dominance as the story concludes, without resorting to more overtly direct interventions from further native characters.

The tale begins with a familiar scenario within an unfamiliar landscape. In the very first chapter, and first paragraph, the narrator, Wiltshire, provides his first glimpse of the island and, indeed, continues Stevenson's deep-rooted use of island settings as he arrives at the shoreline: 'I saw that island first when it was neither night nor morning […] to the east, and right amidships of the dawn, which was all pink, the daystar sparkled like a diamond […] Here was a fresh experience; even the tongue would be quite strange to me; and the look of these woods and mountains, and the rare smell of them, renewed my blood'.[24] Stevenson, however, does not allow the reader to dwell on this beauty, as the colonial experience very quickly thwarts these calm, natural images, and replaces them with the rather bleak machinations of Western culture, and the workings of the white-settler world. The character of Wiltshire, already firmly embedded in the colonial machine, cannot for long escape the reality that he was an integral part of this system. And this is shown abruptly to the reader via the immediacy of the 'wedding scene' with Uma. Her entrance is punctuated by Wiltshire's rapid question and answer: '"Who's she?' said I. "She'll do" '.[25] The implications for the reader are stark. The Western coloniser immediately attempts to impose his control over the life and, ultimately, the body of a native female.

His new acquaintance, fellow-trader (and arch-manipulator of the native population) Case, adds his own jarring observation when he replies '"You can have your pick of the lot for a plug of tobacco" '.[26] Yet it would be too simplistic to assume that Stevenson's colonial vision is narrowly focussed on the dominant aspects of the Western presence in the story. Everything is out-of-place and slightly warped in Stevenson's fictional colonial world. Religion is used to almost comical effect, with the natives having already adopted forms of

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[24] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa' in *White Man in the Tropics, Two Moral Tales* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962) p. 130
[25] *ibid*, p.133
[26] *ibid,* p.133

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Christian worship for their own means. It is not all one-way traffic, and the imposed and odd religious adherences sit side-by-side with the indigenous culture of the natives in an uneasy image of colonial co-habitation.

Wiltshire's surprise in encountering a Catholic sign of the cross gesture from the decayed and indolent Captain Randall is met with the following riposte:

> 'S a rum crowd,' said the captain, and, to my surprise, he made the sign of the cross on his bare bosom.
> 'Hillo!' says I, 'are you a papist?'
> He repudiated the idea with contempt. 'Hard-shell Baptis', said he. 'But, my dear friend, The Papists got some good ideas too; and th' 's one of 'em. You take my advice and whenever you come across Uma or Faavao or Vigours, or any of that crowd, you take a leaf out o' the priests, and do what I do. Savvy?'[27]

Stevenson's subtle manipulation of religious elements is quite revealing in the early stages of the story. The natives appear to have adopted Western cultures, but they adopt them in their own way, and shape them in a manner that has the coloniser accepting local variations. Indeed, there is a delicious irony in Wiltshire's response to undergoing the ceremony of 'marriage' to Uma. The required 'marriage certificate' is no more than a clumsy and crude note by the negro chaplain, 'Black Jack', but it is still a requirement, recognised by the natives. Our narrator bemoans the influence of missionaries when he points out that 'it was the practice in these parts, and (as I told myself) not the least the fault of us white men, but of the missionaries. If they had let the natives be, I had never needed this deception, but taken all the wives I wished, and left them when I pleased, with a clear conscience'.[28] It is important to note that the tone of Stevenson's narrative, while offering a searing criticism of the Western colonial presence, is not reflective of the dark brutality of Conrad but, as David Daiches describes it, the 'good-natured insensitivity' of Wiltshire.[29] This is not an attempt to trivialise the power of his narrative. Wiltshire's narrative is revealing in that his observations on colonial life are without heavy-handed attempts to be didactic. There is no need, as the ironies of his observations perform a more subtle and, arguably, effective mode of presenting colonial attitudes virtually at source.

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[27] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa, op. cit., p.135
[28] *ibid*, p.136
[29] David Daiches in introduction to 'The Beach of Falesa', op. cit., p.127

In the reference above, Wiltshire is bemoaning the colonial influence because the natives have adopted it as a part of their culture, not that a marriage is being forced upon an unwilling participant. And we find throughout the story that there is something of an equilibrium between the imposed Western influence and how the natives adapt and adopt it. The prime example comes in Wiltshire's own rather ironic marginalisation from the local community when he discovers that he has been 'tabooed'. The setting for his marginalising experience is equally ironic: a Christian church service on a Sunday morning. Case has already worked upon the superstitions of the locals and this serves eventually to isolate Wiltshire via his 'tabooing'. Initially, our narrator describes the scene as follows:

> You know how it is. If you hear folk singing, it seems to draw you; and pretty soon I found myself alongside the church. It was a little, long, low place, coral built, rounded off on both ends like a whale-boat, a big native roof on the top of it, windows without sashes and doorways without doors. I stuck my head into one of the windows, and the sight was so new to me- for things went quite different in the islands I was acquainted with- that I stayed and looked on. The congregation sat on the floor on mats, the women on one side, the men on the other, all rigged out to kill- the women with dresses and trade hats, the men in white jackets and shirts.[30]

At first glance, this would seem to be a prime example of Western dominance of the local population, but the scene is in effect a jumbled heap of Western Christian symbolism and local custom. Stevenson makes it clear throughout the story that it is not possible to control or suppress completely the native cultural voices without some careful concessions, and the makeshift half-Westernised church building is a prime example. Case's manipulation (which we discover later) has stirred up the superstitions of the locals against Wiltshire, and when he is spotted by the pastor, 'a big buck Kanaka', his marginalisation from his new society is complete.[31] Without the trade of the locals, his position is negated, his goods unsold and his purpose redundant.

Yet this is also an indication of the smart measures taken to maintain control over the native population. The pastor 'looked up suddenly and caught my eye, and I give you my word he staggered in the pulpit; his eyes bulged out of his head, his hand rose and pointed at me like as if against his will, and the sermon stopped right there'.[32] Thus, the coloniser, the

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[30] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa', op. cit., p.142
[31] *ibid*, p.152
[32] *ibid*, p.142

main voice of the story, becomes the principal marginalised character against the collective voice of the natives; a warped vision indeed of the messy world of colonialism, and all of this stemming from the ability of Case to manipulate the superstitious beliefs of the natives via their own language and culture against another white character, with Case being the only white with a full command of the language.

In effect, the marginalised characters are the colonisers in Stevenson's vision, also a feature of his other major colonial work of fiction, 'The Ebb Tide', and an indication that the native voice has the power to undermine continually attempts to control it, however subtle. As Wiltshire complains as the extent of his marginalisation dawns on him, 'it's a miserable thing to be made a leper of'.[33]

Wiltshire's reaction to his being 'tabooed' is one of the central driving forces of the story. Always verging on the comical, he sets out to get back at Case, and to dismantle his grip and influence over the 'Kanakas'. As David Daiches points out, this is a character who 'does not understand the moral of his own experience', being a 'half-educated Victorian trader' who 'professes the prejudices of his own time and class'.[34] Again, there is no requirement to present anything other than the thoughts of our narrator, whose impotence in his period of being ostracised by the local population causes a blunt reaction:

> 'You tell them who I am. I'm a white man, and a British subject, and no end of a big chief at home; and I've come here to do them good, and bring them civilization; and no sooner have I got my trade sorted than they go and taboo me, and no one dare come near my place! Tell them I don't mean to fly in the face of anything legal; and if what they want's a present, I'll do what's fair. I don't blame any man for looking out for himself, tell them, for that's human nature; but if they think they're going to come any of their native ideas over me, they'll find themselves mistaken. And tell them plain that I demand the reason of this treatment as a white man and a British subject.'

To some extent, Wiltshire gets his way in the end. The bloody conclusion shows the narrator destroying Case's carefully-created area in the 'high bush' which made full use of the natives' superstitious fear of spirits and devils. Case has used the local culture to great effect, being a 'good forger of island curiosities',[35] granting him undoubted influence over the locals based on their *own world,* rather than Western influence. When Wiltshire discovers

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[33] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa', op. cit., p.158
[34] *ibid,* p.127
[35] *ibid,* p.164

that the strange sounds emanating from the woods came from a crude trick, his scorn and sense of victory grows. The character concludes that 'we laugh at the natives and their superstitions; but see how many traders take them up, splendidly educated white men, that have been book-keepers (some of them) and clerks in the old country. It's my belief a superstition grows up in a place like the different kind of weeds'.[36] Wiltshire's determination to end the superstitions used by Case is fuelled upon discovering the source of the ghostly noises: 'a box it was, sure enough, and a candle-box at that, with the brand upon the side of it; and it had banjo strings stretched so as to sound when the wind blew. I believe they call the thing a Tyrolean harp, whatever that may mean'.[37]

In a sense, Wiltshire succeeds in imposing his influence over the island when he kills Case in a brutal frenzy of stabbing, leading to a rather curious conclusion. But he is only able to do this by making use of local beliefs and traditions- in effect, temporarily 'going native' in order to defeat a fellow Western coloniser, who has already immersed himself in the language and culture of the island. Roslyn Jolly points this out as follows:

> In order to understand both the uncanny power of the bush and the concrete politics of the village, Wiltshire must heed Uma and acknowledge the priority of local conditions over imperial or global forces. It is only when he begins to engage with local beliefs and local society that he gains the knowledge and help he needs to overthrow his rival, Case. The novella's insistence on the importance of these systems of knowledge and authority matches its immersion in an island world that has little to do with distant continents and politics, a world where relations between whites and islanders are played out on the ground of particular social, historical and environmental conditions that are specific to the Pacific region.[38]

In a story where voices, language and cultures are thrown together in an unholy mess, his wild stabbing of Case *after* Wiltshire has already killed him sits incongruously with our narrator's sometimes affable recollection of his time on Falesa. When he comes round after a fainting as a result of Case's blood spurting all over him, his first reaction 'was to give him the knife again a half a dozen times up to the handle. I believe he was dead already, but it did him no harm and did me good'.[39] This sudden vicious, almost animalistic behaviour from Wiltshire heralds the somewhat incongruous 'happy ending', which adds to the sense of

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[36] R.L.Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa', op. cit., p. 163

[37] *ibid,* p.163

[38] Roslyn Jolly, 'Stevenson and the Pacific' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson, o*p. cit., pp.131/132

[39] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa', op. cit., p.173

oddness and ill-fitting nature of the colonial world. The narrator's comments on his daughters being 'only half-castes' provides a jarring enough finale for the modern reader, but Stevenson very cleverly uses the irony of Wiltshire's narrative to full effect.

As a resolution to the story it leaves Wiltshire with the dilemma of his inability to 'reconcile my mind to their taking up with Kanakas, and I'd like to know where I'm going to find the whites?'[40] As a narrative device, Wiltshire acts as a highly effective demonstration of Stevenson's own direct experiences of the clashing cultures of colonialism and Western attempts to control already firmly-established cultures and environments. The narrative is so pointedly ironic, that we are invited to question just about everything Wiltshire tells us, as well as peer into the native world surrounding him a*nd* the relationships of the disparate white characters with both the natives and their fellow whites. A curious concoction of a society indeed, and the summary of his family life at the story's conclusion sets the seal on what deceptively appears to be a somewhat light-hearted narrative with a half-educated sense of morality.

In the end, there is no sense of reflection on what Wiltshire has experienced, and certainly no renouncing of the colonial world in which he operates. It is this lack of any moral epiphany which gives the powerful edge to this short tale in terms of Stevenson's unease with the world in which he chose to settle. Comparing Conrad's approach in *The Heart of Darkness,* David Daiches sums up Stevenson's approach thus:

> If it is not a story of profound moral exploration, as Conrad's is, it is certainly a story of moral suggestion, and the literary interest lies in the way in which the 'real South Seas characters and details of life' (as Stevenson put it) are handled so as to present an ironic, and at the same time, in the light of the story as a whole, a curiously genial, comment on the moral paradoxes and confusions implied in the whole relationship between white man and native (as well as white man and white man) in this society.[41]

The story has provided material for some further recent post-colonial critical analysis. Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury's collection *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Boundaries* (2006), provides a welcome consideration of this important stage in Stevenson's colonial literature development, particularly in Manfred Malzahn's essay 'Voices of the Scottish Empire'. Malzahn suggests that Stevenson's Scottishness 'could be of distinct

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[40] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa', op. cit., p.175
[41] *ibid.,* p.128

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advantage', adding that 'If a politically disembodied Scotland remained distinct from and distinguishable to the rest of the world, its chief mode of existence was that of a collective voice, given public utterance by individuals such as Burns, Scott, or, indeed, Stevenson'.[42] The inference here is that Stevenson, to some extent, could be viewed as something of a 'neutral' observer, despite the fact that he was a part of the colonial process. This is certainly evident in the observational style of narrative considered above which governs 'The Beach of Falesa'. Malzahn suggests that Scottish voices are rare. They are more often than not English, providing a certain level of distancing from the excesses of colonialism, while, in this case, providing a potent platform for colonial critique. Malzahn also provides insight into the fluctuating levels of analysis by various critics of the story, suggesting that it has 'received widely divergent ratings on the political correctness scale'[43] and that the subtle nuances of narrative voice go beyond some of the more basic assumptions of previous criticism. Certainly, there can be little doubt that Stevenson 'found the Wiltshires of this world hard to take, especially in a South Sea context'.[44] This is where some critics, such as Peter Gilmour, writing in Andrew Noble's 1982 critical collection, and considered more fully in chapter two, make the mistake of failing to recognise the ambiguous and highly-ironic use of Wiltshire as narrator. Malzahn goes so far as to state that Gilmour's analysis was 'devious logic based on unwarranted ideological expectations of literature, and blatant misreading of literary text'.[45]

Douglas Mack's examination of 'The Beach of Falesa' provides a useful consideration of Stevenson's critique of colonial excess at least in terms of the portrayal of Polynesian characters. His analysis, nonetheless, ventures close to post-colonial critical stances which lose sight of the context in which the text was written. He notes that 'Stevenson came into direct contact with the harsh realities of the coal-face of Empire, and his resulting anger at the exploitation of Polynesians prompted him to go further than before in his questioning of the elite/Imperial position'.[46] He cites the 'wedding' scene between Wiltshire and Uma as a prime example of European mistreatment and ridicule of local cultures and people, noting the narrative irony missed by Peter Gilmour in his contribution to Noble's 1982 collection when

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[42] Manfred Malzahn, 'Voices of the Scottish Empire' in Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury , eds., *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Boundaries* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), p.158
[43] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Beach of Falesa'*, op. cit.,* p.160
[44] *ibid*, p.164
[45] *ibid,* p.165
[46] Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.182

he states that 'in the description of the mock wedding Stevenson provides a devastating image of the relationship of European traders to Polynesians in the South Seas. Clearly this is a relationship based on deception and exploitation'.[47] Mack's assertion here is convincing, yet he lessens the impact of his argument when he goes on to say that 'however, while Stevenson's pro-Polynesian instincts are real and admirable, it remains possible to question the extent to which a genuine subaltern Polynesian voice can be heard to speak in 'The Beach of Falesa' '[48]. Mack is correct to some extent, but he states later that the reason for this was clear in that Uma as a character would be the most unlikely source of narrative intervention given the context of the tale and the form of narrative granted to the less-than-cerebral Wiltshire.

The power of Stevenson's colonial texts, written from the perspective of a member of the colonising population, comes, as we have seen, from his highly unflattering depiction of this same population. Uma- unlikely source or not- does provide a native voice throughout the story, and the competing tones of language and voice are a consistent feature of the narrative. Mack does, in his conclusion, at least consider that 'the colonised subaltern does not fully find a voice in 'The Beach of Falesa' and is still less able to speak in *Heart of Darkness.* Instead, these novellas by Stevenson and Conrad do something else, and something of great value: they draw on direct and disturbing personal experience to question the Imperial story from a position within the Imperial project'.[49] Mack answers his own somewhat tentative questions here. The context of Stevenson's work is crucial, as is that of Conrad after him. A directly intervening native voice would seem incongruous within the context of the fiction of the time.

Stevenson's consistency was maintained by his concern for oppressed populations, from the Covenanters, via the crushed Highlands, down to the South Seas. Relatively silent perhaps are the marginalised voices, but clear and loud are Stevenson's responses and concerns within a world where the Imperial project had yet to run its course. *Catriona* is just one of a range of texts which can be presented in defence of Stevenson's forthright stance on matters of marginalisation and the lack of a native voice does not detract from a powerful response to the world around him. Without a doubt, Stevenson's period of permanent exile in

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[47] Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.184
[48] *ibid,* p.184
[49] *ibid*, p.188

the South Seas was the direct catalyst for a period of intense development and ground-breaking literature.

Catriona, written in the year following the publication of 'The Beach of Falesa', provides a dark vision of the effects of the subjugation of the marginalised, especially if we keep Walter Scott's conclusion to *Waverley* in mind. Douglas Mack's charting of the journeys of David Balfour between *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* provides a compelling basis from which to examine the influence of South Seas exile upon his Scottish perspectives. It is clear that if this text, as Mack puts it, 'can be seen as Stevenson's re-working and re-focusing of the Waverley narrative pattern' then it is an increasingly radical re-focusing of the somewhat romanticised creations of Scott. [50] In *Kidnapped*, for example, there is a narrative of considerable violence and discomfort amidst the potentially romantic climes of the far North. This can be seen on an even starker level with the utterly neglected, complex, and rather bleak depiction of young Balfour in *Catriona* as he attempts to come to terms with a Scotland already well-advanced in the post-rebellion 'stabilisation' of Britain and the complete subjugation of the defeated forces of Jacobitism.

Here is the prime example of the changed perceptions of Stevenson in the intervening years between the publication of *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*. Gone are any of the romantic elements of cross-country dashing across the rugged Highlands, even amidst Stevenson's dark original narrative. This is replaced by a Scotland of 'stability' as the defeated Jacobite cause is finally torn asunder. Like Scott's hero, Edward Waverley, David Balfour moves between both of these incongruous worlds of dying Jacobite romanticism and dominating establishment. Like Waverley, our hero marries his figure of alluring feminine beauty while integrating himself within the new order as the estate of the Shaws finally becomes his after the death of his uncle. But here the similarity ends, and, unlike Walter Scott, Stevenson operates on a far more complex and bleaker level which avoids the obvious equilibrium effect created by his predecessor. In fact, Stevenson's sequel to the original 'Balfour' novel is so radically different in style and tone that the impact of a gap of seven years, and a permanent move to Samoa, presents sharp differences in both the developing character of David himself and the depicted image of post-Culloden Scotland already heavily present in *Kidnapped.*

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[50]Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.175

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We are given an indication of Balfour's ability to engage with the Scottish establishment, and the political nature of the novel, in chapter four, 'Lord Advocate Prestongrange'. Balfour's attempts to intervene on behalf of both Alan Breck and James Stewart are doomed from the start, despite Balfour's determination to seek justice for these threatened Jacobite figures:

> 'And I can just say plainly that the innocence of Alan and James is what I am here to declare in private to your lordship, and what I am prepared to establish at the trial by testimony'.
> 'To which I can only answer by an equal plainness, Mr. Balfour,' said he, 'that (in that case) your testimony will not be called by me, and I desire you to withhold it altogether.' [51]

Stevenson makes it clear that, like Archie Weir's partial rebellion against his father and the execution of Duncan Jopp in *Weir of Hermiston* considered in chapter two, Balfour's intervention stalls at its first attempt. And, as we shall see, his banishment on the Bass Rock ensures that he will be unable to alter the events of what is undoubtedly a political trial with a pre-conceived outcome. Prestongrange makes this clear in his response to Balfour's further protests:

> 'You are the head of Justice in this country,' I cried, 'and you propose me a crime!'
> 'I am a man nursing with both hands the interests of this country,' he replied, 'and I press on you a political necessity. Patriotism is not always moral in the formal sense […] I regard in this matter my political duty first and my judicial duty only second. For the same reason- I repeat it to you in the same frank words- I do not want your testimony.' [52]

In effect, Stevenson halts any sense of potential heroics in Balfour's role in the novel. He is an observer, emotionally close to both the plight of the defeated Jacobite Highlanders and the Lowland Scottish Presbyterian world where he grew up. It is a symbolic conflict of interests in Balfour's character which provides access, via his first-person narrative, to the dichotomy faced by Scotland in the aftermath of Culloden.

Despite his keen interest in Jacobite individuals, Balfour, as a Lowland character of Presbyterian stock, is believably ignorant of both Highland culture and language. Perhaps we

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[51] R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona,* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2007) p. 146
[52] *ibid*, p. 46

see something of Stevenson himself here, given his own upbringing. Given the use of 'Balfour', a family name, Stevenson clearly intended to provide some indication of his Lowland, Presbyterian background and, perhaps, his own lack of understanding of a divided country. This seems appropriate in its context, since the idea of general interaction and mutual understanding between Highlander and Lowland Scot would have been extremely unlikely, both historically and geographically.

This does not by any means suggest that Stevenson in any sense ignored this marginalised and defeated population. On the contrary, he maintained his preoccupation with oppressed sections of the Scottish population which we have already seen in his very earliest publication 'The Pentland Rising', where the eradication of the Covenanting cause preoccupied the young Stevenson with its inhumanity rather than the cause itself. Again, this brings into question the criticism that marginalised voices are silent in Stevenson, given the powerful impact of narrative voice present in much of his work, such as that of Wiltshire in 'The Beach of Falesa'. A far more powerful effect is created by providing an ironic narrative framework, resulting in a more effective critique of behaviour towards marginalised populations than that which might be given by a minor, subaltern figure.

Mack identifies one memorable aspect of *Kidnapped* to illustrate this point. I shall, in turn, examine the ways in which Stevenson extends his concerns for a Scotland in a less-than-harmonious state via the complexities of *Catriona.* In Mack's use of a small section of *Kidnapped*, David Balfour's narrative gives haunting voice to a lost cause when he hears the mournful lamentations of a boat-load of Highlanders bound for America following the rebellion: 'Yet nearer, and there began to come to our ears a great sound of mourning, the people on board and those on shore crying and lamenting to one another so as to pierce the heart. Then I understood this was an emigrant ship bound for the American colonies'.[53] Far from denying the voice of the defeated Highlander, Stevenson's use of an outsider figure is highly effective here, providing a more harrowing vision of a crushed minority than, perhaps, might have been generated by an individual Highland voice. As we have seen in 'The Beach of Falesa', Stevenson's use of an 'outsider' narrative allows the treatment of the marginalised to become more starkly evident for the reader. One might also argue here that Balfour, like

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[53] Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.175

Wiltshire in 'The Beach of Falesa', is himself somewhat marginalised in the text as an outsider figure.

As a tale, *Catriona* severs itself completely from any vestige of the boys' adventure story which, as we have seen, was so often attributed to Stevenson. It depicts a very tense and terse Scottish capital, where it is immensely difficult to distinguish between the apparent factions within this complicated new state. It also offers a highly symbolic departure for at least two momentous movements, and it presents, in the bleak trial scene at Inveraray something of a trial of the 'new' Scotland, with a heavy emphasis on the legal fraternity and the landed establishment. This is a curiously Scottish irony if ever there was one, given the vicious fracturing of the nation which took place both during and after the rebellion of 1745. One of the three specific parts of the novel which are arguably the most important in terms of not only symbolism, but also in relation to the final crushing of Jacobitism are the institutional cruelties exposed in Stevenson's 'off-stage' depiction of the last dying embers of internecine conflict represented by the trial at Inveraray. Mack identifies this aspect of the novel as a source of criticism of Stevenson's depiction of the trial scene. He writes:

> The Inveraray scenes of *Catriona* vividly support the view that even apparently civilised Highlanders are disturbingly close to being savages. However, the Inveraray scenes in this complex novel also point to a crucial difference between Stevenson and Walter Scott, in that these scenes present a powerful case for supposing that there was something rotten at the core of the modern, Hanoverian Britain celebrated in *Waverley.*[54]

This 'rotten core' is revealed as the trial's verdict approaches. With Balfour now at the scene following his release from Bass Rock imprisonment, he is given the final words of judgement, firstly in private by Prestongrange and finally by the words of the trial judge. Balfour reiterates his plea from chapter four when he states that 'you are trying to hang James Stewart, I am trying to save him.' [55] Prestongrange's response leaves no room for last-minute ambiguity:

> 'I will tell you,' he presently resumed, 'there is no question of James Stewart, for or against. James is a dead man; his life is given and taken- bought (if you like it better) and sold; no memorial can help- no defalcation of of a faithful Mr. David hurt him.

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[54] Douglas Mack, op. cit., p.179

[55] R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona,* op. cit., p.306

> Blow high, blow low, there will be no pardon for James Stewart: and take that for said!'[56]

There is perhaps a further point about this section of the novel which Mack omits, namely the possibility that Stevenson is not, in fact, depicting a Highland scene at all, but, ironically, instead reveals the speed by which the Highland upper echelons became a central part of the new Scottish establishment of the Hanoverian Britain mentioned above. In effect, the setting becomes nothing more than a transference of the precincts of state to the Highlands. This can be seen both as a reflection of post-Culloden Scotland and a reflection of the absorption of a defeated Highland culture within the dominant forces of the British state. After all, what was left of Scottish legal independence but the legal system itself? And the grubby scenes of pre-ordained execution upon 'James of the Glens' seem to depict the last gasps of an outmoded and defeated clan system which can now only operate within the strict, closely-monitored precincts of the powerful British state and a Scotland retaining its own legal powers.

The judgement over James Stewart clearly expresses the political position of the legal system:

> Having referred to the year '45, the chief of the Campbells, sitting as Justice-General upon the bench thus addressed the unfortunate Stewart before him: 'If you had been successful in that rebellion, you might have been giving the law where you have now received the judgement of it; we, who are this day your judges, might have been tried before one of your mock courts of judicature; and then you might have been satiated with the blood of any name or clan to which you had an aversion.'[57]

David Balfour's departure from the Bass Rock had whetted the appetite for a stirring, life-saving interjection in the legal proceedings. However, he is able to do nothing. He heard the judgement 'from the justices' private room, where none could see me'.[58] He becomes an impotent figure in a politically impotent country. Again, there is no tangible marginalised voice to counteract the legal savagery of these scenes, but this adds an undoubted impact to the twisted injustice of the events. The narrative of David Balfour is damning enough, as he virtually condemns himself for his own equally total impotence in the face of such overwhelming establishment odds. His infatuation with the romantic figure of Catriona

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[56] R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona*, op. cit., p.306
[57] *ibid,* p.308
[58] *ibid*, p.208

merely adds a curious lamentation to a world which was lost in a manner perhaps only marginally more satisfying than Scott's marital couplings at the end of *Waverley.* In any case, we find that in Stevenson's post-Culloden Scotland, a happy equilibrium is never established.

The choice of the Bass Rock in *Catriona* as temporary prison-setting for David Balfour's pre-trial incarceration is both hauntingly bleak and highly symbolic. Well known as the harsh setting of imprisonment of dissenting Covenanters almost a century before the setting of *Catriona,* Stevenson seems to have deliberately selected this almost derelict ghost-prison as a perfect stage to re-enact the drama of another potent moment of Scottish history. The troublesome detritus of Scottish trauma is dumped off-shore and off stage, well away from the re-moulding of the relatively new Scottish/North British landscape. Of course, young Balfour in *Catriona* is hardly tortured on the Bass Rock but, for the sake of silencing him and preventing evidence being given at Inveraray, his freedom is temporarily extinguished on this very Scottish offshore prison edifice. In the text, the modern images familiar to any television viewer of the early twenty-first century on the West's indulgence in arrests for political expediency are perhaps conjured up in the moment of Balfour's capture by, ironically, un-named characters speaking the Gaelic of the supposedly crushed Highlands. This is one of many clear and repeated signals in *Catriona* and *Kidnapped* that this was a very complex internecine civil war, where it is difficult to determine which side is which, amidst an atmosphere of frenzied suspicion.

David Balfour records his capture thus:

> At the word, they came all in upon me like a flight of birds upon a carrion, seized me, took my sword, and all the money from my pockets, bound me hand and foot with some strong line, and cast me on a tussock of bent. There they sat about their captive in a part of a circle and gazed him silently like something dangerous, perhaps a lion or a tiger on the spring.[59]

Stevenson uses his favoured island landscape to potent effect here, when he creates something of a wilderness for David Balfour's character, and a clear banishing into the wilderness of a lost cause eradicated by the dominant voices of the Hanoverian victors. In effect, the rock-prison becomes a separate entity, beyond the eyes and ears of the rest of the

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[59]R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona,* op. cit., p.150

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population, and as empty as the rhetoric of both Jacobite and earlier seventeenth century Covenanter voices of Scotland's past, the ultimate symbol of physical marginalisation.

Balfour's first glimpse of the Rock presents a duality-filled description of this relic of a 'savage' era, replaced by another:

> With the growing of the dawn I could see it clearer and clearer: the straight crags painted with sea-birds' droppings like a morning frost, the sloping top of it green with grass, the clan of white geese that cried about the sides, and the black, broken buildings of the prison sitting close on the sea's edge.[60]

There is certainly scope to view this stark, exposed setting as Stevenson's Scotland in some form of warped microcosm. It is a Scotland shrouded in beauty, but at the same time strewn with detritus. Lamentations from the 'wildlife' (note the use of 'clan' as opposed to 'flock') and the 'black broken buildings' portray a sense of the discord in the state of Scotland itself akin to Stevenson's own strong perceptions of injustice and strong feelings for marginalised voices, so hidden from the decision making process. Stevenson's character is haunted by the ghosts of the past, still clinging to the Bass Rock, and to the troubled conscience of Scotland. Balfour notes that 'There were times when I thought I could have heard the pious sounds of psalms out of the martyrs' dungeons, and see the soldiers tramp the ramparts with their glinting pipes, and the dawn rising behind them out of the North Sea'. [61] In recent fiction, James Robertson also chose the Bass Rock as his bleak historical setting for the dual narrative of *The Fanatic* (2000): the Scotland of the past haunted by the Scotland on the cusp of monumental change, as both Stevenson and Robertson depict in their respective novels. In Robertson's case, this was the lead up to the General Election of 1997, which heralded the eventual re-convening of the Scottish Parliament in its devolved state.[62]

It is perhaps via the passages following the departure from the Bass Rock, and in the aftermath of the trials at Inveraray, that the novel reveals some of the reasons for its *own* banishment into literary wilderness. The narrative seems to disintegrate within a far less secure and weaker European environment as David Balfour and the fair Catriona set off on an adventure around Europe which descends into an unsatisfactory period of romance in what

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[60] R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona,* op. cit., p.338
[61] *ibid,* p.334
[62] James Robertson, *The Fanatic* (London: Harper Collins, 2000)

remains of the plot. This poses the question of whether Stevenson was unable to sustain the quality of the narrative. From being a dark, cleverly-constructed, highly-symbolic depiction of a Scotland in considerable flux, it degenerates into something seemingly far more trivial through this European section. If one were to continue the symbolic thread then, in literary terms, there is simply no ink or plot left to write for these characters or this particular tale, and there was, literally, nowhere for the story to go but into the embittered exile shared by the remnants of Jacobite failure. Stevenson appears to be providing an example of an extinct, exported historical adventure fiction genre as well as the last embers of the dying Jacobite culture, which he used most notably in *The Master of Ballantrae. Catriona* is arguably an important component of both the development and alteration of the 'historical novel' and the development of Stevenson as a writer of stature amidst a growing Scottish world-wide literary diaspora.

Breck's moderate role in the novel adds to the perception of Stevenson dealing with the departure and exportation of a major element in Scottish history. His character is marginalised in every sense of the word: a failed relic of the Jacobite rebellion, and now banished almost completely from Stevenson's narrative. Balfour has the choice of heading for the French-bound boat, or remaining in his own land; he chooses the latter. And as Breck departs, so too do the last remnants of the Jacobite cause, heralding the new order:

> 'Davie,' he said, pausing, 'Davie, are ye no coming? I am swier to leave ye.'[…] Of a sudden I came the nearest hand to shedding tears, and seemed myself the most deserted solitary lad in Scotland. […]There was no sight or sound of man; the sun shone on the wet sand and the dry, the wind blew in the bents, the gulls made a dreary piping.[63]

Balfour's decision, steeped in regret, but accepting the passing of the momentarily romantic Jacobite cause, consigns Alan Breck and the whole Jacobite subject to the wings of what drama remained. Balfour does, however, have one final period of adventure with Alan Breck. His character is granted one further brief appearance when he is brought to Dunkirk in the final stages of the novel to meet with Catriona and her father. Breck's character in exile is but a shade of past battles fought on Scottish soil, also 'off-stage' in *Kidnapped,* revealing grubby betrayal amidst the exiled Jacobites in the character of James, as he attempts to hand over the former heroic character of a romantic past for final incarceration upon a British ship.

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[63] R.L. Stevenson *Catriona,* op.cit., p.326

Stevenson provides a last piece of adventurous action as Breck discovers, via an intercepted letter, that James More, Catriona's father, aims to betray him to British forces:

> 'Catriona,' says he, 'ye'll have to excuse me, my dear; but there's nothing less than my fine bones upon the cast of it, and I'll have to break this seal.'
> 'It is my wish,' said Catriona.
> He opened it, glanced it through, and flung his hand in the air.
> 'The stinking brock!' says he, and crammed the letter in his pocket. 'Here, let's get our things together. This place is fair death to me.'[64]

The confrontation between Breck and James More, as their 'blades clashed together' presents a violent scene only ended by the intervention of Catriona, crying 'Will you be killing him before my eyes, and me his daughter after all?' As the fight ends, she exclaims the following to her father: 'Begone!' was her word, 'take your shame out of my sight; leave me with clean folk. I am a daughter of Alpin! Shame on the sons of Alpin, begone!'[65] The letter incident and its aftermath provides a robust finale for Breck. Stevenson presents a last defiant flourish before his retreat into the stateless world of the exiled Jacobite hero. Ultimately, no resolution is to be found here. There is no satisfying transference from the romantic past to the new order and no sense of equilibrium so evident in Walter Scott's moulding of the Jacobite aftermath. Any romanticised images of Scotland are stifled, as the population of Stevenson's historical country attempts to come to terms with itself and the land they have moulded; and the past, in the shape of the romantic and dashing Alan Breck, is banished to rootless oblivion, as Stevenson's narrative ends.

Roslyn Jolly, in *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific,* provides a convincing parallel analysis of the process of creating *Catriona* with Stevenson's deep concern and interest in Samoan politics, suggesting a close connection between them, with the former containing a dominating theme of legal process. In her chapter 'The Novelist as Lawyer' Jolly presents a compelling and, at times ironic analysis of life imitating art in the sense that Stevenson, like Balfour, was immersed in the frustrating pursuit of justice in the face of overwhelming odds: the might of the established, state-entrenched laws versus the individual. I suggest *ironic* as Jolly herself indicates some interesting aspects of criticism from Stevenson's contemporaries

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[64] R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona*, op. cit., p.387
[65] *ibid*, p.388

'yearning' for less Samoan observations and more stirring episodes from his Scottish roots. For example, she points out the following:

> In 1893 Stevenson finally gave the public what it wanted. *Catriona* (also known as *David Balfour)* was not only a historical novel set in Scotland, but also a continuation of *Kidnapped*, one of Stevenson's greatest popular and critical successes. It was as if the errant author had heeded the demands of *The Queen,* in its review of *A Footnote to History:* 'Write as many sequels to "Kidnapped" as you wish, and we will read them with zest, but do not tell us anything more about Samoa'.[66]

Jolly's parallel thesis of the creation of *Catriona* suggests that both Stevenson's novel and his nine letters to *The Times* can be seen as products of a mind finely-tuned to injustice and the misuse of Law upon both his fictional creations and the land he chose as his home.

Jolly goes on by stating the following:

> Of the nine political letters he wrote to *The Times* as a Samoan resident, four were written during the period of *Catriona'*s composition (February to September 1892), and all nine are closely related to the political and legal concerns of the novel […] *Catriona* and the *Times* letters are the fruits of opposed and contending impulses within Stevenson's attitude to authorship.[67]

It is with Jolly's comments in mind that a further stout defence of Stevenson's motives can be mounted. Here was a writer who was well aware of the commercial nature of his existence. His livelihood in Samoa depended upon his fame and success as a Victorian best-selling novelist. Yet he could not keep silent when faced with abuses of power which he could, conceivably, have some influence over. As I have documented elsewhere, Stevenson's work from its earliest stages was influenced by the plight of the oppressed by oppressive systems of government. In Stevenson's Samoan experience, the oppression and misrule of the governing elites were not in the distant past, but very much in the 'here and now'. Thus, the impetus for *Catriona'*s law-laden narrative can be seen as a product of a mind preoccupied with the workings of law.

Stevenson's own experience of the legal process in Scotland can be seen throughout the politically-driven trial at Inveraray and the novel in general as David Balfour, trapped in a

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[66]Roslyn Jolly, *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) p.113
[67] *ibid,* p.113

sense by both his 'Whiggish' background and his knowledge of and acquaintance with the Jacobite part of the rebellious equation, attempts to speak out at the aforementioned 'show trial' of James Stewart. He is, however, physically thwarted by the powerful, rapidly-enclosing elite of the Hanoverian state. Jolly draws a further comparison between the letters and *Catriona* when she states that '*Catriona* chronicles, as the *Times* letters express, an individual's determination to tell (at some personal cost) a politically significant and controversial story, which is received with indifference or hostility'.[68] She also points out that 'A broader thematic similarity between *Catriona* and the *Times* letters is their common concern with the repair, and transformation, of a society in the aftermath of rebellion and war'.[69]

It is perhaps the latter of Jolly's assertions which leads to a consideration of the successes and failures of the novel itself. The majority of the story focuses closely on both of the above, yet, it is when Stevenson departs from his society in the aftermath that the narrative seems far less powerful in the romantic scenes abroad between Catriona and David. But the novel's real power is drawn from the tightness of the narrative upon the Bass Rock and at Inveraray. This is chiefly demonstrated in the scenes of agitation in a post-rebellion landscape dominated by the legal process exerting its authority on populations and individuals. Jolly cites a number of sources to back up her assertion that the South Seas greatly influenced Stevenson's Scottish fiction. Oliver Buckton, for example, states that 'Stevenson used his Scottish fiction-specifically, *David Balfour*- not as an outlet for nostalgia, but to develop a critique of the colonial conditions on Samoa' and that 'Stevenson's involvement with Samoan politics found its dual expression in a fictional political allegory, *David Balfour,* and his nonfictional account "A Footnote to History" '.[70] With this in mind, it is certainly ironic that in the majority of critical receptions for the novel among contemporary critics the focus seems, with some exceptions, to have been upon the love plot, undoubtedly the weakest section of the tale.

Jolly points out that 'for some, *Catriona* failed to please because it failed to recapture the sense of youthful adventure created in *Kidnapped'* and that 'the legal-political plot of the novel's first half received less attention from reviewers than the courtship plot of the second,

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[68] Roslyn Jolly, op. cit., p.116
[69] *ibid*, p.118,
[70] *ibid,* p.120

and much more space was devoted to evaluating the success with which Stevenson drew his female characters […] than to discussing the ideas and arguments in the narrative of David's involvement with the trial of James Stewart'.[71] Perhaps this can act as an explanation of why the novel, viewed from a modern perspective, fractures itself between a deeply soul-searching political fiction and the pale trivia of the continental European section, and final dash of swashbuckling Breck that concludes the tale.

I would argue that Stevenson's success in this novel does indeed come from its early stages. The earlier political stages represent the strongest aspect of this novel in terms of its commentary on post-Culloden Scotland. Breck seems pale when compared to the character's earlier incarnation in *Kidnapped.* Forever on the run, he 'gave but one glance and laid himself down to run. He carried a great weight in James More's portmanteau; but I think he would as soon have lost his life as cast away the booty which was his revenge; and he ran so that I was distressed to follow him, and marvelled and exulted to see the girl bounding at my side'. [72] Balfour relates his final glimpse of this symbolic Jacobite renegade. Breck's final words, 'they're a real bonny folk, the French nation' sums up the sense of banishment for the last remnants of the Jacobite cause, which Balfour can only watch as it disappears forever, exiled in Europe.[73]

Stevenson, with a mind to commercial success, seemed to know well what succeeded, and in the end, to some extent, perhaps gave his adoring public what they most desired, while at the same time satisfying his own moral creativity before leaving the stage to the young lovers. The novel, because of the insertion of this romantic sub plot, certainly seems to lack integration. The re-entry of Alan Breck also adds to the incongruity of the text, given that it seems on some levels to be a possible response to commercial expediency. Yet, flawed though it may, the dominant sections set in post-Culloden Scotland provides a potent illustration of Stevenson's response to his country's troubled, and politically stagnant, history. In context and, undoubtedly, given the development of Stevenson's fiction as a direct response to his experiences of exile, we see a stark depiction of a disparate nation unsure of itself, deeply troubled, and riven with the divisions which Walter Scott's creation of the modern historical novel sought to bury in the beneficial light of the Union.

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[71] Roslyn Jolly, op. cit.*,* p.146
[72] R. L. Stevenson, *Catriona,* op. cit., p.371
[73] *ibid,* p.371

Chapter Seven: RL Stevenson, Joseph Conrad, and Graham Greene: Partners in Anti-Colonial fiction- 'The Ebb Tide', *Lord Jim* **and** *The Quiet American***.**

Robert Kiely in the preface to his 1965 book *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure* begins with the following statement on his approach to the study of Stevenson:

> It was admiration for Joseph Conrad that led me into this study of Robert Louis Stevenson. I was interested in Conrad's peculiar ability to employ some of the most commonplace conventions of the adventure yarn to suggest moral and psychological conflicts with power, subtlety and variety. In fact, my reason for re-reading Stevenson was to satisfy a foregone conclusion that his action tales were stylish and entertaining, but inconsequential, that in his hands the familiar conventions remained relatively inert. Professor Albert J. Guerard suggested that I combine three essays on the uses of adventure in the fiction of Stevenson, Conrad and Graham Greene. But, as it turned out, I never got past Stevenson. [1]

This chapter will consider what Kiely originally intended by doing just that. It will make a comparison of Stevenson's 'The Ebb Tide' (1894) *,* Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900) and Greene's *The Quiet American* (1955) in order to examine further Stevenson's credentials as an influential precursor of Joseph Conrad, and as a distinct precursor of colonially critical writing. I have deliberately chosen these texts to show the progression and strength of Stevenson's depictions of imperialism. The central themes of exploitation and the impact upon native populations are as clear in Stevenson's South Seas fiction as they are in both the works of Conrad and Greene. Considering other authors' treatment of the same themes in different countries and contexts provides a focus for Stevenson's writing, taking the effects of colonialism beyond the late nineteenth century of Stevenson to a more contemporary and recognisable scene of Greene's Indochina. As we have already seen, Stevenson's anti-colonial credentials can be derived from much of his Scottish fiction written while resident in the South Seas, particularly *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Catriona.* Graham Greene's 1955 Indochina of *The Quiet American* provides the setting for a new wave of colonial expansion, providing an apt and fitting comparison with Stevenson's approach 61 years earlier, as the same colonial performance is re-enacted, but with a different cast and setting. In these three differing colonial precincts, the same failed ideas of territorial conquest and the voices of marginalised peoples are repeated. The basic principles are as solidly displayed in Greene as

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they are in Stevenson: the colonial setting as a messy, uncontrollable entity, culminating in deeply unsatisfactory outcomes for all concerned.

Prevailing literary criticism, as hinted in Kiely's preface above, has, for much of the past century, deemed the earliest fictional response to the colonial world to come from Joseph Conrad, principally via *Heart of Darkness,* but not from his near contemporary Stevenson. Stevenson's work remained, and to some extent *remains* in critical terms rooted in, as we have seen, the boundaries of the boys' adventure genre. This was indeed Kiely's original view prior to his re-examination of Stevenson's adventure fiction. He also states that he found, to his surprise, 'a maturity in this writer of boys' books which had been skimmed over or ignored by the critics who admired him most'.[2]

Linda Dryden also points out in her preface to *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad* that 'There is no doubt that Conrad, currently, has a much more solid reputation than Stevenson in terms of being a serious, indeed, for some, difficult writer'.[3] Dryden goes on to develop the idea of Stevenson's critical reception when she points out that 'It is often argued that Joseph Conrad inaugurated literary modernism with his chilling tale of Belgian imperialism in Africa, *Heart of Darkness',* but adds 'Yet no genre or new literary form has a unique starting point: modernism grew out of a variety of literary genres, cultural changes, and social and political movements'. [4]

A growing body of opinion, particularly from the 1980s onwards, as shown earlier in this thesis, has arisen which now admits and considers Stevenson in critical terms not previously expressed. His work is now beginning to be weaved into discussions of colonial literature which would previously have excluded his fiction. Most recently, Lynda Dryden in the aforementioned *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad, Writers of Transition* (2009) and in *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature* (2011) has argued strongly that Stevenson is an important innovator and direct precursor of Conrad. The contention here is that Stevenson, in his South Seas fiction, was already at the forefront of very early anti-colonial and modernist discourse long before the coining of the terms.

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[2] Robert Kiely, op. cit., p vii

[3] Linda Dryden, Stephen Arata and Eric Massie, eds., *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad,* op. cit., preface, p.1

[4] *ibid,* p.1

Prominent in Dryden's introduction to *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad* is the realisation that a serious comparison between both writers has taken a long time to emerge. Apart from Kiely's consideration above, it would seem that Stevenson's very close literary kinship with Conrad has been almost completely neglected. What is both refreshing and entertaining at times in Dryden's analysis is the image of Conrad seemingly forever attempting to evade comparison with his precursor Stevenson. In this case, according to Dryden, it took almost a century before mature consideration of Stevenson in relation to Conrad became a solid concept. Dryden notes that Conrad was reportedly 'nettled' by unfavourable comparisons to Stevenson's fiction in relation to his collaboration with Ford Madox Ford on the novel *Romance* in 1903 and that he 'struggled against Stevenson's reputation', suggesting that Conrad in fact spent much time trying to emulate his predecessor's popularity and successes in the 1890s.[5] Dryden's assessment also probes the reasons why such comparisons seemed to disappear in the early years of the twentieth century, suggesting that 'Stevenson suffers in Conrad's estimation by the very fact of his historical proximity both to the nineteenth-century literary scene and to Conrad's modern world'.[6] It would seem that a compelling combination of dates and proximity made it easier to exclude Stevenson from discussions on anti-colonial responses to the imperial world.

Dryden's chapter 'Literary Affinities and the Postcolonial in Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad' in *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature* (2011) provides a comparative analysis which stretches back to the time of Conrad's early publications as a colonial writer. Dryden tells us that Stevenson was clearly 'a writer of colonial fiction, and indeed one who preceded Conrad in authoring fictions that challenge assumptions of European superiority in the colonial encounter'.[7] She states:

> Writing at the end of the nineteenth century, both Stevenson and Conrad were reflecting on the imperial experience and exposing its failures. Their tales of imperial misadventures, and of dark deeds perpetrated by Europeans in the Empire, often anticipate current postcolonial perspectives.[8]

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[5] Linda Dryden, introduction to *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Transition,* op. cit., p.3
[6] *ibid.,* p.5
[7] Linda Dryden in Michael Gardiner, Graeme MacDonald and Niall O'Gallagher, eds., *Scottish Literature and Post-Colonial Literature, Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011) p.86
[8] *ibid,* p.86

In the texts chosen for consideration in this chapter, these assertions are displayed by both authors in abundance. Yet this is a colonial literary challenge which, from Stevenson's perspective, has been largely ignored and subsumed in a modernist critical world seemingly keen to banish the Victorian colonial response to where it belonged: the Victorian age itself.

Alan Sandison considers the contribution of Stevenson to the anti-colonial debate in his chapter ' "The Ebb Tide": A Modernist in the South Seas',[9] from his *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism* (1996). In examining this neglected but important text he states that 'by any standard, 'The Ebb Tide' is a distinctive and innovative work, so clear a precursor of Conrad's fiction that it is impossible to believe that he did not, in fact, make considerable use of it'.[10] Sandison considers possible reasons for the relative critical failure of the text in relation to Conrad's success:

> There is an order of seriousness here which is quite different from all the other serious books he wrote, a good deal of whose seriousness is the seriousness of play. It is also his most complicated book and it suffers because he is complicating things in a new way. What he also lacks, perhaps, is a Marlow since 'The Ebb Tide' illustrates well what *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness* gain by having their action sifted through the consciousness of such a discriminating narrator.[11]

One could say, given Sandison's assessment of the 'problem' with Stevenson's narrative style, that the author was being almost too 'modernist' for his own good. Critics failed to see what Conrad made much clearer via the narrative of Marlow, which provides its own editorial slant on the fictional proceedings. In 'The Ebb Tide' we are given a raw, coarse depiction of what is a distinctly stark tale of three 'morally bankrupt'[12] characters on a sea voyage, supposedly with a cargo of champagne, with a disgraced former sea captain on the aptly named *Farrallone*, given the abandoned nature of these outcast figures. And here we find an area for comparison with Conrad's *Lord Jim,* where the motif of sea-faring, the principal instrument of colonial conquest and travel, dominates the narrative.

Yet the ship of Stevenson, the *Farrallone* is, as Sandison has pointed out, far removed from the conventional idea of a Victorian adventure novel bark. It is a foul, deceptive entity in itself. The only reason why the discredited drunk Davis is given command is due to the

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[9]Alan Sandison, op. cit., p. 317
[10] *ibid,* p.317
[11] *ibid*, p.317
[12] *ibid*, p.318

demise of her previous crew from smallpox, the scourge of the native population. This tainted vessel is first mentioned by Davis prior to their ill-fated voyage: 'She's the *Farrallone*, hundred and sixty tons register, out of 'Frisco for Sydney, in California champagne. Captain, mate, and one hand all died of smallpox, same as they had round in the Paumotus'.[13] Sandison notes that 'Smallpox has killed the officers of the trading-schooner *Farrallone*. Again there is a moral realist feint which invites comparison with Conrad'.[14] The mention of the diseased recent past also relates to the negative aspects of colonialism, in this case the spreading of lethal diseases among the native population and colonisers alike. Conrad describes his ship in *Lord Jim*, *the Patna* as 'A local steamer as old as the hills, lean like a greyhound, and eaten up with rust, worse than a condemned water-tank'.[15]

Ships, a key symbol of colonial expansion, indeed the means by which it is made possible, are rendered to be rotting and dishevelled relics. Conrad's ship, 'eaten up with rust' sails closely alongside Stevenson's *Farallone,* a disease-ridden and symbolically empty hulk, filled with a fake cargo of 'Champagne'. Sandison writes: 'The ship is, however, a travesty of all that a ship normally symbolises in so much Victorian fiction and which Conrad more or less codifies'.[16] He notes that Stevenson uses the ship as a direct and potent symbol of the corrupting nature of the colonial process when he points out that 'The *Farallone* is, as its name might imply (Stevenson insisted it should be pronounced 'Far-alone'), a renegade among ships and has come to stand for greed, selfishness, opportunism- and lost directions'.[17] Prior to the voyage, the ship is again isolated by Stevenson's depiction of it as 'The outcast *Farallone*, upon the other, banished to the threshold of the port, rolling there to her scuppers, and flaunting the plague-flag as she rolled'. [18]

Perhaps these ships, languishing in the background, exemplify the characters' behaviour in the tale. This deconstruction of such a prime imperial symbol renders both Stevenson's and Conrad's depiction of sea-faring adventure at least on an equal footing in terms of colonial critique. At the novel's conclusion, that deconstruction is completed by the burning of the ship by Herrick, a final symbolic torching of the already discredited imperial symbol:

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[13] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide' (London: Dodo Press, 2007) p.23

[14] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.331

[15] Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim, o*p. cit., p.12

[16] *ibid,* p.331

[17] *ibid*, p.331

[18] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*,* op. cit., p.29

The figure of Herrick might have been observed to board her, to pass for a while into the house, thence forward to the forecastle, and at last to plunge into the main hatch. In all these quarters, his visit was followed by a coil of smoke; and he had scarce entered the boat again and shoved off, before flames broke forth upon the schooner. […] About half way on the return voyage, when Herrick looked back, he beheld the *Farallone* wrapped to the topmasts in leaping arms of fire, and the voluminous smoke pursuing him along the face of the lagoon.[19]

In the conclusion of *Lord Jim*, the central character is dogged by guilt in a shipping disaster which resulted in multiple drowning. Unlike Jim, however, Davis's disgrace is not clouded with the introspective guilt afforded to Jim via Marlow's narrative. The attractive nobility of character granted to the penitent Jim is completely absent in Stevenson's Davis. Conrad's Jim is given a stirringly noble epitaph by Marlow:

> 'And that's the end. He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic […] For it may very well be that in such short moments of his last proud and unflinching glance, he had beheld the face of that opportunity which, like an Eastern bride, had come veiled to his side'[20].

In sharp contrast, Stevenson's character, despite his actual verbal penitence as he becomes, in Carruthers's words 'institutionalised'[21] at the end of a tale, is 'praying fervently, seemingly having become 'Attwater's spoiled darling and pet penitent'.[22] Davis sees the voyage of the *Farallone* as a prime opportunity to regain his former position as captain and continue the process of plunder and opportunism. His fate is part of a disjointed and somewhat jarring finale to a text which concludes in a chaotic mess of deliberately unfulfilled plot.

After the attempted slaying of Attwater, and the latter's taunting near-execution of Davis, he finds himself grovelling to his intended victim: 'With trembling hands he seized hold of the man whom he had come to slay; and his voice broke from him like that of a child among the nightmares of fever: "O! isn't there no mercy? O! what must I do to be saved?"[23] The 'captain' Davis, upon being coerced to view his burning ship by Herrick, can only utter

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[19] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.129

[20] Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim,* op. cit., p.425

[21] Gerard Carruthers*, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, The Master of Ballantrae and The Ebb Tide, (2004)* p.48

[22] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*, op. cit., p.129*

[23] *ibid*, p.128

"What did you say anyway? O, the *Farallone*," and he looked languidly out'.[24] Disillusionment and confusion haunt both of the surviving trio as the torched ship provides a suitably bleak ending for such a disoriented tale.

It is the clearly deliberate and ugly ending (Huish having already died horribly, burned by the vitriol he was about to throw at Attwater, then shot) which one of Stevenson's earliest reviewers suggested was another feature of the author's 'new method'. Sandison cites Zangwill's consideration of the ending as an important early example of criticism which recognised the freshness and unusual approach to both narrative and genre adopted by Stevenson. Zangwill concluded that 'when the adventure is over, when the mutual revelations of the quartet have been exhausted, when the interaction and revelation of character are complete, the book is finished and the author wisely lays aside his pen'.[25] In this case, he points to the fact that the ending, being uncomfortably bleak and without resolution, constitutes a new way of working within, yet constantly deconstructing, the adventure genre.

With all of the above in mind, we can compare the final outcome for Stevenson's Davis with the fate of our other disgraced seaman Jim, Conrad's undoubted 'pet penitent'. His concluding moments, in comparison to Stevenson's motley crew, seem heroic, noble, and stirringly fitting. Conrad's is undoubtedly a tale of great tragedy. The reader is left with a perceptibly conventional sense of commonplace morality as Jim is shot down by the leader of the people he loved. Marlow's narrative concludes with a line of immense nobility when he states that 'They say that the white man sent right and left at all those faces a proud and unflinching glance. Then with his hand over his lips he fell forward, dead'.[26] For Jim, this is a noble and tragic conclusion to his tortured, guilt-ridden existence; for Stevenson's miserable trio, as Carruthers concludes, 'One is killed and another (Davis) finds religion. Having set fire to the abandoned ship, Herrick, the main protagonist seems ready to drift away into a hopeless future'.[27]

Sandison considers a comparison between Jim and Herrick, where both have sought to escape from the past. He states the following:

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[24] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.130
[25] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.319
[26] Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim* (London: Penguin, 1983), p.312
[27] Gerard Carruthers, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde., The Master of Ballantrae and the Ebb Tide,* op. cit., p.35

Herrick has (like Jim) also betrayed his own ideals but, unlike Jim, 'he had struck his flag' and 'entertained no hope to re-instate himself'. So he has sought refuge in the islands, but not in the same way as Jim, who repeatedly moved on when his act of self-betrayal caught up with him. He is a Jim, then, who would never gain the honorific 'Lord': a Jim gone determinedly to bad but with a Calvinist conscience which won't lie down, or let him lie down either.[28]

The seemingly noble martyrdom of Jim is contrasted sharply with the moral despair and emptiness of Herrick, who waits for a ship to take him on to his next port of call, drifting hopelessly on a sea of his own empty despair after personally burning the *Farallone*. Stevenson's tale predates Conrad's *Lord Jim* by six years and it presents a far stronger case for an early anti-colonial critique response to the world around him. Stevenson's characters provide a conclusion which, again, rebels against convention, whereas Conrad's ending is, subsequently, rather conventional. Jim's martyrdom seems almost fittingly Victorian in its nobility compared with Stevenson's murky ambiguity. Yet it is Conrad who, as we have seen, escaped the label of conventional Victorian author and eventually attracted the more favourable responses towards his colonial fiction.

Turning again to the texts themselves it can be argued that, in addition to the clear critiques of the colonial process, several plot devices and images are shared between 'The Ebb Tide' and *Lord Jim*, with Conrad's text echoing much of the emptiness and negativity expressed in 'The Ebb Tide'. Both tales use the key symbol of sea-travel as a sense of escape for the central characters struggling to exist within the parameters of a desolate and confusing colonial world. Michael Valdez Moses, early in his argument from his chapter on 'Disorientalism' in *Modernism and Colonialism,* refers to the lack of cohesion in the Western approaches to all things colonial:

> As I will argue, the paradigmatic Conradian scene of the imperial encounter is one of *disorientation*, one in which the Western mind, far from subjugating the pliable native environment to the scientific and epistemological categories of its omnipotent and omniscient European intelligence, finds itself at a loss, overthrown, confused, panicked, frustrated and turned back upon itself.[29]

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[28] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.346
[29] Michael Valdez Moses, op. cit., p.45

One can find little to disagree with here as this reflects a strong colonial theme which can be traced through to Greene's modern-age equivalent, *The Quiet American*. But Stevenson's earlier and arguably starker observations given in 'The Ebb Tide', dealing with remarkably similar ideas of 'disorientalism', are not included in Moses's analysis. Stevenson's colonial images are blurred, confused and haphazard, with as disconnected a *dramatis personae* that you could ever hope to find in a colonial setting. The narrative of 'The Ebb Tide' is constantly broken up by a series of memories, drink, and songs of the Victorian Music-hall, as well as the half-painted and vague image of the ship itself. Just before we discover that the vast majority of the champagne bottles on board are fake, the captain (Davis) 'became sunk in drunkenness […] and went overboard with a pot of paint. But he tired of it in half-an-hour, and the schooner went on her way with an incongruous patch of colour on the stern, and the word *Farallone* part obliterated and part looking through'.[30]

In both Stevenson's and Conrad's texts, the ships, as I have noted above, are harbingers of disillusionment, death and tragedy, the ultimate symbols of disaster. The *Farallone* is the vessel of disease and corrupted failure in 'The Ebb Tide'*;* the *Patna* of Conrad's *Lord Jim* is the disaster vessel for the youngster, and the cause of his despair and ultimate destruction. Moses goes on to explore in considerable detail the ways in which Conrad critically examines colonialism:

> Conrad provides a sustained and unflinching expose of European colonialism and imperialism at its worst (including its economic depredations) but also attempts to generate in the reader a cognitive and emotional dissonance that is the experiential 'aesthetic' correlative of the shock felt by Conrad's characters when confronted with the unsavoury realities of western imperialism.[31]

Moses also states that, as we have already seen in 'The Ebb Tide' and 'The Beach at Falesa', 'first Jim, then Marlow, and finally Gentleman Brown break the hermetic temporal seal of this premodern idyll'.[32] In Stevenson's South Seas fiction, we are constantly given brief glimpses of exotic and settings, only for the spoiling presence of Western humanity to intervene and destroy. This is certainly the case in *Lord Jim*, where the eponymous hero is subjected, and subjects himself, to a sustained and geographically wide period of 'emotional

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[30] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*,* op. cit., p.42
[31] Michael Valdez Moses, op. cit.*,* p.47
[32] *ibid,* p.67

dissonance'. The same catastrophically unsavoury experience also befalls Huish, Herrick and Davis as they make their watery voyage towards varying degrees of disaster in 'The Ebb Tide'.

Alan Sandison presents a compelling case for Stevenson as a 'harbinger of Modernism'[33] and cites the words of several contemporary critics who seem simultaneously bemused and intrigued by this 'new' approach to the art of fiction shown in 'The Ebb Tide':

> Reviewers' verdicts were certainly mixed, but their remarks are of particular interest in the light of any claim for Stevenson to be regarded as a harbinger of modernism. 'All through the narrative', says one, 'there is a recurrent suggestion of the undeveloped […] The incidents have not the air of inevitableness. They seem to have been designed independently of the end in view'.[34]

It would seem that Stevenson's variations of form and content proved intriguing for a number of his contemporary critics. However, later twentieth century commentators, on the whole, have failed to recognise his neglected, yet pioneering, literary output. Sandison again cites Israel Zangwill, who in writing on 'The Ebb Tide' concluded that ' "The result of Stevenson's "new" method is "not only an enthralling romance, but a subtle study of blackguardism in diverse shades and degrees" '.[35] Again, as examined earlier in this thesis, we see the somewhat perplexed nature of the early reviews. 'The Ebb Tide' is a story with some of the trappings of the adventure genre, but with a dark shading which points towards the ultimate bleakness of this most unforgiving of colonial tales. Sandison then suggests that Stevenson cuts across any ideas of convention by 'dispensing with a hero altogether'. He points out that the unholy trio, and the central figure of Attwater, 'form a collective anti-hero',[36] providing further evidence that Stevenson was presenting an entirely new 'script' in terms of Victorian fiction influenced by the Imperial project abroad.

The characters of both Stevenson's and Conrad's colonial fictions function as sea-bound, floating and often rudderless beings. Jim finds his island resting place by sea, providing another broad similarity with the ship-bound trio in 'The Ebb Tide', all of whom seek a new

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[33] Alan Sandison, op. cit., p.319
[34] *ibid*, p.319
[35] *ibid*, p.319
[36] *ibid,* p.320

audience as far away as possible from their previous precincts of existence. Marlow relates the setting of Jim's house on Patusan:

> On the third day after the full, the moon, as seen from the open space in front of Jim's house (he had a very fine house in the native style when I visited him) rose exactly behind these hills, its diffused light at first throwing the two masses into intensely black relief, and then the nearly perfect disc, glowing ruddily, appeared, gliding upwards between the sides of the chasm, till it floated away above the summits, as if escaping from a yawning grave in gentle triumph. 'Wonderful effect,' said Jim by my side. 'Worth seeing. Is it not?' [37]

This becomes only a temporary vision of symmetry and beauty for Jim, as the outside world eventually brings him back to reality when it intercedes in his native idyll.

Stevenson's characters in 'The Ebb Tide' are also treated to an idyllic setting when the island inhabited by Attwater is first sighted:

> The isle- the undiscovered, the scarce believed in- now lay before them and close aboard; and Herrick thought that never in his dreams had he beheld anything more strange and delicate. The beach was excellently white, the continuous barrier of trees inimitably green […] He tortured himself to find analogies. The isle was like the rim of a great vessel sunken in the waters; it was like the embankment of an annular railway grown upon with wood: so slender it seemed amidst the outrageous breakers, so frail and pretty, he would scarce have wondered to see it sink and disappear without a sound, and the waves close smoothly over its descent.[38]

Stevenson's delicate and beautiful prose frames the island in a temporary glow of picturesque and almost spiritual warmth. Even here, the suggestion of its temporary nature in terms of the colonial cast is indicated by the image of its potential in the mind of Herrick to 'sink and disappear without a sound'. [39] This is certainly one of the sharpest points of comparison between Stevenson and Conrad. The stage is set by both authors ripe for tales of romance on the high seas. All of the elements of exotic romance and adventure are there, but what we are presented with in the end is a confused world of colonial mismatches, where the main characters are examples of ultimate failures in their disjointed, uncoordinated worlds. In effect, both authors have chosen to warp the traditional sea-faring image of adventure into a twisted re-working of the genre.

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[37] Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim,* op. cit., p.223
[38] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., pp.64/65
[39] *ibid*, p.65

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However one looks at both of these texts, there are several key sections of each which stand up to further comparative scrutiny. Conrad's Jim and the brutalised colonial bully-figure of Attwater in 'The Ebb Tide' seem, at first glance, to be completely dissimilar in any shape or form. Despite the attractiveness of Jim himself, there is an almost regal, or even God-like sense of awe and control about both of these characters, white masters in a far-flung colonial outpost. Jim is described by Conrad's narrator, on a visit to a native 'Rajah' thus:

> In the midst of these dark-faced men, his stalwart figure in white apparel, the gleaming clusters of his fair hair, seemed to catch all the sunshine that trickled through the cracks in the closed shutters of that dim hall, with its walls of mats and a roof of thatch. He appeared like a creature not only of another kind, but of another essence. Had they not seen him come up in a canoe they might have thought he had descended upon them from the clouds.[40]

The first glimpse we have of Stevenson's Attwater strikes a similar commanding countenance:

> He was a huge fellow, six feet four in height, and of a build proportionately strong, but his sinews seemed to be dissolved in a listlessness that was more than languor. It was only the eye that corrected this impression; an eye of unusual mingled brilliancy and softness, sombre as a coal and with lights that outshone topaz; an eye of unimpaired health and virility; an eye that bid you beware of the man's devastating anger. […] He was dressed in white drill, exquisitely made; his scarf and tie were of tender-coloured silks; on the thwart beside him there leaned a Winchester rifle.[41]

Within these two comparable descriptions we can detect a notable difference. Stevenson's Attwater is immediately a potentially violent corruption of the dominant white master; Conrad's Jim seems a more gentle, yet eventually haunted figure, simultaneously doomed to and celebrated by the margins of the colonial world because his troubled past is temporarily unknown to his native audience. It suits both characters to remain on the far reaches of possible contact, marginalising themselves, cutting off the 'real world' and creating a completely new space in which to operate. As Jacques Berthoud states, 'it would be a mistake to conclude that by going to Patusan Jim leaves reality behind him. Patusan is not essentially different from the great world; it is merely cut off from it. But Patusan can be visited by

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[40] Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim,* op. cit., p.249
[41] RL Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.68

members of the outside world.'[42] In both texts, these previously obscure, virtually uncharted settings are found, secured and, finally, violently soiled. In both tales, the map becomes smaller; the world shrinks; and the dominance of the colonial advance shrinks the world bit by bit. Also, the use of shipping and journeys as key plot devices are fully utilised by each writer. The motley trio of Huish, Herrick and Davis in 'The Ebb Tide' operate in a broadly similar manner, just like the troubled youth Jim, by desperately seeking 'new beginnings' as far away from their present predicaments as possible. The similarly desperate band led by 'Gentleman' Brown in *Lord Jim* contains echoes of Herrick et al as their own form of survival desperation leads to the inevitable chaotic colonial mess of death and destruction, so vividly portrayed in a later, new-colonial age by Greene in the Indo-China of *The Quiet American.* Clearly, desperation in a bleak, unforgiving colonial setting is a key component of the actions and, indeed, fate of the cast of both novels.

In many other ways, the figures of both Attwater and Herrick seem comparable to Conrad's Jim. Herrick, despite his bouts of conscience and soul-searching is in effect a weak and crushed figure by the end of 'The Ebb Tide'. He is portrayed as a lost, yet educated 'University Man', acting as a troubled microcosmic figure of colonial disquiet and failure, offering a sense of unease and distaste seen so clearly in Conrad. In the earliest stages of their voyage, Herrick, on observing the native crew members, develops a sense of deep shame, felt in unconquerable swathes of remorse and guilt in *Lord Jim*: 'Shame ran in Herrick's blood to remember what employment he was on, and to see these poor souls- and even Sally Day, the child of cannibals, in all likelihood a cannibal himself- so faithful to what they knew of good'.[43] Herrick is a character who ponders over the immorality and confusions of his own experience of colonial life. His revulsion is also self-evident when he rails against Attwater's story of the execution of a native. Attwater told a grim tale of an un-named crime, the suicide of one native held responsible, 'Sullens' and the cold-blooded shooting of another, 'Obsequiousness' following his confession to the original offence. ' "It was a murder," he (Herrick) screamed. "A cold-hearted, bloody-minded murder! You monstrous being! Murderer and hypocrite- murderer and hypocrite- murderer and hypocrite" he repeated, and his tongue stumbled among the words" '.[44] Stevenson does not in any sense allow this romantic readiness for a coherent moral stance to develop, as Herrick is reduced to a

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[42] Jacques Berthoud, *Joseph Conrad: The Major Phase* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) p.90

[43] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.45

[44] *ibid.,* p.9

destroyed relic, seeking yet another escape at the end of the tale: ' "Oh, what does it matter?" cried Herrick. "Here I am. I am broken crockery; I am a burst drum; the whole of my life is gone to water; I have nothing left that I believe in, except my living horror of myself." '[45] In effect, what might have resembled a heroic adventure tale is dashed with the intervention of human reality and frailty.

Rarely does Stevenson grant a truly heroic role to any of his characters. As we have seen, even Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island* is left with the empty spoils of his gains at the end of the text in an anti-climactic finale. Wendy R Katz draws upon the close connections between the Jim characters of Stevenson and Conrad when she points out that '*Treasure Island* and *Lord Jim* have striking affinities: both are romances of heroism. Indeed, I imagine that if Conrad had allowed the readers of *Lord Jim* to peek over the young sailor's shoulder as he was reading those stories of adventure, perhaps they would have seen *Treasure Island'*.[46] Katz recognises the close associations of the two authors, which could almost suggest that the older Jim of Conrad can be seen as a version of Stevenson's younger boy character with some years of experience behind him. Katz may call both texts 'romances of heroism', but both are certainly warped examples of any form of conventional romantic, adventure novel.

A further comparison with Conrad can be made via Herrick's despairing words of 'living horror' from 'The Ebb Tide'. Linda Dryden, for example, quotes from a letter of Stevenson in relation to 'The Ebb Tide' where he writes that the story provided 'horror upon horror's head accumulated'.[47] Herrick in 'The Ebb Tide' of course provides Stevenson's fictional response to the extremes of his characters' experiences when, in his utterly defeated state he is left to consider 'the living horror of myself'.[48] Echoes of Herrick's guilt-ridden capitulation can also be heard from Conrad's tragic eponymous youth in *Lord Jim*. Jim's tortured conscience seems an altogether more wholesome and youthful depiction than Herrick's care-worn, disillusioned responses. Jim's various journeys, driven by the aching guilt of abandoning ship whilst leaving an entire boatload of native pilgrims on board the *Patna*, provides a strong comparison with Herrick. Here, in Conrad's character, the reader sees the ultimate corruption of a youthful innocence driven finally into permanent exile, leading to his own tragic demise,

[45] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit.*,* p.109
[46] Wendy R. Katz, Journal of Stevenson Studies, vol.3, 2006, p.38
[47] Linda Dryden in *Scottish Literature and Colonial Literature,* op. cit., p.97
[48] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*,* op. cit., p.109

where he literally 'takes a bullet' in direct retribution for the death of Doramin's (the leader of the Bugis community) son. In many ways, Herrick is already well beyond the innocence of youth stage and seems a character already subjected and weighed down by life amidst a colonial system which is already a debased and corrupted entity. Jim, on the other hand, is a character driven by the sheer moral terror and overwhelming guilt of his own actions aboard the *Patna*. Once again we see a lost component of a colonial world rife with confusion and moral destitution. In chapter 13, for example, Jim, in a fragmented and tortuous conversation with Marlow, displays the desperation to be rid of his mental burden when he blurts out ' "I am not good enough; I can't afford it. I am bound to fight this thing down- I am fighting it *now*." ' Marlow's narrative response adds to this image of a character constantly in flight when the chapter ends with 'He was running. Absolutely running, with nowhere to go. And he was not yet four and twenty.'[49]

A further comparison between Conrad's and Stevenson's texts can be seen in the invasion of a colonial rabble which leads to Jim's final demise. Jim's temporary retreat is doomed upon the arrival of 'Gentleman Brown'. Marlow's narrative describes him thus:

> He was the show ruffian on the Australian coast- not that he was often to be seen there, but because he was always trotted out in the stories of his lawless life as a visitor from home is treated to; and the mildest of these stories which were told about him from Cape York to Eden bay was enough to hang a man if told in the right place.'[50]

Here, Conrad uses similar tactics to Stevenson's to show the spoiling of a potential landscape of safety by the intrusions of a disreputable colonial element, the trio of characters on board the *Farallone* in Stevenson's case. This sense of the infringing upon and spoiling of landscape is present in both 'The Ebb Tide' and 'The Beach of Falesa', as brief depictions of exotically idyllic locations are tainted by the relentless pursuit of supposedly civilising influences. Within the final physical locations of each text, both writers refuse to allow the reader to dwell upon potentially idyllic scenes, consuming any lingering images of perfection and metaphorically mangle the landscape. In these fictional worlds, the darkness of the colonial experience always interrupts and corrupts.

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[49] Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim, op. cit.,* pp.156/157
[50] *ibid,* p.359

In 'The Ebb Tide', Herrick's initial glimpse of the island is momentarily overwhelming in terms of its impact and beauty: 'The isle- the undiscovered, the scarce believed in- now lay before them and close aboard; and Herrick thought that never in his dreams had he beheld anything more strange and delicate'.[51] There are echoes here of Stevenson's own responses to that first glimpse of an exotic landscape. In the first chapter of *In the South Seas* he states that 'The first experience can never be repeated. The first love, the first sunrise, the first South Sea Island, are memories apart, and touched a virginity of sense'.[52] His transference of this personal image is evident in Herrick's case as this virginal glimpse of something unspoiled is soon shattered by experience. It is not long before the tale is engulfed in the tawdrier aims of the trio as a familiar hunt for some form of treasure, or colonial plunder, takes over the minds and actions of the characters. The romantic ideas of exotic landscapes and the pursuit of the unknown are tainted by Western experience.

Although Stevenson's Attwater and Conrad's Jim are totally contrasting characters, there are clear comparisons to be made here in terms of their impact upon landscape. It is the Western world which travels and infects both settings, where each character has adopted a powerful paternal role amidst a native population. Attwater in 'The Ebb Tide' is of course part of the polluting influence upon this far-flung outpost: the native population is dead, struck down by either disease or by the hands of Attwater himself: a far more brutal characterisation of the Western influence by Stevenson, effective in a very different way from the tragic Jim.

In terms of each novel's conclusions, conventional morality ensures that Conrad's Jim occupies the high ground, especially as Marlow in his narrative has portrayed such an attractive characterisation of Jim and his tortured conscience. However, both texts share the undeniable final point that the colonial world is a confused, corrupt and bankrupt entity, filled with disparate and desperate characters in search of salvation. Stevenson's unremittingly bleak conclusion is surely the more realistic of these two strikingly similar texts, with no solution to a problem created by the colonial characters themselves. The desperate grubbiness of Stevenson's colonial mess in 'The Ebb Tide' is sharply contrasted with the undoubted and inevitable sacrifice of Jim to the mercy of the people he so loved and lived among. But

[51] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.64
[52] R.L. Stevenson, *In the South Seas* (London: Heinemann, 1925), p.4

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neither Stevenson nor Conrad provides a comfortable solution. Like Stevenson before him, the colonial presence causes pollution and trouble. In Conrad's plot, Jim pays with his life. As Jacques Berthould writes, the catastrophic mistakes and bloodshed due to Jim's trusting of Brown results in him being 'confronted by a nightmare version of his former self- an intolerable intruder from a world where dishonour is real'.[53] Jim's fate provides a close link to Stevenson's sentiments in 'The Ebb Tide', where a dishonourable invasion takes place on several levels, none of which are successful or beneficial, with Attwater's original occupation of the island being replaced by the desperate and hopeless attempts of the crew of the *Nonesuch* to provide a counter-occupation. Jim's mistakes result in his own furious execution by Doramin; and, as Berthould puts it, 'in an instant, the protector of Patusan becomes its destroyer'[54]. Berthould's comment reflect views of the paternal myth of the colonial world, shared by both Stevenson and Conrad. From neither author comes salvation. Within both of these fictional responses, it is the corrosive side of colonial territorial occupation which links all of the central figures in these early literary products of the age of Empire.

A kinship between colonial writers need not mean that they must be near contemporaries. Some sixty-odd years separate the texts of Stevenson and Greene, yet these writers deal in the universal themes of colonial exploitation and the impact of Western influence upon an indigenous population. They are further distanced geographically and politically, with the South Seas experience of Stevenson contrasting with the growing political tensions of French Indo-China in the 1950s. The transport of the colonial world has also, by Greene's time, changed beyond recognition. For Greene, motor transport takes over as the symbol of the conquering classes, operating as a form of barrier between the colonisers and the native population. Greene writes of a new colonial world altogether. The old cultural dominance of the Europeans has diminished beyond recognition, and is replaced by the embryonic colonial superpower of the United States of America.

Despite these changes in the symbolism of dominance, the pattern of all three texts retains the basic structure of attempted dominance and eventual confusion and failure. Greene's Fowler can be seen as something of a spokesman for the failures of the European colonial past when he attempts to give warning to Pyle, the eponymous 'Quiet American' of the text.

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[53] Jacques Berthoud, op. cit., p.92
[54] *ibid*, p.92

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Fowler tells Pyle that 'We are the old colonial peoples, Pyle, but we've learnt a bit of reality, we've learned not to play with matches'.[55] The ironic detachment of Fowler as first person narrative voice provides a stark example of the cyclical nature of colonial fictional response. The old world domination of large parts of the globe gives way to the wide-eyed innocence of Greene's Pyle, doomed to follow similar destructive paths trodden on by the colonising nations at the height of their powers in the late Victorian period. Here, the reasons for colonising are different, tinged with the perceived terror of communist expansion in South-East Asia, but the consequences remain the same.

A further connection between all three authors can be seen in the lack of illumination and the contributions of metaphorical darkness exhibited by Stevenson, Conrad and Greene. In the texts considered in this chapter, *darkness* acts as a linking image, suggesting the impact of humanity on both the customs and landscapes of colonised areas. It is coloniser who pollutes and creates barriers to his own understanding, barriers that the dominant colonial populations, despite territorial domination, can never fully penetrate beyond the fringes of the cultures they claimed to so dominate. Only briefly does Stevenson ever allow the reader and his characters in 'The Ebb Tide' to escape from the mind-numbing consequences of their hopeless driftwood existence, when he allows Herrick to dwell upon the new-found idyll of Attwater's island, writing that 'Herrick stood transported. In the gratified lust of his eye, he forgot the past and the present; forgot that he was menaced by a prison on the one hand and starvation on the other. A shoal of fishes […] were beautiful like birds, and their silent passage impressed him like a strain of song.'[56] This same fleeting glimpse of a world beyond the scope of his characters' experiences can be found in Stevenson's own *In the South Seas* and in 'The Beach of Falesa', when- as considered in chapter six- Wiltshire sees his new 'billet' for the first time. One can also see this in a different sense in *The Quiet American*, when the 'paddy fields', the metaphorical boundaries of the landscape, hide the real heart of the country, all of which is beyond the sight and minds of the western characters. Greene depicts a land of boundaries: a landscape made narrow in terms of both geography and the Western colonialists' inability to penetrate the land and culture of the country they occupy. He describes the scene as follows:

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[55] Graham Greene, *The Quiet American,* (London: Vintage Classics, 2004), p.149
[56] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*,* op. cit., p.66

One passed out of the French-controlled rice-fields into the rice-fields of the Hoa-Haos and thence into the rice-fields of the Caodaists, who were usually at war with the Hoa-Haos: only the flags changed on the watchtowers. Small naked boys sat on the buffaloes which waded genital-deep among the irrigated fields; where the gold harvest was ready the peasants in their hats like limpets winnowed the rice against little curved shelters of plaited bamboo. The cars drove rapidly by, belonging to another world. [57]

Here we see the ironic limitations of the colonisers, forever condemned to the fringes of the societies they attempt to dominate, further bound by the symbol from another world of the car. Beyond the first sighting, the ability to cross cultural boundaries in a colonial context is limited, and what Stevenson, Greene and Conrad consistently state is the idea that territorial domination does not automatically guarantee the comprehensive domination of the coloniser.

In all of the colonial fictional responses examined here there are obstacles, confusions and failure. Greene's description echoes Stevenson's depictions of colonial presence and impact, with ancient customs attempting to co-exist around the creeping and increasing presence of the modern, colonial world. When first encountering Attwater in 'The Ebb Tide', the consciously moral Herrick tells him ' "I find it heavenly" only to be told "Ah, that's because you're new from sea […] I dare say too you can appreciate what one calls it. It's a lovely name. It has a flavour, it has colour, it has a ring and fall to it; it's like its author- it's half Christian! Remember your first view of the island, and how it's only wood and water." '[58] Again we see the recurrence of Stevenson's frequently utilised *landscape* motifs of innocence and experience which permeate much of his fiction; a landscape that will be soiled only by human experience, just as it is in Conrad and Greene's later visions as the morality of the characters diminishes as their experience develops.

The island of Attwater becomes a strong microcosm of the colonial experience, as this dominant character outlines his 'mission': 'I have had a business, and a colony, and a mission of my own. I was a man of the world before I was a Christian; I am a man of the world still, and I make my mission pay […] I gave these beggars what they wanted: a judge in Israel, the bearer of the sword and scourge; I was making a new people here; and behold the angel of the Lord smote them and they were not!'[59] This powerful piece of symbolism of the effects of

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[57] Graham Greene, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p.76
[58] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.78
[59] *ibid*, p.80

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colonial dominance directly connects the worlds of Stevenson and Greene, as the 'New Colonials' once again adopt a race and a culture to their 'mutual benefit'.

In both texts, this is savagely exploited as a glaring and repeated irony. One particularly memorable scene in *The Quiet American* illustrates the point that those on the colonial side could never connect with the lands they inhabit. Fowler, after having escaped from a watchtower where he and Pyle were hiding, realises that their actions have resulted in the deaths of two young guards: 'I wanted to join him. It was the only thing I could do, to share his pain. But my own personal pain pushed me back'.[60] Fowler's helplessness in this scene suggests a similarity in the distancing effects created by Stevenson through his trio's failure to penetrate the landscape and culture of the world they found themselves in 'The Ebb Tide'. They are left impotent and confused amidst a poisoned and unforgiving setting.

Bearing all this in mind, and with Stevenson's powerful depictions of similar themes, if Greene is to be considered as an inheritor of Stevenson's ironic anti-colonial stance, it begs the question as to why 'The Ebb Tide' and ' Beach of Falesa' have failed to secure the same stature of Conrad and Greene's contributions to the imperial experience. There is undoubtedly a distinct line from Stevenson to Conrad, and arguably repeated by Greene in the new colonial era this last author depicts from the 1950s onwards. The attempted colonial governance and complacency of the Western world as it stumbles from one ill-conceived crisis to the next highlights the failures to learn from past mistakes. Indeed, the fate of Indo-China, outlined in miniature in *The Quiet American* is haunting for the modern reader steeped in the graphic, full-colour film images of the Americans in Vietnam and, of course the continued post-colonial world of conflict and conquest in Iraq and Afghanistan at the turn of the twenty-first century..

Stevenson's characters in 'The Ebb Tide' inhabit a world of confused and empty colonial precincts, where the characters eke out a pitiful existence on the very outskirts of a landscape which they can never inhabit or penetrate, much like the disparate band of characters of Conrad's Africa of *Heart of Darkness* and, in the mid-twentieth century, Greene's Indo-China. The opening lines of 'The Ebb Tide' provide instantly disarming imagery, given Stevenson's own place as one of the 'scattered men' he depicts:

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[60] Graham Greene, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p.106

> Throughout the island world of the Pacific, scattered men of many European races and from almost every grade of society carry activity and disseminate disease. Some prosper, some vegetate. Some have mounted the steps of thrones and owned islands and navies. Others again must marry for a livelihood; a strapping, chocolate-coloured dame supports them in sheer idleness.[61]

The stark nature of his assessment that 'some prosper, some vegetate' takes the tale immediately beyond the idea of conventional novel-writing, and closely linking with the mood of the two later publications. Also, we see the confusion which infuses the novel, with a jumbled mix of colonial characters inhabiting, but never quite conquering, an alien environment. A further link to Greene from this opening page is provided when Stevenson in 'The Ebb Tide' symbolically refers to some colonials 'still retaining some foreign element of gait or attitude'.[62] Their past clings to them; and all three of the texts examined here display the same myopic vision of attempts to control both the precincts of annexed foreign territories and the cultures they attempt to dominate.

Fast forward some 60 years to Greene's 'New Colonials' in the shape of his French/American/English compendium of characters and we find merely a more recent model of a well-rehearsed cultural drama. Once again we see the values and baggage of another, far-distant world attempting to impose Western solutions on, in this case, a far-Eastern background. Greene's Fowler records his initial glimpse of Pyle's bookcase. Quite literally, a handy collection of literature for the budding and fresh colonial character:

> I went across to the bookcase and examined the two rows of books- Pyle's library. *The Advance of Red China, The Challenge to Democracy, The Role of the West-* these, I suppose, were the complete works of York Harding. There were a lot of Congressional reports, a Vietnamese phrase book, a history of the War in the Philippines, a Modern Library Shakespeare.[63]

Stevenson, writing about his own South Seas experiences in a letter to Sydney Colvin (1891) states that 'I see democracy here on the least scale, perhaps in no very favourable example. It is an ugly picture.' [64] These words could easily have been taken from the narrative of Fowler in *The Quiet American,* with Stevenson's own sense of detachment echoing that of Greene's

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[61] R.L.Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*,* op. cit., p.1

[62] *ibid*, p.1

[63] Graham Green, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p.20

[64] Ernest Mehew, *Selected Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.463

character. Uglier indeed is the much later world inhabited by Greene's crusading eclectic entourage, where a similar yearning for the benefits of Western democracy creates a problem which would endure for years to come. Fowler, lamenting the latest atrocity of civilian slaughter, questions the whole grotesque situation he finds himself amidst: 'How many dead colonels justify a child's or a trishaw driver's death when you are building a national democratic front?'[65]

As we have seen in 'The Ebb Tide', Herrick's outraged reaction to the execution of a native by Attwater provides another direct example of the reactions to brutal excess. Both Herrick and Fowler attempt to maintain some form of moral distance from involvement in the brutally violent excesses they witness. Ultimately, both characters fail to achieve this moral distance. Even in the detached narrative of Fowler, there is a clear connection between the texts. One finds the same level of colonial awareness, and the same inability to completely control or comprehend the landscape and customs around them, the same collection of different Western countries intent on providing the missionary work required to safeguard the lives of their colonised natives, in this case France and America, among countless other internal factions.

Fowler himself tries to represent the old colonials who have learned the lessons of the past, but history merely repeats itself. In one exchange with Pyle, he maps out the colonial process, and the inevitability of its ultimate failure:

> 'They don't want Communism.'
> 'They want enough rice,' I said. 'They don't want to be shot at. They want one day to be much the same as another. They don't want our white skins around telling them what they want.'
> 'If Indo-China goes…'
> 'I know the record. Siam goes. Malaya goes. Indonesia goes. What does "go" mean? If I believed in your God and another life, I'd bet my future harp against your Golden crown that in five hundred years there may be no New York or London, but they'll be growing paddy in these fields, they'll be carrying their produce to market on long poles wearing their pointed hats.' [66]

Fowler's responses to Pyle's colonial rhetoric are maintained throughout the novel, with the sense of futility gained by his recollections of the failures of the older, pre-American imperial

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[65] Graham Greene, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p.158
[66] *ibid*, pp. 86/87

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actions of the Western world. Perhaps Stevenson uses his trio of down and out colonials in 'The Ebb Tide' to represent this abject failure of governance in the South Seas. This, as considered in chapter six, was an area divided among several countries, with different factions and kings vying for positions of favour among the ruling westerners. As Ernest Mehew points out, 'Stevenson's life in Samoa cannot be fully understood without some background knowledge of the political situation, bedevilled by the competing interests of the three Great Powers and complicated by the rivalries between the Samoan chiefs'.[67] By simply replacing the countries involved, and the geographical setting, the reader can detect some aspects of the plot of both 'The Ebb Tide' and *The Quiet American*. In both texts we find the dominant forces of colonialism squabbling among a messy landscape of political compromises and antagonism, with the native forces fighting a secondary battle somewhere in the marginalised background of Greene's story. In 'The Ebb Tide', Stevenson's natives are silenced completely.

Greene's world is filled with his own 1950s version of characters existing in a similar sense to Stevenson's characters in 'The Ebb Tide' who relied upon 'memoirs of the music hall'. Greene's characters inhabit a world of unfamiliarity, and compensate by re-creating a sense of their own culture on a new stage-set, a world of bars, clubs and prostitution, creating a familiar Western landscape within an alien scenario. The setting of Saigon provides a form of 'bubble' for the Western colonials to exist within, at the same time remaining safely *outside* the native culture of French Indo-China.

When the novel opens, Pyle is already dead. As the retrospective narrative of Fowler shows in the novel's early stages, the war in the north had begun to encroach upon this 'safer' territory, resulting in further boundaries developing around the Western characters. Fowler informs us that 'The Vieux Moulin stood beside the bridge. There were armed police on the bridge and the restaurant had an iron grille to keep out grenades. It wasn't safe to cross the bridge at night, for all the far side of the river was in the hands of the Vietminh after dark'.[68] The setting is highly symbolic and typical of colonial failure, where boundaries are erected in order that the colonial population can exist. But this existence is always apart and hidden from any sense of native interaction or culture.

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[67] Ernest Mehew, *Selected Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson,* op. cit., p.431
[68] Graham Greene, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p.11

In 'The Ebb Tide' Stevenson begins with abject failure, and focuses on the crushed figures of Herrick, Huish and Davis as his symbols of the vagaries of this system, and the additional absurdity of their very presence in the story at all, clearly marking out this tale as a darkened unromantic human mire. This rich vein of failure continues where the trio in 'The Ebb Tide' after stealing a schooner embark upon a high-seas adventure which, of course, ends in the horror of death by vitriol (Huish), moral turpitude (Herrick), and a seemingly blinding, yet empty religious epiphany for Davis in the face of the 'Fatalist missionary' Attwater. Fowler, by comparison, in *The Quiet American*, ends up as an accessory to murder when he puts a stop to further attempted and misguided politically-motivated acts by the seemingly earnestly missionary Pyle. A further connection can be made between the two characters, Herrick and Fowler, when Fowler, so long a tangible moral figure of journalist and bystander, on the outskirts of events, is brought sharply to the forefront of the action with his collusion in Pyle's death. This situation is somewhat replicated through Herrick's capitulation in 'The Ebb Tide', given the discomfort shown when he hears of Attwater's killing of a native earlier in the novella.

In one sense, these characters are very similar in terms of their attempted morality and frequent distaste for the actions of the dominating forces around them: Herrick on the brutality of Attwater's tale of the casual shooting of a native and Fowler, as he witnesses the bombings of civilians. Herrick, as we have seen, screams ' "You monstrous being! Murderer and hypocrite- murderer and hypocrite- murderer and hypocrite" '[69] upon hearing Attwater's tale of his role in the execution of a native. Fowler is horrified when he learns that Pyle had prior knowledge of the bombing, having 'warned her not to go', referring to Phuong and her regular visit to the café at the centre of the bombing. [70] In 'The Ebb Tide', the odd surrender to Attwater is equalled by the religious zeal shown by Davis as he seems to lose all reason and bow before the 'God-like' Attwater.

Fowler seems to go through a similar process in *The Quiet American*. He has attempted to remain aloof from the politics and madness of the virtually inexplicable mire of Indo-China. Fowler's involvement is absolute and shocking; equally as shocking, in effect, as the moral

[69] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.96
[70] Graham Greene, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p. 153

turpitude of Herrick and Davis in 'The Ebb Tide'. Although Fowler's reasons, on the one hand, are overtly selfish, he does retain an arguably moral sense as he stops Pyle's further involvement. But at what price? The character is left with a destroyed conscience amidst the shell of his relationship with Phuong. This would certainly place Greene's Fowler amidst the considerable wreckage of The Ebb Tide, especially in the final line of *The Quiet American*: 'Everything had gone right with me since he (Pyle) had died, but how I wished there existed someone to whom I could say that I was sorry'[71]. This could be read as a similarly empty and ambiguous conclusion as the final stages of 'The Ebb Tide' in several senses. The disillusioned ambiguity which concludes the tale can be seen with the capitulation of Herrick, describing himself as 'broken crockery' as he surrenders to the mercy of Attwater, left with only the guilt and the 'horror of himself'[72] to live with amidst the sense of anti-climax and waste among the exotic setting of the South Seas.

This sense of moral waste is one element which connects all three of the authors examined here. Self-examination is provided in abundance amidst the diversity of subject matter, with each author providing a colonial setting which can only engender similar endings of the discomforting failure of one culture trying to impose itself upon another. As Stevenson, Conrad and Greene have shown, voices cannot be forever silenced.

This chapter has examined the cyclical nature of colonial writing in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. The gap of 61 years between Stevenson's precursor, through to Greene's own precursor of the 'new Colonialism' of America in Indo-China, simply illustrates the fact that nothing has changed, and no lessons have been learned. Stevenson was the first of these authors who wrote to engender a stark response to the imperial precincts which existed around him. 'The Ebb Tide' certainly produces an equally powerful depiction of colonial chaos compared with Conrad's *Lord Jim* or indeed *The Heart of Darkness*. It is time, therefore, to cement Stevenson's deserved place in a tradition of anti-colonial literary response from which he has been often unjustly excluded.

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[71] Graham Green, *The Quiet American,* op. cit., p.180
[72] R.L. Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide'*,* op. cit., p.108

Chapter Eight: Changing Perceptions of Robert Louis Stevenson on Film

This final chapter considers whether the pattern of the readings of Stevenson's fiction and subsequent enhanced criticism, with a strong awareness of Stevenson's clear critical stance on colonialism seen in the latter half of the twentieth century, was repeated in cinematic interpretations of his fiction. In a similar manner to chapter one, where a wide range of critical readings is considered, I now examine further different *readings* of his fiction, in this case the adaptation of Stevenson's texts into film. Given the extent of the concern for marginalised voices, the dark themes expressed in much of his fiction, and, as I have argued, the distinct anti-colonial content of his later works in particular, this chapter examines whether a pattern of interpretation critical of colonialism was reflected in film. These cinematic interpretations have- to a limited extent- followed a similar path in terms of the critical reception of the late twentieth century, with some of the well-entrenched critical views already considered running parallel with a number of the Hollywood film versions of the early 1950s. Indeed, some of the 1950s film adaptations have played their own part in cementing established views on Stevenson's work. I do not suggest that all film versions in the latter half of the twentieth century followed the same path as the revisionist criticism, but at least one film- the 1971 adaptation of *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*- seems to have anticipated the change in attitudes towards Stevenson by almost ten years, heavily influenced by the social and political context of the early 1970s. A later film, the 1997 version of 'The Ebb Tide', perhaps goes much further in creating a more decisive anti-colonial vision, altering key elements of Stevenson's original to enhance the anti-colonial elements already evident, suggesting that Stevenson's fiction is as portable and usable as some of the more recognised colonially critical authors such as Conrad and Greene. As we shall see the first few years of the 1970s saw an emergence of hard-hitting, politically-edged film versions of some of his most famous fiction, with the Jacobite rebellion in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* emerging as a prime example of the darker, more brutal cinematic imagery of the 1970s, with a focus on the grim internecine after-effects of Culloden, famously the last battle fought on British soil.

Several of Stevenson's texts contain elements of plot and character which would indeed attract the earliest film-makers, with film versions of *Treasure Island* (1908) and *Jekyll and Hyde* (1910) being foremost in cinematic interpretations. Initially, many theatrical productions were staged during Stevenson's lifetime, and the choices of text followed a pattern which would be adopted by film directors after the turn of the century. Alex

Thompson points out that 'within two years of publication (of *Jekyll and Hyde)* numerous dramatic productions were being staged on both sides of the Atlantic, and rival adaptations were petitioning Stevenson for their blessing'.[1] It didn't take long for the fledgling film industry to utilise the cinematic possibilities, with *Jekyll and Hyde* and, later, *Treasure Island* being the most prolific and commercially successful ventures from page to celluloid. The first film version of *Treasure Island* came via a 'one-reeler by Vitagraph' in 1908; *Jekyll and Hyde* swiftly followed with *The Duality of Man* in 1910.[2]

Alex Thompson notes that the adoption of Stevenson's plots and characters by artistic elements beyond the literary world was very swift indeed, suggesting, in turn, a correlative negative subsequent response by literary critics and a solidifying of perceptions of his work:

> The intensity of the personal response to Stevenson by readers and other writers and artists has done much to warn away academic critics […] More considered critical appraisal has also stumbled against the great celebrity of Stevenson's most enduring characters and stories, whose fame is matched only by the speed with which they were absorbed into popular legend; so much so that their literary origins, and even the name of their creator, have often been forgotten.[3]

In terms of the critical responses to Stevenson during the twentieth century, Thompson's points can be related directly to the idea that the powerful cultural presence and influence of the cinema could in itself have *created* part of the erroneous critical responses to key texts and, indeed to Stevenson himself. *Treasure Island* and *Jekyll and Hyde* in effect became the template for popular stereotypes of Stevenson's works via the wide variety of cinematic interpretations after his death.

Sandra Ponzanesi poses some searching questions about the nature of film as distinct from written text in her chapter 'Postcolonial Adaptations', surveying a long-running debate on the nature and legitimacy of transforming a text into film. Her analysis deals principally with the potential and effect of adaptation theory in its recent sense, where a 'structuralist wave' developed during the 1970s in terms of the 'equality between the two media' of text and film. Subsequently, she considers the development of a 'poststructuralist, postcolonial wave' focussing on the 'socio-cultural contexts, the economic aspect of the cultural industry and the

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[1] Alex Thomson, 'Stevenson's Afterlives' in *The Edinburgh Companion to Robert Louis Stevenson, op. cit.,* p.149
[2] *ibid.,* p.149
[3] *ibid*., p.149

distribution system, and the question of reception and evaluation.'[4] In effect, one has to consider the legitimacy of the cinema as an art form in itself, capable of moulding an interpretation of a novel within the context of the film's production and, indeed, intended audience, as well as the context of the original literature.

The obvious allure for the film industry of the psychological horror possibilities in *Jekyll and Hyde,* and the 'romantic' elements suggested by the historical perspectives on the swashbuckling tales of Long John Silver or indeed the Jacobite images of the Highlands, provided a rich scope for early cinematographers. A recurring backdrop of Jacobite insurrection provided potent subject matter for Stevenson, and was recognised by film-makers as an attractive basis for celluloid creativity. This obvious cinematic material may help to explain why it seems that Stevenson's darker themes in his 'adventure' novels were not as easily translated into film until much later in the century. These adventure elements proved irresistible for many film directors, and Stevenson's fiction as a portable vision of a darker consideration of Scottish history would only emerge sporadically via film. The examination of film in this chapter includes a range of other Stevenson texts which have been subjected to cinematic treatment considering, with reference to modern literary criticism and post-colonial theories, how the author's texts have fared in a rapidly-changing social and political cinematic world. Post-colonial film analysis is a complex issue with any study of Stevenson. As the editors of *Postcolonial Cinema Studies* observe, Cinema and Postcolonial Studies 'are deeply involved with questions of representation',[5] and with Stevenson's fiction, the complexities of representation emerge from his depictions of the violent and fractured past of his own Scotland, as well as his own colonial experiences in Samoa. In Stevenson's fiction, his vision of a post-rebellion Scotland is tempered, as we have seen, by the troubling idea of Scotland in the time of the Jacobite conflict and the treatment of Highland culture and individuals, just as his own life in the South Seas was troubled by questions of colonial occupation and the impact upon ancient, indigenous cultures. Stevenson's David Balfour in both text and in film of both *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* acts as a form of conduit between two distinctly different worlds, watching as a way of life disintegrates before him, much as the adult Stevenson saw the eroding of ancient customs as a result of a more 'direct' form of imperialism.

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[4] Sandra Ponzanesi, 'Postcolonial Adaptions' in Sandra Ponzanesi and Marguerite Waller, eds., *Post-Colonial Cinema Studies* Oxford: Routledge, 2012) , p.173

[5] *ibid,* p.2

For some latter-day literary scholars, a white settler pontificating on the fate of the Samoan 'natives' does not quite seem to fit the mould for an anti-colonial commentator, especially via a bohemian literary celebrity in the shape of Stevenson. As argued above, this was precisely the role adopted and fulfilled by Stevenson, and some later twentieth-century films, especially upon the fate of the Highlands in the 1971 *Kidnapped* and the 1996 'The Ebb Tide'*,* recognise this. Indeed, in Stevenson's own case, his unique vantage point of being a Samoan *coloniser* as well as writing distinct anti-colonial tracts, adds a far deeper dimension to much of his later works both from a Samoan or South Seas perspective and within his later fictions set in Scotland, which were certainly influenced by his experiences of exile.

This is best illustrated, textually, by the reading of *Kidnapped,* written prior to his residency in Samoa and *Catriona,* conceived while living as an exile in his new home, a residency created *via* the colonial interjections of the Western world in the South Seas. *Kidnapped* is a very different text indeed to its successor, and in cinematic terms, provides rich material for a far darker interpretation of Stevenson's fiction. To some extent at least, the early Stevensonian predilection for adventure is self-evident in *Kidnapped* amidst the trials and tribulations of David Balfour and Alan Breck, although the novel is filled with the dark ambiguity and distinctly unromantic depictions of a very unforgiving and rough Highland landscape. In *Catriona,* as I have shown earlier, Stevenson darkens the landscape of post-Jacobite Scotland further, with a fractured country re-adjusting after the post-Jacobite 'settlement' of the relatively new British state, providing a close scrutiny of the emerging political landscape, now concentrated on the legal establishment of governance in Edinburgh, rather than the dying embers of the crushed rebellion. It is perhaps no surprise then that the 1971 film version of *Kidnapped,* examined in detail below, incorporates the politically edgy *Catriona* into its screen narrative to provide the darker focus for a cinema audience already immersed in a context of cinematic hard-edged output. When considering his works in cinematic terms, one might conclude that Stevenson in his texts, and, subsequently, some film makers with the Jacobite images of Scotland in mind, address a range of implications posed by the author's darker images of the violent suppression of marginalised populations and, indeed, the effects of colonialism in the South Seas context. This revolves around some of the most important concepts of Stevenson's literature in film: work which is closely associated with Scotland's past, especially that which examines the aftermath of the traumatic

events of 1745, and that of life 'outwith' Scotland's shores in *Treasure Island* and 'The Ebb Tide'.

Two films of the 1950s stand out as prime examples of film adaptations which have helped in creating lasting stereotypes of Stevenson's fiction: the 1950 Walt Disney film of *Treasure Island* and the 1953 version of *The Master of Ballantrae.* The 1950 adaptation of *Treasure Island* is certainly memorable for a variety of reasons, but seems guilty as charged in helping to create and sustain one of the most enduring of Stevensonian piratical stereotypes: Long John Silver himself. The performance of Robert Newton as Long John Silver is one of the most remarkable cinematic interpretations of any literary character. In one sense, this was popularising Stevenson's fiction for generations; in another, it was coining one of the most stereotypically misleading images of his work in popular memory. In this colourful 1950 commercial success, one might be tempted to dismiss anything with a whiff of Disney about it, but it brings out a number of undoubted, and perhaps ironic, subtleties in both performance and direction. The violence and darker edges are toned down, and Silver sails off into the sunset in full view of the remaining characters, wishing him well (among themselves) as he goes. But the viewer can forgive this warping of Stevenson's far more secretive departure of the central character. For, apart from Jim Hawkins, as noted in chapter three in 'The Persons of the Tale' in Stevenson's *Fables,* Silver is Stevenson's triumph, and a triumphantly attractive performance is both required and presented by Robert Newton in outrageous piratical mode, complete with his famous utterances of 'Jim lad' which punctuate the film. As entertainment, this film version certainly works, although as Nollen points out, much of Stevenson's dialogue is discarded, with little resemblance to Stevenson's original.

Not everyone would agree with my assessment of the film's positive attributes, however. Scott Allen Nollen in *RLS: Life, Literature and the Silver Screen* is hugely critical of both the acting and the film itself, calling it 'cartoon-like' in style, and slating the performance of Newton as 'blustery and overblown'.[6] 'Overblown' his performance certainly is, and Newton's performance is certainly full of 'bizarre pronunciations' and 'incessant grimaces'.[7] But the performance of Newton as Silver is precisely why I believe this to be a successful film in terms of capturing the essence of the 'adventure' side of the novel for a screen

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[6] Allen Nollen, *Robert Louis Stevenson: Life, Literature and the Silver Screen,* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 1994), p.101
[7] *ibid,* p.101

audience. It has far more impact when compared to the later performance of Jack Palance in the same role examined below. For young Hawkins' character, there must be *some* attractive qualities about the character to raise him above both the pirate population and the other principal players. Placing the film in its immediate post-war context, the escapist tendencies of both the acting and settings in the film are perhaps commercially understandable.

In the text the reader is almost duty-bound to be mesmerised by Long John Silver's character. From the first glimpse of Newton's creation in the 'Spy Glass', the viewer cannot fail to be captivated by his appearance, accent and behaviour. This, after all, is a character who, in Stevenson's text, can manipulate any audience he performs before. He is very much a study of the charming con-man on both page and screen. Newton, from our initial meeting in the 'Spy Glass' to his leadership among the pirates, and, finally, his manoeuvring *back* into the established world of Livesey, Trelawney and Captain Smollett, achieves this with suitable aplomb. One of Nollen's criticisms is that 'characters telegraph the results of events before they happen […] And, shortly after Silver's first appearance, he and Jim, facing each other in the back room, eagerly shake hands as 'shipmates'. [8] Despite Nollen's further criticism that director Bryon Haskin was guilty of 'frenetic pacing', he can at least be credited with presenting Stevenson's undoubted boundary-blurring setting as the basis of the ambiguities of the text itself.

When the island is reached, and the warring factions have separated, we are given the correct sense of both the lack of societal boundaries in this neutral space *and* the removal of 'good versus bad' characters. Newton's Silver keeps the pirate world both rough and highly-attractive for Jim Hawkins and the viewer. We also see, in Bobby Driscoll's performance as Jim, the duality of his relationship with his pirate 'father-figure'. The pivotal scenes of Silver's violence when in murderous mode are, unsurprisingly, absent in this version, but we are still given frequent glimpses of his ability to move from one world to another at frequent intervals. Skulduggery and swashbuckling behaviour are certainly provided at every turn in this film; but it does some justice to the dual nature of Stevenson's text. This 1950 Hollywood version of *Treasure Island* is visually stunning and placed a great emphasis on Silver as the epitome of the classic colourful piratical image amidst a heightened atmosphere of swashbuckling adventure. This works for a cinema audience, as we have a mesmerising

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[8] Allen Nollen, op. Cit., p.100

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and convincing figure who continually performs in the sharply contrasting worlds which make up the neutral space of the island and its temporary inhabitants.

Peter How's 2000 screenplay and production presents *Treasure Island* in a radically different manner. However, this particular *reading* of the text, with its concentration on gritty realism adopted by the director makes this film seem flat, compared with the 1950 Hollywood version. Jack Palance portrays Silver in a far more subdued and introspective manner, compared with that of Robert Newton, suggesting the delicate balancing act he performs in order to survive and, indeed prosper, amidst the competing worlds that are forced together in this enclosed space. The understated nature of his performance is, however, visually disappointing, as the required allure of Silver, which the text itself makes abundantly clear, takes a considerable amount of time to develop. For Jim in the original text, the attraction is instant. In How's film, a rather tired-looking middle-aged pirate in Palance loses the attractiveness and robust action and accent of Newton's creation. The film also suffers somewhat from some ill-fitting directorial tinkering in key areas, especially the jarringly incongruous ending, where Jim Hawkins sails off with Silver and Ben Gunn after themselves securing the treasure. This seems a rather clumsy attempt, perhaps, to diminish the return of Jim Hawkins to the life of 'normality' presented at the end of Stevenson's text, with the 'underdogs' triumphant, although the novel itself contains no note of triumph regarding the treasure itself.

In a peculiar alteration to the fate of Stevenson's characters, both Dr Livesey and Squire Trelawney are brutally mown down in a hail of piratical crossfire, providing a cinematic victory for the subaltern cast members, but certainly not one written by Stevenson in the novel. In this aspect, the film goes too far in seeming to redress the balance towards a triumph of the 'lower' characters, missing the point of Stevenson's ending. Prior to this, however, there is much to suggest that the director has planned some key sections of the film on a similar basis to some recent interpretations of the text, despite some of his odd interjections, such as the wholesale slaughter of the principal 'higher-level' characters.

It is a relatively short interpretation, lasting no more than 80 minutes, so speed is of the essence in relating the main features of the text. The film begins at a very bleak, rudimentary 'Admiral Benbow', providing a realist edge which continues throughout. Despite the alteration of the ending, the director makes no attempt to romanticise either the setting or the

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activities of the characters, and the 'Captain' (Billy Bones) who gives Jim his first glimpse of the pirate world is a suitably stumbling alcoholic wreck. The director does, nonetheless, render this particular pirate rather more potent than Stevenson intended, especially in the scene where Livesey confronts the pirate in full story-telling flow. In the text, the 'Captain' is instantly silenced by the language of the ruling elite embodied in Livesey; in How's film, the pirate menacingly holds a knife to Livesey's throat as he utters his tame threats to the pirate's future welfare.

Stevenson's text is quite clear about the power of hierarchy and language, and Bones' 'Silence, there, between the decks' is crushed by Livesey's intervention and refusal to acquiesce to the pirate's very temporary command of his audience. Livesey has only to say that, 'If you do not put that knife this instant in your pocket, I shall promise, upon my honour, you shall hang at the next assizes'.[9] In Stevenson's original, both characters know the power of language and the undoubted hierarchical structure of life on the mainland. Bones is instantly silenced by words which represent the rule of law and authority. In How's film, however, the pirate clearly has no notion of the boundaries of language, and aggressively holds the knife to Livesey's throat as the words of power from the text are whimpered by Livesey and neutered by Bones' blade. Clearly, this was a mistaken interpretation by the director in terms of the text, but cinematically appealing in the creation of danger for an audience. Structurally, the clear implication in terms of the use of language in *Treasure Island* is that on land, the language of the ruling elite is king, and the codes and vocabulary of piracy are all empty currency when faced with the unassailable strength of Livesey's authority. At sea, and on the island itself, these linguistic boundaries become temporarily blurred on the island's neutral space.

Jim Hawkins' first meeting with Long John Silver is pivotal in the text for the establishment of their relationship. Stevenson is also meticulous in his description of Long John, providing the basis for a character that must be able to operate within a variety of performance spaces and to very distinct audiences, both piratical and 'law-abiding'. How's film has a Silver mangled with drink in a very dark depiction of the 'Spy Glass', with a host of brawling pirates joining in the rum-soaked melee, extending a somewhat stereotypically drunken image of piracy. The film misses the point here, as Stevenson's intention was clearly

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9 Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., pp.15/16

to depict Silver as a radically different character from that of 'The Captain' in the novel's early stages. Jim needs to be impressed, not faced with the scene of almost comic debauchery seen in this film. For example, when Jim first sets eyes upon Silver he sees, in comparison to the 'buccaneers' he has already encountered 'a very different creature, according to me, from this clean and pleasant-tempered landlord'.[10] Jim's relationship with Silver, and Silver's fondness for the boy, does develop suitably later in the film, but the point of Silver as a plausible 'boundary-crossing' figure, able to exist in front of a variety of audiences, is somewhat lost here. For the character of Silver in the text, the worlds of the 'legitimate' characters and his own are frequently crossed in both directions. How's film latches on to the disreputable far too quickly, disallowing the subtlety in the character's early stages, although the actor Jack Palance's portrayal does display many more subtle elements in at times a pleasingly understated performance once the setting is at sea and beyond.

Where the film does succeed in terms of its appreciation of the text is through its presentation of the parallel world of subterranean piracy, with Stevenson having created multiple layers of ambiguity and irony in the behavioural codes of the pirates. This is first seen in the film's use of the frequent musical accompaniment of the pirates' song, 'Fifteen men on a dead man's chest'. In the text, the sound of the song is a clear signal of piratical fellowship and unity. How's film adopts this motif well, and, for the viewer, as well as the reader, the parallel underworld, with all its inherent fascinations, is unveiled. This is illustrated well in the crucial 'apple-barrel' scene, when Jim finally is subjected to a performance of the pirate world, and he sees Silver in a different light, encountering, and becoming instantly immersed in the dangerous possibilities of the piracy on board the *Hispaniola*.

The film also makes clear the moral ambiguity of the plot, given that the 'higher' characters indulge in the same treasure-hunting activities. The narrative ironies of the supposed 'good' characters against the 'bad' of piracy are warped so heavily that we are presented with a clear depiction of the disappearance of boundaries between the two groups, just as Stevenson intended with the text itself. Nonetheless, the direction of the film does deal in some absurdities, with the obvious buffoonery of Livesey and Trelawney and their followers resulting in the elevation of Ben Gunn and Silver to 'father figure' status for Jim

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[10] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit. p.53

Hawkins, as well as the rather unexpected extermination of the former. Undoubtedly, Stevenson portrays Silver as an occasional paternal character as far as Jim is concerned; but the film's ending, with the three of them sailing off into the sunset on the ship takes this softened paternalism to extremes beyond credibility.

The final stages of the text show a less-than-enthusiastic Jim Hawkins considering the eventual spoils of the hunt for treasure when he recalls that, in terms of Silver, 'we were all pleased to be so cheaply quit of him' and that 'all of us had an ample share of the treasure, and used it wisely or foolishly, according to our nature'.[11] What Stevenson intended at the end was clearly a re-establishment of the 'established order' and Silver, albeit temporarily, returning to the language of subservience employed prior to the voyage. One of his last lines in the text, delivered to Doctor Livesey, is 'I'm on your side now, hand and glove; and I shouldn't wish for to see the party weakened, let alone yourself, seeing as I know what I owes you'.[12] Silver seems to restore the order of boundaries himself; but the text clearly uses this as a prelude to his disappearance into the unknown. Palance's Silver vanishes with Jim Hawkins, which ruins some of the more subtle moments of the film in terms of presenting the moral ambiguities of the pirate world versus the established, law-driven status quo.

Any resemblance between the 1953 film adaptation of *The Master of Ballantrae* and Stevenson's original text is purely coincidental. As a reading of Stevenson's fiction, it is one of the most far-fetched of the films based on Stevenson's work, and contains very little of the novel itself. Instead, it seems chiefly designed as a box-office vehicle for its fading star, Errol Flynn, in his final grand swashbuckling role. As a piece of cinema it is memorable and hugely enjoyable; as an adaptation and reading of the novel it is hopelessly flawed. The film panders to the Scotland succumbing to the barbaric 'colonising England' myth of the Jacobite rebellion, and presents characters who resemble Stevenson's creations in name only. Most of the film is spent witnessing elaborate sword-fencing scenes which recall Flynn in his late-1930s prime as 'Robin Hood', but which destroy any relation to the text itself. So distant is the faintest idea of the original that Mackellar is depicted as being firmly installed in Durrisdeer *before* the rebellion; Jessie Broun, the village trollop, betrays James to the redcoats; the warring brothers of the text are re-united in a scene of thrilling derring-do at the

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[11] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island,* op. cit., p.205
[12] *ibid*, p.203

end; and 'Teach' is replaced by a flamboyantly camp French 'dandy' of a pirate captain. There is also no mention of voyages to the continent of America. It may well be a splendid film to watch, but Stevenson's dark, brooding tale of post-rebellion Scotland, fatally-divided family and trans-Atlantic travel is no-where to be seen as we are transported from one fencing scene, or scene of exotic Caribbean dancing, to yet another appearance of 'Jamie' at the family home after being shot and stabbed. (This is probably the sole genuine adherence to Stevenson's original: the Master's uncanny ability to survive attempts upon his life). Flynn's 'Jamie' is certainly compelling to view, but his portrayal misses the point that Stevenson's original novel depicted James as a hugely ironic and 'discredited hero of romance', rather than the thrilling performance of Flynn in the title role. As Nollen points out, 'Audiences might not have accepted Errol Flynn had he played Stevenson's complex and tragic James Durie (Jamie in the film), and it is doubtful if the heroic movie star could have succeeded in the role'.[13] All that can be gleaned from this film are some vaguely-accurate details of Culloden and a warped, simplified and mistaken sense of English colonisation of the whole of Scotland, conveniently ignoring the irritating truth of Scotland's own involvement in an undoubtedly internecine conflict. In the novel, Culloden is barely mentioned and, of course, James is unearthed as a government spy later in the text, destroying his own frequently-attempted performances as romantic hero in the eyes of both the reader and the inhabitants of Durrisdeer. The film gives us only the roguish jocularity of 'Jamie', the ultimate Scottish romantic hero and enduring historical stereotype which one might, as Alan Riach does in *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography* see as a 'patronising aspect' of Scottish representation in the form of 'Jamy' in Shakespeare's Henry V.[14]

Duncan Petrie examines a variety of film versions of Jacobite stock in his chapter 'The Jacobite Legacy' from *Screening Scotland* (2000). He states that 'it should come as no surprise to learn that the construction of a Scottish past is equally dependent on the construction of mythic projections rooted in fantasy, romance and the power of the imagination' and that 'the dominant historical vision of Scotland in the cinema is primarily associated with the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745'.[15] Stevenson's use of the Jacobite backdrop to Scotland's troubled past is just that: a backdrop, a series of 'off-stage' references and the rumbling consequences of the disastrous Stuart campaigns. As already considered,

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[13] Allen Nollen, op. cit., p.295

[14] Alan Riach, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography,* op. cit., p. 33

[15] Duncan Petrie, *Screening Scotland,* (London: British Film Institute, 2000) p.53

Stevenson moved beyond the unified equilibriums of Walter Scott in his depictions of Scottish history, avoiding any potential mythologising of the Scottish past which the Jacobite battles have so heavily contributed to. This, therefore, makes the cinematic incursions into Stevenson's distinctly Scottish texts all the more compelling, given his treatment of a period already deeply embedded in the reading habits of the Victorian age from Walter Scott's *Waverley* novels.

Petrie makes rather a sweeping statement on the subject at the start of his chapter when he suggests that 'This resistance to incorporation into the newly-unified British state had already inspired a potent mythical construction of Scottish identity propagated by the nineteenth-century novels of Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson, which were to provide rich material for numerous filmic adaptations'.[16] Petrie seems to have fallen into the trap of mistakenly concluding that Stevenson's depictions, along with Walter Scott's, have provided some form of mythical, romantic template for the film-maker within the texts themselves. Petrie, speaking in general of the material available to film-makers, suggests that 'the action invariably takes place against a picturesque backdrop of untamed Highland wilderness reflecting the honour, nobility and defiance of those who have inhabited this land for centuries'.[17] This is now delving into the generalised fantasies of film, as Stevenson's novels often reflect a barren, unforgiving and mournful landscape, far from the picturesque surroundings suggested above. And his characters by no means reflect a constant 'honour' or 'nobility' in the vicious post-Culloden atmosphere of *Kidnapped* and *Catriona.* The picturesque Highlands, as we shall see, do not always dominate in the film versions of Stevenson's Jacobite world.

Two very different film adaptations of *Kidnapped* (1959 and 1971) are now examined. The 1959 Hollywood version of *Kidnapped* contains a star-studded cast, including Peter Finch as Alan Breck and John Laurie as Davy Balfour's foul, murderous Uncle Ebenezer. Directed by Robert Stevenson, this film focuses heavily on the adventure aspects, and some breathtakingly colourful Highland scenery, as the plot dashes from the House of Shaws to Davy's kidnapping at Queensferry and, subsequently, to the romantic Highland setting. The Jacobite rebellion in the film is already a fading image as it is in Stevenson's original and we

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[16] Duncan Petrie, op. cit., p.8
[17] *ibid,* p.8

see the aftermath of the savage subduing of the Highland clan system. Our protagonists suffer none of the discomforts outlined in the text: there is no food poisoning for Balfour when he lands ashore after the shipwreck, and the punishing cruelty of some aspects of the romantic landscape is absent.

What the film does present rather well is the somewhat ambiguous figure of Alan Breck and his position as 'adventure hero' and Balfour as the morally-upright lowland contrast: the perfect literary and cinematic symbols of the uncomfortable duality of a fractured Scottish history. As in the written text itself, he appears in the incongruent and shabby French attire of a Jacobite renegade, a costumed symbol of an outlawed cause which is already dead. Breck is certainly not portrayed as a dashing hero, which a Hollywood film might easily have done, neither is he portrayed in a negative light. The film achieves a pleasing balance in the presentation of this important, complicated character. The costume already looks like it has rather fittingly come from the wardrobe department of a jaded and defunct drama, with the Highland characters more than close to the parody of penny-pinching, Gaelic-speaking oddities, performing marginalised roles which are already confined to history, just as their culture and language became proscribed by the newly-empowered British state in full internally-colonial mode. But, again, this is not an overt criticism, as the viewer, as well as the reader needs to *see* and *feel* the difference as seen by David Balfour, otherwise the message of the divisions in the eighteenth-century Scotland, culturally and geographically, would not be expressed clearly enough.

The time spent in the Highland setting is comparatively brief, giving just enough space to meet a variety of characters including, as Duncan Petrie points out, 'a stingy Duncan McRae, a steadfast Finlay Currie and Peter O'Toole as the unlikely son of Rob Roy MacGregor, with whom Breck engages in a piping duel'.[18] The concluding scenes of the film, reached rapidly in a fast-paced 90-minutes, are set not on Corstorphine Hill, but at Queensferry after David Balfour has taken on the Lairdship of the House of Shaws. The ending does, however, provide a satisfying link to the film's depiction of the tatty-looking Breck as he leaves for a ship to France and exile, along with most of the other players from the marginalised Jacobite worlds of the past. Fittingly, Breck becomes as he departs a memory of a culture already

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[18] Duncan Petrie, op. cit., p.65

gone, which pays homage to the character's departure in the politically far darker sequel, *Catriona*.

The vanishing outlawed culture of the Highland clans is a key aspect of the text of *Kidnapped*. Stevenson's depiction of the haunting lament of dispossessed Highlanders as they leave for distant foreign shores is particularly memorable in the sense that it is viewed through the fresh eyes of a young Lowland Whig, ignorant of the ways of a totally alien Gaelic culture. Director Robert Stevenson's film does provide a convincing dichotomy of Lowland Scotland and its endangered Highland counterpart. Balfour, in both film and text, frequently identifies himself as an outsider, and alien in a culture beyond his youthful ken. The Highland figures he encounters, especially in the film the Gaelic-speaking Duncan McRae, make the contrast clearly. The viewer sees the undoubtedly colourful Highland culture in the same way as the film's youngest protagonist: strange tongues; exotic landscapes and fading costumes of a drama about to be banished into history, with Alan Breck as the prime example of a character in the jaded attire of a soon-to-be bygone age. Robert Stevenson's film does Robert Louis Stevenson's text undoubted justice. It is an impressive and successful representation of the literary original, and presents some glorious performances in the key character roles. Scott Allen Nollen's review of the film agrees with its accuracy in terms of the text when he states that 'the narrative follows the novel very closely, covering every incident except David's experiences on Earraid (this material is replaced by David's meeting with a sinister Highlander) and Alison Hastie's heroic effort on the Forth (instead, Alan's hoodwinking of an old woman allows them to cross the guarded bridge at Stirling)'.[19]

Compared to earlier points on the more recent version of *Treasure Island* above, Robert Stevenson's Disney film is both respectfully accurate and relatively subtle. One prime example of the attention to textual detail paid by the film makers and director is cited by Nollen when he points out that 'From Ardgour equipment was carried by pack ponies to Lettermore wood, where the murder of Colin Campbell was re-enacted upon the original site'.[20] This version from 1959 proved to be both a colourful Hollywood adventure, with glorious Highland settings, and very accurately-constructed characters from a stellar cast.

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[19] Allen Nollen, op. cit., p.269
[20] *ibid.*, p.269

There is enough in this adaptation of *Kidnapped* to suggest that as the century moved on, relatively darker and certainly more textually accurate versions of Stevenson's fiction were beginning to emerge.

The consciously violent approach to the 1971 film starring Michael Caine is important in terms of the impact of the early 1970s political and social context. It offers a discernible shift in the presentation and reading of Stevenson's original, with the combination of *Kidnapped* and the subsequent *Catriona* creating a far starker cinematic reaction to depictions of Scottish history, the Jacobite disaster itself and the effects rendered upon both its followers and the doomed Highland culture. The focus of the 1959 film was clearly on the more adventurous elements of the plot; here, the slaughter of Culloden, and the dangerous aftermath are examined in a stark manner from the film's opening scenes. Stevenson's text, however, does not provide scrutiny of the Jacobite battles in *Kidnapped*. The 1971 version, therefore, can be seen as a strong example of the adaptation theories discussed above, where a far more brutal vision seems to have been applied to the reading of Stevenson's original texts, combining it with the author's own far stronger and darker observation of Scotland in *Catriona* and amplifying these elements for a cinema audience. Duncan Petrie notes this change in emphasis in his 'Jacobite Legacy' chapter of *Screening Scotland,* suggesting a distinct shift in the portrayal of such 'traditional' images. He makes the following comparison between the films:

> While Stevenson (the director of the 1959 film) emphasised the familiar aspects of the Highland romance, the subsequent 1971 version of *Kidnapped,* directed by Delbert Mann and starring (a rather miscast) Michael Caine as Alan Breck, shifts the focus to the '45 rebellion. The film opens on a Culloden Moor strewn with corpses, wounded Highlanders being indiscriminately bayonetted by government troops and the Duke of Cumberland ordering the pacification of the Highlands.[21]

Petrie believed Michael Caine to be 'miscast' in the film; but some disagreement can be found in both Scott Allen Nollen's assessment of his casting and performance and my own assessment. In complete contradiction to Petrie's review, Nollen sees Caine's performance as the 'highlight of the film', describing him as a 'powerful variation on Stevenson's original character' and his portrayal of Breck as an 'admirable performance'.[22] Indeed, the casting of Caine is one of the most important aspects of the film. By 1971, Caine was already a well-

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[21] Duncan Petrie, op. cit., p.65
[22] Allen Nollen, op. cit., p.279

established and recognisable cinema actor, specialising in hard-edged roles in films such as *Alfie* (1966), and *Get Carter* (1971). Later in his career, he would also star as 'Fowler' in the 2002 film adaptation of Greene's *The Quiet American,* another key role from a seemingly more obviously portable anti-colonial text. It would seem that choosing Caine to play the pivotal role of Alan Breck was deliberate in highlighting the violent edginess of this dark version of the two combined novels. In the early 1970s, Stevenson seems very portable indeed in terms of providing material for a very bleak and hardened interpretation, governed heavily by the contextual events of the time.

Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* concentrate on the effects, rather than the brutalities, of the failed Jacobite venture as seen through the eyes of his narrator, young Davy Balfour. He learns and observes from the position of a youth amidst these alien and dangerous settings, both in the Lothian Lowlands and in the extremes of his Highland 'adventure'. Mann's film, however, takes the plot beyond the novel's narrative boundaries as a result of cinematic requirements. A film about Jacobite disaster perhaps requires a certain degree of on-stage governmental cruelty, and Mann's film does not disappoint. In its early 1970s context, the brutalising effects of persecuted communities are perhaps more sharply defined here for a variety of reasons. This was a world in which the horrors of Vietnam were broadcast on a daily basis on television screens. In Northern Ireland, the Ulster 'troubles' were developing into a phase of extreme, and very public violence, most notably with the events of 1969 in Bogside and beyond. And in Scotland, a smouldering growth in the expression of Scottish identity gathered pace during the period before and after the film, beginning with Winnie Ewing's famous Hamilton by-election victory, and culminating in the later failure of the devolution referendum in 1979.

Nollen's assessment backs the theory of 'adaptation' and contextual influences upon the transformation from page to film discussed above when he states that: 'At least one critic claimed that Mann and Pulman's emphasis on the political subplot was prompted by contemporary concerns, including the Vietnam War. (This observation is supported by the American International press book, which refers to the Jacobite campaigns as guerrilla wars)'.[23] When juxtaposed with the context of the desire for post-war colourful adventure of only 20 years earlier, it is perhaps not difficult to detect a cultural change in the presentation

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[23] Allen Nollen, op. cit., p.279

of threatened and brutalised cultures of the past. The long-dispersed Highland rebellion is the perfect subject matter for this cinematically darker form of observation.

The growing and televised violence in the Northern Ireland is another potent and tangible factor in this equation, where a modern, globally-filmed and distributed form of civil war was gathering pace. Also, one can add the equally graphic Vietnam disaster, and it is relatively straightforward to provide a compelling contemporary background to the thinking behind this directorial reading of *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*. For film-goers in the early 1970s, the narratives of brutality could be seen in countless news bulletins of populations existing amidst scenes of violence, all captured on film. All of this assists in the dispelling of any elements of Highland 'romance' in the film set during what, historically, was a severe period of blood-letting in Scottish history. The nature of Stevenson's fiction of the late eighteenth-century Scottish version of the 'troubles' seems uncomfortably close to the internecine blood-letting in Ireland and the disastrous American interventions in Vietnam. In terms of portable Victorian fiction in the 1970s, this brutal depiction of the Highlands, sharpened by the 1970s context might also be compared with possibly the most famous later transportation of fiction to film: *Apocalypse Now* (1979), which transposes Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* into the crazed shambles of Vietnam. Whether the above events directly influenced Delbert Mann's direction is another question, but the climate of well-documented film violence and contemporary events provides a compelling basis for this tendency towards such thoroughly revised interpretations of Stevenson's literature which, in this case, was already full of dark visions of the post-Culloden social and political landscape.

There was, indeed, some celluloid precedent for this style of revisionist film-making of Scottish historical subject matter, as Petrie points out when discussing the memorably brutal 1964 film of the Culloden battle. Duncan Petrie notes the following:

> The 1971 version of *Kidnapped* relies on a more muted and naturalistic colour scheme than its predecessors. This aesthetic approach, coupled with the historical revisionism of the film, may have been indirectly influenced by the 1964 BBC television film *Culloden,* written by writer-director Peter Watkins. This film presents a radically different interpretation of the battle and its aftermath to the popular myth, revealing an ill-prepared and poorly-led Highland army thrown into a conflict that was in some senses a 'civil war' pitting Lowlander against Highlander and in some cases even members of the same family.[24]

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[24] Duncan Petrie, op. cit., p.65

The undoubted starkness of this earlier *Culloden* film brought the realities of warfare to a modern audience used to filmed depictions of death. *Culloden* is presented with brutal repression and a very modern news broadcast format, complete with interviews with the participants, transposing modern, hard-hitting television journalism to the battlefield scenes. This is replicated, at least in terms of brutality and violence, in the opening scenes of the 1971 *Kidnapped*: a ragged and corpse-ridden backdrop of the violent suppression of the doomed rebellion. Mann's direction focuses on the immediate aftermath of battle, with pale and bloodied bodies lying in their final death-poses as the victorious Redcoats wander freely, bayoneting anything which stirs amidst the picturesque Highland backdrop. The irony here is certainly not absent in the harshness of Stevenson's own portrayal of the landscape, although it is undoubtedly amplified in the film. This stark visual violence adds a more gruesome element absent from the original texts, but the subtext of both *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* presents a sequence of events, and the impact upon individuals, which runs parallel to the film's more graphic vision of destruction.

In *Catriona,* we see the troubled political and social impact upon a Scotland adjusting with considerable national discomfort and unease to the post-union and post-rebellion landscape. In cinematic terms the merging of different elements of the two original texts makes perfect sense as it unites Stevenson's own early concerns for the suppressed Highlands in *Kidnapped* with his further enhanced, even darker legalistic and political revision of the past in *Catriona,* influenced, as we have seen, by his detachment from Scotland and colonial immersion. Stevenson leaves his reader with a country in flux, uncomfortably attempting to adjust to the Hanoverian vision of the new Greater Britain. And the scenes of civil war brutality in Mann's film do nothing to dispel the discordant images presented in the original texts, especially the scenes of wholesale slaughter, historically evident in the post-Culloden reprisals of government forces, of entire families at lonely, bloody crofting scenes. The film takes care to show the impact upon civilians, or 'non-combatants', to give them an even more hideously up-to-date definition, caught up in the vicious suppressing of the clans.

In one particularly hard-hitting scene, Michael Caine's Breck comes upon a croft with the bloodied remains of an entire family. In another, Breck, Balfour and Catriona witness the massacre of another family, with the camera's focus providing the mowing down of some small boys and their mother, followed by the repeatedly ominous, off-camera gunshots

heralding multiple deaths at this particularly desolate spot. The repeated use of violence in the film amidst an unarmed populace is another link to the context of violent and well-documented conflict in the early years of the 1970s, removing all traces of previous films' bright cinematic Technicolor and romance. Yes, the viewer is given the same dramatic Highland backgrounds as any other version, but these images are swiftly warped by the constant political and military threat. This was a key aspect of Stevenson's original *Catriona* text in particular, where the political machinations of the troubled state pursue the characters all the way to Jacobite exile in France.

In many ways, this film is an interesting and successful adaptation and amalgamation of several key areas of the two novels. It does, nonetheless, alter and omit much of each text, to the extent of completely changing the written path of the main characters, and changing key events, particularly where Alan Breck is concerned. Rather than sailing into empty exile in France as written in *Catriona,* Breck saves the character of James Stewart by surrendering himself to the justice of the victors. This could be regarded as a noble gesture for the viewer to enjoy amidst the violent excesses of the rebellion's aftermath, but it remains a curious error, given the undoubted political stance of the film, in an otherwise apt transformation. The 'off-stage' machinations surrounding the trial scenes at Inveraray, steeped in political and legal intrigue as James Stewart falls victim to an eighteenth-century 'show trial' are condensed.

In an adaptation focussing on the harsh political realities rather than the romantic, this may well have provided further grim fascination for the viewer if it had been included. We are provided with the interaction between David Balfour and the Lord Advocate- impressively portrayed by Trevor Howard- in the lead-up to the trial. This certainly highlights the textual situation of Balfour as a relatively 'safe' character, caught between the obvious concern for the brutal injustices of the political ramifications of Culloden, and his own place as an emerging, if youthful, landowner after the death of his uncle. Perhaps the film does no disservice to Stevenson's original text, given the weakness of *Catriona* after the physical movement of the cast to mainland Europe. The film does, however, lose some of its clout when Alan Breck offers up his life to save James Stewart, now somewhat incongruously cast as the father of Catriona herself. For all its powerful depictions of a fractured Scotland in a post-rebellion flux, the finale of Breck in heroic sacrifice is perhaps too romantic, and detracts from the strong foundations of the film's bleak depiction of Jacobite destruction.

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The passages rooted in the temporary 'imprisonment' of David Balfour upon the Bass Rock are also missing. These key images from *Catriona* provide one of the most politically-inspired sections of the original text in its haunting use of the off-shore island as a historically-recurring political prison. Stevenson, as we have seen in chapter six of this thesis, links the Scottish persecution of the Covenanters, the previous 'tenants' of the island in its prison form to that of the Jacobites, internally exiled as the country moves towards a 'settlement' into the wider British state. In the novel, it is the solitary figure of David Balfour who is imprisoned on the old prison island for immediate political expediency, namely to stop him interfering in the political show-trial of James Stewart. Perhaps if a film interpretation of *Catriona* had been created during the early 2000s, we might well have seen close attention paid to this key aspect of the text given our own immersion in images of orange-clad prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, the USA's own prison island following the American global interventions on behalf of George W Bush's 'War on Terror'. Conjecture perhaps, but move the film from 1971 to the first years of the new millennium, and we may well have seen a more intense vision of one of the most compelling sections of Stevenson's sequel to *Kidnapped.*

Shohini Chaudhuri examines just such a contemporary film, *Children of Men,* (2006), again starring Michael Caine, where a dystopian vision of the consequences of the 'War on Terror' and its assault upon individual freedoms by the state in a future Britain is portrayed in a 2027 London setting. Chaudhuri points out, in relation to the 'extraordinary rendition' of 'suspected terrorists' (in other words, imprisonment anywhere at the behest of the state, and in particular Guantanamo Bay) that 'This offshoring of torture (including the use of local contractors) has a neo-colonial dimension, following a historical pattern of exploiting "extra-territorial sites where prisoners are detained and tortured at the pleasure of the sovereign power" and where colonial powers can exert their authority without customary legal restraints'.[25] Stevenson's own interest in the legality of the colonial system of his experience is well-known, and his own Edinburgh University training became useful for the exiled writer when dealing with the realities of colonial 'responsibility'. Hence in *Catriona,* written during a period where Stevenson's immersion in legal matters was at its strongest, we see the close attention to detail of the legal power of the state in the trial of James Stewart.

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[25] Shohini Chaudhuri, 'Post-colonial Reflections on Terror, Torture and Detention' in Ponzanesi and Waller, eds., *Post-Colonial Cinema Studies, op. cit.,* p.192

Writing of *Children of Men*, Chaudhuri comments that the London version of a Guantanamo-style detention camp in Bexhill becomes a '"non-place" in which individuals are turned into "unpeople", prisoners into "detainees", who remain utterly at their guards' mercy'.[26] Admittedly, in this less violent form of imprisonment, Balfour's removal from society is very temporary and tame in comparison to the brutalised modern political imprisonment, but the politically-beneficial imprisonment beyond the boundaries of normal legality is there. The film did, nonetheless, focus upon the politics of *Catriona,* despite the diluting of the background to the undoubtedly political Inveraray trial, which, in itself, is a final drawing down of the curtain upon a national drama which had already reached its denouement. Ultimately, the combined approach to the film works because of this undoubtedly hard-hitting and dark reading of Stevenson's text, which was, in itself, already subject to Stevenson's own experiences of the imperial project, colouring the writing of *Catriona* in particular, with its focus on this politically pivotal seismic moment in Scottish history. And it seems clear that the 1971 film version of *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* was guided by both contemporary events in the conflicts of the time *and* by the political undertones of Stevenson's original texts.

As we have seen, Stevenson's more overtly colonially critical texts were written while in Samoan exile. As well as the author's Scottish fiction, film-makers have successfully adapted some aspects of Stevenson's South Seas fiction. There have been several film versions of his post-colonial adventure 'The Ebb Tide', with the first, silent adaptation made by Paramount in 1922, followed by two further Paramount productions in 1937 and 1947.[27] As argued earlier, 'The Ebb Tide' is a distinctly anti-colonial text, breaking new ground within the colonial context in which it was conceived and written. Its focus on the absolute dregs of Imperial enterprise, with a motley crew of fallen colonials, removes any vestige of glory or adventure from the novel from the opening pages. Packed with the sea-faring and island symbolism utilised by Stevenson in several of his major works, it lays bare the stark failures of a discredited world in which he has lived and witnessed at first hand the consequences of Western involvement in the South Seas.

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[26] Allen Nollen, op. cit., p.199
[27] Shohini Chaudhuri, op. cit., pp 321-324

The 1997 film adaptation of the text, with a screenplay written by Simon Donald, directed by Nick Renton, and starring Robbie Coltrane, follows closely the original written text itself, but includes some additional material which provides an enhanced and contemporary anti-colonial cinematic interpretation of the novel. This is probably one of the most compellingly accurate screen interpretations of Stevenson's fiction, and faithfully follows the plot of the original novel, using much of the text written by Stevenson. However, in colonial terms, the representation of the native population is, to some extent, added to and embellished, with the silent island including three native characters absent from the action of the original text. The director takes the darker critical aspects beyond that of Stevenson's original text, imposing a more obvious level of colonial imagery on the audience. The film also alters the *dramatis personae* of the novel, with Coltrane as captain (Chisholm in the film, as opposed to Davis), Chris Barnes as the 'Huish' character (here known as 'Billy Bunch') and Steven MacKintosh as the replacement for Herrick, now known as 'Swanson'. Attwater, the vicious occupant of the island becomes 'Elstrom', here played by Nigel Terry. Despite the name changes, the characteristics of each remain broadly similar; but the fate of most of the characters, and the film's overall conclusions, are radically altered, with 'Chisholm' the solitary survivor, along with two native crewmen, 'Fakeeva' and 'Taveta'. The rest die horribly: Bunch, as directed by Stevenson's original, by vitriol and the merciful gunshot of his captain; Swanson shoots himself with a gun provided by Elstrom following his discovery of the hanged corpse of Elstrom's native maid; and Elstrom himself is rather beautifully harpooned by one of the surviving native crewmen in a blood-soaked finale.

Also absent from the original text is the Scottish element, emphasised by the casting of Coltrane and further explored in the life-story of the character. We learn of his Hebridean wife, 'Fiona', and his tragic family background, for example, and the screen play provides some witty Scottish dialogue for Coltrane to deliver, such as, 'Away tae hell in a bucket o' boilin' shite, Strickland'. (This was in response to a conversation with *another* Scottish character, the sea-captain Strickland in the film). Stevenson's colonial characters in both 'The Ebb Tide' and his other major colonial work 'The Beach at Falesa' tended to concentrate on the English depiction of chief colonial participants, with Wiltshire in 'The Beach at Falesa' being a prime example. Coltrane's contemplative performance, punctuated by his constant desire for 'redemption', is a key additional element in the film's adaptation of the text: a clear linkage to both the original author and, indeed, to the realities of the colonial project, of which Stevenson was a none-too-complimentary participant.

It seems possible that Coltrane's character, and the heavy Scottish element of characterisation in general, is a deliberate attempt to engender a close connection to the writer's own background as a Scot abroad, adding to the acute sense of abandonment displayed by Chisholm in particular, and providing a further element of post-colonial reading and adaptation on the part of the film-makers. Where Stevenson tended to avoid Scottish characters on the whole in his South Seas fiction, the film adds and develops them as an integral image of a very British empire, rather than the stereotypical images of English dominance. As all scholars of imperial history are aware, the Scot took a full and active role in the creation and administration of colonial matters, and the film's conscious decision to develop a strong Scottish element correctly, and successfully, highlights this.

The film's depiction of the three bedraggled characters is highlighted in a key opening section, revealing their low and downtrodden status: white rejects within a colonial environment which has abandoned them. So lowly is their position in both the text and the film that an ironic role-reversal ensues when they are forced to perform in front of an audience of five 'Kanakas' to obtain food. This is a key symbolic moment in the text, as Stevenson reduces the central characters to a level far below that of the colonised natives, echoing the subservient behaviour patterns normally associated with a conquered culture, not the supposed ruling white race. This is but one embellished example in the film of the clear pattern of colonial critique sustained by Stevenson's narrative throughout the text. In the second chapter of the novella he describes the scene thus:

> He (the Captain, Davis; 'Chisholm' in the film) came close up to where the plank rested on the grassy quay; turned his back upon the schooner, and began to whistle that lively air, 'The Irish Washerwoman'. It caught the ears of the Kanaka seamen like a preconcerted signal; with one accord they looked up from their meal and crowded to the ship's side, fei in hand and munching as they looked. Even as the poor brown Pyrenean bear dances in the streets of English towns under his master's baton; even so, but with how much more of spirit and precision, the captain footed it in time to his whistling, and his long morning shadow capered beyond him on the grass. The Kanakas smiled on the performance; Herrick looked on heavy-eyed, hunger for the moment conquering all sense of shame.[28]

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[28] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Ebb Tide', op. cit., p.12

The film's adaptation of the scene is equally clear, and highlights this hugely ironic role-reversal as the white characters literally beg from their native counterparts. Robbie Coltrane's Chisholm character dances a hornpipe in front of the black crew, receiving food as his reward. In terms of representation, Stevenson utilises his colonial characters to great effect, relying on their behaviour, rather than giving voice to the suppressed native characters to deliver his warped images of the results of territorial expansion into the South Seas. This film, however, does add a further post-colonial commentary by providing more of the lost voices of the colonised population and giving them a far more active role in the proceedings. In this case, the supposedly subservient colonised play the roles of the colonisers, having in this situation created a temporary dominance over this small group of white Westerners.

There are several key symbolic moments highlighted in the film, which draw attention to Stevenson's undoubtedly critical textual tone in matters colonial. For instance, once the *Farallone* ship- a 'plague ship', complete with the stinking, rotting corpses of two former crew members on board- has been secured by Coltrane as captain, the visual significance of uniform becomes symbolic of the rule of law and the dominance of the white colonials. Coltrane dons the captain's costume and Swanson becomes his first mate, instantly, in their minds, transforming themselves from virtual *untermenschen* in this colonial outpost to characters with a distinct role and purpose in the great colonial adventure. It is, in effect, an attempt to re-establish colonial boundaries after their humiliations via the uniform of the ruling elite. However, with such a disparate and tiny crew in charge of their fake cargo of mostly empty bottles, discipline between them collapses and fails, resulting in on-ship violence ended only by the discovery of the uncharted island. Here again, as in the text itself, Stevenson has used the island symbol as a pivotal image in his text, an image once again, as in *Treasure Island,* promising great riches when they realise that it is a 'pearl island', but one that is riddled with disease and is a setting doomed to fail.

The initial mystery of the island soon gives way to a desolate, empty landscape with only two visible inhabitants: Elstrom and his female native servant. Complete with British flag, graves of small-pox native victims and empty diving suits, we are given a clear visual image of the failure and degeneration of this outpost, ruled by the upper-class tones of Elstrom as the film's equivalent of Stevenson's original Attwater. Again, events on the island in the film follow the plot of the novella closely apart from the ending. In the text, Huish is the only dead character by the end, but the film finishes with several acts of bloody brutality, including the

killing of Elstrom by the two surviving native crew members, one of whom was swept overboard and the other who jumped ship to find him. It is this ending which seems influenced by a post-colonial, modern, late 1990s context. Stevenson's characters are already written in a distinctly anti-colonial manner; but the film gives voice and action to the remaining black crewmen, being the only survivors apart from Chisholm. This is supportive, perhaps, of post-colonial hindsight, where the colonial governance would eventually disintegrate, leaving the aboriginal population to take back what was rightfully theirs in the face of moral corruption and colonial failure.

It seems clear that, in parallel with the emerging development of literary criticism of Stevenson's work, cinematic readings and depictions of his original texts have altered considerably between the 1950s and the present day in terms of cultural and contextual influences. The attractiveness of the Hollywood Technicolor adventure epics had its own merits; and, as highlighted above, not all of the impact upon the post-war versions was negative, although inevitable- and enduring- stereotypes have made an impact upon popular perceptions of Stevenson's work. However, from the early 1970s, we see to some extent a different approach. In many ways some film-makers delivered a far more mature and revisionist consideration of Stevenson's fiction in a few cinematic interpretations, clearly recognising the darker, more complex Scottish and imperial narratives of a writer who was already an ironic anti-colonial prototype within the colonial system itself. Cinema, arguably, did much to cement critical perceptions of Stevenson which endured for much of the twentieth century; but a small number of modern film-makers have followed (or predated) the revisionist path of many literary critics in recent years.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this thesis was to challenge deeply-embedded critical and genre-based stereotypes of Stevenson's fiction and to present a reading of his work where he is an acute observer of both Scotland and of the age of empire in which he lived and worked. I have, in each chapter, built the case for Stevenson as an embryonic anti-imperial author with deep-rooted concerns for the most marginalised of voices. My argument is that his colonial texts, generally ignored by post-colonial literary criticism, provide evidence in abundance that Stevenson was already writing in a highly critical anti-colonial style before Conrad and at the source *o*f the imperial project. The long-held view of Stevenson as a talented writer of boys' adventure stories does not in any way diminish as a result of thorough scrutiny; but there is substantial depth to his fiction which was often missed by literary critics. Indeed, the research of this thesis leads to the conclusion that the difficulty some critics had in categorising Stevenson's fiction in terms of genre and intended readership resulted in the kind of misguided interpretations of his work which endured for more than half a century after his death. In short, Stevenson is a far more substantial literary figure than his critical reputation and legacy has allowed. This thesis seeks to redress the balance and add weight to revisionist criticism which developed chiefly from the 1980s onwards.

I began this thesis by challenging a wide variety of literary criticisms of Stevenson's work. By using contemporary sources as well as later twentieth-century criticism, this thesis has shown that Stevenson suffered from a negative critical reception which adhered to much of his fiction. Criticism of his work projected this negative attitude towards his fiction, which remained virtually unchallenged (with one or two exceptions) until the early 1980s. It was from this decade onwards that the tide began to turn as far as Scottish literature and Stevenson were concerned. Slowly but surely, academic attitudes displayed signs of recognising the anti-imperial stance and modernist features of Stevenson as one of the earliest colonial critics in fiction. And my own thesis adds to this growing sense of different critical perspectives by examining his work from its very earliest publication, 'The Pentland Rising' to his very last, *Weir of Hermiston.*

Stevenson's deeply-held concern for the plight of marginalised voices was clear from his first published piece, and continued unabated until the end of his career. This I demonstrate in my second chapter, with a close examination of his first and final texts, interspersed with the

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short story 'Thrawn Janet' and the passionate polemic in defence of 'Father Damian' written about a Catholic priest who lived and died among the lepers of the South Seas. Stevenson's geographical precincts altered dramatically as his short life developed; but his approach to the plight of marginalised voices in the colonial world, and in Scottish history, was a constant and important feature of his work, almost completely neglected by twentieth-century critics.

The most commonly-held belief among Stevenson's critics was that *Treasure Island* demonstrated little more than the author's talent for creating highly-successful boys' adventure stories. This is not the case, and the third chapter places this famous tale firmly in the colonially critical and modernist frame. By examining the subtleties of character and setting, where assigned roles on the mainland diminished beyond recognition on Stevenson's empty island, I have shown how a tangible form of colonial microcosm was created. In every recognisable sense of the adventure genre, Stevenson provides a warped vision of adventure with violence and the greed for plunder undermining critics' simplistic views of a highly-complex novel of distinct colonial hue. This chapter concludes that the embryonic signals of a critical approach towards the colonial world were emerging in this text.

What followed highlights much of the twentieth century's undoubtedly misconstrued perceptions of his later fiction. This is particularly apparent in my fourth chapter, where the equally famous *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is examined. Far from being solely a Victorian 'chiller' or 'penny thriller', this chapter concludes that this story can be perceived, among other things, as a novella which again goes far beyond any conventional criticism. This story has attracted a far wider range of critical examination, especially in terms of psychology and sexuality. This thesis, however, goes somewhat beyond these areas, delving deeply into the idea of colonialism 'in reverse' and how much of the terror of the tale comes from the threat to the heart of Empire: the city-state seems under siege from the 'other', the marginalised population beyond the brightly-lit boundaries of the West End of London.

Several areas of this thesis seek to dispel the false idea that Stevenson's Scottish fiction was simply an extension of Walter Scott's fictional images of Scottish history. To demonstrate this, I considered, in separate chapters, *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Catriona,* with additional input from *Kidnapped.* It has been demonstrated here how comparisons with Walter Scott might be made in some aspects: the geographical setting is broadly similar, and

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Culloden is the common backdrop, but there the similarity ends. This association and, indeed, disassociation with Scott is essential in the understanding of the radical departure from Scott's version of history via literature.

As demonstrated at several junctures in this thesis, Stevenson's view of Scottish post-Culloden history is considerably darker and far more pessimistic than that of Walter Scott. Walter Scott's vision of a unified nation as a result of the barbaric past violence runs contrary to Stevenson's bleaker, emptier conclusions. Both writers can take credit for harnessing a fictional vision of Scotland which might well have been lost; but this vision adapts to the political and social context experienced by each writer. There is a distinct gulf between Scott's early nineteenth-century visions of post-Culloden Scotland just as Stevenson's later and far darker vision of the same century tempers his approach to what is a common subject area. As a major area of investigation in this thesis, the ultimate conclusion is that Stevenson moved far beyond the unified vision of the protracted birth of Britain as a state, and the supposed romanticisation of Culloden and the Jacobites. In Walter Scott's fiction, the Jacobite rebellion acted as both a violently crucial moment in Scotland's history and a source of reconciliation and unity. In Stevenson, however, a starkly different approach is shown, where disunity and disembodiment become the overwhelming vision of the Scottish past as shown in the constantly fragmented narrative of *The Master of Ballantrae* in particular. This thesis has shown how the mythologising of James Durie's character collapses when the mists of Culloden clear. He is found to be a government spy and a 'man of pasteboard' as the divided nation is depicted in microcosm alongside the fate of the Durie family. Stevenson's Scotland in miniature provides an accurate vision of a country perennially divided. He presents a radical approach to the aftermath of Culloden, providing what I have described as a 'dark national narrative'.

This darkness of narrative is examined further in Stevenson's neglected *Catriona,* his most overtly political novel, complete with its own eighteenth-century version of Guantanamo Bay in the shape of the Bass Rock. A key symbol indeed, as it links the early interest in the fate of the Covenanters in 'The Pentland Rising' directly with the aftermath of Culloden, given the history of this prison-island. This is Stevenson's re-examination of themes already developed in *Kidnapped;* and the fractured country depicted in *The Master of Ballantrae* is amplified in *Catriona's* images of a Scotland somehow re-assembling itself in the wake of the Culloden slaughter. It is in both of these texts that the impact upon Highland culture and marginalised

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figures is examined, as well as the shaping of Scotland within the solidified and fully-established Union. Culloden and Jacobite myth created much of and still dominate Scottish culture; but my analysis shows a writer directly challenging Walter Scott's sense of unity and deconstructing the myths which remain a central aspect of our culture today.

Walter Scott was capable of showing the tragedy of Scotland's past, but the romanticism engendered in responses to the *Waverley* novels in particular was, as examined above, wrongly attached to Stevenson, seemingly without much thought or mature analysis throughout at least the first half of the twentieth century. This is a critical omission which this thesis has challenged consistently, but this form of criticism undoubtedly endured, relegating Stevenson to the role of a minor -yet famous- children's author of adventure. As noted in the final chapter on cinematic interpretations of Stevenson, the thrillingly colourful versions of *Treasure Island* and *The Master of Ballantrae* may well have helped to solidify responses to Stevenson which went beyond text and became part of an enduring national and international stereotyping of his work. This thesis has placed much emphasis on redressing this anomaly and considered how and why this tone of analysis towards Stevenson started to alter from the 1970s and 1980s onwards and continues to do so, as a result of changing perceptions within Scotland and internationally in terms of identity and politics.

Stevenson's literary relationship with his homeland is certainly an important aspect of this thesis, leading directly to the conclusion that Stevenson was, despite the irony of his own role as a resident in the colonial South Seas, an unambiguously anti-imperial writer, deeply concerned with the impacts of the global imperialism which flourished in the late Victorian years of his authorship. Stevenson's fiction, despite the apparent dichotomy between his more celebrated 'Scottish' work and his South Seas output, has a unity of purpose which transcends both geographical boundaries and literary genre. Stevenson expressed deep concern for marginalised voices and oppressed populations which crossed national boundaries and precincts, dating back as far as the seventeenth-century Covenanters and ending with the plight of the natives of his adopted land, as well as the crushing of the Jacobite rebellion, and what this then entailed for the dispossessed clan populations of the Highlands.

In effect, this thesis has shown a clear line of thematic thought existing throughout Stevenson's career. The oppressed eighteenth-century population of the Highlands was as

alien to Stevenson as the population and cultures of the South Seas when he became an observer of the colonial world at close quarters. We can see in his stark depictions of colonial characters in 'The Ebb Tide' and 'The Beach of Falesa' how his own living embodiment of the colonial process clashes with, perhaps, his own vision of himself: a benign and much-celebrated figure in the South Seas, intent on preserving and celebrating the indigenous cultures of the people he lived among. This thesis has also argued that the post-Culloden impact upon the Highlands of Scotland and the South Seas are equally important and inextricably linked in Stevenson's fiction. Stevenson's exile undoubtedly sharpened his vision of Scotland. By this I certainly do not mean that Stevenson regarded the Highlands of Scotland as an 'English' colony, but as a distinctly British entity which obliterated much of the old Highland culture in a vicious and highly-politicised process, seen particularly acutely in *Catriona.*

There is no doubt that Stevenson's role as colonial critic has been generally ignored in much of the critical responses devoted to the late Victorian period but, as the research for this thesis has found, his voice can and should now be heard among the more recognised figures such as Conrad and Greene. Indeed, one of the main questions raised by my research is why Stevenson's quite obvious precursory role as embryonic anti-imperial author took so long to emerge in terms of these starkly similar comparative figures. As this thesis has shown, the cutting edge of strong colonial criticism is abundantly present in several texts: 'The Ebb Tide'*,* (which I believe is a far stronger piece of critical fiction than Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and certainly as valid as Greene's *The Quiet American*) became one of the principal means of proving the case for Stevenson's anti-colonial inclusion. His use of the island setting, a befouled ship filled with a false cargo, and a collection of disorientated, ruined colonial characters, is as clear an indication of this as one would hope to find in a piece of fiction firmly embedded within the age of Empire.

With all of this in mind, it can be argued that Stevenson's dual role as Samoan resident and Western coloniser strengthened, rather than diminished, the links he had with Scotland as an exile due chiefly to his colonial experiences, culminating in fiction which was infused with the plight of the minority voices of colonialism. From this experience, Stevenson ultimately drew parallels with in the fractured Scottish past. Politically, however, Stevenson seems a most ambiguous figure when it comes to concrete matters of nationality. But his deeply and long-held personal refusal to accept the silencing of minority causes, the crushing

of endangered cultures, or, indeed, the accepted images of history feature strongly in my thesis that Stevenson was not only a powerful writer but also colonial critic. My journey in this thesis has moved the case for Stevenson from apparent 'famous boys' adventure writer' to an author of great complexity who can be compared with the more famous literary heavyweights of anti-imperial fiction. Stevenson's critical heritage must now move beyond the negative presumptions of the twentieth century and grant him his rightful place among the major figures of late Victorian and modern Scottish literature.

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