



Volume 1

Margins and Movement in Scottish Literature: with particular attention to the writing of Robert Louis Stevenson

Les Marges et le Mouvement
dans la littérature écossaise,
en particulier chez Robert Louis Stevenson

Document de Synthèse

Dossier présenté en vue de l'habilitation à diriger des recherches

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Disons qu'on voyage mieux si on a bon point de départ.

(K. White, *Le Poete Cosmographe*, 60)

*I do not love my country. Its abstract splendor
is beyond my grasp.*

*But (although it sounds bad) I would give my life
for ten places in it, for certain people,
seaports, pinewoods, fortresses,
a run-down city, gray, grotesque,
various figures from its history
mountains
(and three or four rivers).*

(José Emilio Pacheco, 'High Treason', translated by Alastair Reid)

Introduction

The aim of the first volume of this dossier is to look back on the research that I have carried out since submitting my doctoral thesis and to outline the directions and detours taken over the course of this practical and critical journey. Drawing up this overview, attempting to reduce my work to its essential elements, has offered me the opportunity to rethink the ideas my publications set out to convey and has led to a certain amount of reappraisal. I have taken the chance not only to survey the work I have published over that period but also to revise and review it; to present it in a new way, one might almost say to rewrite it. This act of rewriting is, according to Matei Calinescu, almost inevitable for anyone writing in a postmodern world in which ‘writers are not only justified to rewrite earlier texts, [...] but, being caught in an infinite textual maze, they have no choice but to rewrite’.¹

In stepping back from this rewriting, I realise that I have experienced the same urge as the traveller-writers who will be discussed in the third part of this synthesis – those who follow in the footsteps of another writer, original text in hand, and inevitably end up reworking the original version of the experience and the descriptions of the places visited. Beyond intertextuality, this task has brought to the forefront my interest in the stratification of texts – those palimpsests of travel narratives and auto/biographies where one can see the work of successive generations of writers through their additions, borrowings, reworking, modifications and reinterpretations. Certain passages and postulations from past work, I have simply restated in a new context, throwing into light new perspectives on older conclusions. This reworking has also brought me to a realisation of the extent to which I had been drawn to work in and on the margins: on annotations, so-called minor modes of literature, fragments, companions, followers; all of this generally centred on Scotland, a country itself marginal with respect to the hegemony of English-English literature.

The works presented in the second volume of this dossier have been published over a very long period of time – perhaps too long – and inevitably the lines of theory have shifted, so that new sources of reflection have come to nourish my thinking around the subjects dealt with, particularly in the field of postcolonial travel literature (I am thinking in particular of the work of Homi Bhabha). During the process of creating this document, I similarly realised that

¹ Matei Calinescu, ‘Rewriting’ in Bertens Johannes Willem and Douwe Wessel Fokkema (eds), *International Postmodernism: Theory and Literary Practice*, Amsterdam: 1997, 245.

rather than simply separating and stacking accounts of those published articles to construct a linear narrative that might reflect intellectual progression and evolution, it was preferable to interweave and interlock them in new ways; to create new arrangements with the aim of establishing a dialogue between the articles. This intertextual overlapping has created fresh ideas for future work.

The work presented in this volume was conducted within the LACES laboratory of the University of Bordeaux, of which I became a full member after the defence of my doctoral thesis in 1994 under the direction of Marie-Claire ROUYER. During a good part of this period I have also been an associate member of the CLIMAS laboratory of the University of Bordeaux Montaigne. Since 1996, I have been a *maître de conférences* in the Department of Languages and Cultures at the University of Bordeaux. At certain points in this document, I have attempted to identify the points of convergence between my research career and the parallel activity of teaching in English for Specific Purposes in the hope of highlighting the pertinence of this double career path, the two strands of which might at first sight seem incompatible. I am, in fact, a lecturer in Medical English while my research is resolutely centred on Scottish literature, particularly non-fiction of the nineteenth century, with some occasional forays into specialised English and university didactics.

1. Traces

Il faut voyager pour froter et limer sa cervelle contre celle d'autrui¹

The research work I carried out for my doctoral thesis – *Voyageurs écossais en France au dix-neuvième siècle : image de la France, reflet de l'Écosse* – was situated at the crossroads of at least three disciplinary areas: Scottish studies, travel literature and nineteenth-century cultural history. The theoretical approach adopted was resolutely reflexive: my aim was to detect the reflection of Scottish identity in the travel narratives of a corpus of writers all of whom were Scottish but from vastly different backgrounds. As is often the case in travel writing, it was clear that the Scottish travellers were explicitly describing France and the French while at the same time implicitly structuring their own identities as Scots; simultaneously reflecting on France and reflecting their home society and culture. Following on from that thesis work, I have continued to adopt and adapt this approach through an ongoing analysis of the various ways in which Scottish travellers have presented their social and national identities

¹ Michel de Montaigne, *Les Essais*, livre I, chapitre XXVI.

in their narratives – explicitly or implicitly – while at the same time paying attention to what they had to say about Elsewhere and the Other.

The objective of the first part of this synthesis document is to revisit the research themes that have enriched and extended my work on Scottish travel literature: namely, questions of rootedness and dislocation, transference, the inscription of self and other in space, boundary work and othering, interactions between the local and the international, of (un)situatedness and *lieux de mémoire*. I also want to show how that original work led to work in the area of auto/biographical writing. This opening section also aims to situate Scotland as a geographical and a theoretical research framework. I will thus examine the traces left by the Scottish traveller-writers as well as those left by Scotland as an object of study in both their texts and in my research work.

1.1 Home and Away

It's frae that time in France that I saw Scotland afresh. Ye gang awa and see yer ain land frae a distance, and ye see it better. Syne ye win hame and ye see the haill world in that new licht.¹

Any analysis of the literature of travel inevitably throws up questions concerning the representations and comparisons contained therein of home and away, and of the areas in which these two notions rub up against each other. Between the moments of departure and return in travel accounts, the reader is invited to follow the traveller-author in his or her discovery of a contact zone with unfamiliar Others. In my research, the point of departure and return has most often been Scotland and the contact zone has more often than not been situated somewhere in France.²

1.1.1 Scotland as a point of departure

[...] the concept of home seems to be tied in some way with the notion of identity – the story we tell of ourselves and which is also the story others tell of us. But identities are not free-floating, they are limited by borders and boundaries.³

¹ James Robertson, *The Fanatic*, London: Fourth Estate, 2001, 73.

² But sometimes also in an unfamiliar region of Scotland, in the United States, in Belgium, or in the Pacific Islands.

³ Madan Sarup in *Travellers' Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*, Jon Bird et al. (eds), Abingdon: Routledge, 1994, 91.

Travelling abroad prompted many nineteenth-century Scottish writers to reflect on their standing in relation to their country of origin, starting with the very name and delineation of that country. Was it Scotland, Great Britain or perhaps even England? This was one of the first questions I attempted to investigate on completing my thesis.¹ Indeed, during the nineteenth century, some Scots not only accepted the latter designation but claimed it as their own. At the beginning of a period when Britain was the largest and richest of the world powers, identification with it represented an almost irresistible force of attraction for Scots. The substitution of 'English' for 'British' was not always a simple terminological shift, but involved a real referential change. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, for the first time, Scotland shared a sense of patriotism with England. The anglicisation of the Scottish mindset that accompanied this shift in loyalty was triggered by the Napoleonic Wars. For the first time, Englishmen and Scotsmen were fighting on the same side in a modern war that demanded of its participants an awareness of their existence as a nation. The idea of British identity was associated with a victory: Waterloo. This new spirit of British patriotism tended to displace and hide traditional Scottish attitudes. Without destroying Scottish identity entirely, it weakened it and made it more complex.

Gradually, I have moved away from thinking of the relationship between Scotland and England as one of internal colonisation, an approach that had been prompted principally by Michael Hechter's influential book *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development*,² towards a focus on the shifting nature and the complexity of that relationship; and the ways in which the Scottish pasts of displaced Scots continued to shape their sense of self and their interactions with the world, sometimes as hybrid colonised-colonisers. I have come to see that the shifting self-positioning of Scottish travellers shadows the notion of ambivalence as developed by Homi Bhabha. He refers to a particular ambivalence that haunts the idea of nationhood, as well as the language used by those who write it and the lives of those who experience it:

It is an ambivalence that emerges from a growing awareness that, despite the certainty with which historians speak of the 'origins' of nation as a sign of the 'modernity' of society, the cultural temporality of the nation inscribes a much more transitional social reality.³

¹ Cf. Lesley Graham, 'Ecosais, Anglais ou Britanniques ? Les Voyageurs écossais en France au XIXe siècle et la nationalité écossaise', *Études Écossaises* N°2, 1993.

² Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536–1966*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1975.

³ Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, London: Routledge, 1.

This ambivalence, whereby Scottish culture is presented as consisting of opposing perceptions and dimensions, or dualities (notably Highland/Lowland, urban/rural, Scots and Gaelic/English), creates a fracture in the identity of Scotland which if not colonised is at least dominated by an overbearing neighbouring power often causes Scottish travellers confronted with the Other to position themselves as hybrids of their own Scottish cultural identity and that of their English neighbours.

In France, nineteenth-century Scottish travellers had unstable and unclear ideas about their own nationality for a number of reasons. Travel in France involved an almost constant comparison between their home country and the country they were discovering. The comparison was often coupled with a discussion of how societies change from primitive and barbaric to refined and civilised. To gain the greatest advantage in the comparison between home and abroad; between the barbaric and the civilised, Scots of the nineteenth century tended to opt for Britain rather than Scotland as their reference. Some travellers, especially at the turn of the century, desirous of the advantages conferred through association with England's more prosperous economy and enhanced reputation even went beyond the terms of the Union by considering Scotland had been subsumed by England and styling themselves as English.

The contrasts and comparisons drawn between France and Scotland/Great Britain by travel writers reveal something of the slipperiness of Scottish-British self-identification in the nineteenth century. Throughout the century, French-bashing Scottish travellers were just as eager as their English counterparts to establish the superiority of the British way of life over that of France. It is significant, given this overwhelmingly chauvinistic mindset, to observe that in some contexts, Scottish travel writers were prepared to change their perspective and to reinforce the notion of France's backwardness in relation to England by comparing it to a similar backwardness in Scotland, deliberately associating their own country with much maligned France and placing England in a position of superiority over both countries. In drawing the reader's attention to these unflattering comparisons, Scottish travellers were looking at France from an obviously Anglo-British perspective. At first glance, this seems a curious move given the eagerness of nineteenth-century Scotland to be accepted on an equal footing with England, especially in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars which had galvanised British national sentiment. The forms that comparative self-deprecation takes in Scottish writing about nineteenth-century France, and its apparent motivations, clearly merited further investigation.

In fact, through all of these identity manoeuvres, a gulf between the Highlands and the Lowlands of Scotland becomes increasingly evident. The Highlander is portrayed as idle and

lethargic, clearly not the self-image that nineteenth-century Britain sought to project. As a consequence, the territory stands out as different and somehow detached from the rest of the country. These factors play a part in the critical stance adopted by some Scots. The Highland/Lowland dichotomy and the dissociation of the supposedly civilised part of the country from the barbaric north are evident. The problems of the Highlands are more openly exposed than those of the southern cities: travellers are much less likely to draw comparisons with the dirtiness of the streets of Edinburgh than the squalor of a Highland slum. Similarly, the problems and weaknesses of what travellers term 'the lower orders' in France and Scotland are frequently compared, while issues relating to the travellers' own social classes are not considered comparable. Through these disparaging comparisons with France, Scotland is literally cut down in size.¹ The boundaries of civilised society are pushed back behind the Highland line (everything north of that line is called Scotland, everything south of it is Britain or very often England), and the population considered comparable to France is reduced to the less well-off and thus further removed from the travellers themselves.

In also highlighting the valued similarities that they observed between their own country and France, however insignificant they might be politically, Scottish travellers were exploring their peripheral place in relation to the hegemonic centre of England – a subtle and somewhat coy way of expressing and affirming the differences between Scotland and England. They discovered that communities other than their own did not conform to the English model and thus affirmed their ex-centricity, a way of overcoming the pull of the centre.²

1.1.2 Destination France: Walter Scott on the continent

*Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
From wandering on a foreign strand!*³

¹ I explored this move in another early article, Lesley Graham, 'Belittling Scotland: Scottish Travellers in France in the Nineteenth Century' in *Etudes Ecossaises* N°3, 1993.

² Lesley Graham, 'Home from Home? Scottish Travellers in France in the 19th Century' in *Réciprocités*, Le Mans, November 1994.

³ Walter Scott, 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel', Canto sixth.

I returned¹ to notions of similarity and difference between the Scottish self and the French other through a close reading of Walter Scott's *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*.² News of the victory at Waterloo had barely arrived before Scott decided to set out with a group of friends for the French capital by way of the field of battle. In this he was hardly original since as soon as the border opened tens of thousands of triumphant British excursionists poured across to pick over the field of Waterloo whence Paris to admire the city and the allied troops that occupied it. What was more unusual, however, was Scott's plan to publish an account of his travels and to do this in epistolary form. The travelogue, *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, consists of sixteen letters written by the fictitious Paul to various people from his entourage at home.

Commentators have found it convenient to bookend any account of Scott's excursion to the continent in 1815 with two phrases from his writing. First, the optimistic 'I expect a great deal from this trip', a hope expressed in a letter on 26th July 1815; and secondly the satisfied declaration 'I shall always number the weeks I have spent here [in Paris] among the happiest of my life,' made at the end of the volume in question. It is worth considering Scott's account of what took place between those two declarations while paying particular attention to the twin questions of alliance and antagonism with regard to France in the context of this travel narrative, first of all in terms of the nation-building work that it did and later with regard to the reception of the travel account in France. What did Scott experience in France and in Paris, a city that he knew so well but from afar, that inspired in him a sentiment of alliance and what inspired the diametrically opposite sentiment of animus? – 'There is so much in Paris to admire, and so much to dislike'³ – and how did he fix the relative positions of his country of origin and France, and the complex interplay of attraction and revulsion that underpinned that mental cartography?

This was Scott's first trip abroad. From his point of view, the excursion was being undertaken in the best possible conditions – those of the victor. The trip is an example of triumph tourism. The opening sentence of the first letter from Paris sets the tone – Paris is 'this conquered capital'. 'The day of reckoning is at length arrived', 'Paris is one great camp', 'an English camp, and in the capital of France, where an English drum has not been heard since

¹ The research drawn on in this section was undertaken for my paper entitled 'Alliance and Antagonism in *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*' given at the eleventh International Scott Conference", 10-13 July, 2018, Paris Sorbonne, as yet unpublished.

² Walter Scott, *Paul's Letters to His Kinsfolk*, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, and John Murray, London, 1816.

³ *Ibid.* 254.

1436, when the troops of Henry the Sixth were expelled from Paris.’ The French taste the gall of humiliation ‘in all its bitterness’ the iron has entered their soul’.¹

The stated objective of *Paul's Letters* is certainly to describe the state of France, but the work that these observations and judgments do is clearly that of fixing England/Britain and therefore Scotland in a certain vision of the world. As Dennis Porter writes:

[...] writers of travel have more or less unconsciously [...] engaged in a form of cultural cartography that is impelled by the anxiety to map the globe, center it on a certain point, produce explanatory narratives, and assign fixed identities to regions and the races that inhabit them. Such representations are always concerned with the question of place and of placing oneself once and for all vis-à-vis an Other or others.²

After Waterloo, Scott places Britain at the centre of a reconfigured Europe and at the top of a hierarchy of states, not only because of Britain's military strength but also because of its purported superior moral strength now discernible in the behaviour of British occupying troops. He writes: ‘the high and paramount part which Britain now holds in Europe, that pre-eminence, ... depends entirely on our maintaining pure and sacred the national character for good faith and disinterested honour.’³

In order to understand the effectiveness of this strategy through the reaction of the French Other to the unflattering portrait drawn by Walter Scott in *Paul's Letters*, a close examination of the reception of the volume in France is enlightening. Despite his very obvious exhilaration at Wellington's victory, and his extreme patriotism, Scott manages to moderate his criticism of France and judges the country and the people with at least relative objectivity and no excessive rancour. He resists the gallophobic hysteria common in so many other travel accounts of the period and is notably less bitter than his Scottish compatriot John Scott. His descriptions of French character and morals are, on the whole, reasonable. This was a reasonableness however that escaped his French readership when the book eventually appeared in translation in 1822. The French translator, Defauconpret, even went so far as to augment his translation with numerous notes in which he refuted Scott's observations. In his preface he admits that he hesitated to bring the book before a French public fearing that it might have a negative impact on the Scottish author's popularity in France:

Sir Walter Scott ne sauroit toujours oublier qu'il appartient à une nation rivale de la France. Il est ici l'historien de nos revers : il est protestant zélé, et semble incliner pour un parti plutôt que

¹ Ibid. 253, 338, 302, 398.

² Dennis Porter, *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1993, 199-20.

³ Walter Scott, *ibid.* 385-6.

pour un autre : aussi il n'a pu se dépouiller entièrement de certains préjugés comme Anglais, comme anglican et comme politique.¹

And indeed, the publication of *Lettres de Paul à sa famille* was immediately followed in France by a series of violently anti-British (or at least anti-English) articles, perhaps the most virulent of which appeared in *l'Album* on 15th August 1822 from the pen of Creuzé de Lesser who writes:

La foi du plus fanatique musulman est loin de celle que gardent les Anglais à tout ce qui peut être au désavantage de la France. Ces hommes, qui voyagent tant, parce qu'ils s'ennuient tant, portent partout un si mauvais esprit, un regard si dédaigneux, qu'ils voyent mal, ou ne voyent point les trois quarts de ce qu'ils regardent ...

Ce n'est pas que je veuille faire la satire des Anglais; mais après un siècle où nous ne nous sommes pas lassés de dire du bien d'eux, et eux du mal de nous, il est plus que temps de reprendre notre place et de les remettre à la leur. Nos armées avaient commencé l'ouvrage ... c'est à nos écrivains à le compléter, et à réparer les folies de leurs imprudens prédécesseurs.²

Amédée Pichot, after a visit to Abbotsford some years later, concluded, more indulgently, that despite the number of French people who believed *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk* to be a tissue of lies, the book was not without merit:

[...] beaucoup de choses vues superficiellement ont inspiré à l'auteur des conclusions erronées ; il y a aussi des préjugés d'Anglais et de tory dont il n'a pu s'affranchir dans un court séjour parmi nous. Mais il rend justice à plus d'une vertu française ; tandis que tant de ses compatriotes ne nous en reconnaissent aucune.³

Even after his death, French commentators were still grappling with Scott's criticism of their national character: Sainte Beuve wrote in his obituary in *Le Globe* (27th September 1832): 'La France a eu de sévères reproches à lui adresser au sujet des jugements étranges dont il a rempli les *Lettres de Paul et l'Histoire de Napoléon Bonaparte* ; mais c'était, de sa part, légèreté et préventions d'habitude, bien plutôt que mauvais vouloir et système.' Indeed, as late as 1929, M. E. Elkington can be found complaining that: 'Scott [...] se vante ouvertement de la victoire des alliés et se complaît de constater l'humiliation de l'orgueil national des Français, qu'il regarde plutôt comme de la vanité justement punie. Son ouvrage contient donc maintes choses blessantes pour les Français, et l'on ne s'étonne pas que, lorsqu'il fut traduit en 1822, il ait soulevé beaucoup d'indignation.'⁴

¹ Walter Scott, *Lettres de Paul à sa famille*, Paris, 1822, ij.

² *L'Album : journal des arts, des modes et des théâtres*, 15 août 1822, 190-1.

³ Amédée Pichot, *Voyage En Angleterre Et En Ecosse*, Paris, 1826, 227.

⁴ M. E. Elkington, *Les relations de société entre l'Angleterre et la France sous la Restauration* (1814-1830), 33.

This investigation into the reception of Walter Scott's travelogue in France was a new approach for me, and revealed another side to the traveller-host relationship that had been under-appreciated in my previous work. The energetic resistance in France to his reading of the state of France and of the character of the French people served as a reminder that France was not simply a blank slate onto which Scottish travellers could project their impressions, but an organic, reactive body of people that countered the attacks and sought in turn to influence the ways in which they were portrayed, and the ways in which the work of France's detractors was received.

1.1.3 Transference

Out of My Country and Myself I Go¹

A first trip abroad can be a revealing test of the traveller's understanding of his or her own national identity, or sense of belonging. The confrontation with otherness challenges the traveller to justify or at least to articulate their notion of self, wrapped up in perceptions of belonging and community. 'Since any search for identity involves differentiating oneself from what one is not,' writes Seyla Benhabib, 'identity politics is always and necessarily a politics of creating difference.'² On his first trip to Paris, the Scottish journalist John Scott began to create and establish this difference in relation to France and he did so with zeal. The concept of transference proved particularly useful as a concept for the more in-depth analysis³ of the account of his trip to France entitled *A Visit to Paris in 1814; being a review of the moral, political, intellectual, and social condition of the French capital*⁴ than I had been able to develop in my doctoral thesis. John Scott's harsh judgement of France and her people was not just opportunistic criticism that met the expectations of an English readership hostile to France and all things French, it was born of a desire on the part of this displaced Scot to build and consolidate British national identity.

¹ Stevenson (echoing Hazlitt), *The Amateur Emigrant*, Edinburgh, EUP, 60.

² Seyla Benhabib, *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2021, 3.

³ Lesley Graham, 'National Identity and Transference in John Scott's Vision of France' in Sellin B., Thiec A., Carboni P. (dirs), *Ecosse: l'Identité nationale en question. Scotland: Questioning National Identity*, Centre de Recherches sur les Identités Nationales et l'Interculturalité, 2009, 151-158.

⁴ Scott, John. *A Visit to Paris in 1814; Being a Review of the Moral, Political, Intellectual, and Social Condition of the French Capital*. Third Edition, Corrected, and with a New Preface Referring to Late Events. ed. London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1815.

If we accept that nations are mental constructs – ‘imagined communities’, to use Benedict Anderson's well-known term¹ – which nationalised political subjects perceive as discrete political entities, we must also assume that national identities, as particular forms of social identity, are produced and reproduced, as well as transformed and dismantled, discursively. John Scott's unconscious mission and the subtext of the three books he wrote on the subject of France was very clearly to create and promote through his discourse a new national identity for himself: a British identity anchored in England that glossed over his Scottish origins. He did this in the crudest possible way by extolling British strengths and comparing them to perceived French weaknesses. Thus, the reader of his travelogues witnessed the textual manifestation of his movement from the periphery to the perceived centre. Having rid himself of the scotticisms that might have marked him as provincial, he now cultivated a somewhat slippery representation of his national origins.

One of the assumptions underlying the work of Wodak et al. in *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* proved useful in this context. It is based on cultural studies research and concludes that:

[...] the discursive constructs of nations and national identities [...] primarily emphasise national uniqueness and intra-national uniformity but largely ignore intra-national differences. In imagining national singularity and homogeneity members of a national community simultaneously construct the distinctions between themselves and other nations, most notably when the other nationality is believed to exhibit traits similar to those of one's own national community, similar to what Freud called the ‘narcissism of small differences.’²

John Scott's motivations for overtly drawing attention to the weaknesses of his native Scotland, and for excluding it from the concept that he understood to be covered by the word Britain, a national entity that he simultaneously attempts to promote, seemed to me to be attributable to the phenomenon of transference. In simple terms, transference is defined as the unconscious displacement to others of feelings and attitudes that were originally associated with important figures early in a person's life. In psychoanalysis, it is a positive and necessary step. According to Dennis Porter, who identifies the possibility of this type of investment in the work of travel writers:

[...] decisions concerning flight or exile from the ‘homeland’ along with the embracing or rejection of the countries through which one travels, often derive from identifications dependent less on objective factors than on the projection of early prototypes onto geographic space. The

¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed., London, Verso, 1991.

² Ruth Wodak et al, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, Edinburgh, EUP: 2009, 4.

positive and negative transferences people make on countries are frequently just as powerful and just as 'irrational' as those they make on individuals.¹

In this transference relationship with France, John Scott, having left behind both *pater* and *patria* (his upholsterer Scottish father and his homeland) attributed to France the characteristics of his father's country. France became for him a convenient scapegoat for the repressed and wholly subjective feelings of rejection that had initially been directed against his father and Scotland and the catalyst for a series of associations between France and Scotland. In recording this, like many other talented Scotsmen, in the early nineteenth century he contributed in his own way, through journalism and travel writing, to the discursive construction of a contemporary British national identity.

Although, the application of the psychoanalytic theory of transference to the context of travel was fruitful in the case of John Scott and his recentred national identity, it did not appear to be a line of research that could be taken much further. The experience of travel is not undertaken in the same spirit as psychoanalysis and to apply the theory of transference or indeed any other theories derived from comparisons with that relationship now seems somewhat contrived. Others, however, have worked on travel and transference in the context of post-colonial travel to good effect.²

1.2 Knowing one's place

1.2.1 Rootedness and dislocation in W. F. Campbell

*Exile is predicated on the existence of, love for, and a real bond with one's native place; the universal truth of exile is not that one has lost that love or home, but that inherent in each is an unexpected, unwelcome loss. Regard experiences then as if they were about to disappear.*³

Work on Walter Frederick Campbell's *Life in Normandy* (1863),⁴ provided me with an entry point to further explore the dynamics of geographical and social rootedness and displacement both of which are at play in this travelogue.⁵ Exiled for economic and financial

¹ Denis Porter, Op. Cit. 11.

² Cf. for example, Leigh Anne Duck, "Travel and Transference: V.S. Naipaul and the Plantation Past." in *Look Away!: The U.S. South in New World Studies*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2004, 150-170.

³ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Vintage, 1993, 336.

⁴ [Walter Frederick Campbell], *Life in Normandy; sketches of French fishing, farming, cooking, natural history, and politics, drawn from nature*, Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, 1863.

⁵ Cf. Lesley Graham, 'The Displaced Naturalist: W. F. Campbell's life of exile in Normandy', *Études Écossaises*, Vol 13, 2010.

reasons, W. F. Campbell (1798-1855) spent the final years of his life in Avranches. He had formerly owned the island of Islay for a period of thirty-two years and his financial ruin was partly due to the agrarian and economic reforms he introduced on the island. Campbell was, in many ways, a benevolent landlord, described as a kind-hearted man with a generous nature and he resisted the temptation to expel the island's population through clearances. The results of his extensive reforms are still visible in Islay today, and audible in the names of the settlements.

Life in Normandy is the fictionalized story of Campbell's life in and around Avranches. His son, John Francis Campbell edited the two volumes, describing them as primarily a philanthropic effort to encourage the Scottish peasantry to improve their subsistence practices.¹ As we have already seen, much of the nineteenth-century writing on France was characterised by a penchant for emphasising how much better France could be if only it were a little more British. It is therefore refreshing to discover that the stated intention of these two volumes, as set out in the preface, is to suggest how Scottish farmers and fishermen might find new ways of fishing and preparing food by adopting French methods.

Hope and Cross, the protagonists of the narrative, both of whom are knowledgeable about nature, fishing and hunting, are manifestly Campbell's alter egos. The narrative unfolds in Normandy in 1848 against the backdrop of the Parisian revolution and can be interpreted as a long implicit rumination on the dislocation and the disintegration of the author's sense of identity and the unstable and difficult meaning of 'home' both for the economic exile and for the peasant classes in France and in Scotland. As Sarup observes:

The notion of home is intimately linked to the notion of place. People are born into and develop relationships and attachments that are always place-based and this natural environment is of fundamental importance in the formation of our sense of self. Attitudes towards these places are socially constructed and, to some extent at least, conditioned by a mental hierarchy associated with the movement of capital from place to place²

Campbell's approach is an interesting variant of the more common traveller's project of the transformation for new lands visited, especially in the colonial context – part of 'the spirit of British improvement that has permeated so many travel texts, its prescriptions emanating from a seat of power behind the invisible, innocent speaking "I".'³ Instead of seeing the host country as available for improvement, Campbell explicitly directs his suggestions back to his home country, and backwards in time to a catastrophic period for him personally. So that,

¹ Campbell, *ibid.* v.

² Madan Sarup, *ibid.* 96.

³ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London, Routledge, 1992, 61.

far from looking forward to the glorious vision of improvement in the country in which he now resides, the usual trope of nineteenth-century travelogues, his suggestions for improvement are sad reminders of missed opportunities at home, his own financial mistakes, and devastating natural events.

Read in the light of Campbell's personal situation, this is more than just a self-help book for distressed islanders. I found that the text could be approached more as a reflection on the notion of home and cathartic exile, discursively focusing the author's strategies for dealing with an acute sense of both social and cultural dislocation. Campbell's main strategy is that of exchange: the exchange of knowledge and experience between the Scottish Highlands and Normandy with himself as the textual intermediary. The exchange is unlikely, however, to have been operational since few of the potential beneficiaries would have read his work. It is, rather, an assertion of Campbell's identity as a useful, if displaced, person, a source of knowledge on the natural world but an economic failure.

One of the ways in which exiles may play on the tension created by their displacement is to do boundary work: to consolidate the definition of what is 'us' and what is 'them'. From the outset of his narrative, Campbell sets himself apart by giving the impression that Normandy is in many ways a hostile environment. The action in Normandy takes place against the backdrop of the rumblings of the 1848 revolution in Paris, with an insurgent taking refuge in the inn where Hope and Cross are staying in Granville lending a suggestion of ambient menace to the exiles' presence in an unpredictable and turbulent foreign land. The struggle to assert social and cultural dominance is played out throughout the travelogue with multiple subtle examples of what Pratt calls 'discourses that legitimise bourgeois authority and delegitimise peasant and subsistence ways of life'.¹ Several aspects of Campbell's text reflect this relationship and reinforce the idea that although he may be exiled from a national point of view and this for financial reasons, he maintains, to some extent at least, his social class. Campbell is undoubtedly a gentleman (he had even set his sights on a peerage) and the narrative showcases a natural dominance over the peasant population of Normandy.

Interestingly, the two areas that he proposes to help and advise, Normandy and Highland Scotland, are liminal spaces, characterized by rich shorelines and set far from the political centres of their respective countries. Despite a sincere effort to find correspondences and potential mutually useful exemplars in both areas, Walter Frederick Campbell was not fully invested in his place of exile and never completely accepted his forced displacement. Even as

¹ Ibid. 10.

he wrote about life in Normandy, he was constantly reworking thoughts of his home in Islay and Scotland and the circumstances of his expulsion from them. The clues in the text reveal a man as intrigued by the similarities between the Scottish Highlands and Normandy as he was by the differences between the two places; a benevolent individual eager to learn from the experience and to transfer the knowledge gained to those who could benefit from it. At the same time, they betray a mind that ruminates endlessly on the meaning of belonging in the natural world, the helplessness that comes with financial ruin, the dislocation of exile and the impulse to maintain and cultivate social barriers as well as cultural differences.

1.2.2 Contact Zones

[we] define ourselves by locating ourselves among different others¹

In retrospect, I am conscious that the travelogues of W. Scott, J. Scott and W. Campbell that I chose to focus on post-doctorate all recount excursions not only to a foreign country but also to contact zones – areas where they mix not only with the inhabitants of that foreign country but also with other classes of society which they sought to dominate. It is this notion of the contact zone that I intend to address in the present section.

Avranches in the mid-nineteenth century as described in Campbell's *Life in Normandy* can be considered to be what Mary Louise Pratt, originally addressing the question of colonial travel discourses in her influential volume *Imperial Eyes*, theorised as a contact zone. It was a social space 'where disparate cultures meet, clash often in very asymmetrical relations of domination and submission [...]'.² Pratt recognizes that many of the conventions and writing strategies associated with imperial expansionism are also found in European travel books about Europe, along with related dynamics of power and appropriation: the discourses that legitimate bourgeois authority and delegitimize peasant and subsistence lifeways, for example. For her, ethnographic texts are a means by which Europeans represent to themselves other, usually subjugated, people while autoethnographic texts are those the others construct in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations, in ways that engage with the colonizer's own terms. She notes that '[t]he initial ethnographic gesture is one that homogenizes the people to be subjected, that is produced as subjects, into a collective *they*, which distills down even further into an iconic *he* (= the standard adult male specimen)'.³

¹ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, Basic Books, 1983, 235.

² Pratt, *ibid.* 4.

³ *Ibid.* 63-4.

Walter Scott's *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk* might well be classed as an early work of ethnography (and to some extent of auto-ethnography through systematic comparison and contrast with Scotland). In this way, the differences between French and British society are codified and normalized and the French other is fixed in a universal timeless present. Thus, in a comparison of the French and British/English character, and again concentrating on the so-called lower orders, who in general are described with much greater diligence than the upper classes, Walter Scott homogenizes an entire national social class (the French lower classes) and is initially surprised by how calm and peaceful they are, how polite, how respectful of public property:

The amusements and habits of the lower orders are, on all occasions of ordinary occurrence, more quiet, peaceable, and orderly than those of the lower English. There are no quarrels in the street, intoxication is rarely practised even by the lowest of the people, and when assembled for the purpose of public amusement, they observe a good-humoured politeness to each other and to strangers, for which certainly our countrymen are not remarkable. [...] to observe this, and recollect what would be the conduct of an English mob in similar circumstances, compels one to acknowledge, that the French appear, upon such occasions, beyond comparison the more polished, sensible, and civilized people.¹

However, as is often the case in this epistolary travelogue, the initial positive impression is only a prelude to and a pretext for a much more critical passage. Scott continues in a harsher tone:

But release both parties from the restraints imposed by the usual state of society, and suppose them influenced by some powerful incentive to passion and violence, and remark how much the contrast will be altered. The English populace will huzza, swear, threaten, break windows, and throw stones at the Life Guards engaged in dispersing them; but if a soldier should fall from his horse, the rabble, after enjoying a laugh at his expence, would lend a hand to lift him to his saddle again. A French mob would tear him limb from limb, and parade the fragments in triumph upon their pikes.²

Here, as in multiple other instances, the travelogue is quite clearly doing boundary work, differentiating between upper and lower classes and setting *our* lower classes apart from *their* lower classes, the former being a homogeneous Anglo-British mass, with no internal national specificities. The travel narrative here does political autoethnographic work for a United Kingdom. In his study of the autoethnographic work of *Waverley*, James Buzzard claims that Scott was perhaps the most influential autoethnographer who ever wrote and the most self-consciously influential autoethnographer at work within the framework of United Kingdom internal colonialism: 'Scott compels us to confront head-on the embarrassments and

¹ Walter Scott, Op. Cit., 420.

² Ibid. 420-1.

discomforts intrinsic to a form whose producer must work his relationship to the central authorities for all he can get – both for himself and for “his people.”¹ The alliances and antagonisms, similarities and differences, that Scott reflects and describes in France are those between the hegemonic centres of Britain and France, whether or not this was in reality a textual act of subterfuge calculated to curry favour with the centre and protect and maintain elements of Scottish specificity by playing down the flagrant differences between nineteenth-century Scotland and England, it is difficult to say.

The categorisation of people and peoples is also mapped out in the landscape and townscape which are for Scott readable reflections of the relationship between the classes. Scott's belief in a natural order that visibly places subordinate classes at the bottom of a pecking order headed by ‘their betters’, ideally personified in a visible, benevolent landowner, is set out in a passage in which Scott lauds ‘the idea of the natural and systematic dependence of a few virtuous cottagers upon an opulent and industrious farmer, who exercises over them a sort of natural and patriarchal authority [...] their submission is to some degree voluntary’² and regrets the absence of this visible dependency in France. And similarly, as in the following passage in which he is dismayed by the absence in the French countryside of manors, parks, gardens, paddocks for horses, country seats, in other words the outward signs:

[...] of the existence of a mild and beneficent aristocracy of land-holders, giving a tone to the opinions of those around them, not by the despotism of feudal authority and direct power, but, as we have already said of the farmer, by the gradual and imperceptible influence which property, joined with education, naturally acquires over the more humble cultivator of the soil.³

Knowledge of the other deployed in an effort to ‘describe in narrative another group of people with the intent of knowing the identity and authenticity of that group’ to borrow a phrase from Clifford⁴ is power over the other, and so *Paul's Letters to His Kinsfolk* in seizing that power over the French, inscribes itself in a crushing hegemonic discourse that is centred unequivocally in London. Under cover of sharing knowledge of the French other, the travel narrative strains towards an owning of that other so that Scott is carrying out exactly what the French journalist recommended in his anglophobic diatribe (see p. 13) when he wrote ‘il est plus que temps de reprendre notre place et de les remettre à la leur. Nos armées avaient commencé l'ouvrage [...] c'est à nos écrivains à le compléter.’⁵ *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*

¹ James Buzzard, *Disorienting fiction: the autoethnographic work of nineteenth-century British novels*, Princeton Univ. Press, 2005, 64.

² Walter Scott, op. cit. 227.

³ Ibid. 267-8.

⁴ James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1988.

⁵ Creuzé de Lesser, *l'Album*, 15 août, 1822.

continues the antagonistic work of war by putting everyone in their place on the mental map of Europe, and in the hierarchy of nations; it puts individuals and classes in their place in the readable landscape and in discourse – the British above the French and the other allies, the farmer above the hind, the landowner above the landless. At the same time, the account consolidates existing alliances and lineages: the book finds its place in time creating links with those that have been written before, and like them re-asserts political alliances, not as might have been expected the ancient one between Scotland and France, but that between Scotland and England in Union, presenting a united front to Europe and the rest of the world. There is a place for everyone and everyone is in their place.

1.2.3 Traces of place in scientific biography

*Biography is, simply, the orphan of academia.*¹

My reading around the question of ethnography and autoethnography indirectly prompted me to undertake a survey of medical auto/ethnographic texts, the subject of a paper entitled ‘Learning to Talk the Talk: A review of ethnographic accounts of linguistic initiation in medical training’ given in 2014.² The objective of the paper was to examine the idea of ethnographic accounts as a valid means of exploring the process of linguistic integration into professional groups in English-speaking countries, and then in the light of those preliminary considerations, to identify the aspects of that linguistic socialisation process in a first language that might be relevant to the teaching of English for Medical Purposes to students of medicine whose first language is not English. It provided a fascinating, if difficult to apply, insight into the ways in which doctors learn to speak like doctors and I regret not taking it all the way to the publication phase.

It also proved possible to apply some of this thinking about traces and places to another English for Specific Purposes (ESP)-related area of research outside the area of travel literature and Scottish studies. In another unpublished study I explored the role played by the literary genre of scientific biography in the scientific community, and the network of contexts – particularly that of place – identified and highlighted by the biographical text. The auto/biographical work of and about scientists can be seen as auto/ethnographic work that

¹ Nigel Hamilton, ‘Nigel Hamilton, “On biography”’, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nigel-hamilton/on-biography_b_780976.html, visited on 14/10/2022.

² At ‘The Language of Medicine: Science, Practice and Academia’, CERLIS, University of Bergamo, Italy, 19-21 June 2014.

contributes to the layman's understanding of the scientist's world. In this context, countries of origin, of residence and of the production of science are coupled with the distinctions between scientific domains. My observations were based on one biography in particular, that of *Rosalind Franklin: the Dark Lady of DNA* by Brenda Maddox.¹

Scientific biography is valuable in that in a single text one finds a (usually) chronological narrative of the scientist's life, a layman's explanation of the science, an account of the impact the science had, and a speculative account of the scientist's intimate life, motivations and challenges. Söderqvist argues strongly that scientific biography is not merely descriptive but has important normative consequences as well. He suggests that the genre 'can provide a variety of exemplars of existential projects of individual scientists – narratives through which we can identify ourselves with others who have been confronted with existential choices and struggled with the existential conditions for living in and with science'.² Baudou, further claims that the biography can be an instrument in a discipline's research process and that the scientific biography makes a contribution to current debate in the subject's discipline.³

No scientist works as an isolated individual, consequently all biographies are to some extent contextual biographies in which the reader expects to learn something of all of the dimensions of an existence and their interactions. The contexts are multifarious and often international – the community, social and political institutions, gender, class, race – and the interactions are numerous: the interacting systems of personal and public domains, intellectual and existential projects, self-image and public perception, past and present, interactions with other individuals in complex societies, the construction of a unique mental universe within a given historical context.⁴ According to Elizabeth Garber: 'The idiosyncrasies of the subject even help to shed light on the characteristics of the collective.'⁵

One of the contexts delineated in all scientific biographies and which deserves more detailed exploration is that of place. Science is generally held to be placeless, and indeed Brenda Maddox makes this claim in the biography under study, proclaiming that 'Science, of

¹ Brenda Maddox, *Rosalind Franklin: The Dark Lady of DNA*, London: HarperCollins, 2003.

² Thomas Söderqvist, 'Existential projects and existential choice in science: science biography as an edifying genre' in Shortland M, Yeo R. (eds) *Telling Lives in Science: Essays on Scientific Biography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, (45-84), 47.

³ Evert Baudou, 'The Problem-Oriented Scientific Biography as a Research Method', *Norwegian Archaeological Review*, 31 (2), 82.

⁴ Vidal, F. (2003). Contextual Biography and the Evolving Systems Approach to Creativity, *Creativity Research Journal*, 15 (1), 73–82.

⁵ E. Garber, E. (ed.), *Beyond History of Science: Essays in Honor of Robert E. Schofield*, Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 9.

all intellectual disciplines, knows no geographical boundaries.’¹ Simon Naylor, however sums up the increasingly popular notion of a historical geography of science arguing with Livingstone that science is ‘a cultural formation, embedded in wider networks of social relations and political power, and *shaped by the local environments* in which its practitioners carry out their tasks’.² Far from placeless, then, science is increasingly seen as eminently place-bound, with place playing an important role in the patterns of development and practice of many scientific disciplines as well as in the shaping of the people who practice them. Thus, landscapes, regions, and places inform – consciously or not – scientific theories and practice. This is perhaps most obvious in disciplines such as geology, archaeology and geography itself but also in other non-outdoor sciences. Livingstone also calls for more attention to what he calls ‘life geographies’ arguing that ‘greater sensitivity to the spaces of a life could open up new and revealing ways of taking a measure of a life.’³

The spaces inhabited by scientific lives clearly merit closer inspection. The reader of Rosalind Franklin’s biography is guided through her activities on the road to international recognition, in and between various significant and very different cities: London, Cambridge and Paris. Initially, she was reluctant to work outside of London or even on the outskirts of the city. Offered a research post in a government laboratory in Kingston-upon-Thames, she protested that she was afraid of being ‘horribly shut off.’⁴ The hegemonic pull of the capital was not exerted during holidays, however, for the stay-at-home Londoner was also an intrepid climber spending many walking holidays in Norway, the Alps, the Lake District, Croatia. At the height of her career she spent some time in the USA and became part of an international intellectual *côterie*. She was a different person on the other side of the Atlantic, claims Maddox, much brighter and happier than in England. One might wonder to what extent Franklin’s sense of place (urban space, mountain space, her use of maps) played a role in her scientific work which involved cognitively extrapolating two dimensional blurred x-rays into meaningful three-dimensional molecules.

In 1946, Franklin was offered a research position in Paris to study coal. She spent four years in Paris. She quickly became, to use the Lawrencian expression, unEnglished and was introduced to unfamiliar cultural practices. The crowd at the lab were ‘fun’ and they all ate

¹ Brenda Maddox, *op. cit.* 265.

² S. Naylor, ‘Introduction: historical geographies of science-places contexts, cartographies’, *British Journal for the History of Science*, 38 (1), 2005, 1-12.

³ Naylor, *ibid.* 11.

⁴ Maddox, *op. cit.* 77. This is an aversion that the biographer appears to share when she later comments that Randall was encouraged to move down from ‘remote Saint Andrews to the livelier environment of King’s College London’ (132)

together ‘Chez Solange’. She was more cheerful, she went swimming and dancing; rode pillion on motorbikes. She even felt she worked better than in England — partly due to the fresh Parisian air she was breathing in as she cycled to and from work — and papers poured out as she established real international standing due to the industrial interest in her work on coal. When, in 1950 she secured a fellowship and a place at Kings College London, Franklin was miserable and overcome by doubt. She left Paris and coal research for London and DNA. Research orientations had changed and the second half of the twentieth century was to be biological. The move was radical in many ways. She left a feminine city for what she perceived to be a man’s city. In Paris she had been ‘confident, admired, independent’ as she admitted in a letter to Ann Sayre (her first biographer), ‘I suspect that I enjoyed being a more interesting person in France than I am in England – more interesting simply because English scientists are rarer in France than in England.’¹ Predilection for place overlapped with political misgivings:

Over and over she cited reasons for dreading return. Britain’s nuclear deterrent was high on the list; she was appalled at their country’s willingness to side with the Americans. One of the things which made her feel more comfortable in France than in England was in France ‘there is a much healthier horror of war, and appreciation of its senselessness’²

She had also left the city of light for a bleaker townscape. Paris had not been bombed during the war but London had, and when Rosalind Franklin arrived back in 1951 the contrast was manifest in the massive crater occupying the main quadrangle at King’s College. The subterranean biophysics unit was situated around this hole in the ground. This brings our focus on place down a geographical notch to the level of buildings.

Working space configurations, and the proxemics they induce also play an important role in the life of Rosalind Franklin. When she moved from Kings to Birkbeck, Franklin declared that she would be moving from a palace to a slum and indeed her office which had originally been the maid’s room was on the fifth floor of a makeshift building with the X-ray equipment was in the basement, in what was originally the kitchen, the ceiling leaked and she had to hold an umbrella over her head while setting up her equipment.

A famous episode, probably half-imaginary, in which Rosalind Franklin defended both her personal space and intellectual principles is recounted in Watson’s *Double Helix* and quoted by Maddox. Watson claims to have been made to feel unwelcome in her office and to later have been set upon by ‘Rosy’ who suddenly ‘came from behind the lab bench that separated

¹ Ibid. 171.

² Ibid. 112.

us and began moving towards me. Fearing that in her hot anger she might strike me, I [...] retreated to the open door.’¹

How do these considerations on an individual life and its geographical contexts relate to my professional practice in the field of English for Specific Purposes? Apart from the obvious significance of the historical, cultural and professional context in which specialised discourse is created, used and evolves and from which it should not be divorced when it is taught, it seems to me that the discipline of ESP could benefit from an occasional shift of perspective from the discourse community and the community of practice to the individual and to life-geographies.² Our students’ perception of the scientific community into which they will be socialized and our own knowledge of that community might be enriched by concentrating on the micro level of an individual trajectory, paying particular attention to the contexts in which that life is played out, working with and occasionally against prevailing contextual forces. Reading scientific biography is a means for the uninitiated student to gain access to an explicit and implicit description of the sociocultural and professional context in which science was created at other times and elsewhere (this is, of course, also true of scientists’ autobiographies, the subject of section 2.2.2). The spatialized approach to science as set out by Naylor and Livingstone, with its emphasis on place, also has important implications for the teaching of ESP. It suggests that scientific cultures are situated cultures and that words gain from being studied in context – that locution is embedded in location.

1.3 Stevenson’s Places and Traces

*A voyage is a piece of autobiography at best.*³

My research output gradually focused on Robert Louis Stevenson. Two of his works – *An Inland Voyage* and *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes* – had been part of the corpus created for my doctoral thesis. Centring on Stevenson has taken my research in new directions. My focus has continued to be on his non-fiction, but has opened up to include his essays and some fiction. Of all of the Scottish travellers in France in the nineteenth century, he is the most literary and the most nuanced in his portrait of his contact with French otherness. It is in part

¹ Ibid.195.

² Söderqvist notes that ‘The recent turn towards discourse analysis and rhetorics of science has, by concentrating on the text, further weakened the interest in the individual scientist and severed the work from the author.’ 1996, 49.

³ Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Cevennes Journal: Notes on a Journey Through the French Highlands*, Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1979, 68.

his ability to identify with and draw on memories of his homeland coupled with a capacity to be a resolutely international author that makes Stevenson a writer who still attracts critical attention; a capacity that I examine in the following section.

1.3.1 Stevenson, the glocal traveller-writer

[H]e is, as we may say, a Scotchman of the world¹

Robert Louis Stevenson's itinerant life² has left traces of many sorts scattered across the various international sites with which he is associated. His boots are in the Writer's Museum in Edinburgh, his baby cap at Saranac Cottage in the state of New York while some furniture and books can be seen in the Stevenson Museum at Vailima in Sāmoa. His wedding ring and his toy soldiers are in the Stevenson Museum in Saint Helena; his flageolet sheet music at Stevenson House in Monterey, both in California. Plaques on the façades of dozens of buildings in Europe, North America and Oceania commemorate his residence there. People come from afar to climb to his grave on Mount Vaea or to walk in his footsteps along officially sanctioned hiking trails in Scotland, England, France, and America. The virtual universe is similarly strewn with traces of Stevenson. His online reach can be measured by the number of times aphorisms from his work – authentic and otherwise – are shared and re-shared across social media every day. In a fitting reflection of his engagement with the world and with moving through it, many of these quotations are themselves related to the practice of travel: 'we are all travellers in ... the wilderness of this world'; 'There are no foreign lands, it is the traveller only who is foreign'; 'For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move.'³

The global spread of Stevenson's footprint through the publication, distribution, adaptation and translation of his work outside Britain began in earnest with the French translations of *Treasure Island* in 1884 and then in 1885.⁴ Translations into Danish, Dutch, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Swedish also appeared rapidly.⁵

¹ Henry James, 'Robert Louis Stevenson', *The Century Magazine*, xxxv, April 1888, 874.

² This section draws on Lesley Graham, "The International Author: Robert Louis Stevenson" in Sheila M. Kidd, Caroline McCracken-Flesher, and Kenneth McNeil (eds), *The International Companion to Nineteenth-Century Scottish Literature*, Scottish Literature International, 2022, 188-93.

³ From the prefatory letter to *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes*, *The Silverado Squatters*, and *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* respectively. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Travels with a Donkey, An Inland Voyage, The Silverado Squatters* (London: Dent, 1984), 94, 231, 130.

⁴ André Laurie (tr.), *L'Île au trésor*, serialised in *Le Temps* (from 25 Sept. 1884) then published as *L'Île au trésor*, Paris: J. Hetzel, 1885, Louis Despréaux (tr.), *L'Île au trésor*, Paris: Calman-Lévy, 1885.

⁵ For accounts of Stevenson in translation see notably Paul Barnaby and Tom Hubbard, 'The International Reception and Literary Impact of Scottish Literature of the Period 1707–1918' in Ian Brown, Thomas Owen

The ways in which the texts initially circulated internationally were not always straightforward: translations were sometimes translations of other translations while others were so free as to be adaptations rather than translations. The first Russian version of *Treasure Island* published in Moscow in 1886 as an appendix to the magazine *Вокруг Света*, for example, was based on a French edition while Oshikawa Shunrô gave characters in the *New Arabian Nights* Japanese names but kept the British backdrop. The international transmutations occasionally ricocheted back to augment the original as when, for instance, plates by George Roux originally produced for the first illustrated French translation were used in the first illustrated edition in English imparting a Gallic touch to the reading experience of the British public.¹

Stevenson is now the twenty-sixth most translated author in the world² and is generally considered to be Scotland's most translated author. He has, as Barnaby and Hubbard note, 'now appeared in eighty-nine languages, and is the only Scot translated into a significant number of non-European languages.'³ Meanwhile *Jekyll and Hyde* is not only the most frequently adapted work of Scottish literature in world cinema, but according to Butt, probably the third most adapted of any works of literature, falling just behind *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*.⁴ Indeed, Stevenson's most famous works – *Treasure Island* and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* – are members of that exclusive club of international popular culture phenomena that have broken free of the literary works that engendered them. Their titles, characters, plots and tropes have seeped into subjective experience of people of most nationalities through reading, viewing and video-gaming.

The world caught the reading bug in the nineteenth century and made Stevenson one of its first truly international celebrities so that when, in 1887, he disembarked in America for the second time the event was front page news. Journalists descended on his hotel and theatre-goers rushed to see one of the first adaptations of *Jekyll and Hyde*, the novella they had recently discovered and the main driver behind Stevenson's sudden notoriety. He used the interviews he gave in New York to draw attention to the question of international copyright, a problem that had exercised him for some time and that worked both for and against his transatlantic

Clancy, Susan Manning and Murray Pittock (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature*, Edinburgh: EUP, 2007, vol. 2, 33-44.

¹ Viz Jim Hawkins wearing clogs in one illustration.

² See the UNESCO Index Translationum *World Bibliography of Translation 1978–Present* (UNESCO, 2017) <http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatexp.aspx?crit1L=5&nTyp=min&topN=50>. The only other author with significant Scottish connections in the top fifty is Arthur Conan Doyle, at number fourteen. (Having left Scotland at a young age, Conan Doyle is not generally considered a Scottish author which brings up interesting questions about applying national labels to dead authors.)

³ Paul Barnaby and Tom Hubbard, *op. cit.* 41.

⁴ Richard Butt, 'Literature and the Screen Media since 1908' in Ian Brown et al (eds) *op. cit.* 53–4.

literary career. Stevenson's fame was a direct consequence of the cheapness and availability of his books overseas, notably in America, but he was not gaining financially from those sales.

Foreign authors received no copyright protection in the United States: the accepted practice for American publishers was simply to reprint their works without paying the author. Stevenson's situation was symptomatic of a changing global book market, and clearly already thinking in terms of an imagined international professional community of writers, he framed the piracy as a threat not only to his own livelihood but also to that of American writers who simply could not compete with cheap reproductions of foreign novels. He repeatedly drew attention to the issue in interviews, essays and letters, actively lobbying for international copyright law. A particularly indignant letter written to the New York publishers, Harper & Brothers in 1887 denouncing their 'act of piracy' was published in *The Times* under the heading 'International Copyright'.¹ Shortly afterwards, an article by Stevenson's main publisher in America, Charles Scribner, appeared in the *Publishers' Weekly* confirming the author's extraordinary popularity and supporting his analysis of the situation.

Stevenson's works are now the most popular here of all living novelists. And this very popularity is assisted in large measure by the cheapness of his works, for the want of an international copyright law makes possible the publication of four of Stevenson's novels in one volume, all for twenty cents. You can readily perceive that a sale thus rendered large through the want of statutory protection tends to shut out home products through the very cheapness of the article, thus not only depriving the British author of his dues but interfering with the sale of American novels.²

Through collaboration with his stepson Lloyd Osbourne, an American citizen protected by American copyright laws, Stevenson was able to safeguard his financial interests in America to some extent. Although he denied that this was the sole objective of their collaboration, he did admit that 'the result is certainly attained by it.'³ In July 1891 the United States Congress eventually passed the Chace Act, the first American International Copyright Law affording foreign authors some protection if the books were manufactured in the United States. By then, Stevenson's earnings had begun to reflect his popularity worldwide.

Stevenson initially bungled his business dealings in America, leaving himself open to accusations of duplicity after a mix-up concerning incompatible engagements he entered into with both Scribner's and McClure and this made him wary of future contracts. He had grown

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, Bradford A. Booth, and Ernest Meheew (eds), *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Vol. 5, New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 1994, 375. Hereafter *Letters*.

² *Publishers' Weekly*, xxxi (April 2, 1887), 489-90.

³ Again, he argued that this had the greatest impact on American fiction since American authors could not compete with the 'cheap pirated editions of English works.' R. C. Terry, *Robert Louis Stevenson: Interviews and Recollections*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995, 154.

up in a city that was, in his own words, part of the ‘world of everyday reality, connected by railway and telegraph-wire with all of the capitals of Europe.’¹ Later, however, geographical distance from these means of rapid communication meant that he relied heavily on a network of friends at home to negotiate deals for him and to look after his literary interests. Charles Baxter and Sidney Colvin were the main elements in this network along with W. E. Henley. They often dealt with publishers and contracts, not to mention editing. He worked hard at creating, then maintaining this network of social and professional relationships that would promote and distribute his work while he was geographically distant from the centres of the literary world. Transatlantic dealings were managed in a more efficient way when in 1924, thirty years after Stevenson’s death, just before his work passed out of unrestricted copyright, his four main publishers swiftly agreed to bring out a uniform edition of the complete works at two different prices (the Tusitala and Skerryvore editions) on either side of the Atlantic.²

As a traveller and expatriate Stevenson was not satisfied with simply dwelling in other parts of the world but made a conscious effort to engage with them in purposeful ways, often drawing inspiration from their literatures and cultures. Much of his travel writing was inspired by his geographical position on the globe, but also his essays, and his political writing from the Pacific. There, rather than being an instrument of colonialism, he became a particularly notable example of what Keown identifies as typical Scots radicalism in action so that while *A Footnote to History* (1892) may stop short of ‘outright condemnation of European colonialism *per se*, the text criticizes the wrangling for power amongst British, German, and US settlers and colonial forces in Sāmoa’.³

Stevenson was influenced by writers from elsewhere – he repeatedly cited Montaigne, Dumas, Whitman and Thoreau – and he in turn influenced generations of writers and critics working in other parts of the world and in other languages. Notable admirers abroad have included Alain-Fournier, Atushi Nakajima, Borges, Calvino, Gide, Nabokov, Le Clézio, Lev Lunts, Malraux, Proust, Jacques Rivière, Schwob, and Sôseki Natsume – many reacting enthusiastically to his work at the same time as it was being side-lined by the gatekeepers of the English literary canon. The process was one of transculturation as his work was read and accommodated in new cultural environments, modifying the literary output and altering the

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Edinburgh, Picturesque Notes*, London: Seely, Jackson & Halliday, 1879, 3.

² See Andrew Nash, *The Culture of Collected Editions*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 122. Stevenson’s works became public domain in December 1944, until when a 10% royalty was payable to his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne.

³ Michelle Keown, ‘Isles of Voices: Scotland in the Indigenous Pacific Literary Imaginary’, *International Journal of Scottish Literature* 9, Autumn / Winter 2013, 52.

structures of feeling, literary trends and popular culture in diverse elsewhere.¹ Authors recognised Stevenson's influence both as a writer and as a theorist, variously citing his work as having been significant in the development and evolution of Latin-American magic realism,² French symbolism, the European Gothic, a compromise between the realist and the psychological novel,³ and the adventure novel. Given his place and standing in world literature at the end of his life, it is little wonder that Stevenson's obituarist in *Le Temps* declared that his death was a loss not for English literature but for universal literature and indeed for humanity.⁴

The process of literary globalisation is certainly more complicated than the reciprocal trading of texts and influences between geographical spaces. To paraphrase Pascale Casanova, there is a struggle between competing forces in the global literary field at play in which those who emerge as international rather than national writers obtain greater freedom for their work.⁵ Accordingly, it is no coincidence that as his international reputation grew, the perception of Stevenson's national identity receded. In the process of internationalisation, as Brown has argued, Stevenson's Scottishness was effaced: 'If one accepts that world literature may be defined in terms of its commodification in production, publication, appropriation and circulation, then the global promulgation of Stevenson's novel, not to mention its many adaptations for – besides film – stage, television, radio and comics, marks it not only as a key text of 'English' literature, but also a key text of world literature [...] Jekyll and Hyde are entities in the global imaginative mindscape and have been evacuated of their Scottish genesis.'⁶ But although his audience may now be unaware of his Scottishness, Stevenson himself, without ever over-sentimentalising his connection to an increasingly unattainable home, never did. Despite his active presence elsewhere and his growing awareness of the globalisation of experience, he continued to engage with Scotland calling on his familiarity with Scottish history, particularly that of the Highlands, not only to create new fiction but also to better apprehend Pacific cultures.

¹ The term 'transculturation' was coined by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz. See Regenia Gagnier, *Literatures of Liberalization, Global Circulation and the Long Nineteenth Century*, New Comparisons in World Literature, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 4.

² Barnaby and Hubbard argue that 'As read by Borges, 'A Humble Remonstrance' and 'A Gossip on Romance' became two of the founding texts of Latin-American magic realism.' op. cit. 42.

³ 'Marcel Schwob bolstered his own reputation with perceptive readings of Stevenson – notably finding in him the middle-road between the realist and the psychological novel', Fitzpatrick, 206.

⁴ 'La mort de Robert-Louis Stevenson est un deuil et pour les lettres universelles et pour l'humanité', *Le Temps*, 18 décembre, 1894.

⁵ Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*. Convergences: Inventories of the Present, Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 2004, 108-110.

⁶ Ian Brown, *Our Multiform, Our Infinite Scotland: Scottish Literature as 'Scottish', 'English' and 'World' Literature*, Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2012, 1.

Stevenson was what Henry James famously called ‘a Scotchman of the world.’¹ This Scot was, in fact, a resolutely *glocal* writer. He was cosmopolitan in lifestyle and world view but able to hold and promote a simultaneously international and local perspective in his work, consciously writing for a worldwide readership while upholding his subjective Scottish experience; combining his knowledge of the world with a feeling for the indigenous. However, instead of making a global product fit the local market as is usual in current commercial strategies, he made texts anchored in local realities and real localities speak to a global market. The *Scribner's* essays, written initially for an American readership but drawing on much Scottish subject matter, are a good example of this syncretism. In the series of twelve essays, although he wrote about universal moral topics, he also riffed on personal reminiscences of places and experiences rooted in his homeland and unfamiliar to the majority of his readers. He wrote about places like Anstruther and Wick and unselfconsciously used expressions like *well kent*, *links*, and *land* with specific meanings in Scots, trusting his American readers to shift their fields of reference accordingly. This was an international writer who expected his readers to be international readers. In creating key texts in world literature that held both the universal and the local in focus, Stevenson proved that one could be simultaneously a Scottish and a world writer.

1.3.2 Scotland from Sāmoa

*There are no foreign lands, it is the traveller only who is foreign.*²

As an example of Stevenson's simultaneously local and international engagement, consider the Scottish historical novels conceived and written while he was living in the Samoan Islands. During this period (1889-1894) Stevenson regularly evoked the twin themes of the Polynesian present and the Scottish past. He wrote to J. M. Barrie:

It is a singular thing that I should live here in the South Seas under conditions so new and so striking, and yet my imagination so continually inhabits that cold old huddle of grey hills from which we come.³

It is perhaps no coincidence that Stevenson turned in particular to the history of the Jacobite movement while living in Sāmoa where his involvement in a real struggle for the

¹ Henry James, ‘Robert Louis Stevenson’ in *The Century Magazine*, xxxv, April 1888, 874.

² Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Silverado Squatters, Travels with a Donkey, An Inland Voyage, The Silverado Squatters*, London: Dent, 1984, 231.

³ *Letters*, 7: 412.

native king, Mataafa, may also have contributed to the unfinished state of a barely begun novel, 'The Young Chevalier'.¹ I devoted an article to this short novel fragment in the volume that I had the pleasure of editing with the historians Allan MacInnes and Kieran German.²

This refocusing on his homeland was motivated by neither nostalgia nor neglect of the Samoan islands. The exiled Stevenson was undoubtedly fond of his native land, but he showed no compelling desire to return there permanently. He never indulged in the maudlin 'The sun dyed the wink he had in my country' sort of sentiment that his friend Andrew Lang projected for his Jacobite hero. Instead, he observed parallels between the social and political life he observed in Polynesia and the Scottish past.

In Sāmoa, Stevenson's social commitment is visible as much in his political actions and stances as in his writing. In describing the problems that he encountered in editing *Catriona* (or *David Balfour* as he was then calling it) to Andrew Lang, Stevenson moves on to reflect on his involvement in Samoan political affairs and the time he spends on them:

I am in a deuce of a flutter with politics, which I hate, and in which I certainly do not shine; but a fellow cannot stand aside and look on at such an exhibition as our government. 'Tain't decent'.³

Inevitably, this enduring preoccupation with local politics rubbed off on Stevenson's writing. There are noticeable parallels between his political writings on Sāmoa and the novel *Catriona*, revealing a critique of colonial conditions in Sāmoa and quasi-colonial conditions in the Highlands, as well as a common concern with redress and transformation of a society after war and rebellion. *A Footnote to History* (1892), is an account of the political machinations behind German intervention in Samoan affairs, the involvement of Britain and America, and the conflicts over kingship between rival chiefs. Recounting a visit to Mataafa's house, one of the largest and most beautiful she has ever seen in Polynesia, Stevenson's wife Fanny Stevenson revealed the imaginary link between the Samoan king and the Scottish prince, and the way in which Jacobite references had seeped into the Stevensons' mental representation of the island's situation:

We have been in the habit of referring to the king as 'Charley over the water,' and toasting him by waving our glasses over the water bottle. Talolo [their incompetent interpreter] had some vague notion of what this meant and now thought it a good time to do the same. To our great

¹ R. L. Stevenson, 'The Young Chevalier' in *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson Vol. 26. Romances, Volume VII. Weir of Hermiston and other fragments*, ed. S. Colvin, Edinburgh: Constable, 1897, 63-83.

² Lesley Graham, 'Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Young Chevalier": Unimagined Space', in MacInnes, German & Graham (eds), *Living with Jacobitism, 1690-1788: The Three Kingdoms and Beyond*, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014.

³ *Letters*, Vol. 7, 312.

amusement, he took his glass, waved it in the air, and cried 'Charley in the water!' which we felt to be a rather ominous toast.¹

Stevenson had acquired a thorough knowledge of Scottish history through many years of voracious and varied reading. This appetite for reading about Scottish history was fuelled at some point in the early 1880s by an obsessively planned but never written history of the Highlands, as well as by his very real desire to be elected to the chair of history and constitutional law at Edinburgh University. This was no far-fetched undertaking for an under-qualified beginner; after all, many of Stevenson's best-known works of fiction were set in the Scottish historical context, and he had, in a very sophisticated way, woven elements of his reading into the fabric of these novels.

In Samoa, he continued to fuel his great interest in history: not only the Scottish history which had been the subject of so many of his books, fictional and otherwise, but also the history of the world as it might be understood by Austin, his step-grandson, to whom he was trying to impart his knowledge, and what he called, not without a sense of derision, 'Historia Samoae'. He was interested in the ways in which history is communicated to children and to the wider public as his comments on the books that he was reading (Renan's *Origins of Christianity*, Orme's *History of Hindustani* for example). Fanny Stevenson and Sidney Colvin were dismayed at the direction his writing about history was taking. He was moving away from the type of work he had done in his travel books on France, weaving historical matter into personal narrative and believed that the reading public invested too much interest in the latter and not enough in the former.

The impossibility of separating anecdote and historical fact; of reconciling the historical figure Charles Edward Stuart with the myth of Charles Edward Stuart, the charm of the Jacobite prince and the unhappy loyalty of his followers, may explain at least in part the difficulty Stevenson had in pursuing the writing of the story. Moreover, in early November 1892, although he was still intending to continue 'The Young Chevalier', he had just begun another Scottish narrative that would become the *Weir of Hermiston*. This novel, set in eighteenth-century Scotland and often regarded as his unfinished masterpiece, was to capture almost all of his imaginative attention until his death two years later. Neither he nor the Young Pretender got the chance to finish what they had started.

¹ *Letters*, Vol. 7, 278-9, n.9.

1.3.3 Stevenson's scattered autobiography

*The future is nothing; but the past is myself, my own history, the seed of my present thoughts, the mould of my present disposition.*¹

Autobiography has not been considered a central concern of literary criticism, and certainly not of French literary criticism since Roland Barthes declared 'the author is dead.'² It has been deemed bad form to attach too much importance to the autobiographical detail of a writer's life. Some lives, however, are so closely intertwined with the author's work, that they cry out for closer examination. It seems to me to be undeniable that a great part of our enthusiasm for Stevenson's writing today, just as was the case during his lifetime, is rooted in our fascination with his life and that in much of his writing he actively fanned that interest. Who can fail to be charmed by the story of that life, his childhood in Edinburgh, his travels from Scotland to France, to California, to the Pacific Islands? And how many other authors can boast five museums dedicated to the memorialisation of their existence rather than their work exclusively? His was a short but eventful existence, as Henry James wrote:

He will not figure among the writers [...] to whom only small things happen and who beguile us by making the most of them; he belongs to the class who have both matter and manner, substance and spirit, whom life carries swiftly before it and who signal and communicate, not to say gesticulate, as they go. He lived to the topmost pulse, and the last thing that could happen was that he should find himself on any occasion with nothing to report.³

Stevenson did not write an autobiography but just as the material relics of his life are scattered widely, his autobiographical presence is disseminated across various texts, from travel writing (did he not say that 'A voyage is a piece of autobiography at best'?⁴), to his poetry, his novels and the genre that I have concentrated on most recently, his essays.⁵ Indeed, much of Stevenson's essay-writing in the 1880s and early 1890s is a scattered sort of life writing; a working up of desultory memories from which even the cursory reader can tease out an account of the arc of his life, the development of his tastes, his craft, his attitude to life, his

¹ R. L. Stevenson, 'A Retrospect' (1870) in Richard Dury (ed), *Essays IV: Uncollected Essays 1868–1879*, New Edinburgh Edition of the Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, 17, forthcoming.

² Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author' in *Aspen Magazine*, n° 5/6, 1967.

³ Henry James, *Notes on Novelists, with Some Other Notes*, New York: C. Scribner's, 1967, 3.

⁴ Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Cevennes Journal: Notes on a Journey Through the French Highlands*, Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1979, 68.

⁵ This section derives from my work on the fifth volume of Stevenson's essays in the New Edinburgh Edition of the Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, which I am currently editing and which will include the essays written between 1880 and 1894 that were not included in the three collected volumes that Stevenson prepared himself (*Virginibus Puerisque* (1881), *Memories and Portraits* (1882) and *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* (1887)).

reading habits, the reasoning behind his moral choices and their gradual modification, as well as the trajectory of his professional development.

I wish here to concentrate on the period from January 1880 until Stevenson's death in December 1894 – a period of fourteen years representing approximately the final third of his life – during which Stevenson moved from country to country, place to place, often in search of the ideal climate for his health. At the beginning of this period, he was still a relatively unknown writer; by the end his name would be known and his work admired across the globe. Despite his predominantly peripatetic lifestyle as well as long periods of illness, for most of these fourteen years he worked intensively producing novels, plays, fables, short stories and longer works of non-fiction, as well as essays.

Stevenson was an extremely versatile essayist. Quoting Montaigne, Sidney Colvin declared in his introduction to Stevenson's letters that the author was *divers et ondoyant*; (diverse and undulating) that 'beyond other men, he seemed to contain within himself a whole troop of singularly assorted characters'.¹ With increasing confidence and technical assurance, Stevenson put those diverse facets of his character to work in crafting essays that were consistently original in their approach to a wide variety of subjects. He is by turns humorous, moralising, theoretical, nostalgic, and occasionally didactic. His subject matter ranges from reflections on travel and topography to questions of literary style and inspiration, from childhood reminiscence to politics and morality.

Many of Stevenson's essays even before the 1880s had been a working up of random memories with an autobiographical element. He repeatedly used episodes from his own experience to spark, develop and illustrate his ideas. The autobiographical account that they build covers not only the period during which they were written but also reaches back into his childhood and young adulthood. Stevenson was constantly fascinated by his own past. As Colley writes, his 'desire to recall and revivify images from an earlier time permeated his writing. He returned constantly to the haunts, the sensations, the reading matter of his childhood years.'² This preoccupation with his past appeared as early as 1870, when he was just 20 years old and wrote the words in the epigraph above in an unpublished essay fragment, followed by: 'It is not in vain that I return to the nothings of my childhood; for every one of them has left some stamp upon me or put some fetter on my boasted free-will.'³

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, and Sidney Colvin (ed), *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Vol. I, London, 1899, xxxi—xxxii.

² Ann C. Colley, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Idea of Recollection, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (1997), pp. 203-223, 203.

³ R. L. Stevenson, 'A Retrospect' (see above).

Stevenson's father died in May 1887, a loss that released Stevenson and his family from the self-imposed obligation of residing in Great Britain. The family set off for New York three months later. Within six months of publication, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* had sold 40,000 copies at home and a quarter of a million overseas, mainly in the United States. Stevenson was on the cusp of becoming 'the most celebrated "Scot abroad"'.¹ He was eagerly awaited by the New York press and by editors desperate to secure a commitment from him to write a series of articles for their papers. Stevenson accepted Scribner's offer of \$3500 a year for a series of twelve essays.² He was offered carte blanche to approach any subject of his choosing with a popular American readership in mind. He reported to a correspondent that the essays were to be of no fixed length: 'as long or as short as I please, and on any mortal subject'.³

When, in early October, the family moved to the bracingly cold climate of Saranac Lake in the Adirondacks, he set to work on the essays almost immediately and all twelve were written between October 1887 and April 1888 with one essay being published every month throughout 1888. The rapturous welcome that he had received in New York as a result of this success and his interviews with inquisitive American reporters alerted him to the fact that he was now an international celebrity and that the details of his life were consequently of great interest to the general public in the United States. This interest encouraged him to be bold in using autobiographical detail to inspire and shape his essays.

The twelve *Scribner's* essays are characterised by no common theme or shape; their content is guided by no overarching plan. Although a loose autobiographical element runs through many of them, this rarely constitutes the main thrust of the essay. That autobiographical content is often ingeniously intertwined with the exploration and examination of another more universal topic. Several essays touch specifically on the theme of literary inspiration, a focus undoubtedly triggered by the persistent quizzing by New York journalists eager to get the scoop on the inspiration for *Jekyll and Hyde*. The long interview published in the *New York Herald*, on 8 September 1887, anticipates some of the ideas in the first *Scribner's* essay about dreaming and literary creation. 'A Chapter on Dreams', is one of those essays in which the essayist refers of the subject as someone of his acquaintance – the modesty trope – before dropping the pretence:

Well, as regards the dreamer, I can answer that, for he is no less a person than myself; – as I might have told you from the beginning, only that the critics murmur over my consistent

¹ Tom Hubbard and Duncan Glen (eds), *Stevenson's Scotland*, Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 2003, xiv.

² *Letters*, Vol. 6, 10.

³ *Letters*, Vol. 6, 148.

egotism;— and as I am positively forced to tell you now, or I could advance but little further with my story.¹

It answers the journalist's question more fully and also examines how Stevenson's awareness of the literary market influences the inspiration provided by his Brownies – 'the little people who manage man's internal theatre'² – while he sleeps. In 'The Lantern Bearers' Stevenson continues his examination of the imaginative life through the evocation of memories of his boyhood holidays in North Berwick – 'There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part, but the embarrassment of pleasure' – and the secret joy in creation possessed by even 'the most stolid'. Happy and frightening boyhood memories jostle 'in the scrap-book of his memory': happy days playing in tidal pools are described alongside the image of:

[...] the fisher-wife, for instance, who had cut her throat at Canty Bay; and of how I ran with the other children to the top of the Quadrant, and beheld a posse of silent people escorting a cart, and on the cart, bound in a chair, her throat bandaged, and the bandage all bloody---horror!---the fisher-wife herself, who continued thenceforth to hag-ride my thoughts, and even to-day (as I recall the scene) darkens daylight.³

In 'Popular Authors', 'on the deck of an Atlantic liner' his persona in the first paragraph is that of 'an emigrant of an inquiring turn of mind' so quite clearly Stevenson himself, the amateur emigrant. By the beginning of the third section he has adopted the first person and proposes to explain how he 'came to be such a student of our penny press' divulging in the following lines his childhood habits and the influence of Alison Cunningham, his nurse, 'the lady who was kind enough to read the tales aloud to me'. He nostalgically evokes his early reading experiences of popular literature long before it was fashionable to admit publicly to lowbrow reading tastes. The changes in Stevenson's stance towards literature, its readership and its retribution were influenced again by the series of life-changing events that made him suddenly aware of his new position in an unfamiliar literary marketplace. First of all, his experiences as an 'amateur emigrant' made him feel his status as a gentleman uncertain, both aboard the emigrant ship and in the unfamiliar society of the USA. At the same time his contact with disadvantaged classes and oppressed peoples brought a new empathetic understanding. In the *Scribner's* essays such as 'Popular Authors' and 'The Lantern Bearers', ordinary people and their joy in the life of the imagination are treated with respect, never ridiculed or denigrated.

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, 'A Chapter on Dreams', *Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Edinburgh Edition, Vol. 1 Miscellanies, Edinburgh: T&A Constable, 1894, 330.

² Ibid. 323.

³ Robert Louis Stevenson, 'The Lantern Bearers', *Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Edinburgh Edition, Vol. 1 Miscellanies, Edinburgh: T&A Constable, 1894, 351.

In the following essay, ‘Epilogue to *An Inland Voyage*’, presented rather coyly in the third-person, the central character is again Stevenson himself, in pure autobiographical mode recounting an adventure that befell him in France in 1875 when he was twenty-four and was mistaken for a Prussian spy.

Stevenson explores memories of experiences dating back to his childhood and young adulthood in Scotland and elsewhere. In reaching back into his past to find material for the essays he demonstrated just how embedded the history, culture, and geography of Scotland were in his creative life and how entwined his personal and family history were with the contours of his native country. Irresistibly, his imagination turned back to Scotland even as he planned and composed the essays in America for an American readership. His attachment to, and his interest in Scotland was heightened by his absence from it. Even the unpromisingly titled ‘Contributions to the History of Fife’ begins with a vivid memory from Stevenson’s childhood—that of the ‘piercing sadness’ of his days away from home at school and the ‘change of scene’ that was deemed necessary leading to him accompanying his father on a tour of inspection of lighthouses and engineering works on the coast of Fife. The reader finds a slightly older but no less autobiographically inclined Stevenson in ‘The Education of an Engineer’ as he describes the weeks that he spent in Anstruther then Wick ‘to glean engineering experience’.

The careful reader of the final essay in the series of twelve, ‘A Christmas Sermon’ will find echoes of the tumultuous event that marked the end of the Stevenson’s residence in North America: his terrible epistolary quarrel with W. E. Henley.¹ The falling out had begun with the arrival of a letter from Henley in the second half of March and still continued to obsess Stevenson in May.² Henley suggested that Stevenson’s wife Fanny might be guilty of plagiarism; Stevenson violently defended his wife, yet was doubtless aware that his own over-reaction might be partly attributable to his own frustration and annoyance with an overbearing friend. Echoes of the quarrel are discernible in the essay in what might be interpreted as coded messages to Henley: the dissatisfaction with conduct over the past year, ‘how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness’; the unhappiness felt because we ‘feel a sneer or an aspersion with unusual keenness’; the justification for causing unhappiness when reacting to a wrong done to another, ‘in the quarrel of our neighbor, let us be more bold [...]: the defence of B is our only ground of action against A’; and at the same time a realization that

¹ I am grateful to Richard Dury for the initial insight into these traces of autobiographical detail in the essay.

² *Letters* 6, 129, 190--1.

‘[i]ll-temper and envy and revenge’ can assume ‘pious disguises’ and that ‘the knot that we cut by some fine heady quarrel scene [...] might yet have been unwoven by the hand of sympathy’. However, the praise for and insertion of the complete poem by Henley at the conclusion of the essay clearly represents a hand extended with an offer of reconciliation to the close friend of his early career. Understanding of the essay does not depend, of course, on the autobiographical circumstances of its composition and readers of the essay, bar a handful would have been completely unaware of the quarrel.

Stevenson’s engagement with the essay genre waned markedly after the *Scribner’s* series and his departure for the Pacific islands in 1888. The pieces he worked on thenceforth were generally light in matter and unfinished. He continued to write quite prolifically, but the essay was no longer his genre of choice. His interests had shifted and his investment in fiction and in ethnographic writing had flourished through larger historical, political and proto-anthropological non-fiction projects such as *In the South Seas*, *A Footnote to History*, *A Family of Engineers*.

Although he continued to work sporadically on ideas for essays, these were fragmentary, mainly autobiographical reminiscences driven by an impulse towards life review and a continuing fascination with the places and sensations of his own childhood and early adulthood. The late fragments were more deliberately autobiographical and their tone somewhat wistful. Their random nature reflects the unsystematic nature of Stevenson’s autobiographical writing; following no chronological master plan but simply delineating the most salient aspects of his past stuck fast in his imagination. He was constantly pursuing what he called in the preface to *Memories and Portraits*, ‘the face of what was once myself’.¹

Stevenson noticed, as I have already observed, that far from home in Sāmoa, as he grew older, his thoughts turned increasingly to Scottish landscapes. He wrote, as mentioned above, to J. M. Barrie about his continuing preoccupation with Scotland and ‘the cold old huddle of grey hills from which we come’.² More than for the *hills* of home, however, these late essay attempts are striking expressions of nostalgia for Edinburgh, both her splendours and the emotions her more squalid quarters evoked in him as a child, notably ‘the lurking horror that is divined in the commonplace’ (‘Early Memories’).

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits, Memoirs of Himself and Selections from His Notebook*, London: William Heinemann, 1924.

² *Letters* 7, 412.

Unpublished in his lifetime, ‘Early Memories’ and ‘Rosa Quo Locorum’¹ reach far back to Stevenson’s childhood in Edinburgh and the surrounding area and concentrate on significant passages related to the development of his reading. There is nostalgia here not only for his hometown but also for his former self, a child listening to his nurse declaim passages from religious works, ‘reading the works of others, as a poet would scarce dare to read his own; gloating on the rhythm, dwelling with delight on assonances and alliterations’ (‘Rosa Quo Locorum’).

In an earlier essay, ‘The Manse’, Stevenson, who was fascinated with photography, refers to the ‘aboriginal’ memory that remains unrealized ‘like undeveloped negatives’ in one’s inner being². Jefferson Singer in *Proper Pirate*, one of the more recent biographies of Stevenson, points out that life review is the final phase of identity theory and that: ‘Stevenson was richly engaged in retrospective gazing, perhaps sensing that his chronic poor health would not grant him the luxury of waiting until old age.’³ Commenting on Stevenson’s ‘internalized narrative of his childhood’ Singer concludes that Stevenson created ‘a rather stable narrative of these early years of his life’ in particular in these essay fragments ‘that coalesce around a specific vision of his early childhood.’⁴ He used and reused his memories and reminiscences in the essays and in his other writing, never expressing any fear that those versions of the past might be unreliable or that he might be altering them through the retelling.

Despite a reference in ‘A Chapter on Dreams’ to the reading public finding him too egotistical, there is no evidence that there were ever any complaints made to the publications in which they were published about the autobiographical content in Stevenson’s essays. Indeed, although Stevenson’s contemporaries were certainly interested in his discussion of the aesthetic, ethical, and existential questions of his time, it was the personal element of his essays – their revelation of the man himself – that they prized most highly. In May 1887, the editor of the *British Weekly*, Robertson Nicoll, in a mean-spirited reply to a letter which must have contained praise for an earlier essay, ‘Books Which Have Influenced Me’ confirmed the commercial value of the autobiographical. He writes, ‘I am glad you liked R. L. Stevenson, but these articles make little difference to the sale. It is personal matter that people like.’⁵

¹ These unpublished essay fragments along with several of the other uncollected essays mentioned in this article will be included in Lesley Graham (ed.), *The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson, Volume 5: Uncollected Essays 1880-94*, in The New Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Edinburgh, EUP.

² *Memories and Portraits*, 119. For a discussion of light and memory and photography, see Colley op. cit.

³ A S. Jefferson, *The Proper Pirate: Robert Louis Stevenson's Quest for Identity*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, xvii.

⁴ *Ibid.* 12.

⁵ W R Nicoll and T H. Darlow (ed), *William Robertson Nicoll: Life and Letters*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926, 76.

Public fascination with Stevenson's life in the aftermath of his death (at the age of 44) was stoked by the retrospective hints in his writing, and by the increasingly hagiographic scaffolding of that writing by works created afterwards by his family and friends. Stevenson's obituary in *The Times* strikes a notably personal tone:

[...] readers everywhere regarded Stevenson, not merely as a writer of books, but as a singularly charming, interesting, attractive, personal friend. [...] He had won us all to himself by his self-revelations, made as they were with an art that was consummate, and bringing before us a personality of the most delightful, the most lovable kind.¹

The obituary writer singled out Stevenson's personal essays as the medium of this interchange, observing that 'chiefly it is [...] in the Essays that we find this self-portraiture.' The autobiographical detail in the later essays and essay fragments has not escaped the attention of generations of biographers. They have recycled Stevenson's essay-writing endlessly in order to reconstruct a life from the snapshots found in them². One of those biographers, Ian Bell, writes that:

A biographer soon discovers that Stevenson was the consummate autobiographer. His own life fascinated him, and he returned to it time and again in essays, poems, stories and letters like a dog to a beloved bone. It is an odd sensation to realise that the reader over your shoulder is your subject. I have tried whenever possible to allow him to speak for himself; often it was impossible to keep him quiet.³

This propensity to write about himself had been noted in the columns of *The Edinburgh Review* shortly after Stevenson's death:

There was irresistible fascination in what it would be unfair to characterise as egotism, for it came natural to him to talk frankly and easily of himself. [...] He could never have dreamed, like Pepys, of locking up his confidence in a diary. From first to last, in inconsecutive essays, in the records of sentimental touring, in fiction and in verse, he has embodied the outer and the inner autobiography. He discourses—he prattles—he almost babbles about himself. He seems to have taken minute and habitual introspection for the chief study in his analysis of human nature, as a subject which was immediately in his reach, and would most surely serve his purpose.⁴

Through the biographies that reprise his own account of his life, Stevenson continues to control the telling of his life story and to perpetuate the pleasure he took in depicting its random nature.

¹ *Times*, Dec. 18, 774.

² Biographers and commentators are correspondingly crestfallen when Stevenson's work turns out not to contain any information about his life. Clayton Hamilton, for example, complains that *Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh* is 'disappointingly unautobiographical.' *On the Trail of Stevenson*, New York: Doubleday, 1915, 11.

³ Ian Bell, *Dreams of Exile – Robert Louis Stevenson A Biography*, Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2014, 18.

⁴ *Edinburgh Review*, July 1895.

As Stevenson wrote at the end of the last surviving essay attempt ‘Early Memories’: [It is] certain at least that the process by which man grows, is by a progressive synthesis of himself. He binds discrete sensations arbitrarily into bundles, which he tickets with a name, and refers to a common source.’ This, it seems, was Stevenson’s destiny – to fashion his identity in and through his work, arranging and highlighting the diverse facets of his autobiographical self, his morals and his aesthetics, through literary examination where they formed a satisfyingly consistent, if distributed, whole.

Conclusion

Underlying all these reflections on places and traces, on Scotland, travel writing and auto/biography is the notion of identities as initially embedded in place and nation. The question transcends that of origins and tradition since identity, both personal and national, is constructed rather than given, and travel abroad, it seems, is one of the most effective catalysts for that process of (re-)discovery and (de-)construction. As I have shown, in the Scottish context that identity can be multiple or hybrid, embracing other parts of Great Britain, shifting as the traveller comes into contact with novel spaces and places, just as it can be displaced, or diasporic. Identity then, as Wollen suggests, can be usefully regarded as being ‘based on becoming rather than being, biographical (or historical) experience rather than fatality of origin [...] derived from something more like a curriculum vitae than a birth certificate.’¹ The recounting of a journey, or indeed of a life, can be approached as a process of discovery. A physical trajectory narrated reflects a singular and shifting subjectivity. As de Certeau suggests, travel is a narrative practice: ‘What does travel ultimately produce if it is not, by a sort of reversal, an “exploration of the deserted places of my memory”, the return to nearby exoticism by way of a detour through distant places, and the “discovery” of relics and legends.’² The discovery of unfamiliar places is therefore a catalyst for the narrative discovery of identity in that it encourages the traveller to look back on his/her past while at the same time consolidating or unsettling past notions of identity, shaking up national consciousness, through comparison with other possible selves and nationhoods.

¹ Peter Wollen, ‘The Cosmopolitan Ideal in the Arts’ in Robertson et al. (eds) *Travellers' Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*, Routledge, 1994, 189.

² De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of Minnesota Press, 1988, 106-7. The quotation within the quotation appears to be unattributed.

2. Movement and Margins

Je me méfie un peu, un peu beaucoup, de mots comme appartenance, enracinement. Il faut parler des sources, mais la source n'est pas le fleuve, et c'est le mouvement qui nous intéresse.¹

Movement, both physical and virtual, has been, and continues to be, an important thread in my research work. The movement in question is of various forms, sometimes flowing, sometimes swirling, sometimes to and fro – rarely linear. Firstly, the physical movement of the travelling Scots explored in the previous section, then the fluid and shifting rhetorical characteristic of the essay genre in general and, in my work, those of Robert Louis Stevenson and Kenneth White in particular. I have also examined the back-and-forth shift in perspective adopted by Stevenson in his autobiographical writings,² and more recently the movement of fictional characters across the Scottish landscape.³ To this might be added the sometimes unpredictable movement of knowledge to and from Scotland.⁴ Margins and marginal activity have been an equally obvious thread in my work – the marginal position of minor writers, of followers rather than precursors, the role of epitexts, of annotation, the functions of the paratext, and the marginality of so-called minor literary genres such as correspondence and auto/biography.

2.1 Movement and Flow

2.1.1 The essay as a moving genre

Je ne peins pas l'être. Je peins le passage.⁵

The essay captures, transmits and represents movement in all of its forms. Consider, for example, Stevenson's essay 'A Modern Cosmopolis' which describes the city of San Francisco in 1879. The text describes and reflects the ebb and flow of the city's population, its rapid changes, the omnipresent sense of instability. The essay itself in its structure and organisation,

¹ Kenneth White, *Le Poète Cosmographe : vers un nouvel espace culturel : entretiens 1976-1986*, (Michèle Duclos, ed), Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, 1987, 59.

² Lesley Graham, 'Toing and froing in Stevenson's construction of personal history in some of the later essays (1880-94)', *Journal of Stevenson Studies*, Vol. 14, 2018, 5-17.

³ Lesley Graham, 'Food and Drink in Two Scottish Novels: Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* (1886) and Alan Warner's *The Man Who Walks* (2002)', PUF, Série Caledonia, forthcoming 2023.

⁴ Cf. introduction to Lesley Graham (dir), *The Production and Dissemination of Knowledge in Scotland : La production et la diffusion des savoirs en Écosse*, Besançon, PUF, Collection : Annales littéraires; Série : Caledonia. Regards sur L'Ecosse, 2017.

⁵ Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, Livre III, chapitre II, 'Du repentir'.

reflects this constant movement adopting shifting voices and points of view, flitting from the shore to Telegraph Hill, to the view from San Francisco Bay. Various aspects of the city are touched on then left, the fire service, earthquakes, the faces of people in the streets, opium dens, wildfowling. The overall impression is of an unstable, fast-moving, ever-changing city – an instability all too obvious to city-dwellers alert to the possibility of devastating earthquakes and fires.

The movement found in the essay genre is generally swirling and meandering, but controlled. The style and organisation reflect the subject: the mixed and changing moods it describes are reflected in the formulations, re-formulations and backtracking typical of the familiar essay. In reading the essay, in an effort to extract meaning we are given the impression of following the process of thought as it moves forward, then turns back on itself, lingers over one idea, then flows free again. Kenneth White, himself an expert practitioner of the genre, identifies this floating quality as one of the strengths of Montaigne, the first essayist. He writes:

It was in order to paint those “passages (from state of mind to state of mind, from feeling to feeling, from attitude to attitude, from mind to place and thing), that Montaigne, master of the floating world, at ease in the relative (which implies a relationship), invented the essay, a form, a way of writing, that allowed him to follow all the meanders of his thought.¹

Montaigne himself asserted the shifting nature of the world and therefore of his writing when he wrote the words found in the epigraph to this section. Having begun my work on Stevenson's essays, I took a fresh look at the essays of Kenneth White, the Scottish poet, essayist and writer of ‘way books’ who has lived in France for many years.²

The temptation to compare the two Scottish writers, travellers and residents in France was compelling. Although White feels what he calls a great sympathy for Stevenson, and even a sense of friendship for the Scottish writer, and although he greatly admires Stevenson's early essays, especially the series of essays that developed a comprehensive theory of walking practice, he concludes with regret that Stevenson did not stay the course he set for himself but turned to what he terms the 'box of tricks' in his later writing.

Of course, even in the novels, there are traces of the other Stevenson, the ‘high line’ Stevenson. Even in the more simplistic of them there will be flashes, phantasmagorical flourishes, pungent atmospheres, a sense of open space, gusts of vigour, strange emptiness, snatches of distant

¹ Kenneth White, *The Wanderer and His Charts: Exploring the Fields of Vagrant Thought and Vagabond Beauty*, Edinburgh: Polygon, 2004, 115.

² I have published just one article on White: 2011c, ‘Kenneth White’s Essays: Cartography Grounded in Self’, *Études écossaises*, Vol. 14, 2011.

music, but none of the sustained high flying he himself evokes and of which we know he was capable.¹

White defines his own approach to the essay in the preface to *The Wanderer and his Charts*. Essays are, in his view ‘attempts at fast, clear cogent thinking. Live thought is erratic and erotic in its nature, full of tentative explanations and existential energy, and the essay-form proceeds by a series of intellectual sensations and logical leaps.’ He further states that ‘this thinking is always linked to felt space, to a lived existence.’² Like all of White's writings, the essays contribute to his grand project of geopoetics, that is, they tend towards a writing that is in touch with the earth, that reflects the lines of the world, and that roundly rejects the mediocrity of contemporary culture.

He recognises in Michel de Montaigne, discussed at length in the essay ‘Aquitainian Affinities’ the creator and master of the genre.³ The essay opens with a digression into an account of the life, travel and work of George Buchan, the French essayist's Latin teacher at the Collège de Guyenne. White justifies the diversion by claiming that ‘an essay by definition must be diverse and fluctuating’ (Montaigne’s expression which, in an earlier section, we noted Sidney Colvin borrowing to describe Stevenson). This is how White generally constructs his essays, bringing together various subjects and influences in a fluid and sometimes unexpected way that perhaps reflects a thought, which is itself meandering and fed by multiple textual tributaries. The essay ‘Aquitainian Affinities’ ends with a reminder that Montaigne, master of the floating world, coined the word essay ‘to designate a new kind of literature, outside the established ruts and full of strangeness’. This strangeness, at the heart of the essay as practised by Montaigne, implies, according to White, ‘[...] leaving the harbour of a fixed identity in order to plunge into the floating life, following the transformations of the self and the meanderings of thought.’⁴

Brian Dillon, in his study *Essayism*, identifies this same fluid movement in the essay.

He writes:

Picture if you can its profile on the page: from a solid spate of argument or narrative to isolated promontories of text, these composing in their sum the archipelago of a work, or a body of work. The page an estuary, dotted at intervals with typographical buoys or markers. And all the currents or sediments in between: sermons, dialogues, lists and surveys, small eddies of print or whole books construed as single essays. A shoal or school made of these.⁵

¹ White, *Ibid.* 84.

² *Ibid.* vii. viii.

³ *Ibid.* 47-48; 58.

⁴ *Ibid.* 58.

⁵ Brian Dillon, *Essayism*, Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2017. Kindle Edition, 76.

The image of the river is also a good representation of the release that the essay form offered Stevenson and other writers. The essay, as practised by Stevenson, is a space of flow and freedom – freedom to float, to meander, to move, to be unsettling, to draw the reader in, to be turbulent, to be creative, and ultimately to open up into seas of possible thought, the aim of the essay being not to reach a clear-cut conclusion or ultimate truth, but to provoke free thought. The essay flows like a river, but stops from time to time in pools to accommodate longer reflections, it is also free to deviate from the path initially suggested, to branch off and then return and re-join the main stream. Ideas float and come together, forming a system rather than a purely linear progression.

These preliminary considerations indicate that the movement generated and reflected by the essay is, in general, a fluid movement. The language of the essay flows like a river within the constraints of the banks imposed by the genre. Words and sentences run one into the next, swirling in pools of meaning, sometimes gushing forward, or pausing in still areas of repeated or reformulated ideas, only to flow forwards again in a more measured manner. It is to this flow that I now turn.

2.1.2 Stevenson in flow

*Maker, ye maun sing them –
Cantos of exploit and dream,
Dain of desire and fulfilment,
Ballants of fire and red flambeaux...
Tomorrow, songs
Will flow free again, and new voices
Be borne on the carrying stream.¹*

The lines above are borrowed from 'Under the Earth I Go', an elegy written by Hamish Henderson, poet, folklorist and father of the mid-century Scottish folk revival anticipating his own death. This idea of the continuity of voice, of the baton passed from generation to generation linking the present and the past, is one that recurs in Scottish literature.²

In his poem 'Where Go the Boats', ostensibly written for children but speaking more directly to adults, Stevenson evokes the flow of life. The child throws small boats into the river

¹ Hamish Henderson, 'Under the Earth I Go' in Raymond Ross (ed.), *Hamish Henderson: Collected Poems and Songs*, Edinburgh, 2000, 154-155.

² Andrew O'Hagan evokes it thus: 'When talking about civic memory, I'm often talking not only about a common experience we have relied on here in Scotland to summon our feelings about a place, but also, in a broader sense, to capture our notion of the relationship – a very brilliant relationship – between what is past and what is to come. Proust understood that very well, and so did Robert Louis Stevenson'. 'Civic Memory: Making Scotlands of the Mind', National Theatre of Scotland Fifth Birthday Lecture, 8.

and imagines other children retrieving them downstream. The idea of the author releasing his work for posterity is irresistible. ‘Away down the river, | A hundred miles or more, | Other little children | Shall bring my boats ashore’.¹ Here, as in certain essays, Stevenson's writing is carried by a river, namely The Water of Leith. Evoking a good river (or better still, a whole litany of good rivers) provides enough flow/impetus to carry the essay through landscapes and ideas as in ‘The Water of Leith’ or in ‘Forest Notes’.² It provides continuity and coherence but also variety. It also provides an idea of what perhaps flowed most easily in his life: words. He relished the flow of words in conversation and in text, regularly comparing their movement to that of a river. The gentlemanly talk of the Savile Club in London – where Stevenson himself was an admired conversationalist – is subjected to the same metaphor in the two-part essay ‘Talk and Talkers’, a celebration of Stevenson's friends and their conversational styles: ‘The genuine artist follows the stream of conversation as an angler follows the windings of a brook, not dallying where he fails to “kill”’.³

Like words, consciousness can flow in the essay form, not so much as a stream of consciousness but rather a mind that has freed itself from compelling physical needs and desires. As the essay ‘Lay Morals’ suggests, if a man learns to love a woman; he overcomes betrayals and regrets; for the man now lives as a whole; his consciousness now moves without interruption like a river; through all the extremes and ups and downs of passion, he remains pleasantly conscious of himself. For Stevenson, it is clear that the mind – that his mind – flows: it is an internalised river. He approached his elected profession, that of a writer, in the same way as his engineering forebearers had approached potamology, by understanding and decoding literature as they had done rivers, and then applying this knowledge to his own creative work. The texts of his essays, in particular, were mapped and designed after long observation and training, just as his father and grandfather had mapped and designed the flow of rivers.

Stevenson’s short apprenticeship in engineering gave him a sense of construction in space, a sense of strength in form. He accompanied his father, Thomas Stevenson, on professional inspection tours of Scotland's ports and lighthouses and later remembered him

¹ R. L. Stevenson, *A Child's Garden of Verses*, 32. We might be reminded here also of Joseph Conrad and the desire he expressed to return to his early years: ‘when I launched my first paper boats in the days of my literary childhood’. (Preface to *The Shorter Tales of Joseph Conrad* analysed by Nathalie Jaëck in ‘Conrad’s and Stevenson’s Logbooks and ‘Paperboats’: Attempts in Textual Wreckage’ in Linda Dryden (ed), *Stevenson and Conrad: Writers of Land and Sea*, Texas: Texas Tech University Press, 2009.

² I am drawing here on my article “Rivers, Freedom and Constraint in Some of Stevenson’s autobiographical writing”, in *Taking Liberties, Scottish Literature and Expressions of Freedom*, Brown, Clark and Jarazo-Álvarez (eds), Glasgow, Scottish Literature International, 2016.

³ R. L. Stevenson, ‘Talk and Talkers 1’, *Memories and Portraits*, London: T. Nelson, 143.

‘brooding over the waves, counting them, noting their least deflection’.¹ During these formative excursions, Stevenson acquired a wealth of knowledge about the topography of Scotland, the movement of rivers and the sea, geology, and the ways in which they could be modified through engineering.

In two other essays of interest, it is the ocean rather than a river, that constitutes the thread and the driving energy of the essayist's discourse. I am thinking of the two essays to which Stevenson gave the general title ‘Random Memories’. Both essays evoke his memories as an apprentice engineer in Scotland. The first, *The Coast of Fife*, the coast and thus the sea, is ostensibly at least the structuring principle of the essay. It is linked to novella ‘*The Pavilion on the Links*’ which depends on the sea for a sense of foreboding (through quicksand, sea attack, being saved from the waves). In the second, ‘*The Education of an Engineer*’, Stevenson launches himself into the sea in the far north of Scotland and feels in his body – a body that had spent an inordinate amount of time in sick rooms – the movement generated by the waves. In the same essay he studiously ignores the humiliation of his father, defeated by the waves of Wick which repeatedly destroyed the breakwaters he had designed.

‘*The Education of an Engineer*’ turns around a series of oppositions. The conflict inherent in choosing between a career as an engineer and one as a writer is central, and the pleasures of a life outdoors are contrasted with the drudgery of deskwork. The Wick of now and of the past are also opposed and the differences between the native Wickers and the incoming Hebrideans are also highlighted when Stevenson examines in detail the society and recent history of the northerly town. The two communities are separated not only by their geographical origins and their occupational activities but also by language since ‘the Lews men are Gaelic speakers. Caithness has adopted English’.²

Another structuring contrast highlighted in the essay is that between land and sea. The detailed description of Stevenson's experience of descending in a diving suit into the depths of Wick harbour is central to the essay's downwards movement, taking up roughly a third of its length. The experience is first mentioned as an aspiration in Anstruther: ‘Only one thing in connection with the harbor tempted me; and that was the diving, an experience I burned to taste of. But this was not to be, at least in Anstruther; and the subject involves a change of scene to the sub-arctic town of Wick.’³ The apparent incongruousness of the Gaelic speakers in Wick, and of two Italians urchins glimpsed from a coach in the north of Scotland are echoed in the

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Records of a Family of Engineers*, 29.

² ‘*The Education of an Engineer*’, *Scribner's Magazine* 4, Nov 1888, 636—40, 638.

³ *Ibid.* 637.

image of the young man underwater, clearly out of his element as an aspiring writer among engineers, and out of his depth as a novice engineer giving orders to more experienced workmen. The theme of mutual incomprehension between speakers of different languages is similarly echoed in Stevenson's diving experience when all communication with his guide Bob Bain is cut off by the barrier of the diving suit:

One moment, the salt wind was whistling round my night-capped head; the next, I was crushed almost double under the weight of the helmet. As that intolerable burthen was laid upon me, I could have found it in my heart (only for shame's sake) to cry off from the whole enterprise. But it was too late. The attendants began to turn the hurdy-gurdy and the air to whistle through the tube; some one screwed in the barred window of the vizor; and I was cut off in a moment from my fellow-men; standing there in their midst, but quite divorced from intercourse: a creature deaf and dumb, pathetically looking forth upon them from a climate of his own. Except that I could move and feel, I was like a man fallen in a catalepsy.¹

The account of the experience is memorable too for its evocation of a feeling of topsy-turviness and muddle-headedness in the water and the consequent importance of being tethered to (a) land. The parallels between the discovery and adaptation to an unfamiliar world underwater while still being connected to the surface and Stevenson's continuing attachment to Scotland even as he moved around the new world, from the Adirondacks to Manasquan for a short stay during which he wrote this essay and prepared to cross the continent to San Francisco whence the Pacific Islands. Scotland was the surface 'air-mill' providing oxygen whistling 'down the tube' as inspiration for his writing. His link to Scotland was manifestly essential for his sense of orientation and of personal and family history but also essential to his imaginative life as would become apparent in the novels to be written over the coming years, many centred in Scotland and drawing again on his knowledge of Scottish history. The main lesson that Stevenson draws from his diving experience is that 'a man's weight, so far from being an encumbrance, is the very ground of his agility' — clearly he had also concluded that the weight of his Scottish heritage could also be turned to his advantage, and this all the more so in a foreign country.

The disorientation of movement underwater serves as a contrast to the solidity of Stevenson's identification with Scotland and his command of Scottish history. The movements of both of the random memories essays are similarly tethered to the idea of Scotland, meandering like the diver, taking 'a fine, dizzy, muddle-headed joy'² in his submarine surroundings but the movement is not random and the experiences recounted are not chosen haphazardly. The memories of Scotland and of the Scottish past that form the substrate of both

¹ Ibid. 638.

² Ibid. 639.

essays are not unfixed, *random* memories at all but rather carefully crafted excursions into the past, carefully selected and marshalled, and calculated to give the impression of casual divagation.¹

Flow tends to become ebb, a turning back and refocusing on the self. Which brings me to another theme that has created a consistency in my research over the years – an interest in the return to autobiography, or the autobiographical turn.

2.1.3 The ebb and flow of autobiography

*Ainsi, lecteur, je suis moy-mesmes la matière de mon livre.*²

The arc of the essay brings Kenneth White inexorably back to his himself. My work on his collection of essays *The Wanderer and His Charts* shows this incessant return to himself, what I might have called his self-centredness. As the essay 'Aquitanian Affinities', for example, comes to an end, White turns back to his own person: 'And here I am now, in my Pyrenean study this April morning, after many an essay, essaying once more. Trying to keep the high line'.³ This is a recurring movement in White's essays – the alternation of passages focusing on the outside world and historical contexts with passages describing his own past and present context. Kenneth White repeatedly refers to himself and the creative space he has hewn out, his solitary development of geopoetics, his resistance to the mediocrity of the surrounding culture. As I pointed out in my 2011 article, the 'me's and 'I's and even 'I myself's⁴ accumulate in certain essays so that his approach might be construed as being overly egocentric, narcissistic even, inducing the creeping impression that Kenneth White may be geopoetics and that geopoetics is still nothing more than Kenneth White. Here I might point out another link with Stevenson, for he too was accused of egotism by commentators: 'the critics murmur over my consistent egotism' he complained.

In drawing up this retrospective overview of my work, it initially seemed to me that my approach to White's had perhaps been a little too critical, perhaps even harsh. After all, as I stated above, I am convinced that the author is not dead and that autobiographical detail can

¹ This analysis of the diving experience and other autobiographical elements in 'The Education of an Engineer' was developed for an article to appear in a collection in honour of Christian Auer: 'Scotland in Robert Louis Stevenson's "Random Memories" essays in *Scribner's Magazine* (1888)', in M. Amblard, S. Juillet, P. Laplace (eds) *Scotland and the Scots*, PUFC, Série Caledonia.

² Michel de Montaigne, 'Au Lecteur', *Œuvres Complètes*, Paris : Gallimard, Collection La Pléiade, 1962, 9.

³ Kenneth White, *ibid.* 58.

⁴ *Ibid.* 206.

augment the reader's appreciation of literary works. I note, however, that the article has been cited by others, who while they may not have agreed entirely have also been struck by White's unselfconscious and systematic focus on himself in his essays.¹

White is meticulous in his description of the genesis and terrain of his own mental landscape, what he has elsewhere called a landscape-mindscape. 'Maybe thought can be like a landscape – with fields and running waters (fluid concepts). A landscape-mindscape. That's maybe what we could make our way towards' he writes.² This brings us back to the previous section on flow, the tributaries of his river. He meticulously catalogues the writers, books, places, landscapes, atmospheres and encounters that have been important to him and have contributed his work.

We have also seen that Kenneth White inhabits his essays through recurrent self-reference, as a living figure – the only living figure – in this fluid cartography. The essays are peppered with elements of life writing, and indeed he sees this as central to his approach.

On peut suivre une ligne biographique à travers tous mes écrits. A tel point que je parlais à un moment donné de *biocosmographie*. Il ne s'agit pas de confession. Plutôt de configuration, de conjugaison. Voire d'auto-analyse (analyse en marche, en mouvement), d'auto-poétique.³

He acknowledges that he was, at one point, contemplating embarking on a more complete autobiography, exposing the meanderings of his personal journey. It would certainly be a book worth reading, for it is hard not to agree with White when he protests in an essay entitled, with the habitual reference to his totemic surname, 'The White Bag of Books'

My stance may seem highly individualistic. It is. I submit that it's with individuals (individuals who have concentrated in their work-field the maximum of general energies and elements) that the really significant developments begin. It's the individual who has taken the time and the pains to develop his/her life and thought who has, in the long run, on the long view, in the last analysis, the most to offer society in general.⁴

The autobiographical turn within the essay is an illegitimate move for some and White's propensity to adopt it has perhaps had the effect of marginalising him in the landscape of contemporary Scottish literature. Some commentators – James Kelman in particular – are

¹ Jeff Malpas, in a book co-authored with White, refers to my view as being 'more sympathetic' than Kelman's 'but still not uncritical', Jeff Malpas and Kenneth White. *The Fundamental Field: Thought Poetics World*. Edinburgh University Press 2022, 88. Cf. also Monika Szuba, *Contemporary Scottish Poetry and the Natural World*: Burnside, Jamie, Robertson and White, Edinburgh, EUP, 2019, 27 passim, and Christophe Roncato. *Kenneth White : et la poétique de l'énergie : épure, écriture, monde*, thèse de Linguistique. Université de Grenoble, 2011.

² Kenneth White and Claude Fintz, *Le Champ Du Grand Travail*, Devillez, 2002, 63.

³ Ibid. 67.

⁴ Kenneth White, *The Wanderer and His Charts*, 178.

patently irritated by his apparent egotism. White anticipates their irritation and pushes back. In *On the Atlantic Edge*, he notes that ‘in the humdrum centres of comment and communication’ his recurrent evocations of whitenesses provoke ‘ire and irritation’. But, he ripostes, ‘my argument is not narcissistic. These white things are there, and they are written into the culture, the great river of culture that flows round the world, they are written into the language.’¹

The ebb and flow in the autobiographical essay can also be a back-and-forth movement where the author also projects her/himself into an uncertain future. This opens up the question of the double, for when the author evokes a future self, s/he is inevitably speaking of a double – someone he does not yet know but whose outlines s/he guesses. The configuration can be complicated by the presence in this putative future of the author in his present state who contemplates this future iteration while evoking the past. The movement in the essay is thus a forward projection that incorporates a backward movement around the pivot of the present.

Stevenson's later essays are marked by a growing nostalgia for his youth and he regularly interweaves memories of his childhood and early adult experiences (see Section 1.3.3). He had already written about his childhood in a more overtly autobiographical style and structure in unpublished accounts entitled 'Notes of Childhood' (1873) and 'Memoirs of Himself' (1880). In these latter essays, however, as his star rose and public interest in his life reached a crescendo, he fragmented the narrative of his earlier self, scattering throughout his writings clues to the origins and development of his present personal identity. The discontinuous nature of the narrative is reflected in the subtitles of some of the essays – ‘Random Memories’, ‘More Random Memories’.

The somewhat unsettling effect created by a back-and-forth between past, present and future presences, between the real, persistent and virtual selves is present throughout Stevenson’s later essays. The narrative of his childhood found in these essays is non-linear and unframed. The perspective is unstable. This approach is not unusual in modern autobiographical essays. Indeed, as Graham Good writes:

[...] the forms of the autobiographical essay enact the processes of disintegration and reintegration, loss and reinvention, interpretation and reinterpretation, dislocation and relocation, which are characteristic of the modern identity.²

For Stevenson, however, autobiographical time extends from before his birth to after his death, as he moves back and forth between real past time, imagined past time, putative

¹ Kenneth White, *On the Atlantic Edge*, Highland, Sandstone, 2006, 71-2.

² Graham Good, ‘Identity and Form in the Modern Autobiographical Essay.’ *Prose Studies*. 15.1 (1992): 99-117, 116.

future time, and a present that brings them all together, not always explicitly, in the person of Mr Robert Louis Stevenson the writer, a constantly shifting nexus of recollection and projection and work in progress. The thing, as always, is to move, to zoom in on the moment that seems most significant, even if that moment is not part of the author's direct experience, or to zoom out as if he were observing the scene from the future or from some other external perspective. The autobiographical back-and-forth movement in these essays is not limited to time, but also applies to place, size and scale, personal pronouns and perspective.

The essay form is particularly well suited to this exercise of life writing in fits and starts since, as Lydia Fakundiny observes, 'it is through various shortenings and dispersions of narrative that the essay, with its conventions of fragmentation and provisionality, assimilates to its relatively short duration and characteristic discursive modes the task of telling the writer's life story'.¹ Thus, in the autobiographical essay, a single significant episode can be explored from all angles and its significance extrapolated to the rest of the life story without having to relate to the overall plan required by a full-length autobiography.

I have noted the extent to which Stevenson's thoughts and creative impulse at the end of his life turned towards memory and recollection, and how as if his single life bounded by birth and death were not enough, in his later essays he regularly makes excursions outside the boundaries of the traditional autobiographical framework. The constant change of perspective is a sign of a certain shift. By broadening the scope of his life story to include multiple prenatal and post-mortem existences, and by multiplying the number of texts in which these existences are inscribed, Stevenson weaves his way through the pages, refusing to be locked into any single stable identity or story. The back-and-forth movement is potentially unsettling, like a light flickering between the different selves represented in these essays but despite the movement and the abrupt shifts in perspective, Stevenson's mastery of the essay form brings the different times and perspectives together into relatively happy, if deliberately random, cohabitation.

¹ Lydia Fakundiny, 'Autobiographical Essay' in Tracy Chevalier (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Essay*, London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997, 87-88.

2.2 Occupying the margins

*The news where you are comes after the news where we are. The news where we are is the news. It comes first. The news where you are is the news where you are. It comes after. We do not have the news where you are.*¹

When we think about movement, we are inexorably drawn towards the notion of margins – the purlieux, the borderlands, those areas where we are concerned not with a central text, nor with the principal author, but with peripheral texts, paratexts, and so-called minor or ancillary authors. Scotland is a case in point, a country that has, since the union of the crowns in 1607, been seen as somewhat off-centre due to the political hegemony of its southern neighbour, England, but whose inhabitants have often benefited from and capitalised on its peripheral geographical location. Take again the work of Kenneth White. He might be considered a marginal author because of his Scottishness and he is a deliberately marginal writer in Scottish literature, both intellectually and geographically. This does not diminish the significance of his work for Scottish literature as a whole. Paradoxically perhaps his marginality widens his reach and reinforces his significance as a Scot abroad. According to Cairns Craig:

If White remains marginal to accounts of Scottish literature it is, perhaps, because the scale and scope of his poetic ambitions represent a fundamental challenge to the notion that a writer's significance is national: [...], he has become, perhaps, the poet of a global Scotland, a Scotland determined not by national boundaries but by the energies of its global explorations.²

I am aware that the concept of the margin in the context of Scottish culture has rather fallen out of favour, and I am sympathetic to the argument that the image of a centre and a periphery is often unhelpful in that it perpetuates the model (especially in post-colonial contexts) and presumes one is speaking from and to the centre. However, working on the nineteenth century implies reading texts permeated by the centre-periphery model, which, it must be said continues to have currency in British mainstream media as illustrated by James Robertson's poem cited in the epigraph above.

In recent years, I believe I have engaged with margins in positive ways: notably by focusing on the entourage of the author at the centre of my work, Stevenson, and especially on the women of his entourage, and by the writers who have followed him. By re-centring the

¹ James Robertson, 'The News Where You Are', 365, Hamish Hamilton, 20.

² Cairns Craig, 'Intellectual Nomad', *Scottish Review of Books*, June 28, 2013.

writings of these marginal authors, we learn something about Stevenson's own positioning within networks; about the ways his entourage built a textual scaffolding around his work to both nourish and support it, especially in the period immediately after his death. Similarly, I have decentred towards the margins by also concentrating on and according importance to his letters, to fragments of work and to paratexts.¹

2.2.1 Annotation, a Marginal Exercise

[...] in a polemical context, if I want to be sure that my reply or my attack will be read and not passed by, indeed read even before the main text, I put it into a footnote.²

Editing a new scholarly edition of Robert Louis Stevenson's later uncollected essays has occupied much of my research focus in recent years. A large part of that work has involved writing explanatory notes for each of the essays (the essay being a marginal genre in itself). Annotation is an activity that takes place largely and sometimes literally in the margins of a literary work, and for this reason its value is often under-appreciated. David Skilton recognizes this in a review of the first volume of the new edition of Robert Louis Stevenson's essays, edited by Robert Louis Abrahamson:

The writing of explanatory notes enjoys a very lowly status in the worlds of academic and general publishing, yet, surprisingly, it is here that much of the value of close attention to Stevenson's works may turn out to lie, not so much in promulgating the texts per se, as in meeting the requirements of disparate readers. The editor must not only address specialists in the field but the large and various constituencies of readers worldwide. Stevenson's voice in the Essays is familiar and engaging, and often addresses us through a multiplicity of allusions to the writings of predecessors.³

Ian Small concurs, referring to 'the hard, tedious and often undervalued practice of text editing'.⁴ Despite its marginal position and its auxiliary function, we should not underestimate the importance of annotation. The explanatory notes will at least colour if not completely define the readers grasp and appreciation of the text that it supports. Some readers turn to the notes before the main text and may even attach more importance to them, as Derrida claimed in 'This Is Not an Oral Footnote' cited in the epigraph above. Thus, the margin can become the centre

¹ This decentring appears to be a trend in recent research in France. Cf. for example the work of Maxime Leroy on the status and significance of authorial paratexts such as prefaces and illustrations in eg. *A Study of Authorial Illustration: The Magic Window*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019.

² J. Derrida, 'This is Not an Oral Footnote', in Stephen Barney (ed.) *Annotation and its Texts*, 192–205.

³ David Skilton, *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, N°14, 2019, 99.

⁴ I. Small and J. T. Boulton, eds., *The Theory and Practice of Text-Editing: Essays in Honour of James T. Boulton*, Cambridge: 1991, 186–208, 190.

of the debate, and this is the danger for the scholarly editor because the notes should generally be intellectually unobtrusive. Linne and Niederhoff offer the following description of the ideal note:

[...] a note should be as reader-oriented and self-effacing as possible. It should avoid strong terms and stylistic graces and provide the necessary explanations succinctly and clearly, making the annotative detour in the reader's textual journey as brief as possible. The ideal note does not challenge the reader to critical debate but answers a question that occurs to him or her while reading the annotated text. The principle of reader orientation also implies that the number of notes be kept to a minimum. After all, every note is an interruption of the intimate communion between the reader and the literary text. Annotators should only interrupt this communion when they have good reason to do so.¹

But what then is the function of annotation? For, Small, the main criterion for annotation is 'the recovery of those aspects of a cultural milieu which are deemed appropriate for a work's understanding'.² However this definition is problematic, or at least limiting, in that it does not specify for whom the editor is recovering that cultural milieu (presumably a modern audience with heterogenous and constantly changing needs) and it fails to take into account that contextualising information (be it historical, social or political) means prioritising the work's historical rather than its literary significance. This leads to the conclusion that any single theory of the practice of annotation will be inadequate and this may explain why, as Small notes, '[e]xplicit discussion of the theoretical issues involved in textual annotation is in fact surprisingly rare.'³ The variety of references that should or could be annotated is not a settled question, and there is no failsafe way of defining what requires explanation or elucidation. Perhaps the best that I can hope to do here is lay out some broad principles I adopted for the marginal practice of annotation in the specific context of Stevenson's uncollected essays. Below is a list, established retrospectively, of the categories into which the majority of the lemmata for which I have created explanatory notes fall. In reality, the process is, of course, much more intuitive than following a list:

- a) literary, biblical and historical allusions
- b) words that are not immediately understandable
- c) words in a foreign language
- d) proper names
- e) cross-references to themes covered by Stevenson elsewhere
- f) biographical details

¹ Lena Linne and Burkhard Niederhoff, 'Annotation as an Embedded Textual Practice: Analysing Explanatory Notes in Three Editions of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.' *Connotations: A Journal for Critical Debate* 29 (2020): 48-76, 69.

² Small, *Ibid.* 192.

³ *Ibid.* 187.

g) facts that can be checked

Anyone who writes anything has some, if not ideal at least imagined, end reader in mind as well as some answers to the following questions: why are they reading; how much knowledge do they already have; do they have an extensive vocabulary; what will they want to know; how much can they be left to work out for themselves? The editor must be careful not to kill the pleasure of reading the essay by imposing her own view on it. Since we are dealing with a scholarly edition, the answers to these questions call on an ideal reader¹ who is probably not so very different from the editor herself: a curious reader with perhaps an above average level of education. Not a school child, but not a literary expert either. Not an expert in either essays, history, philosophy, the life of Stevenson or 19th Century philosophy, but someone with a curious mind. No necessarily a Westerner, but someone with at least a basic knowledge of the Western literary canon. Not a fluent speaker of French or Italian or Scots, or German, nor a reader of Latin, but someone that knows what *voilà* and *al fresco* mean.

The ideal reader will, furthermore, probably be someone who will occasionally be motivated to investigate some of the explanatory notes a little further, who might have their curiosity piqued enough about the coast of Fife, for example, to take down an atlas or (much more likely) to open Google Maps, or to call up a passage alluded to, or to investigate the etymology of a word that required a definition. Ultimately, I have to concede, it would seem that there is no ideal reader, in that no real person will ever correspond to the identikit picture that we have in our minds when we write notes. The knowledge and experience profiles of modern readers are irregular and unpredictable. But perhaps I can hope that my un-ideal reader is a tolerant type who will skip over the notes that are superfluous for them without feeling that their intelligence has been insulted.²

These choices reveal that much has to be left by the wayside – some possible annotations are so marginally useful that, despite their potential pertinence, over the various stages of editing, they end up having to be left out. Furthermore, by their very nature, explanatory notes cannot, for example, draw the reader's attention to interesting features such as assonance or alliteration. Nor can they include any analysis of the structure of the essay, or

¹ I use the term here with no intentional reference to the ideal reader of reader response theory, but rather in the sense of the average potential reader.

² Ian Small concludes: 'An annotator has to address a homogenous audience for she cannot provide information for a culturally (let alone nationally) diverse audience; yet the concept of a homogenous and undifferentiated audience, which a prospective annotator can identify and address, clearly requires an accompanying concept of a homogenous and undifferentiated culture and sub-culture. Today such cultures and sub-cultures manifestly do not exist', *ibid.* 200.

of its internal logic. Stevenson's essays are often constructed, as I have noted, like a work of engineering to channel water, with words being carefully chosen and arranged, paragraphs carefully calculated to create and stem the flow of thought, but this is a realization that the editor has to leave up to the reader since the marginal function of the notes is not to channel the reader's response, that is the work of the essay itself. Similarly, the explanatory notes cannot vehicle the editor's personal reading of the essays – my 'insight' is irrelevant in a scholarly edition. This is at once frustrating – it would be gratifying, for example, to draw the reader's attention to the clues that bolster my belief that 'The Education of an Engineer' is *really* about the difficulty of communication and the risk of miscommunication and to share my analysis of the diving experience as a demonstration of Stevenson's attachment to Scotland (see Section 2.1.2) – and freeing since it creates opportunities for follow up studies and analyses in more suitable fora. Furthermore, the marginal work of annotation does ultimately contribute to facilitating the perception and understanding of these less accessible characteristics of the literary work in that they can only be appreciated when the work has been rendered understandable to the reader, a condition that can be met by making good use of the explanatory notes.

2.2.2 Epitexts

Other marginal phenomena central to my research are epitexts. Stevenson's essays and essay collections are considered by some commentators to be epitexts: texts whose main function, at least in the afterlives of his oeuvre, is to support and promote what is considered to be the central body of his work – novels and novellas – and incidentally to provide biographical background. In the following section (Part 3), I will examine the function of other types of epitext that serve a similar function around Stevenson's oeuvre namely travelogues and correspondence written by the women in his entourage and by travellers who have followed in his footsteps.

In the very different area of English for Specific Purposes, research has traditionally been interested in central texts such as research articles produced and consumed in professional and academic contexts. These clean, linear texts tend to transmit an idealized image of science. As I have already suggested, however, the analysis of epitexts or what might be called peri-professional texts (memoirs, and auto/biographies for example) can be just as useful as more central texts in the description and understanding of professional milieux. In a 2004 article,¹ I

¹ Lesley Graham, 'Scientific autobiography: some characteristics of the genre', *ASp* 43/44, 2004.

took the opportunity to look more closely at the motivations scientists might have to write autobiography. Writing about oneself is clearly not undertaken lightly and the scientist who does so often considers the result a significant piece of work. The autobiography is a liminal device that mediates between central texts (the original research articles) and the reading public many of whom will, in fact, never read the central text. These biographical works in turn condition the general public's perception of science and scientists and indeed the image that science has of itself.

Autobiographical writing by scientists can be considered part of what Bruno Latour described as the 'accreditation system'.¹ The aim of scientist-autobiographers may be to make priority claims and gain recognition and prestige both inside and outside the scientific community. As Schmitt observes, in a similar context, that of smart non-fiction, 'autobiographical content is never purpose-free, never intended to be merely autobiographical.'² Credibility is created and accumulated through the publication of a book-length autobiography. Self-representation can therefore be seen as an operation in persuasion, the objective being to make readers appreciate the contribution made by the author's own work to the important ongoing project of science, and thereby garner prestige. The autobiographical epitext thus frames and glosses the central scientific text or texts.

A careful reading of the epitexts represented by autobiographical documents – their narrative arguments, their inclusions and omissions, their use of language – can reveal to students undergoing socialisation into the scientific community a great deal about the ways and the contexts in which scientific knowledge is created, popularized, and recycled, occupying the space around the central texts. Jon Beckwith claims:

[...] interesting scientific discoveries are rarely the product of such a linear process. The misrepresentation of the workings of science leaves out the human element, the wrong turns, the surprises, the flashes of intuition, even the passions that drive us in science. It also fails to acknowledge the biases, the assumptions that we all must start with in order to proceed in a scientific investigation.³

Peri-professional writing, and in particular autobiography, offers us access to these elements in a way that professional texts cannot. We might adopt Myers' description, originally applied to review articles (but equally applicable to autobiographies) as 'textual forms in which

¹ Bruno Latour & Steve Woolgar, *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986 [1979].

² Arnaud Schmitt, 'The Autobiographical Dimension of Brainy Books', *European Journal of Life Writing*, Vol iX, 22–42 2020, 34.

³ Jon Beckwith, *Making Genes, Making Waves*. 2002:186

the original communication is modified, amplified, fused and melted'¹ Alternatively, we might just as well take up Mellor's less viscous image of popular books acting as 'nodal points in an intertextual web.'² She claims that popular books do work for the scientific community in a not entirely innocent way: 'Indeed they are interesting precisely because of the active boundary work they do in protecting the position of science in a hierarchy of ways of knowing while appearing to be merely playing the popular market.'³

In many ways, scientific autobiography might be seen as the ultimate popularisation – an effort made by the scientist to make the opaque world of his/her community of practice accessible to the lay reader. Various commentators have written on the importance of popularisation work on the production of scientific knowledge by means of a sort of backwash effect. Some have even gone as far as to suggest that the popular doesn't just influence the professional but has priority over it, in other words, the autobiography is the central text and the scientific texts are marginal.⁴ Finally, perhaps the autobiography is not, after all, an epitext, but the driving force that shapes all lives including scientific lives. In the words of Paul de Man:

We assume the life produces the autobiography as an act produces its consequences, but can we not suggest, with equal justice, that the autobiographical project may itself produce and determine the life and that whatever the writer does is in fact governed by the technical demands of self-portraiture and thus determined, in all aspects, by the resources of its medium?⁵

2.2.3 Letters and Fragments, Paratexts

*To the Hesitating Purchaser*⁶

My research has led me to look more closely at other epitexts such as letters and fragments, as well as paratextual elements, and to consider the ways in which they might shape and modify our reading of and reactions to texts considered central. Occasionally, these epitexts have revealed networks of their own. Research carried out while editing Stevenson's uncollected essays led to the discovery of seven unpublished letters from Stevenson to P. W.

¹ Greg Myers, 'Stories and styles in two molecular biology review articles' in Bazerman and Paradis (eds), *Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Writing in Professional Communities*, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1991, 70.

² Felicity Mellor, 'Between fact and fiction: Demarcating science from non-science in popular physics books', *Social Studies of Science* 33/4, 2003, 509-538, 509.

³ *Ibid.* 519.

⁴ Myers, *Op. Cit.* 1990, 190.

⁵ Paul de Man, 'Autobiography as De-Facement', *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 94, N°5, 1979, 920.

⁶ R. L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island* (1883), Epigraph.

Bunting, editor of the *Contemporary Review*.¹ The letters refer to an essay fragment, ‘The Ethics of Crime’, that Stevenson never finished and that will appear, along with several other essay fragments, in Volume 5 of the essays in the New Edinburgh Edition. This unfinished essay addresses the questions of political assassination and the law, in referring to it, or an early version of it, Stevenson writes to Bunting: ‘It will make me, I fear, personally very obnoxious to many; [...] but my whole sack must be emptied’.

Another unpublished letter from Stevenson that I again came across fortuitously also led back to a fragment of writing by Stevenson on which I had worked previously. The letter is to Vernon Lee² and it includes a sympathetic discussion of the character of Prince Charles Edward Stuart and what Stevenson sees as Vernon Lee’s unflattering and one-sided treatment of him as a repulsive drunk in her account of the life of his wife in *The Countess of Albany*.³ Stevenson mentioned the prince in *Kidnapped* the following year: ‘the Prince was a gracious, spirited boy, like the son of a race of polite kings, but not so wise as Solomon. I gathered, too, that while he was in the Cage, he was often drunk; so the fault that has since, by all accounts, made such a wreck of him, had even then begun to show itself.’ Stevenson was to write about the Prince several years later in the novel fragment *The Young Chevalier* (1892)⁴ which paints a brief but psychologically nuanced portrait of ‘a boy at odds with life, a boy with a spark of the heroic, which he was now burning out and drowning down in futile reverie and solitary excess’;⁵ a portrait in line with the plea for indulgence expressed in the letter to Vernon Lee.

The final example of work on the margins that it seems pertinent to evoke here concerns the role of paratexts, again in the area of scientific autobiography. Given the heterogeneity of the genre, it is difficult to identify a characteristic common to *all* scientific autobiographical writing. Certain general traits in the paratext do, however, appear recurrently. These include a declaration of honest intent and the assurance of professional integrity, usually in the preface or introduction. Each autobiography is framed in what Philippe Lejeune⁶ calls the

¹ Cf. Lesley Graham, ‘Seven Hitherto Unpublished Letters from Robert Louis Stevenson to Percy William Bunting, 1884–7’, *Notes and Queries*, Volume 66, Issue 2, June 2019, 303–307.

² Lesley Graham, ‘An unpublished letter from Stevenson to Violet Paget (Vernon Lee), 1885’, *EdRLS Blog*, 6 Oct. 2019.

³ Vernon Lee, *The Countess of Albany* (London, W.H. Allen, 1884), an account of the life of Princess Louise Maximilienne Caroline Emmanuele of Stolberg-Gedern (1752 – 1824), the wife of Charles Edward Stuart.

⁴ R. L. Stevenson, ‘The Young Chevalier’ in *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson* Vol. 26. Romances, Volume VII. *Weir of Hermiston* and other fragments, ed. S. Colvin (Edinburgh: Constable, 1897), 63–83. See Lesley Graham, “Robert Louis Stevenson’s “The Young Chevalier”: Unimagined Space”, in Macinnes, German & Graham (eds), *Living with Jacobitism, 1690-1788: The Three Kingdoms and Beyond*, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014.

⁵ Stevenson, ‘The Young Chevalier’, 82–3.

⁶ Philippe Lejeune is the author of several influential studies of autobiographical writing including *Le Pacte autobiographique*, Paris: Seuil, 1975.

‘autobiographical pact’ – an implicit contract between reader and writer. The autobiographical pact, the contract of identity, is sealed primarily in the proper name: the author's name is identical to that of the narrator and we consequently read the text written by the author to whom it refers as reflexive or autobiographical.

Because of the autobiographical pact, the reader assesses the narrative in ways that are suspended in fictional forms of literature. The autobiographical pact is also embedded in dedications to people whose names also appear in the narrative, in assurances that ‘these stories are true’, in claims that extensive use has been made of contemporary letters to date events, in admissions that some people will not be happy with the book, and perhaps paradoxically in declarations that ‘all names, certain identifying characteristics and temporal events have been changed’. It may also be expressed in the title – Watson's working title for *The Double Helix* was *Honest Jim*.¹

The concept of an autobiographical pact is complex and interesting when applied to scientific autobiography since the implied contract demands not only the honesty of the individual in being who s/he says s/he is when recounting past events and experiences but also his or her scientific credibility: the guarantee that the science is accurate. Consequently, assurances of scientific credibility are also to be found in the paratext; in prefaces, synopses, vitals and author's notes. These disclosures all serve to establish the authors' scientific credibility and *bona fides* and legitimise their right to write about scientific matters. Compare this with the modesty trope mentioned in connection with Stevenson's essay ‘A Chapter on Dreams’, and deployed in other essays, a manoeuvre that leads him to reveal mid-essay that the person at the centre of the argument is himself rather than a nameless third person of his acquaintance, and correspondingly builds belief in his sincerity.

Author photographs also help seal the autobiographical pact and establish scientific authority. Scientific authority is also materialised in the presence of photographs of the author with other scientists, in technical diagrams and in the scholarly apparatus of ‘notes on sources’ including references to well-known scientific reviews. Along with these multiform assurances of scientific authority there are, nevertheless, claims that the narrative is above all to be read as a *personal* interpretation of events. If textbooks are, as has been claimed, a mosaic of claims from which the personal and the provisional have been removed, autobiographical writing is

¹ James D. Watson, *The Double Helix. A Personal Account of the Discovery of the Structure of DNA*. London: Penguin, 1968.

the very opposite. It is rather a distillation of the personal element. Watson, for example, declares:

I am aware that the other participants in this story would tell parts of it in other ways, sometimes because their memory of what happened differs from mine and, perhaps in even more cases, because no two people ever see the same events in exactly the same light.¹

In the sequel to this book, Watson's revindication of the right to personal interpretation stretches the autobiographical pact to the limit. In his foreword, Peter Pauling voices the following reservation, 'As a work of reference to what actually happened, this book is unreliable. There are many mistakes and errors of fact.'² In most cases however, the combination of the autobiographical pact, the assurance of scientific authority and the promise of a personal approach to the material, invites readers to consider the narrator as a uniquely qualified authority, compelling the reader's belief in the story and in the importance of the narrator.

The photographs and facsimiles found inside the covers of the book which we might think of in terms of physical relics. These at once highlight the otherness of the era in question and create a link between the subject of the biography, the past and the reader. Richard Holmes, while following in the footsteps of Stevenson, emphasises the importance of such physical relics for the biographer:

The past does retain a physical presence for the biographer – in landscapes, buildings, photographs. [...] Anything a hand has touched is for some reason peculiarly charged with personality – [...] Stevenson's flageolet and tortoise-shell 'Tusitala' ring. It is as if the act of repeated touching ... imparts a personal 'virtue' to an inanimate object, gives it a fetishistic power in the anthropological sense, which is peculiarly impervious to the passage of time.³

Conclusion

This section has examined the importance of movement in autobiography and in the essay genre in particular – the swirling, fluid movement that characterizes the structure of the essay and the back-and-forth movement characteristic of retrospective autobiographical writing. Both are particularly evident in Stevenson's autobiographical essays in which he tends to change his point of view frequently, jumping between the past and the present, closing in and zooming out of the period or image that he is depicting. The significance of working on

¹ Watson, *ibid.* 13-14.

² James D. Watson, *Genes, Girls and Gamow*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, ix.

³ Richard Holmes, *Footsteps: Adventures of a Romantic Biographer*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985, 67.

and in the margins of literary works, has also become evident in this retrospective survey of my research – the literal margins of annotation (set after the main text or sometimes under it) and work on texts that might be considered marginal (or as epitexts), the para-professional autobiographies of established scientists and their paratexts, the correspondence and unfinished fragments written by Stevenson. Their common function today may be to create accreditation for the central texts, but paying attention to them also allows us to consider those central texts from a different viewpoint, recentring on the margins to create new configurations and ways of reading them, so that Stevenson's correspondence throws light on the genesis and development of his writing, just as close examination of his abandoned fragments breathes new life into the central, published, part of his oeuvre.

3. Pursuit(e): Companions and Followers

*Oui, de ta suite, ô roi, de ta suite ! J'en suis !
Nuit et jour, en effet, pas à pas, je te suis.*¹

In this, the third part of the overview of my research activities, I explore the possibilities opened up by notions of pursuit and suite, of following and accompaniment, in travel literature. These are notions that have been particularly important in my work on and around Robert Louis Stevenson. The term pursuit(e) is not one that I have used before but despite its strangeness it seems to me to be a useful portmanteau word bringing together those who accompany, those who follow as well as what ensues. By *pursuit* I mean the action of travelling in Stevenson's footsteps; or of being drawn into his wake, and of documenting the resulting insight and experience. By *suite*, I am referring first of all to Stevenson's entourage: those people – specifically those women – who accompanied him on his travels around the globe: Margaret Stevenson his mother, Alison Cunningham his nurse, and Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson his wife. The term *suite* also covers the idea of afterlives: the subsequent uses and functions of Stevenson's work in the biographies written about him, and the reworking, adaptation and re-use of his life and writings in other works. It is clear that in both of these areas – pursuit and suite – I am again exploring and engaging with *purlieux*.

Jay Clayton highlights the static nature of the concept of influence in the context of authors following a first author, arguing that influence acts in a unidirectional way, moving from an earlier author to a later one, whereas intertextuality, a much more fruitful concept in the context of travel literature, establishes a flexible relationship between texts. The reader's itinerary, which is shaped by individual interests and experiences, determines the 'direction' of the relationship, and this direction may change over time as the reader develops new interests and experiences.² It is this intertextual movement that I want to expand on in this section. We shall see, more specifically, that the networked texts created by the travellers who accompanied and pursued Stevenson constitutes an ecosystem that carries, promotes, nourishes, supports and extends Stevenson's texts, accomplishing a veritable work of literary scaffolding. The edifice

¹ Victor Hugo, *Hernani*, I, 4, Hernani.

² Jay Clayton, 'The Alphabet of Suffering: Effie Deans, Tess Durbeyfield, Martha Ray, and Hetty Sorrel' in Clayton, Jay, and Rothstein, Eric (eds) *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, Madison, Wisconsin: The U of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 37-60, 50. Quoted by Maria Lindgren Leavenworth, *The Second Journey: Travelling in Literary Footsteps*, Umea, Institutionen för språkstudier, 2010, 49.

thus constituted offers us the opportunity to explore numerous fertile concepts such as the double, foreshadowing, hauntology, belatedness, the reliability of the narrator-traveller, the uncanny and *lieux de mémoire*.

3.1 Suite: Stevenson's female entourage on tour

I have examined texts produced by two of Stevenson's travelling companions, namely the letters of his nanny Alison Cunningham written in France and those of his mother Margaret Isabella Balfour Stevenson written in the Pacific Islands.¹ Their books were not published until after their deaths under the titles *Cummy's Diary* (1926) for the former and *From Saranac to the Marquesas and Beyond* (1913) and *Letters from Samoa* (1916) for the latter. The written accounts of Stevenson's wife, Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson, will be the subject of a future publication. Together, these articles constitute an analysis of a selection of the texts that support and extend the edifice of Stevenson's work. They also open a window onto an understudied genre of 19th century travel literature— that of women. The women who travelled with Stevenson as well as those who followed him are liminal characters in the stories told about Stevenson's life, and yet the study of their marginality has offered multiple ways not only to apprehend Stevenson's own work but also to change our perspective, to put Stevenson himself aside, and focus for once on what is generally considered to be liminal and minor.²

3.1.1 Alison Cunningham – a marginal character

*My second Mother, my first Wife,
The angel of my infant life* –³

Alison Cunningham is a marginal but nonetheless key character in biographical accounts of the life of her charge, Robert Louis Stevenson. She has tended to inspire either unconditional admiration or outright condemnation among biographers with scarcely any more nuanced opinion in-between. Her portrayal in their accounts evolved over the twentieth

¹ Lesley Graham, 'Cummy on the Continent: Alison Cunningham's Trip to Europe with the Stevenson Family in 1863', in Gilles Leydier (ed), *Scotland and Europe, Scotland in Europe*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2007; 'From Scotland to Sāmoa: Margaret Isabella Balfour Stevenson in Polynesia', *Studies in Travel Writing*, Vol. 24, 2020, Issue 1, pp 20-34.

² For a recent volume on minor genres cf. Magali Fleuret, Nathalie Jaëck (eds), *Puissance du mode mineur*, Pessac, MSHA, 2021. They write, 'Dans de nombreux domaines, le Mineur ne semble pas être le moindre terme dans une hiérarchie, mais un espace autonome et créatif, un espace pour lequel on peut choisir délibérément d'opter.' 14.

³ Robert Louis Stevenson, 'Dedication: To Alison Cunningham, From Her Boy', *A Child's Garden of Verses*, London, Penguin, 1952, 15,

century. From the unanimously admired nurse the paragon of surrogate mother-love, basking in the benevolent admiration of Stevensonians such as Lord Guthrie in the early accounts of Stevenson's life and the latterly rather handsome elderly lady who held court in Morningside, she came to be portrayed as a cruel religious fanatic who terrified a sensitive child with tales of eternal damnation; a money-hungry hag who slowly sold off the autographed books gifted to her by her protégé.

As I highlighted in 'Selfless: The shifting reputation of Alison Cunningham in biographies of Robert Louis Stevenson'¹, a term often used to describe Alison Cunningham's dedication is 'selfless' – a notion that can be seen as an excuse to treat the identity in question as a lack of identity; to ignore its reality beyond its direct influence on the subject of the biography. 'For generations', Furnas argued in one of the early biographies of Stevenson, 'this institution of the surrogate mother has done strange things to upper-class British children, perhaps to their parents in repercussion, often to "Nanny" herself'²: one of the only hints in the body of writing made up by of all of the biographies of Stevenson that Alison Cunningham perhaps deserves to be treated as a person rather than as a convenient biographical device to explain certain traits of character later exhibited by her charge.

Many later biographies of Stevenson have been equally selective, choosing to focus on the dark convictions and bigotry of the nanny, blaming her more than Stevenson's darkly religious father for the young boy's early apprehension of sin. It has been repeatedly claimed that Cummy's possessiveness of the child could border on a desire to control him and that, '[p]sychologically, [she] induced a state of mental tumult which only she could calm'.³ It should be noted, however, that most biographers acknowledge that Stevenson himself protested that it was she who gave him 'a passion for high drama'.⁴ Indeed, she is consistently portrayed as the main early influence of Stevenson's behaviour and his art. This treatment betrays the fact that there is a relatively limited amount of information available about his life, and this information has hardly been added to since his death, so it is simply exposed, recycled, reorganised and re-evaluated as biographies seek to become more interpretative and sophisticated.

¹ Lesley Graham, 'Selfless: The shifting reputation of Alison Cunningham in biographies of Robert Louis Stevenson' in *Journal of Stevenson Studies*, Volume 8, 2011, 17-30,

² J. C. Furnas, *Voyage to Windward: The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*, London : Faber, 1952, 28.

³ James Pope-Hennessy, *Robert Louis Stevenson*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1974, p. 30.

⁴ Charles J. Guthrie, '*Cummy*' the Nurse of Robert Louis Stevenson. *A Tribute to the Memory of Alison Cunningham*, Edinburgh : Otto Schulze & Company, 1913, 37.

‘In the story of Robert Louis Stevenson's childhood, Cummy can never be underestimated, and she must never be debunked,’ writes Pope-Hennessy.¹ Almost all biographers jostle to point out that she was, at best, a mixed blessing, counterbalancing her altruism with excessive religiosity. Demystification, in particular demystification of her attention to the spiritual life of her charge, soon became a biographical trope. Devotion to a child is one thing, but religious devotion is another. Nevertheless, just as the biographers disapprove of her excesses in this area, they welcome her as a necessary source of enlightenment in the life story. The limits of Alison Cunningham's character and her influence on Stevenson are thus fraught with contradictions. She was devoted to him, but she made him ill with her ‘religious diatribes’— almost every biographical account of her influence on her charge revolves around a phrase of this kind. Rankin, for example, makes the angel/demon, good nanny/bad nanny shift this way: ‘Victorians and Edwardians loved this image of the devoted nanny cooling the brow of childish genius, but there was also a less benign side to the nanny known as “Cummy”’.² For Bell, ‘Cummy was an extraordinary character, worthy of his legend, whose influence did Louis immense good and much harm’.³ Cairney says that there is no denying that Cummy was devoted and caring, but her influence on the sensitive child could also have been dangerous, while for Harman, ‘her devotion to Lewis, intensified by his vulnerability ... went hand in hand with an equally powerful intention to mould the boy in her own way’.⁴ In their sentences we see the clear imprint of Stevenson's own words in “Memories of Himself”: in which he describes [his] ‘high strung religious terrors and ecstasies. It is to my nurse that I owe these last. The result of her ‘over-haste to make me a religious pattern.’⁵

It should be noted that most biographical interpretation comes from what Stevenson himself says about his childhood: it was he who identified his original inspiration as being read to by his nurse, and the night terrors as her doing as well. In this way, he did much of the work of the biographers for them. So far, no biographer seems to have thought it worthwhile to raise the possibility that Stevenson's account of the source of his night terrors may have been only partially correct, or even whether any subject has the epistemic authority to identify the origin of his disorder: no one, in other words, has thought it worthwhile to seek a source other than the marginal Alison Cunningham for Stevenson's night terrors. Nor is there any real

¹ Pope-Hennessy, *ibid.*

² Nicholas Rankin, *Dead Man's Chest: Travels After Robert Louis Stevenson*. London: Faber and Faber, 1988, 19.

³ Ian Bell, *Op. Cit.*, 46

⁴ Claire Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography*, London: HarperCollins, 2006, 19.

⁵ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits, Memoirs of Himself and Selections from His Notebook*, London: William Heinemann, 1924, 154; 157.

investigation of the idea that, beyond the influence of his reading on the content and style of his writing, it also affected the moral basis of his thinking. In fact, this study of Alison Cunningham's representation in Stevenson's biographies has provided a better understanding of how biographers used the iconic nurse as a vehicle for their own agendas and attitudes towards existing biography than the early processes involved in developing her writing and worldview.

I have relied here on the idea of the palimpsest of biographical writing on Stevenson, with each new layer of biography relying on and adding to previous accounts, without ever really completely overwriting them. It is gratifying to note that my own work is now a small part of that palimpsest, and that my article on Alison Cunningham finds resonance in the account of one of the more recent biographers, Jefferson A. Singer.¹

Before concentrating on the portrayal of Alison Cunningham in biographies, I had previously published on her account of a trip to Europe.² In 1863, at the age of forty, Alison Cunningham accompanied the Stevenson family on a long tour of the European continent. Her 'diary' (letters written to her family in Edinburgh) was not published until 1926, thirteen years after her death, under the title *Cummy's Diary*, Cummy being the name the child had given to his nanny. Academic work on travel literature has tended to focus on books that demonstrate a certain authority, analysing how that authority was created and used. Alison Cunningham had no authority other than that inherent in her physical presence as a woman in service in continental Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. This was clearly not a unique experience but the fact that she had been there with Robert Louis Stevenson, the object of an international literary cult in the early twentieth-century, was the main reason for the publication of her diary. Its publication was thus an opportunistic exploitation of the Stevenson relationship, deemed worthy of dissemination more for its novelty value as an addition to the burgeoning body of Stevensoniana than for either its intrinsic literary merit or its ethnographic or topographical documentation.

Assessing nineteenth-century travel books written by women can be problematic in that the modern reader is often tempted to see these authors as proto-feminists who, encouraged by contact with otherness and experiencing a certain freedom in travel, shake off the burden of Victorian society's expectations. This was not the case for Alison Cunningham nor indeed the

¹ Jefferson A. Singer, *The Proper Pirate: Robert Louis Stevenson's Quest for Identity*, Oxford University Press, 2017, 10.

² In 'Cummy on the Continent: Alison Cunningham's Trip to Europe with the Stevenson Family in 1863', details above.

majority of her contemporaries. Indeed, some of the most original aspects of Cunningham's text are the accommodations and interrogations that arise around the expectations of Scottish Victorian society. The conventional and recurring themes of her letters revolve around domestic arrangements, childcare, sightseeing and religion. For the contemporary reader, the value of the text lies in its first-hand description of a Scottish domestic servant displaced from her home, facing the strangeness of life abroad and a growing awareness of her own otherness. Her diary is not an account of the discovery of the possibility of a new identity, but rather the consolidation in unfamiliar surroundings of familiar national, cultural, social, spiritual and domestic references. I concluded that far from being an enriching experience, the five months this devout Protestant spent in predominantly Catholic Europe were experienced as a test of her religious faith and of her cultural identity. Towards the end of her diary, she writes 'I trust it has been good for me that I have for a season been deprived of the privileges which I enjoy in my own land. No blessing is prized as it ought to be, till we are deprived of it.'¹

Despite Alison Cunningham's failure to be the feminist we hoped she might be, or even to be a particularly perceptive traveller and despite all of the apologies she makes for the quality of her writing, *Cummy's Diary* deserves attention well beyond the fact that it provides biographical knowledge about Stevenson's childhood. Her voice is an authentic and relatively rare one that clearly expresses the tenacious stance she clung to for the survival of her personal identity in what she perceived to be a hostile and testing environment in mainland Europe.

3.1.2 Margaret Isabella Balfour Stevenson in space unattached

*[It is] something like stepping out of 'space unattached' straight into the narrow ruts made by the wheels of life.*²

In an article on Margaret Isabella Balfour Stevenson, Stevenson's mother, I attempted again to show that while the minor mode of letters from women accompanying a famous writer can certainly shed light on that writer's enterprise, beyond that, these writers deserve our attention as unique, individual subjectivities. Margaret Stevenson's accounts of Sāmoa have been cherry-picked by critics to provide context for her son's writing on the assumption that she simply parroted the latter's opinions viz this remark by Joseph Farrel, overly keen to take

¹ Alison Cunningham, *Cummy's Diary; a diary kept by R. L. Stevenson's nurse, Alison Cunningham, while travelling with him on the continent during 1863*, preface and notes by Robert T. Skinner, London: Chatto and Windus, 1926, 190.

² Margaret I. B. Stevenson, *Letters from Samoa, 1891–1895*, edited and arranged by Marie Clothilde Balfour. London: Methuen. 1906, 19.

her at her own modest word: ‘Aunt Maggie is all the more useful as a witness of thinking at Vailima: since she confesses to having little understanding of Samoan politics, her comments can be taken as reflecting the thinking around her.’¹ This dismissal does to Margret Stevenson’s writing what Farrel claims has been done to Stevenson’s own poetry – causes ‘it to be relegated in status to an instrument of value principally, or exclusively, as an aid to biography’.²

It is worth noting again that although Margaret Stevenson's writing, which was intended for the private sphere, is of a minor genre, and although these two volumes do not necessarily display literary talent of the highest order, for many reasons they are worthy of attention in their own right. As Waldroup points out, there is ‘a relatively small archive of travel and encounter narratives by Euro-American women in the Pacific Islands from this period.’³ Their representations of the islands are both conventional and unusual, and the analysis of their texts makes a significant contribution to the literature on women's travel, especially since the Pacific Islands are underrepresented in this field. As a specific account of cultural contact between an older Scottish woman and the Pacific Islanders and her family entourage, Margaret Stevenson’s letters also offer a privileged window into the gendered, generational and cultural dynamics of the nineteenth century and are a contribution to the narrative that builds and reinforces national identities and their interactions. Furthermore, they are an interesting part of what Christianson has described as the ‘late nineteenth-century publishing phenomenon of editing and presenting previously private material in print.’⁴

Biographical descriptions of Margaret Stevenson in Sāmoa are often inspired by the well-known series of photographs taken in 1892 by John Davis (a photographer from New Zealand residing in Apia) of the Stevenson household on the verandah of their house at Vailima. Margaret Stevenson stands out by looking straight and strangely exotic in her holoku and freshly starched white widow's bonnet, notable for the fact that her gaze is directed in the opposite direction to that of the others. Stevenson himself is situated at the centre of the photograph, but it is the startlingly white cap, symbol of the bourgeois Victorian widow, that is the punctum of the photograph. It is a sign of her singularity in this mixed gathering of brown bodies and slouching, bohemian family members.

¹ Joseph Farrel, *Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa*, Quercus. Kindle Edition, location 1945.

² *Ibid.* location 3129.

³ Heather Waldroup, ‘Picturing Pleasure: Fanny Stevenson and Beatrice Grimshaw in the Pacific Islands’, *Women’s History Review* 18 (1): 1–22, 2.

⁴ Aileen Christianson, ‘Private Writing’, in Glenda Norquay (ed), *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Women’s Writing*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012, 75–83, 79.



Figure 1, Vailima veranda photograph by John Davis of Apia (National Galleries Scotland)¹

Travel and ‘displacement’ throw the question of home into perspective by providing an opportunity to question perceptions of rootedness and place. In examining Margaret Stevenson’s letters, I was confronted with many of the familiar tropes found in the writing of earlier nineteenth-century Scottish travellers in France. On her way to New Zealand, Margaret writes: ‘I feel doubly nostalgic— for Scotland and for Sāmoa.’² In adopting a second home with such apparent ease, Margaret Stevenson is part of the long tradition of the Scottish diaspora. For many emigrants, being grounded in the historical past engenders the formation of a strong identity which, in turn, helps to create a more definitive sense of place, or belonging, in the geographical and chronological present. Their common anchor is the narrative of the past that binds different identities: gendered, national, generational. Perhaps, as Di Frances has suggested, ‘because of the sheer scale of this social phenomenon, the collective experience of exile and emigration— whether forced or voluntary, permanent or temporary— has become

¹ <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/120898/literary-group-samoa-including-portrait-robert-louis-stevenson-and-mrs-robert-louis-stevenson> accessed on 3/06/2022. Creative Commons CC by NC.

² Margaret Stevenson, *From Saranac to the Marquesas and Beyond: Being Letters Written by Mrs. M. I. Stevenson During 1887–88, to Her Sister, Jane Whyte Balfour, with a Short Introduction by George W. Balfour M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.* Edited and arranged by Marie Clothilde Balfour, London: Methuen, 1903, 206.

embedded over time in the Scottish cultural psyche as a point of self-perceived identity which in turn manifests itself in the history of national dialogue'.¹

The margins constituted by the paratext are as significant here as in the texts examined in Part 2. Margaret Stevenson's niece, Marie Clothilde Balfour, who selected and edited the two volumes of letters, and completed the first volume with no fewer than fifty pages of endnotes. She is much more concerned with questions of female modesty and morality than her aunt. She adds one extremely long note on the immorality of Polynesian women in general,² demonstrating a prurience that is entirely absent from the main text. These paratextual additions quite clearly subvert the original text, diverting it from its original intent and denying Margaret Stevenson any posthumous agency with regard to the written account of her lived experience. The editing carried out by Marie Clothilde Balfour, which often debases and contradicts the original, re-defining terms already made explicit by her aunt, and supplementing all references to fauna, flora, customs, politics and mores, tends to demonstrate once again that in the textual world woven around Robert Louis Stevenson there is no such thing as what Margaret Stevenson called in the middle of the Pacific, the freedom of 'space unattached'.³

3.1.3 Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson

*The natives think her uncanny and that devils serve her.*⁴

Frances Matilda Vandegrift (later Van de Grift) Stevenson features as a controversial figure in many biographies of her husband, with some authors depicting her as a devoted nurse and companion, others as a woman with grave mental health problems who stymied her husband's creativity. Stevenson was aware of the polarising effect she had on his friends and he was witness to the development of her increasingly awkward personality in Sāmoa, as evidenced in this half-affectionate half-wary excerpt from a letter to J. M. Barrie in April 1893:

She runs the show. Infinitely little, extraordinary wig of gray curls, handsome waxen face like Napoleon's, insane black eyes, boy's hands, tiny bare feet, a cigarette [...] Hellish energy; relieved by fortnights of entire hibernation. Can make anything from a house to a row, all fine and large of their kind. My uncle, after seeing her for the first time: 'Yes Louis, you have done well. I married a besom myself and have never regretted it.' [...] . Doctors everybody, will

¹ Christy Danelle Di Frances, "'Weary for the Heather and the Deer': R. L. Stevenson Depicts the Scottish Diasporic Experience", *International Review of Scottish Studies*, 40, 2015, 64.

² M. I. B. Stevenson, *From Saranac to the Marquesas and Beyond*, 268.

³ See epigraph.

⁴ Letter from Stevenson to J. M. Barrie in April 1893, *Letters* 8, 45.

doctor you, cannot be doctored herself. The Living Partizan: A violent friend, a brimstone enemy Is always either loathed or slavishly adored; indifference impossible.¹

Besom, the Scots term for a woman of character, is often used jocularly and the suggestion made by Stevenson here is that Fanny could be a difficult and domineering character. Her ‘hellish energy’ and pioneering spirit, however, made her an excellent travelling companion, and a valuable asset on the estate at Vailima.

Although she reportedly claimed that her life had been too much like ‘a dazed rush on a railroad express’ for her to write an autobiography, Fanny Stevenson did leave the diary that she kept in Vailima between September 1890 and July 1893, published as *Our Samoan Adventure* in 1956, a record of her life in Sāmoa, her struggles with agricultural exploits and her interactions with the people who worked on the estate, and in part as *The Cruise of the Janet Nichol*, published posthumously in 1914 and republished with an introduction and notes by Roslyn Jolly in 2003.²

She figures prominently, of course, in all biographies of Stevenson and has been the subject of several studies of her own life which continued to be colourful until long after the death of her husband.³ More recently, her writing – in particular her short stories – which had been relatively neglected, has attracted growing interest. Pritzer's work⁴ for example, refocuses interest on Fanny Stevenson as a writer and artist. As she notes, Fanny Stevenson explicitly distances herself from any authorial collaboration with her husband in her introductions to his volumes and in her letters, although he openly acknowledges these collaborations in his own letters and documents. Like Margaret Stevenson, Fanny claimed that her writing was intended as nothing more than a record for Stevenson when he came to write his own travelogue as per the contract that had been drawn up with McClure's for a syndicated series of letters. In the preface to *The Cruise of the Janet Nichol* (1914), for example, she writes that the whole diary was ‘only intended to be a collection of clues to aid [her] husband's memory.’⁵ It is clear,

¹ Ibid.

² MS Stevenson House, Monterey, Fanny V. G. Stevenson, Robert L. Stevenson, and Charles Neider. *Our Samoan Adventure* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1956); Fanny V. G. Stevenson. *The Cruise of the 'Janet Nichol' Among the South Sea Islands: A Diary*, (London, Chatto & Windus, 1915; Fanny V. G. Stevenson and Roslyn Jolly, *The Cruise of the Janet Nichol Among the South Sea Islands: A Diary by Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson*, Sydney University of New South Wales Press, 2003.

³ Nellie V. G. Sanchez, *The Life of Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson*, New York, Scribners, 1920; Margaret M. Mackay, *The Violent Friend: The Story of Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson*, London, Readers' Union, 1970; Alexandra Lapierre, *Fanny Stevenson: Entre Passion Et Liberté*, Paris, Laffont, 1993.

⁴ Robyn Joanne Pritzker, ‘Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson’s Short Fiction: Gender and Genre in the Late Nineteenth Century Literary Imagination, PhD English Literature University of Edinburgh, 2019, and ‘Something Wicked Westward Goes: Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson’s Californian Uncanny’, *Humanities*, 2020, 9, 47.

⁵ Jolly, *ibid.* 2003, 17.

however, that Fanny was exasperated by her husband's anthropological approach and trying through her own text to shape and re-orient his writing. She wrote to Sidney Colvin expressing her frustration:

Louis has the most enchanting material that any one ever had in the whole world for his book, and I am afraid he is going to spoil it all. He has taken it into his Scotch Stevenson head, that a stern duty lies before him, and that his book must be a sort of scientific and historical impersonal thing [...] leaving out all he knows of the people themselves. And I believe there is no one living who has got so near to them, or who understands them as he does. [...] What a thing it is to have a 'man of genius' to deal with. It is like managing an overbred horse. Why with my own feeble hand I could write a book that the whole world would jump at.¹

Her writing is not feeble and her forceful and resourceful personality is evident in her diary. Fanny Stevenson's narrative of life in Sāmoa and descriptions of cruising in the Pacific supplements and provides background for her husband's work just as she said it was intended to do, and it has been repeatedly quarried for that purpose. However, the work is more than just an *aide-mémoire*, it presents a unique account of a nineteenth-century woman adapting to itinerant then settled life in the central and western Pacific in 'scenes and situations few Europeans, and even fewer European women, had experienced.'² Her account of life in the Pacific islands provides an important idea of conditions in this world that was about to be changed forever through continuing colonisation in its various forms, and I look forward to studying it in greater depth for future research.

It is difficult not to conclude that despite their outstanding value as freestanding texts by nineteenth-century women travellers, the most enduring work accomplished by the travel texts written by Alison Cunningham, Margaret Stevenson and Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson continues, for the moment, to lie in their subsequent uses as resources for Stevenson scholars and biographers; as contributions to the multi-layered network of texts that complement Stevenson's own texts. The correspondence and journal entries of these women continue to resonate with a vast ecosystem of texts that nurture and are nurtured by R. L. Stevenson's work, complementing it while at the same time exposing the lived experience, frustrations and interactions of women travellers in France and in the Pacific Islands during the nineteenth century.

¹ Letter to Colvin, May 1889.

² Jolly, *ibid.* 43

3.2 Pursuit(e): Followers and second journeys

Laisser trace de son passage, c'est appartenir au site, c'est devenir Romain soi-même, Athénien ou Cairote, et donc c'est non seulement revenir chez soi dans la lumière de ces lieux-idéogrammes, mais c'est aussi faire de son existence même un « trait » que l'on espère indélébile du signe visité. Pour les voyageurs postérieurs, il est certain qu'aller à Athènes c'est aussi, dans une bien mince mesure sans doute par rapport à d'autres acceptions, mais définitivement, aller voir la ville visitée par Chateaubriand, cette visite étant liée à certains de ces autres traits, les éclairant d'une certaine manière.¹

Having examined the textual traces left by some of those who accompanied Stevenson, I now want to turn my attention to the texts left by those who followed him. I began to take an interest in this sub-genre of travel writing, variously called 'in the footsteps' or 'second journeys' or even 'travel re-telling', with a study of writers who followed Stevenson in the Cévennes.² Some time later, I revisited the approach by focusing on the idea of the double in an article on the traveller-followers after Stevenson in America.³

The analysis of the narratives of the footsteps-travellers goes hand-in-hand with those focused on the female companions in that both categories of writer contribute to the creation of the multi-layered edifice that scaffolds the continuing influence of Stevenson's literary work. Both have a vested interest in perpetuating interest in Stevenson, in controlling his 'authorial body' through memorialisation⁴. There are many similarities to be noted between the two categories – neither the companion nor follower narratives can ever be the central text in this context but may be considered as paratexts: appendices or epilogues. The original journey functions as both pretext for the other concurrent or subsequent journey and pre-text of the account of that journey. We might also say that in many ways the work of the footsteps-travellers shapes that of their precursor in that their texts modify the ways in which subsequent readers read and perceive the original texts. This is best expressed by Borges: 'The fact is that each writer creates his precursors. His work modifies our conception of the past, as it will modify the future.'⁵

The flow of Stevenson's pursuers started early and never stopped. Their accounts have titles such as *In the Track of Stevenson*, *On the Trail of Stevenson*, *Footsteps*, *In Search of*

¹ Michel Butor, 'Le voyage et réécriture', *Romantisme*, 1972, 4, 4-19, 17.

² Lesley Graham, 'I Have a Little Shadow: Travellers after Robert Louis Stevenson in the Cévennes' in R. Ambrosini and R. Dury (eds), *European Stevenson*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2009.

³ Lesley Graham, 'Of Doubles and Duplicity: Travellers after Robert Louis Stevenson in America', in M. Landi, (ed), *L'Ecosse et ses doubles: Ancien monde – nouveau monde, Old World – New World, Scotland and its Doubles*, Paris: Editions de l'Harmattan, 2011, 203-213.

⁴ See Glenda Norquay, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Literary Networks and Transatlantic Publishing in the 1890s: The Author Incorporated*, Anthem Press, 2020, 111, for a discussion of the ways in which Stevenson's family consolidated his image and 'incorporated' his work post-mortem.

⁵ Jorge Luis Borges, 'Kafka and his Precursors' in *Other Inquisitions*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1962, 108.

Stevenson, With Stevenson, The Quest for Robert Louis Stevenson, In the Footsteps of Stevenson, and their textual journeys are all littered with questions about the nature of biography as well as of autobiography, about mortality, about duality, about the *locus geni* and again, about the traces writers and travellers leave behind.

3.2.1 Some characteristics of the ‘In the Footsteps’ genre

*[...] comme s’il me fallait absolument mettre mes pas dans les siens, mes rêves dans ses rêves, jusqu’à ce point d’hallucination où il me semblait, dérivant peu à peu, entrer dans son histoire – à moins que ce ne fût lui, à l’inverse, qui venait hanter insidieusement la mienne.*¹

Literary tourism and the texts to which it gives rise, specifically the accounts of a journey in the footsteps of a favoured writer, is a rich and curious phenomenon. What motivates writer-followers to invest so much time and energy in such an undertaking that can never be entirely original? What do they expect to find along the way? How do they hope to contribute to the knowledge and reputation of the writer they are following? What motivates ‘this endemic, obsessive re-enactment of previous quests,’² and what characterizes their re-travels? These are some of the questions that have guided my work on the writers who have recounted their journeys in the footsteps of Stevenson in the Cévennes and in America, and – in work in progress presented in sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 – in Scotland and the Pacific Islands.

Recent work on travel literature in general has tended to focus on what are seen as highly postmodern features such as polyphony, interrupted chronologies, reflexivity, and experimental ways of telling the story of travel, as well as different ways of occupying postcolonial spaces.³ These are approaches that can equally well be applied to the sub-genre of interest here – those journeys modelled on another (itself sometimes modelled on those of predecessors – which despite its prevalence and popularity has not yet been the subject of any widespread interest in academia. This underexposure is explored by Keirstead who claims that the footsteps subgenre ‘rather than typifying the form’s past or its postmodern exhaustion, can actually propel author and reader alike to a deeper awareness and critical understanding of the politics of travel, especially in postcolonial contexts’.⁴

¹ Michel Le Bris, *La Porte d’or*, Paris, Grasset, 1986, 188.

² Steve Clark, ‘‘Bang at Its Moral Centre’’: Ideologies of Genre in Butor, Fussell, and Raban’, *Studies in Travel Writing*, 4.1, (2000), 106–25, 106, cited by Christopher M. Keirstead, ‘Mapping Genre in Contemporary Footsteps Travel Writing’, *Genre*, Vol. 46, No. 3, (Fall 2013), 285-314, 285.

³ Maria Lindgren Leavenworth, *The Second Journey: Travelling in Literary Footsteps*, Umea: Institutionen för språkstudier, 2010, 7.

⁴ Keirstead, *ibid.* 286.

Here, I would like to briefly describe some of the salient characteristics of the in-the-footsteps travelogue, with some examples from the writing of those who have followed Stevenson and from Walter Scott.

3.2.1.1 *Intertextuality*. The objective of the footsteps-traveller is to recreate the journey described in the original text and the account of that original journey is often quoted repeatedly, thus illustrating various forms of intertextuality, sometimes explicitly and repeatedly. The value of the journey is validated upstream by its inclusion in a doubly literary project, reading and (re)writing. Stevenson wrote: ‘I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in’¹. This is also the case for those who have followed in his footsteps, with a Stevenson book in one hand and their notebook in the other, and both books permeate the retelling. Furthermore, the re-travel is created partly by the traveller and partly by the reader who may already be familiar with the original narrative, highlighting the interactions of these different stakeholders in the re-travel experience. The reprising of entire paragraphs from the original text illustrates the follower’s desire to uphold a sense of simultaneity between the existence of the first text and their own experience and its description while at the same time frequently correcting the first impression and thus taking possession of the first text through quotation or paraphrasing. Travelling in the footsteps of another forces the re-writer to tell the same story but in a slightly or even radically different way, by repeating it, updating it and reworking it.

Footsteps accounts are often embedded in an even wider network of texts. The multiple points of contact created in the travel re-tellings are rich palimpsests, combining not only the original text and that created by the current traveller-writer, but also the other texts that have been created between these two iterations, perhaps even earlier texts that inspired the original author, as well as the iconography associated with them. Thus, those who follow Stevenson in Scotland, France, America or Polynesia are usually familiar with the texts of other followers who have preceded them², not to mention the photographs of Stevenson and his entourage, fiction related to the place in question written by Stevenson himself and by others. Each

¹ ‘A College Magazine’ (1887).

² In the Cévennes, Christopher Rush reveals that he carried two ‘bibles’: one was *Travels with a Donkey*, ‘the other was *Footsteps* by Richard Holmes, the first chapter of which describes his 1964 journey, thirty years before mine, made without a donkey but accompanied by the most intelligent observations I had ever read’ (Christopher Rush, *To Travel Hopefully. Footsteps in the French Cévennes*, Berkeley: RDR Books, 2005, (Originally published as *To Travel Hopefully. Journal of a Death Not Foretold*. London: Profile Books, 2005) 129). Similarly, Eric Poindron uses a passage from Richard Holmes as an epigraph and refers to Kenneth White too (Eric Poindron, *Belles étoiles, avec Stevenson dans les Cévennes*, Paris : Flammarion, 2001, 65). Poindron himself later appears in Cozzi’s account as the author of the preface (Sergio Cozzi, *Murmures en Pays Camisard. A Pied dans les Cévennes sur la route Stevenson*, Brest : Géorama, 2004).

retelling alters the reader's understanding of the original story and cumulatively reinterprets the sought-after personality of the original author – the pursuers re-create their precursors. The follower reads and walks in steps, in steps, in steps ..., in a zone of unstable and fluid intertextuality, playing with the existence of multiple texts in a braided narrative. This intertextuality destabilizes and transposes the place being written from and about, creating a plural, fragmentary object. Derek Gregory observes that the 'citationary structure' brought about by this necessary intertextuality threatens 'the very integrity and 'authenticity' of the experience itself'.¹ We are decidedly not dealing with 'all the old romance, retold | Exactly in the ancient way'² but rather with the journey re-enacted and narrated in a new but inter-related way.

3.2.1.2 Intersubjectivity. Travel literature is generally autobiography of a sort (or at best, to paraphrase Stevenson³) and footsteps-travel literature is autobiography doubled with biography. This raises interesting questions about subjectivity in that travel is a constantly changing performance of the traveller's multiple identities in interaction with the performances of the Other (the Other being other from a personal, national, gendered point of view), and the ways in which this affects the portrayal of the traveller pursued. All travel writing that recounts following in someone's footsteps is to some extent a biographical enterprise as well as an autobiographical project. This process forms the very basis of Richard Holmes's idea of what biography is: 'a continuous living dialogue between the two [biographer and subject] as they move over the same historical ground, the same trail of events.'⁴ These are moments when autobiography and biography overlap, blurring generic boundaries and investing interstices with an intersubjectivity that would be difficult to establish in another genre.⁵

The play of interactions is further enriched by the existence of Stevenson's fictional characters and their inclusion in the texts of those who pursue him and them. When footsteps travellers include references to fictional characters in their travelogues, new readers discover them and participate in the world that he created and that his followers have perpetuated or transformed. In this way, the fictions persist and become integrated into the lives of several generations. Much of the critical perspective that the sub-genre has to offer comes from

¹ James Duncan and Derek Gregory, *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing*, London, Routledge, 1999, 7.

² R. L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island* (1883), epigraph.

³ 'A voyage is a piece of autobiography at best.', Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Cévennes Journal, Notes on a Journey Through the French Highlands*, Ed. Gordon Golding. (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1978) 68

⁴ Richard Holmes, *Footsteps: Adventures of a Romantic Biographer*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985, 66.

⁵ Cf. Keirstead, *ibid.* 291.

confronting these areas of intersection between imagination and reality, so that the reader of a footsteps-traveller's work must juggle between the fantasy version of the place created by the mix of the imagination of another author and Stevenson's, the non-fictional historical account sometimes from the work of Stevenson (viz *In the South Seas* often cited by his followers in the Pacific Islands), occasionally from independent accounts, the non-fictional contemporary account provided by the footsteps-follower, and the place that they see before them through those very filters.

3.2.1.3 *The Past Obscuring the Present.* To the interactions between subjectivities real and fictional must be added the multitudinous tensions that exist between the past and the present of the spaces the traveller visits and occupies, and the tension between the reality observed and the fictions contained in the place the follower had imagined from the description of the original traveller who is being followed. The traveller-follower is first of all a reader and an intermediary who places his work between the new reader and the original book. The first book filters his/er interpretation of the place and the second book(s) filters it again for later readers. Heather Henderson remarks that '[t]he pleasure of imagining scenes from the past on the spot where they took place is often greater than the pleasure of witnessing scenes of today.'¹ In fact, for the follower, the past effaces the present while, at the same time, the present deforms the past.

3.2.1.4 *Claims of originality and authenticity.* Being aware of the sedimented accounts that have been laid down before their arrival on the site that they are to describe means that the footstep-travellers are keener than most to carve out an original approach to the subject, either through the rigour of their research, the contact they have arranged with Stevenson experts and personalities, or the descendants of his acquaintances. Authenticity is predominantly seen to be situated in the past and repeating the past by reproducing as accurately as possible Stevenson's itineraries, for example, ('the contemporary emulation of a past movement'²) is believed to enhance the present and make it more authentic. The drive to reprise earlier texts arises in part from the belief that mass tourism is a threat that will gradually eliminate all possibility of retrieving authentic experiences and sensations. The impossibility of recreating the original experience often leads to difficulties that have to be overcome and therefore

¹ Heather Henderson, 'The Travel Writer and the Text, "My Giant Goes With Me Everywhere I Go"', in *Temperamental Journeys: Essays on the Modern Literature of Travel*, Michael Kolawelski (ed.), Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992, 232.

² Leavenworth, *ibid.* 52.

validate the worth of the enterprise, or to frustration which lead to the follower-travellers lamenting their belatedness.

3.2.1.5 A Sense of belatedness. Traveller-followers often express dismay at the fact that they feel they have arrived too late on the site described by their precursor; too late to replicate the original experience described, to see the site as it was, or to interact with the people as they were. Despite the precipitation with which it was written, there is a sense of belatedness in one of the works examined in the first part of this document, Walter Scott's *Paul's Letter's to his Kinsfolk*. Part of Scott's travelogue can be considered an 'in the footsteps' work since he sets out to cover the ground opened up by British troops in the aftermath of Waterloo. There is the belatedness inherent in arriving after the military victory so that any cultural victory fought for through the text necessarily is pushing on open doors. Scott is even late in the enterprise of collecting souvenirs from Waterloo. Among the physical souvenirs he collected for his *cabinet de curiosités* was the manuscript collection of French songs picked up from the field of Waterloo – but he was too late to pick it up directly from the field himself, it presented to him by Mrs Pryse Lockhart Gordon of Brussels whose husband had presumably got there first. Above all there is a sense of belatedness associated with the enterprise of providing fresh descriptions of Paris. As I mentioned, Scott had arrived well after John Scott and had even read his *Visit to Paris* on the way to Brussels. He resorts to using the book as an alibi for not spending as much time describing the French manner and habits of society as much as he might have and also recommends the work of an ingenious friend (James Simpson, *A Visit to Flanders and the Field of Waterloo*). Scott is manifestly aware of the inadequacy of his presence – he is far from the first to describe Paris at this time and his writing on the city is simply another layer of text on the palimpsest that is Paris. As Porter notes: 'the challenge thrown down to the traveller is to prove his self-worth by means of an experience adequate to the reputation of a hallowed sight. If he is a writer he will be in the even more exposed position of having to add something new and recognizably his own to the accumulated testimony of his predecessors.'¹

Belated as he was, Scott, in turn, created a sense of afterwordness for those who followed him: especially the histotourists and thanotourists at the field of Waterloo. He created what one recent commentator, François, has called 'a deep cultural groove [...] which later nineteenth-century British middle-class visitors merely followed when visiting the battlefield

¹ Porter, op. cit. 12.

of Waterloo'.¹ For later visitors visiting the battlefield was as much about reliving the visits, thoughts and feelings of the literary personalities who had preceded them as seeing with their own eyes the place where Britain's perceived superiority had been confirmed and the site of the dramatic downfall of Napoleon.

The most appealing and noteworthy examples of the footsteps genre mix introspection and perception, the reader is encouraged to believe that the author is not just following their precursor, but taking their place, walking in their shoes rather than in their steps. There can be real moments of empathy for the second traveller, dazzling moments of *extraspection*. But there are also often passages that could be described as pop psychology, in which the contemporary traveller attempts to penetrate the personality of the first traveller believing that s/he has understood his precursor in a way that would not have been possible without having experienced that journey, that pursuit. Sometimes this is a way for the follower to establish some authority over the subject and to acquire intellectual capital. I have also observed a tendency for some authors to project their own obsessions and preoccupations onto the author they follow: their textual father, the object of their identification. This is the theme of the following section.

3.3 Pursuing Stevenson

3.3.1 Recovering Stevenson's 'spirit'

*A spirit intense and rare*²

I have already noted in Section 2 the significance that Stevenson attaches to the idea of the flow and movement of inheritance. One of the ways in which traveller-followers create Stevenson, their precursor, is by imparting new significance to passages in his writing that seem to foreshadow or even provoke the actions of his pursuers by invoking that flow, giving the impression that Stevenson is encouraging his followers, egging them on, from a prescient past. In an essay on the 'Forest of Fontainebleau', for example, he hints at the possibility of his haunting the site even during his lifetime:

Many of us have passed Arcadian days there and moved on, but yet left a portion of our souls behind us buried in the woods. I would not dig for these reliquiæ; they are incommunicable

¹ Pieter François, "The Best Way to See Waterloo is with Your Eyes Shut" British "Histourism", Authenticity and Commercialisation in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (2013): 26-41, 29.

² W.E. Henley, 'Apparition', *A Book of Verses*, London: D. Nutt, 1888.

treasures that will not enrich the finder; and yet there they lie, interred below great oaks or scattered along forest paths, stores of youth's dynamite and dear remembrances. And as one generation passes on and renovates the field of tillage for the next, I entertain a fancy that when the young men of to-day go forth into the forest they shall find the air still vitalised by the spirits of their predecessors, and, like those 'unheard melodies' that are the sweetest of all, the memory of our laughter shall still haunt the field of trees.¹

Continuing in this vein, the footsteps-travellers Findlay, Hamilton and Rankin quote from the letter Stevenson wrote to S. R. Crockett from Vailima on May 17th 1893. In the letter which anticipates the quests of his followers to find him post-mortem in the more out-of-the-way parts of Scotland he had frequented, Stevenson asks Crockett:

Do you know where the road crosses the burn under Glencorse Church? Go there and say a prayer for me: *moriturus salutatur*. See that it's a sunny day; I would like it to be a Sunday, but that's not possible in the premises; and stand on the right-hand bank just where the road goes down into the water, and shut your eyes, and if I don't appear to you! Well, it can't be helped, and will be extremely funny.²

With this flippant conclusion (omitted by Rankin undoubtedly to secure optimal sentimental impact), Stevenson anticipates and subverts the impossible quest undertaken by generations of footsteps-travellers to recapture his spirit at the Scottish sites with which he is associated. Stevenson also encouraged Alison Cunningham to invoke his spirit in the Pentlands. He wrote to her from Bournemouth in April 1887:

Some day climb as high as Halkerside for me (I am never likely to do it for myself) and sprinkle some of the well water on the turf. I am afraid it is a Pagan rite, but quite harmless, and ye can sain it wi' a bit prayer. Tell the Peewies that I mind their forbears well. My heart is sometimes heavy and sometimes glad to mind it all. But for what we have received, the Lord make us truly thankful. Don't forget to sprinkle the water and do it in my name; I feel a childish eagerness in this.³

Given this foreshadowing, it is hardly surprising that many of the followers express a feeling of privileged contact with Stevenson in the places with which he is associated. This is doubled with a distinct feeling of the uncanny, a theme that I addressed in an article on travellers after Stevenson in the Cévennes.⁴ During a stay at The Robert Louis Stevenson Foundation in Grez, Linda Cracknell describes what she calls an 'allegiance' with Stevenson: 'it was almost as if I understood him through the implication of what the place had meant to

¹ R. L. Stevenson, 'Fontainebleau: Village Communities of Painters II', *The Magazine of Art*, 7, 340-345, May 1884, 343.

² *Letters* 8, 75. Quoted by Findlay, *ibid.* 57; Hamilton, *ibid.* 28 and Rankin *ibid.* 39.

³ *Letters* 5, 392-3.

⁴ Lesley Graham, 'I Have a Little Shadow: Travellers after Robert Louis Stevenson in the Cévennes' in R. Ambrosini and R. Dury (eds), *European Stevenson*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2009, 101-2.

him, [...] I tested my bare feet on the hallway's black and white tiles, imagining that they overlaid his.'¹

Simply occupying these spaces associated with Stevenson – these stratified *lieux de mémoire* – is enough for many of his followers, for others, however, the objective of their journey is not so much to establish a link with Stevenson's past physical presence as to perceive the imprint of his personality, the survival of his 'spirit'. For them, tracing Stevenson's journeys is essentially a way of establishing a mysterious but direct link with his spiritual as well as his physical past on earth. Gavin Bell, for example, describes his travels after Stevenson as a literary odyssey in search of the spirit of the man 'to convey something of the magic of his personality.' Lying in the dark on the slopes of Mont Lozère, he calls up the presence of his guide and predecessor:

In the deepening shadows, my imagination fancied the lean figure of a man, dressed in the fashion of a century before, drawing on a pipe and writing his journal. He seemed to turn towards us, and with a smile nod his approval. This first encounter with the spirit of Stevenson left a deep impression.²

For Stott, establishing this spiritual connection is simply a question of will: 'Stevenson is still present in the Cévennes. He can be sought by those who choose to do so.'³ Spatio-synchronised feelings, are another way of accessing Stevenson's 'spirit' and for some those feelings can only be recreated by being in the right place. Rush writes that although Stevenson's diary records growing anxiety, it is only by physically making the journey that you can feel the traveller's fear for yourself and follow him now with apprehension.'⁴

The search for this 'living relationship' is carried by Stevenson's followers into the archives, libraries and museums of Europe, America and Oceania where they seek new points of contact. Le Bris is particularly enthusiastic in his enumeration of artefacts in the Writers' Museum, all of which he feels are emotionally charged.

[...] il me semble à l'instant que ce ne sont pas seulement des objets, entassés, anonymes, qu'épuiserait leur fonction, mais une mémoire gravée, le texte même de ce lieu – tant de rêves, tant d'habitudes, tant de traces se sont inscrits en eux, comme la signature d'une existence humaine !⁵

¹ Linda Cracknell, 'The Writer, The Island and The Inspiration', *Northwords Now*, Issue 41, Spring–Summer 2021, 20-2, 20.

² Gavin Bell, *In Search of Tusitala: Travels in the Pacific After Robert Louis Stevenson* (London: Picador, 1995) p13; 4. Bell is correspondingly disappointed he does not sense that connection. In the Marquesas, he confides: 'I felt lonely and depressed by the rude landscapes and the sultry weather. The spirit of Stevenson had eluded me.' 79-80.

³ Louis Stott, *Robert Louis Stevenson & France*, Milton of Aberfoyle: Creag Darach Publications, 1994, 81.

⁴ Christopher Rush, *ibid.* 237.

⁵ Michel Le Bris, *La Porte d'or*, Paris : Grasset, 1986, 149.

The most banal domestic objects thought to have come from the various homes of the Stevensons are thus transformed into talismans and *momento mori*. This is an illusory attitude and a motivation that Nicholas Rankin makes fun of. A heightened sense of fake authenticity is a recurring element in Rankin's travelogue, but it is nowhere as apparent as in his descriptions of Hawai'i. He describes one of the 'authentic 'sights' of Honolulu with not a little sarcasm: 'a fake replica of a house Stevenson was probably never in, standing behind the Waioli Tea Rooms at a place he never visited. Tourists happily take pictures of it and feel close to the spirit of the author of *Treasure Island*.'¹ Leavenworth claims that it is the disappointment that the follower-travellers experience when they come into contact with 'objects, built places, writings, photographs, letters and memories of other people'² that pushes them to present their own accounts as more dynamic, or at least as an alternative to the first traveller, and certainly better than anything that can be conveyed by museums. This is particularly clear in *Dead Man's Chest* where Rankin repeatedly criticizes Stevenson collections and museums, while giving prominence to his own work – a second journey and a biography – as presenting a more vivid and accurate representation of his subject.

For some authors, although the magical spiritual link simply does not materialize, they feel that some sort of connection has been made through their very presence in a space occupied by Stevenson. Furnas, for example, writes of the Silverado Museum: 'I have visited every place in the world (except Davos) where Louis spent more than occasional periods of time. Perhaps because of the peculiar immediacy and pungency of his writings on the subject, one senses more Stevenson in the air in Silverado than anywhere else except Edinburgh and the surrounding area.'³ Clearly, even when there is almost nothing material left and no-one knows exactly what Stevenson did in a place, the site retains what D. H. Lawrence, in an essay on Taos Pueblo, called a kind of 'nodality.'⁴

Finally, for some, a footsteps journey may be a way not only of creating a link with Stevenson but subsequently of also of distancing themselves at last from a writer who had been their companion during a significant period of their lives. Michel Le Bris declares in the first pages of his biography of Stevenson:

¹ Nicholas Rankin, *Dead Man's Chest. Travels After Robert Louis Stevenson*, London, Faber and Faber, 1987, 265.

² Leavenworth, *ibid.* 43.

³ J.C. Furnas, *Voyage to Windward: the Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*, London: Faber & Faber, 1951, 163.

⁴ Geoff Dyer, *White Sands: Experiences from the Outside World*, Edinburgh: Canongate, 2017, 66.

[...] tout écrivain se découvre à travers quelques livres, quelques écrivains d'élection. Stevenson, pour moi, fut un de ceux-là. Et je sais bien que mon entreprise, [...], n'aura été, dans le fond, qu'une manière de me lire à travers lui – et cette biographie, tout à la fois, le moment le plus intense de cette aventure et sa conclusion : *une manière, en somme, de nous séparer.*¹

3.3.2 The Stevenson Heritage Trail in Scotland

*[...] somewhere, deep down in the heart of each one of us, something yearns for the old land and the old kindly people.*²

Having published on travellers after Stevenson in France and in America, I decided more recently to examine accounts by travellers who had followed Stevenson in Scotland on what is now styled the Stevenson Heritage Trail.

The colour gray, like the haar and the rain, impregnates many footsteps accounts of Scotland in general and of Edinburgh in particular. Hamilton citing Stevenson himself calls Edinburgh 'the gray metropolis of the winds' while Queensferry is 'utterly gray in colour', and Colinton Manse is 'constructed staunchly of gray stone'.³ For Gavin Bell, Stevenson 'emerged from the grey half-light of a Scottish winter'.⁴ Rankin writes that in the rain, 17 Heriot Row: 'takes on the hue of lead. Later, the reader is introduced to 'The slate-gray town of Ballachulish'.⁵ Le Bris's description of his visit to Edinburgh is similarly steeped in misty grayness. He describes a mysterious, mythical Edinburgh, a maze of vennels and dead ends, permanently soaked in torrential rain, a city that corresponds not so much to any objective reality as to his French readership's idea of the ghost-infested Scottish capital. The pubs where he is served hot toddies made according to ancestral recipes are conveniently peopled with stereotypical seamen. He writes:

[...] c'est ici, ce soir, dans le vieil Edimbourg [...] battu par les vents qui soufflent de partout, détrempé par les pluies, enfoui sous le brouillard glacial venu de la mer, saupoudré de toute la neige qui arrive en trombe des Highlands' qu'il me semble enfin le retrouver, et quelques-uns de ses fantômes.⁶

¹ Michel le Bris, *R. L. Stevenson. Les années bohémiennes, 1850-1880*, Paris : Nil, 1994, 19.

² Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Silverado Squatters*, The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Swanston edn, vol II, London: Chatto and Windus, 1911, xi.

³ Clayton Hamilton, *On the Trail of Stevenson*, Garden City, New York, Doubleday, Page & Company, 1915, 9, 36 and 10.

⁴ Gavin Bell, *ibid.* 10.

⁵ Nicholas Rankin, *ibid.* 15, 41.

⁶ Michel Le Bris, *A Travers L'Écosse*, Bruxelles : Éditions complexe, 1992, 8-9. It is unclear who and what is being quoted.

The details of his account are correspondingly shrouded in blurriness – a grey zone. Places and people are consistently given erroneous names when he enumerates the usual haunts associated with Stevenson: Inverleigh [sic] terrace, 17 Herriott [sic] Row, Swanson [sic] Cottage, Duncan [sic] Brodie’s pub. This disregard for accuracy in the transcription of the details of present reality is coupled with a correspondingly acute interest in the unnameable and indefinable atmosphere associated with the city and with Stevenson’s past presence there, just as the all-pervasive fog and greyness reflect the elusiveness of the footsteps travellers’ quest to recover something of Stevenson’s spirit in Scotland.

Descriptions of Colinton manse and its garden where Stevenson played as a young boy are connected through their reliance on Stevenson’s autobiographical texts which condition the follower-travellers’ reactions to the site and structure their accounts of it. Hamilton, for example, recommends reading Stevenson’s essay ‘The Manse’ as one surveys the garden in order to better understand ‘the process of his art. He has selected very few details; but those few are precisely those which produce the most vivid impression’.¹ The same author calls again on his familiarity with *A Child’s Garden of Verses* as he describes leaping down from the wall into the garden, ‘that sacred province’ where the traveller ‘may identify the very trees and bushes that are commemorated in many of these poems.’² Rankin too quotes extensively from *A Child’s Garden*. He recounts his realization that searching out tangible proof of Stevenson’s past presence in the garden was futile thus confirming Stevenson’s own message in the poem ‘To Any Reader’, namely that past iterations of ourselves and others are forever irretrievable.

[...] you may see, if you will look
Through the windows of this book,
Another child, far, far away,
And in another garden, play.
But do not think you can at all,
By knocking on the window, call
That child to hear you. [...]
For, long ago, the truth to say,
He has grown up and gone away,
And it is but a child of air
That lingers in the garden there.³

The frustration described in the poem and inherent in the quest to recover something of Stevenson’s boyhood is acknowledged by his followers. Jacinta Matos observes that Rankin

¹ Clayton Hamilton, *ibid.* 28.

² *Ibid.* 28-9.

³ Robert Louis Stevenson, ‘To Any Reader,’ *A Child’s Garden of Verses*, The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Swanston edn, vol xiv, London: Chatto and Windus, 1911, 59.

‘is aware that there is no direct access to the past, nor an empirically restorable ‘reality,’ but only [...] encoded configurations of it.’¹ The followers appear, nevertheless, to derive some satisfaction from repeatedly coming up against the impossibility of finding a connection, as if the difficulty of the enterprise somehow validated the worthwhileness of undertaking it. Rankin is convinced that the ghosts of Stevenson’s lost childhood make Colinton different in some way, and his fortuitously coming across the tomb of a young Balfour killed in action in the Falklands in Colinton cemetery takes on particular significance, given Stevenson’s own awareness of both familial and affinitive heredity² and validates his dogged pursuit of significant points of convergence between his quest and Stevenson’s past presence.

Frustration is evident too when the travellers in Stevenson’s footsteps come up against a site that has been built over; when the map does not match the terrain. The key word used in this situation is often ‘overgrown’. Hamilton, for example, claims that North Berwick is ‘now somewhat overgrown with seaside hotels’ but suggests that with some effort the literary pilgrim may still identify landmarks familiar from the beginning of ‘The Lantern Bearers’. Similarly, Kingussie where Stevenson spent the summer of 1882 ‘is now overgrown with many monstrous villas of recent erection’, but, he claims, the follower with knowledge of Stevenson’s texts ‘can still catch some of the echo of the music that Stevenson heard there from the burn.’³ Again, on the Kidnapped trail, Nimmo is dismayed to find that the spot where Colin Campbell was shot, has been covered over by planting by the Forestry Commission. On Mull, the same author notes that the very landscape of the Kidnapped Trail has changed forever, due to the changes brought about by the dam at Loch Uisge.⁴ The present inaccessibility of certain sites and landscapes familiar to Stevenson are generally experienced by the footsteps travellers as so many obstacles to be overcome in order to truly connect with the life of author and the fictional lives of his characters. John Buchan, in an article based on a walking holiday in the Highlands in 1898, speedily short-circuits any attempts to find the precise locations described in *Kidnapped*, claiming that Stevenson ‘romanced with his landscapes’, although they were ‘always subtly correct in atmosphere.’⁵

These travel accounts frequently feature performances of national identities of the traveller-followers as Scots or non-Scots or quasi-Scots, as well as observations on the

¹ Jacinta Matos, ‘Old Journeys Revisited: Aspects of Postwar English travel writing’ in Michael Kowalewski (ed.), *Temperamental Journeys: Essays on the Modern Literature of Travel*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992, 225.

² Nicholas Rankin, *ibid.* 35.

³ Clayton Hamilton, *ibid.* 37, 44.

⁴ Ian Nimmo, *Walking with Murder: On the Kidnapped Trail*, Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2005, 81.

⁵ John Buchan, ‘The Country of Kidnapped’, *The Academy*, May 1898.

performances of others. These notions of national identity – Stevenson’s, the travellers’ as well as that of the people met on the journey in Scotland – are almost always bound up with another common trope in this sub-genre: expressions of nostalgia and notions of an irretrievably lost Scottish heritage so that Nimmo’s account of Mull for instance, is framed in a lament for the disappearance of the island ways of the past. Similarly, Davies writes of Leith, ‘You should see that area today, with tarted up pubs, nicely painted old boats and twee shops. Edinburgh’s Old Town has also been pushed up for the tourists’. He adds that Pilton now [in 1994] has the worst stats for crime and Aids’.¹

This nostalgia expressed by the followers for a bygone Scotland they believe to have existed in the days when Stevenson frequented the Scottish sites they are (re)visiting, and the even more distant Scotland represented in his historical novels, is often mirrored by their intertextual flagging of Stevenson’s own nostalgia for Scotland towards the end of his life when he was resident in Samoa. Le Bris and Ian Bell both evoke a passage in *The Silverado Squatters* in which Stevenson describes typical cleavages in Scottish culture, but also his yearning for Scotland and the joy of meeting another Scot when far from home:

Scotland is indefinable; it has no unity except upon the map. Two languages, many dialects, innumerable forms of piety, and countless local patriotisms and prejudices, part us among ourselves more widely than the extreme east and west of that great continent of America. When I am at home, I feel a man from Glasgow to be something like a rival, a man from Barra to be more than half a foreigner. Yet let us meet in some far country, and, whether we hail from the braes of Manor or the braes of Mar, some ready-made affection joins us on the instant.²

It is primarily Stevenson’s Scottishness that is being explored by the footsteps travellers but following his traces in Scotland, while combining autobiography and biography, can make these writers more aware not only of the deep-rootedness and importance of that identity to the author they are pursuing as evidenced by their interactions with his later writing but the journey frequently also incites an examination and questioning of the followers’ own Scottishness, or non-Scottishness or partial Scottishness. As Keirstead observes, ‘following so closely in the paths of others invites critical questioning of oneself.’³ The Scottish footstep travellers make a point of claiming their Scottishness as an important point of convergence between their own lives and that of Stevenson, perhaps even an explanation for their identification with the writer.

¹ Hunter Davies, *ibid*, p. 25.

² Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Silverado Squatters*, *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Swanston edn, vol II (London: Chatto and Windus, 1911), quoted by Michel Le Bris, *ibid*, p. 13 and John Cairney, *The Quest for Robert Louis Stevenson*, Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2004, p. xi.

³ Keirstead, *ibid*, p. 312.

Others claim that their non-Scottishness is more complicated than it might seem. Rankin, for example, is at pains to invoke the legitimacy of his own Scottish heritage. His consciousness of his heredity is heightened, aptly enough, on this heritage trail. He considers himself a child of the Scots diaspora whose face fits but who suffers from the ‘yearning of the deracinated’ — another focal point of identification with the deracinated Stevenson yearning for Scotland from Sāmoa.

In his study of footsteps travel, Keirstead argues that this sub-genre of travel writing rather than signalling the postmodern exhaustion of travel writing, ‘can actually propel author and reader alike to a deeper awareness and critical understanding of the politics of travel, especially in post-colonial contexts.’¹ There is no need to go so far as to characterize Scotland as a post-colonial context to see a clear political subtext to these travel accounts and observe that those who follow in the footsteps of Stevenson in Scotland are often either willing to reassess their own national identities or experience an intensification of that identity², and may come to question the nature of the national identities of the people that currently inhabit the townscapes and landscapes associated with Stevenson. What they do not however question in their intersubjective, polyphonic footsteps accounts is the reality of Stevenson’s attachment to and identification with Scotland, nor indeed Scotland’s current embracing of Stevenson in such a way that his past existence and his writing are mapped onto the land in plaques, place names and settled heritage trails, and that that land can be apprehended through reference to his texts. Scotland shaped Stevenson and he in turn has defined the cultural identity of parts of his native city and great tracts of his native country chosen to be projected and sold to tourists, literary and otherwise, from within and outwith Scotland.

3.3.3 Footprints in the Sand: Travellers after Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific

*Footprints on the sands of time:
Footprints that perhaps another³*

The final area of the globe left to be covered in my survey of travellers after Stevenson was the Pacific, and I did this with some new research presented at the IASSL conference in Prague in July 2022, the main lines of which are set out here.

¹ Keirstead, *ibid.* 286.

² See my article ‘Questions of Identity on the Stevenson Trail in Scotland’ PUF, Série Caledonia, forthcoming.

³ ‘A Psalm of Life’ (1838) by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: ‘Lives of great men all remind us | We can make our lives sublime, | And, departing, leave behind us | Footprints on the sands of time; | Footprints, that perhaps another, | Sailing o’er life’s solemn main, | A forlorn and shipwrecked brother, | Seeing, shall take heart again.’

The tropes discernible in footsteps travel in other parts of the world are just as evident in the Pacific Isles – the uncanny, a feeling of belatedness, mimicry of the language of pilgrimage, a feeling of a now unattainable authenticity being overgrown, run-down or otherwise obscured, of the new obliterating the old. The intertextuality that characterizes the sections of travelogues covering Europe and America is also just as evident in the Pacific Islands. Lowell Holmes for example, in a book that disappointingly turns out not to be an in-the-wake of book but rather a biographical account, inventories the texts from which his own book is derived, and with which it interacts, stating that, ‘The facts were gathered from Louis's correspondence with scores of friends and relatives and from the letters written by Fanny Stevenson and Aunt Maggie (Stevenson's mother). Journals kept by Fanny, Maggie and Louis and books written after the death of Stevenson by Fanny, her daughter Belle and son Lloyd help fill out the record. Then there are books of reminiscences by people who met the Stevensons on their way through the South Seas.’¹

The travellers in his footsteps are acutely aware of the texts that are their guide and motivation, but also of the texts left by others who have preceded them in their quest, texts that they may recruit to either confirm their own narrative or to legitimize their originality. Footsteps accounts with self-aware authors are embedded in this wider network of texts. Standard references are consulted and the texts they come across along the way are added to the research file. Rankin finds ‘a faded and stained copy of *The Stevensonian*, ‘the journal of the defunct RLS Club of London edited by Ernest Mehew’ in Apia library. He describes his own notes too – another layer in the palimpsest – taken conscientiously in an effort to do justice to both the experience and the history of the places he was visiting: ‘My notes were scrawled in pencil; a farrago of legends, customs, myths, dates, ‘facts’ and fancies as I grappled with Samoan history, [...] I did not want to be just one more wrong-headed, blundering *palangi*’.²

In my previous work on travellers in Stevenson’s footsteps (in France, in America and in Scotland), I tended to focus on the belief expressed by some followers that their presence in places that figure significantly in Stevenson’s life story could, through geographical and temperamental synchronicity, spark a special connection and lead to otherwise impossible insight into his character and motivations, and indeed his writing. The belief persists in the Pacific Islands. Rankin reports, for example, that Barry Menikoff tells him that ‘to understand *The Beach at Falesa* you have to live in the Pacific “You have to experience it”’. In

¹ Lowell D. Holmes, *Treasured Islands: Cruising the South Seas with Robert Louis Stevenson*, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y: Sheridan House, 2002, xiv.

² Rankin, *ibid.* 317.

investigating the writing of those who followed the Scottish writer as far as the Pacific Islands, I opted to concentrate on the disappointments and frustrations inherent in the enterprise evident in a certain creeping awareness as they approached the site of Stevenson's death and his grave, that they were not following permanent footsteps but rather vanishing footprints and that their quest might be somewhat delusional. Addressing Stevenson directly, as he does in alternating chapters, Davies writes with a certain self-awareness that 'after these years on your trail one starts to presume a certain intimacy. All biographers suffer from this delusion, fooling themselves that they have acquired inside knowledge, if not a personal relationship.'¹ While Ian Bell concludes that although Stevenson's 'footsteps can be detected in the patterns of sunlight and shadow on the plateau of the Cévennes, amid the peaks of the High Sierra, or in the creaking planks of the Samoan house.' These are, '[i]mages and noise, merely. A book is not a life, not even when it hunts a life lived for books'²

This disappointment, often coupled with notions of a lack or loss of authenticity and belatedness, is negotiated in different ways by the footsteps-travellers, often with not a little guilt and this can perhaps be explained by the fact that the first footsteps in which most of us follow, the first guilty disappointments to be negotiated, are those associated with our parents (and, for some, particularly with their fathers). Stevenson half expressed this when he wrote to Elizabeth Fairfax regretting not having come to the Pacific earlier:

[...] I resisted, I refused to go so far, from my father and mother. O, it was virtuous, and O, wasn't it silly! But my father, who was always my dearest, got to his grave without that pang; and now in 1890, I (or what is left of me) go at last to the Navigator Islands. God go with us. It is but a Pisgah sight when all is said; I go there only to die; but when you come you will see it is a fair place for the purpose.³

Stevenson's realisation that he had come further than his own father is somewhat similar to Freud's description of his feelings as he stood on the Acropolis in Athens. Freud thinks of his father who never travelled as far as Greece and is overcome by a feeling of what he calls *filial piety*. He writes: 'a sense of guilt was attached to the satisfaction in having gone such a long way: [. . .]. It seems as though the essence of success was to have got further than one's father, and as though to excel one's father was still something forbidden.'⁴ In not only leaving the shores of Europe where his father was buried, but in surpassing his father by

¹ Hunter Davies, *The Teller of Tales: In Search of Robert Louis Stevenson*, London: Sinclair Stevenson, 1994, 14.

² Bell, *ibid.* 282.

³ *Letters* 6, 421.

⁴ Sigmund Freud, 'A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis' (1936), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Vol. 22. London: Hogarth Press, 1953, 247-8.

travelling to the other side of the world, Stevenson, like Freud, recognized his own power and perhaps the inadequacy of home. However, as is clear in the reference to Pisgah, that power is incomplete and unsatisfying. In Deuteronomy, God commanded Moses to climb up and view the Promised Land from the top of Pisgah, then said to him that this was the land he had promised to give to his descendants: 'I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it.' (Deuteronomy 34:4). Stevenson's reference to this passage in this letter is significant because he clearly believed that it was there in the Pacific that he would die, and that like Moses he would see his promised land but might not have the benefit of truly experiencing it. In this way, the end of the passage in Deuteronomy opens the way for the stream of travelling 'descendants', the footsteps travellers who would come to see that promised land with their own eyes.

The footsteps-followers' guilt is subsequently associated sometimes with the knowledge that Stevenson is dead and that the followers have survived and surpassed him; they have been allowed to take advantage of 'the promised land' in ways that Stevenson was not able to, and they are party to what happened next in terms of the geopolitical history of the islands that fascinated Stevenson and took up so much of his energy simply through the fact of living in a later era. There is guilt attached too to the realization and knowledge that the imagined Pacific paradise does not exist or at least no longer exists, and that this is, to some extent at least, the fault of the Western footsteps-traveller. On Hiva in the Marquesas, Pamela Stephenson writes:

'This is it,' I decided. 'This is the actual "paradise" of fiction, the stuff of Bounty ads, J-Lo videos and hair product commercials.' It was such a cliché of the European notion of paradise, I could barely enjoy it for the breadth of my own cynicism.¹

The Paradise Lost motif is set up through the story told to her by a young man named Philippe: the 'sad story of his eight years in LA, during which time he had become addicted to alcohol and drugs, and subsequently suicidal.'² The disaffected youth of the Pacific Islands, the high suicide rates, and tales of Samoan gangs in California are a leitmotif in all of these footsteps accounts. Pamela Stephenson concludes:

This is not paradise, but a stunningly beautiful place inhabited by some people who have become disenfranchised, depressed, or otherwise troubled. And as an affluent, visiting

¹ Pamela Stephenson, *Treasure Islands: sailing the South Seas in the wake of Fanny and Robert Louis Stevenson*. London: Headline, 2006, 140.

² *Ibid.*

Westerner – I suppose I must be part of the problem. Back on board, from my sunset vantage-point, I nursed my white-man's guilt.¹

Stephenson's realisation that the Pacific islands are not a paradise but a much more complex heterotopia, is mirrored by others. Gavin Bell becomes similarly jaded and faces the frustration of a present-day reality that does not correspond to the paradise he expected. In Hookena he admits to being particularly discouraged: 'I was trying to span a century in which the world had been convulsed by wars, automobiles, air travel, and the insidious cult of television. How could I hope to relive Stevenson's adventures in islands where fishermen had abandoned their villages to build highways and nuclear bombs?'² He disengages temporarily from his quest, as he had done in Nuku-Hiva, the difference between what he expected from the guide book of Stevenson's writing and reality being too great. 'After a couple of weeks in Nuku-Hiva I had become sceptical and a little weary of Stevenson's superlatives',³ he admits.

It is something of a commonplace to compare literary tourism with medieval pilgrimages, but the metaphor very often holds and explains the motivation for the footsteps journey in that it is often believed to be educational and uplifting in some way. Laura Stubbs was one of the first travellers in Stevenson's footsteps. Her account of her journey in 1902 is overtly couched in the language of pilgrimage from the title, *Stevenson's Shrine: The Record of a Pilgrimage* to the description of Vailima where she visits 'First his bedroom, then his library, and lastly his Temple of Peace, the innermost shrine where he wrote.'⁴ She ends her visit at his tomb atop Mount Vaia: 'At last I had attained the goal of my pilgrimage; at last I was within hail of that lonely plateau, where all that was mortal of Robert Louis Stevenson was laid to rest [...].' Over a hundred years later, Pamela Stephenson was using the same language when she decides 'to make a pilgrimage up the beautiful rain-forested Mount Vaea'.⁵

Pilgrimage is obviously dependent on the existence of sacred sites, both as an ultimate destination and as stations along the way. During his sojourn in the Pacific, Theroux argues that places can be sanctified through writing. He writes, 'Like most other visitors I reflected on Maugham's "Rain." Maugham was another writer who had sanctified a place by using it as a setting; he had done the islands a great favor—made them seem exotic and interesting.'⁶ The notion of pilgrimage is also bound up with the idea of trials, challenges and danger encountered

¹ Ibid. 142.

² Bell, op. cit. 168.

³ Ibid. 60.

⁴ Laura Stubbs, *Stevenson's Shrine: The Record of a Pilgrimage*, Boston, L. C. Page, 1903, 41-42.

⁵ Stephenson, ibid. 376.

⁶ Paul Theroux, *The Happy Isles of Oceania: Paddling the Pacific*, Kindle Edition, 1996, 350.

along the way and this is amply covered by Pamela Stephenson who feels the need to purchase guns and learn to shoot before setting off on her months-long cruise and by Bell, the intrepid foreign correspondent, who highlights all of the extravagant dangers encountered both deliberately and accidentally during his journey: a mass of infected sores, death-defying flights in tiny aircraft, and 'the most terrifying experience' of his life, swimming with sharks.¹

The house at Vailima is a station on the way to Stevenson's tomb on Mount Vaia the ultimate destination of the pilgrimage. This *lieu de mémoire* is frequently a source of disappointment. When Stubbs visited just a few years after Stevenson's death, the house was relatively well preserved, by the nineteen-nineties it was uninhabitable partly due to the cyclones of 1991 and 1992, the tin roof broken, windows smashed, walls with holes in them. Bell manages to get in but is disappointed that the hoped-for communion with Stevenson's spirit does not materialize. Stevenson's study 'was just a bare, dirty room. The scene of Stevenson's burning desire to continue writing through bouts of severe illness was a forlorn, empty corner of a derelict house'. He continues

I walked slowly down the great staircase of Californian redwood, pausing on the bottom step to look at a corner of the hall where I knew Stevenson had breathed his last, but there was nothing there. It would have been irrational to expect anything else. When a house is long abandoned and gutted of its contents, its atmosphere and its memories do not linger. Still, I had come so far, and I was disappointed to have seen so little. The magic had gone.²

Most of the followers whose travelogues I have studied describing France, Scotland and the USA, have been admirers of Stevenson, lovers of his writing. Paul Theroux is different. He is primarily a professional traveller and only coincidentally a somewhat cynical and accidental follower of Stevenson. However, even he adopts 'the spirit left in the place' trope although unlike Stubbs and most of the other footsteps-travellers, when a sentry refuses him admission to Vailima and suggests he visit Stevenson's grave instead, he chooses not to, declaring that graves are for 'pilgrims and hagiographers':

I wanted an inkling of his spirit. It was the house he had built, and where he had lived, that I wanted to see—there were always vibrations of past tenants in houses. Why should I want to climb all morning up Mount Vaea to see the little plot which contained his mouldering bones?³

The other footsteps-travellers all make the hike up the hill, but the dilemma for them too is how to stand out from the crowd. Some take the circular route, others the straight, more

¹ Gavin Bell, *ibid.* 53, 104.

² Gavin Bell *ibid.*, 287.

³ Theroux, *ibid.* 324.

testing route. All quote the lines of Stevenson's well-known epitaph, some lamenting the extraneous *the* in 'home from the sea'. The "'all-round literary man"' has a literal on his tomb' jokes Rankin.¹

The accounts of these pursuits end with performances of farewell, farewell to Stevenson from the gravesite, farewell to the Pacific, farewell to the journey and the task of writing about it. Gavin Bell lifts his arms and sings out to the valley Stevenson's poem: 'Sing Me a Song of a Lad that is Gone' (given the disappointments he had experienced in not quite managing to retrieve the island paradise described by Stevenson it might just as well have been 'Sing Me a Song of a Land that is Gone'). Rankin concludes, 'Stevenson had lain buried on that mountain for ninety years, and yet he was still alive in his pages, a friend to people who had never known him. The dead are not really dead while there is someone alive who remembers or reads them.'² Or, one might add, someone who cares enough to follow his 'footprints in the sands of time' to the other side of the world and add a travelogue to the network of texts that feed off and continue to circulate his original writing.

Conclusion

This section has sought to demonstrate the relevance of attending to the writing of authors often considered minor and marginal who not only provide biographical substance to accounts of Stevenson's life story while also buttressing and perpetuating the standing of his oeuvre, but also provide new and fertile fields of research in their own right. The work of second-travellers is particularly exciting in that it opens up new spaces in which to examine the prospective and retrospective effects that subsequent writing can have on our perceptions of an original work and of the sites described – a virtual contact zone of a sort other than that described in the first part of this document, one that combines two separate but co-dependent subjectivities.

¹ Rankin, *ibid.* 351

² *Ibid.*

Conclusion

Working on this retrospective overview of my research has been a humbling and a rewarding exercise. It has thrown up new insights into the directions that research has taken, deliberately and fortuitously, but has also led to new questions and a little frustration. In terms of insight, I realise now that I have attempted, punctually, to reconcile a research focus on mainly nineteenth-century Scottish non-fiction and its afterlives and less formal research related to my teaching role which is almost exclusively carried out in English for Specific Purposes and particularly in English for Medical Purposes, as well as research-adjacent activities in the area of internationalisation in higher education. Research in areas related to ESP has undeniably been secondary in my output, and I wonder now why I did not pursue work on para-professional genres such as scientific auto/biography as well as medical ethnography more energetically, an oversight that has led me to leave at least two worthwhile pieces of research on these subjects unpublished.

It is also clear that the editing of *The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson, Volume 5: Uncollected Essays 1880-94* for the New Edinburgh Edition turned out to be a more all-consuming task than I had anticipated and I might have been more hesitant in taking it up had I realised how much time it would take away from other research pursuits. However, the project has confirmed my taste for doing research work that is directly useful to readers, facilitating access to nineteenth-century works of non-fiction by offering reliable edited texts that are as close to the original as possible, including overlooked, unpublished and unfinished essays, while also making them more readily accessible to twenty-first-century readers through the provision of appropriate, well-crafted explanatory notes. The project also widened my focus in the area of non-fiction outwards from travel writing to include the essay; an unquestionably enriching and fruitful development.

Re-assessing my research has also allowed me to survey the various ways in which pre-existing predilections and sensibilities have guided the directions that work has taken in perhaps a more logical and interconnected way than I had realised. In retrospect, it was my interest in travel writing that led me to essays, and in turn it was an interest in scientific auto/biography that led to a desire to make visible the autobiographical aspects Stevenson's essays. Repeated close reading of Stevenson's essays, led to a heightened awareness of certain characteristics that I wanted to analyse in more depth and with more freedom than was possible in a scholarly edition. These included the river-like movement of certain essays, the backwards

and forwards shifts in perspective that were evident in others as well as their increasingly autobiographical nature.

Similarly, early work on the ways in which nineteenth-century Scottish travel writers discursively constructed and asserted their identities – both national and personal – while travelling in France laid the terrain for later work on the influences on and influence of Stevenson on the world stage. Scotland has served as a structuring element, allowing me to focus on the country as a source of identity to be embraced or rejected, the locus of a long and sometimes turbulent history drawn on extensively by Stevenson, as a geographical territory that anchored much of his essay-writing, and as the source, I am sure, of much of my own sense of academic identity and legitimacy. The question of Scottish national identity has been important in my work, although I have grown to question the usefulness of further examining the concept, even as it continues to structure my own sense of belonging. As Norquay and Smyth acknowledge in the introduction to *Across the Margins*, a volume that actively urges readers to think beyond margins in the spaces of a post-nationalist world, the desire to belong, ‘pulls us into identifications with geographical and historical spaces, and [...] this desire still holds possibilities of allegiances that may be empowering and enlightening.’¹

Successive roles in the governance of la Société Française d’Études Écossaises, most recently as president, have meant that I am a regular participant at the annual conference. It is clear to me that the strength of these conferences and indeed of the SFEE itself is that fact that the scope of its academic activities is not limited to one discipline, encouraging the possible cross-fertilization of various interests and areas of expertise in the wide field of Scottish Studies, so that literary scholars get to learn from what historians are doing, specialists in the cultural politics of Scotland can compare views with linguists etc. I have benefitted enormously from workshop sessions in areas of scholarship in Scottish Studies outwith nineteenth-century literature, on the margins one might say, of my own research focus.

One of my most recent articles, ‘Food and Drink in Two Scottish Novels: Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Kidnapped* (1886) and Alan Warner’s *The Man Who Walks* (2002)’ (forthcoming), throws out a new link from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first century and constitutes a novel foray for me into the area of Scottish fiction. Yet again, I see that I have been attracted to the field of autoethnography (here fictional representations of contemporary and historical

¹ Glenda Norquay and Gerry Smyth (eds), *Across the Margins: Cultural Identity and Change in the Atlantic Archipelago*, Manchester University Press, 2002, 8.

foodways) and to rewriting since although the later novel is not just *Kidnapped* transposed to a modern setting and the protagonist is not simply a modern-day David Balfour (nor indeed an Alan Breck Stewart), the later novel does resonate with *Kidnapped* in various ways. Written a hundred-and-sixteen years apart with plots set roughly two-hundred-and-fifty years apart, both novels describe picaresque travel across the Highland landscape. The exploration of the afterlives of Stevenson's oeuvre in the writing of twenty-first century Scottish novelists is an avenue that I intend to explore further in the future.

Had I not had to draft this review, I doubt if I would have realised the extent to which my research had focused on margins – marginal genres, marginal writers and marginal geographical and textual spaces – and sought to recentre those margins. When, in 2009, I first wrote of the travellers who had followed Stevenson in the Cévennes, there was very little work on this minor genre of footsteps travel writing. Since then, interest in marginal and minor genres has burgeoned.¹ This strengthens my resolve to continue to occupy these decentred textual spaces paying attention to authors who repeat the original journey, revive and revise the original work: the pretext and pre-text for their ventures. I hope to bring several of these strands of marginality together in a publication project that will present an examination of the accounts of the women travellers who accompanied Stevenson alongside those of travellers who followed in his footsteps.

¹ Cf Keirstead, *ibid*; Leavenworth, *ibid*; Fleurot and Jaëck, *ibid*.