Thomas Percy: Literary Anthology and National Invention

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Frank Murphy.

Abstract

This thesis examines three key anthologies by Bishop Thomas Percy as a means of discussing ideas of British identity. It is argued here that the imaginative construction of Britain in the century following the Union of 1707 is anthological in its nature, and therefore that anthology is an appropriate vehicle for national textual imaginings. This argument has been achieved by an examination of *Hau Kiou Choaan* (1761), *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763), and *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). This study situates these books in their contemporary contexts, such as the Enlightenment, eighteenth-century print culture, and Percy's epistolary network and establishment sympathies and connections, in order to come to a full understanding of their influences, impact, and uses in developing a poetry of nationhood. Percy's conception of Britain was of a Gothic nation, and this informed his work aesthetically and politically, but similar works such as James Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* suggest alternative origins for the British native genius. This thesis argues that Britishness in the eighteenth century was an identity with inherent hybridity and plurality, and that for Percy it was predominantly informed by English establishment morals, culture, and politics, which we might term 'Cultural Anglicanism'.

This study has been undertaken using primarily archival methods, but there is also a significant theoretical component, as the discipline of book history (under which studies of anthology fall) is opened to postcolonial, gendered, and class readings. By expanding the meaning of anthology to include national hybridities, this thesis has been able to suggest that other hybridities may be found in anthologies, taken as micro-canons, which may be subverted or upheld by anthologists and readers according to their own aims. In this sense, the anthology becomes an ideal textual expression of complex plural identities.

Note on Access to Contents

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Introduction

> The Library has existed *ab æternitate*. That truth, whose immediate corollary is the future eternity of the world, no rational mind can doubt. Man, the imperfect librarian, may be the work of chance or of malevolent demiurges; the universe, with its elegant appointments – its bookshelves, its enigmatic books, its indefatigable staircases for the traveller, and its water closets for the seated librarian – can only be the handiwork of a god. In order to grasp the distance that separates the human and the divine, one has only to compare these crude trembling symbols which my fallible hand scrawls on the cover of a book with the organic letters inside – neat, delicate, deep black, and inimitably symmetrical.[1]
>
> *Jorge Luis Borges*

Contexts

This thesis is a study of the role of anthology at a pivotal time in British history, and centres on a central figure in British literature. Thomas Percy (1729-1811) was a Bishop, a man of letters, a poet, and a collector. He was born within 25 years of the Union of Parliaments, and in the year his magnum opus *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* had been published (1765) the last major Jacobite rebellion was history by twenty years, and the Seven Years' War by only two; the authority of Britain had begun to be questioned in America and James Macpherson's Ossian poetry had identified a distinctly Caledonian strain in the British poetic tradition. The question of British identity was contentious, defined by the nation's international conflicts, intranational power struggles, and, increasingly, global reach. As a moderate conservative working during peacetime in a revolutionary century, Percy tasked himself with inventing a poetic legacy for Britain that centred the Anglo-British experience; that is, a sense of Britishness that was directed by the moral authority of

[1] Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Library of Babel', in *Collected Fictions*, ed. by Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), pp. 112–18. p.113.

the crown, constitution, and church of the English people. Whereas Macpherson, to whom Percy was responding with his book *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763), characterised the national poetic genius as Celtic, Percy's books identify the history of Britain's eighth-century Icelandic invaders as the origin of the British voice. In fact, the history of Britain is a patchwork in which no single, authentic, poetic voice takes precedence. Percy sought to resolve this tension by presenting the British voice as driven by a textually literate Gothic experience which was capable of both rising to the fore of oral poetry and surviving the onslaught of time. To underscore the antiquity and literacy of his bards, he arranged his efforts in anthologies.

Percy was born in Shropshire in 1729, to Arthur Pearcy and his wife Jane.[2] He graduated from Christ Church, Oxford in 1750, having read classics (and by this time spelling his name Piercy) and in 1753 obtained a postgraduate MA in Hebrew while working as a deacon and, later, an Anglican priest. In 1756, he became the rector of Wilby parish, the personal chaplain to the Earl of Sussex, and settled for the rest of his life on 'Percy' as the spelling of his surname. 'Percy' was an illustrious surname to have, as it was the surname of the House of Northumberland, with whom Percy would come to share a lasting professional bond, both clerical and literary. In 1761, he published his first major work *Hau Kiou Choaan, or The Pleasing History*, which was the first complete English translation of a Chinese novel, and a supplementary text the following year *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese.* The Chinese books were followed in 1763 by an Icelandic translation, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry,* and a new version of *Song of Solomon* in 1764.

In 1753, the most oft-related moment of Percy's life would occur, when during an otherwise innocuous visit to his friend Humphrey Pitt's house in Shiffnal, he would discover a small stack of paper "lying dirty on the floor, under a bureau in the parlour […] being used by the maids to light the fire."[3] The Folio Manuscript, as it came to be

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[2] The definitive biography of Percy is Bertram H Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989).

[3] *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, British Library Add. MS. 27879; reproduced in *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, ed. by John W. Hales and Fredrick J. Furnivall (London: N. Trübner, 1868). Vol. 1, p.lxiv.

known, which he described as a “very curious old MS. Collection of ancient Ballads,”[4] was the object by which Percy would symbolise his whole career. In 1773, Joshua Reynolds painted him holding it like a hagiographic symbol.[5] Percy was cagy about displaying his manuscript after a binder damaged it in 1760 while in the care of Samuel Johnson; it was the sole known textual witness to several ancient ballads, including ‘Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne’ and ‘Guy and Amarant’, which gave him an advantage of exclusivity when it came to publishing in the crowded genre. The Folio Manuscript inspired him to channel his by this time well-documented antiquarian interest into a great publishing project, which would require all of his social acumen and intellectual prowess, and would propel him to great professional heights: the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, a three-volume collection of ancient ballads and contemporary imitations which was held up by the following generation of Romantic poets as the finest examples of poetry in English.

It worked. In 1765, having dedicated the *Reliques* to Elizabeth Percy, Duchess of Northumberland, Percy was employed by her husband Hugh as a personal chaplain and tutor to their son. His wife Anne became a wet-nurse to Queen Charlotte and the baby Prince Edward. Thanks to the patronage of the Percy family – to whom Percy was *not* related, though his orthographic self-fashioning would deliberately suggest otherwise – Percy would go on to become a chaplain to George III in 1769, Dean of Carlisle in 1778, and Bishop of Dromore in Ireland in 1782 where he lived and worked till his death in 1811. By many accounts Percy was an admirable public servant, with

[4] *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*, ed. by Cleanth Brooks (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977). p.3.

[5] See Figure 1. William Dickinson, *Thomas Percy, after Sir Joshua Reynolds.* (1775). © National Portrait Gallery, London Reference Collection NPG D39455. See also Bertram H Davis, ‘Thomas Percy, the Reynolds Portrait, and the Northumberland House Fire’, *The Review of English Studies*, 33.129 (1982), 23–33.

Figure 1: 'Thomas Percy' by William Dickinson, after Sir Joshua Reynolds. © National Portrait Gallery, London

one obituarist lauding him for “promoting the instruction and comfort of the poor with unremitting attention, and superintending the sacred and civil interests of the diocese, with vigilance and assiduity [and being] revered and beloved for his piety, liberality, benevolence, and hospitality, by persons of every rank and religious denomination.”[6] The Catholic, Presbyterian and Republican citizens of Dromore, whose revolutionary activities, connections, and ideas made the Bishop anxious and reactive, would likely have had a differing opinion.[7] Though his publishing output slowed somewhat by the

[6] ‘The Late Bishop of Dromore’, *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 81.2 (1811), p.483.
[7] E. R. R. Green, ‘Thomas Percy in Ireland’, *Ulster Folklife*, 15/16 (1970), 224–32. pp.226-8; James Kelly,

1770s, his books remained popular for more than a century; a 1906 Everyman edition of the *Reliques* had at least five printings, and his works *Key to the New Testament*, *Northern Antiquities*, and *The Hermit of Warkworth* being republished through the nineteenth century.[8] He was influential among European romanticists such as Wordsworth, who declared that "Poetry has been utterly redeemed by [the *Reliques*],"[9] and Scott, who recalled his boyhood enjoyment of the book:

> To read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my schoolfellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm.[10]

Percy's well-documented antiquarian interests lay almost exclusively in texts. By the age of seventeen he owned 265 books.[11] It stands to reason, therefore, that his national project should be a literary one rather than the horticulture of his friend William Shenstone, or the philological efforts of Samuel Johnson, or the art collections of any number of great noble families. He was assiduous in his textual research – though his books did have some embarrassing errors, particularly in his Chinese anthologies – and his enduring reputation as an antiquarian of note is well deserved.[12] This thesis intends to shift the perception of Percy as an antiquarian from a mere "radicalized awareness of the alterity of the past,"[13] to a literary nationalism which was

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Sir Richard Musgrave, 1746-1818: Ultra-Protestant Ideologue (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009). pp.85-7

[8] Roy Palmer, 'Percy, Thomas (1729–1811)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2006 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21959> [accessed 8 June 2017].

[9] William Wordsworth, 'Essay Supplementary to the Preface' in *The Major Works*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). pp.640-62. p.656.

[10] John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott* (New York: Macmillan, 1914). pp.18-9.

[11] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.5.

[12] A literature review appraising criticism of Percy as an antiquarian would be too long to be useful; in the major recent work on Percy, Nick Groom writes that the *Reliques* "was liberally sprinkled with literary-antiquarian annotations, reflections both genteel and arcane, and politely discreet revisions." Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999). p.1.

[13] Ann Rigney, *Imperfect Histories: The Elusive Past and the History of Romantic Historicism* (Ithaca:

concerned with the potential of the nation, using the anthology as a map of the past in order to create a blueprint for the future. He achieved this aim throughout his published works first by saying what Britishness was not (in the Chinese books), then by what it had come from (in the Icelandic books), and finally by how it had grown and would continue to grow (in the *Reliques*). The nature of Percy's national Anglo-Britishness was defined by genealogical proximity to the Gothic invaders who were, he supposed, the forefathers of Britishness as he understood it. This was supported in his career by difference from the Oriental Other as much as by intra-Union similarity and was formed by not only his love for antiquarian study but also by his loyalty to the British establishment; an establishment which, by his church, patronage, and writings, we know to be an English one. It was expressed through anthology because of the genre's sympathy for seeing fragmentation as a potential part of a connected entity and space for editorialising, which suited Percy's style; the nature of the literature with which he was working; and the national identity he sought to construct.

Percy's projects were frequently collaborative and he depended often on friends and correspondents such as William Shenstone to help him realise his literary goals. His friendship with Shenstone is particularly useful in understanding his compulsion for his books to be elaborately textual. Shenstone was a poet and one of the world's earliest landscape gardeners. He had an eye for good taste, and nowadays is best known for his impressive garden at his family home the Leasowes, which, in the words of Samuel Johnson, "he did with such judgement and such fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great and the admiration of the skilful: a place to be visited by travellers, and copied by designers."[14] His involvement with Percy during the period of preparation of the *Reliques* was key to the book's success, though Percy did not always accept the advice Shenstone was so keen to offer. They likely began their correspondence in 1757, though their first letters indicate they had met in person before then. They were introduced by one of Percy's friends in Shropshire, probably Humphrey Pitt, in whose house Percy discovered the fêted Folio Manuscript. In that

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Cornell University Press, 2011). p.8.

[14] Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, ed. by G. B. Hill (London: G. Walker, 1905). Vol. 3, p.350.

first letter, Percy makes one of his earliest references to the manuscript, telling Shenstone about the Folio Manuscript and requesting his assistance with a copy of a ballad for collation to form what would become 'Gil Morrice' in the *Reliques*.[15] Shenstone's reply sets the tone for how their relationship would proceed, as he obliged Percy's request. He was immediately invested in the professional relationship, telling Percy that "You pique my Curiosity extremely by the mention of that antient Manuscript; as there is nothing that gives me greater Pleasure than the simplicity of style and sentiment that is observable in old English ballads."[16] Shenstone was less enthusiastic about *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*, writing upon receipt of the former that, although he hadn't had a chance to read the book yet (likely a diplomatic lie) the dedication and binding were suitable, if "a little too pompous."[17] He took a more active role in the preparation of *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, brokering the publication deal with Robert Dodsley on Percy's behalf. *Five Pieces* is consciously modelled in content and style on James Macpherson's ubiquitous Ossian Fragments, an editorial decision which is apparent from Percy's first mention of the project when he wrote to Shenstone that he was "making up a small Collection of Pieces of this kind for the Press, which will be about the Size of the Erse Fragments."[18] Percy again anticipated his friend's reaction, writing to him in September of 1760:

> You will probably be disgusted to see [the enclosed poem, likely The Incantation of Hervor] so incumbered with Notes; Yet some are unavoidable, as the piece would be unintelligible without them.[19]

Shenstone replied:

> With Regard to the Celtic[20] Poem, I think there is something *good* in it

[15] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.3.
[16] Ibid. p.5.
[17] Ibid. pp.106-7.
[18] Ibid. p.70.
[19] Ibid. p.70.
[20] In the first half of the eighteenth century, it was common to interchange "Celtic" and "Gothic" as ethnic and cultural categories. Paul-Henri Mallet's *Introduction a l'histoire du Danemarc* (1755), for instance, from which Percy drew much of his research for *Northern Antiquitie*s does not clarify the difference until the second edition.

> – The absolute *Necessity* of Notes, will be the Rock that you may chance to split upon. I hope they will be as short as possible, and either at the end of every Piece; or thrown into the form of Glossary at the end of the *Collection*. Perhaps some small Preface at the Beginning also, may supersede the Use of *Many*.[21]

As Percy's career progressed, concurrently with his developing relationship with Shenstone, he began to depend on his friend's reassurance more and more, and by the time the composition of the *Reliques* had been started in earnest, the two were corresponding intensely. Shenstone felt his services had been engaged so that Percy could avoid "The passion of antiquity" which he described as "the foible of a lazy and pusillanimous disposition, looking back and resting with pleasure on the steps by which we have arrived thus far, than the bold and enterprising spirit of genius whose ambition fires him only to reach the goal."[22] When he first agreed to help with the project, he wrote of his concerns that "[Percy's] fondness for antiquity should tempt him to admit pieces that have no other sort of merit. However, he has offered me a rejecting power, of which I mean to make considerable use."[23] In fact, their collaboration was limited to a roughly nine-month period very near the beginning of the book's genesis, and Percy would ignore more of his suggestions than he would accept. Percy was looking less for a collaborator and more for a resource. When Shenstone died, Percy described him as "one of the most elegant and amiable of men, and his tender writings were but the counterpart of his heart, which was one of the best that animated the human body."[24] He had intended to dedicate the *Reliques* to his friend, apparently even before he had died, in tribute to Shenstone's early influence, but given their later divergence in opinion over the book's audience and aims, a dedication would have been an inappropriate, even hypocritical tribute. Instead Percy put his ambitions to work and tasked Johnson with composing a dedication to Elizabeth

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[21] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.74.

[22] William Shenstone, 'Essays on Men and Manners', in *The Works, in Verse and Prose, of William Shenstone*, Esq. (London: J. Dodsley, 1768). pp.279-80.

[23] *The Letters of William Shenstone*, ed. by Marjorie Williams (Oxford: Blackwell, 1939). p.597

[24] *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Richard Farmer*, ed. by Cleanth Brooks (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1946). p.37.

Percy, the Duchess of Northumberland, a decision which also resulted in Percy swapping the order of ballads carefully arranged in collaboration with Shenstone in order to prioritise ballads depicting the history of the Northumberland Percys. Elizabeth Percy was no relation, though an unpublished family history he wrote some time around 1776 contends that his great-great Grandfather (also Thomas) who was Mayor of Worcester, had been related to the Percys of Northumberland. His presentation of his supposed lineage is thorough, though the evidence he supplies is not substantial enough for his representation of his own ancestry to be entirely believable.[25]

Percy's elevation of ancient and vernacular literature was in-keeping with an eighteenth-century trend in forming a canon of English literary history which suggested that, contrary to earlier models, modern literature did not necessarily improve on historical works and that older forms of literature had a spirit of native genius.[26] This movement included a revival of the Spenserian stanza,[27] a renewed interest in Shakespeare and Chaucer,[28] and the publishing of ballads and other antique literatures. Percy's work operates within an enterprise of recovery and invention of an English native tradition that also included Thomas Warton, Thomas Chatterton, John Upton, and Elizabeth Elstob. Percy's own contribution to the English canon was heavily informed by his theory of the Gothic, which is how he came to define Englishness and, within this definition, Britishness. In the eighteenth century, many British writers were interested in developing a Homeric tradition for British poetry; that is to say, a folk literature that demonstrates unique native genius and is worthy of preservation and scholarship.[29] The antiquarian (and "maverick racist", who seized on many of the perceived racial divisions of Percy's work for his own means[30]) John Pinkerton

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[25] Thomas Percy (?1776) *An Account of the Private Family of Percy, formerly of Worcester, afterwards of Bridgnorth, Shropshire*. British Library Add. MS 32326.

[26] Jonathan Brody Kramnick, 'The Making of the English Canon', *PMLA*, 112.5 (1997), 1087–1101.

[27] Edward Payson Morton, 'The Spenserian Stanza in the Eighteenth Century', *Modern Philology*, 10.3 (1913), 365–91.

[28] Philip Connell, 'British Identities and the Politics of Ancient Poetry in Later Eighteenth-Century England', *The Historical Journal*, 49.1 (2006), 161–92. pp.118-9.

[29] Maureen N. McLane and Laura M. Slatkin, 'British Romantic Homer: Oral Tradition, "Primitive Poetry" and the Emergence of Comparative Poetics in Britain, 1760-1830', *ELH*, 78.3 (2011), 687–714.

[30] James Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic', *The Eighteenth Century*, 48.7 (2007), 95–109.

acknowledged that the concept of national genius was inextricably tied to remembrance and legacy when he wrote “We may laugh at Sir Isaac Newton, as we have at Descartes; but we shall always admire a Homer, an Ossian, or a Shakespeare.”[31] Though new ideas lead us to Enlightenment, he suggests, poetic genius tells us about who we are. For writers such as Macpherson and Percy, the question of identity – and by extension the question of the Homeric tradition – was configured along national lines. In order to develop a sense of self, the antiquarian looked back. For Macpherson, who grew up amidst the chaos of Culloden, it was easy to identify with the Celtic forefathers of his clan.[32] Percy was, perhaps understandably given his position in the Anglican church, opposed to the Jacobite cause and the Caledonian identification which it inspired, took considerable pains to differentiate the work he did from that of Celtic antiquarians; *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* in particular is, in parts, frankly antagonistic to Macpherson, suggesting openly that he may have been the sole composer of the Ossian fragments.[33] Though Percy was far more moderate in his sentiments than many of his contemporaries, it was his belief that, at least in the world of literature, the influence of the Scots was far overextended and had to be reined in.[34] He did not necessarily draw a border between Scotland and England as they existed in the 1760s – after all, both nations were now British and should be considered as such – but he did differentiate between the supposed origins of both nations, the Celts and the Goths, as “two races of men *ab origine* distinct.”[35] He had a passionate interest in Teutonic literature, not least because of their celebrated manuscript culture which was valuable to Percy as an antiquarian. In the perceived dichotomy he explored between the Celts and the Goths, the former spurned literacy

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p.103.

[31] John Pinkerton, ‘On the Oral Tradition of Poetry’, in *Scottish Tragic Ballads* (London: J. Nichols, 1781). p.xviii.

[32] James Macpherson, *The Poems of Ossian and Related Works*, ed. by Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999). p.viii-ix.

[33] Thomas Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry Translated from the Islandic Language* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1763). p.A4 vers.

[34] He scathingly remarked in a letter to his friend Evan Evans that the Scots were “everywhere recommending the antiquities of their country to public notice, vindicating its history, setting off its poetry […] even our most polite Ladies warble Scottish airs.” *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy & Evan Evans*, ed. by Aneirin Lewis (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957). p.2.

[35] Thomas Percy, *Northern Antiquities: Or, A Description of the Manners, Customs, Religion and Laws of the Ancient Danes and Other Northern Nations* (London: T. Carnan and Co., 1770). p.xix

to foster a "remarkable air of secrecy and mystery with which the Druids concealed their doctrines from the laity; forbidding that they should ever be so committed to writing, and […] not having so much as an alphabet of their own," while the latter were "addicted to writing […] no barbarous people ever held letters in higher reverence, ascribing the invention of them to their chief deity and attributing to the letters themselves supernatural virtues. [There is no] room to believe that any of their doctrines were locked up or concealed from any part of the community."[36] This ancient dichotomy had more recent echoes of Catholicism and Protestantism following the Reformation. Percy valued the textual literacy of the Goths. It meant that, unlike Macpherson, he had access to real and substantial manuscript evidence which he could use as evidence for his claims about the nature and origins of British poetry. This access was useful to Percy as an antiquarian, but it was also ideologically useful, as the Gothic affinity for the written word could be spun as a more 'advanced' version of barbarism. Although the Goths embodied a fashionable primitivism, their literacy also represented a technological sophistication which could be claimed as a founding inheritance of modern British culture. The Celts did not have "that equal plan of liberty, which was the peculiar honour of all the Gothic tribes, and which they carried with them and planted wherever they formed settlements,"[37] and where barbarity may have existed in the Gothic people, Percy supposed, these practices were borrowed from the Celts "without being at all descended from them, or having any pretensions to be considered as the same people […] Nothing is more contagious than superstition; and therefore we must not wonder, if in ages of ignorance one wild people catch up from another, though of very different race, the most arbitrary and groundless opinions, or endeavour to imitate them in such rites and practices as they are told will recommend them to the gods, or avert their anger."[38] Percy's own Anglicanism, grown out of a textual Reformation, was founded on principles which he could see a version of in the Gothic people, who were supposedly the first Germanic peoples to convert to Christianity.[39] The Celts were spiritually alien to him. Neither was

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[36] Ibid. p.xvii.
[37] Ibid. p.10.
[38] Ibid. p.15.
[39] Richard A. Fletcher, *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999). pp.71-2.

there evidence that the Celts shared the legal values of the Goths, which were still discernible in contemporary England and Britain, such as the presence of established general assemblies and juries.[40]

By the time Percy published *Northern Antiquities* (1770), the book in which he most explicitly discussed the Gothic ancestry of modern Britain, he had been writing about the Goths in one way or another for a decade. In *Hau Kiou Choaan*, he described certain important facets of Britishness – such as literacy, democracy, and respect for women – in terms of how the Chinese differed in his perception (see chapter two). In *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, he began to originate these British ideals in Gothic culture, and commented that Gothic literature could "constantly afford matter for philosophical reflection by showing the workings of the human mind in its almost original state of nature."[41] The contemporary British reader, a descendant (he supposed) of the Goths, could be assured of their state of standardness by which difference was measured in the competing identity politics of an increasingly imperial nation with a global reach. By the publication of the *Reliques* in 1765, Percy had developed a theory of Gothic minstrelsy which he keenly presented as a link between the Teutonic people of *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* and the dedicatee of the *Reliques*, Elizabeth Percy, Duchess of Northumberland. To the *Reliques* was affixed 'An Essay on the Ancient Minstrels', in which Percy suggested that the medieval minstrel and the poet of chivalrous romance could both be traced back to the Nordic *skald*. "The Minstrels seem to have been the genuine successors of the ancient Bards, who united the arts of Poetry and Music, and sung verses to the harp, of their own composing," he wrote in the essay's opening paragraph. "Their skill was considered as something divine, their persons were deemed sacred, their attendance was solicited by kings, and they were every where loaded with honours and rewards. In short, poets and their art were held among them in that rude admiration, which is never shown by an ignorant people to such as excel them in intellectual accomplishments."[42] The poetry of the

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[40] Lewis. p.84.; Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). pp.211-49.

[41] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A9 vers.

[42] Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1765). Vol. 1, p.xv [Hereafter *Reliques*]

minstrels bridged the gap between the courtly and the folk; revered, but rude: divine, but earthy: beautiful, but authentic. A bardic figure is represented on the title page, strumming a harp to a rapt (noble) audience before a Gothic castle – perhaps the same castle that sits in ruin on the recto frontispiece. This characterisation was expanded in the second edition, in which Percy explicitly tied the genius of the Gothic minstrels to the locale of his patron, the Duchess of Northumberland:

> I cannot conclude this account of the ancient English Minstrels without remarking that they are most of them represented to have been from the North of England. There is scarce an old historical song or ballad wherein a Minstrel or Harper appears, but he is characterized by way of eminence to have been 'of the North Countrye:' and indeed the prevalence of the northern dialect in such compositions shows that this representation is real.[43]

Though this argument could be considered disingenuous given the confirmation bias of Percy's sources (he would have found traditions of minstrelsy elsewhere in the British Isles had he done field work for the book), their bardic talents were, Percy suggests, fostered by the noble English house of Northumberland and a part of the English/British identity.[44] Percy's allegiance to the Gothic identity was politically and professionally useful – it allowed him to avoid problematic Jacobite associations that littered contemporary folk literature and enabled him to access the literary holdings of the Northumberlands. He had a passionate and apparently genuine interest in Teutonic literature not because of its comprehensive physical realisation, but also because the Gothic appealed to his taste. He saw in himself a minstrel who could speak to his congregation as easily as he could speak to the Percy family; an

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[43] Thomas Percy, 'Essay on the Ancient Minstrels', in *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1767), pp. xix–xxxviii.

[44] He consecrated the memory of the minstrels to the house of Northumberland in the dedication. "By such Bards, Madam, as I am now introducing to your presence, was the infancy of genius nurtured and advanced, by such were the minds of unlettered warriors softened and enlarged, by such was the memory of illustrious actions preserved and propagated, by such were the heroic deeds of the Earls of Northumberland sung at festivals in the hall of Alnwick: and those songs, which the bounty of your ancestors rewarded, now return to your Ladyship by a kind of hereditary right." Percy, *Reliques.* Vol. 1, p.vii.

appropriate custodian of the literary history of a Britain which, as he saw it, depended upon a form of Anglo-supremacy to survive and thrive in an era of significant international change. As Kathryn Sutherland writes, “Percy gave the figure of the minstrel a bold, imaginative coherence, as he did to the ballads he so freely emended, providing a national poet and a national song.”[45] This imaginative coherence also takes on a moral aspect, as the Homeric tradition was used to justify the nationalistic impulse in folk literature. Katie Trumpener has argued that “For nationalist antiquaries, the bard is the mouthpiece for a whole society, articulating its values, chronicling its history, and mourning the inconsolable tragedy of its collapse.”[46] I would add to this that, for certain nationalist antiquaries (such as Percy), there is no tragedy of the society collapsing, as their stadial view on history demands that the primitive society of the past develops into the enlightened society of the present. In the view of these antiquarians, this development will lead to even greater things in the future, a future which, according to nationalists, is secure in the eternal predestination of the nation. In the words of Benedict Anderson, “If nation-states are widely conceded to be ‘new’ and ‘historical’, the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, guide into a limitless future. It is the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny.”[47] For Percy, this meant emphasising England’s gothic past to guide the nation into a limitless future as Britain.

The idea that the leadership of Britain should be an English pursuit was not exclusive to Percy, and nor was it the purview of the more fanatical nationalists such as John Wilkes, who protested that “by you, the English name, is now melted down to Briton,”[48] in a diatribe against the King. Like much of what Wilkes wrote – indeed, like the majority of xenophobic discourse even today – Percy’s milder form of nationalism was reactive. In the 1750s, having quashed the Jacobite political (though not necessarily cultural, as Jacobite sympathies were still to be found in contemporary

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[45] Kathryn Sutherland, ‘The Native Poet: The Influence of Percy’s Minstrel from Beattie to Wordsworth’, *The Review of English Studies*, 33.132 (1982), 414–33. pp.418-9.

[46] Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). p.6.

[47] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006). pp.11-2.

[48] Alexander Stephens, *Memoirs of John Horne Tooke* (London: J. Johnson, 1813). p.61.

literary and artistic responses) threat through martial force and repressive legislation, the British leadership assumed that the Scots' role in Britain would be one of a supportive resource. Secretary for War, Lord Barrington told parliament that "I am for having always in our army as many Scottish soldiers as possible; not that I think them more brave than those of any other country we can recruit from, but because they are generally more hardy and less mutinous."[49] In fact, for many well-to-do Scottish people the relationship would become reciprocal, as Scots began to seize the social and professional opportunities to which they were now entitled south of the border. It was to this opportunism that Wilkes and his allies reacted. In 1763, the second year of John Stuart, the Earl of Bute's brief time as the first Scottish Prime Minister, the English satirist Charles Churchill published 'The Prophecy of Famine', a cautionary tale on Scottish advancement, which warned:

> Into our places, states, and beds they creep;
> They've got the sense to get what we want sense to keep.[50]

An anonymous 1762 engraving entitled *The Caledonians Arrival in Money-land* warns of a similar fate, as a gaggle of kilted sycophants crowd around a Laird in supplication saying "Since I have been in money-land I am grown as fat as an alderman"; "Twa thousand a year shall do for me"; and "Now I'm a Laird too I mauna sell any mair Oatmeal."[51] The enmity which arose from this perceived opportunism was propped up by centuries of "mutual hatred, mistrust and armed conflict […] since the eleventh century at least," as well as a far more recent recollection of atrocities at Culloden and in the wake of Jacobite marches south.[52] In Percy's sphere of experience, the fact that Scottish antiquarian poetry was undoubtedly in vogue was a source of consternation to him, but "Far from blaming this attention in the Scotch," he wrote, it was to the shame of the English that they:

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[49] Quoted in Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992). p.120.

[50] Charles Churchill, *The Prophecy of Famine: A Scots Pastoral* (London: G. Kearsly, 1763). p.11.

[51] Reproduced in Colley. p.121. 'The Caledonians Arrival in Money-Land'. *Library of Congress* (British Cartoon Prints Collection, 1762) <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006682175/> [accessed 16 June 2017].

[52] Colley. p.117.

> have not shewn the same respect to the peculiarities of their own Country, but by their supineness and neglect, have suffered a foolish and inveterate prejudice to root itself in the minds of their compatriots […] which might have been in a good measure presented had they occasionally given us specimens of the treasures contained in their native language; and which may even yet be in part removed by the same means.[53]

Percy had a solution to the problem of English antipathy towards Scottish cultural advancement, and it lay in his Folio Manuscript. As an antiquarian, he didn't resist the Albannach urge to celebrate the historical Celtic culture, but he undoubtedly saw that culture as stemming from an inferior historical root and something to be countered. Though Scottish ballads (and ballads about Scotland) feature prominently in the *Reliques*, the representation is often not complimentary (see chapter three). Though there is a clear Anglo-bias in his works, it is worth bearing in mind that Percy had no intention of stirring up enmity within the Union as writers such as John Wilkes may have had. Shortly after the publication of the *Reliques,* Percy wrote to his collaborator David Dalrymple, "I think it might do good in these times of Division and Distraction to show what our ancestors suffered in the state to which some want to reduce us."[54] Percy favoured unity – and hierarchy.

A note on 'Cultural Anglicanism'

It may be worth making explicit at this point what exactly is meant by the phrase "cultural Anglicanism". The theologist Diarmuid Martin has described the phrase in its modern usage as a term which "at times seems to reflect a brand, a corporate culture, or even a tribe, rather than what is essential in faith,"[55] a definition that speaks to ideological notions of appropriateness which were prominent in eighteenth-century

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[53] Lewis. p.2.

[54] *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes*, ed. by A. F. Falconer (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1954). p.123.

[55] Diarmuid Martin, 'The Christian in the Public Square', *The Furrow*, 58.9 (2016), 447–60. p.454.

literary/Enlightenment discourse. When we speak of cultural Anglicanism, we describe less the influence of faith on a person or a community and more the influence of religion. Moral judgements which are informed by cultural Anglicanism are not necessarily borne from ethical considerations but from the wider social context of the cultural standards of societies which are predominantly Anglican in their faith or government, such as eighteenth-century England/Britain. As a Church of England cleric (and later Bishop), Percy's adult life was strongly informed by Anglican influences. When I describe Thomas Percy as being culturally Anglican, his faith comes with the assumptions of English-speaking, class stability, literacy and associated cultural markers not limited to language and social standing. His life is, at least retrospectively, defined far more by his cultural contributions than his religious ones. Though he did write on religion,[56] he was more prolific in his life and legacy as a scholar of ancient literature, and as a clergyman he was something of a careerist whose sincere faith catalysed his ambition.[57] Cultural Anglicanism therefore refers to his aesthetic assessments informed by religion rather than his spiritual or philosophical ones.

The Enlightenment Context

As a prominent intellectual working in eighteenth-century Britain, it is important to consider Percy's engagement with the predominant intellectual movement of the era: the Enlightenment. It will be especially valuable to analyse Percy's nationalistic tendencies within the context of the Enlightenment literati's national and world-view. The Enlightenment as it emerged in Britain (and, specifically Scotland, where many key Enlightenment figures lived, worked, and wrote) was a movement that celebrated Scottishness, Britishness, and Europeanism. Scotland had long benefited from its superb university tradition. By the time the *Reliques* was released, most of the major British universities were in Scotland, and the universities at St Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh were internationally renowned due to their "enthusiastic receptivity to new ideas in philosophy, theology, law, medicine, mathematics and

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[56] Percy published various sermons and religious texts, notably a new edition of *Song of Solomon* in 1764 and a *Key to the New Testament* in 1766. The latter was a tremendous and enduring financial success, being republished throughout the nineteenth century. See E. K. A. Mackenzie, 'Thomas Percy's Great Schemes', *The Modern Language Review*, 43.1 (1948), 34–38. p.37n.

[57] Robert T. Clark Jr, 'Herder, Percy, and the Song of Songs', *PMLA*, 61.4 (1961), 1087–1100. pp.1087-8.

science."[58] In some ways, in fact, they were superior to their English counterparts; between 1750 and 1850, the older and larger Oxford and Cambridge produced around 500 doctors of medicine, but the universities in Scotland graduated 10,000.[59] Scotland, especially in the lowlands and central belt, enjoyed a renewed prosperity in the years following the Union of 1707, with the most talented and educated Scottish people prominently collaborating with their new English compatriots in politics, engineering, warfare, architecture, and education.[60] The Enlightenment was also a cog in the British Imperial machine, as political and legal advancements, developed in the community of Scottish literati, helped form the aggressive authority which would come to define Britain's colonial policy after the American war, though many Scottish rationalists such as Adam Smith would denounce some aspects of imperialism, namely slavery, as inhumane.[61] The Enlightenment in Scotland was also happening parallel to rationalist advancements throughout Europe, such as in the philosophical work of Immanuel Kant, who wrote that:

> Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere aude! [Dare to know!] "Have courage to use your own reason!" – that is the motto of enlightenment.[62]

Enlightenment was characterised in part by the sharing of knowledge, often by

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[58] 'Introduction: What was the Scottish Enlightenment?', *The Scottish Enlightenment: An Anthology*, ed. by Alexander Broadie (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1997). p.11.

[59] Colley. p.123.

[60] Ibid. pp.123-4.

[61] "There is not a negro from the coast of Africa who does not […] possess a degree of magnanimity which the soul of his sordid master is too often scarce capable of conceiving." Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. by A. L. Macfie and D. D. Raphael (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). p.206. Though it is certainly worth noting that Smith was an abolitionist primarily because he saw slavery as an unprofitable enterprise. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations, Vols. 1-3*, ed. by Andrew Skinner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970). pp.484-95.

[62] Immanuel Kant, 'What Is Enlightenment?', in *On History*, ed. by Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), pp. 3–10. p.3.

epistolary means, which was known as the 'Republic of Letters'. On the national and international stages, the academic advancements made in Scottish universities were tremendously influential. Scotland's Enlightenment was an international and textual movement which produced the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, first published in Edinburgh between 1768 and 1771; an internationally renowned reference text that continued to be edited and published in Edinburgh until 1898 (and itself an anthological publication of a sort). Because the movement had such wide international influence (and was itself informed by far-reaching international influences), it resisted parochial nationalism. It was a cosmopolitan movement with internationalist aims. Percy's Anglo-nationalism does not sit easily with Enlightenment values of cosmopolitanism. In his book on the subject, Thomas J. Sclereth defines Enlightenment cosmopolitanism as "an attitude of mind that attempted to transcend chauvinistic national loyalties or parochial prejudices in its intellectual interests and pursuits,"[63] a description which appears to strongly refute Percy's approach to anthology and translation. Where much Enlightenment thought was tied up in theories of how to "improve" society, Percy's antiquarianism at times seems static and backwards-looking. Percy's personal interests were certainly varied enough to befit a gentleman of the Enlightenment – the contents of his personal library are testament to this – but in his work, he was single-minded, and though his literary efforts appear at first to be diverse, they work in tandem towards a single national vision. In fact, the Enlightenment as a concept is likely to have offered Percy a conflicted sort of fascination. Though his methodologies – such as his interest in philology and his international epistolary network – operate within the tenets of Enlightenment, the contents of his work demonstrate certain theological and political qualms.

Research Questions and Methodologies

This thesis will focus mainly on Percy's three major anthologies: *Hau Kiou Choaan: or, The Pleasing History* (1761; also to a lesser extent its sister volume *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* published the following year), which was the first

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[63] Thomas J. Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought, Its Form and Function in the Ideas of Franklin, Hume, and Voltaire, 1694-1790* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977). p.xi.

complete English translation of a Chinese novel; *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763), a short volume of Icelandic poems directly inspired by Ossian; and his greatest work *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). Though his work would be less favourably evaluated in later years as more comprehensive and less erroneous versions of ballads and sinological and skaldic literatures would come to be published, he nevertheless secured an enduring legacy that made his name synonymous with literary antiquarianism and the ballad movement.

The thesis will answer the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the national identity Percy seeks to construct/invent?
2. What is the role of anthology in the construction of Percy's literary national narrative?
3. How does a theoretical perspective on book history help us to develop a nuanced understanding of the applications of anthology?

These questions will be explored over four chapters. Chapter one, 'Anthology as National Canvas', will explore how anthology works generally in the eighteenth century, particularly in terms of its uses for antiquarians. What is Percy's philosophy of the nation, and how are such philosophies contested and expressed through anthology? Chapter two, 'National Identity in the Translated Anthology', will focus on *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, which I consider to be a pretext or practice run for his greater, later effort in the *Reliques*. This chapter locates anthology as a tool for antiquarianism – looking back at the nation's past – but also a futurist exercise in predicting and suggesting the nation's future by its artefacts. Chapter three, 'Britain and the *Reliques*', is concentrated on the composition of the first edition of the major ballad work, drawing out the various textual identities represented therein and examining the hierarchy placed upon these identities by Percy, interrogating the philosophical value of and textual evidence for this hierarchy. This chapter includes a deconstruction of four ballads of the *Reliques* chosen for their unique and varied perspectives on identities in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century. Chapter three also posits the idea of 'anthological' as an epistemological value; as a descriptor of how (national) ideas are invented, rather than merely how textual collections are

constructed. This central vein will be supported by the perspectives contained in chapter four, 'Applied Anthology', which considers various theoretical perspectives on the construction of the book, the nature of the voice of the text, and the ownership of narrative, to show that anthology best represents the nation by allowing (more than novels, poetry, drama, etc.) for a multiplicity of expression within a single text, but is still limited by the presence of an editor, who may represent the colonial impulse within nationalism. This chapter will draw on the writings of Gérard Genette, Mikhail Bakhtin, Edward Said, and Hélène Cixous, among others, to demonstrate that a diverse theoretical framework is required to parse the application of anthology in (inter)national literary study. The overarching argument of this thesis is that in the collaborative process of nation-building, anthology is the best vehicle for representations of national identity, because its collaborative nature allows for hybridity and plurality. Thomas Percy uses not only the literature within his anthologies, but also the anthology format itself to interrogate the nature of Britishness in the mid-eighteenth century.

The methodological approach of this thesis has been primarily archival. I have spent a considerable amount of time with the Percy Collection at Queen's University Belfast Special Collections, where a significant selection of his personal library is currently housed, including first (and subsequent) edition copies of all of Percy's books discussed in this thesis as well as his own first editions of Milton,[64] Ramsay,[65] and Dryden.[66] Percy's handwritten marginal notes have been invaluable in discovering his editorial process.[67] I have been fortunate to visit the Special Collections at the University of Glasgow, which also has a first edition of the *Reliques* in impeccable condition.[68] The Mitchell Library in Glasgow contains the Foulis Collection, a Glasgow publishing house

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[64] John Milton, *Poems of John Milton* (London: Humphrey Moseley, 1645) Queen's University Belfast Special Collections Percy 584.
[65] Allan Ramsay, *The Gentle Shepherd: A Scots Pastoral-Comedy* (London: J. Watson, 1743) Queen's University Belfast Special Collections Percy 607.
[66] John Dryden, *Religio Laici: Or a Layman's Faith* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1682) Queen's University Belfast Special Collections Percy Pamph. 13 (i).
[67] Percy's diverse library was sold by Sotheby's in 1969 and catalogued, though the electronic version of this catalogue was only completed relatively recently and digitisation efforts are not yet complete. Queen's University Belfast Special Collections Percy h Z921.Q3 PERC.
[68] University of Glasgow Special Collections BD20-h24/25/26.

whose publications were consulted extensively by Percy thanks to the mutual relationship with David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes. I was delighted to have the opportunity to visit Bishop Percy's own famous Folio Manuscript during the period of my MPhil (2012-13), and again in 2017 during the final stages of preparation for this thesis.[69] Finally, I am extremely grateful to have received special dispensation to consult with artefacts and archival holdings at Dromore Cathedral, many of which had never before been seen by the public, including a 1790 anonymous print of Percy feeding swans in the River Lagan and a 1785 Charter of James I with Percy's notes in the margin, apparently correcting it for a new copy.[70] The unprecedented access to these materials I was granted led me to a greater understanding of Percy's reception as a Bishop, and to the shape of his career to come as he saw it following his promotion. The benefit of tactile manuscript and rare book research to a project of this nature cannot be overstated. As Barbara L'Eplattenier has observed, "historical studies are difficult to replicate […] readers must rely on the (unstated) historical methods of the researcher. As readers, we are dependent on accepting the version or analysis presented to us."[71] For a study which depended so heavily on unravelling Percy's own editorial process, to 'rely on the unstated historical methods of the researcher' was insufficient. By managing my own archival research, I was able to circumvent extratextual reliance and achieve what I believe to be a more authentic insight into Percy's apparent plan for the books: plans which too often went awry.

One difficulty posed by archival methodology is the lack of training available to students at any level in how to work with archives, a detailed and intimate process that requires a knowledge of bibliography, palaeography, historical linguistics, and library science just to begin to parse the object. This problem has been acknowledged by Alexis Ramsay *et al*, who wrote of historical research that "For the most part, we've learned on our own how to search for documents, how to talk to archivists, how to achieve funding, and how to work documents once we found them […] Our major

[69] British Library Add. MS. 27879.

[70] These materials are not yet catalogued.

[71] Barbara L'Eplattenier, 'An Argument for Archival Research Methods: Thinking Beyond Methodology', *College English*, 72.1 (2009), 67–79. p.73.

source for information about archives was trial and error and conversations with others who have 'gone before.'"[72] What Ramsay and her co-writers say closely mirrors my own experience, and though I found archival research to be enriching and often enjoyable, it was a taxing learning curve. I identified strongly with Pertti Alasuutari's metaphor of the archival historian as a detective, sifting through "false leads" for a glimmer of information.[73] On the other hand, managing the balance between flexible expectations and methodical approach, which can only be learned by diving directly into the archives themselves, inspired what I consider to be some of the most fascinating and original ideas in this thesis. As the route between libraries to compose my thesis began to resemble a route Percy's books and ballad copies might have taken to reach his writing-desk, I began to conceptualise the anthology as a singular spatial location for a diverse geography of texts, expanding the idea of what a book can be. In this way, to echo the words of Katherine Tirabassi, "The method itself was organic, shaped by the research process itself and shaped by other key theoretical and pragmatic factors."[74] In spite, therefore, of the not insignificant temporal, geographic, and financial restrictions imposed by archival work, research of this nature was not only necessary to compile this thesis, it became central to the thesis's very argument of the potential of anthology.

One issue that was highlighted in particular by working in the Percy collection at Queen's University Belfast was the divergence in content between different editions of Percy's *Reliques*. The book went through four editions in Percy's lifetime (though he claimed, probably out of modesty and professional posturing, that his nephew Thomas did the bulk of the work on the fourth edition), and the content and political tone of

[72] Alexis E. Ramsay and others, 'Introduction', in *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*, ed. by Alexis E. Ramsay and others (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010), pp. 1–8. p.1. See also Jonathan Buehl, Tamar Chute and Anne Fields, 'Training in the Archives: Archival Research as Professional Development', *College Composition and Communication*, 64.2 (2012), 274–305.

[73] "It is precisely for this reason that taking 'field notes' about the development of one's thinking is needed […] The text can be like a detective story, where one presents these 'false leads' until they are revealed to be a dead-end." Pertti Alasuutari, *Researching Culture: Qualitative Method and Cultural Studies* (London: SAGE, 1995). p.192.

[74] Katherine E. Tirabassi, 'Journeying into the Archives: Exploring the Pragmatics of Archival Research', in *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*, ed. by Alexis E. Ramsay and others (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010), pp. 169–80. p.70.

the subsequent editions changes along with Percy's own accomplishments and priorities for the future. In this thesis, the 1765 first edition is taken as the authoritative version of the text. This is not because the changes made to the subsequent editions are insignificant or unimportant, but because spatial limitations compel me to be narrower in my textual selections (however, the textual afterlives of the *Reliques* is, in my opinion, a necessary project in waiting with diverse possible avenues). A couple of factors informed the decision to use the 1765 edition. The first is practical. Although I have been able to consult first editions of the *Reliques* at the University of Glasgow and Queen's University Belfast libraries, Nick Groom's 1996 Routledge edition of the *Reliques* is an excellent resource, and it takes the 1765 edition as its copy-text.[75] The second is that there is a readily apparent relationship between the 1765 edition and the other anthologies contained herein, because the first edition of the *Reliques* was necessarily informed by his immediately previous scholarship whereas subsequent editions were allowed to percolate within their own context. The major limitation of this approach is that Percy's experience of Irish literature and culture was severely limited prior to his promotion to Bishop in 1782, and therefore the Irish experience does not factor into his discourse on Britishness or his interpretation of colonial literary traditions. Although the Irish dimension of Percy's literature would fall under the theoretical remit of this thesis, it is a discussion which would be best served in a textual afterlives project concentrating specifically on the afterlives of the *Reliques*.

Finally, it behoves me to clarify the philological and epistemological position this thesis takes on a couple of recurrent terms throughout, namely 'identity' and 'anthology'. 'Identity' typically refers to national identity. When I speak of identity in the context of this thesis, I am referring to the configuration of the self on a national level and as part of a national community, particularly in the context of the eighteenth century and the myriad social, economic, and political shifts that were occurring at that time. The main such shift is the Union of 1707, when the question of British identity became a social, cultural, and legal one, rather than merely geographic. While the general English

[75] Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, ed. by Nick Groom (London: Routledge 1996).

consensus was that the Scots should acculturate to become more like the English culturally, the Scots tended to favour an assimilation that would allow them to become equal partners in a hybrid identity.[76] The tension between the two major geopolitical parties in the Union (England and Scotland) would continue to be explored in literature throughout the long eighteenth century and beyond, and Percy's balladic exploration of identity in a nation in flux was just one such example.[77] Antiquarianism – a mode of historiography with a particular attachment to objects and artefacts – was a useful mode for discussions of contemporary identity because it suggested that current identities had a tangible root that could be catalogued as 'belonging' to a nation. In the case of texts, the antiquities in which Percy was most interested, this national root also had a linguistic dimension which located the identity even more firmly in a particular place and time. Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign,"[78] and theorises identifying with the nation as "belonging with 'kinship' and 'religion', rather than with 'liberalism' or 'fascism'."[79] (National) identity, therefore, is the expression of the lived experience of finding kinship with an imagined political community. Anderson identifies the eighteenth century as being the dawn of nationalism (the ideological conviction driving national identity):

> The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism, brought with it its own modern darkness. With the ebbing of religious belief, the suffering which belief in part composed did not disappear. Disintegration of paradise: nothing makes fatality more arbitrary. Absurdity of salvation: nothing makes another style of continuity more necessary. What then was required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning […] few things were (are) better suited to this end than an idea of nation. If nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and

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[76] Michael Hickey, 'The Acts of Union and the Shaping of British Identity', *Binghamton Journal of History*, 15 (2014), 1–12.
[77] See Philip Connell.
[78] Benedict Anderson. p.6.
[79] Ibid. p.5.

> 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and still more important, glide into a limitless future. It is the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny.[80]

The Enlightenment brought with it a secular dependence on nationhood as a site of identity, defined in Britain by the shifting of borders. The first edition of the *Edinburgh Review* was prefaced with an identification that "The memory of our ancient state [Scotland] is not so much obliterated, but that, by comparing the past with the present, we may clearly see the superior advantages we now enjoy, and readily discern from what source they flow."[81] Enlightenment writers, particularly in Scotland, were developing a theory of nationhood that was increasingly defined by structural necessity and not Romantic nationalist dynamic.[82] Writers of this era were also responding to the nature of borders as a defining feature of British nationhood. As this chapter has already alluded, Macpherson was responding to what he perceived as a violent absorption of Highland culture in the project of the Union, and he therefore constructed a national narrative whereby that border could be rebuilt and ideologically defended. Percy, too, was responding to the loss of the border around and near to his imagined community of Northumberland, by selecting ballads which were identifiably Scottish and anthologising them under a titular banner of Englishness and an ideological banner of Britishness. Enlightenment also had a significant impact on the personal configuration of identity, as people began to consider the role of the nation globally, including as an imperial or colonial agent. Enlightenment and industrialisation suggested a hierarchy in nationhood, whereby nations were either enlightened (by European standards) or primitive.[83] In the eighteenth century, therefore, inhabitants of Britain were obliged to consider their identity as British in terms of the identities that had existed before "British" and in terms of the competing global identities against

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[80] Ibid. pp.11-12.

[81] 'Preface', *The Edinburgh Review* (Edinburgh: G. Hamilton & J. Balfour 1755), pp.i-v. p.iii.

[82] See Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (Thetford: Lowe and Brydone Printers, 1977)., particularly pp.92-125.

[83] See Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technlogy, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). pp.21-129.

which Britishness must be measured in the new intellectual milieu. To the extent that Percy worked for and within the British establishment, his version of Britishness is a conservative one. He identified a native English genius while remaining cautious about contemporary advocates of the same genius in Scotland and Wales. His engagement with Britishness is to be understood as Anglican; informed by his moral, political, and spiritual allegiance with the Church of England. The native quality of genius he identified in British poetry was Gothic in its origins and continuation. Though he supported and advocated for Scottish strains of poetry in the *Reliques*, the moral authority of Britain remained English. In this respect, his literary identity is an Anglo-British one.

The experience of the loss of identity is perhaps more easily articulated by those who have had more to lose – i.e., those who are at the bottom of what Krishnan Kumar has described as "England's hegemony over the rest of the British Isles."[84] It is also true that the identity of the English is defined not by the loss of its distinct sense of self but by Britain's rapid imperial expansion, leading to what Katie Trumpener has termed "the systematic underdevelopment of Englishness." She further argues that:

> To the degree that England becomes the centre of the empire, its own internal sense of culture accordingly fails to develop. And to the degree that the English language, coercively imposed on the British peripheries, comes to serve as the means of imperial absorption, it becomes an increasingly minimal basis for identifying Englishness.[85]

This accounts for the contemporary critical evaluation of expressions of English national identity in folkloristics lacking in comparison to those of Scotland and Ireland, where scholarship has explored not only the historical context but also the literary one more thoroughly.[86] It is therefore imperative in discussions of national literatures in

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[84] Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). p.1.
[85] Trumpener. pp.15-16.
[86] See Philip Connell. p.166.

the eighteenth century to consider identity, including the English identity expressed by Percy, as a hybrid, encapsulating Englishness, Britishness, and the relative hierarchical position of the imagined communities therein. In this thesis, 'the nation' typically refers to the contemporary geographic entity 'Britain' in this context (which, for example, did not become a United Kingdom with Ireland until 1801), and 'identity' to any expressed understanding and claiming of Britishness.

The second term is 'anthology', which will be more fully articulated as the thesis develops. 'Anthology' in this thesis will refer both to a published book which is a collection of various pieces of literature and the act of drawing together ideas under a single ideological banner, such as was necessary under the Union of 1707 wherein the ideas were those of the individual previously autochthonous nations and the ideology is post-Union Britishness. This reconceptualization of anthology as a process rather than simply a state of print is the main focus of this thesis, and is supported by existing book-historical research, which describes the anthology-book as "the expression of heteroglossia and plenty, the diversity of a plural society that simultaneously advertises communality and licenses divergence."[87] Anthologies enjoyed a publishing boom in the eighteenth century due to permissive legislation allowing booksellers to make money quickly by reprinting "imitations, condensations, adaptions, anthologies, indexes, and similar partial copies," until perpetual copyright was overturned in 1774.[88] The debate over intellectual property, occurring parallel to and symbiotically with the growth of the anthology industry, "institutionalized the belief that the formation of a literary culture takes precedence over the pecuniary rights of individual authors and booksellers."[89] The right to anthologise was also the right to take ownership of a literature that represented one's national identity. Anthologies became a synecdoche for communities, and according to Leah Price their editors were "an amanuensis rather than a creator […] The anthologist claims to stand within – and for –

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[87] Barbara M. Benedict, 'The Paradox of the Anthology: Collecting and Difference in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *New Literary History*, 34.2 (2003), 231–56. p.252.

[88] Simon Stern, 'Copyright, Originality, and the Public Domain in Eighteenth-Century England', *Originality and Intellectual Property in the French and English Enlightenment*, ed. by Reginald McGinnis (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 69–101. p.69.

[89] Trevor Ross, 'Copyright and the Invention of Tradition', *American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 26.1 (1992), 1–27. p.3.

the same audience that he addresses."[90] In the specific context of Britain in the eighteenth century – after all, this is a generation of legislation that would affect the first truly 'British' citizens – the selective process of both choosing and reading an anthology speaks to the process of self-determination that is inherent to exploring one's own identity within the parameters of the shifting borders of a new state. With this context in mind, this thesis intends to broaden the concept of anthology from its literal definition of a book of collected/excerpted works to a reading/writing imaginative process wherein the reader/writer participates in the construction of their own identity in the process of reading/writing. In this sense, anthology becomes a creative act in the eighteenth century rather than a purely commercial one. Further scholarship on anthologies building on the work of Price, Benedict, and others is much needed, particularly scholarship which attends to the theoretical aspect of this history. The appetite for interrogating Englishness as the dominant identity in the British Isles and various movements to rebalance or deconstruct this hegemony (political or otherwise) that we see in anthologies of the eighteenth century still exists to this day.[91] In this sense there is no single 'stable' British identity, and any study of anthologies produced as a reflection of the state of Britishness (and constituent attached identities) must reflect this: just as anthologies represent a collage of fragments, so too must an understanding of the British anthology reflect the plurality of the nature of Britishness. If anthology is the textual genre best suited to the exploration and containment of ideological plurality, then the plural representation of ideologies and identities is anthological.

Having identified the relevant pedagogical gaps that this thesis hopes to address, I would finally reflect on the difficulty of scaling such a project. There are many relevant and accessible anthologies with fascinating and diverse things to say about British identity in the long eighteenth century; James Macpherson has already been mentioned in this thesis, but in addition to this Joseph Ritson and Walter Scott both

[90] Leah Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel from Richardson to George Eliot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). p.68.
[91] Murray Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999). pp.134-41.

write anthology retrospectives in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and Allan Ramsay's *Tea Table Miscellany* was first published in 1724. All of the above would be candidates for a study of how identity in what after 1707 was termed 'Britain' was performative, constructed, or anthologically realised. As Michael Suarez has noted, "The bewildering number and variety of poetry miscellanies, each with its own complex intertextual relationships, has made scholars, perhaps understandably, reluctant to study the miscellany as a vital means for the publication and consumption of poetry in the eighteenth century."[92] Percy was chosen as the test subject for this study for a number of reasons. The first is practical; my previous work on Percy's ballads as an antiquarian language exercise, though peripheral to this thesis, equipped me with a confident knowledge of Percy and his work, and to continue exploring it seemed a natural progression.[93] However, his candidacy as the central figure of anthology as identity praxis is substantiated by the various other ways in which Percy is an innovative and influential literary figure. His relationships place him in a network of literary greats from Johnson to Dodsley. *Hau Kiou Choaan* was the first complete translation of a Chinese novel into English, anticipating the incipient trend for Chinoiserie that would occupy much of English leisure culture for decades. Less auspiciously, his work on Norse and Icelandic literature was prominently championed throughout the nineteenth century by certain European/white supremacist ethnologists, who were by no means the only audience for this material, but who did champion it as a literary framework for their ideology.[94] For better or (occasionally) worse, Percy's anthologies had a diversely interdisciplinary reach which makes them ideal for considering them as an arbiter for identity. His work, having fallen out of literary fashion for some time, deserves recuperation.

Review of Literature

This thesis is informed by a book-historical approach to reading literature and history.

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[92] Michael F. Suarez, 'The Production and Consumption of the Eighteenth-Century Poetic Miscellany', in *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays*, ed. by Isabel Rivers (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2007), pp. 217–51. p.245.

[93] Danni Glover, *Studies in Language Change in Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (Unpublished MPhil Thesis: University of Glasgow, 2014).

[94] Reginald Horsman, 'Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37.3 (1976), 387–410.

As such, it draws from a range of theory and research with varying degrees of specificity. Although Percy is unquestionably one of the most influential writers of the eighteenth century, monographs dedicated to his work are scant. His name appears at intervals in publications in various fields – ballads, ethnography, book history, Romantic literature – and he is still well-known today, but comparatively few modern critics and scholars have afforded him extensive attention. The major recent work on Percy is Nick Groom's *The Making of Percy's Reliques*, and he also features in the work of Maureen McLane. Leah Price and Barbara Benedict's histories of the eighteenth-century book provide context for the ways in which Percy collected and edited for his audience. The theoretical frameworks of nationalism and book construction offered by Benedict Anderson and Gérard Genette have provided the backdrop against which this thesis' theory of how the nation and the book interact develops. Finally, Bertram Davis' biographies of Percy and Linda Colley's *Britons* have been indispensable secondary records of Percy's life and times.[95]

Any modern study of Percy would be incomplete without Groom's scholarship in its foundations. *The Making of Percy's Reliques* is particularly useful for its methodology of identifying and collating Percy's sources, arranged in extensive appendices in the back. This methodology was useful in the preparation of my 2014 MPhil dissertation, and it continues to inform my approach to archival research of the sources of eighteenth-century literature, though this project is larger and more developed in its thematic scope than my previous work. Groom has identified several key transcriptions and library visits Percy made in the preparation of the *Reliques* first edition – such as his time in the Pepys library and his annotation of Robin Hood ballads – and identified the contents and order of the *Reliques* through multiple drafts, situating the 1765 first edition as an authoritative witness to Percy's editing style. The book is a substantial catalogue of Percy's library visits, borrowings, and literary

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[95] Though not directly consulted or referred to in this thesis, I would also like to acknowledge some recent doctoral theses on Percy which are shaping other aspects of scholarship. See Francis Ferguson, *Thomas Percy: Literary Antiquarianism as National Aesthetic* (Unpublished doctoral thesis: Queen's University Belfast, 2002); Paul Stephen Nash, *The Idea of China in British Literature 1757-1785* (Unpublished doctoral thesis: University of Edinburgh, 2013); Kevin Byers, *Folk Kan Synge Hit Bet Than I: The Medievalism of English Folkmusic, 1750-2013* (Unpublished doctoral thesis: Queen's University Belfast, 2014).

networks, and how these textual experiences shaped Britain's first major scholarly ballad work. In his own words, the book "focuses on what one man read, and how this affected his literary output. It provides a detailed analysis of Percy's reading, correspondence, and transcription habits to analyse the impact of a medium on the integrity of the text."[96] As the title would suggest, the study is more or less limited to the *Reliques*, which although allowing for extensive and detailed critical reporting, also has the effect of making the story of the book's production seem more episodic and stadial than it was. In fact, Percy worked on many tangents at once, often developing ideas in other texts that would be credited to the *Reliques* by future studies. One such example is his theory of minstrelsy as a continuation of Skaldic poetry, the seeds of which are seen in *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*.[97] When read alongside Bertram Davis' comprehensive biography of Percy,[98] the context for Percy's other major works[99] becomes clearer, and we can begin to consider them not only as texts which fed into his major ballad project but as texts with their own merits and limitations, distinct from his later career. The approach taken by this thesis requires both analyses: that these earlier books are instrumental in shaping Percy's political and literary views, but that they are also indicative of these views in their own rights. Groom's book is hugely assistive in shaping the framework of the theoretical discussion of book history contained herein, especially in chapter three.

Davis' biography also warrants a mention for its comprehensive chronology of Percy's life. Though not an analysis of Percy's work, it was valuable to this project because it provided detailed insight into the context of Percy's careers, both literary and clerical, throughout his various correspondences and professional alliances.[100] It is worth, for example, considering his literary output in three eras: pre-Northumberland, post-Northumberland, and Ireland. Though Davis' chronological breakdown is more minute

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[96] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.5.
[97] Ibid. p.92; Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A4 vers.
[98] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*.
[99] For the purposes of this thesis, *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*; though the irony that this suggests a structure wherein the other books are supportive and peripheral rather than independently worthy is clearly apparent.
[100] Davis' earlier, more slight book has a more literary focus. Bertram H Davis, *Thomas Percy* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981).

and detailed than this, by reading his biography in tandem with his communications and publications we might gleam some insight into how the friendships both personal and professional he enjoyed in these eras might have impacted the quality, content, and volume of his literary work. For example, details about Percy's time as Bishop[101] might inform the persuasive theory that the 1794 fourth edition of the *Reliques* was not, as Percy claimed, edited by his nephew, but by a now ennobled Percy seeking to disguise activities that might be seen as frivolous or antithetical to his clerical duties.[102] This thesis takes the 1765 publication of the *Reliques* as a chronological end point, but the scholarship is informed by the changing peripheries of Percy's life up to this point and beyond.

Much has been written on the formation of the British state in 1707. As one of the most significant single events of British history, its impact on global/Commonwealth politics is almost immeasurable. Linda Colley's *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* recovers a wide-ranging timeline of British social history in the long eighteenth century. The dates covered in the book represent what, for the purposes of this thesis, may concurrently be considered the context, release, and immediate impact of Percy's works. This timeline is useful for discussing the immediate social, cultural, and political context for many of Percy's editorial decisions, partly because Colley sees historical narrative and identity as being inextricably linked, stating as her intentions for the book as being:

> to uncover the identity, actions, and ideas of those men and women who were willing to support the existing order against the major threats their nation faced from without, to establish exactly what it was these Britons thought they were being loyal to, and what they expected to gain from their commitment [and] to show that it was during this period that a sense of British national identity was forged, and that the manner in which it was forged has shaped the quality of

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[101] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson.* pp.265-334.
[102] Ibid. pp.278-9.

> this particular sense of nationhood and belonging ever since, both in terms of its remarkable strengths and resilience, and in terms of its considerable and increasingly evident weaknesses.[103]

She interrogates the development of British patriotism – a concept peripheral to, but not discussed by, this thesis – and shows how by the peacetime Victorian era, patriotism of a specifically British bent became a required component of active citizenship. Colley's focus on conflict as a non-military endeavour is a useful lens through which to consider the various ways in which conflict has shaped the identities of Britain in this era, including in the machinations of print culture in which Percy was involved. Perhaps the most significant of these conflicts is the internal conflict of hybrid identities evident in Percy's work and alluded to as a British phenomenon in *Britons* when Colley writes:

> I am not suggesting for one moment that the growing sense of Britishness in this period supplanted and obliterated other loyalties. It did not. Identities are not like hats. Human beings can and do put on several at a time. Great Britain did not emerge by way of a 'blending' of the different regional or older national cultures contained within its boundaries as is sometimes maintained, nor is its genesis to be explained primarily in terms of an English 'core' imposing its cultural and political hegemony on a helpless and defrauded Celtic periphery […] Instead, Britishness was superimposed over an array of internal differences in response to contact with the Other, and above all in response to conflict with the Other.[104]

The position of this thesis varies significantly from Colley's analysis in the respect that the Britishness which was so superimposed was configured to match a primarily English

[103] Colley. p.1.
[104] Ibid. p.6.

identity, at least as far as Percy's own cultural position goes, but otherwise, it is the secondary historical text to which I most often refer throughout.

The Romantic context for Percy's work is the dimension through which he is most often examined today. Although this dimension is not strictly within the remit of this thesis, it is impossible to ignore Percy's impact on the questions of identity and poetics which would be taken up by Romantic authors in the century following the *Reliques.* Maureen McLane's book *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, and the Making of British Romantic Poetry* engages both the oral and the textual ballad in the history of the development of Romantic poetry in Britain, and how the Romantic tradition borrowed the minstrel figure to promote an ideal of native genius.[105] This book naturally takes much to do with Percy's *Reliques* as a work of ballad scholarship, but from the point of view of Percy as an anthologist of British literature more generally, her paper 'British Romantic Homer: Oral Tradition, Primitive Poetry, and the Emergence of Comparative Poetics in Britain' (co-authored with Laura Slatkin) speaks to how primitivism and orality were spun (or not) as valuable and worthy aspects of literature. This discussion is pertinent not only to the *Reliques* but also to Percy's Chinese and Nordic literatures. McLane and Slatkin trace the legacy of Homer in Britain throughout the eighteenth century, showing that he was adopted and reinvented by various philosophers and writers "as a crucial solvent or counter in debates over cultural progress, the status of media (oral/writerly/print), and the relation of poetry to its medial situation."[106] They place Homer as "a zone of preliminary poetic and cultural research,"[107] suggesting that – to literary historians and philosophers of the eighteenth century – one had to locate the character of innate poetic genius in a national literature in order that that literature be evaluated at all. In Percy, the *Reliques* are the most immediately accessible version of this, but *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* suggests a continuation from skaldic poetry to the medieval ballad whereas *Hau Kiou Choaan* unconvincingly contends that the Chinese have no such figure and therefore no such national poetic genius. Percy's major

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[105] Maureen N. McLane, *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, and the Making of British Romantic Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[106] McLane and Slatkin. p.689.
[107] Ibid. p.691.

scholarship is inextricably linked to the proto-Romantic Homer, identified as "unrecoverably primitive or miraculously present [and indicative of] demonstrably modern views, or more precisely Romantic" by Robert Fowler.[108] While this thesis is concerned with the consolidation and formation of new and old identities in the modern British nation-state, as an antiquarian Percy employed aspects of the Homeric tradition – configured in the *Reliques* as the courtly minstrel – in his case for a British identity. McLane's work, and in particular her work with Slatkin, inform questions of origin and contemporary scholarship addressed by this thesis.

Seth Lerer has identified a need for attention to anthologies in the field of book history studies, writing "If literary histories are (at least in part) the histories of reception, then the next great project should be a full-scale history of the idea of the anthology. If such a book is written, it may now look more like the fragmented pastiches that are our newer histories than like a traditional, linear account of form and function."[109] He wrote this three years after the release of Leah Price's *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel from Richardson to George Eliot*, which although not an entirely comprehensive history (as the title suggests, it focuses entirely on novel anthologies and abridgements) certainly goes some way to creating a foundation for the kind of scholarship called for by Lerer. Price's book takes as its starting point the epistolary anthologies formed from abridgements of Samuel Richardson's' novels *Clarissa* and *Grandison*, ending with a consumerist analysis of how George Eliot's books were anthologised for an increasingly literate public who were consumers of novels on an intellectual rather than merely leisurely level. Price argues that the demand for anthologies suggested a changing pace of reading that writers and publishers contended with on moral and social levels, and although she specifically refers to the pace of reading novels, this contention also speaks to the process of national self-invention suggested by Percy's anthologies. Price coins the term 'the culture of the commonplace' to describe the sharing of aphorisms, excerpts, and quotations which

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[108] Robert Fowler, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Homer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). p.3.

[109] Seth Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology', *PMLA*, 118.5 (2003), 1251–67. p.1263.

made reading anthologies an edifying, intellectually rigorous experience rather than a leisurely one. She argues that the anthologist's process of sharing (as opposed to creating) literature shifts the composing/reading relationship from a private and singular one to one which is public and collaborative, and characterises the anthologist as speaking "*ex officio* or not at all."[110] This is also true of Percy; he intervenes heavily in the anthology, but he always does so in his (self-realised) capacity as a guardian of the literature, with no pretence as to his role being greater than that of a circulator (at his most subtle he elevates his role in the paratexts; see chapters three and four). Price's book deals with the position of anthology in book history in one specific role, and although it shares with this thesis an interest in developing scholarship on anthologies, it differs somewhat in its approach and conclusions.

The 'paradox' alluded to in the title of Barbara Benedict's 'The Paradox of the Anthology: Collecting and Différence in Eighteenth-Century Britain' is that anthologies are "simultaneously inclusive and exclusive."[111] The anthology is notable not only for what the anthologist has included but what s/he has excluded, and also for what the reader chooses or does not chose to read; while the anthologist may present a suggested route of reading, the reader is essentially free to read as s/he wishes. This site of paradox arose, Benedict argues, from "the great shift in the nature of literature over the early modern period from an oral to a printed form, and from an elite to a mass-produced commodity."[112] Benedict's scholarship has been influential to this thesis in two main regards. First, it treats anthology as a genre, rather than a mere mode of printing, which has informed my analysis of the British anthology as being reflective of Britain in its form as well as content. Second, its analysis of the anthology as a place of hybridity has informed my analysis of the situation of identity within anthology. Benedict also examines the process of collecting that goes into the production of an anthology, expanding on the idea of collecting as a primarily or exclusively antiquarian pursuit: "The objects' power lay not in their intrinsic value but in their history and appearance: they were emblems for contemplation and reflective

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[110] Price. p.73.
[111] Benedict. p.245.
[112] Ibid. p.235.

study."[113] Benedict characterises the collection (both textual and object) as being collaborative in its reception, which was "particularly valuable at a time dedicated to healing forty years of social divisiveness," in the mid-eighteenth century.[114] She further asserts that this collaboration, combined with the contemporary explosion of anthologies in the book industry, made reading a more communal activity, encouraging the advancement of reading clubs and lending libraries. This experience of reading in parts reflects the structure of anthologies and is rewarded by it, and it also reflects the narrative of Percy's anthological constructions. In seeking and circulating drafts and sources amongst his correspondents, Percy created an anthological situation for his process of sourcing. Even when we read the *Reliques* in the most private and isolated situation, we are participating in a conversation between Percy, Dalrymple, Shenstone, Evans, and many other collaborators who offered Percy copies and the authors and communities from which these ballads and songs originated. Benedict's paper is a useful companion to Price's book; the analysis of markets offered by Price is complemented by that of readership offered by Benedict. Both have been influential in this thesis's analysis of anthology composition and demonstrate the need for scholarship on this genre that brings together the contexts of composition and reception for a more complete understanding of an under-researched yet culturally significant literary phenomenon.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* is a seminal work on nationalism. It subjected nationalism as a concept to a level of scrutiny hitherto unreached and to this date unparalleled in a single work, though its argument is quite rigidly dated in a Western print culture that no longer exists in a digital age. Its influence on the epistemology of this thesis is perhaps obvious; Anderson's characterises the nation as:

> An imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members,

[113] Ibid. p.236.
[114] Ibid. p.245.

> meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion […] limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations [and] sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm […] Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.[115]

This characterisation has informed the four nations approach to British history broadly adopted by this thesis in its analysis of Britain as a national identity on the periphery of other, older national identities.[116] Though it might be presumed that a 'loyal' citizen in the mid-eighteenth century would describe themselves as 'British', there is no reason why they may not privately imagine (or indeed publically declare) themselves to also be English or Scottish, or to reject outright a subsuming identity with which they had little common ground. This was the case with John Wilkes, who protested against the popularity of the phrase 'Great Britain' in his newspaper *The North Briton.*[117] The possibility of hybridity within national identity is central to the research questions of this thesis, particularly where it pertains to the nature of the identities Percy seeks to construct in his anthologies. Anderson's limitations when it comes to print culture as the driving force behind nationalism becoming less relevant in an increasingly digital age are not as acutely felt in the argument of this thesis, as it shares Anderson's eighteenth-century focus. In fact, his understanding of printed language as a primarily consumerist enterprise resonates with this thesis' argument that oral/low culture was (re)interpreted and mediated by Percy as belonging to those who had political and social capital:

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[115] Benedict Anderson. pp.6-7.

[116] See Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) pp.1-12 for more on the four nations approach.

[117] Colley. p.116.

> It is self-evident that all these lexicographers, philologists, grammarians, folklorists, publicists, and composers did not carry on their revolutionary activities in a vacuum. They were, after all, producers for the print-market, and they were linked, via that silent bazaar, to consuming publics. Who were these consumers?[118]

Anderson's nuanced portrayal of nationalism as a cultural double-edged sword resonates easily with the works of Thomas Percy. Because nationalist ideology has been the impetus for a great many international atrocities across recorded history, the modern critic's impulse is to avoid it as also being the impetus for cultural creation. To do so is to blind oneself to the realities of the political contexts of the culture we enjoy. As Anderson writes:

> In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?) to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts – show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles. On the other hand, how truly rare it is to find *analogous* nationalist products expressing fear and loathing.[119]

This definitional dichotomy encapsulates Percy's attitude towards creating nationalist art. Percy doesn't hate the Other; occasionally his attitude towards China is paranoid, and his opinion on Scottish history is hostile, but what drives his work is a sense of patriotic superiority. This is an important distinction because, as this thesis shows,

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[118] Benedict Anderson. p.75.
[119] Ibid. pp.141-2. Emphasis Anderson's.

Percy does not reject or eliminate alternative non-British identities; in fact, he often uses them as a marker of difference by which the superior value of Anglo-Britishness can be evaluated. Anderson's work on nationalism remains the most sophisticated framework for analysis of nationalisms in literature and provides useful nuance to the application of postcolonial frameworks such as those of Makdisi and Said to literatures which have not traditionally been considered under the postcolonial lens.[120]

Philip Connell's scholarship on the eighteenth century is wide-ranging; however, it is his 2006 article 'British Identities and the Politics of Ancient Poetry in Later Eighteenth-Century England' which has had the biggest impact on this thesis. This paper aims to elucidate "the relationship between cultural primitivism and more overtly politicized discourses of national identity," which he concludes "precludes the emergence of a coherent and ideologically consensual account of English literary tradition's 'ancient' originary moment."[121] As well as Percy, Connell focuses on Thomas Warton and the ubiquitous Macpherson, and characterises the debate on the identity of ancient British poetics as being on the one hand Gothic poetry and on the other Celtic. This polarity is too simple to be entirely convincing – for example, there is no suggestion given that there might be a diversity of Celtic traditions[122] – but as a study of the general reception of these ancient literatures in England in Percy's lifetime, the paper robustly links literary developments with specific historical occurrences, such as the convergence of Francophobia with radical Saxonism being met with the moderate Percy's increased reliance on French sources and common ancestry with the French in the second edition of the *Reliques*.[123] Connell concludes that the result of national identities and historical narratives converging was "an enduring ambiguity surrounding the ethno-historical sources of the English literary imagination,"[124] but rather than an ambiguity, this thesis takes the position that anthologies of ancient poetry such as the *Reliques* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* allow for a plurality of identities, a hybrid

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[120] Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003).
[121] Philip Connell. p.161; p.192.
[122] See Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image.* pp.1-4.
[123] Philip Connell. p.187.
[124] Ibid. p.192.

imagined community which was at once British and (in Percy's case) English, and though Connell is correct in his assertion that this negotiation "precluded the emergence of a coherent and ideological consensual account of English literary tradition's 'ancient' originary moment,"[125] this preclusion suggests the anthological state of Britain expressed by Percy and others in their anthologies of ancient poetics. It is not simply the case that antiquarian writers and editors were using ancient poems as a medium to express an individual national literary truth; rather it is the case that antiquarians such as Percy used the anthology format itself to show that the British identity/ies should allow for a sense of plurality or hybridity, because that was what reflected the sources of ancient British literature. For Percy, there was a dominant identity (Anglo-British) but he had no intention of delegitimising the Celtic history advocated for by Macpherson and others (though he correctly believed that Macpherson himself was not a legitimate representative of this literature). Percy and his peers were responding to Britain, of which England was the dominant, but not sole significant, part. Connell's paper is useful as a history of Percy and Warton's developing Gothicism as a response to and engagement with the rising proliferation of ancient poetics, and as a context to Percy's politics at the time of the *Reliques* publication.

Though it is important to consider the social, political, and literary contexts in which Percy's books developed, it is also vital to consider the technological advancements in publishing that enabled the books' success. This technology is exemplified in the paratexts, particularly in Percy's work as he had something of an obsession with printing minutiae. The term 'paratexts' was coined by Gérard Genette in his book *Seulis* (translated and republished as *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*) in which he defined the paratext as "what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public," or, less esoterically, the materials supplied with the text that are peripheral to the text but still impact its reception to some degree, such as the title, illustrations, footnotes, contents page,

[125] Ibid p.192.

preface, etc.[126] Genette's book has been recognised as one of the most significant studies in the theory of the book,[127] though it has also been criticized for its "frequent failure to account for the distinction between the author and the publishers, [Genette's] tendency to see the publisher as the enabler, indeed the continuation, of the author's intention, and paratexts as the vehicle, signals an untenable, essentialist fixity of meaning for the text."[128] Though the criticism of Genette's lack of attention to the sociology of the text is fair, his characterisation and analysis of the paratext is useful from the point of view of evaluating a text's production. In Percy's case it might be fair to say that the publisher was an enabler to a certain extent; he did have a relationship with Robert Dodsley fostered through their mutual friend Shenstone, and Dodsley indulged multiple last-minute errata and various elaborate demands in the book's production, and *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* were similarly beset with publishing issues.[129] Genette's influence in this thesis will mainly be seen in chapter four, where his interpretation of several paratexts strongly inform my analysis of their application in Percy's anthologies. His work lends theoretical perspectives to the methods of construction which are largely missing from discussions of anthology in the field of book history. Furthermore, his characterisation of the paratext as being in one sense peripheral and in another central to the understanding of the text speaks to themes of hybridity in identity present in this thesis. If the anthology can represent the voice of various identities within a geographical space, can the paratexts of what is necessarily a highly textual work also express identification, divergence, subversion, and hybridity both peripherally and centrally to the 'main' text as identity? This argument goes against Genette's assertion that the paratext is "only an assistant, only an accessory of the text,"[130] an argument which was also challenged by Alex Watson in his study of the Romantic annotation, who counters that "while eighteenth-century writers described the footnote in overwhelmingly hostile terms, they also used it to

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[126] Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[127] David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, *An Introduction to Book History* (New York: Routledge, 2005). pp.14-15.
[128] Juliet Gardiner, 'Recuperating the Author: Consuming Fictions in the 1990s', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 94.2 (2000), 255–74. p.258.
[129] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. pp.210-17.
[130] Genette. p.410.

create a diverse range of new literary practices,"[131] and by Christine Baatz who argues that "the typography of the *Reliques* contains a message of its own [and] achieved a successful and suggestive synthesis of recent developments in typography and more traditional stylistic features, and thus makes a programmatic statement."[132] The position of this thesis is that the paratext is both a technological feature of print that fosters and reflects reading practices, per Genette's argument, and a quasi-independent fountain of information, particularly in the case of Percy, whose paratexts were frequently so elaborate and detailed as to distract from the text itself. Nevertheless, Genette's study of what a paratext is capable of doing is the primary theoretical basis in this thesis for what the paratext does in Percy's editorial hands.

This thesis hopes to show that Percy's construction of British identity in the eighteenth century was anthological in its nature, and that such anthological construction was only appropriate for a national identity that demanded space for hybridity. It is hoped that, in doing so, the complex nature of British identity for which Percy advocated will be highlighted and it will be shown that even conservative writers in the eighteenth century worked to conceptualise Britain in new and innovative ways. By taking a book-historical approach that treats genre itself as a mode of expression rather than a mere mediator for meaning, I hope to show that the field of book history allows space for fruitful discussion on historical and contemporary identities not only within this thesis' British remit, but also globally.

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[131] Alex Watson, *Romantic Marginality: Nation and Empire on the Borders of the Page* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012). p.29.

[132] Christine Baatz, '"A Strange Collection of Trash"? The Re-Evaluation of Medieval Literature in Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765)', in *Anthologies of British Poetry: Critical Perspectives from Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. by Barbara Korte, Ralf Schneider, and Stephanie Lethbridge (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), pp. 105–24. p.109.

Chapter one – Anthology as national canvas

Introduction

What is an anthology? What does it do? These questions are deceptively difficult.[1] The forms and functions of anthology are often not so clearly defined in the received knowledge of the academy. In the eighteenth century, the anthology and the novel were closely related as abridged and excerpted versions of the novel were often more affordable and accessible to readers. The three major novels of Samuel Richardson (*Pamela* (1740) *Clarissa* (1748) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753)) all feature characters who anthologise texts for their own amusement, often reproduced in the novels themselves.[2] The anthological efforts of Richardson's protagonists were recreated when, first at Richardson's impetus and later by third-party publishers, his own novels were later abridged and republished for brevity, and Richardson himself considered some sections to be "of general use and service,"[3] and published a *Collection of such of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Cautions, Aphorisms, Reflections and Observations contained in the History [of Clarissa], as presumed to be of general Use and service* in 1755 and a further volume, *A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections, Contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison* in 1755. During the long eighteenth century which helped define both art forms, the novel and the anthology shared many aspects. In Samuel Richardson's anthologies, as in the case of any anthology, the editor has decided which texts – and indeed which parts of those texts – are of relevance or interest to the reader. In Percy's case, the useful texts were the ones that supported his ideas of British identity: Anglican, Gothic in their sensibility and aesthetic, Anglo-centric, literate. Where fragments of a text (or, as is often the case of anthologised poetry, selected entire texts) have been deemed aesthetically or ideologically more

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[1] One thing that an anthology "does" in the eighteenth century is enable a bookseller to cheaply produce a profitable book with a proven market. This thesis does not discuss the details of publication-for-profit in detail, but this does exist in the background of any discussions about publication of anthologies in the eighteenth century. Instead I will discuss the editorial process of constructing anthologies before it reaches the bookseller. It is a conversation that assumes there is a straight line between the editor and the reader, and is involved with anthologies of literary and artistic material. See Stern.

[2] Price. pp.13-15.

[3] From the extended title of the third and fourth editions (1753).

valuable than other parts, an editor may anthologise them. The selections are not made by accident, however. There is always a process of prioritising texts to fit an editorial vision. In order to explore this process, we must first be clear in our definitions. This chapter will begin to interrogate the concept of anthology as a canvas for the building of nations, and will introduce the types of nationhood Percy dealt with in his anthological works for further exploration in later chapters, with particular attention paid to the uses of anthology for antiquarians in the eighteenth century.

Anthology and Gothic Ruin

The concept of the anthology is received wisdom, but a clear academic definition is difficult to locate within bibliography studies. Where the study of anthology has existed, it has tended to focus on (largely American) twentieth-century volumes, mass produced for undergraduate scholastic purposes (e.g., the popular *Norton Anthology of English* Literature in two exceptionally heavy volumes) but the origins and growth of the anthology is underexplored critical territory.[4] This is a glaring omission, as there have been anthologies of sorts for as long as there have been written or printed texts. The earliest anthologies, as with many literary traditions, contained religious texts (e.g., sermons, proverbs, books of canon law etc.),[5] and most were produced for personal use either as a commonplace book or by a patron. Hagiographic texts were available in England during the Norman Conquest and even earlier in Ireland, and by the fifteenth century printed Latin and vernacular lives of Saints Patrick, Brigit, and Colum Cille, anthologised together, were popular throughout Europe.[6] Before the Reformation, such collections of Saints' lives and proverbs were the most accessible route to self-determined religion for a person who had no Latin, and quite probably

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[4] Reviews of anthologies are consistent, but not the rigorous academic study to which I refer. See Stephen Carl Arch, ‘Letting Go of the Big Anthology: A Declaration of Anthological Independence’, *Early American Literature*, 30.1 (1995), 78–85.; Sean Shesgreen, ‘Canonizing the Canonizer: A Short History of the Norton Anthology of English Literature’, *Critical Inquiry*, 35.2 (2009), 293–318.

[5] In a book-historical sense the Bible is also an anthology of a sort. The word ‘Bible’ comes from the Greek Biblia or a diminutive form of ‘books’. The approach taken by most modern theologists is to view the Bible as a unified text, rather than an anthologised one. See Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III, ‘Introduction’, in *The Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. by Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III (Grand Rapids: Zondever Publishing House, 1993), pp. 15–40. pp.35-7.

[6] Jean-Michel Picard and Notker Balbulus, ‘Adomnán’s “Vita Columbae” and the Cult of Colum Cille in Continental Europe’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics,* 98.1 (1998), 1–23. pp.1-23.

limited written English. More elaborate, sophisticated versions of this were hand-produced, often to argue for the precedence of certain places, holy people, and events. An early, elaborate, surviving example of this comes in the ninth-century Book of Armagh, an illuminated manuscript featuring the oldest complete examples of Old Irish texts as well as texts in Latin.[7] The work of three scribes, the Book of Armagh contains vernacular and Latin lives of Saint Patrick alongside New Testament texts and a Latin life of Saint Martin. It is thought to have been produced for Patrick's ecclesiastical heir, Torbach, hence its ornate, reverential appearance. The Book of Armagh also functions as an attempt to locate Celtic Christianity in Ireland rather than Scotland, specifically Iona, where Colum Cille (known as Columba locally) founded his ministry and died. In the 9th century, the saint's relics were divided between Iona and Downpatrick, where Patrick and Brigid are also said to be buried. The Catholic tradition of reliquary is exemplified both in the exhumation of Colum Cille's bones and in the production of sophisticated manuscripts. Faith in the 9th century was tactile and often associated with geographic locations, and the importance of these artefacts to their communities shows a clear link between the book, community identity, and location which remained evident in significant anthologies throughout the history of the book.[8]

An early extant example of secular material anthologised is the Harley Lyrics manuscript, compiled in the first half of the fourteenth century by the same scribe in Latin, English, and French.[9] The manuscript collects popular religious verse and prose with secular materials on love and religion which are unique to that manuscript.[10] In terms of variety of genre and content, and of apparent indifference between the popular and the obscure, the Harley lyrics represent several key components of

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[7] Polly Cone, ed., *Treasures of Early Irish Art 1500 B.C. to 1500 A.D.* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1977). p.143. One page from the manuscript is photographed by Lee Boltin on p.134.

[8] On religious reliquary, pilgrimage, and the reverence of objects, see various chapters throughout *Matter of Faith: An Interdisciplinary Study of Relics and Relic Veneration in the Medieval Period,* ed. by James Robinson and Lloyd de Beer (London: The British Museum, 2014). On Medieval vernacular and Latin faith anthologies, see 'Introduction' in *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology*, ed. by Thomas F. Head (London: Routledge 2001) pp.xiii-xxxviii.

[9] Various texts including secular and religious lyrics (also known as the 'Harley Lyrics') including King Horn and the Follies of Fashion, and Psalms listed for recitation at certain times (imperfect), British Library Harley 2253.

[10] Derek Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry (The Routledge History of English Poetry, Volume 1)* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977).

anthology. The defining feature seems to be variety. We might begin to define anthology as a collection of several different texts. They may be complete or abridged; of the same genre or different; connected thematically or not. When one considers the vague parameters within which we must eke out a definition, it is not difficult to understand why a significant body of scholarship on anthology does not exist. This vagueness is complicated further in the eighteenth century, when the Statue of Anne led to an unprecedented explosion in anthological publishing leading to a bewildering quantity of such books available on which to base scholarship. Given the obvious contribution of anthology to literature, however, the question is worth asking: what is an anthology, and what does it do?

By the time Percy was producing anthologies, they had ceased to be the purview of wealthy patrons and learned monks, and they were commercially produced as educational primers, abridgements as popular texts, and scholarly and aesthetic studies.[11] While early anthologies may be understood through a lens of manuscript and early print culture, and while modern (i.e., twentieth- and twenty first-century) anthologies represent introductory, undergraduate, or generally popular practises of reading literature (that is, a commercially convenient primer on canonical texts),[12] this thesis explores the role of anthology in the eighteenth century, and in particular its role as an antiquarian tool, though the genre also flourished as a function of the study of elocution and *belles lettres*.[13] We must therefore locate our relevant definitions and defining examples in this century. For the purposes of discussion, I define anthology as a collection of broadly literary texts, published together under a unifying title, which strive to be representative of some type of canon as defined by the anthologist. These collections usually have a unifying theme (which may be a theme of genre, i.e., religious poetry, ballads, excerpts from novels etc.); where there is an absence of theme, the descriptor "miscellany" may be more appropriate. 'Miscellany' implies a lack of intentional curation. The pieces may be more randomly grouped and reflective

[11] See Price. pp.1-12.
[12] See David Hopkins, 'On Anthologies', *The Cambridge Quarterly*, 37.3 (2008), 285–304.
[13] Thomas P. Miller, *The Formation of College English: Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the British Cultural Provinces* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997). p.249.

of a book culture which prioritised reading as a private activity with more limited sense of public literacy, as opposed to the social aspects of literacy we see in lending libraries, literary clubs, the culture of letters etc., and the works therefore are reflective only of the reader/collector's individual tastes. Where the anthology may seek to build a canon of a sort, the miscellany tends not to, unless that canon resembles a personal reading list.[14] This subtlety of definition emerges in the etymological root of the words. 'Anthology', first encountered in the seventeenth century, comes from the Greek *anthos*, meaning 'flower', and -*logia*, meaning 'collection', suggesting a process of picking the finest blooms for aesthetic appeal.[15] 'Miscellany', also from the seventeenth century, is from the Latin *miscellus*, meaning 'mixed'.[16] The suggestion of this definition is that the collection is more random. Michael F. Suarez expands on these basic definitions with details which are useful when considering the difference between literary miscellanies and anthologies, arguing that "Miscellanies are usually compilations of relatively recent texts designed to suit contemporary tastes; anthologies, in contrast, are generally selections of canonical texts which have a more established history and a greater claim to cultural importance,"[17] but his analysis offers insufficient weight to the role of the anthologist and seems to suggest that the books exist in a production vacuum wherein canons are, like Benedict Anderson's description of the state, "an unproblematic, primordial given,"[18] rather than being a reflection of the complex network of readers, writers, educators, patrons, and commercial book producers that it in fact is.

During the long eighteenth century, the commercial production of anthologies and miscellanies was enthusiastically embraced by British booksellers; there are almost 5000 such publications in Britain between 1700 and 1800.[19] Contemporary legislation

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[14] See chapter four for links between anthology and canonicity.
[15] "Anthology, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/8369> [accessed 21 August 2015]. Unless stated otherwise, all definitions are from the online edition of the Oxford English Dictionary.
[16] "Miscellany, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/119276> [accessed 21 August 2015].
[17] Suarez. p.219.
[18] Benedict Anderson. p.89.
[19] See *The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, Vol. 2, ed. by George Watson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971). cols. 341-429.

"did not regulate imitations, condensations, adaptations, anthologies, indexes, and similar partial copies,"[20] which meant that booksellers could publish partial texts without paying fees to the authors. They were sometimes advertised as being an effort to preserve the existence and integrity of texts which were under threat of obscurity.[21] Ritson, for example, argued that so many inferior ballad collections were in production by unscrupulous booksellers that his own *Select Collection of English Songs* (1783) existed to rescue "pearls" from the "ocean" of unworthy Grub Street anthologies.[22] Though such advertisements may have been simply an obscuration of more cynical and avaricious reasons for publication, they speak to a certain anxiety about the loss of the national past which preoccupied the minds of many post-Union antiquarian writers. It is also worth noting that reading practices in the eighteenth century moved with the trend of increased circulation. By the 1740s, London was home to several lending libraries, with nationwide subscription libraries existing by the 1780s, and coffeehouses in London and Edinburgh offering loans of pamphlets and periodicals to their customers.[23] Among the upper classes, an emergent interest in antiquarianism became more widespread during this century which allowed people to appropriate the past for themselves; to curate a canon of British national artefacts in ancient objects (antiquarianism typically being the purview of the bourgeois upper-class elite, who had the resources to enjoy this interest; if, as Rosemary Sweet has argued, antiquarianism "provided the raw material from which the narratives of history could be fashioned,"[24] then all but the richest members of society were priced out of the commercial aspects of antiquarian interest). Antiquarianism refers to the study of history told through

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[20] Stern. p.69.

[21] See Paula McDowell, '"The Manufacture and Lingua-Facture of Ballad-Making": Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse', *The Eighteenth Century*, 47.2 (2006), 151–78. p.155. Percy's anecdote about the discovery of the Folio Manuscript also fits with this apologetic and selfless narrative.

[22] "So long as these beauties, this elegance continue to be […] buried alive in a multitude of collections, consisting chiefly of the compositions of the lowest and most despicable nature; one or more being annually hashed up by needy retainers to the press, and the most modern being, always, infinitely the worst […] the greater part of this inestimable possession must, of course, remain altogether unknown to the generality of readers […] Every one who wishes to possess a pearl, is not content to seek it in an ocean of mud." Joseph Ritson, *Select Collection of English Songs* (London: J. Johnson, 1783). Vol.1, p.i.

[23] See James Raven, 'From Promotion to Proscription: Arrangements for Reading and Eighteenth-Century Libraries', in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, ed. by James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 175–202.

[24] Rosemary Sweet, 'Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-Century England', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 34.2 (2001), 181–206. p.181.

locations or objects of historical importance. Antiquarians study the tangible evidence of events rather than theoretical aspects of history or historiography. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, an antiquary notable for his contributions to the first major history of Wiltshire, said of antiquarians that "We speak from facts, not theory."[25] Though a little disingenuous towards historians with different approaches, Hoare identifies an important aspect of antiquarian study: permanence and precision. Percy's work strives towards a faith in permanence, and reflects precision inasmuch as his analysis is precise and exact, but it is often predicated on misreading and misplaced information. Anthology is a physical collection of "raw material" as described by Sweet and the collective nature of anthologies allowed such a "narrative of history" to be constructed.

When Thomas Percy published his most celebrated anthology, *The Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), the genre of anthology was inextricably linked to the conscious aims he had for the project. The "relique" of the title suggests a precious object; his desire to preserve both the literal object of his famous manuscript and the balladry contained within was an antiquarian impulse, and the physicality of the text was of vital importance to him. The *Reliques* is the first major work on British national ancient poetry in Britain,[27] and is (often to its own detriment) concerned with the exploration and definition of nations. The antiquarian method of understanding national identity was to trace the history of the nation using artefacts from its cultural ancestors. From a nationalist point of view, the existence of artefacts demonstrating conflicting narratives could pose a problem, as this undermines the state's perception as singular and incontestable. Antiquarian nationalists such as Percy answered this problem through a process of selection and omission of desirable and conflicting national truths in the artistic and scholastic outcomes of their antiquarian activities, using artefacts (including texts) as evidence. Artefacts need to be curated in a collection (e.g., a museum) in order to be understood in context and to exist in the public imagination to

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[25] Quoted in Tobias Smollet, *The Critical Review,* 3.1 (1813). p.395. See also Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient History of North and South Wiltshire* (London: W. Miller, 1812).

[27] I specify 'British' because major works on the ancient poetries of other nations within Britain also existed, e.g., Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Scottish Poetry* (1760); Evans' *Specimens of Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards* (1764).

create a narrative of history. The anthology may be understood as a kind of textual museum, as evidenced by the fact that the word is often included in the titles of some collections of this sort, such as the *Scots Musical Museum,* published between 1787 and 1803 in Edinburgh.[28] The antiquarian must preserve the national past at the risk of it being lost forever. Their belief that only physical preservation in a literal sense is the only way to do so holds some weight when one considers the impermanent, ephemeral, vulnerable nature of the unprinted, uncatalogued oral history. Britain's own history (it may go without saying) is fraught with division and opposition and was in the mid-eighteenth century in a state of emergence. To the mid-eighteenth-century editor, this history was particularly recent, calling to mind the Jacobite conflict and observing with inconvenient scrutiny the former border that had until fairly recently separated Scotland from England. The nationalist editor represents the conflicts that are essential to the formation of borders as necessary stages in the development of the nation. However the editor choses to represent conflict, division, and borders in history, the expression of history's inherent plurality in the text gives the history an heteroglossic effect. History may be written by the victors, but the 'losers' play a supporting role in that composition. In acknowledging the divisions inherent in history as a stepping stone to the modern British state, the textual formation of the state becomes anthological, with the fragmented remains of previous states being the basis of the overarching structure that is the nation. This is why, to invent through antique textuality a ballad tradition that assumed a national perspective, Percy turned to the anthology. The decision to anthologise ballads from and tangential to his Folio Manuscript rather than, say, publish the manuscript unmediated or as a facsimile speaks to the role of the editor in the shaping of the national story, a role which Percy recognised as being vital. John Hales and Frederick Furnivall, who published the facsimile of the Folio Manuscript in 1868, were critical of certain editorial practices employed by Percy (they were neither the first nor the last scholars to anoint Percy

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[28] Most famously, Robert Burns was an enthusiastic contributor to this series. It is the source for many of his best loved songs such as "Scots Wha Hae", "Ae Fond Kiss" and his versions of "Auld Lang Syne" and "My Love is like a Red, Red Rose". James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum* (Edinburgh: William Blackwell, 1787-1803). Available online at The National Library of Scotland <http://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/pageturner.cfm?id=91519813> [accessed 29 July 2015].

with mixed praise, and were in fact kinder than many) but their project was ultimately a very different one from his. Where they sought to preserve a precise historical document (historicised not only for what Percy saw in it, but also because Percy himself was at that point an historical figure) for the ages, Percy sought to preserve the histories contained within several documents, and to his mind anthologising them was the best way to do this.

The national literary tradition which Percy sought to construct was influenced by a number of deeply-held beliefs in his life. As a Church of England clergyman, he lived with the Christian faith, and the Anglican theopolitical slant of that faith. This meant that his version of the literary tradition was informed by the conviction that the Church of England was the true church, and therefore English traditions had a moral superiority over the traditions of other communities and identities within what was now Britain. The perceived superiority of English morals was to inform subsequent superiorities over the cultural, political, and social hierarchies of modern British life. Percy also had tremendous respect for the aristocracy, who he believed were the spiritual owners of literary culture in Britain with a social standing ordained by God and supported by law and cultural tradition. He configured medieval minstrelsy as being a vocation with connections to nobility because the nobility were the literal owners of the physical relics of literary culture, which as an antiquarian was his principal interest. This deference to the social hierarchy of aristocracy manifested itself in the *Reliques* being dedicated to, and arranged around the balladic literature of, the Percys of Northumberland. The *Reliques* were an exercise in establishing a Gothic tradition in English literature, and in this Percy configured the Gothic predilection for textual literacy as being part of the fabric of English (and therefore British) culture. Recently scholars have also noted the role of Percy's Chinese and Scandinavian literature in this projection of Gothic culture onto modern Britain.[29] Samuel Kliger described the historical basis for political Gothicism thus:

[29] Robert W. Rix, ‘Oriental Odin: Tracing the East in Northern Culture and Literature’, *History of European Ideas*, 36.1 (2010), 47–60. pp.52-7; Watt, ‘Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic’. pp.104-7.

> The political institutions which were implanted in England by the "Gothic" invaders in 449 were thought to be "free" or "democratic"; furthermore, the "Gothic" free institutions were thought to have had a continuous development in England despite the successive Danish and Norman invasions […] It is precisely out of such a contrast between Gothic freedom and Roman tyranny that the eighteenth century derived the term "Gothic" on one side of an antithesis to denote the "enlightened," the "liberal," and similar meanings.[30]

James Watt identifies Percy as working within an "indigenous model of literary production"[31] which worked not only through the construction of a Gothic nationalism in literature but also, in the work of James Macpherson and others, through the construction of a Celtic one. The site of the modern nation's indigeneity became a key factor in the debate, as to locate the root of the nation would enable nationalist writers to construct uncomplicated and singular narratives of how the nation came to be and the roles that the constituent states within the new nation should play. Percy was essentially correct about the role of Gothic tribes of what is now Denmark (the Jutes and the Angles) in the cultural building of Britain, although as is often the case with Percy, he is in fact referring to England, which he viewed as the centre of the Union, the foundation upon which satellite states and colonies should be added.

> From this near affinity we might expect to discover a strong resemblance between both nations in their customs, manners, and even language; and, in fact, we find them to differ no more - than would naturally happen between a parent country and its own colonies, that had been severed in a rude uncivilized state, and had all intercourse for three or four centuries; especially if we reflect that the colony here settled had adopted a new religion, extremely

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[30] Samuel Kliger, 'The "Goths" in England: An Introduction to the Gothic Vogue in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Discussion', *Modern Philology,* 43.2 (1945), 107–17. p.112.

[31] James Watt, 'Eighteenth-Century Gothic: Nation, History, Gender', *Gothic Studies*, 14.1 (2012), 7–20. p.10.

> opposite in all respects to the ancient Paganism of the mother-country; and that even at first, along with the original had been incorporated a large mixture of Saxons from the neighbouring parts of Germany; and afterwards, among the Danish invaders, had come vast multitudes of adventurers from the more northern parts of Scandinavia. But all these were only different tribes of the same common Teutonic stock, and spoke only different dialects of the same Gothic language.[33]

Gothicism was the major tenet of Percy's nationalist ideology, but it also had a role to play in his antiquarianism, though the two quickly became intertwined. To curate an antiquarian nationalism, Percy sought to prioritise textual sources, even for the prominently and historically oral ballad form. From his policy of favouring textual sources came a hierarchy of textual cultures. Percy identified Gothic cultures as superior to Celtic because the Goths left behind physical texts for antiquarians to preserve and curate where the Celts did not. His antiquarian impulses gravitated towards the culture that could best support antiquarian practice. In *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry,* he made an explicit connection between the faith culture of the ancient Scandinavians and the endurance of their language and poetry, noting that "The ancient inhabitants of Sweden, Denmark and Norway retained their original manners and customs longer than any of the other Gothic tribes… nor was it till the tenth and eleventh centuries that christianity [sic] had gained an establishment among them. Hence it is that we… have more of their original compositions handed down to us, than any of the other northern nations."[34] In *Northern Antiquities*, he wrote of the Icelandic people that:

> No barbarous people were so addicted to writing, as appears from the innumerable quantity of Runic inscriptions scattered all over the north; no barbarous people ever held letters in higher reverence,

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[33] Percy, 'Essay on the Ancient Minstrels' in *Reliques*, Vol. 1. (2nd Edition 1967; expanded from first) p.xxii.
[34] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A2 (vers)-A3 (rect).

> ascribing the invention of them to their chief deity, and attributing to the letters themselves supernatural virtues.[35]

Although Percy retains a Christian-inflected, Enlightenment-influenced scepticism of the superstitions of the ancient Scandinavians (himself investing a religious reverence to his own texts by terming them 'reliques', a synonym for the artefacts and remains of Christ and other holy figures), his interest in their textual culture identified a spiritual connection between the modern Briton and the ancient Goth. This connection was extended to entwine the race and the act of writing itself, demonstrating a native genius that transcended the barbarism of early civilization. The act of writing was so central to the Gothic existence that the mysticism afforded to writing became permanent and extended to the evolution of Gothicism into modern Britain. They wrote, Percy believed, because it was in the Gothic nature, which by extension made it the British nature too. Thomas Spray has written of the mythical nature of literacy in Percy's canon:

> The essence of writing […] defined their mythology. The ancient northerners after all had claims on being the most literate barbarians around. Their dramatic shift from peasantry to mastery was down to the focus on literary interaction and public involvement. Conversely, Percy argues, the druids of the Celtic peoples treated their faith with a secrecy which shrouded its tenets from the common people. Secrecy and obscurity led to weakness.[36]

By making literature (and faith) a public (and commercial) enterprise, Percy argues, the Goths were able to secure a textual and societal legacy and the British, who were the descendants of that legacy, would do well to emulate them in this respect. The secretion of sources seen in the Ossian controversy seemed to be an extension of the Celtic secrecy that doomed that race, with a contemporary echoing insinuation of

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[35] Percy, *Northern Antiquities.* (1770) p.xvii.
[36] Thomas Spray, 'Northern Antiquities and Nationalism', *eSharp*, 23 (2015), 1–17.

Jacobite conspiracy. An application of history that was antiquarian in nature demanded a tactile understanding of history which would also ensure the philosophical survival of the British people. There is an unresolved tension in Percy's literary philosophy between the public and private which fails to recognise the public and communal aspects of oral literature because it is an essentially ephemeral publicity. An oral performance is private in that unless you can occupy the same space and time as the performer, it is not accessible to you, but it is constructed along essentially public lines. Printed literature, on the other hand, is constructed for private consumption but can be shared and disseminated with a wideness that Britain, in the early stages of Empire, was only beginning to come to grips with.

The Case for Anthologies of Translation

In the publication of *Hau Kiou Choaan,* Percy was a pioneer of a sort: the first person to publish a complete English translation (albeit from Portuguese) of a Chinese novel. Because he was the first person to do so, and even though it was not a direct translation, he had a certain level of control over the narrative of Chinese literature in the West. He found anthology a useful format for his Chinese translations for several reasons. The anthology allowed him to present the various expression he believed possible within the language, while also drawing a line under what he did not believe the language was capable of. His need to foreground literacy benefited from this format, as it emphasised the textuality of his chosen texts while simultaneously diminishing the value of Chinese script. He attached himself to at least one extremely spurious and very soon discredited theory by John Turberville Needham that Chinese letters were derivative of Egyptian hieroglyphs, and that the script had no connection to the oral form of the language, a misunderstanding based on a Eurocentric – even Anglocentric – view of language.[37] Percy wrote in the preface to *Miscellaneous Pieces* that the "discovery" struck a blow against "all the pretences of the Chinese to that vast antiquity, which has been wont to stagger weak minds, and which has with so much parade been represented by certain writers as utterly incompatible with the history of

[37] John Turberville Needham, *De Inscriptione Quadam AEgyptiaca Taurini Inventa, et Characteribus Aegyptiis* (Rome: Nicolai, 1761).

the Bible."[38] By 1763, Percy appeared embarrassed and regretful at his wrongheadedness, writing in a letter that "Dodsley thinks it better to take no further notice of Needham's Imposture till our Chinese things arrive to the honour of a 2d Edition," though the second edition itself would never come to fruition for either of his Chinese books.[39] This embarrassment is, it must be said, deserved as subsequent philology has exposed his argument as false.[40] Percy's translation philosophy had the agenda of using the allegedly primitive Chinese language to bolster the intrinsic value of English by exposing linguistic difference which he perceived and presented as being deficiencies.[41] This is reflected in his frequent positioning of Chinese and English in contrast to one another.[42] The apparent dismissal of the variety of language in China is a frequent reading of Eastern alphabetic forms in Western critiques. Edward Said's *Orientalism* offers the analysis that Occidental culture-makers positioned themselves as gatekeepers to the art and commerce of a people who (they supposed) were incapable of capitalising upon it themselves.[43] (*Orientalism* quotes Karl Marx in its epitaph: "They cannot represent themselves: they must be represented."[44]) Thus Western consumers and producers see themselves as having a right to the appropriation of Eastern culture as they alone have the intellectual capital to truly appreciate it, and, crucially, the geographically singular and textually phonetic language to elucidate their enjoyment. The native language (in this case, Chinese) is therefore inferiorised by a coloniser working under the fallacy that because they do not understand a text or it is inaccessible to them, it carries little value and must be translated, modernised, or polished. The simplicity of expression which he so lauded in the literature of Gothic tribes is re-rendered as literary inadequacy when he comes to terms with the literature of the Chinese. He writes, for example, that "The translation

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[38] Thomas Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1762). vol.1, preface. p.A8 vers.

[39] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Richard Farmer*. pp.31-32.

[40] Traditional Chinese characters are logographic, while Egyptian hieroglyphics were partly logographic, determinative, and phonetic. The two scripts are not related.

[41] Although there are several national languages in China, Percy was unfamiliar with any of them. He spoke of them in homogenized terms, using "Chinese", "Mandarin" and "Manchew" interchangeably.

[42] See chapter two.

[43] Said. pp.94-6.

[44] Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte [Facsimile Edition]* (New York: Wildside Press, 2008). p.124.

of this little tract was made as literal as possible, in order to retain all the peculiarities of the Chinese author: this, ‘tis hoped, will be accepted as an apology for any baldness of impurity that may appear in the stile,”[45] and reproduces a footnote by Du Halde that suggests a lacking in the languages of both the Turks and the Chinese, as “The Tartar author hath rendered [this song] into prose, his language not being proper for versification. Hitherto at least no Manchew [sic] hath ventured to rhyme in his own language.”[46] Percy's Orientalist approach to the linguistics of his Chinese collections emphasises the cultural value of Englishness by positioning the elements of Chinese that are unique (such as a non-phonetic alphabet) as inferior.

His Icelandic work is more accomplished. He was more *au fait* with the script in which the literature was written, having studied runes in 1759 with the assistance of Edward Lye (1694-1767), an eminent scholar of Germanic language.[47] His work was influenced by Paul-Henri Mallet’s *Introduction à l’Histoire de Dannemarc* (1755) which, like much of Percy’s work, was composed in the service of forging a bond between writer and nation, though in Mallet’s case the nation was an adopted one, being a Swiss writer working on Danish materials. September of 1760 was the first recorded indication that Percy was seriously considering publishing a book of Icelandic poetry. His first mention of the project was in a brief missive to Shenstone, writing that he was “making up a small Collection of Pieces of this kind for the Press, which will be about the Size of the Erse Fragments.”[48] Percy also asked for his observations on an enclosed draft of a poem and for his opinion on publishing the originals alongside the poetry. Shenstone’s reply came soon, and was typical of an aesthete’s priorities, imploring Percy not to include too many notes which were “the Rock that you may chance to split upon,” reflecting his concerns about the Chinese books.[49] In the same letter, Shenstone also

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[45] Thomas Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan: Or, The Pleasing History* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1761). Vol. 1, p.39.

[46] Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese.* p.99.

[47] Margaret Clunies Ross and Amanda J. Collins, ‘Edward Lye (Bap. 1694, D. 1767)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17240> [accessed 15 August 2017]. Percy detailed this relationship in an inscription in his copy of William Shaw’s *Gallic and English Dictionary* (1780), given to him by Shaw on the occasion of his ordainment as Bishop in 1782. It is in Special Collections at Queen’s University Belfast, Percy 333.

[48] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.70.

[49] Ibid. p.74.

empathically counselled against the inclusion of the Icelandic originals ("There should *certainly* be nothing of this kind inserted, that is *Less* considerable than what you send me,"). Percy's introductory notes, however, were often longer than the poems, and he still included a number of footnotes. This was a compromise to Shenstone's elegant aesthetics, but at the same time it was a rejection of his suggestion that the book should be aimed at a popular, rather than a scholarly audience.

Ossian was on Shenstone's mind as he admonished Percy for dragging his feet with the publication for so long that Macpherson's *Fingal* beat it to the presses, asking him "Why will you suffer the Publick to be quite *cloyed* with this type of writing [by Macpherson], ere you avail yourself of their *Appetite*?"[50] In an acknowledgement of the fact that *Five Pieces* was influenced by Macpherson, Percy conceded in the preface to the book that his Norse pieces lacked the pathos and elegance of Macpherson's Ossian, which he correctly believed were forgeries. However the book was designed not as an imitation of Ossian, but as a response to it. Both books began with an epigraph by Lucan, and at Shenstone's suggestion, the translations were, like Macpherson's, printed in paragraphs as prose. But *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* was a weighty tome printed on high quality paper with ornamental interpolations throughout, lengthy prefaces, and clarifying footnotes and endnotes. By comparison, it made the brisk, brief presentation of Macpherson's *Fragments* look scant and suspect. The book is more sophisticated and tasteful than his previous Chinese efforts, but it was still a dense work of scholarship first and foremost, much to Shenstone's chagrin.

Shenstone also implored Percy not to include the originals from which his translations were developed, but in accordance with what Nick Groom has called the "grand textual conspiracy" of Percy's Gothic nationalism, Percy felt it prudent to show his working and included them at the back of the book.[51] This defiant act of anthologising gave value to literature in fragments and demanding that history, however fragmented our understanding of it as a culture, be the basis of understanding the present day. This

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[50] Ibid. p.124.
[51] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.86.

focus on fragments as the foundation of understanding was particularly prescient when you consider the book as firstly a response to Macpherson, who could provide no such originals, fragmented or otherwise, and when the Icelandic publications are brought into context. Though Icelandic poetry, unlike the Chinese novel, was available in Britain at this time, it was mostly accessible only in the original or in translations in Latin, French, and Swedish.[52] Percy was laying the editorial process bare, and like his version of history, it was stadial. From unrefined, splintered fragments he produced an elegant, elaborate book reflective of the technological, social, and moral progress that the modern Briton had made from the foundation of his Gothic ancestors. Anthology's powers of comparative and connective reading allow him to construct this narrative uniquely. In this example, anthology doesn't represent a drawing together so much as it reflects a building upon, but the effect is still a cumulative reading process which Percy designed to lead the reader through a progressive narrative of identity, analogous to the developing national history.

Identity and Ideology

Anthology's predilection for fragmentation is valuable to the antiquarian. It makes the publication of fragments of texts a legitimate literary, or even academic, pursuit, particularly in the pre-Romantic era after which poetic "fragments" became fashionable. Anthology affords the editor the opportunity for expansion, emendation, and explanation of fragmentary texts which may have been considered otherwise unsuitable for publication in this era. Percy made liberal use of this opportunity in the *Reliques*; one 39-line fragment in his Folio Manuscript was expanded by some 200 lines into 'The Child of Elle', an epic tragedy. In his Chinese collection, he included a selection of proverbs which would only have filled a slim volume alone, but when anthologised with *Hau Kiou Choaan*, they served to legitimise Percy's often spurious arguments about the novel, as well as to give some context for why he felt the literature was worth examining in the first place. He was also at that time working on a collection of proverbs from various nations which never materialised.[53] Though

[52] Robert W. Rix, 'Thomas Percy's Antiquarian Alternative to Ossian', *Journal of Folklore Research*, 46.2 (2009), 197–229. p.216.

[53] Vincent H. Ogburn, 'The Wilkinson MSS. and Percy's Chinese Books', *The Review of English Studies*,

Confucianism was incompatible with Christianity, Percy identified with the philosopher with whom he shared a dedication to ancient texts and literary tradition, and proverbs by and in the style of Confucius were a relatable entry-point to Chinese culture.[54] Anthology has the further value of showing a variety of writers and kinds of texts, from which editors can make remarks on and draw conclusions about the breadth of literary capability in a language or culture. Percy uses these assertions to place a relative value on the literary cultures he encounters. For example, his Eurocentric reading of Chinese literature leads him to the conclusion that the Chinese have no vernacular form of poetry, and although this conclusion is founded on a fundamental misunderstanding of the workings of the languages of China, it nonetheless informs when and how he chooses to present Chinese poetry to an English-reading audience. On the other hand, anthology's capacity for variety is also a capacity for narrow focus. The *Reliques* is a good example of this double-edged sword. If one's only encounter with vernacular verse in English were the *Reliques*, one might assume that the most popular topic for composition was the local nobility, that there was no significant oral dimension to the literature, or that there existed a clear, single line of origin. This narrow focus is a perhaps necessary symptom of the process of detailed research. The problem faced by the poetry anthologist is to make his editorial intentions and the limitations of the format co-operate with one another. Percy's success in negotiating this problem is limited, partly due to his scholarship being hasty in its enthusiasm at times. He exercises the literary possibilities of anthology for ideological ends, though his sometimes limited understanding of and knowledge about the texts which he is anthologising prevents him from being entirely convincing in his editorial efforts. For example, his construction of Britain is anthological in its nature and stadial in its understanding in the *Reliques*, but his simplistic assessment of the history of ballad literature undermines its effectiveness by suggesting that the composition and transmission of ballads was organised strictly along geographical lines. His insistence on textuality as the primary mode of transmission ignores entirely the significant role

9.33 (1933), 30–36.

[54] David Porter, 'Sinicizing Early Modernity: The Imperatives of Historical Cosmopolitanism', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43.3 (2010), 299–306. p.305.

that oral literary cultures played in the foundation of the genre.[55]

The exploration of and advocacy for a single ideology is one of anthology's most prominently advantageous possibilities. The editor of the anthology has the freedom to suggest an existing tradition for their (national) agenda, which makes the anthology a more persuasive piece of evidence for this agenda than an original work. The work of nation building is more synthesizing than it is wholesale creating; canons are synthesized from existing material, for example. Percy used this to the advantage of his own literary and national ideology, which positioned the Union as the manifest destiny of Britain's constituent states, and England as the core of that destiny, with the other states expected to assimilate and support England's spiritual (and secular) mission. His outlook was Anglican in its spirit, prioritising the culture of the noble and literate, while also being strongly influenced by the Gothic. When he visits other cultures in his writing, he is usually either demonstrating their inherently inferior state of civilisation as compared to the English, as with his translations from Chinese, or admiring what he perceived as a shared tradition of literary Gothicism, as with his translations from Norse and Icelandic. This cultural relativism is evident in the content as well as in the genre; ballads such as 'The Spanish Lady's Love' reflect a relationship between Britain and Spain in which Britain enjoys a moral high-ground.[56] The nature of anthology as a micro-canon is such that the anthologist as canon-maker can select and reject texts, and contextualise moments and movements, according to his own agenda. In Percy's case, his anthologies are highly and deliberately textual (i.e., they include explanatory notes, glossaries, illustrations etc.) which lends credibility to his argument for a literate and textually sophisticated history of England. The hyper-textuality of the anthology is an ideological point in and of itself, particularly when the literature being anthologised is more traditionally transmitted orally. The ballad singer Margaret Laidlaw famously articulated this concern when she read her contribution to Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy* for the first time.

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[55] See McLane. pp.23-33.
[56] 'The Spanish Lady's Love', Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 2, pp.227-30.

> There was never ane o' my songs prentit till ye prentit them yourself, an' ye hae spoilt them a' thegither. They war made for singin, an' no for reading; and they're nouther right spelled nor right setten down.[57]

The dominant ideology of Percy's *Reliques* (and to a less articulated extent his other works) is that of an Anglo-British national identity. The role anthology plays in inventing and cultivating national identity is to collect a variety of texts from a variety of sources and from them draw out a unifying narrative or philosophy. Percy’s enthusiastic but misguided ideas about nationality and national/racial difference colour his anthologies’ expressions of these ideas, and in many ways his knowledge about language and culture are too deficient to predicate a thorough or even accurate discussion. His Chinese texts, for example, were translated from French and Portuguese copies, rather than the originals; he completed this body of work without ever visiting China. Having the effect of a copy-of-a-copy, they lose the essential texture of original research, though this was not necessarily unusual in the eighteenth century. The far more successful *Reliques* was not without similar flaws. In his dedication to the Duchess of Northumberland, Percy wrote that:

> These poems are presented to your Ladyship, not as labours of art, but as effusions of nature, showing the first efforts of ancient genius, and exhibiting the customs and opinions of remote ages.[58]

These “customs and opinions” are presented heavily filtered, however, to the extent that they can hardly be called “effusions of nature.” In the preface to the text, he approached the supposed flaws of nature less deferentially:

> In a polished age, like the present, I am sensible that a great many of these reliques of antiquity will require great allowances to be made

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[57] James Hogg, *Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott* (New York: Harper, 1834). pp.124-5.
[58] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol.1, p.viii.

> of them […] To atone for the rudeness of the more obsolete poems, each volume concludes with a few modern attempts in the same kind of writing: and, to take off from the tediousness of the longer narratives, they are everywhere intermingled with little elegant pieces of the lyric kind […] As great care has been taken to admit nothing immoral and indecent, the editor hopes he need not be ashamed of having bestowed some of his idle hours on the ancient literature of our own country, or in rescuing from oblivion some pieces (though but the amusements of our ancestors) which tend to place in a striking light their taste, genius, sentiments or manners.[59]

The *Reliques*, then, is a hybrid text. It is both the ancient inspiration of the minstrels and the imitative contribution of Percy's contemporaries. It is the customs and opinions of the ancestors of Britain, but without the bawdy or political "improper" ballads which are well represented in the genre. It is both an effusion of nature and a feat of editing. Percy's projection of the national narrative assiduously explores the potential of anthology in realising such a project, and though his methodology is inconsistent in the achievement of this aim, this is only a criticism to the extent that his is a tall order at which his contemporaries would doubtless also stumble. Though the nature of this national narrative is quite apparently pro-English Britishness, the effectiveness of this imagined state is frequently undermined by confused textual evidence. If his interest is in the sixty-year-old British state, his perspective could be seen as myopically Anglican, and problematized by his use of texts that pre-date the Union and originate from outside of England. If his interest is in a refined Anglo-centric – a proxy for 'English' – nation building, then his use of non-English texts appears is at times redundant or offensive due to his habit of positioning Scottish texts in a deviant light. Anglican identity was his primary stake in the anthology projects, and Percy's affinity with Gothic history was a frequent reference point for this identity.

A precedent for establishing English history as Gothic existed before Percy, and he

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[59] Ibid. p.xiv.

identified strongly with this impulse. Samuel Kliger has demonstrated the link between eighteenth-century England and the medieval Goths and argues that "the real history of the Gothic begins not in the eighteenth but in the seventeenth century, not in aesthetic but in political discussion."[60] He argues that through a process of "speculative geography" the ethnic movement of the Goths was absorbed into the migration of all Germanic people, and that "as the seventeenth century read Bede, the Jutes were given a predominance in the invasion and in the subsequent political history of England in such a way as to establish the term "Gothic" to denote the origins of the English people and their culture."[61] Indeed many notable writers of history in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century admired the supposed influence of the Goths on England. In 1648, Nathaniel Bacon asserted the Gothic provenance of English law writing that "Nor can any nation upon earth shew so much of the ancient Gothique law as this Island hath."[62] Swift argued that the very notion of a parliament is inherently Gothic (as if to confirm this belief, the Palace of Westminster was to be redesigned in the Gothic style by Charles Barry and Augustus Pugin after a fire in 1834[63]) and that parliament came to England through "the Saxon princes who first introduced them into this island from the same original with the other Gothic forms of government in most parts of Europe."[64] Contemporary to Percy, Henry St. John Bolingbroke wrote that "Tho the Saxons submitted to the yoke of Rome in matters of Religion, they were far from giving up the freedom of their Gothic institutions of government."[65] Contrast Macpherson's *Ossian* poems: admittedly based on plagiarism and forgery, but for Macpherson the historical interpretation of British literary identity was one of sublime Celticity and prioritised the Albannach experience through a lens of sentimental Jacobitism.[66] For Percy, the "English" of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* referred not only to a language, but to a national, political, cultural, and given

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[60] Kliger. p.107.
[61] Ibid. p.110.
[62] Nathaniel Bacon, *An Historical and Political Discourse of the Laws and Government of England* (London: D. Browne and A. Millar, 1739). p.60.
[63] Rosemary Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain* (London: Allen Lane, 2007).
[64] Jonathan Swift, *The Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. by Walter Scott (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1814). Vol. X, p.43.
[65] Henry St. John Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England* (London: T. Davies, 1752). p.52.
[66] See Murray Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). pp.178-86.

his career as an Anglican priest, even religious identity. The *Reliques* should be read as a project of recalibrating the cultural centre of Britain in a new and vulnerable British state; the state is coded as English and the vulnerabilities as Celtic. These Celtic vulnerabilities had to be quashed to maintain the era of civility and civilisation in which he lived. To this end, ballads which were Scottish in origin served to bolster the status of English balladry in the collection, acceptable voices only when paying deference to the dominant British ideology in matters of language, politics, religion, and culture.

In achieving this dominance textually, the anthologist may admit and eliminate texts from his collection. What is allowed and barred from entry can tell us much about the ideological parameters of canonicity. By selectively curating texts and fragments/excerpts of texts, an editor can impose a nationalist ideology. Texts from one's own state and its allies can be foregrounded; texts from dissenters and national enemies can be ignored or shown as deviant. In the formation of the British canon, the content of the anthology is useful for assigning place and propriety to all involved. For Percy's purposes, this allowed him to show the English aristocracy (and in particular the Northumberland Percys) in a positive light, while the Scots were presented as being more treacherous, more feminised, and less suitable for any role but a subordinate one in modern government and society. Percy achieved the literary subordination of the Scots by suggesting that the gruesome and shameful episodes of Scottish history were in some ways a contemporary fear for patriot nationalists such as himself who worried about the repercussions of Caledonian dissent, which was not to be entertained. Meanwhile, England’s bloodiest annals were demonstrative of her Gothic ancestry and of how far she has come to civilization. Scotland was too rich a poetic resource simply to ignore, but by presenting the Scots as effeminate barbarians, thus counterweighting their popular sentimental representation, Percy was able to draw on the rich balladic tradition of (as he saw it) the past, while also maintaining the appropriate status of his patrons and the hierarchy that they represented. Anthology allowed him to do this. He played on various contemporary anti-Scottish tropes in the *Reliques*. One example of this is in the feminisation of the eponymous hero of ‘Gil

Morrice', a ballad which according to Percy "lays claim to a pretty high antiquity"[67] and tells the story of the secret son of a beautiful woman who is mistaken for her lover and killed by her husband. The feminisation of Scottish folk heroes in ballads is linked to anti-Jacobite sentiment, and a characterisation of the Jacobite conviction as being treacherous on a fundamental, even physical level. The following lines from this ballad were composed by Percy himself and added to the Folio Manuscript version of the ballad. They describe Gil Morrice's physical appearance as the hyper-masculine and violent villain Lord Barnard discovers him in the woods:

> His hair was like the threeds of gold,
> Drawne frae Minerva's loome:
> His lipps like roses drapping dew,
> His breath was a' perfume […]
> The baron came to the grene wode,
> Wi' mickle dule and care,
> And there he first spied Gil Morìce
> Kameing his zellow hair:
> That sweetly wavd around his face,
> That face beyond compare:
> He sang sae sweet it might dispel
> A' rage but fell despair.[68]

In Percy's sources the description of him "kembing his zellow hair" is consistent, but Percy draws this description out, romanticises it, and relates it to femininity. Minerva, the Roman Goddess of poetry and wisdom is invoked by his delicate hair and his skin, scent, and lips appear floral. His voice has a supernaturally musical element. 'Jemmy Dawson', a poem based on true events by Percy's mentor Shenstone and included

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[67] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 3, p.93.
[68] 'Gil Morrice', l.109-12; l.121-8. Lines 121-124 appear in the Foulis version, albeit slightly altered:
"And when he cam to guid grene wod
Wi miekle dule and cair
And there he first saw Gill Morice
Kemeing down his zellow hair." 'Gill Morice', l.109-112.

posthumously in the *Reliques*, shares the anti-Scots bias of gender.[69] 'Jemmy Dawson' is about a young Englishman's turn to Jacobitism, but his crime is presented in terms of his clothing and gender performance:

> Their colours and their sash he wore,
> And in the fatal dress was found;
> And now he must that death endure,
> Which gives the brave the keenest wound.[70]

Following the '45 rising, many English writers noted with aggression their suspicion of the Scots as betrayers of the Union, unworthy of the positions of power that Scots such as the Earl of Bute enjoyed. One such outlet for these suspicions was to call into question the gender performance of the Scots. This is perhaps a side effect of the now infamous tale of Charles Edward Stuart escaping to Skye disguised as Flora MacDonald's servant, Betty Burke.[72] The image of the saviour of Jacobitism fleeing in drag is a perfect symbol for the failures of the movement and the artifice of his claim and identity, which can be mapped onto the collective identities of the Scots. This can be read as a warping of heterosexuality, and, by extension, the English family itself. Not only do Jacobites subvert the natural order by donning skirts, they also do so by refusing to bow to Protestant English rule, and indeed fighting against it.[73] Lord Barnard and Gil Morrice represent the insidious dual face of Scottish warriors according to English writers: the unthinking, violent brute and the potentially homosexual effeminate who is eventually revealed to be a bastard. As a bastard, Gil Morrice is also a source of shame within the community of Scottish nobility. Not only is he a threat to Britain, he is also a threat to the natural order of social class. The Scots of Percy's 'Gil Morrice' are either feminized, violent, or sexually unrestrained. As

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[69] Percy, ‘Jemmy Dawson’ in *Reliques*. Vol. 2, pp.378-82.

[70] 'Jemmy Dawson', l.21-24.

[72] Murray Pittock, ‘Charles Edward (1720–1788)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5145> [accessed 10 June 2016].

[73] The suspicion of Jacobite foppish effeminacy on the part of Protestant Whigs was reinforced by Jacobite links to France. See Felicity Nussbaum, T*he Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). pp.69-73; Rosalind Carr, *Gender and Enlightenment Culture in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014). pp.32-3.

for the Englishman Dawson, his crime begins in the donning of treacherous and effeminate garb, before his active role in rebellion had commenced.

The English identity was implicitly bolstered by this subordination, but the content of English ballads is also explicitly favourable to this hierarchy of identities. As he saw the role of Englishness as dominant in the construction of the British nation-state, it was vital to curate a literary tradition which showcased the English as natural leaders, historical geniuses, and the upholders of moral value. This is exemplified in his ballad 'The Spanish Lady's Love', in which an imprisoned Spanish woman throws herself sexually at the knight who is her captor. A paragon of Englishness, the knight refuses her advances of gold and sex, invoking his wedding vows, and the Spanish lady begs his forgiveness, drawn along national lines ("Count not Spanish ladies wanton"[74]) and vows to become a nun. Englishness is a primally civilising influence in this ballad. It is an imperial force, challenging deviant racial and gendered behaviours. As much as the role of this knight in the historical narrative is to continue the English conquest of Spain under Elizabeth I, so too is his literary role to continue the English supremacy in the post-1707 Union narrative. The Spanish fare particularly badly in Percy's sexual generalisations. Another ballad, 'The Spanish Virgin, or Effects of Jealousy'[75] tells the story of a Spanish noblewoman who becomes convinced that her virginal servant is attracting the eye of her husband and locks her in a dungeon full of "dank and noisome vapours"[76] and "adders, snakes and toads"[77] until she dies. The ballad finishes with this warning to women:

> The wicked lady, at this sight,
> With horror strait ran mad;
> So raving dy'd, as was most right,
> 'Cause she no pity had.

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[74] 'The Spanish Lady's Love', l.93.
[75] Percy, 'The Spanish Virgin' in *Reliques*. Vol. 3, pp.247-52.
[76] 'The Spanish Virgin', l.59.
[77] 'The Spanish Virgin', l.61.

Let me advise you, ladies all,
Of jealousy beware:
It causes many a one to fall,
And is the devil's snare.[78]

If the punishments both meted out and received by the noblewoman seem overly cruel, it is only because her behaviour is especially obscene. Her sexuality is both feminine and exotic, and without the bridle of English politeness, it is free to explore the depravity which her existence implies. 'The Spanish Virgin' is a cautionary tale. It is the story of what might have happened to the heroine of 'The Spanish Lady's Love' without the civilising and colonising influence of an English man. The conclusions of the two ballads deal in the duality of Anglican moral absolutes: while The Spanish Lady repents and becomes a nun, her antithesis is caught in “the devil's snare” by her uncontrollable sexual impulses. The role of Englishness and Scottishness respectively in the *Reliques* will be discussed in detail in chapter three, but in the context of an anthology it is worth noting that a purposeful narrative is drawn out by ‘Gil Morrice’ and ‘Chevy Chase’, which celebrates the heroism of the house of Northumberland, occupying the same cultural and textual space, particularly in the context of a historiographic rationale for the race of the Homeric genius in Britain. Anthology is the conduit through which comparisons of this sort pass, occupying the same space physically in the book and temporally in the mind of the reader. Alone ‘Gil Morrice’ is a ballad about fatal sexuality, but contextualised with Percy’s notes and anthologised with ‘The Spanish Lady’s Love’, it is part of a story about who has the temperament and constitution for leadership, and who does not.

Conclusion

Just as the Union of 1707 may be looked at as a drawing together of nations, so too may an anthology be looked at as a drawing together of influences and ideas from literature. The intention of the anthologist cannot be overlooked; the book is an explicit product of his agenda, and the texts or parts of texts that they choose or omit

[78] ‘The Spanish Virgin’, l.121-8.

provide a direct commentary on the identity that the book represents. In eighteenth-century Britain, the issue of identity was particularly contentious as a generational shift occurred that saw people engaging with or resisting Britishness, but having no real say in its formation and path. Literature, and in particular anthologised literature offered a route to national empowerment for the generation after Britain's new foundation. How people realised Britain in texts was a matter for personal politics. James Macpherson, for example, was partly influenced by British violence after Culloden. For Percy, an important factor of Britishness was unity, but under his own conditions (namely Anglicanism, textual (English) literacy, and a deference to the social hierarchy). His anthologies are records of a Britain where Englishness is the predominant identity and submission to this identity is an obvious solution to any conflict that may arise from the joining of nations. The next chapter will explore the role of Percy's Chinese and Norse anthologies in the construction of a wider national narrative.

Chapter two – National Identity in the Translated Anthology

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed anthology as a vehicle for expressing antiquarian concerns of permanence and curation and as a bibliographic method for establishing a national canonical identity. Antiquarianism alone, however, is an insufficient context for understanding the role of anthologising in the literary-social landscape of the mid-eighteenth century. In order to fully understand Britain (and in particular, Thomas Percy's Anglican window on Britain), it is necessary to consider anthology not only as a tool for looking back, but as a means for imagining the future. This chapter will take Percy's anthologies in translation (*Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, Hau Kiou Choaan,* and *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*) as an anchor and show how their construction represents a nation-building effort for a recently constructed British nation seeking to start solidifying its legacy.

Recognising Identity in the Translated Anthology

As has already been shown, the anthology in its essential state is a collection of texts, perhaps but not necessarily explicitly related to one another, curated with purpose together by an anthologist. The reader in the very act of reading elicits narrative meaning from the textual and paratextual materials provided to them by the editor and unlike narrative forms of literature they are unhindered by mandatory linearity in their reading choices, though the structure of the book may suggest a linear reading experience. Percy's role as an anthologist is apparent; he is an active voice in the paratexts and his correspondence reveals a hands-on approach to structural and content questions in the construction of his books. His editorial work is quite visible in the text, whereas other editors may operate more from the backseat, offering less evidence of their scholarship in the form of footnotes and so on. The latter is the type of editor Shenstone had wished Percy would become. He viewed explanatory notes as an "encumbrance" on the reader, and centred a restful reading experience with space to pause and digest the text, a priority which was reflected in the

preponderance of rest areas in his prized garden at the Leasowes.[1] Percy, on the other hand, centred breathless notetaking in the reading experience; to him, the white space advocated for by Shenstone was less for the clean airiness of the page and more an empty margin into which one could pour one's thoughts.[2] In simplistic terms, we might think of it as a dichotomy between an editor who is an academic, and one who is an aesthete, though these definitions are superficial and insufficient without the context of other specific aspects of the editorial process discussed throughout this thesis. Anthologies are often as interesting for the material which is absent as for that which is present. In this sense they become a micro-canon of literature that represents the interest of the anthologist. As with all discussions of canonicity, this framing of the literature presents us with some problems. Which audience is the editor targeting by his inclusion of a certain text, and who is he placating by a certain text's exclusion? What is the effect of this practice of inclusion and exclusion on the canon as a whole? As Price has argued, "Anthologies are more than a referendum. They determine not only who gets published or what gets read, but who reads, and how."[3] If, then, an anthology is a publication made up of constituent texts for the reader to interpret, one might analogise anthology to the immediately post-1707 British state: the bringing together of constituent nations into a theoretically singular national identity. These acts of union are problematic, as just as the individual entries of an anthology cannot be said to be fully realised outwith the contexts of their own sources (this is particularly true of eighteenth-century anthologies which often functioned as "an aggregate of modular parts rather than an indissoluble whole"[4]), so too did the newly formed British state come with its own identity contexts which did not sit easy with complete cultural and social integration. The recurrent threat of Jacobite rebellion is testament enough to this.

Problems aside, the anthology did also offer a solution to the seemingly

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[1] Robert Dodsley wrote and illustrated a description of the Leasowes for Shenstone's posthumous collected works. Robert Dodsley, 'A Description of the Leasowes', in *The Works in Verse and Prose of William Shenstone Esq.*, ed. by Robert Dodsley (London: J. Dodsley, 1791), Vol. 2, pp. 285–320.

[2] The contents of the Percy collection at Queen's University Belfast attest to this; filled with his neat but often frantic marginal notes.

[3] Price. p.3.

[4] Ibid. p.24.

insurmountable problem of how to recognise a national canon when the very nature of the nation was in flux. Nation and canon have a symbiotic relationship. They create one another. By curating (perhaps selectively, and to an agenda) the constituents of an anthology, an editor can condense geographically disparate libraries with their rare books and manuscripts of great historical value, into a single object, and in so doing centralise the geography of a set of texts within an easily defined border. Percy invested his printed space in the *Reliques* in texts which supported his Anglo-supremacist, intellectual, Enlightenment, British establishment view. Even when not explicitly writing about Britain, he had his eye on the imperial British agenda. His Chinese and Norse anthologies are contextualised by how the national identities the literature(s) represent compare, often unfavourably, with Britishness. Thus the act of national canon-building, made purposeful in anthologising, is to admit and reject texts as an ideal for what the literature of the nation – and by extension, the cultural identity of the nation – should be. This is subjective based on the identity of the editor/anthologist. Do nations form canons, or do canons enshrine nations? In fact, both depend on each other.[5]

For Percy as an antiquarian, the physical manifestation of the canon represented the permanence of nation: even though the Goths of *Five Pieces* were long dead, their national literature survived, establishing a permanence that far exceeds the possibility of the human lifespan. For the nationalist, this is appealing, as it serves as evidence for the nation as a predetermined, predestined entity. Through books, Britain could occupy a mythically eternal place on the globe, an appealing illusion in the years in which Britain was trying to establish itself as an international force.[6] It did not matter that the constituent texts of the *Reliques* (for example) were much older than the nation that they represented, because they were able to be

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[5] See Paul Lauter, *Canons and Contexts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)., especially pp.vii-xiii; John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993). pp.3-14.

[6] As Linda Colley has shown, this international expansion was successful. “The Seven Years War was the most dramatically successful war the British ever fought. They conquered Canada. They drove the French out of most of their Indian, West African and West Indian possessions. They tore Manila and Havana from the Spanish. Their navy devastated its European rivals. And they assumed for themselves the reputation of being the most aggressive, the most affluent, and the most swiftly expanding power in the world.” Colley. p.101.

appropriated into Britishness as their ancestral composers had Britishness imposed upon them, or in the words of Julia Wright, the situation was:

> complicated by the merging of England, Scotland, and Wales into Great Britain as a cultural entity as well as a political and geographic one [...] Under such conditions, it was difficult to sustain a linear tradition that would pass as British. Wordsworth, for instance, suggests that, despite the good use of English literature in its modification of Scottish material, James Macpherson's Ossian poems have been 'wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country' and that 'This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island, is, in [his] estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural.' The union of Scottish and English traditions is 'unnatural' and therefore produces no progeny.[7]

The nation can be read as a symbolic anthology of cultural history. Migration, invasion, language change, religion, cultivation of resources: all change the makeup of a land and its citizens, and the requisite multiculturalism is a form of social anthology. Text, especially printed (i.e., not oral) text, is a most convenient way of understanding and explaining the canonicity of nation, the vital details which make an identity tangible. As John Guillory has argued, "Canonicity is not the property of the work itself, but of its transmission, its relation to other works in a collocation of works."[8] Similarly, national identity does not exist in a vacuum, but as a way to define oneself (and to unite the community of individuals) with reference to an opposing group. Conflict is central to nation-building. Nations are formed by opposition and ownership. The nation only exists in relation to its allies, enemies, and competitors.

If one considers the nation both as a form of anthology and as a position that necessarily sits in opposition to others, Percy's translation anthologies are of

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[7] J. M. Wright, 'The Order of Time'': Nationalism and Literary Anthologies, 1774-1831', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 33.4 (1997), 339–65. pp.352-3.

[8] Guillory. p.136.

particular interest. If Percy's editorial motivation was to curate an Anglo-British canon, it seems pedantic to work with Old Norse materials and frankly baffling to work with Chinese, particularly when we know that he had little to no knowledge of these languages. Eun Kyung Min has argued that "Percy's publications on China […] seem oddly peripheral to his reconstruction of an ancient English literary tradition,"[9] However, rather than being peripheral, it is precisely because he perceived Chinese manners and customs as so different from those of the English that sinology was so attractive a lens through which to view the correct way to be British. Pre-dating the imperial entitlement of ownership but exactly contemporary to the Enlightenment conviction of Eurocentric intellectual achievement and the superiority of nations, communities, and individuals who obtain such achievement, *Hau Kiou Choaan* is an exercise in evaluating the qualities of Britishness by looking at a society which seems to be incompatible with life within British conventions.[10]

Hau Kiou Choaan anticipated an emerging vogue for Chinoiserie in Britain in the late eighteenth century. It was contemporary to Oliver Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World* (1762) and the anonymous (probably forged) translation *The Bonze* (1765), as well as original writing inspired by China, such as Arthur Murphy's 1759 drama *The Orphan of China*, heavily adapted from Voltaire's play *L'Orpheline la Chine* (1755). Percy's own publisher James Dodsley had composed a book of Chinese morals supposedly gathered from an English traveller in China in 1750: *The Oeconomy of Human Life* ran through almost two hundred editions by the end of the century. Most books on China in English were taken from written accounts of Jesuits at work

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[9] Eun Kyung Min, 'Thomas Percy's Chinese Miscellanies and the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765)', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43.3 (2010), 307–24. p.317.

[10] Foucault characterised the Eurocentric Enlightenment ideology as: "In societies like ours, the 'political economy' of truth is characterised by five important traits. 'Truth' is centred on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions which produce it; it is subject to constant economic and political incitement (the demand for truth, as much for economic production as for political power); it is the object, under diverse forms, of immense diffusion and consumption (circulating through apparatuses of education and information whose extent is relatively broad in the social body, notwithstanding certain strict limitations); it is produced, and transmitted under the control, dominant of not exclusive, of a few great political and economic apparatuses (university, army, writing, media); lastly, it is the issue of a whole political debate and social confrontation ('ideological' struggles)." His definition is the one applied here. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon (Essex: Prentice Hall, 1980). pp.131-2.

there.[11] Percy positioned himself as a neutral third party in contrast with the Jesuit missionaries from whom he sourced his material, whose literary celebrations of China were part of their accommodationist approach to religious conversion. His Britishness and cultural Anglicanism were not ideological, but morally requisite: “a commentator equipped to offer a sober assessment of Chinese cultural prestige.”[12] Edward Said argued that “Knowledge [of a nation] means rising above immediacy, beyond self, into the foreign and distant.” He goes on to say that “The object of such knowledge is inherently vulnerable to scrutiny; this object is a ‘fact’ which, if it develops, changes, or otherwise transforms itself in the way that civilisations frequently do, nevertheless is fundamentally, even ontologically stable. To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it.”[13] If this is the case with Percy’s analysis of Chinese culture, as it seems to be, then the Jesuits do not possess the ‘foreign and distant’ perspective required to formulate an intellectually dominant position. Only the truly neutral Anglican observer does.

Perhaps the most critical difference for Percy between what he saw as the civilisation of Britishness and the comparative barbarity of the Chinese was in their respective measurements of literacy. Percy observes in *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* that Chinese written characters are intricate and difficult to learn, that the writing of the Chinese “does not so soon furnish them with the knowledge and learning already provided to their hands. It requires so much more time and pains for them to climb to the top of the edifice, that when once they have arrived there, they have less time to raise it higher,” and ultimately concluding that the Chinese manner of writing and content produced in that manner was “inferior to ours.”[14] As Percy measured the worth of a culture by its literacy, this was an indictment against the transmission of Chinese identity, and posed a dichotomy that pitted the values of Britishness against the perceived lack of Enlightenment-defined refinement of the Chinese. In fact, Chinese textual heritage surpassed that of the English in age and

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[11] Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land: Jesuits and Their Scientific Missions in Late Imperial China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). pp.13-30.
[12] Watt, ‘Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic’. p.100.
[13] Said. p.32
[14] Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese.* Vol. 1, p.13-14.

quantity.[15] In light of China's four thousand years of written history, Percy's defence of the English relique may be read as somewhat neurotic. Percy never acknowledges the true wealth of the Chinese archives and thus they are characterised in his work as textually underdeveloped. By anthologising Chinese literature alongside this racial evaluation, Percy sublimates the authority of the English eye over the Chinese text, and in so doing advocates for his own cultural Anglicanism as the highest milieu of cultural achievement. We may find them an entertaining curio, but they will not be morally or intellectually improving. "The Chinese morals," he wrote, "evidently fall short of the Christian, since they know not how to inspire that open and ingenious simplicity, void of all guile, which more elevated principles of morality propose to our esteem and imitation."[16]

The Norse literature on the other hand, gives the impression of a culture held in the highest possible veneration and respect. This is perhaps to do with Percy's antiquarian impulse – he had an innate sympathy for the extant ruins of an extinct culture, and the Chinese were an undoubtedly living culture. However, there are ethnological reasons for Percy's literary alignment with Skaldic literature. Percy approaches these anthologies with a translator's eye, writing a detailed 'Translator's Preface', complete with diagrams delineating a line of ancestry between modern English and ancient Gothic and affording the dead languages a reverence appropriate to an ancestral tongue.[17] The Norse works themselves were comprehensively annotated, with a quantity of footnotes that Shenstone seemed to find irritating. His Norse project was a direct response to the popularity and controversy brought by

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[15] See Cynthia J. Brokaw, 'On the History of the Book in China', in *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, ed. by Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 3–54.

[16] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Vol. 1, p.129n.

[17] Celtic languages are so far from related to contemporary English that they appear in a diagram of their own. Curiously, Percy identifies three modern languages (Welsh, Cornish, and Bas-Bretagne) as "ancient British", in contrast to the modern British English which is derived from the Gothic. Percy's identification of the invading Anglo-Saxons is underpinned by linguistic development, but he does make an uneasy concession to Britain as a land mass rather than a cultural/national identity; it is difficult to imagine him describing the Welsh language as "British" in any other context. Evans and Percy agree that Welsh poetry has "a rich vein of poetry, and even a classical correctness infinitely superiour to any other compositions of that age with which I am acquainted," that the English have "one advantage over [the Welsh], which is, that a great part of [their] ancient poets are either in print, or in such publick libraries, where a free access may be had to them." Lewis. p.51-55.

James Macpherson's *Ossian* sequence with a characteristically scholarly enthusiasm and notable textual reverence, but there are also ideological reasons for developing a connection between modern British and Old Norse and Icelandic texts through anthological publication. Politically, the ancient Norsemen were seen to represent a historical version of contemporary ideas of liberty and freedom. Percy notes their "passion for liberty" in the introduction to *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry,* and that the "equal plan of liberty… was the peculiar honour of all the Gothic tribes… planted wherever they formed settlements,"[18] From a religious point of view, however, Norsemen would appear to be antithetical to Percy's ideology. Polytheism among other tenets of faith would surely be troubling to the good Anglican, but the Norse religion does offer a symbolic template for social structures which Percy believed worked to stabilise Britain. Margaret Clunies Ross has described the stratification of Norse mythological characters using the language of aristocratic status:

> Óðinn is the Lord of Valhalla, the Valkyries are his maidens, and the men who enter this Northern paradise are brave, noble and free. Slaves are excluded from Valhalla and have to make do with a reception by the god Þórr. Poetry, significantly, is contextualised within this aristocratic Odinic world.[19]

I.A. Blackwell, the editor of the 1847 edition of *Northern Antiquities*, was also keen to acknowledge the ancient Scandinavians for their attention to social detail:

> The Rígs-mál furnishes a striking proof of the aristocratic spirit that prevailed in Scandinavia at a very early period of its history, and we should recommend its attentive perusal to those writers who, allowing a tolerable free scope to their imaginative faculties, expatiate on the marvels which, according to their notions, have been wrought by the influence of a Scandinavian democratic

[18] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, p.A2 (rect); *Northern Antiquities,* p.10.
[19] Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Norse Muse in Britain 1750-1820* (Trieste: Edizioni Parnaso, 1998). p.84.

> element, transfused in the veins of the phlegmatic Saxon.[20]

Percy supported the aristocracy, being in the patronage of the Northumberland Percys (and hinting at spurious claims of familial connection to them by changing his name from Piercy).[21] He viewed the upper classes aspirationally, as guardians of the material trappings of culture and prestige. This much is evidenced in an unpublished family history in which he wrote that he "often heard [his] father say… that the first of our Ancestors, who came to live in Worcester, was descendent from one of the branches of the Northumberland Family (by rank a Gentleman)."[22] Clearly he believed that his supposed ancestral lineage was worth preserving, though he did not appear to make any moves to publish this document. The great English noble families fascinated him. Their social standing and the maintenance thereof mattered, so the parallels between contemporary British society and Norse mythological social organisation were appealing to him, but the wealth of their antiquity mattered too. The *Reliques* is designed to position Percy as a sentinel of the heritage of the Northumberland Percys, and of Britain itself. The British aristocracy represented prestige simply because they had the material possessions, including texts, to substantiate their claims to antiquity in the family line. Percy perceived this as a cultural similarity with the Norsemen, who were mythologically defined by literacy. Percy praised the saga writers for the quantity prevalence of their output:

> No barbarous people were so addicted to writing, as appears from the innumerable quantity of Runic inscriptions scattered all over the north; no barbarous people ever held letters in higher reverence, ascribing the invention of them to their chief deity, and attributing to the letters themselves supernatural virtues.[23]

Percy characterises their literacy as transformative. Because of the value they placed

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[20] Thomas Percy, *Northern Antiquities*, ed. I. A. Blackwell (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1847). p.367.
[21] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.142. See also Percy, *An Account of the Private Family of Percy*.
[22] British Library Add. MS. 32326
[23] Percy, *Northern Antiquities*. (1770) p.xvii.

on writing and recording the narrative of their history, they elevated themselves from "barbarous people" into the bardic originators of modern Britain. This assessment conveniently ignores the fact that skalds were also heavily involved with their own oral culture, but this would be far from the only occurrence of Percy ignoring oral culture in the development of a literature. Ross has concurrently observed that Percy's argument that "the reason why we have a good deal of early Scandinavian poetry extant is because the Scandinavians remained Pagan for longer than other European peoples […] disregards the fact that the preservation of early Norse poetry in manuscript form took place in the Christian era."[24] They were neither as 'barbarous' (in the sense that a Church of England clergyman would view pre-Christian religion as barbarity) nor as textual as Percy believed.

As confused as Percy's evaluation of Norse literature was at times, his reasoning for working with it in his translation anthologies was consistent with his own ideological convictions. Percy's work on this literature has been well-investigated, particularly by Margaret Clunies Ross and Robert Rix, both of whom are indispensable analysts of eighteenth-century readings of Old Norse and Icelandic literatures. However, pertinent questions about the state of the translation anthology under Percy still remain. How does Percy represent the nation in anthology? How do translation and anthology interact in the book? Is Percy's editorial strategy successful? These texts are less a representation of cultural difference and more an attempt by Percy to integrate ethnic experience under a banner of 'antiquity'. Robert Rix has argued that Percy's early work was preparation for his 'real work' in the *Reliques*,[25] but there is also an Enlightenment sensibility acting in the service of his cultural (and political) Anglicanism.

Percy and Macpherson

It bears repeating; for Percy, the nation was textual. The strength of his conviction to this effect is reflected in his engagement with the Ossian controversy. In 1760, James

[24] Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Old Norse Poetic Translations of Thomas Percy: A New Edition and Commentary* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001). p.29.

[25] See Rix, 'Thomas Percy's Antiquarian Alternative to Ossian'.

Macpherson published his soon-to-be infamous book *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, supposedly oral continuations, translated from Gaelic into English, of the work of a 3rd century Scottish bard. The circumstances of Macpherson's publication and its sources were frustrating to Percy. He correctly suspected, as did many others,[26] that the work may be a forgery, writing in his preface to *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* that "it is impossible to say whether [Macpherson's translations] do not owe their superiority, if not their whole existence, entirely to himself."[27] The debate surrounding the (at the time alleged) forgeries of Macpherson's translations had an inherently nationalist aspect. By configuring Ossian in a Homeric role (a blind, bardic figure who represented native genius) Macpherson was able to point to his collection as evidence for a uniquely Celtic national heritage. This was a bold claim to make, not only for Scotland's role in the future legacy of Britain but also for Scotland's historical legitimacy as a nation independent of the rest of Britain. Macpherson's own context for this conviction was informed by his early years as a Highlander living under British rule. His poetry is a response to the cultural destruction enacted upon his community: an attempt to recover national heroism in the damaged Highlands.[28]

Percy's relationship with the British establishment could not have been more different from Macpherson's. He engaged with the Scottish nationalist aspect of the Ossian debate in a letter to Evan Evans, in which he suggested that Ossian probably would not have been so successful if "the Scots had not been simple enough to make it a national affair, and join in imposing on themselves and others: for you can hardly meet with a Scottish Gentleman who will not tell you that he knows somebody who has heard all these songs repeated, in the Highlands."[29] Though Percy's national project was intended to stabilise the British textual identity within Anglicised parameters, he was conscious that Scottish people were becoming increasingly culturally involved in the British social landscape. Some English nationalists such as

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[26] Thomas M. Curley, 'The Great Samuel Johnson and His Opposition to Literary Liars', *Bridgewater Review*, 28.2 (2009), 7–10.

[27] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A4 vers.

[28] See Fiona Stafford, *The Sublime Savage: James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988). pp.6-23; Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*. pp.133-186.

[29] Lewis. p.98.

John Wilkes suggested that increased Caledonian participation was to the detriment of the English supremacy hoped for by some during the 1707 Act of Union. Though Percy was not an English nationalist as Wilkes was,[30] he did show sympathy for and allegiance to a British identity that was rooted in cultural Anglicanism, and the frenzied and enthusiastic appetite for Ossian upon its publication was both an irritation and a concern. In an earlier letter, Percy notes with some prejudice that the Scots were "everywhere recommending the antiquities of their country to public notice, vindicating its history, setting off its poetry […] even our most polite Ladies warble Scottish airs"; that "whatever relates to the Scottish Nation is always mentioned with peculiar respect [in Parliamentary discussions]"; and most damningly that:

> Far from blaming this attention in the Scotch, I […] am sorry that a large class of our fellow-subjects [i.e., the English and Welsh], with whom we were united in the most intimate union for many ages, before Scotland ceased to be our inveterate enemy, have not shewn the same respect to the peculiarities of their own Country, but by their supineness and neglect, have suffered a foolish and inveterate prejudice to root itself in the minds of their compatriots [against] the treasures contained in their native language.[31]

Of greatest concern to him, reflected in his suspicious remarks in the preface to *Five Pieces*, was the lack of textual evidence in Macpherson's sources. Robert Rix has observed that "The frustration of not being able to check the validity of the English translations was symptomatic of Macpherson's detractors, who, for the most part, knew no Gaelic,"[32] but Percy's erratic career as a translator shows that knowing only a small vocabulary of a language had not deterred him from embarking on a project before – although, we might charitably also assume that the disaster of

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[30] Though any latent sympathies towards English nationalism would have been difficult for Percy to express while under the patronage of the Duke of Northumberland, who had strong personal connections with Lord Bute, the Scottish-born Prime Minister of Great Britain (1762-3).
[31] Lewis. p.2.
[32] Rix, 'Thomas Percy's Antiquarian Alternative to Ossian'. p.200.

Miscellaneous Pieces had soured him on future philological experiments. Perhaps if there were a text to investigate he would have done just that, but the fact was that Macpherson could produce no manuscript evidence for his work. This was more of a sticking point for Percy than the obscurity of his source language. When Percy set out to publish *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, he attempted to correct both the perceived imbalances of Scottish nationalism and Celtic illiteracy. Illiteracy was a problem for Percy not only because of, as he saw it, the disproportionate celebration of illiterate culture (i.e., oral Celtic poetry) in society, but also because as an antiquarian orality worried him. Whereas the physical object can be touched, observed, and categorised, the oral is intangible and subversively resistant to the hegemony imposed by theopolitical structures such as Anglicanism and the British state. In celebrating this dangerous orality, Macpherson posed an ideological danger to Percy. *Five Pieces* was his response. He admits that it was directly inspired by *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* ("It would be as vain to deny, as it is perhaps impolitic to mention, that this attempt is owing to the success of the ERSE fragments"[33]), and Margaret Clunies Ross has noted the similarities in the presentation of the texts and the structure of the book:

> Percy's title page was made up to resemble the title page of James Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*. Both works are anonymous and Percy's formula 'Translated from the Icelandic Language' parallels Macpherson's 'Collected in the Highlands of Scotland and translated from the Galic or Erse Language' […] Both Macpherson and Percy include a quotation from Lucan's *De Bello Civili*, describing the religious beliefs and customs of the barbarian Celts and Germani living in the furthest reaches of the Roman Empire.[34]

Both collections bucked the eighteenth-century tradition of (re)arranging ancient

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[33] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A4 vers.
[34] Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Old Norse Poetic Translations*. p.21.

heroic poets into couplets and presented the texts as prose.[35] They were similar in physical size (*Five Pieces* was slightly longer than the second edition of *Fragments*). Percy's assertion that *Five Pieces* embodied a poetic tradition that was "quite original and underived"[36] echoed Macpherson's claim that "Their language is pure and original, and their manners are those of an antient and unmixed race of men."[37] The clear relationship between these two books did not go unnoticed by Percy's contemporaries; the April 1763 edition of *Monthly Review* reviewed Macpherson's *Temora* and Percy's *Five Pieces* consecutively, noting the similarities between the two and, conceding that though the Ossianic poems were likely less authentic than Percy's Icelandic collection, they were aesthetically superior.[38] However, Percy was more concerned with editorial process than with aesthetics and was anxious to illustrate that the processes of compiling *Five Pieces* could not have been more different than that of Macpherson's *Fragments*. Against the advice of Shenstone, who had the idea that the book should be aimed at a popular audience,[39] Percy chose to include transcripts of the original Icelandic poems he was translating in the back of *Five Pieces* as "vouchers for the authenticity of his versions"[40]. Percy had his eye on both the popular and the scholarly book markets, and he hoped that "the few pages assigned to the Islandic [sic] originals will not be thought a useless incumbrance [sic] by any readers; but it is presumed will be peculiarly acceptable to such curious persons, as study the ancient languages of the north,"[41] but more than being simply motivated by maximising his sales potential, he was pre-empting the kind of criticism he himself had levied at Macpherson by showing his sources.[42] In doing so, not only was he able

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[35] Percy's version of 'The Incantation of Hervor', for example, begins "Awake, Angantyr; Hervor, the only daughter of thee and Suafu, doth awaken thee. Give me, out of the tomb, the hardened sword, which the dwarfs made for Suafurlama." Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.13. Macpherson's ninth fragment starts "Thou askest, fair daughter of the isles! whose memory is preserved in these tombs? The memory of Ronnan the bold, and Connan the chief of men; and of her, the fairest of maids, Rivine the lovely and the good. The wing of time is laden with care. Every moment hath woes of its own. Why seek we our grief from afar? or give our tears to those of other times? But thou commandest, and I obey, O fair daughter of the isles!" Macpherson. p.19.

[36] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A5 rect.

[37] Macpherson. p.206.

[38] 'Review of Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, Translated from the Islandic Language.', *The Monthly Review; Or, Literary Journal* (London, April 1763), pp. 281–86.

[39] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. pp.71-6.

[40] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A7 rect.

[41] Ibid. p.A7 vers.

[42] Macpherson's *Temora*, published in the same year as *Five Pieces*, also contained an appendix of

to claim that his Norsemen were more literate and therefore more civilised than Macpherson's Celts, he was also able to draw a concrete linguistic connection between Old Norse and contemporary English, and establish an ancient textual history for English. Unfortunately for Percy, his examples intended to substantiate this conviction were often derived from ideology and failed to stand up to subsequent critical scrutiny. As Rix notes:

> If the Scottish antiquary was forced to use English (a language far removed from Gaelic) to reach a commercial public, Percy's Icelandic texts were linguistically more closely related to English. Percy does not fail to point out the continuities between the two languages, such as in the use of a filial metaphor to describe Icelandic as a "sister dialect" of Anglo-Saxon […] In 'The Dying Ode of Regnar Lodbrog,' Percy annotated his translation of the line "loud was the din of arms" with the note "Din is the word in the Icelandic original. *Dinn greniudu hrottam*" [making] a point of emphasizing the accuracy of his translation *vis-à-vis* Macpherson, who used "din of arms" as a formulaic phrase in his translations […] The annotation was based on a misreading.[43]

Misreadings such as this are characteristic of Percy's enthusiastic if occasionally misguided, replete with confirmation biases and brand new information which was sometimes a matter of weeks from being proven erroneous.

Five Pieces of Runic Poetry

Understanding the context and the structure of *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, we might ask the reason for publishing this particular national counter narrative. What was it about Old Norse poetry that Percy found so appealing in the years leading up to his most famous work, the *Reliques*? Scandinavian poetry offered Percy a route to the

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supposed originals, but in a Latinized alphabet from which "the erroneous orthography of the bards is departed". Macpherson. p.330.

[43] Rix, 'Thomas Percy's Antiquarian Alternative to Ossian'. p.206.

Gothic identity he desired to claim for his work. Seventeenth and eighteenth-century Swedish translators of sagas claimed that the ancient Goths originated in Götaland in Sweden, and therefore traced their own contemporary culture to a tribe that had had a significant role in shaping the modern world.[44] This statement of intent by the Swedes was particularly potent during the country's years of conflict with Denmark in the seventeenth century. For Percy, the word "Gothic" represented not only the ancient Germanic race, though his racial sympathies with the Goths were a key component of his identification with the word, but also a speculative artistic literacy germane to eighteenth-century aesthetics. In the eighteenth century, it was common to use the term "Gothic" to describe admiration for the democratic institutions implemented in England by the Jutes in 449 such as parliament and many surviving laws. The word carries a peculiar juxtaposition in the eighteenth century where it denotes both the barbarism of invasion and the genius of democracy, while also suggesting a Northern European contrast to Southern Europe's Catholicism. Samuel Kliger has identified a "contrast between Gothic freedom and Roman tyranny" in religious matters as the reason for this apparently contradictory neologism.

> The eighteenth century derived the term 'Gothic' on one side of an antithesis to denote the 'enlightened', the 'liberal', and similar meanings. Thus a preference for the Gothic style […] might be characterized as a Whiggish taste. […] These two meanings remained appropriate and, in fact, were the reasons for the transfer to aesthetic discussion in the eighteenth century of the term 'Gothic' to describe cathedrals, ballads, Norse poetry, and even Arthurian legend; in the latter case, even if a dim awareness existed that its materials were Celtic and not Germanic, the Arthurian tales were still in these two meanings.[45]

Percy was attracted to the stability and order that the legacy of the Goths in Britain

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[44] Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Cambridge Introduction to the Old Norse-Icelandic Saga* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). p.156.
[45] Kliger. p.112-5.

represented: literacy, democracy, and carefully preserved antiquity. The Goths had left behind manuscripts and artefacts; they had inspired the structure of the Houses of Parliament; as a society, they embodied imperial success and material appreciation. He also appreciated the Goths (including their Ancient Scandinavian contemporaries) as the producers of art, contending the common view of their poetry as purely the glory of gore in *Five Pieces*:

> From the following specimens it will be found, that the poetry of the Scalds, chiefly displays itself in images of terror. Death and war were their favourite subjects, and in expressions on this head their language is amazingly copious and fruitful. If in the following versions there should be found too frequent a recurrence of synonymous phrases, it is entirely owing to the deficiency of our language, which did not afford a greater variety: for in the original the same thought is scarcely expressed twice in the same words. But tho' most of the Islandic poetry, that has been printed, is of rougher cast; we are not to suppose that the northern bards never addressed themselves to the softer passions, or that they did not leave behind them many pieces on the greater subjects of love and friendship.[46]

As with Percy's other major literary projects, his network of sources goes a long way towards explaining his editorial philosophy and strategy. His role as a maker and keeper of cultural artefacts in the enlightenment context depended upon him building a tight-knit intellectual and social network of peers. In a diary entry dating February 1759, he first records his interest in the poetry of Scandinavia, noting that his contemporary antiquarian Francis Wise believed that "Iceland [was] the Country of Bards [and] Gothick [was the] Language Universal in Europe."[47] He wrote to the Welsh antiquarian Evan Evans in 1764, expressing his wish to publish Norse poetry,[48]

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[46] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A6 rect.-vers.

[47] British Library MS Add. 32, 366, fol. 16v. See also Francis Wise, *Some Enquiries Concerning the First Inhabitants, Language, Religion, Learning and Letters of Europe* (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1758). Bodley MS Percy c.9 fol. 99r records Percy's borrowing of this book from Edward Lye.

[48] Lewis. pp.1-5.

but his first recorded reference to the book which would become *Five Pieces* comes in the preciously cited 1760 letter to Shenstone, in which he alluded to "making up a small Collection of Pieces of this kind for the Press, which will be about the Size of the Erse Fragments."[49] The letter also included "an ancient Celtic, (or rather Runic) Poem, translated from the Icelandic," likely a version of *Hákonarmál* (The Funeral Song of [King] Hacon), which Percy obtained from a 1697 Stockholm edition edited by the Swedish antiquarian Johan Peringsköld.[50] Shenstone was supportive and involved with the project, brokering a deal with James Dodsley on May 21st 1761 on Percy's behalf. It is therefore probable that although Macpherson's *Fragments* spurred him into an urgency of publication, Percy was working to some extent on the texts of *Five Pieces* before *Fragments'* 1760 release.

For *Five Pieces*, Percy consulted English, Latin, French, and Swedish texts from the middle of the seventeenth century to the contemporary period. Three of the poems,[51] 'The Dying Ode of Ragnar Lodbrog', 'The Ransome of Egill the Scald', and 'The Complaint of Harold', shared three sources: Ole Worm's *Literatura Runica* (1636); Thomas Bartholin's *Antiquitatum danicarum de causis contemptæ a Danis adhuc gentillibus mortis* (1689); and the first edition of Paul-Henri Mallet's *Introduction a l'histoire du Dannemarc* (1755). The first of these texts he borrowed from his neighbour Lord Sussex.[52] The other two he owned personally in his well-stocked library (his edition of Mallet still survives in the Percy collection of Queen's University Belfast, and although it is not the primary source for any of his poems, he uses it as a reference for 'Lodbrog', 'Egill' and 'Harold'). For 'The Incantation of Hervor', he consulted George Hickes' *Linguarum veterum septentrionalium thesaurus grammatico-criticus et archæologicus* (1703-5) and Olas Verelius *Hervarar Saga på gammal Götska* (1672), both borrowed from Edward Lye. 'The Funeral Song of

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[49] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.70.

[50] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla Eller Snorre Sturlusons Nordländske Konunga Sagor*, ed. by Johann Peringskiöld (Stockholm: Wankiwianus, 1697).

[51] Here I give their English language titles. This is how Percy refers to them and I will refer to them thus in this thesis. In their original Icelandic, their titles are 'Kràkumàl', 'Höfuðlausn', and 'Haraldr hardradi's gamanvisur' respectively.

[52] See Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Norse Muse in Britain 1750-1820*. pp.53-55 for an account of Percy's purchasing and borrowing while composing *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*.

Hacon' came partly from the text he had originally sent to Shenstone and partly from Mallet. He had also considered several fragments from *Heimskringla* sourced from John Dryden's *Miscellany* (1684) and Johan Peringskiöld's *Heimskringla*, but upon the advice of Shenstone he did not include them in the main body of the eventual publication, save from some short excerpts of them in the explanatory notes. He does, however, include composite Icelandic version of all five poems in their complete and untranslated forms as an appendix at the end of the book. This was in part an exercise in transparency, in contrast to Macpherson's editorially opaque work.

It was also an immediate concern of Percy's work that his texts be as textually sophisticated and inexorably literate. He had a limited understanding of the diversity of oral traditions, and therefore largely disregarded them as being legitimate historiographical accounts of a community, either on a local or national scale. The antiquarian impulse in him demanded that the nation's history be physically realised in print. It was convenient that the ancient Scandinavian skaldic tradition was so well preserved in print and manuscript because these were the only sources Percy trusted enough to consider legitimate. Furthermore, he was conscious of his own work embodying the literacy he sought in his sources, an embodiment he achieved through his involved and elaborate paratexts. Though *Five Pieces* was not as elaborate a publication as the *Reliques* would be in 1765, it nonetheless tells a story about his process of physicalizing a text as a complete and multidimensional object. He sought to create a text which was had as similar a feel to the authorial original as it possibly could have, but as an antiquarian he recognised that in order to create a text that recognised authorial intent, he had to simulate the context of that intention for a modern readership. In other words, it was sometimes necessary to include editorial interpolations such as glossaries, footnotes, appendices, illustrations, introductions and prefaces in order to supplement the gaps in contemporary understanding with what would once have been more common or accessible knowledge. One could fairly criticise him for occasionally including such interpolations even when they were not strictly necessary for any reason other than him expressing his own relationship with the object; the footnote explaining the

translation of “din of arms” mentioned above is a good example of this.

The advantage of the printed book is that it allows for inclusion of materials that are considered “extra”; they can be read or not read according to the needs and expectations of the reader, who may not experience the antiquarian impulse of the editor. From a production point of view, the printed book is neither labour-intensive like the manuscript nor ephemeral like the oral poem. The inclusion – and spotlighting – of paratextual elements in a book emphasises its textuality. Percy appreciated that the potential for paratexts made the book a sophisticated format, and he also exercised the paratexts as a space to signpost his own editorial sophistication to his readers. Macpherson, though ostensibly concerned with oral literature, was also acutely aware of how textual sophistication affects the reading experience and also manipulated textuality to advance a very different agenda – the rejection of couplets on the page in favour of a prosaic presentation which may better reflect the aural experience is one example.[53] Percy’s elevation of the textual within the text was an ideological tactic; the practical benefit is that a well-researched footnote can explain the context of a piece of writing for which the reader has no equivalent, for example the observation that “It was usual with the northern warriors to inscribe Runic Characters on their weapons, to prevent their being dulled or blunted by inchantment, as also to give them a keenness and strength which nothing could resist,” in reference to the description of such a weapon in ‘The Incantation of Hervor’.[54] Percy saw paratexts as a positive, or indeed vital, inclusion in this text. He alluded to this in a letter to Shenstone, in which he wrote “You will probably be disgusted to see [the enclosed poem] so incumbered with Notes; Yet some are unavoidable, as the piece would be unintelligible without them.”[55] Shenstone made several suggestions with regard to presentation that Percy found much more agreeable. At his behest, and probably in direct imitation of Macpherson’s own style, the translations were printed in paragraphs as prose, and the small fragments were, for the very most part, not included.

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[53] Christian Benne, ‘Ossian: The Book History of an Anti-Book’, *Variants*, 7 (2008), 179–201. p.184.
[54] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.17.
[55] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.70.

Though Percy's sinological literature beat *Five Pieces* to the booksellers, *Five Pieces* was the first major work which Percy prepared to publish. It should be considered the first entry in a chronology of ideological statements Percy makes about the nature of the British nation. It is arguably his most revolutionary work (Ross notes that "no one at that time had devised a method for translating skaldic kennings in order to bring out the full meaning, often metaphorical, of this kind of poetry."[56]) while also being his most reactionary, which speaks to his divided attentions in the nation. Percy was a conservative moderate whose ambitious designs on positions of influence in the clergy and in his relationships with the aristocracy were highly dependent on the stabilisation of a dominant British identity; however, the British identity he favoured leaned heavily towards cultural Anglican authority, underpinned in the *Reliques* in the linguistic and textual censure of the Scottish ballad tradition. In his reproductions of ballads which he identified as Scottish, Percy used an anglicised (non-standardised) form of Scots which was typical of contemporary publications of Scottish poetry in England. As Corbett et al have shown, the anglicisation of Scots "had the unfortunate effect of suggesting that Broad Scots was not a separate language system, but rather a divergent and inferior form of English."[57] The nature and treatment of the Scots language in the eighteenth century was contentious: Corbett *et al* describe it as "still ubiquitous" during this era, though they also note that writers such as Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson who were advocates of Scots vernacular literature "were writing for a readership largely schooled in written English."[58] The languages of Scotland had been in decline since the Statutes of Iona in 1609 had required Highland Chiefs to have their children educated in English rather than Gaelic. As for Scots, David Murison has argued that:

> When the legislature removed to London, English became in effect the official language of the whole country for law, administration,

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[56] Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Old Norse Poetic Translations of Thomas Percy*. p.14.

[57] J. Corbett, D. McClure and J. Stuart-Smith, 'A Brief History of Scots', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scots*, ed. by John Corbett, Jane Stuart-Smith, and J. Derrick McClure (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), pp. 1–16.pp.12-13.

[58] Corbett, McClure and Stuart-Smith. p.12.

> education and church usage, spoken as well as written. Scots became more restricted in use and scope, having lost spiritual status at the Reformation, social status at the Union of the Crowns, and political status with the Parliamentary Union.[59]

Percy, operating in the service of a political hegemony that demanded subjugation of the languages of Scotland, did not have an exact dislike of Scottish people. He subscribed to the more moderate ideology that the Scots had valuable contributions to make to the Union, but that they should be generally submissive to anglicisation, English manners and customs being a conduit for civility. This assessment of the role of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom is reflected in Percy's relationships with texts. As an Anglo-antiquarian with Whiggish sensibilities, he believed that the ancient texts he published represented an unpolished, uncivilised native genius and benefited from the privilege he had both in era and in nationality. It was typical of the eighteenth-century editor to believe his work to be at the furthest possible pinnacle of his literary discipline, at a point of such removal from the Dark Ages that further advancement seemed impossible, and furthermore that pre-modern literary endeavours were less worthy by virtue of their stadial lack of enlightenment. Marcus Walsh has addressed this idea:

> To believe we have now achieved confident editorial enlightenment, and to describe the history of editing as a progress towards that enlightenment, would of course be merely another chapter in Whig history […] Eighteenth century scholarly editors did not have an extensive modern knowledge of the conditions of production of earlier writing, and entertained […] rather different ideas of the author and of the text. […] Scholars were aware that Shakespeare's plays were altered in the playhouse, but they normally thought of that as corruption and degradation rather than cooperative creativity.[60]

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[59] David Murison, 'The Historical Background', in *The Languages of Scotland*, ed. by A.J. Aitken and Tom MacArthur (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1979), pp. 2–13. p.9.

[60] Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). pp.5-7.

For an editor such as Percy, therefore, the textual evidence left behind by early people was to be celebrated only with a certain amount of modernisation. It had value precisely because it was the sort of original genius that *could* survive the (in his opinion worthwhile, indeed morally requisite) process of modernisation. The enjoyment in appreciating a text's antiquity is simultaneous with appreciating one's own position as an enlightened arbiter of modern taste. In exactly the same way, the socially inferior Scots could be improved by the guiding hand of the English, who had the moral tools necessary to do so.

If, then, Percy views the role of the post-Union Englishman as that of the patriarch, what does this say about his decision to edit Old Norse poetry? Unlike Macpherson, Percy does not identify with the geographically native tribe; he identifies with the settlers. Why would he turn to the Goths, rather than the Anglo-Saxons of earlier indigeneity and of more direct racial proximity to the English? It has been suggested that his reasons for doing so were "pragmatic"[61] however Percy's extensive literary network, personal connections, and access to libraries imply that he did not lack for research materials. Indeed, for a man as ambitious as Percy was, it might have been quite the coup for him to have had made his name as the progenitor of antiquarian readings of Anglo-Saxon poetry. As it is, he identified more closely with the Scandinavian settlers because of their Gothic ingenuity and sophistication and in spite of their foreignness. Though medieval invasions were (often hostile) colonial formations, the idea that the superior nation in the contest of formation would come out ahead in the nation that would eventually emerge from the contest was appealing to Percy, even if the invasive process was not. This conviction had a contemporary importance to him. He noted his distaste with the composure of his Scottish contemporaries in the previously quoted letter to Evans; the Scots were "everywhere recommending the antiquities of their country", and he could hardly blame them, for why shouldn't they? After all, all subjects being equal under the Union, they were as entitled to celebrate the antiquities of their nation and culture as

[61] "Only a limited number of Anglo-Saxon texts known today were accessible outside the circles of specialist philologists in Percy's day" Rix, 'Thomas Percy's Antiquarian Alternative to Ossian'. p.199.

anybody else.[62] Percy's contempt is subtle, but telling; Scottish antiquarians needed to be cut down to size. Their heritage had been a dangerous impetus in the recent past, and the risk of uprising felt immediate and real. The suggestion was that when the Scots are active cultural producers, they threaten the stability of Union. Percy's mild English nationalism was not borne of hatred of the Scots, but of a recent history that suggested that Scotland was politically volatile and a potential threat to the stability of the British Union, which Percy was keen to support. Percy's comparatively benign nationalism nevertheless instilled a sense of affinity with historical cultures whose superiority was bolstered by dominance and cultural staying power. His decision to edit Norse, rather than Anglo-Saxon literature, was based on what he saw as the cultural permanence of Norse culture that had led to the present-day British state.

That said, the argument for Norse heritage was undermined by too-frequent inaccuracies in the text. In his presentation of 'The Incantation of Hervor', for example, he translates the Icelandic "lofdunga vinur" (friend of princes) as "O royal ancestor", not recognising that the phrase "friend of princes" carried a specific meaning in its original language; namely, that the person was a kinsman who consorts with royalty. Ross has written that this emendation "does not really bring the translation closer to the sense of the Icelandic",[63] a charitable analysis of an alteration that dramatically repositions the conversational context between Hervor and Angantyr without recognising the cultural significance of ancestry in Icelandic literature. She is less charitable in her evaluation of a particular stanza in 'The Dying Ode of Regnar Lodbrog'. "Percy failed to understand this part of the stanza, probably

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[62] Linda Colley makes a similar point in *Britons*, in her discussion of the legal fallout of a 1760 assault by two Englishmen on a Scottish innkeeper and his pregnant wife. "Sober now, and horribly aware of what they had done, [the defendants'] apologies and offers of private compensation were brushed aside […] George III himself insisted they should submit to the Scottish courts, ordering them to be severely reprimanded as well: 'to regain the good opinion and confidence of their fellow citizens'. It was this reaction on the part of the authorities in the south that was the most remarkable part of the Ravenshaugh toll affair. It showed that in official eyes, Scotland was no longer the old enemy, and no longer either an alien province to be left gingerly alone or viewed with unrelenting suspicion […] Instead, Scotland was coming to be seen by those in power as useful, loyal, and British, just as entitled as any other part of the island to have its civilian law upheld against arbitrary attack by members of the regular army." See Colley. pp.117-119.

[63] Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Norse Muse in Britain 1750-1820*. p.87.

because of its fractured syntax," she writes. "It should read, 'King Marstan, who governed Ireland, did not allow either eagle or wolf to fast."[64] While Ross' translation implies that King Marstan fought valiantly, leaving many bodies in his wake for the animals to feast upon, Percy translates the lines as "The Irish king did not act the part of the eagle […] King Marstan was killed in the bay: he was given a prey to the hungry ravens," making explicit his interpretation that Marstan died in battle. This reading exposes his bias, as he wrote in the preface to the book that the Scandinavians were best known for "Their valour, their ferocity, their contempt of death, their passion for liberty," and that "the poetry of the Scalds chiefly displays itself in images of terror. Death and war were their favourite subjects, and in expressions on this head their language is amazingly copious and fruitful."[65] Despite (perhaps because of) his limited knowledge and practice as a translator, Percy configures Norse mythological literature in a narrative of English heritage. This narrative of similarity was to be decisively underpinned in comparison to a culture which was as marked by perceived difference as Percy could imagine: the Chinese.

Hau Kiou Choaan and *Miscellaneous Pieces*

Percy's Chinese efforts were neither particularly well-received nor were they a financial success, especially when compared to the later four editions *Reliques* Percy would live to see. The first time Percy showed an interest in China occurred in 1758 of a manuscript translation of *Hau Kiou Choaan* from Captain Wilkinson.[66] Dodsley's *Oeconomy of Human Life* also had an influence, unsurprisingly given the book's astonishing popularity. Dodsley's unparalleled success in marketing Chinese literature to English readers may go some way towards explaining his faith in Percy's Chinese project.[67] *Hau Kiou Choaan* was notable for its novelty at least, if not for its quality, but *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* was embarrassing. Percy hitched his wagon to a very soon discredited theory that Chinese letters were

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[64] Ibid. p.117.
[65] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A6 vers.
[66] See Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic'. p.96.
[67] See Harry M. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley: Creating the New Age of Print* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996).; Donald D. Eddy, 'Dodsley's "Oeconomy of Human Life" 1750-1751', *Modern Philology*, 85.4 (1988), 460–79.

derivative of Egyptian hieroglyphs, writing in the preface to *Miscellaneous Pieces* that the "discovery" struck a blow against "all the pretences of the Chinese to that vast antiquity, which has been wont to stagger weak minds, and which has with so much parade been represented by certain writers as utterly incompatible with the history of the Bible."[68] Percy's tendency to identify traits in an individual text or character as being representative in some way of all people in the nation of origin was clearly ineffective analysis, and is shown to be contradictory even in his own notes. He asserted that "[in China] the women in general are held so cheap, we must not wonder that the men should be so backward to acknowledge a soft and respectful passion for any one of them; or that a nation in other respects civilized and refined, should in this resemble the most savage and unpolished."[69] Percy had no textual evidence for this claim. In fact, the heroine of *Hau Kiou Choaan* is described with the most reverential and affectionate language:

> [Shuey-kew-yeh] had no other children, but only one daughter, who was so exquisitely beautiful, that it would exceed the power of the most masterly pencil, to express the exactness of her proportion: nor could the whitest lily, or richest carnation among the flowery tribes, exhibit tints so lovely as were blended in her cheeks. She was no less distinguished for the rare endowments of her mind, and greatness of her capacity, in which she equalled the most eminent of the opposite sex, Shuey-ping-sin, for that was her name, was the darling of her father, who loved her with an affection, equal to that he would have had for a son of the same accomplishments, and gave her the entire management of his house.[70]

The text itself rebukes the accusation of "savage and unpolished" treatment of women, who were recognised as writers and aesthetes in China decades before they achieved the same recognition in England.[71] Furthermore, his obvious ignorance of

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[68] Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*. Vol. 1, p.A8 vers.
[69] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 2, pp.129n.
[70] Ibid. Vol. 1, pp.69-71.
[71] See Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford

Chinese literature in practice betrays an amateurism in his method. Nevertheless, the project gave him practice in defining the Gothic nationalism of his later works through an Orientalist lens, as James Watt has argued:

> If the inclusive cultural Gothicism of the *Reliques* initially served the cause of consensus in a domestic context, however, this account of Gothic customs and manners [*Five Pieces*], appearing soon after the publication of Percy's writings on China, also at times proclaimed a sharp sense of difference between Europe and its Asiatic other.[72]

Like the *Reliques*, *Hau Kiou Choaan* was a decorative text, accompanied by explanatory footnotes on the text and the translation, additional information on the cultural difference of Chinese society from British, a preface, and various illustrations. Percy's understanding of Chinese culture draws heavily on the work of the Jesuit Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, whose book *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de l'Empire de la Chine et de la Tartare Chinoise* was influential in developing the Chinese taste in England.[73] The acclaim afforded to Du Halde’s book was not universal. When Voltaire read it, he was struck by the missionary’s inexperience:

> Although he had never stirred out of Paris, and never saw a Chinese, has given, in an extract taken from the Memories of the Missionaries, the most ample and best description of the Empire of China that is extant.[74]

Given Percy's inadequacy as an editor of this material, Voltaire's backhanded remarks on its source were prescient.

University Press, 1997). pp.76-8.

[72] Watt, ‘Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic’. p.104.

[73] Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de l’Empire de La Chine et de La Tartare Chinoise* (Paris: Lemercier, 1735).

[74] Voltaire, *The Age of Louis XIV, to Which Is Added, an Abstract of the Age of Louis XV* (London: Fielding and Walker, 1779).

Whereas the nation-building efforts of *Five Pieces* were sketched with ideas of the similar, the Gothic nationalism of Britain in the Chinese texts is emphasised through difference. The Orientalist approach to differentiating Chinese culture in Percy's work has been examined elsewhere, though typically these analyses have focused more on what Percy said (or did not say) about China rather than what his statements and omissions say about his Anglo-British nationalism. Ros Ballaster has argued that Percy's Chinese literature was aimed "to promote estrangement rather than identification".[75] Min describes Percy's engagement with China as an effort of "strenuous disidentification," and that "his lyric nation was an un-Chinese nation."[76] More than being a mere disidentification with a culture that was alien to him, Percy was so far removed as editor from the human experience of Chinese people that he approached the literature as a voyeur. The voyeuristic role is shared by the reader. Whereas in *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* the reader is encouraged to identify with the Norsemen, the reader of *Hau Kiou Choaan* is encouraged only to observe the Chinese with a kind of hostile distance. It is in the negotiation between close study and academic distance, he suggests, that the Western reader can best understand the Chinese nature; the reader is reminded that "the Chinese can only be thoroughly described by themselves,"[77] but is simultaneously encouraged to apply "European criticism" in their analysis.[78] As the editor, he saw his role as providing space for that negotiation in his interpolations, in which he identified parts of the text and concurrent aspects of Chinese culture that may, he supposed, benefit from European expertise.

This negotiation is a purposeful effort to foster comparisons between perceived barbarity in modern Chinese civilisation and progressiveness amongst the ancient Goths. While in *Northern Antiquities* he challenged Mallet's claim that polygamy was a frequent practice in Gothic cultures,[79] in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, the above quoted

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[75] Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). p.238.
[76] Min. p.319.
[77] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Vol. 1, p.xvii.
[78] Ibid., p.xii.
[79] Percy, *Northern Antiquities.* (1770) pp.328-30n. See Jane Rendall, 'Tacitus Engendered: "Gothic Feminism" and British Histories, c.1750-1800', in *Imagining Nations*, ed. by Geoffrey Cubitt

assertion about women being regarded "cheaply" allowed him to argue that even the ancient Norse were in some ways more civilised than the modern Chinese by their proximity to Britishness. This racist analysis was in no way borne out by textual evidence. From the editorial parapet he insinuates to his readers that he has an authentic and unguarded Chinese experience for them to consume without the intellectual effort of identification and therefore his unfair assessment stands. His principal interests in Chinese culture demonstrate a marked difference from the interests he has in the Norse. Whereas he sought identification with the textual and mythological culture of Nordic Skalds, the footnotes to *Hau Kiou Choaan* describe more ephemeral and consumerist interests; food, money, household items; gardening and the history of Christianity in *Miscellaneous Pieces.*[80] His engagement with Chinese culture is shallower than that of what he understood to be Gothic nations. Certainly, as an antiquarian, physical objects such as writing implements and home décor were fascinating to him, but his engagement with these objects is at the complete expense of detailed analyses of history, culture and tradition that pervade the literature's Norse counterparts. Chinese artefacts appear in his work to be curios, completely free of context, and therefore a blank slate for Eurocentric projection.[81] *Hau Kiou Choaan* under Percy is a sensual experience rather than an intellectual one. Min has contended that his distant voyeurism was an effort on Percy's part to bypass Chinese suspicion of colonial outsiders:

> He makes [*Hau Kiou Choaan*] an experience of sexual as well as cultural exploration; never designed for foreigners' eyes, it therefore

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(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 57–74. pp.58-62 for the divergence in Mallet and Percy's arguments. Though the two men did share a correspondence, it is not apparent that this is something they discussed personally.

[80] In his Preface to *Hau Kiou Choaan*, he does describe the quality of the manuscript with typical devoted enthusiasm: "The following translation was found in a manuscript, among the papers of a gentleman who had large concerns in the East-India company, and occasionally resided much at Canton […] he had bestowed considerable attention on the Chinese language, and that his Translation (or at least part of it) was undertaken by him as a kind of exercise while he was studying it […] first written with a black-lead pencil, and afterwards more correctly over-written with ink." (Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.ix-x) However it is worth noting that the manuscript object itself is a European object.

[81] One such projection may be the risqué connotations attached to china in Restoration drama. For an example of this, see the infamous 'china scene' (IV.iii) of Wycherley's *The Country Wife*. William Wycherley, *The Country Wife, and Other Plays*, ed. by Peter Dixon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

> offers the best possible circumvention of Chinese hostility toward them. The reader becomes an illicit voyeur, a Peeping Tom snooping in the house of China, with the novel as a site of cultural licentiousness […] China is consumed and collected in the reader's transgressive reading that turns this work of fiction into an authentic miscellany of Chinese culture, customs, and manners.[82]

Because this voyeuristic disidentification also comes attached with a nationalist agenda, his participation as editor carries a frequently hostile tone, rooted in a fundamental need to secure a global British legacy without reopening troublesome intra-European conflicts of recent years. By not attempting to understand Chinese manners and customs beyond their most superficial appearance, Percy places a moral qualification on Chinese existence as a lived, human state. His cultural Anglicanism denies the validity of Chinese culture as an identifiable human experience by centring the Anglican experience of China and its artefacts – rather than the Chinese experience itself – in aesthetic and moral discussion. Watt has argued that Percy engages in this way with aspects of sinology in part to challenge the ubiquity of Chinoiserie in English taste:

> Rather than defend the canons of neoclassical taste or launch another attack on the morally corrupting effects of luxurious consumption, therefore, Percy's writings on China might be seen to strip away the alluringly exotic façade of Chinese-style cultural productions, so as to expose the reality of the foundations to which they obliquely referred […] Percy in effect fleshed out the substance of this idea [of the authentic China] in such a way as to dispute both the appeal of Chinoiserie and the cultural prestige of China itself.[83]

Though Percy was working within the voracious taste for Chinese literature and art in the eighteenth century, he did not consider himself to be an advocate for it. Rather he

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[82] Min. pp.312-3.
[83] Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic'. pp.102-3.

saw his role as an editor of England's first complete Chinese novel (in anthologised form alongside contextually necessary extra-textual material) as a buffer between the sensual excess of the Orient and the democratic, pragmatism of the literature for which he advocated.[84]

This evaluation of Chinese culture as a sensual, superficial experience is also gendered. Many prolific collectors of Chinese antiques were wealthy women who could most readily identify with the images of leisure that Chinese art and artefacts represented, both in their depictions of leisure scenes and, particularly in the case of porcelain, in their actual role at the tea-table. David Porter has written on the gendered appetite for Chinese culture and on the similarly gendered analysis of the artefacts and texts of this culture:

> Even as Chinese porcelain spread to middling households, its firm associations with the feminized rituals of the tea-table suggest that it remained prominently, though by no means exclusively, an object of female consumption, and one which women tended to invest with a greater degree of personal significance. Though the prevalence of misogynist satire in the period renders problematic any attempt to read literary depictions of women's leisure activities as a form of historical evidence, the ubiquity of literary scenes pairing women with Chinoiserie objects of various kinds suggests they most likely had some degree of experiential resonance.[85]

Percy's chauvinist voyeurism reflects what Porter describes as an association with "female extravagance and the morally suspect indulgence of a debased foreign taste."[86] This indulgence is suspicious to Percy. If Chinoiserie represented a new

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[84] Though he does hint that English consumers have a role to play in this culture of consumption. "The Chinese apply their Earthenware to more uses than we, but we are not to suppose that it is all of that kind which we call Chinaware or Porcelain. This is even with them a dear and valuable commodity." Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Vol. 2, pp.203-4n.

[85] David Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). p.31.

[86] Ibid. p.58.

fashion for imagining and celebrating female leisure, then Percy's interpretation of China refutes the sincerity of that leisure and rejects shallow Chinoiserie as a mode for his more authentic depiction of Chinese taste. *Hau Kiou Choaan* is the sombre academic antidote to the frivolities of Chinoiserie. His claim that *Hau Kiou Choaan* represents "a faithful picture of Chinese manners, wherein the domestic and political oeconomy of that vast people is displayed with an exactness and accuracy which none but a native could be capable of attaining,"[87] is facetious, not only because his access to the authentic Chinese experience is far more limited than the force of his argument would suggest, but also because it implies that any previous experience that Britons had with Chinese culture (through fashionable Chinoiserie) was inauthentic in any meaningful sense. They were being misled by an artificial trend. However, Percy's moral relationship with Chinese literature was more complicated than mere condemnation. His dedication to the Countess of Sussex at the beginning of *Hau Kiou Choaan* asserts that the work has the potential to "countenance virtue and discourage vice":

> At a time when this nation swarms with fictitious narratives of the most licentious and immoral turn, it may have some good effect to shew what strict regard to virtue and decorum is paid by writers amongst the Chinese, notwithstanding the deplorable ignorance they labour under of those sublime and noble truths, which we enjoy to so little purpose.[88]

His admiration is somewhat backhanded. Once again he asserts European superiority, this time by employing the cliché of a noble and virtuous heathen.[89] He doubles down on this intellectual disidentification and simultaneous ethical approval in the Preface:

> That there is a littleness and poverty of genius in almost [footnote:

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[87] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.xv.
[88] Ibid. p.A4 vers.
[89] His literary efforts again have echoes of Macpherson, though Macpherson had an ancestral connection to his own 'savages' and therefore treated them with a greater degree of mystical reverence. See Fiona Stafford, *The Sublime Savage.*

> Perhaps their taste in gardening ought to be excepted] all the works of taste of the Chinese, must be acknowledged by capable judges. This is at least evident in their writings; and in a narrative like the following, would make a writer creep along through a minute relation of trifling particulars, without daring to omit the most inconsiderable. The abjectness of their genius may easily be accounted for from that servile submission, and dread of novelty, which enslaves the minds of the Chinese, and while it promotes the peace and quiet of their empire, dulls their spirit and cramps their imagination.[90]

Native genius was a Gothic property, and therefore a British property. However savant the Chinese were about the moral truths expressed in their literature and proverbs, Percy supposed that this was a lesser intelligence than the inherent genius that gave England – an England that would become Britain – Shakespeare and Milton. Their moral enlightenment was held back by their non-Anglican templates for faith. Ros Ballaster identified a trend for the Anglican negotiation of Eastern religions, describing the process by which "all faiths other than Judaeo-Christian are characterised as fictional narratives rather than theological truths in Western published writings of the period. But non-Islamic faiths […] could present eastern cultures as something other than a monotheistic rival to the Christian west."[91] She further observed that "Transmigration doctrines were, by comparison with the moral atheism of Confucianism or the monotheism of Islam, inassimilable to Western Christian thinkers, Protestant and Catholic alike, and we find no one willing to countenance their possibility."[92] Confucianism, though it does not recognise the God of Abraham, is the perfect distance from the blasphemous interpretation of Islam and the incompatibility of Buddhism. The cultural and religious aspects of his Anglicanism forbade concession to the talents of non-Christian thinkers and writers, though he did express some admiration for Confucius. His measured admiration is in part due to similarities between the philosopher's life and his own. He described him as "the

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[90] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, pp.xii-xiii.
[91] Ballaster. p.28.
[92] Ibid. p.229.

prince of the Chinese philosophers"[93] and dedicated a three-and-a-half-page long footnote to describing the philosophical, dynastic, and educational achievements of Confucius in implicit comparison with his own; his changing of his own name from "Piercy" and fealty to the Northumberland Percys; his work as a teacher; his conscientious reading from a young age. In his most appreciative and revealing comparison, he notes that Confucius edited many "philosophical and historical works, which compose the canonical books of the Chinese,"[94] a literary achievement which Percy hoped to replicate for the British. As an Anglican priest, however, Percy's admiration was unsurprisingly tempered with the unequivocal recognition of the ultimate influence of Christ above all other moral influencers. Similarly, the texts upon which his work was based were written by Jesuit missionaries with their own emphasis on Christian faith and lifestyle. As David Porter has shown:

> As the China Jesuits had discovered before him, for a Christian to claim common cause with a heathen, however virtuous, was to totter on the edge of blasphemy; Percy's rhetorical backpedalling reflects his sensitivity to the limits of cross-cultural identification […] These repeated gestures of repudiation are not just personal or religious but are more broadly cultural, suggesting an attempt to define Englishness oppositionally as that which the Chinese are not. For an Englishman, it seems, to claim common cause with an Asian, however civilized, was to totter on the edge of treason.[95]

Hau Kiou Choaan was at least successful in its invention of an anti-Gothic Oriental Other against which Percy could define the *Reliques*. While the Goths of the *Reliques* and *Five Pieces* are to be celebrated for the familiarity and transparency of their rituals, "There is nothing for which the Chinese have higher veneration than their ceremonies: these are looked upon by them as essential to the good order and peace of the state," to an extent that Percy's reader may find "ridiculous."[96] When Percy

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[93] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 3, p.240.
[94] Ibid. Vol. 2 pp.118n.
[95] Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England*. p.167.
[96] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Vol. 1, pp.141-2n.

writes of “a horrid sect called *Pe lien-kio*, always disposed to rebellion, and who are therefore sure to be punished, whenever they are discovered,” the reader in 1760 is sure to have in mind a threat far closer to home, but when he reassures them that “China, on account of its vast extent, prodigious populousness and frequency of famines, is very liable to seditions and insurrections, which thro’ the pusillanimity and feebleness of its military government are always dangerous,” [97] the threat is safely Orientalised.

Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese, on the other hand, does not appear to have a clear ideological, aesthetic, or academic *raison d'être*. Published a year after *Hau Kiou Choaan*, it seems to have not been intended for reading independently of its predecessor, but as an addendum to the more organized argument of the former, more organised and substantial text. Much of his research for *Hau Kiou Choaan* was based on a manuscript composed as a translation exercise in 1719 by James Wilkinson and loaned to Percy by the Wilkinson family.[98] Percy learned Portuguese for the occasion. *Hau Kiou Choaan* was ultimately a more valuable text to Percy as an editor than any of the *Miscellaneous Pieces* sources were, because it gave him access to another manuscript and fed his literary antiquarian impulse, Percy categorising the manuscript with characteristic attention to detail:

> The following translation was found in manuscript among the papers of a gentlemen who had large concerns in the East India Company, and occasionally resided much at Canton [...] first written with a black-lead pencil, and afterwards more correctly over-written with ink.[99]

He is less enthusiastic about the process behind and context of *Miscellaneous Pieces.* He is dismissive of the book, describing it as “two or three entertaining articles [translated] for his amusement”. That this comes only a year after his enthusiastic,

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[97] Ibid., Vol. 3, p.100n.
[98] See Ogburn for a complete discussion of this manuscript.
[99] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.xx.

rationalist argument for his "faithful picture of Chinese manners" suggests that this is more than a typical editorial modesty topos, it is a clear indication of disinterest which successfully distances Percy from a work which he knew was rushed, incomplete, and insufficient as a supplementary to the superior work. It was a thematic offshoot of the novel, an overflow of the material (primarily from the Jesuit *Lettres Edifantes & Curieuses* (1702-76)) that would not have been entirely appropriate collected in the same volume as *Hau Kiou Choaan,* but that Percy had consulted in his research. As if it occurred to him immediately after the fact, he published it anyway. Umberto Eco has identified translating as a negotiation, "a process by virtue of which, in order to get something, each party renounces something else, and at the end everybody feels satisfied since nobody can have everything."[100] As translator and as editor, it seems that Percy was never willing to fully accept that the negotiation was concluded. It is ironic that Percy was obsessed with print, valuing it for its permanent legacy, but was unable to accept that a book was fully completed when he sent it to the presses.[101] The collection comprises an essay on the Chinese language, particularly its written characters, a play (*The Little Orphan of the House of Chao*) and an accompanying essay, memoirs of the development of Christianity in China, two essays on gardening, and a description of a celebration honouring the emperor's mother. It is frustratingly incohesive and often offensive to twenty-first century racial sensibilities. When compared to the innovation and intimacy offered by *Hau Kiou Choaan*, the first book of its kind, it is a disappointing second act. *Hau Kiou Choaan* offered a kind of truth-through-fiction approach to introducing Chinese culture to an English readership (albeit a flawed approach). Its readers are encouraged to view the experience of reading a Chinese novel as being the best way to truly understand the Chinese experience, or as Percy puts it, "A foreigner will form a truer notion of the genius and spirit of the English, from one page of Fielding, and one or two writers now alive, than from whole volumes of *Present States of England,* or *French Letters Concerning the English*

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[100] Umberto Eco, *Mouse or Rat? Translation as Negotiation* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003). p.6.

[101] Percy continually delayed the final printing of the first edition of the *Reliques*, and made changes to every edition produced during his lifetime. To Percy, print was valuable because it was final, but he struggled with this finality in his own quest for textual perfection.

Nation."[102] *Miscellaneous Pieces* has no such narrative consistency and reads as a collection of non-sequiturs. One is never quite sure who the book is for. If *Hau Kiou Choaan* had a badge of authenticity against the glimmer of Chinoiserie taste which gave a luxurious but bastardised version of Chinese culture to the uninitiated, *Miscellaneous Pieces* leaned into Chineseness as a luxury aesthetic, crediting the nation as being "allowed to deserve respect for their taste in gardening and knowledge of moral truths."[103] Ironically, in Percy's introduction to *Hau Kiou Choaan* he expressed his distaste for the very sort of publication he would produce himself the following year:

> [Writers of factual accounts] may give a dead resemblance, while they are careful to trace out every feature, but the life, the spirit, the expression, will be apt to escape them. To gain a true notion of them we must see the object in action. There is not a greater difference between the man who is sitting for his portrait, stiffened into a studied composure, with every feature and limb under constraint; and the same person unreserved, acting in his common sphere of life, with every passion in play, and every part of him in motion: than there is between a people methodically described in a formal account, and painted out in the lively narrative of some domestic history.[104]

The evaluation of fiction as a vehicle for national truth has been theorised by Slavoj Žižek as a colonial process. He describes it as "perverse desubjectivization" and argues that:

> By the very act of recognizing myself as the addressee of the ideological call, I posit the Other as the agency which confers meaning upon the contingency of the Real; by means of the very act

[102] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Vol. 1, p.xvii.
[103] Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*. Vol. 1, p.A4 vers.
[104] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.xvi-xvii.

> of perceiving myself as the impotent, negligible, insignificant witness
> of the spectacle of the Other, I constitute its mysterious,
> transcendent character.[105]

In other words, a fiction narrative gives the illusion of narrative indifference to the presence of a reader, but in fact is addressing the reader directly. Žižek's argument echoes the earlier argument offered by Edward Said that "Narrative, in short, introduces an opposing point of view, perspective, to the unitary web of vision; it isolates the serene Apollonian fictions asserted by vision."[106] This is also known as 'sympathetic imagination'. The role of the observer is a moral one, particularly when filtered through the colonial gaze. English engagement with the East was at this time mediated through consumerism rather than ideological or military colonialism. Even as the British Empire spread throughout Asia in the nineteenth century British presence in China was primarily consumerist as silks, tea, and porcelain were still in high demand, as were Chinese texts, either in the authentic or inspired mode.[107] Because the novel *Hau Kiou Choaan* is an act of self-representation by the Chinese it was closer to the truth of Chinese experience than even the best-researched efforts by a foreigner, and *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* was far from the best-research effort. Percy had not only never been to China, he depended almost entirely on the translated accounts of Jesuit missionaries who could hardly be said to be unbiased. For one, their accounts from the indulgences of Peking differ greatly from accounts offered by traders and merchants in Canton; they were also keen to report only the most glowingly complimentary experiences because they had to continuously justify their mission to Rome.[108]

Conclusion

Percy's earlier anthologies begin to set the stage for the major British anthology

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[105] Slavoj Žižek, 'Hegelian Language', in *For They Know Not What They Do* (New York: Verso, 2002), pp. 99–140. p.109.
[106] Said. p.240.
[107] Elizabeth Hope Chang, *Britain's Chinese Eye: Literature, Empire, and Aesthetics in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010). pp.71-5.
[108] Ballaster. pp.206-7.

project forthcoming in 1765, but they must also be evaluated on their own merits and failures. While *Five Pieces* was a bold riposte to Ossian, popular and elegantly produced, it was also an example of Percy's hasty scholarship impeding the success of his aims. *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Miscellaneous Pieces* were yet more innovative and elaborate, but they are too disjointed to have their innovation fully realised, and informed by an academic racism that precludes accurate and worthy scholarship. This chapter has aimed to show that Percy's early efforts to use the anthology format to establish a British textual identity had varying results, and demonstrated a risk-taking editorial practice he would shed before preparing the *Reliques*. It is in this period that his obsession with the physical realisation of texts would come to light, which informed the politics, aesthetics, and practice of his anthological efforts to come. The following chapter will examine his anthological efforts during the preparation of the *Reliques*.

Chapter three – Britain and the *Reliques*

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed how Percy's translation anthologies implied a perspective on British textual mythologies by positioning contemporary British literature as a continuation from Icelandic literature and as inherently antithetical to literature produced under the (he supposed) radically different and backward Chinese culture. As a nation-building effort, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* expressed a need to examine the nation's past in order to imagine its future, while *Hau Kiou Choaan* and (to a lesser extent) *Miscellaneous Pieces* printed more contemporary Chinese literature to show the perceived ideological advancements that Britain had made versus its eastern equivalents. The translation anthologies engaged with the imperial conversation by contending that colonial influence tended to be a force for civilisation. They also spoke to Enlightenment values of improvement and the cosmopolitan understanding of Britain as a player on the world stage rather than an isolated island, though Percy resisted internationalist readings of Britishness in favour of a more introspective nationalism. In these attempts, the translation anthologies had limited success, though it is important to bear in mind that in terms of innovation and construction, they were and are impressive efforts which laid the groundwork for the aesthetics of future translation and verse anthologies. Their greater role, however, was to establish a basis for his major project, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). This chapter will briefly consider *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* specifically as a pretext for the great ballad anthology, informing an analysis of the nationalist context of the anthology genre and how Percy uses the anthology to uphold and subvert different identities found in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century, according to his own (nationalist) cultural Anglican, Whig, conservative ideology. The chapter will also explore the process of collecting the material that would become the *Reliques* into an anthology, and in so doing uncover the anthological invention of Britain in Percy's major work. This will be discussed particularly through the lens of antiquarianism as a conservative means to preserve a canon of literature and national identity, particularly in the face of dissent and resistance to the concept of a conservative nation. The

chapter will examine four ballads chosen for their discussion of Britishness along the borders of Britishness. In his particular research method, Percy's appreciation of physical literacy (the printed or written or engraved word, though especially the printed word which, in Percy's mind at least, carried a permanence that bordered on the spiritual and underscored the national) is underscored. The very object of the book – the *Reliques* – is more than the drawing together of ideas; it is the drawing together of other, fragmented objects into a whole which is greater, more solid, more entirely authentic than the sum of its parts.

Anthological Pretexts

The *Reliques* was a three-volume collection of ballads in English (though not necessarily from England) on various themes, edited together and dedicated to Elizabeth Percy, the Duchess of Northumberland. They were a huge commercial success, running through four editions in Percy's lifetime and continuously in print, though by the fourth edition (1795) Percy was embarrassed by them; he was, by this point, a Bishop, and denounced the collection as "merely the amusements of my youth" and claiming to delegate editorial duties to his nephew.[1] His embarrassment at his previous literary ambitions was not shared by the book's many admirers, among them Wordsworth, who declared that "I do not think that there is an able Writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the *Reliques*; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own."[2]

Between Nick Groom's *The Making of Percy's Reliques* and Bertram Davis' 1981 and 1989 biographies of Percy, the origins of the *Reliques* have been well described, and it is not my intention to repeat their work here. Nevertheless, in the interests of appropriately parsing the work, some context would be useful in this thesis. The – possibly apocryphal – event that spurred Percy into preparing the book for publication came during a visit to his friend Humphrey Pitt's home in Shropshire in 1753, when he

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[1] John Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (8 Vols.) (London: JB Nichols & Son, 1858). Vol. 8, p.309.

[2] William Wordsworth, 'Essay, Supplementary to the Preface' in *The Major Works*. p.656.

came across a bundle of pages and asked to keep them. This much is certainly true – the Folio Manuscript still exists in good condition today at the British Library – but other details of the story, which he inscribed on the manuscript itself, fall into the territory of eighteenth-century antiquarian narrative tropes:

> This very curious Old Manuscript in its present mutilated state, but unbound and sadly torn &c., I rescued from destruction, and begged at the hands of my worthy friend […] I saw it lying dirty on the floor under a Bureau in ye parlour: being used by the Maids to light the fire. It was afterwards sent, most unfortunately, to an ignorant Bookbinder, who pared the margin, when I put it into Boards in order to lend it to Dr Johnson.[3]

The story calls to mind yet another similarity to Macpherson, who claimed to have rescued the Ossian manuscript from out of the scissors of tailors, which was a complete fabrication.[4] Percy's manuscript is to this day in such good condition that the idea that it had been in the furnace-pile should raise scepticism with scholars who have encountered it in person, as should the manuscript's impressive provenance and ownership.[5] The narrative of upper-class gatekeepers rescuing literature from the ignorant mishandling of the labouring class, thus securing upper-class ownership for the literature, was pervasive and satisfying to an editor such as Percy who imagined himself as the sole worthy sentinel of the literary heritage of the Northumberland Percys. This narrative allows for the found manuscript trope, pervasive in Gothic fiction, to develop, and is used by Percy in his antiquarian literary nationalism. Just as Horace Walpole "discovered", rather than wrote, *The Castle of Otranto* (1765); just as James Hogg would – later and more self-referentially – declare himself the "editor" rather than "author" of *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824); so too is Percy positioning himself less as the composer of these *Reliques* and more as the

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[3] *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, British Library Add. MS. 27879. Fol.1.
[4] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques.* p.38.
[5] Percy believed that the manuscript was written by the eminent lexicographer and antiquarian Thomas Blount. *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, ed. by Peter Beal and Jeremy Griffiths (London: The British Library & University of Toronto Press, 1993). Vol. 4, p.118.

explorer of already existing realities, existing in the liminal space between reading the words of the past and writing the words of the present.[6] Whether his discovery the Folio Manuscript is as authentically related as Percy claims or not, his self-fashioning as the editor of a heritage, divinely ordained by his discovery of a manuscript, is unchanged. The fact of its status as a manuscript also puts it within a specific creative textual context which Percy was interested in as an antiquarian. He consulted various sources in his construction of the *Reliques*, including the Pepys library and ballad copies sent to him by correspondents all over Britain. Nick Groom has suggested that Percy's archival visits were designed to mirror "the bustle and industry of Johnson's dictionary workshop during his trip," and he brought with him several ballad transcripts and his copy of *A Collection of Old Ballads*.[7] In keeping with his preference of print as the superior medium due to its conformity to the necessities of cataloguing and its immutable state, he did no research on the oral transmission of ballads in the communities that produced them. He had no faith in the validity and use of the oral medium within his national project and probably a limited understanding of how to record and parse orally transmitted information.[8]

Percy's anticipation of the cult of Chinoiserie centred himself and his work as an intellectual beacon among more shallow leisure pursuits. Not only was he prescient in his adoption of the trend, but also in his appraisal of its merits and limitations. The eighteenth century vogue for Chinoiserie would reach its peak after the publication of *Hau Kiou Choaan* in 1760, with many aspects the Orient eventually falling out of fashion, as British society began to perceive it "a backwards, debased and degraded version of the Occident" which was suited only to the entertainment of children.[9] Percy anticipated several phenomena of Oriental literature in the West in his Chinese publications; from the proto-feminist heroine of *Hau Kiou Choaan's* distinctly non-

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[6] For analysis of the found manuscript trope, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (London: Methuen, 1986).; Timothy C. Baker, 'Authentic Inauthenticity: The Found Manuscript', in *Contemporary Scottish Gothic: Mourning, Authenticity, and Tradition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 54–88.

[7] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.165.

[8] See Nick Groom, 'Celts, Goths, and the Nature of the Literary Source', in *Tradition in Transition: Women Writers, Marginal Texts, and the Eighteenth-Century Canon*, ed. by Alvaro Ribeiro and James G. Basker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp.275-96.

[9] Makdisi. p.113.

Western femininity (though Percy himself would interpret Suey-Ping differently) to the taste for Chinese gardening that would impact on scenes of leisure and aesthetics throughout the next century. The artful and cunning female hero of the Oriental tale was to become a popular trope of the genre, seen in Scheherazade in *The Arabian Nights* (first published in English 1706) and in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* (1762). Suey-Ping was a relatable introduction for Western readers to Chinese literary norms as she had similarities to Samuel Richardson's eponymous heroines, Clarissa and Pamela, such as her resourcefulness and steadfast virtue.

In 1763, Percy published *Five Pieces*. He promised that from this book:

> The English reader [would] see the seeds of our excellent Gothic constitution […] many supervisions, opinions, and prejudices […] that the ideas of chivalry were strongly rivetted in the minds of all the northern nations from the remotest ages [and] an ancient Islandic Romance that shews the original of that kind of writing which so long captivated all the nations of Europe.[10]

Gothicism was Percy's literary-cultural ideal. He admired their literacy, their native genius, which he coded as a native English genius, believing them to be ancestors of the English. He claimed that they showed themselves to be more sophisticated writers than previously believed because they supposedly invented rhyming verse (though he celebrated this through their written compositions, not their oral ones; one wonders if the rhyme has the same value written down as it does said aloud? Is rhyme valuable to Percy not because it demonstrates great creativity and harmony, but because it demonstrates a linguistic standardisation?). He bemoaned the existing perception of the Goths as barbarians, writing that "It will be thought a paradox, that the same people, whose furious ravages destroyed the last poor remains of expiring genius among the Romans, should cherish [writing] with all possible care among their own

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[10] Lewis. pp.84-5.

countrymen: yet so it was."[11] Percy admired the Goths principally for the fact that they left documents behind: unlike Macpherson's Celts, whose oral literature was charming precisely because of its ghostly ephemerality and difficulty in pinning down, Percy's Goths' literacy made them a friend to the antiquarian. He looked to the figure of the Gothic minstrel as a carrier for artistic truths in indigenous historical literature. The minstrel tradition initiated by the Goths, Percy supposed, survived until at least the seventeenth century and was part of the literary inheritance of Britain. The peculiar figure of the literate minstrel in the *Reliques* allowed Percy to explore Anglo-Gothicism to its fullest extent.

His interest in publishing innovative cultural histories continued with the *Reliques*. Its release signalled the beginning of a wave of publications promising ballads from the exotic to the indigenous. The book was rare in that the ballads were textually presented as fundamentally un-musical, but in other ways it was very representative of this tide; conservative, standardised, apologetic for supposed 'rudeness', and married to the notion of authenticity as a benchmark for quality in indigenous literature. *Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1698-1720) had included far bawdier ballads and *The Tea-Table Miscellany* would be politicised as the first in a "revival" of Scottish vernacular literature.[12] *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* owed its success and popularity to the fact that Percy had the prescience to do what few had thought to do before him; anthologise the ballads together, drawing them into an accessible continuous structure that provided a context – albeit a context mediated by his cultural Anglicanism – for the literature.[13]

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[11] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A2 vers.

[12] Whether the successes of Ramsay and his contemporaries constitutes a "revival" or not is contentious, particularly in terms of its links to ballad literature. Jeremy Smith has described the Scots ballad tradition as a "continuity […] which moved out of the shadows into 'mainstream' literary tradition, sometimes overlapping with that distinctive eighteenth-century urge to recuperate and re-work the medieval." Jeremy Smith, 'Scots and English Across the Union: Linguistic Connexions and Contrast', *Scottish Literary Review*, 8.1 (2016), 17–32. p.22.

[13] On the successes of the *Reliques*: I am referring to commercial success and later intellectual influence. The *Reliques* went through four editions in Percy's lifetime and the triumph of this success assisted in his achievement of his professional ambitions outside of literature, including the Bishopric. In terms of influence, Bertram Davis has described the textual legacy of the *Reliques* as "Percy's most significant literary accomplishment of the eighteenth century's final years", noting its influence on Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, and others. Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.312-4.

Collaborators

In the early days of assembling the *Reliques*, Percy relied on input from his friend Shenstone. Shenstone's advice on the content and layout of Percy's previous books was largely overlooked, but Percy was particularly keen to make the *Reliques* a success and began corresponding more frenetically with his friend as production of the book became more urgent. He often asked for corrections on drafts or to have copies of ballads supplied, sometimes asked for advice on presentation, occasionally forewarned him of the ways in which the book would be a disappointment to his aesthetic sensibilities. For Shenstone's part, he too was extremely invested in the project's success, though they diverged on the form that success may take, and he wrote regularly to Percy offering notes on drafts. He seemed to regard himself as a patron of Percy and the *Reliques* as a joint project, though Percy himself affectionately thought of Shenstone more as a resource than a collaborator. In a letter to John Macgowan Williams, Shenstone wrote of Percy that he:

> Has himself a folio collection of this type of MSS; which has many things truly curious, and from which he selects the best. I am only afraid that his fondness for antiquity should tempt him to admit pieces that have no other sort of merit. However, he has offered me a rejecting power, of which I mean to make considerable use.[14]

Having attempted to guide Percy through the minefield of good taste during his work on the Chinese project, Shenstone's concern about Percy's "fondness for antiquity" was well-founded. He had cautioned the less experienced, younger man against overwhelming his productions with notes, correctly identifying that the abundance of notes could betray an anxiety about the quality of the knowledge contained therein. Shenstone argued that the overbearance of notes in particular was to the detriment of an ancient text, which could and should stand alone in aesthetic appreciation, seeming to suggest that the object alone was capable of conveying a sense of itself without

[14] Williams. p.597.

paratexts. Percy's plans for the elaborate title page and frontispiece also caused him anxiety, and he cautioned him that he was "not partial to a Full title-page, being a passionate lover of Simplicity […] To say a Piece looks busy is one of the highest terms of Approbation, as it is with me a term of Reproach."[15] Though Percy cared enough about his friend's opinion to frequently press him for notes on drafts and sources of new poems and verses, and to make concessions to Shenstone's more graceful style, the two men had different ideas about what the book should be, and certainly about what Shenstone's role was.[16] Shenstone died in 1763, missing the publication of the *Reliques* by two years, and the loss to Percy was devastating. He described him as "one of the most elegant and amiable of men, and his tender writings were but the counterpart of his heart, which was one of the best that animated the human body,"[17] and resolved to dedicate the *Reliques* to his late friend, though this resolution never came to pass.

In the *Reliques*, Percy built upon ideas of Gothicism he developed in his earlier work with Chinese and Nordic materials. In this respect, we might think of these earlier works as a dry run for the *Reliques*, anticipatory gestures indicating an effort to what he perceived, and what history has recognised, as his greater literary and scholarly mission. His earlier efforts prepared him for the possibilities and limitations of the printing press, and allowed him to make mistakes that the later, more ornate book would not brook. The printing of *Hau Kiou Choaan* in particular was fraught and inelegant. In 1761 Shenstone wrote to Percy saying that:

> I think the Publick must esteem itself as much obligated to the Editor as the editor has grounds to be offended at the Printer. Very numerous indeed are the errors that remain, over and above what appear in the tables of errata; and very solicitous indeed does the Editor appear, least, by the omission of any possible Improvement,

[15] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.134.
[16] See Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson.* p.44.
[17] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Richard Farmer*. p.37.

> he should disoblige the Publick.[18]

Bearing these failures of the earlier effort in mind, Shenstone compelled his friend to ensure that the presentation of the *Reliques* should emphasise the simple elegance of the ballads, that white space on the page could make the work look restrained and sophisticatedly sparse.

> I would wish you to consult for Simplicity as much as possible. – Some old words, I presume (which it will be perhaps necessary to preserve) must be explained by modern ones – For these alone, I would reserve the bottom of each Page. [As for] the little Anecdotes that you insert by way of illustration […] If they are short, perhaps, they may not be amiss in Italicks, at the beginning. However should you begin each Ballad at the head of a Page, you will often have room for notes of a larger extent at the Close of the Foregoing – and perhaps you may want here to introduce a particular note, as well as a general Argument. In this Case (the bottom, as I said, being reserv'd for mere verbal explanations) I would throw both the general argument and particular notes together at the Close; for otherwise your text will be almost smothered by these incumbrances in every part.[19]

The foundation of Percy's Gothic nationalism lay in literacy, and developing this foundation not only meant an involved printing and typesetting process but also a network of epistolary collaboration before the book even came to be. Percy consulted with many of the finest intellectual and antiquarian minds in Britain, valuing many of them as personal friends and all of them as hitherto untapped resources, anthologising their contributions alongside those of the Folio Manuscript and other sources, and giving more recent works equal weight based on the recommendations of prestigious

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[18] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone.* p.105.
[19] Ibid. pp.77-8.

friends. Aside from Shenstone, two significant correspondences to the production of the *Reliques* were those he shared with the Welsh antiquarian Evan Evans and the Scottish lawyer David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes.

Evans contributed greatly to the research which would become the *Reliques*, but Percy first began writing to him when preparing *Five Pieces*, to ask for his expertise on the history of the Welsh bards and a request to supply him with some examples of Welsh balladry. At the time his Icelandic and Chinese projects were one and the same, an apparently vague plan for an unwieldly book called *Specimens for the Ancient Poetry of Different Nations*. Evans responded to his request with a brief thesis on the distinct nature of Welsh balladry, writing that “[the Welsh] have none of the same nature with what the English have of that kind. Our bards were contemporary with the persons, whose actions they celebrate, and acted the part of historians as well as poets."[20] He was shrewd to retain any specific examples of Welsh bardic compositions for later correspondence, as he was at the time preparing his *Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards* (1764), also published by R & J Dodsley. Percy, too, was a secretive editor, and did not inform Evans that he had been preparing a collection of ballads until December of 1764.

> I have for a long time (at odd hours of leisure) been concerned in printing a work, which as I never intended to own, I have been shy of mentioning to you and my other friends, tho’ I have occasionally shown you small essays that make parts of it. At length an occasion has happened that will require me to give my name to it, and therefore I venture to divulge it to you.[21]

An unwitting collaborator, Evans’ letters provided Percy with sufficient context to write a few introductory paragraphs to the ballad ‘Robin Good-fellow’,[22] a copy of

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[20] Lewis. p.25.
[21] Ibid. pp.102-3. He had, in fact, mentioned the work vaguely and in passing to Evans in a letter dated 23 November 1761.
[22] Thomas Percy, 'Robin Good-fellow' in *Reliques*. Vol. 3, pp.201-206.

which Percy obtained from the British Museum. Evans and Percy disagreed on key aspects of antiquarian scholarship – Percy believed that the bards had borrowed alliterative poetry from the Icelandic Skalds, for instance, while Evans noted that there was evidence of alliteration in even older civilisations – however the relationship was of great intellectual value to Percy. He did not congratulate Evans' *Specimens* upon its release. His lack of enthusiasm mirrors the contemporary reaction from critics.[23] Reviewers had observed that the translations were lifeless and pedagogically styled, too dependent on the Ossianic tradition. Their epistolary collaboration contains hints of competition, but Percy was no longer threatened by the rival publication, which was bardic nationalism of a specifically Welsh sort, painting the English not as the dominant head of a unified country, but as colonisers and oppressors. *Specimens* was aimed at a Welsh audience, and rejected linguistic and cultural Anglicization, servicing a different readership than the one aimed for by Percy by including a good deal of untranslated poetry. Particularly when considered against Percy's meticulous bridging of where he supposed his readers' gaps in knowledge would be, the two works were clearly sufficiently different in style and intent to be unthreatening to one another. Evans' process and missteps served to advise Percy of how not to present his major ballad collection. *Specimens'* dry pedagogy is what the *Reliques* could have been had Shenstone not had such an influence on the production, and its explicit nationalist undertones cautioned him to be shrewder with his own political opinions.

In terms of the sheer number of contributions, Percy's correspondence with the lawyer and literary scholar David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes was probably the most profitable. Some twenty pieces of poetry sent by Dalrymple would go on to be included in some form in the *Reliques*, as well as material for the paratexts including the introduction to 'Hardyknute' and the glossary.[24] Percy modelled his relationship with Dalrymple closely on that which he had had with Shenstone prior to his unexpected death in 1763, however while it was clear with Shenstone that Percy valued (though did not always accept) his friend's opinion and expertise, Dalrymple seemed to be more like a means

[23] Sarah Prescott, '"Gray's Pale Spectre": Evan Evans, Thomas Gray, and the Rise of Welsh Bardic Nationalism', *Modern Philology*, 104.1 (2006), 72–95. p.79.
[24] Falconer. pp.42-4.

to a resource whose opinions he would tolerate rather than actively seek. He was happy to accept copies of ballads from the Scot, but he would frequently send him drafts too late to take his opinion into consideration in the finished product, indicating that his opinion was less valuable to Percy than his library was. He wrote to Dalrymple in late 1764, warning him that “When you receive a finished set, you will find innumerable alterations both in the Plan and selections.”[25] Himself a publisher of printed ballads, Dalrymple is mentioned several times in introductory paragraphs throughout the *Reliques*.[26] His name becomes a shorthand for literary research and the sending of ballad copies from scholar to scholar. Dalrymple’s efforts in collecting and printing ballads from oral sources made him an appropriate conduit through which Percy could filter ‘authentic’ ballad materials without indulging the oral tradition, and Percy thanks him for “most of the beautiful Scottish poems with which this little miscellany is enriched, and for many curious and elegant remarks with which they are illustrated.”[27]

Locating Anthology

As Percy was a strong advocate of celebrating Gothic literacy as employed in the written (printed) word, it was vital that this was underscored in every possible way in his manufacturing and dissemination of the *Reliques*. In making the work an effort of epistolary collaboration, Percy imagined the *Reliques* as a sort of archive of the literary history of Britain. Himself an enthusiastic visitor of archives and libraries, the image of a physical space sanctified to the purpose of studying the ballads of Britain is a powerful one which purposefully psycho-locates the reader in an imagined version of this space as they read through the *Reliques,* including the overarching and individual introductory materials. His fastidiousness about detailing his sources in these micro-introductions varies by prestige: in the ballad ‘Edom O’ Gordon’, for example, he cites

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[25] Ibid. p.91. Evans did not receive a finished set; Percy wrote him an embarrassed apology in the letter quoted above.

[26] Dalrymple anonymously published versions of ‘Edom O’ Gordon’, ‘Gill Morice’, and ‘Young Waters’ through Glasgow’s Foulis Press in 1755, all of which Percy would consult in his preparations of these ballads for the *Reliques*.

[27] ‘Preface’, Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1 p.xii.

Of the ballads included in the *Reliques*, Percy acknowledges in preface ‘Edward, Edward’, ‘Edom O’ Gordon’, and ‘Hardyknute’ as having been provided by Dalrymple.

his Folio Manuscript as the main source of the ballad and credits an edition by Dalrymple, "preserved in the memory of a lady, that is now dead" for its "additional stanzas."[29] In 'Sir Patrick Spence' he is vaguer ("given from two MS. copies, transmitted from Scotland"[30]). 'The Lady Turned Serving-Man', a less obscure and regional ballad, is "given from a written copy",[31] a broadside which was of limited prestige because of its wide access;[32] he fails to note, however, that he also derived the ballad from the anonymously edited *A Collection of Old Ballads* (1723-5).[33] The higher the prestige of a source, the keener he is to cite it in detail: 'The Legend of Sir Guy' for instance not only appears in his Folio Manuscript, but also "in two printed [editions], one of which is in black letter in the Pepys collection."[34] The Pepys Library at Cambridge was held in particular significance due to the prestige attached to the collector and the physical grandeur of the collection. It was one of the first stops on his tour of literary vestiges and he spent two weeks toiling there without cessation.

Percy's emphatic reliance on the printed word underpinned his Gothic interest, but it also connected with his strong antiquarian impulse. It is difficult, perhaps even impossible, to prove the antiquity of a ballad principally or exclusively transmitted orally; should a piece of literature exist in a printed form, however, it is concrete and tangible. The object can be dated even when the text cannot. One could own it in a collection. The word "collection" here is understood to have two distinct but subtly differentiated definitions within the context of (literary) antiquarianism, both of which connect a particular object with a particular space. This thesis deals most immediately and in the greatest detail with the idea of collection as anthology – the objects are (often fragmented) texts and the space is the book – but the definition which would be most immediately relevant to Percy and his contemporaries is one where the objects are antique curios, artefacts, and tchotchkes, and the space is a private or public

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[29] In fact the Dalrymple edition is used more faithfully than the Folio Manuscript, which was a supplementary source in this and many other cases.
[30] Percy, 'Sir Patrick Spence' in *Reliques*. Vol.1, pp.71-3; p.71.
[31] Percy, 'The Lady Turned Serving-Man' in *Reliques*. Vol. 3, pp.87-92; p.87.
[32] Percy's copy is held in the Houghton Library. 'The Lady turned Serving Man', Percy Broadside Ballad Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University, pEB75 P4128C, no. 93.
[33] See Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. Appendix II, p.251.
[34] Percy, 'The Legend of Sir Guy' in *Reliques*. Vol. 3, pp.103-111; p.105.

museum, gallery, library, or other dedicated display area for the personal enjoyment and perusal of the collector. In the *Reliques* these two definitions are realised. It is, on its most surface understanding, an anthology of texts, but it also represents the physicality of the collection of the bookish Percy, who owned an astonishing 265 books by the age of seventeen. Just as the *Reliques* was, Percy's personal library was curated with the utmost taste and sophistication; "a young man's rather than a boy's library."[35] It contained not only the classics as well as Shakespeare and Milton, but also Samuel Richardson's novels and the plays of Dryden.[36] Privately, Percy was beginning to curate an English canon which he would publically celebrate in the *Reliques*. This dichotomy between the public and the private in the collection was realised in paratexts. The presentation of the *Reliques* was an elaborate blend of Shenstonian aesthetics and Percy's owlish antiquarianism.[37] Percy and his mentor, as described previously, had differing opinions on the role of the editor to intervene in the reader's textual experience, but the end product's sophisticated use of paratexts was a successful balancing act between the complementary priorities of academicism and creativity. The clearest example of this balance comes in his 'Essay on the Ancient English Minstrels', which demonstrates the depth of his knowledge while also allowing him to advocate for the cultural supremacy his patrons in Northumberland ("I cannot conclude this account of the ancient Minstrels, without remarking that they are most of them represented to have been of the North,")[38] and exercise a personal and sentimental prosaic enthusiasm ("Their skill was considered as something divine, their persons were deemed sacred, their attendance was solicited by kings, and they were every where loaded with honours and rewards,").[39] The paratexts also elevated the

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[35] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.5.

[36] See *The Library of Thomas Percy*, Queen's University Belfast Special Collections.

[37] The descriptor "owlish" is borrowed from Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. (1999), in which the author describes a fable which Percy translated from a Dodsley copy: "The fable of 'The Owl and the Nightingale' is paradigmatic to the book's argument: Percy's *Reliques* is a marriage between the owl and the nightingale, a union of the antiquarian with the man of taste, of scholarship with poetry, of the pedant with the minstrel." (Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.3) Groom's analysis provides a useful metaphor, particularly for the dynamic of Percy's relationship with Shenstone. It is also important to note the vital role that Dodsley's book production techniques played in the construction of the *Reliques*, but this has been well discussed elsewhere. Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* and Solomon are of interest in this respect.

[38] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, p.xxi.

[39] Ibid. p.xv.

book's status to that of an object to something ornate and sacred. To (over)extend Groom's metaphor somewhat, Percy's editorial entrepreneurship has the steely determination of a bird of prey as he negotiates antiquarianism, aesthetics, national ideology, and commerce. There is also a central irony at play whereby Percy leans heavily on the technological advancements of the modern age (i.e., print) in his most successful advancement of the antiquarian agenda. The elegance and elaboration of the *Reliques* would have been limited by earlier, less developed iterations of the Dodsley's printing press. As an object, it is both inherently modern and a link to a distant past. The civility represented by eighteenth-century print culture may hearken back to the textual civility of the Goths, but it is too wrapped up in modern technologies of civilisation to mirror it exactly. Percy's most successful acts of antiquarianism can be seen in his use of the most modern methods of book production and technology, contained within an aesthetic structure that was very to-the-moment for 1765.

Percy set a precedent for his emphasis on paratextual elements during his preparation of Chinese and Nordic literature. *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, for example, showed its antiquity first by printing both a runic and a Latin inscription on the title page, and its authenticity by including the Icelandic originals from which Percy developed his translations in an appendix in the back of the book, though his characteristic enthusiasm led to an overdependence on notes which services the antiquarian expert more than the average reader. Paratexts helped to develop *Five Pieces*' identity as being uniquely worthy by virtue of its antiquity and its authenticity. They were used with similar affect in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, which was primarily an English translation of a Chinese novel, but also included a translator's preface, the plot of a play, proverbs, and fragments of Chinese poetry. In the *Reliques*, paratexts also underscore the physicality of the object of the book by contextualising editorial interpolations as a necessary part of the narrative and implicitly enforcing the idea that there are no oral footnotes (though there are close equivalents such as call-and-responses and balladic positioning within other oral productions such as plays). According to this model of understanding, a ballad as it is related by a bard is incomplete because it is not subject to the kind of critical review that a curatorial eye can offer. Paratexts reinvent the role of editor as a

curator of texts, shifting the anthology from an indecipherable and inaccessible textual object to a book designed to give a discerning reader an insight into the workings of the culture being anthologised. Percy presented the text alongside paratexts, particularly in his most precious *Reliques*, because his contextualisation of the topic allowed him to present himself as a guardian of the object. His role is not merely to show us the object; it is to lead us to an understanding of it, coloured by his own (often flawed but always studiously argued) understanding.

The paratext which most explicitly fosters the idea of the book as a physical and antiquarian object in Percy's work is the title: *Reliques*. The importance of the title can easily be overlooked, but as Genette has shown, it can be – and in this case, is – revealing. "The titular apparatus as we have known it since the Renaissance," he writes, "is very often not so much precisely an element as a rather complex whole."[40] In this case, much of the "complex whole" of the book in its entirety is suggested by the language of the title. The word implies a religious sanctity, the relics of a saint or holy person being artefacts and tissue they left behind when their life was over which are collected by the church and symbolically appreciated. Rather than, say, an artefact or an object or even, simply, a book, this is a "relic" of a bygone age, fragmented, in decay, and saved by its curator and worthy of worship. It denotes a sort of Gothic ruin. The unusual spelling of the word is deliberately archaic, framing this particular relic in the semantics of Middle English.[41] Nick Groom has suggested that Samuel Johnson may have been the one to suggest the word "Relique" for the title, as he had visited Percy's home at Easton Maudit in 1764 and helped Percy compose the dedication to the Duchess of Northumberland, and he had defined "relick" in his dictionary with enthusiastic detail:

> 'Relique' had connotations of the court and the church, chivalry and valour, antiquarianism and history, life and death memorials, and fragments and ruins. But it also fittingly described the remnants of

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[40] Genette. p.55.
[41] *OED Online*, 'Relic, n.' <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/161910> [accessed 28 May 2016].

> the body of English poetry deserted by the modern poet, retained in memory as a function of nostalgia, of noumenal import. Simply the word focused on the values and status of the ancient English minstrels. And it arose from a dedication, perfectly pitched to win patronage, that was offered in thanks by a writer who believed he had narrowly escaped madness, to the friend who had saved him.[42]

Groom's analysis of reliquary as "a function of nostalgia" overlooks the spiritual. A relique is not a mere discarded fragment of poetry. It is a venerated text, preserved in a paradoxical state of decay and ornament, and also, in liminality, through antiquarianism, recovery and celebration. Percy highlights these aspects of the text further in the rest of the title.[43] Not only is it a "relic", it is a relic of an "ancient" era; it is authentically "English" (a conspicuously chosen national identifier which I have explored elsewhere[44]) and, more than just balladry, it is "poetry". It is not the low songs of the labouring and illiterate classes, but a Homeric tradition – i.e., the literary history of a society structured on the oral literature inherited from ancient poets and singers – of an art form which should be preserved to protect national identity and contextualised as the cultural birth right of the upper classes. His previous titles had been somewhat less grandiose, but a project of this magnitude demanded a certain level of heraldry. The title calls to mind a suggestion by Derrida on the definition of "the strange institution called literature":

> The question of [literature's] origin was immediately the question of its end. Its history is constructed like the ruin of a monument which basically never existed. It is the history of a ruin, the narrative of a

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[42] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques.* pp.221-2. Johnson's definition of "relick" was as follows: "It is often taken for the body deserted by the soul […] That which is kept in memory of another, With a kind of religious veneration." Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 2 (London: A. Millar, 1766).

[43] *Consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, and other Pieces of Our Earlier Poets (Chiefly of the Lyric Kind) Together with Some Few of Later Date.*

[44] Glover. p.41.

> memory which produces the event to be told and which will never have been present.[46]

In this sense, the reliquary of English language ballads in Britain becomes not just a question of understanding itself, but of understanding the whole continuum of literature as a global institution. Britain, however, remained the site of authentic ethnic genius in poetry in Percy's mind.

The authenticity and merit implied by parts of the title and signposted throughout the text was stressed in particular because, with the *Reliques*, Percy was working within a mode that had been accused of inauthenticity and insufficient worth. Joseph Ritson, a contentious English radical and antiquarian working a generation after the first edition of the *Reliques*, whose own editorial stance was meticulous and often antagonistic, was a great detractor of Percy. Ritson was a difficult man to please and though most contemporary reviews of Percy were mostly favourable, he never bought what Percy was selling. He wrote in 1794 that "with respect to vulgar poetry, preserved by tradition, it is almost impossible to discriminate the ancient from the modern, the true from the false." His condemnation of popular folk literature went so far as to argue that "the purest strain [of poetry] become polluted by the foulness of its channel, [it] may in turn be degraded to the vilest jargon. Tradition in short, is a species of alchemy which converts gold to lead."[47] Samuel Johnson, who had an enduringly pejorative attitude towards recognition of the art form, had defined the ballad in his dictionary as "A song", a definition that pointed to the ballad's supposed inability to stand alone, its demands for musical accompaniment in order to be valid. However, many ballad collections before Percy celebrated the form's musicality and did not think of the musical aspects as a detraction. A 1662 collection entitled *Rump: or An Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs relating to the Late Times* claimed, "If thou read these Ballads (and not sing them) the poor Ballads are undone."[48]

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[46] Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge (London: Routledge, 1992) p.42.
[47] Joseph Ritson, *Scottish Songs: In Two Volumes* (London: J. Johnson, 1794). Vol.1, p.lxxxi.
[48] *Rump: Or An Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs Relating to the Late Times* (London: Henry Brome, 1662). Vol.1, p.1.

The Ossian controversy, as well as other high-profile literary forgeries, had made the question of the authenticity of the text and visibility of evidence within the finished product a pressing one, and Percy was keen to pre-empt the implications of fraud that hounded Macpherson, some of which came from Percy himself. In the introduction to *Five Pieces* Percy slyly remarked that "It is by no means for the interest of this little work, to have it brought into comparison with those beautiful pieces [i.e., Macpherson's *Fragments*], after which it must appear to the greatest disadvantage. […] The editor of these pieces had no such boundless field for licence."[49] Percy had included as an appendix to *Five Pieces* the Icelandic originals sourced from Paul-Henri Mallet from which he worked, demonstrating a transparency of sourcing that he did not duplicate in the *Reliques*. This was understandable, however; the Folio Manuscript was his most prized source and he had legitimate reasons to be cagier about its public release. The enduring success of the *Reliques* depended at least partly on its originality. Percy had access to original sources that nobody else did. He occasionally sent transcriptions from the manuscript to his collaborators and correspondents, but he declined access to the manuscript itself, especially after it was damaged by a binder when it was under the care of Johnson. He mythologised it, making much of his rescue of it from the hands of maids in Shiffnal, and placing it in the context of a chain of literary succession. It was not a mere seventeenth century commonplace book; it "[appeared] to have been transcribed (about 100 years ago) from another Copy much older."[50] He kept the manuscript hidden, eventually claiming in the 1790s that it had been on display at a bookseller's recently to fend off accusations that he was hiding it for reasons of inauthenticity.[51] This concession to public accountability echoed a similar effort by Macpherson in the 1770s, but unlike Macpherson, Percy actually had a manuscript to display, and his public perception reflected this ownership to the extent that his most famous portraiture depicted him holding it as if it were a religious

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[49] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.A4 vers.

[50] *The Percy Letters: The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Thomas Warton*, ed. by M.G. Robinson and Leah Dennis (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951). p.5. All commonplace books, of course, are transcriptions of copies, but there is a deliberate ceremony in his description.

[51] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.242.

artefact.[52]

Hau Kiou Choaan and *Five Pieces* served as something of a rehearsal space in these respects. The earlier works gave him some experience in sourcing his texts, emphasising paratexts, exploring his Gothic interest, and making a counterossianic effort to authenticate his work before it could be accused of inauthenticity. The great ambition of the *Reliques* is what separates the work from his earlier endeavours. It invents a Homeric poetic tradition for Britain. While *Hau Kiou Choaan* was a fashionable and innovative exploration of what the literature of China had to offer contemporary Britain, and while *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* suggested a Gothic origin for the literary lineage of Britain, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* took a holistic approach to exploring the indigenous literature of what had been called Great Britain only for the past sixty years. This meant some careful appropriation: sub-headings such as Scottish, English, or Welsh, were now superseded by the dominant political identity. We were all, now, British, though this was a Britishness which was heavily coded as English in the *Reliques* by a process of (selective) Anglicization and the inclusion and exclusion of ballads which furthered this agenda. More than the sum of its parts, the poetry rose above its origins to manufacture a literary identity that was greater than the national identifiers that existed when it was composed. Although this appropriation was problematic in obvious ways (for example, it represents a chronologically inaccurate template of history), it was neat. A ballad such as 'Edom O' Gordon' for example is identified as being of English origin but is presented in the *Reliques* with Scottish characters and in particular a regional Scottish villain. He excused this geographical inconsistency with a rare concession to the ballads' mutability:

> Whether the author was English or Scotch, the difference originally was not great. The English Ballads are generally of the North of

[52] Joshua Reynolds painted Percy holding the manuscript in 1773. The original was sadly lost in a fire in 1780; a 1775 print by William Dickinson from the original exists in the National Portrait Gallery (reproduced on page 3). See Davis, 'Thomas Percy, the Reynolds Portrait, and the Northumberland House Fire'. p.32.

> England, the Scottish are of the South of Scotland, and of consequence the country of Ballad-singers was sometimes subject to one crown, and sometimes to the other, and most frequently to neither.[53]

Percy he is keen to emphasise that the indigenous identity of these ballads is interchangeable throughout the island. A new identity has taken its place which he was keen to promote and protect. He had no interest in exploring ballads from the nation's peripheries on their own terms, and frequently lacked the linguistic knowledge to do so anyway.

As an Anglican clergyman with literary patrons in the house of Northumberland, the Anglo-aristocratic establishment was Percy's most comfortable condition. This condition, however, was subject to the changing state of acceptable nationalism in the Age of Enlightenment. The philosophical advancement of both individualism and international cosmopolitanism meant that national narratives could not be insular. When Enlightenment figures did champion nationalist narratives, they tended to be those of cultural nationalism, such as Hugh Blair's advocacy of Ossian, and in the eighteenth-century Scots vernacular 'revival' of Allan Ramsay and his contemporaries.[54] Percy's nationalism, understated though it was, was not only cultural but also in the service of a conservative political nationalism, which in itself was an effort of professional advancement as much as a strongly held political conviction as it helped him secure appropriate patrons. Percy's clerical and literary ambitions were dependent on a level of establishment stability and the *Reliques* were in part an effort to secure that. If Percy could show a united literary history, he could harmonise Anglo-Scottish relations under the banner of patronage to the Northumberland Percys – selected for their patronage because of their long, noble lineage, their ties to fashionable London and court society, and the large selection of ballads he had in his repertoire that told their, often chequered, history – which would

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[53] Percy, 'Edom O' Gordon' in *Reliques*. p.99.
[54] Trumpener. pp.116-7.

(and did) have an excellent effect on his own chances at professional and literary advancement. Perhaps the original ballad composer of 'Edom O' Gordon', whoever s/he was, had considered herself English, not British; to Percy, it didn't matter. Part of this identity was linguistic. The *Reliques* are mostly printed in English, with less easily recognisable Scottish words (such as "drie" in 'Edom O' Gordon') glossed, which had the dual effect of making the text accessible to English readers while also assuming a hierarchy of language in which modern English was supreme.[55] Percy would later qualify the textual history of English as being Gothic in a set of tables outlining the language families of the British Isles. Identifying English (and "lowland Scotch") as being of Gothic origin, he also describes the Ancient British and Ancient Irish languages in separate tables.[56] While linguistically correct, the parallel presentations of these language families, alongside his consistent suggestion that the textual history of Britain is a Gothic one, has the effect of suggesting that indigenous literatures in non-Gothic languages are less legitimate in their contributions towards the nation's literary history. Non-Gothic indigenity is therefore problematic in Percy's work. One exception to this nonspecific Britishness suggested by the preface to 'Edom O' Gordon' was the spotlight shone on the ballads of Northumberland, which are specified as such. This was because the patronage of the Northumberland Percys was of utmost important to Percy. He emphasised his link as a gatekeeper to the Folio Manuscript which he designated a key to the family's history, and in this way antiquarianism as the act of collecting becomes an act of stabilisation; when history can be seen and touched, when one can have a tactile relationship with it, it is not open to dissent or re-interpretation. The irony is, of course, that a collection of any sort is as vulnerable as any other record of history; much of Percy's own library was destroyed in a fire in 1780.[57]

Nation as Anthology, Anthology as Nation

At this time, I wish to develop the earlier worked definition of "anthology" of chapter 1 from a descriptor to a more of a conceptual method for textually understanding the

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[55] Glover. p.60.
[56] Percy, *Northern Antiquities.* (1770) pp.xxiv-xxv.
[57] See Davis, 'Thomas Percy, the Reynolds Portrait, and the Northumberland House Fire'.

nation. For example, we can say that the literary construction of Britain in the eighteenth century is *anthological.* Anthologies such as *the* Reliques allow for a full representation of national self-reckoning, particularly in the case of a nation so recently politically united as was post-1707 Britain in the new nation's early textual generations. Anthology specifically represents the unification of various textual experiences under a single ideological banner, unlike the comparatively autonomous experience of a novel, or the lyrical remit of poetry, or the performative ephemerality of a drama. Barbara Benedict has argued that anthology is a genre of paradox:

> The anthology is one work and it is many works. Inclusive and exclusive, communal and fractured, a physical representation of sociability and elitism, heteroglossic yet homogenous, the literary anthology entails the activity of literary comparison and differentiation […] It is the literary embodiment of the social tensions and project of the early period of modernization: the gathering together into a composite whole of diverse elements that yet retain their integrity.[58]

It is in this paradox that the eighteenth-century anthology situates the conversation about national identity. It is the genre best suited to discussing the understanding of the national condition because allows an imaginative space for the expression of a nationhood that is truly plural and various; unlike poetry, drama, and prose, which generally reflect the experiences and identities of their single authors, the anthology represents a variety of perspectives. The condition of being both English (or Scottish) and British following the invention of Britain requires a literary space which allows for duality, though of course writers would use diverse tactics to express individual nationhood in the following generations. The question of Britain still hung too unanswered in the air to be expressed in a conventional novel with a beginning, a middle, and an end. A poem is also insufficient, as the introspective aspects of poetry preclude the collaborative understanding of a nation that is, at its heart, plural.

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[58] Benedict. pp.252-3.

Anthology is the best way to represent the many conversations that take place in the recent national definition process because it can show that there are conflicts and contradictions at play both in what is included and what is excluded from the nation by reflecting the inclusion/exclusion in the text. The anthologist seeks to theorise where the state is and where it is going, using the editorial process to contain difficulties which may make this type of conceptualisation too fraught. This was especially pertinent for editors of Percy's political persuasion, who sought to stabilise the nation while also exploring the potentially destabilising idiosyncrasies of its past. Anthology attempts to circumvent the inherent problems of various literary forms in expressing the national identity by situating the expression of identities, including the negotiation of multiple identities, as a conversation rather than a monologue. David Hume wrote "a nation is nothing but a collection of individuals,"[59]; by the same token an anthology is nothing but a collection of texts; therefore, the British nation, unsure in the eighteenth century which, if any, of its previous regional traditions should carry forward into the new nation-state, should be understood as anthological in its imaginative construction. Anthology as a textual object provides both a space for an imagined community to exercise its collectivised identity (a space for an imagined community to imagine itself) and a metaphor through which one can understand the psychocultural landscape of Britain in the century after its anthological inception. The conversation is based on the belief in a national character, which had much traction in the age of sensibility and beyond. Kathleen Wilson describes the eighteenth-century belief that national character resulted from "the universal human propensity for mimesis and conformity, making propinquity as important as institutions in producing the fact of difference." She also notes that the character was "contingent – based on proximity and shared language, laws, government and social organization – [and] inherited – an essence that could not otherwise be acquired."[60] Henry Home, Lord Kames defined the national character in 1778 as shared idiosyncrasy, writing that:

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[59] David Hume, 'Of National Characters', in *Essays Moral, Political, Literary*, ed. by Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987), pp. 127–35. p.127.

[60] Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003). p.8.

> Such peculiarities in a whole nation, by which it differs from other nations or from itself at different periods, are termed the *manners of that nation*. Manners therefore signify a mode of behaviour peculiar to a certain person, or to a certain nation.[61]

Edmund Burke described the national character in 1790 as “a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator [sic].”[62] In the twentieth century, this theme was extrapolated by George Orwell in ‘England, Your England’:

> It is quite true that the so-called races of Britain feel themselves to be very different from one another. A Scotsman, for instance, does not thank you if you call him an Englishman. You can see the hesitation we feel on this point by the fact that we call our islands by no less than six different names, England, Britain, Great Britain, the British Isles, the United Kingdom, and, in very exalted moments, Albion.[63]

Orwell’s comments on national character – or feeling, as he terms it – are more nuanced than many eighteenth-century conceptions of the theme, as they seem to explicitly allow for hybridity in the characters of the nation. Are Scottish Britons somehow inherently different than English Britons? How do we account for aspects of difference in the quest for a national character? Anthology allows for a literary exploration of hybridity, which makes it the most suitable genre for explorations of the national character. It has the potential to be a truly collaborative literary form. This is not to say that the process is necessarily democratic; the anthologist may have a higher social cachet than the writers contained therein as he represents a gatekeeper between literatures and potential audiences, and in this sense editing might be seen as a higher pursuit than creative writing itself. It demonstrates texts based on

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[61] Henry Home, *Sketches of the History of Man* (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1778). Vol. 1, p.314.
[62] Edmund Burke, ‘Letters on a Regicide Peace’, in *The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, ed. by Henry Rogers (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1842), pp. 275–317. p.301.
[63] George Orwell, *England, Your England: And Other Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1953). p.203.

compatibility with the cultural biases of its editor to form a certain cultural/political/social argument in much the same way that one conceptualises the nature of nation and national identity. Though an anthologist reflects, represents, and advocates for a certain public view, he does so selectively and within the remit of his own textual and social biases. Price has characterised the role of editors in imagining textual communities within anthology:

> An anthology that reproduces the work of poets also records the voice of fame. An amanuensis rather than a creator, its editor represents a community instead of expressing a self. In the same way that each anthology-piece functions (at least in theory) as a representative synecdoche for the longer text from which it is excerpted, the anthologist claims to stand within – and for – the same audience that he addresses.[64]

Percy's Homeric tradition is built largely on texts which were composed with little to no conception of what Britain in the sense of the Union could be, presented alongside modern imitations that presuppose this. In one sense this is useful: it promotes a sense of native, intuitive genius that is older and more original than even the nation itself, that the British poetic genius predates civilisation as Percy was attempting to understand it, and grew stadially form this pre-enlightened era. However, the anthological construction of the nation is challenging to the authentic qualities of the ballads. Anthology works to frame the text's origins in a specific way while also suggesting that anthological interpretation may be as or more valuable than the original context. Its concrete textual state fixes the material in a specific condition of printing; though the text can be revised in subsequent editions, it cannot erase the first edition-object. It draws ideological borders around literatures. Balladry as a genre resists these limitations. Ballads have the unique quality of affirming community histories and simultaneously fluidly transporting the histories between performers and across borders (Percy alludes to this mutability in the previously quoted introduction to

[64] Price. p.68.

'Edom O' Gordon', but with no analysis of what this quality of movement implies for his publication). In their oral composition and transmission, ballads resist the impulse of textual literatures to be fixed in a single version on the page instead participating in an ongoing tradition of song and recitation subject to change, revision, adoption. Anthology, while very useful for arranging canonical national poetries, is in several ways antithetical to balladic strains of poetry. The genre resists textual categorisation of the sort that anthology thrives upon. On the other hand, anthologies are uniquely placed to contextualise fragments of poetry (which is a state in which printed and manuscript ballads are often found, given the fallibility of human transmission and the fact of sections of ballads being borrowed and moved around from version to version and even across different stories) as being worthy of unique recognition. Percy often supplements his fragments with additional lines conflated from other editions, for which not even Shenstone could fault him; this editorial decision had, he said, the effect of "a modern Toe or Finger which is allowably added to the best old Statues […] owing to Gaps rather than to faulty Passages."[65] For other contemporary anthologies, a fragment was considered permissible without any additional collation with other sources or additions from the editor. This was particularly common with anthologies of selections from novels (what Price calls the "culture of the excerpt"[66]) but is also the case with verse and especially antiquarian verse anthologies. Some antiquarian editors were emboldened by the success of the "fragments" of Ossian, a success which was based on forged fragments designed as a pretext for publishing longer pieces of poetry (though this inauthenticity was not apparent to everyone at that time). A 1782 collection of Euripedean tragedy edited by Michael Wodhull, for example, included fragments, some pieced together from concurrent editions into a more coherent verse but others left untouched. Jonathan Swift's *Miscellanies* (1739) contained fragmentary ballads side by side with complete ones. It may have been difficult for an editor in the mid-eighteenth century to justify the publication of a book comprised solely of verse fragments, but in the context of an anthology the meaning and aesthetic value of a fragment is enriched by the poetry published around it and vice versa. This

[65] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.73.
[66] Price. p.5.

generation's efforts to legitimise fragments of poetry were certainly appreciated by the next generation of poets, to whom the poetic fragment (and complete poems presented as fragments such as Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan') was a significant movement in the Romantic genre.[67] The suitability of fragments for anthology goes towards explaining why anthologies are favoured by antiquarians, who deal in fragmentation by virtue of their practice.

There is a connection between anthology and fragment in that the fragment is usually packaged in publication as a part of the anthology. In the anthological metaphor of the nation we can also see parallels to what the text represents as a fragment. Fragmentation is retroactive. Nothing starts out as a fragment.[68] There is inherently a whole thing to be broken up. In the case of a piece of poetry, only a part of the poem survived. In the case of Scotland, what had once been a whole and complete nation was retroactively interpreted by many as only a part of Britain by English and global cultural voices in a way that, I would suggest, England, due to its cultural and political dominance in the Union, was not. The role of an (antiquarian) anthologist is to contextualise fragments without necessarily understanding them as the text that they once represented but rather understanding them as the ambient context of an over-arching narrative. The fragments that are left behind are not only to be synthesised to give a better picture of the past, but to use this synthesis to imagine potential futures. National identity in this context is not a question of who we have been; it is also a question of who we can become. What may be considered to be indigenous is also reinterpreted. This is not to say that there is no hierarchy of the national sub-identities in the *Reliques*. Englishness is privileged in the book's title, and we might intuit that if Scotland and Wales are retroactively understood as fragments of the new Britain, England is the whole upon which the fragments are added. England is the text and its neighbours are the important but ultimately often serve more as paratexts than as

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[67] "Does [temporality] mean that this origin-as-fragmentation perpetually remains just that, fragmentation, never achieving a fluid continuity?" Timothy Bahti, 'Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" and the Fragment of Romanticism', *MLN*, 96.5 (1981), 1035–50.

[68] At least in the sense of a fragment as a part of something more whole. As alluded to above, Romantic writers would frequently term complete works of poetry "fragments" to suggest a potential for continuation. See Andrew Allport, 'The Romantic Fragment Poem and the Performance of Form', *Studies in Romanticism*, 51.3 (2012), 399–417.

texts, to say nothing of communities such as the Highland Gaels whose relationship with England is more colonial than cooperative. The paratexts (which will be discussed in the next chapter) are important to understanding the text in the greatest possible detail, but ultimately the reader can expect to get the gist without them.[69] In much the same way, Percy expects that a reading of his national ballad project that privileges the English experience will get the gist of the national experience in total.

Anthology invites its readers to engage in a variety of ways, allowing them to tailor the reading experience to their own needs, or, as Price says "Far from substituting extensive for intensive reading, anthologies forced their editor alternately to re-enact and to undo that historical shift by oscillating constantly between the two."[70] The paradox of anthology also allows for contradictions, which is particularly evident in the case of the *Reliques*. Percy's insistence on textuality as a marker of national genius contradicts his use of ballads as a textual example for exploring themes of Britishness, as the printed (i.e., broadside) and oral (i.e., minstrel) ballad traditions exhibit inherent difference which is not explored or resolved in the *Reliques*. His ballads are at once Scottish and British, or English and British, both representative of where the British nation is now and where it was then, which is the pursuit of antiquarianism, but the anthology format also allows the past to be represented as a contemporary story. He commends its success to the Folio Manuscript but depends more on recent (often post-Union) printed versions of the ballads, so his process encompasses both antiquarian study and contemporary scholarly enterprises.

If the anthology is a proposed vision of the nation, then Percy's vision for Britain as expressed in the *Reliques* is, to borrow a phrase from the modernist poet Hugh MacDiarmid, marvellously descriptive and incomplete.[71] Throughout the *Reliques* he chooses ballads that act as case studies for exemplary versions of what Britain could be: some cautionary tales, some celebratory visions. The recurrent theme of rebellion

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[69] My own interpretation of the value of paratexts would seem to better reflect that of Shenstone than Percy in this regard.

[70] Price. p.4.

[71] Hugh MacDiarmid, 'Scotland Small?', in *Selected Poetry*, ed. by Alan Riach and Michael Grieve (New York: New Directions, 2006), p.198.

is at turns liberating and oppressive for English agents in the *Reliques*, and when enacted by Scottish characters is always disastrous for all involved. 'Edom O' Gordon', which has already been mentioned, exists in both English and Scottish versions, though in the *Reliques* its Scottish features are emphasised, and paints Scottish nobility as fraught and volatile. 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', a ballad to which Percy could claim sole manuscript ownership, is a rustic celebration of English cultural independence. 'Jemmy Dawson', a modern composition by Shenstone, positions Scottish independence as a direct threat to English moral supremacy. 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' attacks the Scottish nobility for historical acts of defiance against their Northumberland neighbours. These ballads work in tandem to express acceptable and unacceptable forms of power and autonomy, creating a British hierarchy at the top of which, naturally, sits the morally capable and historically vindicated English.

The Britains of the *Reliques*

Edom O' Gordon

'Edom O' Gordon' appears in many guises throughout the eighteenth century, though all sources agree that the ballad had significant roots in the English tradition. Joseph Ritson uses the Cotton MS[72] in his rendering, which omits the husband's revenge on the titular villain (in this case, Captain Car). In a characteristic barb at Percy's editorial standards, Ritson describes his own version as "the undoubted original of the Scottish ballad, and one of the few specimens now extant of the genuine proper Old English ballad, as composed – not by a Grub Street author for the stalls of London, but – to be chanted up and down the kingdom by the wandering minstrels of the North Countrie."[73] Ritson was correct that London's less established and prestigious printers were busy with their own versions of the ballad. The most ubiquitous was called 'Loudoun Castle', and though Child would later retain the joint title 'Captain Car, or, Edom o Gordon', the content of his version is very similar to eighteenth-century

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[72] Where it sits alongside the Lindisfarne Gospels, the sole Beowulf manuscript, two witnesses to the Magna Carta, and the diaries of Edward VI in a MS collection which became one of the foundational collections of the British Library after John Cotton's death in 1702.

[73] Joseph Ritson, *Ancient Songs and Ballads, from the Reign of King Henry the Second to the Revolution* (London: J. Johnson, 1790). p.138.

broadside versions.[74] Percy had a 79-line fragment of this ballad in his Folio Manuscript (also titled 'Captaine Carr'). He expanded it in the *Reliques* to 144 lines with the assistance of a second edition, edited and provided to him by Dalrymple, which was printed in Glasgow in 1755. Percy's introduction to the ballad says much about the national questions its inclusion in the *Reliques* poses. He begins by saying that the ballad "was preserved in the memory of a lady that is now dead," a shift in editorial responsibility that may have been designed to decentralise the Caledonian violence of the ballad from Percy's vision for a modern Britain, and to place it in a literal grave where it can be safely symbolically resurrected for antiquarian purposes without posing a real-life threat to his desired political stability. There has been some contention regarding the social class of the anonymous female balladeer used as a source by Dalrymple, which may have some bearing on our analysis of her complicity in the decontextualisation of the ballad from the Aberdeenshire ballad tradition. Bertrand Bronson has contended that the use of the word "lady" is significant and that "Lord Hailes was not the man to spend valuable time taking down songs from the mouths of peasants in order to get the exact words of unvarnished tradition."[75] Maureen McLane believes that the lady's anonymity could suggest either the namelessness of the lower classes or the purposeful polite obscurity of nobility collaborating in low art:

> What we do not know […] is how the lady acquired the contents of her memory […] How was that memory mediated? I have been assuming that she recited or sang the ballad to Lord Hailes, but she might well have written it down at his request: such was the prerogative of a noble and presumably literate "lady" […] Thus "the lady" above rests comfortably and unproblematically in genteel anonymity, whereas the Scottish correspondent – Percy's co-collector – is named and specified.[76]

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[74] Francis James Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ed. by Helen Child Sargent and George Lyman Kitteridge (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1943). pp.434-9.

[75] Bertrand Harris Bronson, *The Ballad As Song* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969). p.2.

[76] McLane. pp.53-4.

Though the identity of Dalrymple's lady is shrouded in polite ambiguity, the geography of the ballad is ambiguous in a far more self-conscious way. Percy writes that though the ballad is in the "English idiom […] whether the author was English or Scotch, the difference originally was not great. The English Ballads are generally of the North of England, the Scottish are of the South of Scotland, and of consequence the country of ballad-singers was sometimes subject to one crown, and sometimes to the other, and most frequently to neither."[77] It is true that the borders of balladry were porous, and it is also true that "old strolling bards or minstrels made no scruple of changing the names of the personages they introduced, to humour their hearers,"[78] but Percy's identification of 'Edom O' Gordon' as Scottish while simultaneously admitting it to the British canonical exercise is significant. This refers to a plurality of identity in poetry while also functioning as a condemnation of a sort for what this specific plurality could represent. There are plenty of ballads in the *Reliques* which demonstrate "the violences practised in the feudal times in every part of this Island, and indeed all over Europe,"[79] but few of these examples are so firmly located in one part of the British Isles by the editor, particularly when by his own admission, the ballad is English in its most antique origin. Percy's textual agenda often shifts from appreciation of antiquity to ballad correctness and perfection to aesthetics to presenting unique texts and back again, and his critics have been noting his editorial fickleness since Shenstone. It is therefore hardly surprising that Percy writes an introduction to fit his thesis, rather than one supported by the ballad itself. In the ideal version of Britain that the *Reliques* represents for Percy, 'Edom O' Gordon' was the startlingly contemporary vision of feudal Scotland that threatens the stability of the (United) kingdom. Gordon stands for the mythological ancestor of eighteenth-century Jacobite rebels. It may be worth noting that the historical figure on whom the ballad is based is very likely Adam Gordon of Auchindoun, a military leader loyal to Mary Queen of Scots, herself a perceived threat to English morality in her own time.[80] Adam de Gordon was also the name of the Scots nobleman who, according to local legend, fought in hand-to-hand combat against

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[77] Percy, 'Edom O' Gordon' in *Reliques*. Vol. 1, p.99.
[78] 'Edom O' Gordon', p.99.
[79] 'Edom O' Gordon', p.99.
[80] The ballad 'The Murder of the King of Scots' also deals with the treachery of Mary's supporters. Percy, 'The Murder of the King of Scots' in *Reliques*. Vol. 2, pp.197-200.

Edward I during the king's plundering of Berwickshire. The name has some historical resonance in terms of Scots posing problems for the English – Captain Carr is a less evocative name. When the lady of the castle calls the titular villain "False Gordòn" (l.41), a "traitor" (l.50) and the "bluidy butcher" (l.55), therefore, she is signalling a disapproval for Scottish resistance to and aggression against the English for centuries.

The ending of 'Edom O' Gordon's' various iterations is different depending on provenance, and the ending provided by Percy is unique, likely modern, and a reflection of Percy's own outlook on national recovery from Scottish political misdemeanours. The Folio Manuscript is incomplete, with some terminal stanzas missing, but it ends with the lord vowing vengeance on Captain Carr and discovering him at Dractons-Borrow, presumably to kill him. Dalrymple's version ends with an unconvincingly modern verse, likely an interpolation of his own invention, though one in keeping with the ballad tradition's tendency to end on a moralising note, which Percy criticised as "unnatural":[81]

> And round and round the waes he went
> Their ashes for to view.
> At last into the flames he flew
> And bad the world adieu.[82]

Percy ends his version with the lord following Gordon into the night with revenge on his mind.

> And after the Gordon he is gane
> Sa fast as he might drie
> And soon i' the Gordon's foul hartis bluid
> He's wroken his dear ladie.[83]

[81] Falconer. p.68.
[82] Dalrymple. p.12.
[83] 'Edom O' Gordon'. l.141-4.

It is a more dynamic ending, which seems to suggest optimism about the possibility of Scotland recovering from its violent, feudal past, and recommitting its loyalty to non-revolutionary projects, such as the building of empire. Because no violence actually takes place, the Lord's hands are clean, but it is clear that his quest for justice is driven by a metaphorically Scottish self-interest, and the determination he seeks for himself is a rejection of the destructive impetus within this remit.

Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne

'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', on the other hand, is a ballad that represents the essence of Englishness as Percy believed it should be manifested in Britain; dominant against encroaching (European) foes, glorying in the stunning English landscapes, and above all, held in a manuscript by one who knew how to appropriately deploy it. Robin Hood ballads were commonly circulated in broadside form from the mid seventeenth century, and by 1790 several versions of *Robin Hood's Garland* had appeared, collecting the most popular stories and ballads in cheaply printed collections.[84] Though Robin Hood ballads are common (several are reproduced in the *Reliques*), 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne" is not found in any broadsides before the *Reliques* because it is unique to the Folio Manuscript.[85] Exclusivity was important to Percy, and by printing this ballad he could demonstrate that his interest was an antiquarian one, and that it had not been merely selected for reasons of populism.

In contrast to his yeoman status of the earliest Robin Hood ballads (including his appearance in *Piers Plowman*), the Robin of the sixteenth century onwards was often ambiguously noble, framing his outlaw status as an act of patriarchal protectionism against foreign insurgency with no room for (mis)interpretation as a figurehead of the peasants' revolt. Interestingly, and despite the conventional wisdom reflected in popular culture modern depictions of Robin, no ballads are extant depicting him robbing the rich to give to the poor, a representation that was taken up by Child who describes him as "friendly to poor men generally, imparting to them of what he takes

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[84] Barrie Dobson and John Taylor, 'Robin Hood Ballads', *Northern History*, 35.1 (1999), 237–39.
[85] Percy, 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne' in *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.74-86. p.74.

from the rich."[86] Conventional wisdom based on other Robin ballads tells us that Robin Hood is an indisputable champion for Englishness, but the text of 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne' does not easily meet the assumption of him as a folk hero. As Groom points out, the *Reliques* "welters in gore: the bloodiness of death and dismemberment incarnadines the entire three volumes, and if occasionally watered by humour or levity, it is more often deepened by a colossal immorality,"[87] though the gory content of 'Guy of Gisborne', is both an example of gruesome dark humour and violence couched in the rhetoric of nationalist self-preservation. The most egregious example of violence in this ballad comes after Robin has already dispatched the villainous Guy:

> He tooke sir Guys head by the hayre,
> And stucke it upon his bowes end:
> Thou hast beene a traytor all thy life,
> Which thing must have an end.
>
> Robin pulled forth an Irish knife,
> And nicked sir Guy in the face,
> That he was never on woman born,
> Cold know whose head it was.[88]

Robin's disfigurement of his dead assailant does not seem to represent the decency and chivalry one might expect from a beloved folk hero, but the grisly act is offset in a couple of ways. Firstly, Percy's paratextual framing of the ballad is a sympathetic rendering of Robin's mission as a freedom-fighter for English rights, observing in the introduction to the ballad that he acted in defiance of "those tyrannical forest laws that were introduced by our Norman kings," evoking a conversation about the Norman Yoke and English radicalism as an acceptable measure against oppression.[89] 'Robin

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[86] Child. p.255.
[87] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques.* p.45.
[88] 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', l.165-172.
[89] 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', p.74. For an account of eighteenth-century English interpretations of the Norman yoke, see Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). pp.75-82.

Hood and Guy of Gisborne' presents Robin's actions as a rebellion against an illegitimate authority, lending credence to the supremacy of English (Gothic) forms of liberty. It is also notable that Robin commits these acts of violence not with his English hand, but with his Irish knife, a detail which hints towards Percy's suspicion of Celtic antiquarian exercises such as Ossian as the ancestor of the nation's literary mythology.

Percy also reproduces the false aphorism that Robin stole from the wealthy and redistributed their wealth to the poor, citing Stow's *Annals of England* (1603) as evidence for this.[90] Twentieth-century research has uncovered that this characterisation is based on a very minor detail of the ballad cycle and misrepresents the general content; he never robs from the rich with the express purpose of giving to the poor, though would sometimes donate part of his ill-gotten gains to charitable causes, and he also never robs secular landlords, suggesting a critique of certain ecclesiastical structures inherent in the tradition, rather than of wealth itself.[91] Percy never overstates Robin's popular perception; he merely leans into it uncritically. Hales and Furnivall observed that "Robin Hood was dear to the English imagination as the representative of the forest life [...] the spirit not to be cribbed and cabined in towns and cities, but rejoicing in entire unrestraint and wildest freedom,"[92] and in his buoyant defences of freedom, Robin comes to represent the native spirit of Gothic liberty. The freedom of the English people is divinely manifested, and the laws of immigrants and invaders can have no bearing on it. When Robin's companion Little John is captured by the Sheriff's men in 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', he invokes his right to the justice of heaven before that of the Norman kings:

> Thou shalt be drawen by dale and downe,
> And hanged hye on a hill.
> But thou mayst fayle of thy purpose, quoth John,
> If itt be Christ his will.[93]

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[90] 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', pp.74-5.
[91] J. C. Holt, 'The Origins and Audience of the Ballads of Robin Hood', *Past & Present*, 18 (1960), 89–110. p.91.
[92] Hales and Furnivall. Vol. 1, p.11.
[93] 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne' l.85-88.

In the end, the English heroes win the day, killing the assassin Guy of Gisborne and chasing the Sheriff and his men back to Nottingham, and in the published version the encounter ends with humour. Though Percy's Folio Manuscript described Little John "cleav[ing] his head in twinn," the Sheriff of the *Reliques* escapes such a gruesome fate, instead falling victim to a comic seeing-off in the final lines:

> But he cold neither runne soe fast,
> Nor away soe fast cold ryde,
> But Litle John with an arrowe soe broad,
> He shott him into the 'backe'-syde.[94]

Jemmy Dawson

'Jemmy Dawson' was a late addition to the line-up of the *Reliques.* It describes the true story of the hanging, drawing, and quartering of a Mancunian rebel swept up in the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, and his beautiful fiancée who died of grief at his execution, and was written by Shenstone after he read about the events in a letter published in *The Parrot*.[95] Though Shenstone's ballad is excessively sentimental to modern sensibilities,[96] it more or less accurately reflects the tone and content of the letter from which Shenstone took inspiration:

> I will not prolong the narrative, by any repetition of what she suffered on sentence being passed upon him. None, excepting those utterly incapable of feeling any soft or generous emotions, but may easily conceive of her agonies. Besides, the sad catastrophe will be sufficient to convince you of their sincerity.[97]

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[94] 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne' l.233-236.

[95] This detail is absent from editions published in Percy's lifetime. See Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London: George Allan, 1910). Vol. 2, p.371.

[96] This sentimentality allowed Percy to muse on recent Jacobite anxieties without dwelling too much on politics. Scott would also use sentiment as a marker of distance in *Waverley* (1814). Waverley is a textual descendent of Jemmy who manages to survive Jacobite seduction and is educated into the true fold of Britishness.

[97] Quoted in T. B. Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes and Misdemeanors from the Earliest Period to the Year 1783* (London: T. C. Hansard,

Percy had a few reasons for including this poem. Firstly, Shenstone died in 1763, and as Percy had decided to devote the dedication of the *Reliques* to Elizabeth Percy, Duchess of Northumberland instead of, as he had originally intended, his late mentor, the inclusion of this ballad served as a tribute to the work Shenstone had contributed to the project. Secondly, although Shenstone's works, including 'Jemmy Dawson', were posthumously published a year before the *Reliques*, Percy could claim to have published it "here given from a MS. which contained some small variations from the printed copy,"[98] showing that there was a tactile textual relationship between the two men. This private textual relationship forms part of the foundation of the *Reliques*, becoming a mythological artefact of textual ballad culture just as the Folio Manuscript did. Thirdly, 'Jemmy Dawson' posits an all-too-recent cautionary version of Britain, imagined through the lens of the Jacobite cause successfully winning over English men, in which Dawson's failure to remain loyal to king and country represents a microcosm of the national grief caused by Caledonian infidelity to the Union. Although no actual Scottish characters are mentioned in the poem, the presence of a tartan spectre is felt throughout, malevolently directing Dawson (and Kitty, and, by extension, the Romantically conceived future of Britain their union may have produced) to his death. Dawson and Kitty are represented as pure, dignified, urban English youth from good, traditional stock:

> Young Dawson was a gallant youth,
> A brighter never trod the plain;
> And well he lov'd one charming maid,
> And dearly was he lov'd again.
>
> One tender maid she lov'd him dear,
> Of gentle blood the damsel came,
> And faultless was her beauteous form,

1816). Vol. XVIII, p.374.

[98] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 2, p.378.

And spotless was her virgin frame.[99]

Dawson's fortune begins to turn, however, when the "rebel clans" appear at his doorstop:

Their colours and their sash he wore,
And in the fatal dress was found;
And now he must that death endure,
Which gives the brave the keenest wound.[100]

By adopting the (at the time of composition, illegal) dress of the Scottish rebels, Jemmy seals his fate. The adoption of Scottish apparel becomes his "fatal" moment – his treason may not even have involved violence. Such is the risk of exposure to Scottish rebellion. Jemmy's sartorial crime is reminiscent of Bonnie Prince Charlie's escape to Skye dressed not only as a woman, but as a peasant.[101] The ballad regards Jemmy's donning of the kilt as being a unique tragedy, as part of Dawson's crime is having allowed Scottish corruptions to occur on his own body, a shame which is both gendered and nationalised. English chauvinism here represents a force of patriarchal unification, and the ballad recognises the Jacobite uprisings not only as a destabilising event in recent British history, but as a personal tragedy being enacted on young English men.

Like 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', however, English law is recognised as an almost divine providence which may seem awful, but is also ultimately fair and demanding of respect. Dawson's crimes are seen as a tragedy over which, to a certain extent, he had no control, but he still must accept responsibility for them. Although his "[heart] could his king forget, /'Twas true and loyal still to [Kitty],"[102] she does not protest his

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[99] 'Jemmy Dawson'. l.9-16.
[100] 'Jemmy Dawson' l.21-24.
[101] In Scottophobic propaganda of the time, it was common to represent the Scots as being feminised as a parody of this escape. See Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland.* pp.164-5.
[102] 'Jemmy Dawson' l.63-4.

execution, instead accepting that the justice handed down to them is fair and correct:

> She followed him, prepar'd to view
> The terrible behests of law;
> And the last scene of Jemmy's woes
> With calm and stedfast eye she saw.[103]

The final stanzas of the ballad are among the most sentimental in the entirety of the *Reliques*:

> The dismal scene was o'er and past,
> The lover's mournful hearse retir'd;
> The maid drew back her languid head,
> And sighing forth his name, expir'd.
>
> Tho' justice ever must prevail,
> The tear my Kitty sheds is due;
> For seldom shall she hear a tale
> So sad, so tender, and so true.[104]

Scottish rebellion was dangerous enough when it remained in Scotland and on the battlefield, but when it travelled south through the towns and cities of England, it disrupted the patriarchal character of the national gender and perverted the natural justice, unsettling England's role as the patriarch of the United Kingdom. This version of Britain is a cautionary tale to reject anti-Union sentiment and protect innocent youth from the wrong sort of nationalism, instead ushering them into a stable and productive familial unit where their happiness can be translated as the fortunate advancement of the Anglo-British people who have descended from Percy's Goths.

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[103] 'Jemmy Dawson' l.49-52.
[104] 'Jemmy Dawson' l.73-80.

Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas

Percy's commitment to the Northumberland Percys was paramount to his literary and clerical ambitions. His dedication to Shenstone in the *Reliques* was shelved in favour of one to Elizabeth Percy, written for him by Samuel Johnson.[105] The Duchess of Northumberland, an influential woman in London society, accepted his flattering dedication, which prompted Percy to make several rapid and radical changes to the *Reliques*. The most significant of these changes was a complete swap in the printed order of ballads. The original volume three was filled with ballads relating to the Northumberland Percys; Percy swapped volumes three and one, making the history of the Northumberland Percys a quite literal entry point to the literary history of the entirety of Britain, as he imagined it. 'The Ancient Ballad of Chevy Chase', which became the first ballad of the first volume of the *Reliques*, opens with an introduction to Northumberland lore:

> The Percé owt of Northombarlande.
> And a vowe to God mayd he,
> That he wolde hunte in the mountayns
> Off Chyviat within dayes thre,
> In the mauger of doughtè Dogles,
> And all that ever with him be.[106]

'Chevy Chase' is one of the most antique ballads of the region, and Percy would certainly have included it anyway, but due to its linguistic and geographic precision, it is a perfect microcosm of how Percy thinks the Northumberlands should be represented in the literary canon. Also included in the first volume are 'The Battle of Otterbourne', 'Elegy on Henry Fourth Earl of Northumberland' (a poem by the Tudor poet John Skelton), 'The More Modern Ballad of Chevy Chase', 'The Rising in the North', and 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas'. The latter poem is a depiction of the conflict with Douglas alluded to in 'Chevy Chase', in which James Douglas, Earl of

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[105] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.109.
[106] Percy, 'The Ancient Ballad of Chevy Chase' in *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.1-17, l.1-6.

Morton sold the exiled Earl of Northumberland (coincidentally also called Thomas Percy), who he had been harbouring at his home, to the English government for £2000, delaying his extradition by haggling for more cash.[107] The ballad is unsurprisingly sympathetic towards Northumberland, to the extent of completely ignoring his role in the anti-Elizabethan rebellion as a Catholic recusant, and instead presenting him as a victim of circumstance, a man whose suffering is taken advantage of by dishonest Scots:

> How long shall fortune faile me nowe,
> And harrowe me with fear and dread?
> How long shallI in bale abide,
> In misery my life to lead?
>
> To fall from my bliss alas the while!
> It was my sore and heavye lott:
> And I must leave my native land,
> And I must live a man forgot.[108]

Northumberland is intercepted by Douglas's sister, the child of a witch, who warns him that her brother is "a traitorous man" and implores him to come with her to Edinburgh Castle. Her eldritch counsel appears untrustworthy, and Northumberland remains at Lochleven regardless. The ballad makes repeated reference to Scotland and England as distinct cultural and geographical spaces; Northumberland describes leaving his "native land", which specifically refers to his geographical remit as a lord and as the Warden of Middle Marches – a position which existed to secure the border between England and Scotland – though it also suggests a nostalgia for a distinctly English identity, uncompromised by the political ramifications of Union. As in 'Jemmy Dawson', 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' gives a sense that the stability of the

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[107] Margaret H.B. Sanderson, 'Douglas, William, Sixth Earl of Morton (c.1540–1606)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7930> [accessed 5 December 2016].

[108] Percy, 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' in *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.257-68, l.1-8.

Union is vulnerable to the 'corruptive' influence of Scotland, even referring to specific truces that the two countries have made (and broken):

> Betweene England and Scotland it wold breake truce,
> And friends againe they wold never bee,
> If they shold 'liver a banisht erle
> Was driven out of his own countrie.[109]

Northumberland's confidence in Douglas' fidelity is misplaced, yet in spite of this betrayal the two countries have, in Percy's time, remained close enough friends that the Union became feasible. 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' suggests a cautious memory, where the Union remains stable while the English – and in particular the noble English house of Percy – bear in mind the previous infidelities of their Scots counterparts. The success of the Union depends upon co-operation and, at least on the part of the English constituents, caution. The poem makes repeated reference to transactions of gold ("Ne for the gold in all Englànd,/The Douglas wold not break his word,"[110]) as if to emphasise a financial reality of the Union: though England would benefit from the acquisition of Scottish lands, the biggest individual financial gains would be felt by the Scottish people who took advantage of the opportunity to migrate south in search of jobs.[111] These references are also reminiscent of Burns' own later analysis of the transactional nature of Union, in which he famously wrote that "We're bought and sold for English gold/ Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!".[112] The language of conflict in the ballad also has a Scottish dimension, with Percy employing the word "flyte" ("The wylie Douglas then bespake,/And thus to flyte with him began:" "What needeth this, Douglas, he sayth;/What needest thou to flyte with mee?"[113]). Though this word appears in its middle-English counterpart "ffloute" in his Folio Manuscript version,[114] the spelling "flyte" is most commonly associated with a Scottish poetic form

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[109] 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' l.69-72.
[110] 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' l.63-5.
[111] See Colley. pp.117-32.
[112] 'Such a Parcel of Rogues in a Nation' in Robert Burns, *Burns: Poems*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers (London: Everyman's Library, 2006). p.214; l.22-4.
[113] 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' l.39-40, 213-4.
[114] 'Northumberland Betrayd by Dowglas' in Hales and Furnivall. Vol. 2, pp.217-26, l.204.

exercised by William Dunbar and his contemporaries,[115] notably in 'The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie', in which two great poets or orators argue and insult one another for the entertainment of the court.[116] Percy's adoption of a Scottish spelling within an English ballad in which an English person is the narrator suggests that the quality of bringing insult and low politics to courtly conflicts is a Scottish one. There is a sense that by crossing the border he was sworn to protect, Northumberland unknowingly ushered south an intergenerational intranational trauma in the form of Scottish resistance to Union and all its political and courtly implications. In 'Northumberland Betrayed by Douglas' and the other Northumberland ballads, Percy displays his most overt English nationalism, grounding himself so firmly as a guardian of Northumberland history and culture as a proxy for ideal Englishness that he adopts a position of antipathy to their historical enemies. Here the cultural benefits of nationalism as described by Benedict Anderson are seen alongside the natural conflicts thrown up by such an ideology.[117] Nationalist sentiment – even when such sentiment is born of conflict – is an influence on significant cultural movements.

Conclusion

The *Reliques* was doubtless the jewel in Percy's literary crown and it had significant professional repercussions. After requesting Elizabeth Percy's permission to be the works' dedicatee, Percy was appointed by her husband to be the family's personal chaplain and tutor to their son Algernon. This appointment fulfilled a professional ambition, and allowed him to pursue further eclectic literary endeavours; *A Key to the New Testament* was released in 1766, *Northern Antiquities* in 1770, and an original ballad-style poem *The Hermit of Warkworth* in 1771. Subsequent editions of the *Reliques* were published in 1767, 1775, and 1794, with Percy ceding editorial responsibility to his nephew for the fourth edition. Also published in 1768 was *The Regulations and Establishment of the Household of Henry Algernon Percy*. The diversity of Percy's publications shows him a reverent and qualified patronee as well as a good

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[115] 'Flite | Flyte, V.', *OED Online* <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/71707 > [accessed 5 December 2016].
[116] William Dunbar, *The Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. by James Kinsley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) [eBook edition].
[117] Benedict Anderson. p.141.

cleric, an authentic poet, and a diligent literary scholar of his earlier books. The *Reliques* have been received as his most nationalistic work in recent scholarship,[118] but it is important to take into consideration the groundwork for the national narrative that he laid in *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. This continuity contextualises his national narrative, in which the British nation is led by English impulses, needs, and enterprises, and the Scots play a supporting role because of their ethnic roots and their troublingly errant recent political actions. It is also important to note that because the nation has been constructed anthologically (i.e., individual geographical and cultural identities, recontextualised under a single narrative banner), the anthological construction of the *Reliques* is the most appropriate format for discussing what the new nation means, where it has come from, and how individual and collective histories could form a blueprint for the future of the nation. This chapter has demonstrated that Percy's *Reliques* are British, but his Britishness was a narrow and at times indecisive construction built on the labour of balladeers who were writing not for Britain but for Scotland, or England, or even smaller regional identities such as Northumberland. It was not, as Percy suggested, strictly the case that "the country of Ballad-singers was sometimes subject to one crown, and sometimes to the other, and most frequently to neither"; rather it was the case that a balladeer represented any number of plural identities at any given time. Percy's antiquarian methodology as expressed in the first edition might have had fewer inherent contradictions had Percy been more astute in identifying his sources, or even had he done any field work, but at a publication level, the genre-limitations of anthology – namely the genre's dependence on the voice of a coherent editorial policy often from a single editor – limits the extent to which this plurality can be explored in this case. The *Reliques* succeeds in conveying the particular moment of being a moderate English nationalist in 1765, and anthology remains the genre with the greatest potential for national impact during a revolutionary century with a developing print culture, but by rejecting the multiplicity of identities inherent in the new nation its history is incompletely rendered. The following chapter will introduce theoretical elements to the discussion to show how one might situate book history at the intersection of various critical

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[118] Philip Connell. pp.189-90; Min. p.319.

inquiries.

Chapter four – Applied Anthology

Introduction

In previous chapters I have shown what an anthology is and, focusing on Percy, what they have achieved in terms of constructing a national narrative. This chapter will begin to discuss the production and uses of Percy's anthologies. In this chapter I am to show the applications and limitations of the canon (i.e. the representative pieces of literature which are popularly seen to be important and influential) to the study of book history in general and with specific reference to anthologies. How does the idea and construction of a canon help us understand the idea of the anthology book? This chapter will also consider specific tensions between the aural and the textual that Percy is forced to engage with throughout his work, though usually begrudgingly. As with the rest of the thesis, this chapter will concentrate on *Hau Kiou Choaan/ Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese, Five Pieces of Runic Poetry,* and *The Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, as they are the most explicitly anthological of his books; though texts such as *Song of Solomon* (1764)*, Key to the New Testament* (1766) and *The Hermit of Warkworth* (1771) speak to similar cultural and personal ambitions evident in Percy's life and work, they function in a sufficiently different way to warrant a separate theoretical discussion. This chapter will draw on theorists such as Gérard Genette, Edward Said, and Hélène Cixous. It hopes to demonstrate that the diverse and far-reaching implications of expanding the remit of book history to consider technological advancements such as paratexts alongside theoretical developments such as post-colonialism and feminism. Such expansion will lead us to a greater understanding of the anthology-book's origins and prospects. This diversity of tactics will enable us to parse the anthology and its applications in greater depth, opening numerous avenues for scholarship in the field of bibliography.

Paratexts

Percy's interest in antiquarianism has been well documented, and has been referred to

several times over the course of this thesis.[1] As both clergyman and (self-fashioned) custodian of English literary history, Percy had an intimate interest in antiquities and the mythologies they evoked. Religious and national mythologies both had an air of the spiritual in a way that history as a mere tale does not. The artefacts of history allow the antiquarian to mythologise the past by offering them a tangible link to it. Thus the textual antiquarian such as Percy must find a way to make his textuality physical. The contemporary explosion in commercial printing provided a reasonably simple solution to a well-connected and intelligent scholar: publish a book. In a heavily saturated market, how could Percy ensure that his books were obviously physical enough to be venerated as relics while being ostensibly ancient enough to be worthy of antiquarian attention? The book straddles a fine line between being a highly modern technological development and a representative of an ancient literary history.

Furthermore, there are tangible parallels between the colonial project and the antiquarian one. The antiquarian can purchase and possess an object no matter how far removed they are from the individual or culture who created it, and can then benefit from the prestige attached to the object's beauty or uniqueness, particularly if the identity of the original curator is obscured by the colonial relationship and/or if he can articulate a position in which he is the 'natural' owner of the object. This prestige continues for generations after the original colonial moment; the British Museum has maintained ownership of the Elgin Marbles, identified in Britain by the name of their collector rather than the name of their source (in Greece they are better known as the Parthenon marbles), long after Greece obtained independence from the Ottoman Empire which had arranged for their removal, and even after Greece had made specific requests and arrangements for their return.[2] In this case, and in many others, the object is colonised to such an extent that it is absorbed in the identity of the coloniser, and not of the producer. 'Percy's *Reliques*' is shorthand for the book itself, not because Percy was the author but because he was the owner. This category of ownership is

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[1] See Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. pp.210-11; 242; 274 for details of antiquarian essay-projects he undertook; Leah Dennis, 'Thomas Percy: Antiquarian vs. Man of Taste', *PMLA*, 57.1 (1942), 140–54. for a discussion of his antiquarian principles at work in his literary projects; Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. pp.30-40 for the contexts of Percy's literary antiquarianism.

[2] Michael Kimmelman, 'Who Draws the Borders of Culture?', *The New York Times*, 5 May 2010.

indicative of a colonial impulse to possess a culture and reconfigure the parts of it which are useful to the imperial project as native to the coloniser, both in the sense of national nativity and cultural heritage. Percy's projected ownership of the Chinese and Icelandic literatures is problematic because he is a foreign visitor to the literature. His guardianship of the ballads of the *Reliques* is less so, though due to his decontextualisation of the ballads as a solely courtly pursuit, not entirely without complications.

This is easier to do with objects than with ideas, however, and this is where the antiquarian compulsion to physicalize (and collect) mythology plays a role. How does one go about physicalizing indigenous oral poetry, or the perception of a foreign or long dead race? This process of pinning-down the ephemeral has been the task of book-makers through the history of print. In order to publish these ideas, one must first textualise them. This is achieved through paratexts. In his seminal book on the subject, Gérard Genette described paratexts as "a kind of canal lock between the ideal and relatively immutable identity of the text and the empirical (sociohistorical) reality of the text's public."[3] Percy's books are positively crammed with paratexts, particularly notes. He was prudent in his connections to secure three contracts with Dodsley in May 1761, a publisher who could offer him elaborate printing options such as illustrations, multiple fonts, and elegant appendices.[4] He was sure to use all of the tools at his disposal. This enthusiasm for the paratextual was a constant source of consternation for Shenstone who favoured a more restrained, aesthetically simple approach to antiquarian publishing. Shenstone was not alone in his concern about notes, which the French writer Alain described as "the mediocre attached to the beautiful," but Percy did not share this view.[5] For Percy, notes were a necessary mediation between the lost foreign/indigenous culture and the reader; questions of style or aesthetics were secondary to questions of his position as gatekeeper relative to the text's understanding (though these secondary concerns, themselves also paratextual, were by no means dismissed, as the book was an elegant and elaborate

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[3] Genette. p.408.
[4] Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.77.
[5] Quoted in Genette., p.319, n.1.

production with very pleasing aesthetics). In reference to an ongoing correspondence about *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy acknowledged, but ultimately dismissed, Shenstone's concerns:

> For my part I think the beauties of style and composition an inferior consideration (at least that the want of them may upon some occasions be excused) when the knowledge of our common nature is thereby promoted and we can gain a deeper insight into the mind of man.[6]

Shenstone's reply to this letter no longer survives, but by the next time he writes he provides a (delayed) response to the book, and its total failure to impress him is immediately evident:

> Let me tell you my truest sentiments, at the time I tell others my most favourable ones: for this I think is the business of Friendship, in all circumstances of this kind. The Novel, tho' in some parts not void of Merit, must certainly draw it's [sic] chief support from its value as a Curiosity; or perhaps as an agreeable means of conveying to the generality all they wish or want to know, of the Chinese manners and constitution [...] Very numerous indeed are the errors that remain, over and above what appear in the tables of errata; and very solicitous indeed does the Editor appear, least, by the omission of any possible Improvement, he should disoblige the Publick. This, perhaps, to an excess, of the better kind. Your Annotations have great merit; yet on the whole, I can form no Conjecture, what vogue it will obtain.[7]

Your scholarship is accomplished, says Shenstone, but when it's this dense and

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[6] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.110.
[7] Ibid. p.114.

unattractive, don't expect people to like it. He may have had a point, after all; *Hau Kiou Choaan's* footnotes are lengthy to the point of being overbearing. One such footnote from the second edition goes on for five pages, most of which are more note than text, on the day-to-day practices of an order of monks mentioned in passing in the text.[8] Percy was not necessary unusual in his copious paratexts; Dodsley's 1765 edition of Aesop's Fables is equally as elaborate in its notes and more so in its illustrations,[9] while Genette notes that Voltaire demonstrates "the eighteenth-century tradition of reserving the most polemical or sarcastic barbs of the discourse for the notes," which in Voltaire's case was a not insubstantial undertaking.[10] In the case of *Hau Kiou Choaan*, these footnotes (as well as the index to the novel's subjects, preface, glosses, information about translation, etc.) serve a dual function. Firstly, they frame the novel as being inherently inscrutable in its foreignness, and Percy as a neutral cultural as well as linguistic translator, providing the guiding materials necessary for the reader to reach the core truth of the artefact, and secondly, they provide a concrete link between the text as a vehicle for ideas and the text as an object. The objectification of the text is central to Percy's project to use the text as evidence for a literary mythology and, therefore, for an inherent sense of Britishness based on literacy as a core value thereof. The presence of notes absolves the text from having to exist solely on its own merits, because they provide both evidence and commentary and are mediated by the agenda of the editor, who is not necessarily (as in this case) the writer. This absolution implies an absence in the text for which absolution must be offered; an inevitable chasm that prevents the reader from reaching an authentic meaning. In this sense, the footnote anchors the text into a meaning which is more real, more tangible, mentally accessible. Far from being an inscrutable context, the footnote transforms the text into something that can be possessed, owned, and colonised, while also colonising the ideas of the text by presenting them as subordinate, incomplete, and subject to imperial interpretation by virtue of their inaccessibility to foreign audiences.[11] The textual

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[8] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 2, pp. 3-7 n.1.

[9] Robert Dodsley, *Select Fables of Esop and Other Fabulists* (London: J. Dodsley, 1765).

[10] Genette. p.327.

[11] Lipking's study is the most comprehensive – and creative – on the history of the various uses of the gloss. Lawrence Lipking, 'The Marginal Gloss', *Critical Inquiry*, 3.4 (1977), 609–55. Alex Watson's book focuses specifically on marginalia in the Romantic era, arguing that "The dynamic between centred text and margin provided a model through which Romantic-period writers could establish the relationship

coloniser sees this inaccessibility not as a mere difference or as a fault on the part of the uneducated reader, but as a fault on the part of the Oriental text. This is true even when the fault is clearly one of the editor. As Min has observed, "In Percy's version of novelistic truth, novelistic character translates flawlessly into cultural characteristic, circumventing plot, context, and narrative altogether. Instead of expanding the narrative, his footnotes contract and consume it in chunks of cultural information."[12] For example, Percy's insistence that women "are held so cheap, we must not wonder that a nation in other respects civilized and refined, should in this resemble the most savage and unpolished"[13] is consistently refuted by the treatment of Shuey ping-sin, who is seen as "the darling of her father, who loved her with an affection, equal to that he would have had for a son of the same accomplishments."[14] Indeed, in the same footnote, Percy expounds his point by imploring the reader to "bear the above Remarks in mind throughout this and some of the following chapters," privileging his reading in the footnotes and subordinating the content of the text itself.[15]

Five Pieces of Runic Poetry is, for the most part a little more restrained in terms of the number and length of notes (though it is also much shorter and readers had already been exposed to Icelandic literature significantly more than they had been to Chinese), but Percy still felt the need to apologise for them in his private correspondence. He defended his choice to Shenstone by outright stating that they were required by his reading public.[16]

Shenstone replied with an idea that he hoped would mitigate the effects of Percy's scholarship on the book's inherent elegance, suggesting "some small Preface at the Beginning" to preclude Percy's typical enthusiasm for notes.[17] Percy liked the idea of prefacing the poems. "To prevent as much as possible the interruption of notes," he wrote at the start of 'The Incantation of Hervor', "it was thought proper to premise a

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between the nation-state and its 'others'. Watson. p.139.

[12] Min. p.314.

[13] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 2, p.129n.

[14] Ibid. Vol. 1, p.70.

[15] Ibid. Vol. 1, p.129n.

[16] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. p.70.

[17] Ibid. p.74.

few miscellaneous observations."[18] These few observations, however, occupy six pages to the poem's eight, and fail to remove the need for notes entirely. What at first appeared to be a compromise to Shenstone's aesthetics became Percy having his cake and eating it, having discovered another space in which to cram his dense scholarship, in what was an editorial exercise in manipulating the experience of reading. The presence of footnotes allowed Percy to be present with the reader throughout the experience of reading. He is not an invisible editor. The paratexts – and, by extension, the editor who is singlehandedly responsible for producing them – "surround and extend [the text] precisely in order to present it […] to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays at least) of a book."[19]

Although the *Reliques* was linguistically and culturally more accessible to readers than his translated works, Percy still made liberal use of footnotes. This is particularly evident in the section on Northumberland ballads, in which Percy exercised his ambition to be the patronised cleric of the Northumberland Percys to extrapolate the family's history in the notes as well as in the ballads. After Elizabeth Percy had accepted his request to dedicate the book to her honour, Percy had rearranged the table of contents so that ballads regarding her esteemed family were foregrounded, which leads to the effect of the first book feeling rather front-loaded with notes. The first two ballads in the collection, 'The ancient ballad of Chevy-Chase' and 'The Battle of Otterbourne',[20] both of which recount aspects of the noble family's history, have very extensive introductions, inordinate footnotes, and numerous linguistic glosses, and to both is further appended an 'Illustration of the Names in the Foregoing Ballads'. The notes specify moments of concurrence and deviation from the prestigious manuscript from which Percy's version is taken; Percy arranges them in stanzas, for example, but maintains the manuscript's spellings for "Monteith" and "Buchan", glossing them in the notes rather than modernising them.[21] Percy's footnotes to these ballads underscore

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[18] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. Vol. 1, p.6.
[19] Genette. p.1.
[20] 'The Battle of Otterbourne', Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.18-31.
[21] Ibid. p.4; p.26.

his role as the canoniser of Northumberland history. There is a correlation in the *Reliques* between how precious a ballad is to the general (and ideological) success of his project and how much scholarship he affords it in terms of notes. Hence 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne', which had never appeared in print before Percy uncovered it in his Folio Manuscript, is well-footnoted with contextual information, variances in his text from the manuscript, and allusions to other ballads, as well as a lengthy preface; 'Barbara Allen's Cruelty' on the other hand, which had appeared in print many times before, has a short perfunctory introduction and only brief linguistic glosses by way of notes.[22] Percy's heavy dependency on footnotes is, like any paratext, an effort to direct the act of reading from beyond the page. Genette has outlined the limitations of footnotes' use:

> Their strategic importance will perhaps offset the inevitably disappointing nature of a "genre" whose occurrences are by definition irregular, divided up, crumbly, not to say dustlike, and are so often closely connected to a given detail of a given text that they have, as it were, no autonomous significance: hence our uneasiness in taking hold of them.[23]

In a sense, the pedantry and obsessiveness over fragmented detail outlined by Genette fits very well with Percy's editing style and with the outcome of the *Reliques* in general. They were, as Genette says, "strategically important" because they provided a textual experience for which there is no real oral equivalent; a real-time, detailed commentary providing historical and linguistic context for aspects of the literature which were likely to be unfamiliar to many contemporary readers as they read. This is not to say that the literature is necessarily improved by the presence of these notes – Shenstone would certainly disagree with that – but it does underscore a feature of the book-as-object which is unique and valuable. In the hands of a community, oral literature is a vehicle for dissent and protest, but by binding it in a book and presenting it as an antique relic

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[22] Percy's version is taken "from an old black-letter copy." Ibid. Vol. 3, pp.125-7; Percy may be referring to a 1675 broadside version (British Library Roxburge 2.2.5) which is very similar.
[23] Genette. p.319.

of a bygone era, Percy is in control of how the literature is read and understood. In the words of Nick Groom, "by replacing the roar of rebellion with the hush of antiquity, ballads could be depoliticized."[24] Notes depoliticize literature by contextualizing it within a single political truth; that of the antiquarian editor who composes them. This is seen in the introductory note to 'The Battle of Otterbourne', a Northumberland ballad in the *Reliques* that Percy notes also has a Scottish provenance, while using the note-space to suggest that the English version of the ballad is the more authentic lyrically and truer to historical fact:

> The only battle, wherein an Earl of Douglas was slain fighting with a Percy, was that of Otterbourne, which is the subject of this ballad. It is here related with the allowable partiality of an English poet, and much in the same manner as it is recorded in the English Chronicles. The Scottish writers have, with a partiality at least as excusable, related it with no less in their own favour. Luckily we have a very circumstantial narrative of the whole affair from Froissart, a French historian who appears to be unbiased.[25]

As the anthologist, the note-space belongs to Percy, and he uses it in the service of his patrons' often difficult history. The history written in his footnotes only legitimises one political truth; that of his conservative cultural Anglicanism.

Perhaps the most completely textual paratext is illustration. In printing a text and image in tandem, the two can be explicitly, unambiguously, and permanently associated with one another. The Dodsleys, who printed all three of Percy's major anthologies, had access to beautiful, ornate illustrations and fleurons, and Percy made use of this resource in several ways.[26] In his earlier works, *Miscellaneous Pieces*

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[24] Nick Groom, '"The Purest English": Ballads and the English Literary Dialect', *The Eighteenth Century*, 47.2 (2006), 179–202. p.194.

[25] 'The Battle of Otterbourne', p.18. Percy goes on to extensively quote an account of Froissart, which seems to concur with his own "allowable partiality"; of course, unlike the historians who support the "excusable" Scottish version of events, Froissart is "unbiased".

[26] I am grateful to the team behind Fleuron, a new database of eighteenth-century printers' ornaments, for introducing me to their indispensable tool for this research. Helen Wilkinson and others, 'Fleuron: A

Relating to the Chinese and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, he made use of Dodsley's ability to print in non-Roman alphabetic letters to include in his frontispieces both Chinese and Runic scripts. The title page of *Miscellaneous Pieces* prints some Chinese characters with the caption "Chinese Characters referr'd to in pag. 31, 32, 33", referring to his ill-fated 'Dissertation on the Language and Characters of the Chinese'. Percy's adopted thesis that the Chinese script had evolved from Egyptian hieroglyphs is underpinned by – he supposed – illustrative evidence. Similarly, the title page of *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* is adorned with runic versions of passages from 'The Dying Ode of Regnar Lodbrog' and 'The Ransome of Egill the Scald', which were supplemented with non-runic Icelandic originals printed in the back.[27] *Hau Kiou Choaan* also came adorned with images inspired by the text in each of the four volumes.[28] In volume one, an image of the Mandarin coming into the town appears next to the frontispiece, in a delicate fold-out page. The background of the image is sparse and its figures are more detailed, smiling and playing music as the nobleman passes through the town. It is a depiction of Chinese society that lends credence to Percy's assertion that "No people affect such pompous shews and splendid processions: nor does any abound more with dramatic entertainments."[29] Volume two carries a rural scene of linen workers reacting in fear as Tieh-chung-u passes through the woods on a mule. Cowering in the face of his might, the linen workers and concubine are a picture of "servile submission and dread of novelty,"[30] suggested by Percy's preface. Volume three's image is of Tieh-chung-u pleading a tribunal for justice after having been attacked. Chinese legal and justice systems were of particular interest to Percy; he spent much time in the footnotes explicating them.[31] Finally, the image appended to volume four is of Tieh-chung-u and

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Database of Eighteenth-Century Printers' Ornaments', 2017 <https://fleuron.lib.cam.ac.uk/index> [accessed 11 February 2017].

[27] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. pp.83-99.

[28] I have been unable to ascertain the identity of the illustrator; however Percy does give a vague source for them. "We beg leave to inform the Reader that the plates prefixed to these volumes are only given as curiosities, being copied from prints in a Chinese History that was found among the Translator's papers. In this book every page of Chinese characters was faced with one of these cuts." Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.xxxii.

[29] Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*. Vol. 1, p.A4.

[30] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.xiii.

[31] See Ibid. Vol. 1, p.216 for a description of torture methods used against suspected criminals; pp.218-9 for information regarding the punishment of parents alongside child criminals, including the death penalty; Vol. 2, pp.165-69 for an assessment of the ineffectiveness of Chinese laws in curtailing excessive avarice which Percy describes as an "evil tendency"; pp.220-2 for the structure of Chinese

Shuey ping-sin sharing a courtly meal before their marriage, with the groom staring at his bride as if he were "so ravished with the sight of her, that he thought she could be nothing less than an angel from heaven."[32] These images are indicative of one fault with Percy's editing of Chinese literature: his amateur knowledge was an impediment to his scholarship having any sense of accuracy, and he tended to let his conclusion lead him to evidence, rather than his evidence to conclusions.

The title page of *Hau Kiou Choaan* carries an inscription from Du Halde which says "There is no greater way to learn about China than by China itself; for it is our duty not to be deceived about the genius and abilities of this nation."[33] Had Percy taken this advice critically, he may have avoided these racist generalisations which persisted in spite of immediate textual evidence; but the images are also indicative of another, more subtle faculty of Percy's editing. Though they are an artistic expression of Chinese culture, they are also a subtle act of advocacy for printed Eurocentric nationalism. There is no greater way to learn about China than by China itself – but Percy's translated, annotated, and illustrated anthologies are presented as the next best thing for an eighteenth-century consumer who would never have had the option of travelling there. The act of physically unfolding these delicate pages becomes transportive. Percy demands you engage with the book fully in order to comprehend the Chinese experience as completely as you can without literally going there. Percy's advocacy for print as the best way to evidence and construct a national narrative (and his belief that Gothic nations such as he supposed Britain was were superior for having achieved this) is defied by the fact that China was producing wood-printed books and other printed materials long before such technology reached the West, and that the influence of Western printing techniques in China came about as part of the imperial Jesuit mission to spread Christianity in the East.[34] By the seventeenth century, Chinese print culture

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policing; Vol. 3, p.92 for a description of tribunals; pp.100-1 for a prescient discussion of the punishment of political rebellions and insurrections; Vol. 4, pp.157-8 for the legal accountability of ministers, for examples.

[32] Percy, Ibid. Vol. 4, p.37.

[33] Translation mine. Originally: "Il n'y a pas de meilleur moyen de s'instruire de la Chine, que par la Chine méme: car par la on est súr de ne se point tromper, dans la connaissance du genie et des usages de cette nation."

[34] Christopher A. Reed, 'Gutenberg and Modern Chinese Print Culture: The State of the Discipline', *Book History*, 10 (2007), 291–315.

had diversified as much as Western print culture had, but Percy's insistence that the written Chinese language was an unsuitable vehicle for literature as the oral language lacked the primitive simplicity of English and its parent languages undermined the thriving and historical print culture of the East. In *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Miscellaneous Pieces*, the elaboration of print afforded to Percy by his connections was used to describe an inherent Chinese difference that his textual evidence simply refused to substantiate.

The frontispiece of the first edition of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* had to rise up to meet the elegance and cultural importance of the project itself. Percy employed Samuel Wale, who had previously been charged with designing the frontispiece for *Fingal* (1761) for Macpherson, to design an image for him.[35] Wale worked under Percy's direction, and the engraving he produced is a pastoral vision of a minstrel working at a harp for the rapt attention of well-dressed noble men and women and a knight, with a Gothic castle in the background.[36] Above them, cherubs raise a banner that reads "Non Omnis Moriar", a Horatian quotation meaning "I shall not wholly die."[37] On the title page, Wade engraved an elegant harp resting on loose sheets of music amidst Gothic ruins. The epigraph continues with a Latin motto: "Durat Opus Varum" ("The work of the bards endures").[38] The two pictures form a narrative in-keeping with the message of the *Reliques*. Somewhere between the book being opened and the reader reaching the title page, the bard who had once held the attention of the great and good with his compositions has died. The structure around us has crumbled. But in the act of reading, his work continues. The original image is also accompanied by

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[35] M. G. Sullivan, 'Wale, Samuel (1721?-1786), Painter and Book Illustrator', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2009 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28453> [accessed 12 February 2017].

[36] Some details of this image are anachronistic. The image of the minstrel seems mirrors one described in a document quoted by Percy in his 'Essay on the Ancient English Minstrels': "A PERSON very meet seemed he for the purpose, of a xlv years old, apparelled partly as he would himself. His cap off: his head seemly rounded tonser-wise: fair kembed, that with a sponge daintily dipt in a little capon's greace was finely smoothed, to make it shine like a mallard's wing His beard smugly shaven: and yet his shirt after the new trink, with ruffs fair starched, sleeked and glistering like a pair of new shoes, marshalled in good order with a setting stick, and strut, that every ruff stood up like a wafer." Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.xix-xx.

[37] 'A Closing Song to his Muse' Horace, *The Complete Works of Horace* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1923). p.90.

[38] Seen in Ovid. *Stories from Ovid in Elegiac Verse*, ed. by R. W. Taylor (London: Rivington, 1882). p.105.

a few lines from Nicholas Rowe, the first modern editor of Shakespeare:

> These venerable antient Song-enditers
> Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers:
> With rough majestic force they mov'd the heart,
> And strength and nature made amends for Art.[39]

This poem makes an explicit case for the native genius of oral ballad composers, majestic not because of elegant refinery but because of rough, unpolished greatness. In the selection of this verse Percy makes a connection between his bards and minstrels and Shakespeare, and between himself and Rowe, implicating the Bard of Avon in his textual mission. Like Rowe, he also saw himself as the guardian of an indigenous literary genius, the person who would be responsible for recuperating the image of a literature which was limited (or so he believed) by its orality. A further smaller image appears above the dedication to Elizabeth Percy, showing her coat of arms being flanked by two cherubs who are crowning a lion and a unicorn with the inscription "Esperance en Dieu" ("Hope in God"). The Percy name is synonymous with British greatness and they are protected by God.[40]

The varied typefaces of the title page of the *Reliques* also point to an elegant and deliberate printing effort. Though often considered peripheral in interrogations of the modern paratext – Genette says only that "This is not the place to discuss the history or aesthetics of the art of typography; I will simply note that typographical choices may provide indirect commentary on the texts they affect,"[41] – in the eighteenth century typefaces mattered immensely, as they often reflected a degree of prestige in the process of printing. The commentary provided by eighteenth-century typefaces was not so indirect as in modern printing. The typefaces of the *Reliques*, the classical

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[39] Though Percy misses several lines, the epigraph is taken from Mr Wilks' prologue in Jane Shore. Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (London: Bernard Lintott, 1714). A ballad of Jane Shore also appears in the *Reliques*. Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 2, pp.248-58.

[40] See Figure 2 (overleaf). Image courtesy of Queen's University Belfast Special Collections, reproduced with permission.

[41] Genette. p.34.

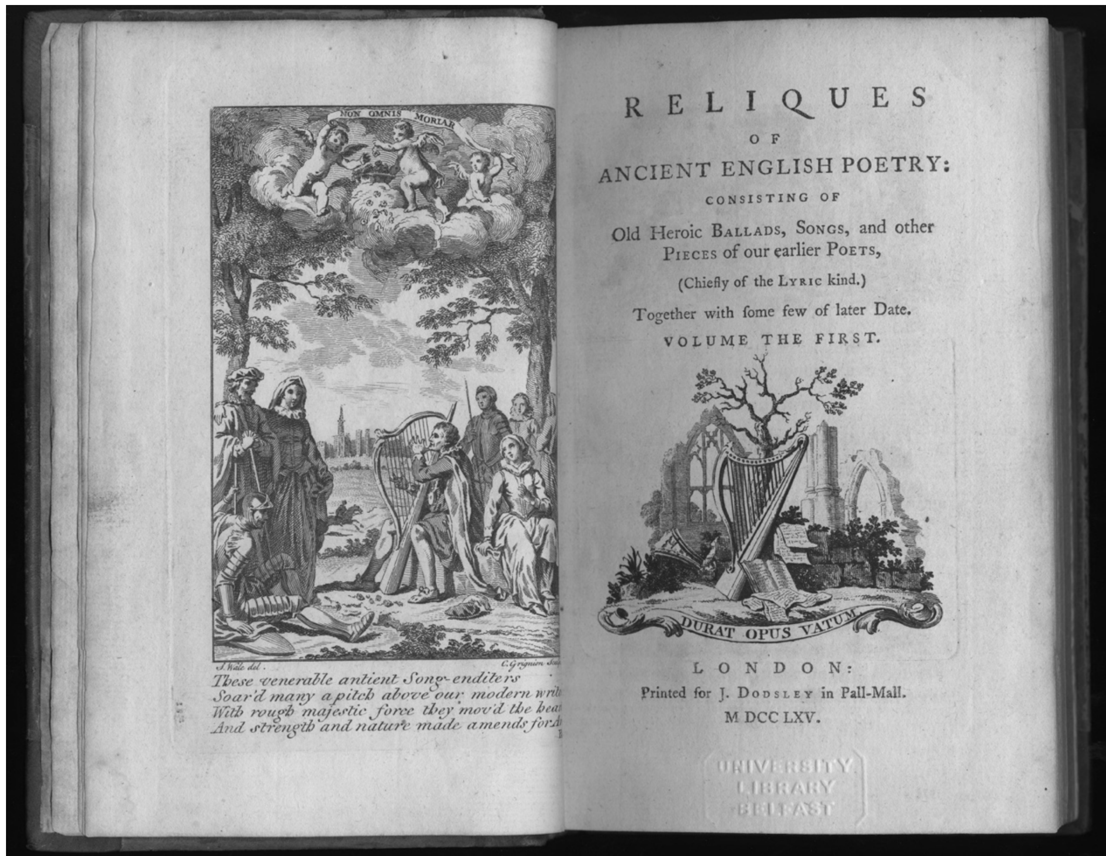

Figure 2: Frontispiece and title page of the Reliques

references in the mottos, and the Gothic imagery in the illustrations show a sophisticated blend of influences which has been recognised by Christine Baatz as a deliberate effort to influence the perception of Gothic poetry as something inherently worthy of recovery and re-evaluation:

> In the *Reliques* a sophisticated typographical programme is used to achieve a twofold aim: first to claim 'classical' quality for the texts presented […] second, to stress the texts' different, indigenous, 'Gothic' nature.[42]

One notable example of Gothic textual imagery that is missing from the title page, however, is blackletter. Dodsley was certainly capable of printing blackletter, having done so in a 1760 edition of *Tristram Shandy*;[43] that said, though Percy did exert a lot of

[42] Baatz. p.116.
[43] John M. Yoklavich, 'Notes on the Early Editions of Tristram Shandy', *PMLA*, 63.2 (1948), 508–19. p.510.

control over the production of his book, it would have been considered unusual for an author to demand words be printed in this font or that, particularly taking into consideration the physical limitations of a printer having access to multiple fonts and a page having the spatial accommodation for elaborate lettering. A convention had existed in the seventeenth century to print medieval literature in blackletter and modern English or classics in Roman font, but this convention had become obsolete and blackletter was quite commonly observed in legal and religious texts, and in antiquarian documents.[44] Blackletter appears (under an illustration of the proceeding ballad) in the body of the text,[45] and occasionally in his notes when referring to a historical document,[46] but his reticence to use it on the title page is telling, particularly if the control he exerted over other aspects of the book's appearance extended to his opinions on fonts. The reason for this restraint may be in a letter to Shenstone:

> You have taught me to dislike a crowded Title-page, and therefore must pardon me if I object to the second [suggestion] of yours. The plain Title in 3 Lines of Capitals: with either an ornamental sculpture or a good Motto, or both, etc. should be all I would have for my full Title: and for my half Title, the same only devoid of all ornament motto or date.[47]

Though the title page was hardly un-crowded, the presence of blackletter would have made it busy beyond a point at which Shenstone could have tolerated it kindly, though Percy appeared to be less dependent on Shenstone's approval than his reassurance by the time the *Reliques* were ready to print, and besides he was not alive to see it. Perhaps Percy used Roman fonts on his title page to underscore a kind of textual simplicity he hoped would come through in the ballads in spite of his, as we have seen, extensive footnoting. Shenstone had accused Percy of a "fondness for antiquity should

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[44] Joseph A. Dane and Svetlana Djananova, 'The Typographical Gothic: A Cautionary Note on the Title Page to Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*', *Eighteenth Century Life*, 29.3 (2005), 76–97. p.90.

[45] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, p.1.

[46] "Subscribed, after the usual manner of our old poets, explicit (explicitly) quoth Rychard Sheale. " Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, p.2n.

[47] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. pp.130-1.

tempt him to admit pieces that have no other sort of merit" in private correspondence,[48] and as the design of his previous efforts have demonstrated, he benefited from the stylish guidance of his mentor. His restraint in the use of blackletter may be the effects of this guidance in action.

The dedication is another significant paratext. Its existence speaks both to the context of the text's content and production. Almost all of Percy's anthologies feature a high-profile dedication. As depicted in the above described Samuel Wale etching, minstrels (of the sort exemplified by Percy in the *Reliques*) would dedicate the oral performance of a work to an honoured patron or powerful audience-member; this practice was also common among actresses performing dramatic roles, whose (often female) patrons often supported not only the print edition of the play but also their individual performances.[49] Percy's minstrels, in the words of Groom, "coexisted in an almost Augustan equation of arts and politics, of state patronage and eulogizing poet. They were central to the cultural and imaginative well-being of society, and guardians of its history and identity."[50] The patronage of minstrels was intrinsic to the safeguarding of the identity of the nation, and dedications, whether oral or printed, were a part of that relationship. Dedications in the eighteenth century were financial boons to writers for two reasons: the apparent approval of an influential nobleman or woman made the book visible in the market, and a well-written, flattering dedication might result in either an individual financial gift or a new patronage.[51] On the other hand, the type of cranked-out, insincere dedications which Johnson described as "indecent and promiscuous"[52] drew scorn from critics who saw them as servile. The practice of dedication to unworthy but wealthy patrons was often satirised, including in Samuel Foote's 1764 play *The Patron,* in which one such patron as described as:

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[48] Williams. p.597.

[49] Felicity Nussbaum, *Rival Queens: Actresses, Perfomance, and the Eighteenth-Century British Theatre* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). pp.137-50.

[50] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques.* p.241.

[51] Paul J Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', *American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 7.4 (1974), 453–73.

[52] Samuel Johnson, 'The Meanness and Mischiefs of Indiscriminate Dedication', in *The Rambler* (London: Jones, 1801), pp. 180–86.

> A rank impostor, the buffo of an illiberal, mercenary tribe; he has neither genius to create, judgement to distinguish, or generosity to reward; his wealth has gain'd him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty insolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. *Voila le portrait de votre oncle.* Now on to the next.[53]

Percy's early dedications received their own deserved criticism from Shenstone when he presented a draft of his dedication of *Hau Kiou Choaan* to the Countess of Sussex. Though Shenstone did not suggest that the Countess was an inappropriate or unworthy dedicatee, he cautioned Percy to make sure his supplication was appropriate:

> Do you not suppose 'the House of Sussex' a little too pompous in your Dedication; or do you mean it should be pompous, in Lieu of much other Panegyrick? The last six words in your Dedication had surely better been omitted. I have hitherto read no farther.[54]

This criticism offers a perspective on the temperature of the market for dedicating prestigious literature authentically, as well as affirming Percy's opinion that "Dedication is a paultry [sic] kind of writing."[55] The dedication to *Miscellaneous Pieces* which Percy also composed himself, was offered to Barbara Talbot, Viscountess Longueville in a couple of simple lines which say nothing about the text. This was perhaps sensible, as the book was really designed as a companion piece to the more ambitious earlier project, and to oversell its merits would have been excessive (particularly when the book was not successful in procuring further editions).

With the criticism from Shenstone fresh in his mind, Percy knew he could not risk making the same mistake with *Reliques*, which was a more important project with bigger aims and a far bigger potential audience. Having dedicated these two Chinese

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[53] Samuel Foote, 'The Patron', in *The Dramatic Works of Samuel Foote, Esq.* (London: A. Millar, 1797), pp. 330–66. p.331.
[54] Brooks, *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*. pp.106-7.
[55] Ibid. p.102.

books which, very shortly after their release, would be recognised as flawed beyond the repair of a second edition to prominent and influential society figures was an embarrassment he could not afford to replicate. Percy had intended to dedicate the book to Shenstone, but after he died, given their later divergence in opinion over the book's audience and aims, a dedication would have been an inappropriate, even hypocritical tribute. Instead he put his ambitions to work and began composing a dedication to Hugh Percy, the Earl of Northumberland. This was Percy's first effort in configuring the *Reliques* to be a work specifically celebrating the history and achievements of the Northumberland Percys. However, after realising that the Earl was a Percy by marriage and an act of Parliament and not by blood, Percy turned his attention to his wife Elizabeth.[56] Percy's original draft of the dedication was brief, perfunctory, and not nearly deferential enough to secure a long-term patronage:

> To His Excellency The Earl of Northumberland, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland &c. These Volumes (whose humble aim is to preserve a few ancient pieces written to celebrate the house of Percy: which we see revived in our time with so much splendour) are most respectfully presented by The Editor.[57]

His evident failures as a composer of dedications might have halted the project's success, if not for his excellent connections. Having spent the previous summer recuperating from a bout of melancholy at Percy's countryside vicarage, Samuel Johnson agreed to compose a dedication in which he describes the "reliques of antiquity" as being imperative to modern mental activities:

> No active or comprehensive mind can forbear some attention to the reliques of antiquity: It is prompted by natural curiosity to survey the progress of life and manners and to inquire by what gradations barbarity was civilized, grossness refined, and ignorance instructed:

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[56] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. pp.219-20.
[57] 'Draft Dedication to the *Reliques*', Bodl., MS Percy c 4, fol.26.

> but this curiosity, Madam, must be stronger in those, who, like your Ladyship, can remark in every period the influence of some great progenitor, and who still feel in their effects the transactions and events of distant centuries.[58]

Johnson's dedication is impactful for two main reasons. Firstly, it suggests that the lexicographer, who had defined "relick" as "That which remains; that which is left after the loss or decay of the rest […] That which is kept in memory of another, with a kind of religious veneration"[59] and given "relique" as a French variant spelling, may have suggested the word to Percy. He had previously in correspondence been calling the *A Collection of Old* (or *Ancient) Ballads*, a title which would surely have gotten lost amidst the sea of publications with very similar names, whereas "Relique" stood out as elegantly European, with a softer, more romantic terminal syllable, and evocative of the bridge between spirituality and antiquarianism. Secondly, it secured a patronage for Percy with tasteful anonymity, which would be maintained until the publication of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* in 1791, allowing Percy to continue to borrow from the talents of his friends even in the later stages of preparation.[60] Though Percy positions himself as the sentinel of the Northumberland and British textual histories, the *Reliques* is in many ways a collaborative project in its production and content. Anthologies tend to have a sense of literary communion in that they are typically the co-presented works of multiple authors, and the *Reliques* has an extra layer of being an alliance of minds in its production as an object.

Five Pieces of Runic Poetry did not feature a dedication, but *Northern Antiquities* did; the book was dedicated to Hugh Percy, who had hired Percy as his domestic chaplain after the publication of the *Reliques*, and became the first Duke of Northumberland in 1766. Percy's dedication to the Duke of Northumberland was significantly more detailed and deferential than the previous dedications to the Countess of Sussex or

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[58] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, p.vi-vii.

[59] Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 2. <https://archive.org/details/dictionaryofengl02johnuoft> [accessed 14 February 2017].

[60] James Boswell, *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, ed. by George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934). Vol. 4, pp.555-6.

Viscountess Longueville had been, as might be expected for a dedication to a respected patron who had, by that point, seen Percy and his family in good stead for five years. Between the publication of the *Reliques* and this time, Percy had also assembled *The Regulations and Establishment of the Household of Henry Algernon Percy* (1768) and *The Hermit of Warkworth* (1771), a pastiche of a Northumbrian ballad, and the Northumberland family had made him their chaplain, the personal secretary to Hugh Percy, and the tutor to their son Algernon. Percy dedicates the work not only to the Duke himself, but to the memory of the Percy ancestors, and to the very act of antiquarian nationalist study:

> Superior to the mean and selfish jealous of those, who, conscious of their own want of dignity or worth, consign to oblivion the illustrious dead, and wish to blot out all remembrance of them from the earth; you, my Lord, have, with a more than filial piety, been employed for many years in restoring and reviving every memorial of the Percy name. Descended, yourself, from a most ancient and respectable family; and not afraid to be compared with your noble predecessors, the Earls of Northumberland, you have repaired their monuments, rebuilt their castles, and replaced their trophies: and whatever appears to be any way connected with them, is sure to attract your attention and regard.[61]

This dedication is successful because it is meaningful; Percy has spent his entire career thus far dedicating his efforts to the preservation of a national narrative through literature, and his recognition of the Duke of Northumberland's efforts to do so through architecture and collection (and – though he modestly restrains himself from saying this outright – through his patronage of a man who is capable of doing so through literature) rings true. His work was timely, as the Northumberland family were also in the process of revitalising the prestigious but fading estates in their keeping. This dedication is respectful and affectionate without being overly familiar.

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[61] Percy, *Northern Antiquities*. (1770) p.A3 vers.

Paratexts are, as this thesis has, a major aspect in transforming the text from a story or symbol to a physical object which is worthy of reverence. They influence the experience of reading by directing the reader along the path designed by the writer or editor, in many cases intersecting with the editor's agendas, abilities, and limitations of knowledge and practice. However, it is also worth noting how the way in which an anthology was typically read also underscores its physicality. The nature of an anthology is such that the reader is invited to casual, unsystematic reading, re-reading and discovery. It may be useful to return to the etymological root of the word "anthology" as "a gathering of flowers", as inferred by Lawrence Anderson's introductory epistle to his 1640 *Miscellanea*:

> And as we obserue, that a man comming into a curious Garden, layeth not hold of euery flower, which first presenteth it selfe to his sight, but will gather here and there such, as are most pleasing to the eye, & smell; So I hope, I may here boldly say, I haue forborne all vulgar and obuious Obseruations (as presuming them to be knowne to you allready) resting only (and this with the iudgment of other graue men of my Coate, already acquainted with this Worke) in such, as choyse, selected, and full of matter.[62]

Anderson suggests that while one is in the garden, one is not obligated to take everything in, but to pick and choose at the elements that one finds most pleasing or edifying, but he is simultaneously quite sure that all of his selections are worthy of consideration. Garden metaphors were used in the titles of a great number of sixteenth to eighteenth-century (and beyond) miscellanies and anthologies to evoke a similar sense of leisure-based selective reading within one consecrated space.[63] Personal, commissioned miscellanies of the Middle Ages are unique, individual collections based on the preference of the compiler or person who commissioned the compilation, but

[62] Quoted in Randall L. Anderson, 'Metaphors of the Book as Garden in the English Renaissance', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 33 (2003), 248–61. p.253.
[63] Ibid. p.254.

commercial anthologies largely drew on a frequently shared pool of literary resources, which became a prototype for what readers and scholars would call the canon.[64] Editors could direct the reader from beyond the page with their choice of text and paratexts, but the private experience of reading was unmediated. Collecting texts had become an exercise not only for antiquarians such as Percy, but also a good deal of the middle class. This invitation to dip in and out of an anthology, to immediately recall parts in which one is interested and reject those parts which are of no interest, is a textual experience because it involves selective moments of engagement and non-engagement with a text. Even the onus which had previously been placed on memory as a vital aspect of the classical art form of rhetoric was falling out of favour in favour of textual means of presenting knowledge. The adoption of the commonplace book as a personal anthology of memory placed a new onus on eclectic collection as a method of self-improvement for the genteel.[65] The textual anthology had no need for fallible human memory once it was in print, unlike oral literature, and the impetus to experience and re-experience texts contained therein was on the reader alone and not on the performer. The textualisation of traditional literatures exemplified by verse anthologies in the eighteenth century was a movement to centre the upper-class reader/consumer over the labouring-class composer/producer. The literature was objectified in a book, the cost of which precluded many from taking ownership of a literature that, in less cost-prohibitive forms such as oral and broadsheet, was once theirs. In many cases, this included the composer themselves, who may not have possessed the sophisticated literacy required to navigate complex paratexts which themselves served to underline the book's textuality, thus precluding them from the textual experience designed by the anthologist. Indigenous or orally-composed literature is presented as belonging to those who can sell and purchase it commercially. It is not so much a case of cultural voyeurism as one of cultural repossession.

Hearing Voices: Sounds and Heteroglossia

Considering the literatures anthologised by Percy as straddling the printed and the oral,

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[64] See Lerer. p.1261.

[65] Lucia Dacome, 'Noting the Mind: Commonplace Books and the Pursuit of the Self in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 65.4 (2004), 603–25.

it is important to figure the method of representing this duality textually into our analysis. Percy represents the spoken and sung through a network of negotiations that would later be termed 'heteroglossia'. When Mikhail Bakhtin outlined the idea of heteroglossia in *Discourse in the Novel* (1934), he referred only to novels. Whereas the novel was "a diversity of social speech types […] and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organised,"[66] the job of the poet was to "assume a complete single-personed hegemony over his own language, he must assume equal responsibility for each one of its aspects and subordinate them to his own, and only his own intentions. Each word must express the poet's meaning directly and without mediation; there must be no distance between the poet and his word."[67] While this analysis would be true of Percy Shelley or William Wordsworth (for example), there is a necessary difference in how the poetry of the ballads is represented in text, because the many aspects of the ballad tradition resisted solely textual representation. The editor of *The Rump* knew this in 1662 when he added his addendum to the introduction described previously, and James Hogg knew it when he reported his grandmother Margaret Laidlaw's distaste at Scott's *Minstrelsy*. The very act of interpreting ballads for print provides the distance between utterance and meaning that Bakhtin suggested precludes poetry from heteroglossic analysis. In fact, ballads lend themselves to such aural analysis more than many modern novels, notably excepting those which deal explicitly with the vernacular voice such as the expert imitations of high and low speech by Dickens. It may not be the intention of the editor to leave space for aural interpretation (and this is certainly the case for Percy, whose emphasis on textuality came at the complete expense of conscious engagement with the oral), but nevertheless this space exists in the *Reliques* (and to a lesser extent in his Chinese and Icelandic works) in three major ways. Firstly, Percy gives us a lot of textual information about accents such as lowland Scots, West Country, and (non-specifically) Chinese, a specifically oral phenomenon for which he has developed a philological system of representation on the page. Secondly, although Percy's ballads are frequently represented as being amusical, there is a significant musical influence to be observed

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[66] M. M. Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), pp. 259–422. p.262.
[67] Ibid. p.297.

among them. Finally, Percy's ballads often recreate a call-and-response system which is particular to their oral performance aspects (and is the closest thing in practice that oral ballads have to a paratext).

The *Reliques* does not consider ballads from all over the British Isles. It is likely that Percy felt that Welsh, Irish, and Highland balladry was sufficiently provided for in the book market.[68] It is also the case that he lacked the linguistic ability to publish Irish, Gaelic and Welsh literature. Ballads from these regions tended to include elements of what Katie Trumpener has called "Bardic Nationalism", a political allusion which Percy was surely keen to avoid.[69] However, there is enough geographic variation in the *Reliques* to identify a few unique accents exemplified in the text. In 'Edward, Edward', Percy represents an accent from the lowlands/central belt of Scotland.[70] The opening lines of the ballad are richly accented:

> Quhy dois your brand sae drop wi' bluid,
> Edward, Edward?
> Wuhy dois your brand sae drop wi' bluid?
> And quhy sae sad gang yee, O?
> O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
> Mither, mither:
> O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid:
> And I had nae mair bot hee, O.[71]

The <quh> spelling of "Why" is an Older Scots construction. It is the first clue that the language of this ballad may be an affectation, designed to signal an unearned archaism, but it is a very common spelling from the fourteenth century to around the

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[68] This attitude is reflected in his earlier quoted comments in which he bemoaned the Scots "everywhere recommending the antiquities of their country to public notice, vindicating its history, setting off its poetry". Lewis. p.2.

[69] See Trumpener. pp.71-82.

[70] He assumes particular responsibility for the accent of this ballad because it is likely he had a greater than usual role in composing it due to its uncharacteristically sophisticated composition versus other ballads supposedly from that time. See Bronson. pp.1-17.

[71] 'Edward, Edward', Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.53-5. l.1-8.

seventeenth, and it is peculiar to Scots (Middle English "what" and "hwat" having developed from the Old English "hwæt").[72] Though it has no significant impact on pronunciation versus <wh>, it is evocative of an accent which has aged out of existence; it has the 'sound' of being old in the mental imaging of reading. Other curious features of spelling in 'Edward, Edward' are textual attempts to recreate features of the accent of the composer which would be intuitive to the composer himself but quite foreign to much of Percy's genteel, modern, English readership. The "wi'" of lines 1 and 3, to represent the English "with", has appended to it an apostrophe (known as the "apologetic apostrophe"[73]). The apologetic apostrophe has been interpreted as there being something absent from the word, suggesting that it is a corruption of English rather than a word from a distinct linguistic tradition, as part of the eighteenth-century linguistic impulse to inferiorise the non-standard.[74] The spelling "sae" which corresponds to "so" (i.e., thus) in English is not common in Scots until around the time of the publication of the *Reliques*, whereas spellings such as "sa" and "swa" were in use from the fourteenth to the late seventeenth centuries.[75] To a native Scots speaker of most dialects, the written form "sa" would be intuitively pronounced as [se]. That would not be immediately apparent to a contemporary speaker of – for example – Northumberland English, who would perhaps assume the word was pronounced as [sa]. Another example of this phonological representation of Scots which is incongruent with actual Older Scots spelling practices is the use of "hae" in lines 5 and 7. In fact the word was spelled "have" just as in English or "haue" until the mid-eighteenth century, when editors who noticed the dropping of the medial <v> in Scots sought a way to represent the vowel sound used to represent this in speech. The two vowels together seem to represent something like the RP diphthong [eɪ̯], but in most pronunciations of Scots it is closer to [e]. It was important to represent this differentiated vowel sound, because without a pictorial representation the line "O, I

[72] Data regarding the dating of Scots philology is taken from information collated from the *Dictionary of the Scots Language* and *OED* online editions.

[73] Graham Tulloch, 'The Search for a Scots Narrative Voice', in *Focus on Scotland*, ed. by Manfred Görlach (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1985), pp. 159–79.

[74] See John Corbett and Jennifer Bann, 'The Spelling of Scots: Tradition, Adaption and Reform', in *The Routledge Handbook of the English Writing System*, ed. by Vivian Cook and Des Ryan (London: Routledge, 2016). pp. 293-314.

[75] "Sa adv., conj.". 'Dictionary of the Scots Language', *Scottish Language Dictionaries* <http://www.dsl.ac.uk/> [accessed 24 January 2017].

hae killed my hauke sae guid" read by a non-Scots speaker would introduce a friction between the [v] of "have" (as the word would more likely be spelled by a contemporary Scots writer) and the [k] of "killed", erasing some of the line's inherent musicality. One final curiosity in the spelling of 'Edward, Edward' comes in the visual rhyme of the words "bluid" and "guid", which in fact are pronounced [blʌd] and [gød] respectively. Although the performance of a native speaker would not have an aural rhyme in this case, the creation of a visible one satisfies Percy's argument that Gothic forms of literature such as the ballad were an example of ancient genius because the Goths had invented rhyming verse. The spoken language of lowland Scots would not have been sufficiently different to foster misunderstanding to the English spoken in the north of England. One almost contemporary account holds that "To pass from the borders of Scotland into Northumberland was rather like going into another parish than into another kingdom,"[76] and Colley has suggested that printed Scottish materials would have been more common in Northumberland than materials produced in England.[77] Percy's orthographic interpolations have the dual effect of marking the Scots out as "other" by virtue of their markedly different linguistic roots while also supplying the ballad with a further anchor to textuality; "bluid" is pronounced the same whether it is spelled that way or the more common contemporary "blude", but in the spelling Percy can demarcate the word as unique.

Though Percy never goes particularly far north in the British Isles in his balladic travels, in 'Plain Truth and Blind Ignorance' he travels south to Somerset, where the language and balladic tradition is diverse enough to draw his attention as more than a curiosity. He takes as his witness Thomas Deloney's *The Garland of Good Will* (1593).[78] Deloney was a Norwich balladeer who was highly regarded in his time for having "rime inough for all myracles, & wit to make a *Garland of Good will* more than the premisses,"[79] but

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[76] *The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-99*, ed. by D. J. Withrington and I. R. Grant (Ilkley: EP Publishing, 1900). Vol. III, p.491.
[77] Colley. p.16.
[78] The earliest extant edition of *The Garland of Goodwill* is from 1626 and is badly corrupted, but it seems that Percy was working from a complete version.
[79] Thomas Nashe, quoted in Paul Salzman, 'Deloney, Thomas (D. in or before 1600)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2007 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7463> [accessed 21 February 2017].

he was generally more interested in writing ballads about politics and current affairs, so a nostalgic religious ballad such as ‘A pleasant Dialogue between plain *Truth,* and blind *Ignorance*’ is a surprising effort for him. However, it is the exact wheelhouse of the *Reliques*, and Percy is enthusiastic about preserving it. “This excellent old ballad,” he writes “is preserved in the little ancient miscellany, entitled, “The Garland of Good-Will.” Ignorance is here made to speak in the broad Somersetshire dialect. The scene we may suppose to be Glastonbury Abbey.”[80] Because the modern West Country dialect has its roots in West Saxon, the language of people from that region would have had striking aural differences to a person from Northumberland or central England, where Percy centralised the British literary identity. The character of Ignorance in the ballad is heavily accented and nostalgic for the time of the “old lawe” before the modern Christian church advocated for by Truth, who speaks in standard English and eventually talks Ignorance round. Setting aside the obviously insulting connotations of having a character whose actions and identity are rooted in ignorance speak in a thick dialect, Percy’s rendering of the ballad is orthographically very close to Deloney’s original, reproducing several unique features of the Somerset dialect that would not have been intuitively apparent to readers from the rest of the island.

The most prominent diagnostic feature of the West Country accent is the use of the voiced fricative in words whose standard pronunciation has /f θ s ʃ/; thus “farm” is pronounced as /vɑrm/ and “seven” as /zɛvɛn/. These aspects are seen in Ignorance’s opening lines:

> Chill tell thee, by my vazen,
> That zometimes che have knowne
> A vair and goodly abbey
> Stand here of brick and stone;
> And many a holy vrier,
> As ich may say to thee,
> Within these goodly cloysters

[80] ‘Plain Truth and Blind Ignorance’ Percy, *Reliques.* Vol. 2, pp.275-81.

Che did full often zee.[81]

There is an irony to Percy visually representing aural elements such as accents while also advocating for a version of the same literature which was strictly – or at least primarily – textual. As Groom has observed, “If the *Reliques* draws attention to the visual quality of outlandish and obsolete spellings that are lost when the word is spoken, the word must still be understood as it is spoken rather than written.”[82] Non-standard spellings, including the phonetic representation of accents, are purposeful. Percy is attempting to consciously create what educational theorists would later call subvocalization: the act of reading and comprehending by mentally narrating the text; a “voice in the head” approach to reading. By rendering accents on the page, Percy’s anthologies become an amphitheatre of voices, where poets from Scotland and Somerset can commune together. In his role as the editor around whom these voices orbit, he creates the space necessary for heteroglossic analysis which is supposedly incongruent with the poetic voice, giving the appearance of the text being unbridled while still containing it within paratextual restraints, marshalled by the English/establishment editor.

In *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*, Percy’s extrapolation on how accents ought to be represented is more explicit. His analysis of the Chinese accent is uncomfortable for modern readers to encounter, depending as it does on outdated theories of language, a pathologised understanding of Chinese oral anatomy, and a profoundly Eurocentric view of oral language. Quoting Du Halde, Percy’s ‘Dissertation on the Language and Characters of the Chinese’ makes a suggestion as to why Chinese speakers may pronounce English words differently than native English (i.e., white European) speakers do:

Their teeth are placed in a different manner from ours: the upper

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[81] ‘Plain Truth and Blind Ignorance’ l. 9-16. In Deloney’s original, “che” is “she”, “say” is “zay” and “full” is “vull.” Thomas Deloney, *The Garland of Good-Will* (London: J. Wright, 1678). Early English Books Online: Text Creation Partnership. U. of Michigan Library, <http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A37506.0001.001> [accessed 21 February 2017].

[82] Groom, ‘“The Purest English”: Ballads and the English Literary Dialect’. p.189.

> row stands out and sometimes falls upon the under lip, or at least on the gums of the under row, which lies inward; the two gums scarce ever meet together, like those of Europeans.[83]

Percy goes on to give some examples which demonstrate the problematic Eurocentrism of his value judgements:

> This subjects the missionaries to great inconvenience in fitting *European* words to *Chinese* mouths. The difficulty of doing this we shall readily conceive, if we take along with us, that every word of many syllables must be made to appear as a string of monosyllables, and must be divested of all those sounds which a Chinese mouth cannot pronounce […] Thus for *Maria* they were forced to say *Ma-li-ya*; for *Crux, Cu-lu-su*; for *baptizo*, *pa-pe-ti-so*; for *spiritus, su-pi-li-ti-su*; for *Christus, Ki-lu-su-tu-su*; and for *Bartholomeus, Pe-ulh-to-lo-meu-su*.[84]

While it is the case that Chinese languages and dialects do not typically have the phonemes /r/ and /l/ as they are in English, the theory about mouth shape and dental positioning was simply not true. Any perceived difficulty a non-native speaker of English may have with those phonemes comes from a state of non-exposure to the phonemes, rather than an inherent biological or physiological difference, similar to the difficulty many standard-English speakers have when encountering the velar fricatives [x] and [ɣ] common in Arabic. Percy's supposedly rationalist treatment of accent variation in Chinese speakers is only tangentially heteroglossic because it is presented in the guise of scientific understanding, but it is worth noting that, just as he did no actual field research for his *Reliques* ballads, Percy had also never been to China to conduct the research necessary for those projects. He worked entirely from materials produced by Jesuits, who had their own imperialist agenda for the people of East Asia.

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[83] Percy, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*. Vol. 1, p.22.
[84] Ibid. Vol. 1, pp.24-6.

English is presented as the language of prestige, but even within English there is a hierarchy; the slurred consonants of a non-native speaker who is unfamiliar with them is a fault; the non-Mercian speech of the south west is a 'corrupted' variant, particularly on the part of isolated, labouring-class communities. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, labouring-class poets such as Robert Burns and John Clare would be celebrated for writing their experiences in what polite audiences perceived to be a 'bilingual' perspective. John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan have described this as "cross-cultural trespassing… the speech of the subaltern," and ask "to whom, and for whom, does the subaltern, or the labouring-class poet speak?" suggesting a consciously subversive challenge to polite preconceptions of native genius.[85] In the mid-eighteenth century, these plebeian voices required more extensive mediation in order to be embraced by polite audiences, which was lamented by Robert Southey who noted the "almost inevitable" process by which poets such as Stephen Duck and James Woodhouse altered their natural style "upon some approved model."[86]

One aural component I have yet to touch upon which is particularly relevant in the case of the *Reliques* is musicality. Johnson's somewhat pejorative definition of a ballad as "a song" in his *Dictionary* suggests that, then as now, the musical aspect of the literature was commonly seen as an integral part. Percy's ballad collection is unique in the respect that, for all its paratexts, it includes almost no musical information. There is some musical notation accompanying the introduction to 'For the Victory at Agincourt' (indicating that the printers had the facilities to print music, at least) but Percy describes the ballad as included for being "merely a curiosity" and doesn't appear to have any great stake in it, but as Nick Groom has observed, "If Percy had printed musical notation in the *Reliques*, it would have given equal authority to words and music, to both literature and sound, to reading and hearing, and this was antithetical to

[85] John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan, 'Clare and the Traditions of Labouring-Class Verse', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature 1740-1830*, ed. by Thomas Keymer and Jon Mee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 280–95. P.282.

[86] Robert Southey, *The Lies and Works of the Uneducated Poets* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975) p.118.

his criterion of Gothic authenticity being literate and archival."[87] This is not to say there is no music in the heteroglossic representation of the *Reliques*. Balladry cannot be extrapolated from musicality because the music and the lyrics were composed together. 'For the Victory at Agincourt', for example, though included as "merely a curiosity", features an example of a call-and-response refrain typical to British balladry. Every stanza finishes "Deo gratias:/ Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria."[88] The Shakespearean ballad 'Willow, Willow, Willow' similarly features an eponymous refrain at various points throughout the stanza.[89] Percy's production of these refrains belies text's function as a circumvention of memory. Part of the skill of balladry lies in the ability of the balladeer to recall the story and the music together, and the refrains were an *aide memoire* to that. They also suggest a community element to the literature, whereby the performer says a line aloud and the audience responds in collaboration. The ballads vibrate with the sounds of musical instruments and voices. 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne' begins with the noise of birdsong and ends with Robin blowing his slain enemy's horn. In 'Dowsabell', the heroine comes across a shepherd singing and playing the pipes.[90] Martial ballads such as 'Sir Andrew Barton'[91] and 'The Winning of Cales'[92] are punctuated by the pounding of drums. The most significant instrumentation of the *Reliques*, however, is the harp, which appears as the centrepiece of the collection's Gothic title-page. In the 1767 edition of the *Reliques* Percy argues that the word "harp" was a "genuine Gothic original […] current with every branch of that people."[93] The eponymous hero of 'Glasgerion' plays the harp,[94] as does the beggar in 'The Beggar's Daughter of Bednal-Green' who, like Ossian, is blind.[95] In 'The Lady Turned Serving-Man', not only does the Lady, posing as a man to escape a villain, play the harp, but her song is reported verbatim within the narrative context of

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87 Groom, '"The Purest English": Ballads and the English Literary Dialect'. p.188.
88 'For the Victory at Agincourt', Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 2, pp.24-5.
89 'Willow, Willow', Ibid. Vol. 1 pp.175-80.
90 'Dowsabell,' Ibid. Vol. 1, pp.282-7.
91 'Sir Andrew Barton', Ibid. Vol. 2, pp.177-93.
92 'The Winning of Cales', Ibid. Vol. 2, pp.223-6.
93 Ibid. Vol. 1, p.xlixn. Percy fails to observe the musical, not to mention political symbolism of the harp in Celtic cultures. See Ruan O'Donnel, 'The Irish Harp in Political History', in *Harp Studies*, ed. by Sandra Joyce and Helen Lawlor (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2016), pp. 121–28.
94 'Glasgerion', Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 3, pp.43-7.
95 'The Beggar's Daughter of Bednal-Green', Ibid., Vol. 2, pp.155-69.

the ballad and, overheard by the king, saves her from her disguise and marries her, restoring her status. The ballad, therefore, could never truly be represented as amusical from this perspective, but textually Percy was keen to represent it thus. This was not only to preserve the sense of spiritual engagement with the nation's history (after all, holy songs exist in the ballad tradition; 'Dowsabell' begins with the heroine singing a psalm in church[96]) but to foster a respectful silence of another sort; that of the voice of the mob. Percy's politically moderate conservatism has been well established in this thesis and elsewhere,[97] and it may be useful to consider the extent to which balladry was used as a political tool. Ballad literature had for years functioned as the voice for the disaffected, a literature form that existed to express dissent against the polite but oppressive upper classes to whom Percy dedicated the collection. Ballads were "expressions of dissent, vehicles of social protest, and rallying cries for disaffected insurgents; the mob was loud."[98] Percy's job as the editor of the stable Britain of the *Reliques* was to quiet that mob. By erasing the musical component of these ballads, their functionality as a vocal expression of dissatisfaction was muted, and though musical sounds still pervaded the collection, their background subtlety had the effect of a distant antiquarian hum rather than a noisy contemporary roar. Heteroglossic and vocal aspects of Percy's literature were therefore simultaneously foregrounded and conspicuously absent, with the ultimate effect of an at times overwhelmingly confused chorus hushed into a whisper. However, this aural effect is only one example of the way in which his scholarship in this project was problematic:

Decolonizing the Canon: Colonialism, Gender, Labour

Another prism through which to consider the impact of print on Percy's meaning is that of post-colonial thought. In post-colonial theory, the canon is something to be reclaimed and reinterpreted by those whom the colonial hegemony sought to suppress, such as dissenting natives of colonised countries. For this reason, it is useful to think of the canon as "not a body of texts *per se,* but rather a set of reading

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[96] 'Dowsabell', Ibid., Vol 1, pp.282-7.
[97] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.25.
[98] Groom, '"The Purest English": Ballads and the English Literary Dialect'. p.194.

practices,"[99] and to consider how anthologies can direct reading practices for hegemonic or subversive means. To challenge and subvert the canon as it works through Percy's anthologies, we might consider the book through three key theoretical lenses: gender, labour, and colonialism.

Print culture, including anthologies, has been a key instrument in the promotion of textual colonialism globally.[100] One aspect of this is language. As I have previously noted, the standardisation of language is one facet of print culture which resists and is resisted by the impulses of oral literature, but it is also indicative of what Ashcroft et al describe as "imperial oppression" in which "The imperial education system installs a 'standard' version of the metropolitan language as the norm and marginalizes all 'variants' as impurities […] Language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conceptions of 'truth', 'order', and 'reality' become established."[101] Though this refers specifically to the placement of the imperial language at the top of the hierarchy, it also speaks to certain contemporary theories of language acquisition as an instrument of colonial impulse. In 1778, at the height of the East India Company's power, Nathanial Brassey Halhed produced *A Grammar of the Bengal Language*, printed in Calcutta to benefit British interests in India. The primer was the first of its kind, and in its preface, Halhed positions the colonist-native relationship as having a natural order in which language is acquired not as a skill but as a resource:

> The Romans, a people of little learning and less taste, had no sooner conquered Greece than they applied themselves to the study of Greek. They adopted its laws even before they could read them, and civilized themselves in subduing their enemies. The English, who have made so capital a progress in the Polite Arts, and who are masters of Bengal, may, with more ease and greater propriety, add its language

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[99] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991). p.189.
[100] Ibid. pp.3-4.
[101] Ibid. p.7.

> to their acquisitions: that they may explain the benevolent principles of that legislation whose decrees they enforce; that they may convince where they command; and be at once the dispensers of Laws and Science to an extensive nation.[102]

When comparing this colonial discourse to the Chinese efforts of Percy, there are some obvious limitations and parallels. Britain did not colonise mainland China as it did the countries that once comprised the British Empire,[103] though there is an argument to be made that the Western Jesuit missionaries operated something of a colonial mission. There was therefore never a concerted effort at an institutional level to pathologise Chinese languages as an inferior to English, but this is certainly how Percy presents Mandarin particularly in *Miscellaneous Pieces*, as we have seen. We might also read a (complicated) version of this analysis in the Scottish ballads of the *Reliques.* Certain critics have recently attempted to position Scotland as an unambiguously colonised nation, particularly in the run up to and aftermath of the 2014 Scottish independence referendum.[104] Such analyses are simplistic and, for one, overlook Scotland's own autonomous role in the formation of the British Empire.[105] Liam Connell has correctly identified that "The designation of Scotland as an English colony is highly controversial and displays a dazzling confusion of textual and social forms of exclusion," and identifies "a terminological confusion over the meaning of its political vocabulary, chiefly in blurring the concepts of colonization," as being at fault for this rendering of Scottish literature under post-colonial theory.[106] He also notes that "linguistic standardization in and of itself is not an indication of colonization and cannot justify the

[102] Quoted in Robert Fraser, *Book History Through Postcolonial Eyes: Rewriting the Script* (London and New York: Routledge). p.5.

[103] Though Hong Kong was a British colony from 1843 to 1997. It is also vital to note that although no official colonisation took place, the efforts of the East India Company to create a monopoly on opium production and foster an illegal opium trade in China had a lasting impact on the country's sociological prospects. See Ramkrishna Mukherjee, *The Rise and Fall of the East India Compan*y (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974). pp.300-1.

[104] Colin Kidd and Gregg McClymont, 'Say No to Colony Myth', *The Scotsman*, August 2014.

[105] "While it is possible to argue that [Ireland, Wales, and Scotland] were the first victims of English expansion, their subsequent complicity in the British imperial enterprise makes it difficult for colonized peoples outside Britain to accept their identity as post-colonial." Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin. p.33.

[106] Liam Connell, 'Modes of Marginality: Scottish Literature and the Uses of Postcolonial Theory', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 23.1/2 (2003), 41–53. p.42.

claims that Scotland was colonized,"[107] and it is certainly true that the effects of colonization are more than merely cultural, but also economic, political, social, and ethnic. Cairns Craig has more thoroughly debunked the positioning of Scotland as a colonised nation:

> Scotland is indeed only too truly *post*-colonial – in the historical sense of having come (almost) to the end of being a *colonising* nation. Concentration on the nation's internal hybridity emphasises what Scotland is assumed to have in common with the colonised of the English peaking world – the interaction of local language or dialect with standard English, the interplay of local mythology and literary tradition with the 'standard' literature of the English cultural imperium – and represses the fact that it was Scottish writers such as Walter Scott from whom the colonised had to learn in order to acquire the imperial language and culture.[108]

With these limitations in mind, however, it may be useful to use post-colonialism as a lens through which to consider the linguistic displacement of certain communities in Scotland. Insofar as the *Reliques* were a response to the Ossian phenomenon, they could also be said to be a rejection of the Gaelic identity, for example, as an out-dated language culture that did not fit in with the new British ethnic identity, and this was fitting with Westminster policy that saw the Highland Gaels as, alternatingly, a nuisance, a resource, uncivilized, and a threat.[109] There is no Gaelic in the *Reliques*, while Percy's approach to lowland Scots treats it as a mere satellite dialect of English. He altered ballads in Scots liberally to make them more authentic, more antiquarian, or more romantic according to a constantly shifting editorial policy.[110] The hierarchy of language in the imperial project, outlined by post-colonial theorists, is clearly visible in

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[107] Ibid. p.44.

[108] Cairns Craig, 'Scotland and Hybridity', in *Beyond Scotland: New Perspectives for Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), pp. 229–54. p.237.

[109] See Colley. pp.76-7; 119-121.

[110] For a detailed analysis of Percy's shifting editorial policy with specific examples of linguistic alterations in the Scottish ballads, see Glover. pp.52-62.

this instance: Gaelic, being the indigenous language of the "other" within the culturally colonised space is erased, while the more acceptable, but not to the point of respectability, indigenous language is positioned as a satellite with limited appeal and use.

As well as in the preservation of standardised languages within a hierarchy, anthologies themselves represent a process of canonisation which can be used for colonial ends. Because the anthology represents a microcosmic process of canon formation, in which the editor "represents a community instead of expressing a self,"[111] and because anthologies have been used as teaching aides,[112] anthologies are the most singular textual expression of canonicity available to us. In more recent years, for this reason, anthologies have been the vehicle through which marginalised literary communities have chosen to come out of the shadows.[113] It has also been the process by which these communities continue to be oppressed and under-represented.[114] It is certainly also true that anthologies represent a textual priority that could subsume oral identities which are more vulnerable to hegemonic interpretation. The editor of the anthology is the curator of a personal canon, be that one of Black American poetry, or Victorian women's letters, or, in the case of Percy, early (balladic) conceptions of British identity. His anthologies are nationalistic. In his case, the anthology is used to uphold the imperial hegemony unambiguously. Anthologies more generally create and are created by canons, either consciously or unconsciously, and we therefore must consider their impact in terms of canonicity.

Having established the role of the anthology in the creation of canon, then, we might

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[111] Price. p.68.

[112] It is imperative to remember the significant role formal literary education has played in the formation of canon; Percy's ballad work was influential on nineteenth century ballad editors William Motherwell and Francis Child in providing a chronology for their theoretical frameworks which would become ballad collections specifically designed for education. McDowell. pp.152-4.

[113] Elizabeth Alexander, 'The Black Poet as Canon-Maker: Langston Hughes, New Negro Poets, and American Poetry's Segregated Past', *Poetry Foundation*, 2007 <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/articles/detail/68438> [accessed 19 December 2016].

[114] M. H. Abrahams, the first general editor of the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, once wrote that "I have not found ten lines worth reading in any of the women added [to the *NAEL*]. People want these but they don't use them. And we have to put them in to be p.c.," an absurd and misogynistic conviction that reflected his editorial policy. Quoted in Shesgreen. pp.296-7n.

consider the role of the canon in the colonial project. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin define a canon as "a set of reading practices (the enactment of innumerable individual and community assumptions, for example about genre, about literature, and even about writing). These reading practices, in their turn, are resident in institutional structures, such as education curricula and publishing networks."[115] The Canon, which is upheld by establishment institutions such as universities, also carries certain assumptions about quality and identities which include or exclude texts based on that matrix. Thus Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *Sunset Song* (1932), about a young, rural, Scottish woman who is navigating her conflicting impulses to devote herself to education and to the land, is taught in secondary schools across Scotland, whereas Nan Shepherd's *The Quarry Wood* (1928), which was published earlier and deals with similar themes and characters, has been characterised as 'women's writing' and marginalised as the literature of a community.[116] Similarly, as we have seen, Percy includes and excludes ballads from the *Reliques* based on his understanding of what the hegemonic British identity was. The canon is inherently involved with colonialism because the process of admitting or rejecting entry has been mediated by those in imperial power and has overwhelmingly tended to favour texts which thematically and in their production uphold imperial hegemonies. This is the case with Percy's three major anthology projects discussed at length in this thesis, with various aspects and effects. The Chinese literature, as has previously been discussed, is problematized in this regard by there being no great colonial relationship between China and England or Britain. Furthermore, though the project was certainly anthological, it differs from his other anthologies in the key respect of not making a significant effort to construct a canon, primarily because in its innovation it pre-dates the literary moment at which canonicity becomes possible or appropriate. However, Percy's sinological analysis benefits from an understanding informed by post-colonial concepts. The above quoted passage in

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[115] Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin. p.189.

[116] In the introduction to their landmark collection of essays on Scottish women's writing, Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan note that "Scottish women's writing arguably suffers from the double bind of being Scottish and being by women… the whole notion of *Scottish* women's writing is itself open to a continuing questioning which constantly produces redefinition, a process reflected in the construction and edition of this *History*." Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan, 'Introduction: A History of Scottish Women's Writing' in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. by Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. ix-xxiii; pp.ix-x.

which Percy describes the physiological features of the Chinese mouth which (he supposes) affected the development of their language and speech is one such example, in which the Chinese body is marked as Other and the capabilities of those bodies are measured with reference to those of the English body (which is to say, how the two nationalities pronounce certain phonemes), with the dominant (English) body being the one with "superior" qualities and the Chinese body being marked as subordinate by its perceived comparative inferiority. This is particularly underscored by the Biblical examples chosen to highlight Chinese speech patterns – the research (such as it is) was collected by Jesuit missionaries – but at the same time demonstrating that the Other is marked by its removal from The Word. In undertaking this innovative project, Percy demonstrated what Robert Fraser has termed the "curatorial enthusiasm"[117] that preceded explicitly denigratory narratives of the west encountering eastern language, such as James Mill's description of Sanskrit poetry as being "childish to a degree, which those only acquainted with European poetry can hardly conceive" and exhibiting:

> Inflation; metaphors perpetual; and these the most violent and strained and often the most unnatural and strained; obscurity; tautology; repetition; verbosity; confusion; incoherence distinguish the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayan* in a degree to which no parallel has yet been discovered.[118]

These comments by Mill are a descendent of those by Percy because both men have positioned themselves as appropriate judges of quality of a literature of which they have extremely limited understanding due to their perceived status as a non-biased, external observer, but also because both men were involved with commodifying the East as a concept to Western buyers. The status of the East as a commodity is important not only because the tussle for resources is the narrative behind all colonialism, but also because the Chinese in particular were a material culture who inspired in this era "a considerably less swashbuckling era of imperial envy, a structure

[117] Fraser. p.42.
[118] James Mill, *The History of British India*, Vol. 2 (London: James Madden, 1817). p.47.

of feeling with respect to the material products and cultural achievements of an advanced and powerful Eastern civilization that was characterised by awe, admiration, and desire."[119]

As Benjamin Disraeli wrote, "The East is a career."[120] This is true just as much of those whose career was built on packaging Chinoiserie and other Orientalist fantasies for British consumers as it was for those who were on the ground in India and elsewhere actively advancing British interests in the East. In order to do so, Percy and his contemporaries with Orientalist interests positioned themselves as neutral spectators of the East, but with an intellectual vantage point, so that they could observe but also analyse, they suppose, better than the Chinese themselves could. Percy's technique for showing this was to publish the Chinese novel itself, rather than a book about the Chinese, supporting his claim that it was "a faithful picture of Chinese manners."[121] The reader is therefore primed to enter a truly authentic Chinese experience, incognisant perhaps of the fact that the experience is mediated through the editorial agenda of a white English man who has never even been to China and who too often in his footnotes tries to make a cultural square peg fit a textual circular hole. Percy's construction of the Chinese in his prefaces and footnotes is an act of othering, a Eurocentric voyeurism which concludes that "The Chinese morals, notwithstanding their boasted purity, evidently fall short of the Christian."[122] In the words of Min his annotations have a "delicate balance of distance and disclosure [which uphold] its aura of authenticity while promoting a satisfying sense of cultural possession."[123] Instead of merely contextualising novelistic information, his interpolations constantly identify the foreign, preserving a thick margin between the Chinese author and the British writer. In this margin lies a significant fault line in this method of reading, however, which is that cultural comparisons measured through distance and difference can fall into an ignorant hierarchy of value. David Porter has discussed the China/West dichotomy at length, and notes that "East-West pairings […] too often yield variations on sterile

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[119] Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England*. p.6.
[120] Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred: Or, The New Crusade* (London: Fredrick Warne, 1866). p.100.
[121] Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Vol. 1, p.xv.
[122] Ibid. Vol. 2, p.129n.
[123] Min. p.313.

orientalist clichés concerning the stagnant traditionalism and uniformity of societies that missed the fast train to modernity."[124] "Curiosity" represents both the inherent oddness of the Chinese and the voracious appetite for oddness possessed by the European consumer. Percy's Chinese literature is an offering into the colonial canon because it acquiesces to the European demand for nations-as-product. If it were a truly cosmopolitan effort, for example, Percy might have included some information about China's legacy of print, which had been thriving for 400 years before movable print reached the West. Porter identifies Percy's subsequent projects as "not a little defensive" in this respect.[125]

In the Nordic literature, colonialism takes a different aspect: the Anglo Saxons were the ones being colonised. It promises a narrative in which colonialism delivers the best-case scenario, in this case the "primordial given" of the British nation-state. The editor of the 1847 edition of *Northern Antiquities*, I. A. Blackwell, articulated this interpretation of lineage more explicitly than Percy would:

> And when we turn our attention to a small island on the north western coast of Europe, we behold a nation, formed by the genial blending of Saxonic and Scandinavian tribes, arrived at a height of commercial prosperity and maritime greatness hitherto unparalleled. Ay, 'tis a pardonable vanity to record the fact; England […] is now in possession of that heritage, whose succession we have traced through cognate races, and will, we trust, long retain it by virtue of the law which appears to have regulated its transmission; that it should be held for the time being, by the most energetic tribe of the race to which it had devolved, by the tribe that physiological and psychological qualities rendered the most adapted to make use of it for the development of humanity.[126]

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[124] Porter, 'Sinicizing Early Modernity: The Imperatives of Historical Cosmopolitanism'. p.300.
[125] Ibid. p.305.
[126] Percy, *Northern Antiquities*. (1847) pp.44-5.

Blackwell, also coding Britishness and Englishness as synonymous, was writing at the height of the British imperial project, and his sentiments echo the dominant contemporary discourse of Britishness as a signifier of civilisation. No mere invaders, the British were of a stock who took their rightful place in an uncivilised nation and brought them to the point of being the most powerful and dominant race in the world. Percy published *Northern Antiquities* in 1770, shortly after the Seven Years War; a war which had expanded the empire considerably not only in scale but in ideology. Linda Colley has written that "The spoils of unprecedented victory unsettled [...] in part because they challenged longstanding British mythologies: Britain as a pre-eminently Protestant nation; Britain as a polity built on commerce; Britain as the land of liberty because founded on Protestantism and commerce. All of these premises seemed to be put in question by the scope and nature of the post-war British empire."[127] If these mythologies were now problematic in some ways, Percy's solution was to rededicate national mythology along colonial lines and using anthological textual templates. Britain's textual history was no longer one of pleasant Anglican proto-capitalism; it was one of invasion, for which the modern Briton should be grateful. After all, invasion was the route through which they became able to invade for themselves. Thus colonialism is presented as a net positive which allows countries to reach their full potential.

It is also worth briefly remembering that Percy's skalds were, in contrast to his Chinese writers, marked for their similarities to contemporary Britons. Though Percy appeared to share a certain affinity with Confucius,[128] the Nordic invaders were a pagan race who had converted to Christianity, and with this conversion came the manuscript culture which allowed them to preserve their literacy. Nordic mythology came equipped with a version of aristocratic hierarchy that, from a patronage point of view, Percy found very significant.[129] They brought with them ideals of liberty and freedom as national traits, and unlike the (in Percy's view) deceased and decaying Celts, they were sturdy and cheerful even in death. Good humour appears to be a particularly Gothic trait, as does martial candour; while Macpherson's Crimora cries "all night long [...] and all the day"

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[127] Colley. p.103.
[128] See Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic'. p.99.
[129] See Margaret Clunies Ross, *The Norse Muse in Britain 1750-1820*. p.84.

over the death of her Connal,[130] Rednar Lodbrog "die[s] laughing."[131] Aspects of Norse life and culture survived in Britain in a way Percy could easily perceive, whereas other geographically British races such as Celts were more opaque in their modern effects. This opacity was never more elemental than in the language issue; Macpherson had to "translate" his works from Gaelic into English, languages which had next to nothing in common. Percy's work was more authentic by virtue of his translations existing on the same branch of the language tree. More authentic and with more obvious links (in his rendering) to modern British society than Ossian, and also closer to his own British ideal than the Chinese literature, Percy's Icelandic works exist in a higher hierarchical space within his imperial efforts.

Of course, the major project of Percy's nation-building effort is the *Reliques*, and it should come as no surprise that this is also the major site of canonical imperialism in his work. The *Reliques* built on his earlier international works – the Chinese as a site of difference and the Icelandic as one of similarities stemming from shared ancestry – to construct a text which was not only to be accepted into the canon of literary British identity, but in its anthological state, to become the canon itself; not a mere amanuensis but a self-determined British voice declaring "I am." The voice, as I have established, is an Anglican expression of nationhood rooted in Homeric tradition and not encompassing the full polyphony of other voices within the islands. Because the *Reliques* was composed with a specific anthological purpose in mind – to construct a national canon, but also to function within it – it is worth briefly identifying the specifically canonical features of this book before discussing the theoretical implications of its inclusion within the canon of British literature; an inclusion which is irrefutable if we take legacy and influence into account.

Canonicity has traditionally been a form of historiography which is written by the victors. Enlightenment writers were open to the idea of poetry as historiography. Adam Smith identified poets as "the first historians of any,"[132] while Adam Ferguson

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[130] Macpherson. p.13.
[131] Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*. p.42.
[132] Adam Smith, *Lectures of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres: Delivered in the University of Glasgow by Adam*

wrote that “Even the historian and the poet may find the original essays of their arts in the tale, and the song, which celebrate the wars, the loves, and the adventures of men in their rudest condition.”[133] This applied particularly to ancient literature more or less contemporary to the history which it represented, but it increasingly also spoke to the rising demand for modern English literature in universities in the mid- to late-eighteenth century.[134] That Percy believed poetry could speak to us about history is evidenced most obviously in *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry,* in which he takes the runic narratives somewhat literally, but the historical aspects of the *Reliques* are more subtly realised. The history represented by the *Reliques* is complicated partly by its construction, which exists in an awkward mediation between cultural primitivism and sophisticated and sombre antiquarianism. The Britain of 1765 did not exist to the composers of ‘Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne’ or ‘Edom O’ Gordon’, yet Percy draws a modern British heritage out of this pre-British literature and pins the heritage to a tangible document, publishing the words of his datable artefact alongside some contemporary writers to suggest a somewhat improbable continuation from the (likely poor, possibly not literate) composer of, for example ‘The Beggar’s Daughter of Bednal-Green’ to William Shenstone, the writer of ‘Jemmy Dawson’. The *Reliques* is both printed and built primarily on printed (and manuscript) sources, a tangible link to the past which is an irrefutable ticket to the canon, a document of the national story as valid and valuable as the Magna Carta. This canon-as-history element is underlined further by the prevalence of historical ballads in the collection, which are in part present to flatter Percy’s patron family, and which also demonstrate an historical correlation between the event and the production of art reflecting the significance of heroic poetry in the classical canon. This is particularly true of later editions, where Percy revisited the ballads and made a particular effort to cite historical sources for the events outlined therein, as was the case with later editions of ‘Edom O’ Gordon’, informed by a letter to the *Gentlemen’s Magazine*.[135] The fact that, in Percy’s

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Smith, Reported by a Student in 1762-63 (London: Thomas Nelson, 1963). p.100.

[133] Adam Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. by Fania Oz-Salzberger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). p.161.

[134] See Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). pp.16-44.

[135] *The Gentleman’s Magazine and Historical Chronicle*. Volume XLV., ed. by Sylvanus Urban (London: D. Henry, 1775). pp.219-20.

understanding, the language and culture of the English grew from Gothic civilisations on these islands, is also significant in this respect; printed literatures are more worthy of canonizing than oral literatures are because their form makes them more permanent and less vulnerable to loss or corruption. The canon-as-history element also leaves history open to colonization; those who write the history and those who accept individual histories as canonical truth are complicit in what Debord has described as an exercise of cultural control:

> The precious advantage which the spectacle has acquired through the outlawing of history, having driven the recent past into hiding, from having made everyone forget the spirit of history within society, is above all the ability to cover its own tracks – to conceal the very progress of its conquest of the world, its power already seems familiar, as if it had always been there. All usurpers have shared this aim: to make us forget that they have only just arrived.[136]

The limitations of describing the relationship between Scotland and England post-1707 as colonial notwithstanding, Percy's project of constructing a history which was ostensibly 'British' but which overlooked the distinct histories of what had once – comparatively recently – been entirely separate political entities has the ideology of Debord's usurper; an agent who seeks to reconfigure the present not as a result of the past but as a manifest destiny of the colonial moment. Claude Lévi-Strauss argued that "History is therefore never history, but history-for."[137] In this case history was for the established British (and later, European) élite.

Finally, we might consider the impact of Empire on the *Reliques* and how the book functions as a colonial agent. By prioritising a culturally Anglican agenda in the *Reliques*, Percy's book helps to set the tone for how the British colonial effort would manifest

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[136] Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, trans. by Malcolm Imrie (London and New York: Verso, 1990). pp.15-6.

[137] Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'History and Dialectic', in *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 245–90. p.258.

itself. Percy's is a stadial history, and his book is intended to both appreciate primitive poetic efforts and to acknowledge that the rationalist age in which he lived was a superior state which was attained through the chronological movement from darkness to light. This was also the machination behind colonial expansion. British society was the next stage of civilisation for countries which were underprepared to best use their national resources, according to the Western colonial rationale. The question of how effective this was being essentially an historiographical one: who owns history? While oral preservations of history are valid and valuable, they are undoubtedly more vulnerable to corruption and loss than printed and written sources. In the words of Walter Ong, "Written words are residue. Oral literature has no such residue or deposit."[138] It is precisely this residue that allows the coloniser to claim ownership of a history to which they otherwise have no connection. An object can be bought, owned, possessed. An utterance cannot. Percy's ownership of the object (the Folio Manuscript) allows him to claim a semblance of ownership to the history the object represents. It is useful to consider the reinterpretation of history by outside forces as being a pre-colonised and therefore a pre-enlightened state in terms of Debord's discourse of history being "usurped", of the colonial mission itself being disguised by the colonial configuration of history as the path to civilisation.

Patronage and intertextuality also played a role in establishing the *Reliques'* position in the literary canon. It is far too simplistic to say that canons are built by readers, because to do so ignores the complex commercial and social structures underlying readership as we know it, but in the eighteenth century there was some truth to the argument that the correct reader could ensure a book's success. Recognition by a social élite gave the book a credence which was necessary to garner the kind of respect by reviewers, readers, and the academic establishment upon which canonicity is built. Its worthy readership extended beyond the Northumberland Percys and into an extensive network of the knowledgeable and fashionable in literary society. Behind its contents page is a network of letters between the great and good of British antiquarianism,

[138] Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002). p.11.

much of which has been alluded to in this thesis, including the key literary circles of Johnson and Dodsley. Percy's research on broadside and blackletter ballads was extensive, and the *Reliques* represents the contents of the Pepys library, Richard Johnson's *Golden Garland of Princely Delights* (1690), Dodsley's *Select Collection of Old Plays* (1744) and *Collection of Poems by Several Hands*, the anonymous *A Collection of Old Ballads* (1723-5) and *Robin Hood's Garland* (1749) and ballads from Shakespeare, amongst others.[139] The *Reliques* represents a conversation between multiple texts which by varying degrees were or were not canonical within their genre at the time, and several tastemakers who were responsible in part for the process of canonization. It is necessarily mentioned in the same sentence as these books, promoting a sort of canonicity by association.

The dedication speaks to the colonial aspects of the project. The Percys had and would continue to have extensive colonial interests. Algernon Seymour (1684-1750), the father of Baroness Percy, was the Governor of Minorca and later Guernsey.[140] Her son Hugh Percy (1742-1817; Thomas Percy was tutor to his brother, Algernon), was a lieutenant-general in the British army during the American Revolution.[141] Her grandson (also Hugh, 1785-1847) became lord lieutenant of Ireland - but he was also an ardent abolitionist – and her other grandson Algernon (1792-1865) brought artefacts from South Africa and Egypt to be housed at the restored Alnwick Castle.[142] Those members of the Percy family who witnessed and influenced Thomas Percy's literary climb also witnessed the establishment and legacy of global empire in Britain, and the fact that Percy dedicated his book to the matriarch of the family shows that colonial influence was valuable to his construction of Britain and its legacy. The Percy family played a

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[139] For a complete list of Percy's transcriptions, see the appendices to Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques.* pp.247-79.

[140] See R. O. Bucholz, 'Seymour, Charles, Sixth Duke of Somerset (1662–1748)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004 <http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/25156> [accessed 20 August 2017].

[141] Stephen Conway, 'Percy, Hugh, Second Duke of Northumberland (1742–1817)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21944> [accessed 20 August 2017].

[142] F. M. L. Thompson, 'Percy, Algernon, Fourth Duke of Northumberland (1792–1865)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004 <http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/21924> [accessed 20 August 2017].

significant role in shaping Britain's reputation at home and abroad and the dedication represents an awareness of and supplication to that role. By dedicating the *Reliques* to a family with such connections, Percy positions the book as a relic of both Britain and Britain's role in the empire; that is, it is both an argument and rationale for Britain's continued advancing supremacy on the world stage. He is not without a role to play in the colonial project himself. His move to Dromore represented the efforts of the English establishment to cement their power in what many consider to be the first colony of Britain by installing an English patriarch whose English establishment sympathies and connections were at the highest level, as a custodian of the Church of Ireland.[143] Inasmuch as the *Reliques* is a canonical work, it uses gatekeeping notions such as primitivism and stadial history to ensure that the canon works in service of colonialism and not in subversion of it.

We should also consider the *Reliques* in terms of its power to preserve and uphold certain elements of the canon, not just contribute to it. This thesis has discussed the effect of standardisation on the hegemony of language and how linguistic hierarchies influence and are influenced by imperial concepts, but it is important to note that this influence extends to the influence of the canon. By insisting that a previously unstandardised form of literature submit to standardisation through print – which, it has been established, was an ideological cornerstone of this book – Percy uses the *Reliques* to bolster the concept of the canon itself. The *Reliques* are a commentary on canonicity not only in their form but also their content. From the dedication to the ballads selected (and rejected) for inclusion, the book is a testament to the acceptable, culturally Anglican, tastefully noble canon advanced by Percy throughout his work. The *Reliques* advocated for a Britain that was stable in its identity and thriving in this stability. This was possible – the book supposes – by respecting the ancestry of the noble families whose political decisions have shaped the country's history, and was realised by including ballads with an historical or antiquarian bent and excluding those which were political, of which there were a great many; Nick Groom has described this

[143] Jennifer Orr has written on "the reinvention of Union-era Ulster as a centre of culture" with reference to Percy and his Anglican circles in Ireland. See Jennifer Orr, *Literary Networks and Dissenting Print Culture in Romantic-Period Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). pp.198-200.

as “a deliberately melancholy drone as an index of polite, reading-class Englishness – in stark contrast to more rambunctious definitions of national identity expressed through noise or ‘rough music.’”[144] This is also in part why Percy heavily limited the musical influence on the *Reliques*; a song invites disorderly collaboration, while the ballad-as-book invites a hushed, reflective experience, particularly if the ballad is, like a fragment of the Cross, packaged as a relique.

Aspects of gender and labour intersect in the *Reliques*, perhaps most notably in Percy’s likely apocryphal story of coming across the Folio Manuscript “being used by maids to light the fire.” In Percy’s version of this story, he heroically rescues the invaluable manuscript from the ignorant actions of young working women, with likely limited literacy. Percy positions the encounter as being his destiny. Were it not for his quick actions, the world might never have known his masterpiece, a textual gateway to the English literary tradition. Another interpretation of this story positions Percy as an interloping man, a mere guest in the women’s lives, undermining them when they may very well have been an excellent source for ballad literature themselves. In both interpretations, their voicelessness is articulated. In fact, close inspection of the Folio Manuscript itself reveals it to be in remarkably good condition for a bundle of papers which had supposedly been rotting in pile of fire-lighters, and Humphrey Pitt’s (in whose home the manuscript was discovered) library was of sufficiently high quality that the treatment of the manuscript seems highly unlikely. However, factual or fictional, Percy’s mythologizing here provides insight into his perceived role as the patriarch of eighteenth-century ballad culture. In fact, ballads in the eighteenth century were in many ways the purview of female creators and sellers. Ballads and ballad paraphernalia often detailed women’s work and roles in society, and the manual labour typically performed by women such as domestic and textile work has a rhythmic connection with the structure of sung ballads that suggests the precision and regulation of the work being done.[145] In urban settings, poor women were prominent

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[144] Groom, ‘“The Purest English”: Ballads and the English Literary Dialect’. p.194.

[145] See Helen Smith, ‘Gendered Labour’, in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Popular Culture in Early Modern England*, ed. by Matthew Dimmock, Andrew Hadfield, and Abigail Shinn (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 177–92.

Figure 3: 'The Enraged Musician' by William Hogarth © Tate

ballad-sellers. This was a type of work that could be undertaken by mothers, as seen in William Hogarth's 1741 etching 'The Enraged Musician', depicting a pregnant ballad-seller holding a baby in one hand and a bundle of broadsheets in the other, a third child at her feet.[146] These urban ballad-sellers were as proficient in the aural aspects of balladry as they were knowledgeable about it as a printing industry, as their sales of printed ballads involved a performance aspect. As we have already seen, women contributed not only to the low-culture industry of ballads in milking sheds and Grub Street, but also to major literary ballad projects such as the *Reliques*: after all, the original source for Dalrymple's 'Edom O' Gordon' is given merely as "a lady". This effort had been acknowledged in collections before; the *Edinburgh Miscellany* (1720) was superlative in its gratitude to female collectors:

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[146] See Figure 3 (overleaf). William Hogarth. *The Enraged Musician.* (1741). Tate (T01800) photo © Tate, image released under Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported) <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hogarth-the-enraged-musician-t01800>. [accessed 20 March 2017].

> As for the Ladies, who have generously contributed to make up this Work, we are proud to declare, that, tho they have sent us few of their Composures, they have sent nothing that is refuse. And therefore, while we publickly thank them for the Assistance already receiv'd, we beg they will continue to shine like the brighter Constellations amongst Luminaries of a dimmer Aspect. The rest of that Delicate Sex, will excuse us, tho we particularly thank the Fair Intellectual Club for the Poems they have been pleas'd to favour us with for publick Use.[147]

What Dalrymple, Percy, and to an extent Hogarth have in common is the manufacture of high art based on the labour of anonymous women, be they the maids at Humprhey Pitt's house, the singer of 'Edom O' Gordon', or the working mother hawking ballads in the street. While the identities of these men are enshrined in the cultural canon, their sources are anonymous, their labour, agency, and expertise undermined. This erasure is largely down to respectability. The major female figure of the *Reliques* is the Duchess of Northumberland, whose role in the project is to sponsor it with her money and social standing while men get on with the work involved. Other than her, Percy's *Reliques* represents a boys' club of balladeers, a patriarchal network of intellectuals who see themselves as better representatives of folk culture because – as with Percy's Chinese argument – they share expertise and not only mere sentiment. In the preface to the first edition, he mentions "The names of so many men of learning and character" who assisted him in the book's creation, specifically praising their learning, libraries, and resources.[148] Furthermore, the types women usually involved with the sale and production of ballads were not the paragon of respectability that the Duchess of Northumberland was: urban ballad singers were commonly associated with sex work, and the types of ballads in their repertoires were not always as deferential to class stability as the *Reliques* was overall intended to be.[149] As Lynn Wollstadt has

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[147] *The Edinburgh Miscellany* (Edinburgh: J. McEuen, 1720). Vol. 1, pp.ii-iii.
[148] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, pp.xii-xiv.
[149] Helen Smith. p.185.

shown, “The power of upper-class men is recognized and accepted, but it is not celebrated. The narratives of the ballads most often recorded from women do not reward male hegemony, as so many other ballads do; good things do not happen to the men who rule society.”[150] In ‘Sir Patrick Spense’, for example, which was likely composed by Lady Wardlaw,[151] the king’s mission is unfulfilled and Patrick and his crew all die, while the emotional apex of the ballad comes in the description of their grieving widows. While Percy could use this rejection of male hegemony to illustrate a certain public perception about Scotland, itself a gendered nation in the mid-eighteenth century, such a rejection of male stately power and the negative effects of this power on female citizens is scarcely explored.[152] Neither too are domestic topics such as childbirth or family grievances – Percy preferred martial and historical ballads – though a glut of such ballads exists.[153] David Buchan’s seminal text *The Ballad And The Folk* has somewhat chauvinistically implied that women’s ballad repertoires are incomplete, being that they may be less inclined to compose, preserve, and perform martial ballads (“This imbalance presumably resulted from [Mrs Brown’s] sources of all being women, and therefore constitutionally more inclined to the marvellous than the martial.”[154]) but if this is true then surely the opposite is, also: a collection such as the *Reliques* which overlooks and underestimates the domestic ballad work of women is also incomplete. Though from a canonical point of view it may make some sense to minimise the effect of gender on genre, this does a disservice to the way in which this particular genre functioned. Not only did women play a significant role in the

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[150] Lynn Wollstadt, ‘Controlling Women: “Reading Gender in the Ballads Scottish Women Sang”’, *Western Folklore*, 61.3/4 (2002), 295–317. p.315.

[151] Lady Warldaw also wrote ‘Hardyknute’. Mary Ellen Brown, ‘Wardlaw, Elizabeth, Lady Wardlaw (1677–1727)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*, 2004. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28721> [accessed 20 August 2017].

[152] Murray Pittock has discussed the gendered aspects of Scottish experience and identity in the eighteenth century several times. See Murray Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland 1685-1789* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997). pp.85-91; Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image*. pp.64-9.

[153] See Mary Ellen Brown, ‘Old Singing Women and the Canons of Scottish Balladry and Song’, in *A History of Scottish Women’s Writing*, ed. by Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 44–57. Though Percy identifies heroic ballads such as these as a priority in the title, he does also include ballads of love and relationships; however, in many, such as ‘The Marriage of Sir Gawaine’ (Vol. 3, pp.11-24) they deal with love that has been marred by violence and is between courtly subjects. The third volume of the *Reliques* also contains some heartbreak songs by female narrators, notably ‘The Lady’s Fall’ (Vol.3, pp.138-43) and ‘Waly Waly, Love be Bonny’ (Vol. 3, pp.144-5).

[154] David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971). p.76.

production and distribution of ballads, but to canonize a ballad text as being "Percy's" or "Ritson's" or "Dalrymple's" overlooks a key gendered aspect of balladry outlined by Mary Ellen Brown:

> For the most part, THE author cannot be discovered, having ceased to be relevant when her/his work was accepted and learned and sometimes recreated and transmitted by others. Thus THE author is irrelevant, for such ballads and songs exist not in a definitive text, but in the multiple texts, that very multiplicity affirming the materials' traditional status. And those variable texts were performed by individuals, bearers of tradition, and sometimes bore marks of those individuals' creativity.[155]

Brown's analysis of the oral tradition, orthodox though it may be, suggests a feminist literary theory of a distinctly postmodern bent that at first glance may not cooperate with antiquarian literature: the *écriture féminine* of Hélène Cixous. The imperceptible identity of balladry coupled with its inescapably oral origins (however textual the tradition would become in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) is reminiscent of the "white ink" of Cixous' theory:

> In women's speech, as in their writing, that element which never stops resonating, which, once we've been permeated by it, profoundly and imperceptibly touched by it, retains the power of moving us – that element is the song: first music from the first voice of love which is alive in every woman. Why this privileged relationship with the voice? Because no woman stockpiles as many defences for countering the drives as does a man. You don't build walls around yourself, you don't forego pleasure as 'wisely' as he. Even if phallic mystification has generally contaminated good

[155] Brown, 'Old Singing Women and the Canons of Scottish Balladry and Song'. p.46. Emphasis Brown's own.

> relationships, a woman is never far from 'mother' [...] There is always within her at least a little of that good mother's milk. She writes in white ink.[156]

Cixous argues that in oral discourse, women speak with their bodies, whereas men make a division "between the logic of oral speech and the logic of the text."[157] This analysis of gender resonates strongly with Percy, a man so bound to the logic of the text that he takes pains to underscore it on every page. Percy's textuality and the nature of the canon are such that they reward rigidity and standardisation. Balladry does not reward these ideals. In fact, it thrives on adaptation, on cross-community collaboration, on the unknowability of origin. "It is impossible to *define* a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded," Cixous writes, "Which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist."[158] The literary canon is inadequate for enclosing balladry, because in its form and content, balladry encapsulates an intellectual femininity that is not complemented by the rigid (Cixous might say 'phallic') coding of the canon. Percy erases the female balladeer to configure the minstrel figure as only male, with male heirs including himself and his contemporaries.

If we are to accept the analysis of the *Reliques* as a "seminal, epoch-making work of English Romanticism"[159] then it is worth considering the text in respect to its relationship with labouring-class verse, which also developed within this movement. Overwhelmingly, Percy rejects a working-class provenance for the ballads. He fits with the class of "antiquarian scholars who, in the main came from the lower middle-class" and who "recognized the prospect of adding to human knowledge even while they received the notice of their *betters*, members of the aristocracy who were looking for ways of condescending."[160] This much is clear even from Percy's dedication to the

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[156] Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', *Signs*, 1.4 (1976), 875–93. Trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. p.881.
[157] Ibid. p.881.
[158] Ibid. p.883.
[159] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. p.3.
[160] Roger D. Abrahams, 'Phantoms of Romantic Nationalism in Folkloristics', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 106.419 (1993), 3–37. p.3.

Duchess of Northumberland. Quite apart from the above-delineated undermining of feminine labour, the *Reliques* has a problem with recognising labour more generally. It was published about a generation before words like ‘genius’ would be applied to supposedly unpolished, plebeian poets such as Burns, but it did serve as a bridge to the plebeian for the polite. Audiences were beginning to develop a taste for poetry that was authentic in its sophisticated state of only apparent roughness but were not yet prepared to accept that specific plebeian writers should be worthy of praise for their role in producing this literature, in part because of the anxiety over linguistic difference inherent in non-standardised versions of English.[161] Percy therefore configured balladry as initially being a courtly genre attended to by minstrels, rather than a folk genre attended to by workers. This is exemplified in the title illustration of a minstrel performing for lords and ladies in front of a ruined castle, explicitly explored in his ‘Essay Concerning Minstrels’, and demonstrated more subtly in his choice of ballads to be included. Percy’s view of minstrelsy was by no means uncontested; while to him, they were poets of an elevated and revered (by the élite audience) status, the common view prior to his rehabilitation of the minstrel was that they were vagrants. Though Percy admits that the association with vagrancy was rooted in historical truth, he maintains a degree of sympathy for the minstrel, and expresses regret that “this class of men” had fallen out of grace and that an Elizabethan statute “seems to have put an end to the profession, for after this time they are no longer mentioned.”[162] Scott rehearsed this debate of antiquarians in his essay ‘On Popular Poetry’, appended to the *Minstrelsy*:

> Dr Percy looked on the minstrel in the palmy and exalted state to which, no doubt, many were elevated by their talents, like those who possess excellence in the fine arts in the present day; and Ritson considered the reverse of the medal, when the poor and wandering glee-man was glad to purchase his bread by singing his ballads at the ale-house, wearing a fantastic habit, and latterly sinking into a mere

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[161] See Goodridge and Keegan.
[162] Percy, *Reliques*. Vol. 1, p.xxi.

> crowder upon an untuned fiddle, accompanying his rude strains with
> a ruder ditty.[163]

Overwhelmingly, Percy's *Reliques* speak of the demeanours and histories of the nobility. Off the battlefield and out of the courtly hall, its heroes do not appear to *do* much. Ballads which narrate the experience of proletarian life are largely excluded (in rare inclusions such as 'The Beggar's Daughter of Bednal-Green', the titular daughter marries well and escapes a life of drudgery after her father's burlesque of noble minstrelsy[164]) and poor balladeers were excluded from commercial production by the configuration of balladry as expensive and elaborate books. In a perverse sense, Percy could be said to be seizing the means of production but unlike the ballad hero Robin Hood, he uses the *Reliques* to take from the poor and reward the rich. This impulse has been identified by Dave Harker in his exploration of the English folksong revival as a construction of middle-class male poets, in which he writes that Georgian ballad collectors such as Percy were driven by a desire for patronage which "disposed them to patronize or even to expropriate the products of workers' culture."[165] The end result of patriarchal, middle-class mediation of ballad culture is seen in Wordsworth's 'The Solitary Reaper', in which he bemoans his lack of access to the foreign ballad song of a Gaelic field worker. The poem ends:

> I listened till I had my fill:
> And, as I mounted up the hill,
> The music in my heart I bore,
> Long after it was heard no more.[166]

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[163] Walter Scott, 'Introductory Remarks On Popular Poetry', in *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott* (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1838), pp. 1–14. p.10.

[164] I would conservatively count thirteen ballads in the *Reliques* as narrating a specifically labouring perspective ('Take Thy Old Cloak About Thee'; 'The Frolicksome Duke, or the Tinker's Good Fortune'; 'Dowsabell'; 'The Turnament of Tottenham'; 'Harpalus'; 'Robin and Makyne'; 'Gentle Herdesman Tell to Me'; 'The Beggar's Daughter of Bednal-Green'; 'The Ew-Bughts Marrion'; 'The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter'; 'The Shepherd's Address to his Muse'; 'The Willow-Tree'; and 'The Auld Good-man'). Of these thirteen, four are on the theme of labouring class people marrying well.

[165] Dave Harker, *Fakesong: The Manufacture of British 'Folksong' from 1700 to the Present Day* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1985). p.13.

[166] 'The Solitary Reaper', Wordsworth, *The Major Works*. pp.319-20. l.29-32.

The field worker's song may be the genesis of this poem, but it is not the thematic focus; Wordsworth's perceived slight as a mediator of labouring-class culture unable to access the song of an unnamed woman is. When he implores the reader to "listen! For the Vale profound/ Is overflowing with the sound,"[167] it is not to the singer that he demands the reader listen; it is to himself. 'The Solitary Reaper' reveals a poetic economy which is, in the words of McLane, "obviously rich and potentially disquieting."[168] Such is the role of labouring-class poetry under the Romantic movement which sought to identify worker-poets as a source for native genius, a poetic role which was identified by Percy a generation before as essential to the British literary voice. It is through the act of middle-class mediation that the worker-poet has been admitted into the literary canon, because without such mediation, the poetry would never have reached the attention of patrons who may have found it, in the words of Goodridge and Keegan, "presumptuous, or even politically suspect" otherwise.[169] The commercial aspects of producing labouring-class poetry (including ballads) such as patronage and brokering deals with printers meant that in the eighteenth century the use of a middle-class intermediary such as Percy was essential. Unfortunately, when those intermediaries take possession of the poetry for themselves (or their own patrons), the presence of the unmediated labouring-class voice in the canon is undermined, and sometimes erased entirely.

Conclusion

When the anthology is opened up to intersecting theoretical scrutiny, several aims are exposed. The anthology-book's function as contribution to and supporting structure of the literary canon exposes it as participating in hegemonic structures. Though in recent years this participation has frequently been subversive and aimed at redressing sexist, racist, homophobic (and other exposed) assumptions of canonicity,[170] for Percy, his

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[167] 'The Solitary Reaper', l.7-8.
[168] McLane. p.232.
[169] Goodridge and Keegan. p.281.
[170] Kenneth Warren, 'The Problem of Anthologies, or Making the Dead Wince', *American Literature*, 65.2 (1993), 338–42.; Carl Arch. 'Letting Go of the Big Anthology: A Declaration of Anthological Independence'; Shesgreen. 'Canonizing the Canonizer: A Short History of the Norton Anthology of English Literature'.

engagement was to uphold and enshrine an élite canonicity he found useful and valuable. Who owns the literature he publishes? Certainly not the often female and labouring class composers whose relationship with Britishness was more colonially complex than his own. The inherently fragmentary and collaborative nature of the anthology discloses a power imbalance between the producer and the publisher in the eighteenth century with which the book must contend. This will be shown not only in the context of the anthology itself but also in paratextual and oral components, which will allow us to evaluate the self-fashioned (and actual) position of the anthologist in the hierarchy of anthology production. In elaborate texts such as Percy's, supported by the aristocratic élite and upper-class intelligentsia, the work of the (often female, subject to colonial control) labourers of literature is used to support a specific version of Britishness created anthologically to support an identity that was, according to the needs of the establishment élite, stable and unproblematically English, male, and rarefied.

Conclusion

The literary construction of British identity in the eighteenth century was anthological in its nature. In this thesis I have attempted to examine the use of the anthology structure to imaginatively invent Britain in the generations following the nation's inception, as seen through the anthologies of Thomas Percy. The contemporary British identity interpreted by Percy was supported by his readings of ancient literatures that far pre-date the Union, which shows that Percy and his contemporaries and peers imagined the nation as being made of constituent parts, though some perhaps more prominent than other. This construction was designed to follow a narrative whereby the English aristocracy, especially Percy's patrons in Northumberland, were the natural keepers of literary history by virtue of their Gothic historical identity. This discussion has been directed by key research questions focusing on the central themes of identity and anthology and showing how these themes interact within the anthology genre. These research questions were:

1. What is the nature of the national identity Percy seeks to construct/invent?
2. What is the role of anthology in the construction of Percy's literary national narrative?
3. How does a theoretical perspective on book history help us to develop a nuanced understanding of the applications of anthology?

In order to assert that (national) identity and anthology have always been intertwined, in chapter one I embarked on a very brief history of the collected abridgement in its various forms, from medieval hagiography to opportunistic eighteenth-century song collections. Through this history it became apparent that the canonicity reflected by collections also reflected the prevalent national state, including its conflicts and politics. Percy's anthologies, for example, reflect his belief that the British nation was in need of stable leadership to calm its recent turbulent past, and the stable leadership he called for was a reflection of his Anglican faith; the English establishment who he saw as having the moral sensibilities and historical fortitude to foster prosperity and

peace. This was true of the *Reliques*, which, with its dedication and content, explicitly privileged an Anglo-establishment point of view, but it was also true of *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry.* While ostensibly about the literatures of China and ancient Scandinavia respectively, these books also worked to create a narrative of respectability and legacy which would support the claims made by Percy in the *Reliques* for a Gothically conceived Anglo-British nationalism. Particularly because Percy worked in an antiquarian mode, the anthology was the most suitable vehicle for publishing his poetry and attached poetic ideology, because anthology rewards the fragmented narrative accessed by antiquarians by presenting it as legitimate because of, not in spite of, its state of abridgement. The selectivity offered by anthologies (to both readers and editors) also allows for a cultural relativism which is useful for literary projects with a nationalist agenda. Chapter one also introduced the Gothic aesthetics which are central to Percy's construction of a British identity, and while its outlook was mostly concentrated on Percy's anthologies and antiquarian-rooted British identity, its discussion on the two central themes of this thesis lays the groundwork for the more generally applicable theoretical perspectives on anthology's scope offered in chapter four.

Chapters two and three go into detail about Percy's anthologies. Chapter two examines *Hau Kiou Choaan* and *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, discussing them as textual structures which define Britishness by introducing a culture with huge ostensible differences and an ancient culture from whom Britishness may be said to have come respectively. I suggest that these earlier works may be seen as preparation for his greater project, the *Reliques*, but that they have merit of various kinds on their own and that their perspective on the anthological construction of the nation should not be overlooked. Both texts, for example, are useful in establishing the value of textual legacy which Percy emphasises in the *Reliques*. Both are notable for their lengthy footnotes as Percy began to explore his role as anthologist, defining this role as one of a guardian of the literature through whose archival perspective (expressed largely paratextually) the book should be read. In the paratexts, Percy berates the Chinese for not having what he perceived to be a sufficiently textual literary culture, while celebrating the Norsemen for their spiritually infused 'addiction' to writing. Chapter

two establishes Percy’s ‘cultural Anglicanism’ as the basis for his nationalist agenda, ascribing to his faith certain assumptions of language and culture which allowed him to designate the Chinese as being somewhat morally suspicious by virtue of their difference, and the Norse as being the forbearers of British (English) culture and therefore, in spite of their primitivism, a moral authority. Chapter two also develops the context of the Enlightenment, a movement whose cosmopolitanism problematized Percy’s nationalism by making the relationship between state and neighbour-state one of information sharing and cordiality rather than conflict and differentiation. Chapter three, which focuses on the *Reliques*, expands on the Enlightenment context by introducing the idea of Britain as a state which had virtually erased its borders, uniting Scotland and England in 1707 under a banner of Britishness that not all its citizens agreed on the meaning of, or even accepted. Chapter three imagines the process of composing an anthology as being anthological in itself, as it depends on collaboration with various writers and book repositories, and because it unifies a number of textual experiences under a single ideological banner. The *Reliques* is a case study for this as it features English and Scottish ballads expressing their national selves and each other, which was shown in the chapter through close readings of four such ballads articulating the English experience of the English and the Scots, and the Scottish experience of the same. Chapter three shows that the anthologist includes and excludes certain experiences in order to direct the reader to a conclusion (about national identity), and characterises the anthology as a sanctified space for national discussion, drawing together the contents of various libraries into a single dedicated arena. This centres the anthology on the reader, who moves from shelf to shelf with an ease provided to her by the anthologist, and, though directed by the anthologist, comes to her own conclusion. The complex relationship between anthologist, reader, and writer is explored further in chapter four.

In chapter four, the theoretical implications of an in-depth study of the anthology are examined. Chapter four refers to the work of Gérard Genette in its exploration of the technical aspects of book construction, postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said in terms of how the book is used to disseminate information on an imperial scale, and feminists such as Hélène Cixous who deconstructed the notion of a text in a way that is

useful to understanding the reconstructive process of anthology. The chapter interrogates the canonical reception of texts and how anthologies can function to uphold or subvert the canon, and how this functions in tandem with the invention and recovery of national identity. In this chapter I hoped to show that technological advancements and ideological debate meet in the anthology, which is what makes it such a fertile genre for the discussion of nationhood. Chapter four is the culmination of the previous chapters which feed specific textual examples to the theoretical discussions contained therein. It is from chapter four that the wider research implications of this thesis become clear.

Thomas Percy's central position within the British establishment, fostered by his career and his personal and professional relationships, make him an excellent test-case for the study of the British anthology in the eighteenth century. This becomes only truer when the timeframe of this thesis is expanded to uncover his post-*Reliques* life including his time as Bishop in Ireland, a country whose relationship with the Union is even more fraught than that of Scotland.[1] His demanding emphasis on literacy, though inconsistent and problematic, has also ensured that his process has been reasonably well-preserved for future scholars. In the study of his notes and letters, I have found him to be transparent, if inconsistent as an editor.

Future research

What, then, for anthology? Book history is a comparatively new field of study, still developing its pedagogy, though it has an established pedigree in its links to sister disciplines such as bibliography and the study of literature.[2] Future work on book history must take into consideration not only the way in which book history can be applied to other disciplines, but the way in which it stands as a discipline on its own merits, and how theoretical pedagogy arising from the study of book history can be applied to other disciplines. The conceptualisation of anthology as an epistemological process and not merely a technological one achieves this aim.

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[1] See Orr. pp.83-121; Ferguson. pp.206-45.

[2] Finkelstein and McCleery. pp.7-27.

Much of recent book-historical scholarship of the eighteenth century has concentrated on the novel, as with Leah Price's study, and with good reason, as the story of the novel in the eighteenth century is a fascinating one. However, I would contend that the time is right for suggesting several questions which a book-historical approach to the eighteenth-century verse anthology might hope to answer. Per Heningsgaard has argued that although Australian literary scholars have largely embraced book history more than other postcolonial nations, the field has "a disciplinary obsession with literature from the United Kingdom and the United States from the Gutenberg era through to the end of the nineteenth century; it is uncommon to find book history scholarship about more recent developments in the book, and less common still to find it about the subject of a postcolonial nation's literature."[3] It is precisely this Anglocentrism which has caused the field to give due but not balanced coverage to the study of the novel as informed by European novelistic assumptions. Robert Fraser's *Book History Through Postcolonial Eyes* begins with an apology to this, arguing that "No one person can – or will soon – write a comprehensive history of the book from a postcolonial point of view. The subject is too protean, the readjustments required too radical for this time."[4] Generally, I am inclined to agree with this assessment. However, I would contend that, given the utility of printed literature in the eighteenth century to the project of empire, it is surprising that there is so little writing on book history and colonialism at all. We might take verse anthologies as a jumping-off point for the postcolonial study of book history because Britain was the world's most prolific colonizer of the later eighteenth century and, as I hope I have shown, Britain's construction of national identity during this time was configured through an anthological understanding of history. This evaluation of anthology as a component of national identity has continued to the present day, as shown by David Hopkins when he wrote that "the possession of a general anthology of English poetry – perhaps obtained as a school prize – was felt to be, along with a good dictionary, the complete works of

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[3] Per Henningsgaard, 'Emerging from the Rubble of Postcolonial Studies: Book History and Australian Literary Studies', *Ilha Do Destero: A Journal of English Language, Literature in English, and Cultural Studies*, 69.2 (2016), 117–26. p.121.

[4] Fraser. p.ix.

Shakespeare, and a copy of the Authorized Version of the Bible, a *sine qua non* for any civilised household."[5] The word "civilised" here is telling, as are his other literary selections. Anthologies of English poetry, he suggests, are as valuable to the identity of an English-speaking person as linguistic standardisation and Christian religion. If, then, anthologies inform and are informed by the way in which British people see themselves culturally, and if they saw themselves as being at the top of a hierarchy of culture and civilisation, it stands to reason that book historians should make postcolonial theory a priority in our study of anthologies. This is essential in recognising and redressing the cultural imbalances perpetuated by colonialism and suggested by much postcolonial literature. I would contend that verse anthologies have a particular role to play in this analysis, because they have been more successful in the aim of a literary realisation of British identity; anthologised novels, though more common in the eighteenth century, are so rare as to be almost unheard of in the twenty-first, whereas verse anthologies are still such a cultural cornerstone that they form the basis of syllabi of general and specialist literature courses throughout the world.[6] In short, we cannot understand, challenge, and subvert the Western canon without fully appreciating its origins and historical applications in Britain as an anthological effort of self-determination. The next step in the study of anthologies is to recognise, as this thesis does, the genre's ability to define certain ideologies, and to open book history up as a subject that interrogates ideology alongside technology, such as in the work of Robert Fraser and Per Henningsgaaard. Fraser's book makes apparent the link between the developing book market's increased access to technology and the ideological applications of the books produced, a link which is also explored by Leah Price in *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*; the "full scale history of the idea of the anthology" advocated for by Seth Lerer should take into consideration the fact that the idea of the anthology was often germinated for ideological means, such as those explored in this thesis.[7]

As for Percy, the next step in exploring his role in the British anthology is to fully explore how his anthologies change from edition to edition as Britain – and Percy – go

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[5] Hopkins. p.286.
[6] See Paul Lauter, 'Taking Anthologies Seriously', *Melus*, 29.3/4 (2004), 19–39.
[7] Lerer. p.1263.

through the extensive changes that the late eighteenth century had in store. The temporal remit of this thesis necessarily ended in 1765, at which time Percy was beginning to shine professionally but if – as his most ardent modern scholars have suggested[8] – Percy's work in literature was at least in part an exercise in fostering professionally useful relationships with the Northumberlands and others, then perhaps the most interesting part of his literary life comes when he reaches the professional heights of Bishopric in 1782. A fourth edition of the *Reliques* – ostensibly edited by his nephew, though some have suggested this claim was a fiction authored to save Percy's professional face – emerged in 1794; biographer Bertram Davis has claimed it was "the best of Percy's lifetime" and noted that it was "the edition on which scores of subsequent publications were to be based."[9] How did Percy's upward mobility and the changing socio-political/cultural landscape of Britain in the second half of the eighteenth century affect this edition, and for that matter the editions of 1767 and 1775? A textual afterlives approach, such as the one suggested by Jeremy Smith in much of his recent work, would offer a thorough perspective on the influences on and reception of the *Reliques* during these publications.[10] This project could take the form of a hyperlinked digital edition of the *Reliques* annotating the sources of ballads, additions and omissions, notable post-*Reliques* afterlives, intertextual links with previous Percy works, and how consistently-included ballads change from edition to edition. Such a project would have wide-ranging impact on how Percy is read in the twenty-first century, not only as a pioneer of ballad and ancient literature but also as an editor with intense involvement in his own work and significant influence in how books are constructed as well as what they contain. It is only through a parallel reading of the four editions published in his lifetime that we can begin to appreciate how Percy was received by the writers upon whom he has had an acknowledged or unacknowledged influence. A project of this nature would require some investment, including travel to various archives that were inaccessible to me during the preparation

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[8] Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques*. pp.219-20; Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson*. p.142.

[9] Bertram H Davis, 'Thomas Percy: The Dilemma of a Scholar-Cleric', *The Kentucky Review*, 3.3 (1982), 28–46. p.44.

[10] Jeremy Smith, 'Textual Afterlives: Barbour's Bruce and Hary's Wallace', in *Scots: Studies in Its Literature and Languag*e, ed. by John M. Kirk and Iseabail Macleod (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013), pp. 37–70.

of this thesis: for example, the Bodleian library contains various antiquarian papers and correspondence by Percy, including letters to and from his nephew which may shed some light on the fourth edition,[11] while the Houghton Library at Harvard University contains the Donald & Mary Hyde Collection of Dr Johnson and Early Modern Books and Manuscripts, including a number of Percy's own letters.[12] As Percy's projects were to some extent collaborative, access to these letters would no doubt open up fascinating insight into the state of the relationships he cultivated. This in turn would allow us to map the influence and influences of the *Reliques* and Percy's other work, revitalising scholarship on a hugely significant figure of English literature whose reputation in recent years has badly suffered the prejudice of critics who see his editing as destructive. Hales and Furnivall, the editors of the published edition of the Folio Manuscript, described his books as being "puffed out… pomatumed… and powdered," for example.[13] While it is undeniable that Percy had a heavy and often errant editorial hand, it is also true that his great literary experiments helped authenticate the ballad as serious literature, to make antiquarian and translated literature accessible to a growing general readership, and to inspire the appetites of the very critics who would later condemn his work as "consigned […] to the special hell reserved for bad editors."[14]

Furthermore, the trove of Percy materials discovered by Tom Gribben at Dromore Cathedral, to which I have had near exclusive access, are in desperate need of critical attention and archival care.[15] They include a 1790 Bible printed in Dublin and possibly used by Percy, a roughly 1790 anonymous print of Percy feeding swans in the Lagan, extracts from two mid-century charters presented to Percy, Grand Jury papers of the diocese of Dromore detailing Percy's daily decisions as Bishop, and, most excitingly, a copy of James I's charter containing marginal notes by Percy on every page, perhaps indicating that he planned to prepare it as a publication. These items had previously

[11] Bodl. MSS. Percy b. 1-3, c. 1-11, d. 1-11, e. 1-10.

[12] Project information and some content available online. 'The Donald & Mary Hyde Collection', *Houghton Library* <http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/collections/hyde.cfm> [accessed 7 June 2017].

[13] Hales and Furnivall. Vol. 1, p.xvii.

[14] Albert B. Friedman, *The Ballad Revival: Studies in the Influence of Popular on Sophisticated Poetry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961). p.205.

[15] These items are not yet catalogued.

been in a basement under the Cathedral for an undetermined period of time; presumably decades. To my knowledge these materials have never been researched. Their uncovering shows that Percy may not have "burnt out" during the Dromore years as some have suggested.[16] They speak to his antiquarian interests during a very significant but, in terms of his literary output, perhaps underestimated period of his life and demonstrate that his passion for language and historicity did not fade as his public writing career slowed, but that his interests and priorities shifted in line with his professional position.[17]

Final reflections

"In order to awaken the dead, the antiquarian must first manage to kill them."[18] I have returned to these words by Susan Stewart periodically while preparing this thesis. Antiquarianism has accusations of morbidity levelled at it often; accusations which, it must be said, are not groundless. After all, what is a relique in its original definition? The remains of a long-dead holy person or thing, frozen in the liminal space between decay and preservation. Stewart suggests a rawness in the process of memory, but I would contend that the act of memorialising strips much of this rawness away, and the end result is often a very polished product: an obituary; a museum; an anthology. If anthology is an appropriate venue for antiquarian fragmentation, it is because the anthology is the museum situated in a mausoleum of appropriation. Much like the museum, we enter the anthology seeking a link to an elusive, perhaps mythological past. The curator provides us with an experience which we can choose to adapt to our own needs, revisiting or skipping entire depositories of artefacts according to our fragmented interests. Percy's anthologies, which span centuries and continents, are an often flawed and fluid exploration of what it means to be British in the second half of the eighteenth century by way of Britain's medieval and fragmented past. Just as Percy

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[16] Palmer. 'Percy, Thomas (1729–1811)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online Edition)*.

[17] Dromore Cathedral is also home to a very significant 1614 Bible which Percy did not use as it was stolen during the 1641 rebellion and miraculously returned three hundred years later, and a Book of Common Prayer presented by Percy to the congregation. It would be appropriate for a study of Percy's life as Bishop of Dromore to take these texts into consideration also, as they are central to the identity of the town and the cathedral in which Percy worked.

[18] Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993). p.143.

experienced and articulated this past in his anthologies, we too can experience fragments of his reality, subjective, subject to interpretation and memory. His anthologies tell us about late eighteenth-century Britain but they also tell us about late eighteenth-century Thomas Percy. Elizabeth Birmingham has argued for a "researcher's sixth sense" which will "enable us to recover and converse with the lost dead, to understand them in a way that is definitive and true, but that they will help us recover ourselves, help us discover that we did not know that we were the dead, inhabiting the crypt, repeating dead histories in dead languages."[19] In speaking with Percy, reading his words, walking the spaces he walked, I feel I have come to know him well. He strikes me as flawed, but authentic; passionate if misguided. How delighted he would be to know that the *Reliques* has become a relic in its own right, to have himself passed through the death of antiquarianism and the resurrection of future study.

[19] Elizabeth Birmingham, '"I See Dead People": Archive, Crypt, and an Argument for the Researcher's Sixth Sense', in *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process*, ed. by Gesa E. Kirsch and Liz Rohan (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), pp. 139–46. p.145.

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