

# *Armadale* and the Logic of Liberalism

NATHAN K. HENSLEY

## I. In Particular, in General

In a throwaway moment from the middle of *Armadale* (1866), Wilkie Collins's Reform-era book about slave money and identity, Bashwood's unsavory son obscures his character by inhabiting another one. Describing this man in disguise, the narrator states:

no ordinary observation, applying the ordinary rules of analysis, would have detected the character of Bashwood the younger in his face. . . . No eye for reading character, but such an eye as belongs to one person, perhaps, in ten thousand, could have penetrated the smoothly-deceptive surface of this man, and have seen him for what he really was. (516)

Repeating the terms “character” and “ordinary” twice, the passage draws attention to how a single thing (“one person”) can be differentiated from a massive collection of items like it (“ten thousand”): what makes individuals individual, and how, through a quasi-scientific process of “analysis,” one can or can't tell. Not even an exceptionally astute observer can “penetrate” the “surface” to see the real Bashwood in his radical singularity. A good reader *might* be able to discern the features that particularize “Bashwood the younger” from the person he's impersonating, but here the process of reading fails, and in Collins's knowingly staged scene, Bashwood's ability to exchange his singularity with someone else's allows for a

---

ABSTRACT: This article argues that Victorian ideas about “character” crystallize a tension between singularity and universality crucial to the smooth functioning of modern democracy. Formally equivalent to one another and able to engage in contractual social relations, liberal subjects emerge through an operation J. S. Mill's *System of Logic* describes as induction, and that Karl Marx explains via the general equivalency of the money form. In dialogue with theories of reform, commerce, and abstraction, Wilkie Collins's *Armadale* endorses and ironizes the move from particularity to exchangeability underwriting “modern” social organization. In the context of a wider network of exchange, the empire, Collins traces links between the domestic modernity Mill called liberty and the most basic form of human interchangeability: slavery.

jibe at a liberal political order—and a literary community—obsessively fixed (as Collins puts it) on “reading character.”

Taking unconscious cues, perhaps, from scenes like this one, reviews of *Armadale* fixated on character, judging that “character alone should be the central object of interest for a novelist. And Mr. Wilkie Collins cannot draw character” (Page 159).<sup>1</sup> But critics who have focused on *Armadale*’s apparent preference for plot over character fail to notice that its plot is *about* character—how it can be falsified, how names do or don’t match it, how one individual (in disguise) might inhabit several of them in sequence.

Recent work by Amanda Anderson, Lauren Goodlad, and David Wayne Thomas, among others, has underscored the importance of character to liberal political systems, expanding on Victorian self-assessments to highlight the ethical self-fashioning denoted by this term.<sup>2</sup> But in the decade of the Second Reform Bill, “character” also signaled a broader conceptual dilemma fundamental to a widening democracy, one raised in Bashwood’s disguise sequence and treated at length in *Armadale*’s spectacularly complicated plot: the tension between interchangeability and singularity. Catherine Gallagher has shown that the problem of particularity is “coiled at the heart of the novel genre” (61), but it also twisted at the foundations of the democratic sovereignty being debated during the 1860s, when any particular voter began to be understood as potentially equivalent, in philosophical terms, to the next.

Thomas Carlyle’s “Shooting Niagara, and After” (1867) is among the most forceful accounts of the theoretical shift effected by liberal-democratic Reform. As he explained with fulminating energy, Carlyle saw the era of mass democratization not in terms of a salutary progress or through the lens of liberal self-cultivation favored in recent accounts; instead he saw the fundamental threat posed by Reform as a shift in the matrix of social relations toward number. Quality, he thought, was now to be replaced by quantity. Despite its grand-sounding name, universal suffrage was nothing more than a “count of Heads”: “‘the equality of men,’ any man equal to any other” (592). The franchise would transform a social body once composed of particular, qualitatively *different* individuals into a state comprising exchangeable units, citizens subject to the counting that Carlyle associated with the expanding vote, and that we might associate with the Census, which was widening its scope dramatically during this period.<sup>3</sup>

Citing mid-nineteenth-century usages, the *OED* informs us that the term “character” crystallized precisely this transition, denoting both a *general* or commonly held morality, and also what would seem like its opposite: particularity itself. Character, we learn, meant both “[a] person regarded in the abstract” and “the aggregate of the distinctive features of any thing; essential peculiarity.” Marking both an abstract exchangeability and a non-exchangeable singularity, “character” names the tension between those poles. As Deidre Lynch has observed of *literary* characters, “the character is located—optimally—at the interface of what is particular and what is general” (46). Or as Carlyle’s enemy Matthew Arnold might have put it, character was what kept you from destroying Hyde Park, but *your character* was also what distinguished you from everyone else in the mob.

*Armada* exploits this inherent tension to respond to what we might call the logic of democratic Reform, a strategy that allows this particular sensation novel to be classified with other, more obviously philosophical texts of the period—including those of J. S. Mill. Mill authored not only the liberal ur-texts *On Liberty* (1859) and *The Subjection of Women* (1868), but also the single most important work of Victorian method, the *System of Logic* (1843–72). The *Logic* includes among its many pages an experimental section on what Mill calls “ethology,” or the study of character (VIII: 861–74). But in addition to these rather confused writings,<sup>4</sup> Mill’s “sacred book for students who claimed to be genuine liberals” (Stephen 75–76) contains a central theoretical section grappling with the problem of particularity and generality directly. In a still-cited discussion of induction, Mill explains that inductive operations are how the rational mind transforms observed particulars into general propositions, converting singularities into abstractions. Mill’s inductive method details the procedure by which abstract “types” can be “induced” from particulars, explaining on the level of mental process what Mill’s political writings leave untheorized. This is the political transition by which the liberal state’s abstract or modern citizens—formally free, able to conclude contracts, and implicitly male—might be produced: uplifted, as Mill writes in the *Logic*, into “law” (VII: 316–17).<sup>5</sup>

In *Armada*’s preface, Collins addresses his novel to “Readers in general” and “Readers in particular” (6), announcing a central theoretical drama of the novel, and hinting at *Armada*’s engagement with the fundamental conceptual dilemma of a developing mass democracy. While it follows Mill in imagining a modern historical stage of

equal relations among subjects, Collins's novel ironizes liberal society's tendency to create the economically equivalent, typical units that would participate in those relationships. It thus offers a principled, if self-contradictory critique of mid-century liberalism's domestic project of abstraction. But this globe-skirting novel also expands liberal theory's domestic focus, acknowledging that the Victorian state's mechanisms of equivalence operated abroad, in that ever-widening system of *actual* exchange known as the British Empire. By tracing connections between an older circumatlantic slavery and a newer, equally violent cosmopolitanism (personified in Lydia Gwilt), *Armada* bears witness to this other system of abstraction too, pursuing the Empire's global money economy through time, from its historical origins in slavery into the newer, freer market in labor that ushers in guilt (or Gwilt) itself.

*Armada* thus produces connections among abstraction, exchange, and violence in ways that comment on a moment, the 1860s, when "the free market had become the hallmark of modernity" (Howe 29). In doing so it provides Victorianists with new ways of thinking about Reform and empire together. Read in the political-economic terms of Mill, *Armada* provides a test case for looking past the imperial or liberal *cultures* that have been the focus of work in those areas since the 1980s.<sup>6</sup> In parsing the shared logic between the political protocols of domestic Reform and the material operations of imperial globalization, *Armada* helps us appreciate that in the 1860s, it was not just unsavory opinions on race, nor only problematic developmental narratives, but also a modern financial system that furthered British hegemony and masked its expansion under the sign of peace.

## II. The Victorian Rule of Equations: Mill's *Logic*

To register how *Armada* transforms the stock sensation theme of impersonation into a meditation on the philosophy of human exchange, we need to understand how Victorian liberal theory understood that philosophy to operate. In the *Logic* Mill created what would become the Victorian period's most influential methodological program for describing the procedure by which particularities could transform into higher-order abstractions. Containing work Mill had begun just after the 1832 Reform Bill, published in 1843, and revised throughout the 1850s and 1860s (only appearing in a final edition in

1872), *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive* literally spanned the period of mid-century reform.<sup>7</sup> It was a compulsory text at Oxford until the end of the nineteenth century and was also read widely at Cambridge (Snyder 100). As Leslie Stephen and others have appreciated, Mill's *Logic* was nothing short of the methodological unconscious of mid-Victorian liberalism.

The story the *Logic* tells of an old, pre-rational tyranny turning into a newer, more individualistic empiricism explicitly anticipates the narratives of *On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*.<sup>8</sup> Both of Mill's more directly political works trace a two-stage model of progressive history, theorizing that the inevitable march of human knowledge would move society out of dogma and into reason, out of force and into a rule of law associated with equality and characterized by contract. In reference to the *Logic*, Mill refers to this historical transformation as one by which an old "philosophy of intuition" (based on prejudice) turns into a more empirical "philosophy of experience" (I: 270). In multiple idioms, Mill's work expresses a political-theoretical historicism pitting an ancient philosophy of tyranny against a modern philosophy of freedom, a liberal shorthand that persists in Victorianist criticism.<sup>9</sup>

But rather than restaging Victorian celebrations of a new, putatively peaceful modernity (no single year of Victoria's reign was without imperial war), I focus on the logical steps enabling Victorian theory to understand how the modern state's constituent subjects emerged. Mill tackles this problem most directly in the idiom of logic: his theory of induction attempts to solve the problem of how abstract or theoretically interchangeable units can be created out of a mass of singularities denoted by proper names. In this way Mill gives conceptual weight to Doctor Downward's admission, in *Armadale*, that he has "known very serious inconveniences to arise sometimes from mistakes about names" (341).

Mill engages a set of problems in diverse proto-disciplinary languages, his concepts moving between idioms and gaining inflection in that translation. Thus we might notice how the *Logic*'s story of something young and impulsive turning older and more serious informs the self-fashioning tale in Mill's own *Autobiography* (1873). The *Logic*'s philosophical focus on aggregated masses of particulars likewise echoes the equally formidable *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), which was being drafted alongside the *Logic*'s early editions. But the *Logic*'s theories of abstraction and aggregation also find Mill working

out the fundamental assumption of his more directly political works, that of a modern state made up of countable citizens governed by law, participating in contracts, and entitled to an equal share in a social system understood as an “aggregate.” In *Considerations*, Mill insists that the best modern government “is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power in the last resort, is vested in the entire aggregate of the community” (XIX: 403). Mill’s most extended treatment of the philosophy of aggregation, *Utilitarianism*, closes with a quotation from Jeremy Bentham’s “Plan of Parliamentary Reform”: “everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one” (X: 257). In the modern state, each personal unit is understood to be typical, self-contained but counted within the larger calculus of costs and benefits defining Mill’s utilitarian democratic program.<sup>10</sup>

The word “aggregate” reappears in Mill’s writing with regularity: as a numbered whole or a counted mass, it is a total entity theoretically reducible to equal parts.<sup>11</sup> Mill’s choice of this term signals his assumption of a *typical* or universal subject of law, a bearer of rights and equal participant in the state’s horizontally arranged sovereignty. Intuiting this, Stephen critiques Mill for assuming “that man, like molecule, represents a constant unit” (283). Massed together, these are the regular elements that, in aggregate, act as both the subjects and objects of the modern liberal sovereignty Mill imagines. All of Mill’s explicitly political works, then, assume a structural distance between named particulars and the abstract or exchangeable units that are individuated but no longer singular. As Carlyle also recognized, on the front end of this conversion process are incommensurable singularities, while on the back end are *examples* of the “type” citizen, the proper subjects of a count, or aggregate.

Collins emphasizes exactly this difference in the first pages of *Armadale*, conspicuously set in the year of the first Reform Bill. In the novel’s introductory scene, Collins portrays a crowd, then distinguishes between “the three notable personages of Wildbad” and, “beyond this select circle,” “the townspeople in general” (9). Here, the distance broached by Reform is between (singular) “notable personages” and the abstraction that constitutes a citizenry. Mill addressed most directly the question of how this distance is to be broached not in his multiple political writings but in the *Logic’s* description of the inductive method.

Induction is the centerpiece of Mill’s analytic theory, “the main question of the science of logic—the question which includes all

others” (VII: 283).<sup>12</sup> Inferences created in the process of inductive reasoning are more than closed logical circuits (like syllogisms are), and more than matters of definition (like names are): they are the extrapolation from what has been observed into a new order of claim. An induction occurs at the moment when the human mind transfers between levels, creating new knowledge by moving from particular observed cases *upward*, as Mill consistently figures it, to general (or “abstract”) principles. This moment of ascent or uplift thus works as the link connecting low and high, covering the distance between empirically observed facts, or items of particular data, and new abstractions:

Induction, then, is that operation of the mind, by which we infer from what we know to be true in a particular case or cases, will be true in all cases which resemble the former in certain assignable respects. In other words, Induction is the process by which we conclude that what is true of certain individuals of a class is true of the whole class, or that what is true at certain times will be true in similar circumstances at all times. (VII: 289)

Mill thus defines the machinery of induction as a “process” or an “operation of the mind” where an “inference” is made, a mental leap between the level of particular cases to that of larger principles. Once they have been properly abstracted, what were at one point named singularities can now be said to be members of a set, and are subject to the rules of belonging to that set, which Mill calls the “laws” that “govern” them (XXI: 236; see also VII: 316).

Properly executed inductive linkages are the crucial features of Mill’s politically inflected rational system, but its mechanism of abstraction is most clearly visible when Mill describes classification. Classification requires an initial operation of reason, a first-order step that contains a given set of similar particularities under the label of a set, or class. Classes, he specifies, are the “general conceptions” that are “obtained (in metaphysical phrase) by *abstraction* from individual things” (VIII: 650, emphasis original). Mill’s description of the process by which we arrive at these higher-order categories calls forth his most detailed account of how abstraction works:

We know that two things are as much as the mind can easily attend to at a time, and we therefore fix upon one of the objects, either at hazard or because it offers in a peculiarly striking manner some important character, and, taking this as our standard, compare it with one object after another. If we find a second object

which presents a remarkable agreement with the first, inducing us to class them together, the question instantly arises, in what particular circumstances do they agree? and to take notice of these circumstances is already a first stage of abstraction, giving rise to a general conception. Having advanced thus far, when we now take in hand a third object we naturally ask ourselves the question, not merely whether this third object agrees with the first, but whether it agrees with it in the same circumstances in which the second did? in other words, whether it agrees with the general conception which has been obtained by abstraction from the first and second? *Thus we see the tendency of general conceptions, as soon as formed, to substitute themselves as types, for whatever individual objects previously answered that purpose in our comparisons.* (VIII: 654, emphasis mine)

Beginning with an individuating “character” Mill shows how we move from that particularity outward, upward, aggregating other examples “in our hand[s]” and then producing a “general conception” “obtained by abstraction” from the first material objects. In this foundational moment of Mill’s liberal method, abstraction is born as the type.

As Mill explains, the type is an immaterial proxy, different from but linked to the “first” and “second” particularities from which it is abstracted. It is a heuristic or properly immaterial figure, *standing in* for a potentially endless set of particular items (other examples of that type), allowing those particulars to be seen, now, as iterable members of a similar class, exchangeable with one another within the overarching sameness of a newly created category. As the mediating figure that serves to contain two (or more) distinct items, the type is the immaterial substitute that puts what were once qualitatively distinct particularities into a relationship of exchange, arranging them into groupings within which each example is equivalent.

By providing the mechanism by which qualitatively distinct objects can be compared and aggregated with others of its class, Mill’s type performs the function of what Karl Marx theorized as exchange value—a parallel testifying to the wide circulation of this logical problem during the Reform era.<sup>13</sup> In the early chapters of *Capital* drafted contemporaneously with the *Logic* in the 1840s and 50s and published in the year of the Second Reform Bill (1867), Marx offers a well-known analysis of the hidden work performed by the commodity, describing the “mystery” of exchange in ways that directly restate Mill’s description of the inductive process (*Capital* 139). For Marx, the particularities at the beginning of the inductive process are “qualitatively different” or non-equivalent particular goods, such as linen and shirts. But by a process of conversion called exchange, these two once-dissim-



ilar particularities are first typologized into commodities (objects with exchange value), and then finally equated. Where Mill spoke of two separate “objects” “in hand,” Marx writes of corn and iron:

Let us now take two commodities, for example corn and iron. Whatever their exchange relation may be, it can always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron, for instance 1 quarter of corn = x cwt of iron. What does this equation signify? It signifies that a common element of identical magnitude exists in two different things, in 1 quarter of corn and similarly in x cwt of iron. Both are therefore equal to a third thing, which is itself neither the one or the other. Each of them, so far as it is exchange-value, must therefore be reducible to this third thing. (*Capital* 127)

As in Mill’s account, Marx shows that forcing a comparison between two disparate objects under a regime of equivalence produces a “third thing” functioning as a *medium* of achieving equivalence between the first two: this “third thing, which is itself neither the one or the other” is the means of achieving equivalency between them, the substitute. It is the properly abstract “object” that provides the connective tissue linking the first two qualitatively distinct objects.

What Mill calls “the type” Marx theorizes as money—it is that “third thing” that allows qualitatively distinct, particular objects to be put into a numerically represented relationship of equivalence: money, writes Marx, “crystallizes out of the process of exchange” (*Capital* 181). The contours of Marx’s political-economic critique of exchange are well known, but for Marx as for several of his later interpreters (notably Theodor Adorno), the historical development of exchange also exacts an acute metaphysical cost. On the level of logical process, the mode of abstraction documented in the *Logic*, and that Marx critiques in *Capital*, creates equations out of difference: it subordinates particularity, subsuming alterity under the category of abstraction. In the extreme form Mill advanced in the *Logic*, it ensures, on a theoretical level, that all qualitatively different objects or subjects in the world (as Mill called those items denoted by names) are potentially exchangeable with one another—that they can be made not different.<sup>14</sup> In a book-length reading of Adorno, Fredric Jameson calls attention to “the existential or even metaphysical dimension” of exchange, paraphrasing Adorno to describe “the effects . . . of *equivalence* as a new form imposed on reality and of *abstraction* in the broadest epistemological sense as a historically emergent form of organizing the world” (148, emphasis original). For Adorno, equiva-

lence “excises the incommensurable” (qtd. in Jameson 149): monetary logic flattens qualitative distinctions in order to produce repeatable, exchangeable units that work, like money or citizens, as the chits of a political-economic system now operating according to a metaphysics of counting.<sup>15</sup> It is in this sense that we should understand what has been described as Mill’s “deep commitment to equality” (Collini 138).

Mill’s inductive method attempts to outline, on the level of logical process, the theoretical mechanism by which, on a political level, the liberal state’s abstract citizens—formally equal and implicitly male, all cases of the same type—were understood to be produced out of a sea of properly named singularities. In an often-cited formulation, Marx writes that after the introduction of money, “Men are henceforth related to each other in their social process of production in a purely atomistic way” (*Capital* 187). Referring to the “juridical relation, whose form is the contract” (178n), Marx echoes Mill and other mid-Victorian contract theorists by outlining the legal relation proper to the new regime of money, a “juridical relation” that “correspond[s] to the production of commodities” (178-79n). Here, in this juridical, monetary modernity—Mill’s stage of “liberty”—exchangeable legal subjects are the members of an aggregate that (like commodities) have been moved into that higher-order position in which they stand in as examples of a type Mill called citizen.

Both Mill and Marx responded to the theoretical novelty of the Reform decade by attempting to describe the logical process fundamental to liberal democratic sovereignty. Noting this allows us to more tightly historicize existing accounts of the conversion process Adorno and Jameson associate with a generalized modernity. But if Marx’s critique of political economy and Mill’s massive *Logic* can be read as Reform-era documents, so too can that genre of fiction specific to the 1860s—the sensation novel—be said to engage with the philosophical problem of exchangeability that attended a (slowly) widening franchise. Jonathan Loesberg has argued that these novels by Collins, Mrs. Henry Wood, and Mary Elizabeth Braddon, all worked as reflexive attempts to solve the contradictions of reform; they are “manifestations of the same ideological responses that formed the structure of Victorian discussions of parliamentary reform in the late 1850s and 1860s” (116). By emphasizing the singularity of one of Collins’s specific interventions into the category “reform fiction,” I argue that *Armada*, a novel about slavery and contracts, knowingly engages with its moment. It follows Reform-era theory to natu-

ralize abstract free-agents as “modern” while remaining attuned to difference and obsessed with securing particular human beings against the violence of both slavery and the interchangeability of liberty.

### III. “The civilized universe knows it already”: *Armada* and Exchange

Like Mill’s *Logic*, *Armada* is a wide-ranging document with multiple subplots. And like Mill’s treatise on abstraction, Collins’s sensation novel begins with a preamble on the philosophical function of names. In the first pages of the *Logic*, Mill explains that “the signification of names, and the relationship generally between names and the things signified by them, must occupy the preliminary stage of the inquiry we are engaged in” (VII: 22). *Armada* introduces us to this problem before we even open the book. To whom or what does the title refer? Following the pattern of mid-Victorian triple-deckers like *Pendennis* (1848–50), *David Copperfield* (1850), or *Phineas Finn* (1867), we might assume that this novel’s title refers to its most conventional hero, the “light” Allan Armadale. “Thoroughly English” (55), this Armadale is represented as typical in a self-conscious sense: he loves sailing, hates thinking, and sports a lovely complexion and a cheery disposition. But his opposite number is an Allan Armadale too, this one bearing the blood of former slaves and introducing himself by the “extraordinary” and “strangely uncouth name” of Ozias Midwinter (62, 60). One dark, one light, one introverted, one plucky, these second-generation Allan Armadales do not yet exhaust the roll call of potential referents for this novel’s name, for they are the progeny of two others, the novel’s first pair of doubled potential protagonists.

In total there are five men who lay claim to the proper name of Allan Armadale. The novel’s original is the England-based owner of an eighteenth-century slave plantation in Barbados. This man is “godfather by proxy” to one Allan Wrentmore (28), whose first name is Allan in honor of Armadale, but who later inherits his godfather’s sugar fortune—and with it, the wealthy slaveowner’s last name. Because the original Armadale’s actual son, also named Allan Armadale, was disowned, Allan Wrentmore/Armadale becomes “the richest man in Barbados,” passing his youth “in idleness and self-indulgence, among people—slaves and half-castes, mostly—to whom [his] will was law” (28, 27–28). This violent backstory of slavery and sexual excess reaches its climax in a lethal conflict between Allan Wrentmore/Armadale and the disowned son, one

centering on sexual jealousy and the fate (and fortune) of a rich English woman suggestively named Blanchard. Armadale the son impersonates Wrentmore, stealing his intended bride and her English fortune. But Wrentmore catches up with him at sea, locking his enemy into the hold of a sinking timber ship called *La Grace de Dieu*. Before he drowned, however, this roguish Armadale had impregnated his “blanching” bride, producing the light Allan Armadale of the novel’s main, second-generation action. Wrentmore, now a murderer, goes on to marry a woman of “mixed blood” and “African eyes” (24) in Trinidad, later fathering a mixed-race son. This is the other Allan Armadale, also known as Ozias Midwinter—the one who, as the novel unfolds, is able to overcome his dark inheritance, ultimately befriend the son of the man his father murdered.

Sensational as it may be, *Armadale’s* double-generational plot recapitulates the more serious temporal-political schemes set out by Collins’s advanced liberal contemporaries. Mill’s *Subjection of Women* and *On Liberty* both describe a progressive historical sequence that moves from an era of force characterized by slavery into an epoch of modern peace based on contract. The transition that in the *Logic* saw the philosophy of “intuition” develop into that of “experience” is characterized, in *On Liberty*, as the distinction between “custom” and “liberty,” while legal historian and political theorist Henry Maine, in *Ancient Law* (1861), figured it as the transition between the stages “status” and “contract.” In all of these accounts, modern agreements are understood to be based not on coercion or kinship but on contracts negotiated freely between autonomous or abstract subjects. Set in the West Indies in the years between 1832 (the year of the first Reform Bill) and 1837 (just after slavery was abolished in the British Empire), *Armadale’s* backstory occurs at the late cusp of what liberal theory understood to be a pre-modern political temporality. Characterized by slavery, patrilineal inheritance, and conflicts over women and the fortunes traveling with them, it is, in the terms laid out by Maine and Mill and ratified by Collins’s narration, “pre-contractual.”<sup>17</sup>

*Armadale’s* scandalous backstory establishes the novel’s central theme of impersonation, or human interchangeability. But bracketed in the past, in a series of expository letter-writing and dictation scenes, it also provides a temporal-political counterpoint for the novel’s main action, which centers on the two modern Allan Armadales, heirs to the earlier rivals. Starting in 1851—the year of the Great Exhibition—*Armadale’s* diegetic events trace a self-consciously modern plot. But

here Collins strays from his fellow theorists of modernity: where Mill believed that the historical stage of liberty would put an end to bloodshed, *Armada* reveals that violence does not go away. Its main, second-generation action revolves around a bewitching series of what Lyn Pykett has called “crimes of advanced capitalism,” those “aris[ing] from the traffic in paper currency, from the manipulation of documents in a bureaucratic culture, and the control, misrepresentation, or misuse of information” (149). A writer, a forger, and an expert inhabitant of multiple identities, the female free-agent Lydia Gwilt is perhaps the most sharply drawn symptom of this monetary modernity. Where the docile Blanchard was passed back and forth between men like an object, Gwilt is an autonomous subject, able to alter character at will. Bootstrapping herself into any role she imagines, Lydia is both a criminal and a perfectly rendered subject of law, what Neil Larsen calls a “monetary subject,” whether she has money or is after it (56–57).

After the defeat of this professional self-fashioner’s efforts to defraud the light Armadale of his fortune (and to murder him) comes a conventional happy ending, one that follows Mill in viewing the emergence of free, abstract subjects as an appropriately uplifting denouement. *Armada* teaches the (liberal) lesson that the sins of the fathers are not visited upon the sons: every subject can break free from his family history through the magic agency of individual virtue. “The promise of the Future,” we are told, “shin[es] over the ashes of the Past!” (108). While the Armadales *pères* found themselves bound up by the obligations of status—locked in a pre-modern blood-feud—their sons overcome what seems like fate to ratify a peaceful relationship between equals. The novel culminates as Ozias and Allan establish a contractual brotherhood sealed by handshake, between the sons of sworn family enemies, finalizing what Elaine Hadley calls the Reform era’s “shift from an old . . . vertical system of status relations to a new . . . horizontal system in which transactions were commercial, private, and contractual” (46). “‘While we live, brother, your love and mine will never be divided again,’ [Ozias said]. They shook hands in silence” (677). Contract defeats status, and liberty, equality, and a powerfully figurative fraternity (not based on blood) close the book on Collins’s historical plot.

The novel’s juxtaposition of an outdated slavery and a modern union between economically equivalent subjects places its analysis in the territory of Mill and Maine. Following Mill, the novel acknowledges

that modern marriage is a contract too, a fact Collins plays for laughs as Allan and Neelie Milroy read naïvely through Blackstone's *Commentaries*: "Is there nothing about Love?" asked Neelie. 'Look a little lower down.' 'Not a word,' [Allan said]. 'He sticks to his confounded "Contract," all the way through'" (456). The action of *Armadale's* historical plot naturalizes the abstract subjects of such contracts as modern, concluding its historical sequence with a handshake ratifying the equivalence between qualitatively *different* Allan Armadales. Yet Collins's tacit approval of modern exchange is couched within a far-reaching critique that would seem to contradict it.

As multiple readers have observed, Collins was fascinated with defending difference, valorizing the idiosyncratic or marginal over the "typical" in ways that self-consciously reverse what Alex Woloch has called the modern novel's "distribution of attention" away from minor characters (12-42).<sup>18</sup> The formal conceit of *Armadale's* main action highlights this antagonism between major and minor, figure and ground, as two heroes share the same name and compete, in structural terms, for status as referent for the novel's title. But Collins's preference for marginal figures is clear in *Armadale's* treatment of these two potential heroes. The light-haired Allan and the fetching Neelie act their proper parts as hero and heroine of a typical English novel, exchanging banal lovers' talk and cooing with one another in saccharine tones (albeit as they wade through "the bottomless abyss of English law" [456]). In contrast to these second-hand souls, Ozias is what Mill's *Logic* would call an unabstracted particular—a qualitatively *different* thing—and it is to Allan's apparent credit that he notices this:

Allan had seen in him—what he didn't see in people in general. He wasn't like the other fellows in the neighbourhood. All the other fellows were cut out on the same pattern. Every man of them was equally healthy, muscular, loud, hard-headed, clean-skinned, and rough; every man of them drank the same draughts of beer, smoked the same short pipes all day long. . . . They were no doubt excellent fellows in their way; but the worst of them was, they were all exactly alike. It was a perfect godsend to meet with a man like Midwinter—a man who was not cut out on the regular local pattern, and whose way in the world had the one great merit (in those parts) of being a way of his own. (67)

The markers that identify these "equally" banal clubmen are social and economic indicators of the English leisure set. But they are also class markers in another way, signaling the interchangeability of these

subjects within an overarching “general[ity].” This is classification in the most double-coded sense: going through the motions of inherited activities (“smok[ing] the same short pipes”), these interchangeable Englishmen, all “cut on the same pattern,” are represented as the very opposite of this text’s dark-skinned descendent of a slave.

At this point the novel’s polemic seems clear. But this defense of particularity is mouthed by Allan, the typical hero Collins satirizes. And we notice, on closer inspection, that this blond man’s paean to the powers of individuality refers not to Ozias Midwinter but to “a man like” him. Even here, in the novel’s most fully voiced “celebration of diversity,” the singular is folded back into the type. Internally contradictory as it may be, the novel’s interest in valorizing the marginal gives a geopolitical edge to the fact that its most sympathetic character, the one closest to exhibiting absolute singularity, is not English. Dark with the “creole blood” imparted to him in Trinidad (397), Ozias is the more fascinating of the two modern Allan Armadales, just as the bewitchingly international Gwilt emerges as more colorful than the classically English Blanchard.

Collins’s sympathy for such peripheral characters reflects an investment in difference extended to setting. Flitting between the West Indies and Thorpe-Ambrose, the Canary Islands and Italy, the novel’s dense network of action links multiple points in the Victorian world’s “increasingly dense web of economic transactions” (Hobsbawm 62). *Armadale* repeatedly links the fringes of this network with a positively charged particularity, while its scenes depicting classical tableaux of English domestic novels—the countryside, the family estate—are typical in a decidedly negative sense. The novel’s famous shipwreck scene occurs on a gothic crag in the waters off the coast of the Isle of Man. In weird moonlight and with a surplus of particularizing details (including the proper names of specific rocks, “Spanish Head” and “Calf” [120]), Collins identifies this spot as distinct from every other place in the world. The town on the Isle, Castletown, is equally particularized: “It is doubtful if there is a place on the habitable globe which, regarded as a sight-seeing investment offering itself to the spare attention of strangers, yields so small a per-centage of interest in return, as Castletown” (114). A pun on “interest” allows the novel to satirize the assumptions of transactional logic (“investment,” “yields,” “per-centage”) in order to declare, ironically, that this spot won’t repay attention from economically minded travelers.

But Collins “invest[s]” no fewer than three full pages describing its features, spinning artful sentences that describe the architecture, setting, inhabitants, and the “prevalent colour” of this unrewarding town (114), even detailing “various interesting discoveries in connection with the laws and constitution” made by Ozias and Allan (115). When the novel’s action shifts to the “singular place” (255) in the northern moors called “The Broads,” we are told that “the shore in these wild regions was not like the shore elsewhere” (255). Similarly individualizing descriptions accompany accounts of other non-English locales, including Germany, Italy, and even the derelict, lawless suburbs of London, site of Doctor Downward’s mental institution. What these scenes show is that *Armadale* endows the peripheries of England’s global network of exchange with a positively charged particularity, while the stock scenes of domestic fiction are represented as just that.

The chapter describing the Isle of Man is entitled “Day and Night,” highlighting the difference between Collins’s vivid description of that “happy little island [that] rejoiced in laws of its own” (115) and the classically English Thorpe-Ambrose. Not only does Collins neglect to describe this clichéd countryside manor, but he jokes of not doing so: “Description of it is needless; the civilized universe knows it already. It is the typical cottage of the drawing-master’s early lessons in neat shading and the broad pencil touch—with the trim thatch, the luxuriant creepers, the modest lattice-windows, the rustic porch, and the wicker birdcage, all complete” (179). The English, the domestic, the moneyed—all amounts to a visual cliché and the adjective “typical.” In fact Collins describes not the cottage itself but an aesthetic rendering of it, in a drawing-master’s practice sketches: doubly mediated, abstracted twice into images based on other images, to “civilized” eyes, the scene is typical, not itself.

As with the English clubmen who can be exchanged with one another endlessly, this scene finds Collins satirizing fiduciary logic on another level. Conspicuously not particularized, the cottage is located at the very epicenter of England’s “civilized universe”; it thus falls under the abstracting power of metropolitan typicality, where one cottage can be exchanged with another with no loss of descriptive effect. It is rather to the underdeveloped fringes of this clichéd realm that Collins directs his descriptive energies. We see, for example, that at the “outskirts of the little town of Thorpe-Ambrose,”



Nature was uninviting; man was poor; and social progress, as exhibited under the form of building, halted miserably. . . . All the wastepaper of the town seemed to float congenially to this neglected spot; and all the fretful children came and cried here, in charge of all the slatternly nurses who disgraced the place. . . . No growth flourished in these desert regions, but the arid growth of rubbish; and no human creatures rejoiced but the creatures of the night—the vermin here and there in the beds, and the cats everywhere on the tiles. (376)

The picture is far more than a drawing-master's sketch. In a particularizing mode, *Armadale's* narration traces a relationship between the clichéd realm of "social progress" and its "neglected" margins, registering the economic distance between the two, and their connectedness as part of a single system, at the level of aesthetic practice.

Collins's novel repeatedly draws analogies between the financial logic of "types" and what it styles as this abstraction's cognate forms, social convention and aesthetic cliché. The multiple levels of *Armadale's* critique become clear in the scenes satirizing Major Milroy's clock, that ill-conceived creative effort—much like a bad novel—in which the "perfect discipline" of the machine's literally wooden characters comically breaks down (224). But *Armadale* extends its critique of mechanical aesthetics even further than this, associating abstracting or "civilized" creative practices like Milroy's with actual violence. Lydia Gwilt's hackneyed lie to Midwinter sets the plot on course toward its final scene—poison gas, an attempted murder, a suicide. This villain has made up a story about her past life in order to convince Midwinter she's someone else. But it is a bad story: "There was nothing new in what I told him; it was the commonplace rubbish of the circulating libraries. A dead father; a lost fortune; vagabond brothers, whom I dread ever seeing again; a bedridden mother dependent on my exertions—No! I can't write it down!" (491). Gwilt's admission frames this novel's distinction between interchangeable literary clichés and vividly particular fiction. Via this oddly sympathetic anti-hero, Collins's autoreferential gesture suggests that unlike Milroy's clockwork plot or Gwilt's twice-told tale, a *specific* narrative will have an identity—distinguishing marks that make it singular—while "commonplace" fiction can be reduced to a list of stock plot devices. That Collins's own novel earned him an unprecedented sum, appeared serially in the respectable *Cornhill*, and circulated in those same circulating libraries are among this passage's distinct ironies. *Armadale's* internally conflicted critique posits a particularizing literary practice as the realm of the

incommensurable. The ironies of this aesthetic ideology are further complicated by the book's treatment of its anti-hero, Gwilt. She (like Ozias) is a sympathetic defeater of clichés and also, a murderess. Although Gwilt finally dies, this was feeble justice according to contemporary reviewers, who complained that she had not been punished enough.

The novel's ambivalence toward its intermittently appealing writer-villain—she is in this sense very much like *The Woman in White's* Count Fosco (1859–60)—can be taken as evidence of the self-contradictory stance toward the modernity this post-1851 plot documents. Even as *Armada*le naturalizes the freely acting, monetary subject of the contract form as modern (as we saw in Ozias's happy handshake), it also attacks the deadening effects of that very abstraction. As the representative of an epoch of free agents, Gwilt concretizes what Adorno calls abstraction's "rage" to subsume the world (23), or what Matthew Arnold referred to, in 1861, as democracy's effort "to *affirm its own essence*; to live, to enjoy, to possess the world" (5, emphasis original). When Gwilt wonders, "Why am I not always . . . like a wicked character in a novel? Why? Why? Why?" (559), *Armada*le's self-reflexive critique of exchange logic turns full-circle, forging a connection between the lethal violence of its plot and the flattening force of aesthetic abstraction. This critique of typological procedure registers as a specifically political one in a moment, 1866, when the universal equivalence imagined in Mill's *Logic* was being put into (limited) institutional form by the Second Reform Bill and being enacted, materially, as the British financial empire was busy extending its networks of exchange across the globe.

#### IV. "The names haunt me"

Those networks are where *Armada*le takes place. Ranging across the entire "Age of Reform," from the 1830s to the 1860s, *Armada*le superimposes over this timeline a spatial organization that spans the globe. Tracing the movement of money, people, and communications across the mid-Victorian world system, its plot shuttles over trade and communication lanes linking London to Barbados to Italy and to the not-incidentally chosen "Isle of Man." Its setting is the imperial network, that increasingly dense web of transactions based in England but reaching across the globe.

Connecting apparently disconnected spaces, *Armadales* double-generational plot also makes links across time, joining the two political-economic epochs it appears to separate. Like its slave-based backstory, the novel's modern plot takes place *through* Liverpool, that legendary entrepôt of the slave trade and hub, in the 1860s, of a newly global commerce. What it means, in a novel explicitly about slavery, for Allan and Ozias to have suffered "detention" in Liverpool (156) is left for the reader to imagine. What is clear is that *Armadales* traces the historical development of its world-spanning configuration, charting the contemporary global order from its genesis in the eighteenth-century traffic in slaves to its modern or "free" phase. Attending to the dark history of the global modernity it documents, *Armadales* reaches as far back as the era of British capital accumulation in the West Indies; it moves as far forward as the moment when the money issuing from those sugar plantations has been forgotten, laundered, "Blanched"—arriving through Liverpool but transformed into cleaner, more respectable English money in countryside manors like Thorpe-Ambrose.

It is true that *Armadales* partially expunges the dark past it outlines, sealing it *in the past* in order to welcome in a more modern (contractual) present. "Out of Evil may come Good," exclaims Midwinter in the novel's final scene, just before his handshake (677). But the hesitation implied by "may" reveals the novel's ambivalent historicism: good might come of evil, but a series of past crimes, committed under an earlier regime of slavery, reappear as troubling specters in the present—ghosts of past damage that will not go away. More lethal than Lydia Gwilt's free agency, more scandalous than Miss Oldershaw's ability to reinvent herself in multiple roles, the primal violence of slavery effaces the characters of those who profit from it.

Midwinter's father, raised among the "half-castes" to whom he dictated law, is destroyed by his association with this economic system, having sustained a "paralytic affection" in the West Indies (*sic*, 15) that has reduced him to a blank slate. His eyes roll in his head, and

the rest of his face [was] as void of all expression of the character within him, and the thought within him, as if he had been dead. There was no looking at him now, and guessing what he might once have been. The leaden blank of his face met every question as to his age, his rank, his temper, and his looks which that face might once have answered, in impenetrable silence. Nothing spoke for him now but the shock that had struck him with the death-in-life of Paralysis. The doctor's

eye questioned his lower limbs, and Death-in-Life answered, *I am here*. (13, emphasis original)

The disease is syphilis, but, unnamed, it is also the crippling effect of the most literal form of human exchange. In *Armadales* telling, the institution of capital accumulation by human bondage has the power to convert the singularity of its practitioners into a stripped-down being, without markers of any kind: “*I am here*.” The “social death” Orlando Patterson associates with chattel slavery is thus cunningly turned around, for here it is not the slave, but the master who has “bec[ome] a social nonperson” (Patterson 5). Inheritor of a slave fortune, despot in a colonial zone, Allan Wrentmore/*Armadales* is “Death-in-Life,” depar-ticular-ized—the most haunting of Victorian things.

Mill’s historicism posited that an era of modern liberty would eventually close the door on violence. “The great extent and rapid increase of international trade,” he argued further, would prove “the principal guarantee of the peace of the world” and “the great permanent security for the uninterrupted progress of the ideas, institutions, and *character* of the human race” (qtd. in Howe 27, emphasis mine). *Armadales*’ historical model redirects Mill’s interest in character, tracing an uncanny linkage between past and present forms of human exchange. It does so by figuratively connecting slavery and the modern labor market, that supposedly ennobling institution that is the point of entry, via a newspaper ad, for the novel’s murderous governess. When Mrs. Milroy argues in favor of the ad that will ultimately secure Gwilt’s services, she reasons that “my niece’s governess was originally obtained by an advertisement, and you may imagine her value to us when I tell you that she lived in our family for more than ten years” (178). This respectable woman unwittingly tells us that even in the modern market, a person of “value” can be “obtained”—though this servitude is bought on a free market and not a Barbados auction block. Before he becomes Allan’s right-hand man, Ozias too has suffered the pains of a modern market system, having learned about the civilized world from the bottom up: “It has been my good fortune to see something of Society,” he says. “I have helped to fill its stomach and black its boots” (93). Scenes like this reveal that the triangular trade in slavery that made the nearly dead *Armadales* “the richest man in Barbados” had, by mid-century, improved into a global system of exchange characterized by the metaphorical violence of abstraction as well as its more literal forms, allegorized in

sequences of attempted murder, poison gas, and forced detention in Doctor Downward's psychological ward.

In contrast to Mill's paean to the powers of trade, then, Collins's novel charts the persistence of violence from an apparently outdated era of slave accumulation into a newer one, in its novelistic present; it attends to the historical development of a "contractual" modernity in which violence changes forms but does not go away. As Midwinter approaches a window in the novel's final sentences, he sees that "the darkness had passed. The first light of the new day met him as he looked out, and rested tenderly on his face" (677). In this stunning conclusion, *Armada* tells us with apparent confidence that an overpowering metaphorical darkness is gone. But it also tells us that the "light" arriving to replace that darkness falls directly on the very face that, flush with Trinidadian blood, registers the persistence of a dark history in the present, and the future.

Attention to *Armada*'s complex historicism unearths the theoretical and material complications of liberal imperialism in the Reform era, when a newly centralizing, increasingly democratic British state, operating under the auspices of peace and trade, addressed its power of abstraction to a progressively expanding field of particular bodies within its boundaries. Claiming the power to manage the lives of those citizens who fell within its official count, this state also reserved the power to exert force on the bodies beyond its edges—in those underdeveloped zones, internal and external, where, as Collins wrote, "social progress" was "halted miserably" (376). Focusing attention on these derelict modern spaces, *Armada* also looks to reverse the abstracting process Marx and Mill very differently charted, drawing attention to the global conditions of possibility that allowed Victorian theory to conceptualize its modernity.

I have argued for the specificity of Collins's efforts in this direction, but my own account has performed a series of abstracting moves. I've read Mill's diverse works as a class; elaborated a functional homology between Mill and Marx; and linked one Collins novel (but not all) to that newly created set of texts I've treated as "Reform-era logics of exchange." If my own analytic gestures have taken the shape of a performative contradiction, I conclude with a suggestion of why and how, calling on another critic, Walter Benjamin, who along with Adorno may be the most searching diagnostician of how modern conditions of exchange impinge upon method. In the "Epistemo-Critical Prologue" to his

doctoral dissertation, translated as *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1924-25), Benjamin imagines a method by which the singular instance of historical information—the fragment, the letter, the episode—can stand as an emblem or allegorical representation of a larger whole without becoming the “example” of its “type.” Properly constellated, such singular objects might poetically express or otherwise evoke “abstract” historical narratives—and true ones—without becoming subsumed under the categories they are called upon to represent. The goal of such a non-abstracting historicism, Benjamin writes in the later *Arcades Project*, is “to discover in the analysis of the small individual moment the crystal of the total event” (461). Refusing any Millite claim to seamless induction, highlighting the misfit between the singular instance and its category, Benjamin’s allegorical method argues against “successfully” performing the move from particular to general, even as it continually insists upon enacting that very oscillation. This allows for particulars to remain particulars, unconverted into higher-order, exchangeable intellectual objects.

“Let me think,” Lydia Gwilt confides to her diary. “What *haunts* me, to begin with? The Names haunt me!” (424, emphasis original). She is talking about the profusion of Allan Armadales, but her comment has methodological resonance. To be haunted by names, to be obsessed with the lost or marginal singularities denoted by them while remaining attuned to larger categorical claims: this is the challenge Benjamin’s method proposes and that *Armadales* invites us to consider. My own account has taken its cues from *Armadales*’s philosophical link-making, taking this singular novel as an occasion to tell a story about how logical procedure and political practice informed one another in the mid-1860s, when vast damage was paradoxically produced by the innovations most characteristic of liberty. I’ve argued that *Armadales* coordinates the logical dilemmas of modern reform with those of financial exchange, shuttling its action across oceangoing networks first carved by transactions in human bodies and linking, in the 1860s, the empire’s increasingly democratic core and its underdeveloped “outskirts.” *Armadales* thus addresses itself to a moment when the first liberal empire in history saw its capital and violence transact themselves across a vast global network, one unrivaled until our own even more fully realized moment of empire. Then as now, as Madame Pratolungo declares in the later *Poor Miss Finch* (1871), “Do what one

may in the detestable system of modern society, the pivot on which it all turns is Money” (106).

*Duke University*

---

## NOTES

I thank Kathy A. Psomiades, Bill Knight, Charlotte Sussman, Andrew Miller, and the anonymous *Victorian Studies* reader for their advice on this article.

<sup>1</sup>The *North British Review* judged similarly that “to this author plot and incident are all in all, character is nothing” (Page 141). The plot-character distinction is by now well worn, but Deidre Lynch has charted the rise of “deep” character in the late eighteenth century, indexing the aesthetic innovations of modern character to changes in the culture and practice of finance. To the pairing of finance and fiction I add a third, related concept and a different historical focus: the monetary logic of democracy, taking shape in the years surrounding the Second Reform Bill.

<sup>2</sup>See especially Anderson, *The Powers of Distance*; Goodlad, *Victorian Literature and the Victorian State*; and Thomas, *Cultivating Victorians*. I am indebted to these accounts, but emphasize with Collins the structurally excluded, uncultivated bodies that necessarily fall out from the universality imagined by Mill and Anderson’s Habermas—those who live “beyond the pale of the Civil Law of Europe,” as Collins writes in *No Name* (139). John Bright called this democracy’s structurally necessary “residuum” (qtd. in Hall et al. 98).

<sup>3</sup>For a history of the Census’s expansion as an institution of state counting, see Glass.

<sup>4</sup>Janice Carlisle argues that the chapter on ethology forms a central mystery in Mill’s philosophy, a confusion that finds its way into a form that “trips and stumbles[;] variations in tone from brash certainty to meek insinuation seem misplaced and uncoordinated, and the organization of the argument proceeds in a fashion that can be described as simply backwards” (134).

<sup>5</sup>On the abstract subject as implicitly male, see Pateman; on the abstract subject as able to conclude contracts, see the lengthy treatment in Hegel.

<sup>6</sup>Lauren Berlant has argued that “to ask the question of what makes something a case, and not a merely gestural instance, illustration, or example, is to query the adequacy of an object to bear the weight of an explanation worthy of attending to and taking a lesson from” (666). What follows makes the case for *Armada*’s ability to stand as a case in these terms.

<sup>7</sup>The book went through eight editions during Mill’s lifetime, “including an inexpensive edition for working-class readers” (Snyder 100). Mill made some 5,000 emendations to the text over the course of its publication history (Whitaker 1035). For an account of these, see Mill VII: xlix-cvii.

<sup>8</sup>According to the *Autobiography*, by the time of his work on the *Logic* Mill believed that the time had come for a “hand-to-hand fight” between the philosophies of experience and intuition (I: 270).

<sup>9</sup>In Anderson’s *Powers of Distance*, for example, Mill stands (with Eliot) as exemplary of the book’s polemic on reason; he is praised for his ability to “privilege the capacity to

achieve distance from one's own perspective and interests, conceiving the movement toward truth as result of a continuously enacted impartiality on the part of the individual" (17).

<sup>10</sup>In arguing that the question of particularity and aggregation is a structuring problem for democratic reform, I am reading Mill as part of the casuistical tradition John Forrester examines in his ongoing work on the case form.

<sup>11</sup>In an 1862 usage, the *OED* gives for "aggregate," in legal terminology, something "composed of many individual bodies united into one association"; a second definition (1824, 1859, 1876) simultaneously biologizes and politicizes this definition. An aggregate is a thing "constituted by the collection of many particles or units into one body, mass, or amount; collected, collective, whole, total." As Michel Foucault writes, using his own terminology for the flexible governmental power he associates with the mid-nineteenth century, "Utilitarian philosophy was the theoretical instrument that underpinned the government of populations" (74).

<sup>12</sup>In a brief discussion of the *Logic* focusing on Mill's treatment of syllogisms, Forrester claims that "for Mill . . . reasoning is always from particulars to particulars" (6). But while Mill did argue against the a priori existence of classes or "natural kinds," his *Logic* explains at length how scientific classes or "generalizations," however provisional, could and should be determined: this is by induction, a mode of reasoning central to Mill's method but undiscussed by Forrester.

<sup>13</sup>Marx was in explicit dialogue with Mill's work, citing him in several derisive instances in *Capital*. My point is that this logical problem underwrote a major political shift and found expression in multiple idioms during the Reform years. For a related argument see Poovey, *Making a Social Body* 31.

<sup>14</sup>As Mill explains, "If . . . we knew what all names signify, we should know everything which, in the existing state of human knowledge, is capable either of being made a subject of affirmation or denial, or of being itself affirmed or denied of a subject" (VII: 46). The quietly radical position here is that *all* observable or conceivably observable phenomena in the world are potentially nameable as "facts"; they are theoretically able to be marked as particular "subjects" available for mental processing.

<sup>15</sup>Though her timeline differs from the tighter history I am attempting to trace here, Poovey's *History of the Modern Fact* discusses induction's place in modern orders of rationality. For discussions of the type and the typical and their relationship to historicism, see Baucom 35-79, and Chandler, *England in 1819*, especially 194-212, and "On the Face of the Case."

<sup>16</sup>On the "deep interconnection between the legal form and the commodity form," see Pashukanis 63. Baucom discusses monetary subjectivity in relationship to slavery in the eighteenth century (35-79).

<sup>17</sup>On Maine's political historicism, see Psomiades's forthcoming *Primitive Marriage* and Burrow's *Evolution and Society* (137-78).

<sup>18</sup>As Pykett summarizes, "his fascination with social outsiders is matched by a well-developed interest in crime and criminality" (138).



## WORKS CITED

- Adorno, Theodor, and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2002.
- Anderson, Amanda. *The Powers of Distance: Cosmopolitanism and the Cultivation of Detachment*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001.
- . *The Way We Argue Now: A Study in the Cultures of Theory*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006.
- Arnold, Matthew. *Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1993.
- Baucom, Ian. *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002.
- . *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Trans. John Osborne. London: Verso, 1998.
- Berlant, Lauren. "On the Case." *Critical Inquiry* 33.4 (2007): 663–72.
- Burrow, J. W. *Evolution and Society: A Study in Victorian Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966.
- Carlisle, Janice. *John Stuart Mill and the Writing of Character*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1991.
- Carlyle, Thomas. "Shooting Niagara, and After?" *The Works of Thomas Carlyle*. Vol. 16. New York: Collier, 1897. 589–633.
- Chandler, James. *England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.
- . "On the Face of the Case: Conrad, *Lord Jim*, and the Sentimental Novel." *Critical Inquiry* 33.4 (2007): 837–64.
- Collini, Stephan. *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain, 1850–1930*. New York: Oxford UP, 1991.
- Collins, Wilkie. *Armada*. 1866. New York: Penguin, 2004.
- . *No Name*. 1862. New York: Oxford UP, 1998.
- . *Poor Miss Finch*. 1871. New York: Oxford UP, 2000.
- Forrester, John. "If *p*, Then What? Thinking in Cases." *History of the Human Sciences* 9.1 (1996): 1–25.
- Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France*. London: Palgrave, 2007.
- Gallagher, Catherine. "George Eliot: Immanent Victorian." *Representations* 90.1 (2005): 61–74.
- Glass, D. V. *Numbering the People: The Eighteenth-Century Population Controversy and the Development of Census and Vital Statistics in Britain*. Westmead, UK: D. C. Heath, 1973.
- Goodlad, Lauren. *Victorian Literature and the Victorian State: Character and Governance in a Liberal Society*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2003.
- Hadley, Elaine. *Melodramatic Tactics: Theatricalized Dissent in the English Marketplace, 1800–1885*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995.
- Hall, Catherine, Keith McClelland, and Jane Rendall. *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender, and the British Reform Act of 1867*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2000.
- Hegel, G. W. F. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1991.

- Hobsbawm, Erich. *The Age of Empire: 1875–1914*. New York: Vintage, 1989.
- Howe, Anthony. "Free Trade and Global Order: The Rise and Fall of a Victorian Vision." *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought*. Ed. Duncan Bell. New York: Cambridge UP, 2007. 26–46.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Late Marxism: Adorno; or the Persistence of the Dialectic*. London: Verso, 2007.
- Larsen, Neil. *Determinations: Essays on Theory, Narrative and Nation in the Americas*. London: Verso, 2001.
- Loesberg, Jonathan. "The Ideology of Narrative Form in Sensation Fiction." *Representations* 13 (Winter 1986): 115–38.
- Lynch, Deidre Shaun. *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.
- Maine, Henry Sumner. *Ancient Law: Its Connection with the Family History of Society, and its Relation to Modern Ideas*. 1861. New York: Henry Holt, 1873.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Vol. 1. New York: Penguin, 1990.
- Mill, J. S. *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*. Ed. J. M. Robson. 33 vols. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1963–91.
- Page, Norman, ed. *Wilkie Collins: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974.
- Pashukanis, Evgeny B. *Law and Marxism: A General Theory*. New York: Pluto P, 1978.
- Pateman, Carole. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988.
- Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1985.
- Poovey, Mary. *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.
- . *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830–1864*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995.
- Psomiades, Kathy A. *Primitive Marriage: Victorian Anthropology and the Novel*. Unpublished book manuscript.
- Pykett, Lyn. *Authors in Context: Wilkie Collins*. New York: Oxford World's Classics, 2005.
- Snyder, Laura J. *Reforming Philosophy: A Victorian Debate on Science and Society*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2006.
- Stephen, Leslie. *The English Utilitarians, Volume III: John Stuart Mill*. London: Duckworth and Co., 1900.
- Thomas, David Wayne. *Cultivating Victorians: Liberal Culture and the Aesthetic*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2004.
- Whitaker, J. K. "John Stuart Mill's Methodology." *The Journal of Political Economy* 83.5 (1975): 1033–49.
- Woloch, Alex. *The One vs. the Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003.