

# Architecture and Thomas Hardy

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## Abstract

Thomas Hardy is the only major English novelist to have been a professional architect. In his essay, "Memories of Church Restoration," written for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (1906), it was clear that, for Hardy, architectural structures preserved the spirit of all those who had created and originally worked and lived within them. By their very presence, then, ancient and medieval buildings were historical artifacts housing the memories of past lives. This intertwining of humans and the built environment became the stuff of Hardy's novels, short stories, poetry, and essays. Drawing on autobiographical material, including correspondence and notebooks, as well as novels and poetry, this thesis examines the various ways in which Hardy engages with ideas and debates about architecture taking place in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While previous studies have examined the treatment of architecture in Hardy's fiction, this thesis focuses on key figures in the architectural world and the complex role their ideas play in his work. Hardy explores a combination of ideas from leading architectural thinkers, at times offering an important synthesis to coexisting architectural ideas. I argue that Hardy saw architecture as recording centuries of memory, rooted in an instinctual life that connects humans with the natural world in an intimate way, evoking evolutionary time. In so doing he expanded the meaning of the "architectural" well beyond the confines of medievalist or classical ideas, or debates sparked by architects and critics such as A.W.N. Pugin and John Ruskin and architecture, in its broadest definition, acts as a metaphor for the way the past lives on in the present, undergoing continual processes of change; for destruction

and decay; and for the way buildings undergo natural processes. The nexus of architectural ideas also allows Hardy to respond to questions of the role of art in relation to society and social communities.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Mr. Hampden W. Pratt spoke of the novels of Mr. Thomas Hardy as of peculiar interest to architects, seeing that before Mr. Hardy became a novelist he was an architect.

–“Discussions,” *The Builder*, 11 March 1882<sup>1</sup>

The field of architecture into which Thomas Hardy entered at the age of sixteen was dominated by the social and cultural contrasts characteristic of the age. Railways, cast-iron and glass buildings, and brick factories coexisted with medieval churches, centuries-old laborers’ cottages composed of mud and thatch, and the ancient remnants of a seemingly bygone past. The juxtaposition between the present and the past, between ancient agrarian culture and industrialized urban life, is one Hardy witnessed during his apprenticeship with Dorchester architect John Hicks. Hardy records in his autobiography:

Owing to the incident of his being an architect’s pupil in a county-town of assizes and alderman, which had advanced to railways and telegraphs and daily London papers, yet not living there, but walking in every day from a world of shepherds and ploughmen in a hamlet three miles off, where modern improvements were still regarded as wonders, he saw rustic and borough doings in a juxtaposition peculiarly close. (*Life of Thomas Hardy* 31-2)

Even as early as 1831, the “spirit of the age” was certainly, as John Stuart Mill pointed out, an “age of transition” (53). As a result of industrialization and the shift from an agrarian to a capitalist-based society, John Wilton-Ely contends, the

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<sup>1</sup> See the *Builder*, Vol. 42, p. 295. Hardy made a cutting of the mention for his scrapbook.

architectural field itself was undergoing its own complicated process of transition (Wilton-Ely 180). In spite of the changes brought about by industrialization, or, in many ways because of them, architecture relied heavily on past models and, as such, many contemporaries viewed the nineteenth century as having no architectural style of its own. Some believed that architectural innovation, particularly in design, was lagging behind. In 1853, J.D. Wyatt, President of the Architectural Association argued, "Progression in architecture has not kept pace with the march of general improvement [...] counterfeits should be denounced as unworthy. Better the humbler material in its truthful form than a paltry imitation of a superior" (532). But the revivals were in themselves providing innovation. Victorian architects revived a wide array of historical styles, including Greek, Neoclassical, Romanesque, Gothic, Elizabethan, Jacobean, Renaissance, Baroque, and Queen Anne as well as English vernacular (Brooks "Historicism and the Nineteenth Century" 12). And these historicist buildings were often constructed using wrought and cast iron—the industrial materials of the age. "Many fashions of the art," Hardy writes in *A Laodicean* (1881), "were coming and going in kaleidoscopic change" (7). This eclecticism meant that architecture conveyed multivalent meanings; about the present and the past, progress and decline; but also about religion, politics, social class, and gender. Nineteenth-century architecture was an expression of conflicting ideals about the relationship between society and the various types of structures it produces. As Chris Brooks writes, "all architectural styles of the nineteenth century were [...] ideological in their inception ("Historicism and the Nineteenth Century" 12). However, Brooks continues, "the sheer extent of building activity in the nineteenth century gave style a determining life of its own"

(“Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 12). Because architecture was stylistically eclectic, it was subject to numerous and varied interpretations, from architects, architectural critics, and the public.

As an architect, Hardy witnessed first-hand the very multi-layered and ideologically complex world of architecture in the nineteenth century. Edited by London architect Thomas Harris (1829/30-1900), the periodical *Examples of the Architecture of the Victorian Age and a Monthly Review of the World’s Architectural Progress* (1862) claimed, in a statement that celebrated the achievements of the age, that architects and novelists were driven by the same purpose: “It is theirs to embody the thoughts, to catch the forms of beauty, and give perpetuity to the wisdom, taste, and skill of their age, and bequeath its culture a precious legacy to future generations” (1). Both literature and architecture were, for Hardy, expressions of the complexities of human life. In a 1925 letter to Harley Granville Barker, Hardy, having read his play *The Madras House*, found it likely Barker would one day “drift into novel writing” (*Collected Letters* 6: 374).<sup>2</sup> Hardy explained, “I don’t see how otherwise you can express all the complications that you discern in life” (374). Hardy pointed out that Barker, with his ability to express the complications in life, would likely have thrived as an architect or architectural critic (374). Both novels and buildings give shape to the complex history of individual lives. According to David Spurr in *Architecture and Modern Literature* (2012),

Architecture, as the art of building, gives concrete form to the external world according to the structures of imagination; whereas literature, as the art of written language, gives symbolic form to the same world.

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<sup>2</sup> Granville-Barker’s play was published in 1909.

In their respective manners architecture and literature are potentially the most unlimited of all art forms in their comprehension of human existence itself, and this fact alone justifies the task of putting them in relation to one another. (3)

It is this encounter between literature and architecture that is the subject of this thesis.<sup>3</sup> The intertwining of humans and the built environment was the stuff of Hardy's novels, poetry, and essays. Hardy's diverse architectural imagery has its counterpart in the complex lives of his characters and the worlds they inhabit. Architecture in Hardy's fiction encompasses the various historical layers comprising the nineteenth-century architectural milieu and this includes ancient stone structures, cathedrals, village churches, inns, country houses, London townhouses, laborers' cottages, colleges, castles, barns, a shepherd's hut, and a reddleman's caravan, even a purposely-built gymnasium designed by the wealthy daughter of an industrialist. Hardy depicts the historical and lofty structures associated with the ideological principles of the day but also the most humble of structures, those that are not always built to last, but constructed purely out of the instinct to protect oneself from natural elements, "houses" composed of mud and held together precariously by leaves; the kind of place where Henchard spends his final days in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886). Even the landscape is comprised of architectural forms; Iron Age hill forts and Roman roads have altered the geography of the natural world. Expanding the meaning of the architectural well

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<sup>3</sup> Various studies devoted to the relationship between architecture and literature have appeared in recent years and cover a wide range of historical and literary periods. Works focused on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries include Andrea Katson Tangee's *Architectural Identities: Literature, Domesticity, and the Victorian Middle Class* (2010), Victoria Rosner's *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life*, David Spurr's *Architecture and Modern Literature* (2012), and John Twynning's *Forms of English History in Literature, Landscape, and Architecture* (2012).

beyond the rather narrow confines of medievalist or classical ideologies, or the debates sparked by architects and critics like A.W.N. Pugin, John Ruskin, and William Morris, Hardy saw architecture as something which both records centuries of memory in the more recent past but also deep evolutionary time, and is rooted in an instinctual life that connects humans with the natural world in an intimate way.

Previous critical studies dedicated to Hardy and architecture have been predominantly concerned with the history of his architectural career. Claudius J.P. Beatty produced substantial research and published extensively on this subject. In *The Part Played by Architecture in the Life and Work on Thomas Hardy, With Particular Reference to the Novels* (2004) Beatty examines the novels through this biographical lens. Beatty edited and wrote the introduction for *The Architectural Notebook of Thomas Hardy* (2007). In *Thomas Hardy: Conservation Architect: His Work for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings* (1995), Beatty includes the history of Hardy's involvement with the Society as well as the correspondence between himself and various members, particularly those seeking his advice on architectural preservation in Dorset. The work includes a biographical overview as well as a summary and analysis of various passages from *A Laodicean*. Because Beatty's work is predominantly concerned with biography, these publications tend to focus on architectural history at a local level and of the various Dorset buildings that likely influenced Hardy's architectural principles. J.B. Bullen's *The Expressive Eye: Fiction and Perception in the Work of Thomas Hardy* (1986), examines the relationship between visual imagery, ideas, and emotions in Hardy's fiction. His discussion of *A Laodicean* focuses on architectural imagery. Here, he touches on the Gothic Revival, particularly Pugin's *Contrasts*, as well as the conflict between

engineering and art at work in nineteenth-century debates about architecture in Hardy's novel. Bullen emphasizes the point that Hardy believed the novel was a "series of images," and those images often manifest themselves in painterly impressions of the landscape or the built environment (12). Timothy Hands' essay "Thomas Hardy and Architecture: A General Perspective and A Personal View," (1998) offers another overview of Hardy's life as an architect and points to the fact that this certainly would have had an influence on his literary career. Although the essay does point to prevalent architectural debates of the nineteenth century, with particular emphasis on the Gothic Revival, Hands does not provide any significant analysis of Victorian architecture or of the ways in which Hardy might have responded to ideas about the built environment in his fiction. In *Forms of English History in Literature, Landscape, and Architecture* (2012), John Twynning explores architecture and history, emphasizing the role of the past in Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*. Twynning argues that Hardy wants to preserve "the organic social existence he finds emblemized in the local parish church" (8). While this is certainly the case in a pastoral novel like *Under the Greenwood Tree*, it becomes a vexed issue in Hardy's later fiction, whereby the survival of the past in architectural models is often as complicated an issue as its disappearance.

Discussions of architecture in Hardy's fiction are often subsumed by topics devoted to archaeology, genealogy, and geology as well as notions of the self and desire. Indeed, Hardy explores the multivalent meanings of architecture in his fiction and, as such, it is subject to various scholarly interpretations. For example, Sophie Gilmartin's examination of Hardy and genealogy in *Ancestry and Narrative in Nineteenth Century Fiction: Blood Relations from Edgeworth to Hardy* (1998)

discusses the restoration of graveyards and tombs in the nineteenth century and the implications this has on memory in Hardy's fiction. Andrew Radford's *Thomas Hardy and the Survivals of Time* (2003) examines Tylorian survivals throughout Hardy's fiction. Architecture forms part of Radford's discussion on Hardy's characters and their relationship to cultural survivals. Jane Thomas's *Thomas Hardy and Desire: Conceptions of the Self* (2013) includes a discussion on the alienated figure in Hardy's fiction with particular focus on the "lost childhood home" as well as female characters and their desire to break free from domestic spaces (8). Thomas's work foregrounds a theoretical approach, drawing in particular on Lacanian psychoanalysis. While these studies make an important contribution to ongoing scholarly discussion of Hardy's treatment of architecture, they have overlooked his engagement with pervading ideas about architecture in the nineteenth century, particularly in the works of A.W.N. Pugin, John Ruskin, William Morris and various scientists writing about architecture in the natural world. The purpose of this thesis is to examine Hardy's response to notions about the built environment in his novels, short stories, poetry, and essays. Although the premise of my argument is based on the fact that Hardy was himself an architect and I think it is necessary to discuss various aspects of his architectural career, I am interested in this aspect of his life primarily as it relates to the wider architectural debates taking place within the nineteenth century. My approach is historicist and I draw on cultural studies as part of my methodology, reading Hardy's work as contributing to part of the discourse on nineteenth- and twentieth-century architectural debates. The discourse on architecture provides a metaphorical vehicle for commenting on the meaning of the past, for ruminating on our

relationship to technological change, and for discussing the implications of evolution in human life.

### **Industrialization and Rural Society**

Hardy's use of the past in his fiction is anything but the simplistic or idealized chronicle of a lost way of life, though some early reviews and scholarship argued that this was the case. Andrew Lang's 1871 review of *Far From the Madding Crowd* saw Weatherbury as an "ideal setting... 'where the old and new meet'" (qtd. in Davis 40). In 1943 David Cecil's *Hardy the Novelist: An Essay in Criticism*, described Hardy as "a man of the past," comparing him to Walter Scott (qtd. in Davis 51). In his discussion on Hardy's relationship to the past Andrew Radford cites Louis MacNeice's poem "Wessex Guidebook" (1966), in which Hardy "is perceived as a quaint museum exhibit along with the period he supposedly tried to salvage" (20). But, Radford continues: "Hardy's revisiting the crumbling abodes of history was not shaped by vacuous and cloying sentimentality for 'traditional values' in an age of escalating technological advance" (21-2). Indeed, Hardy's relationship to the past is a complex one in which the past and the present are continually brought together in a changing world. Raymond Williams writes, "It is this centrality of change, and of the complications of change, that we miss when we see [Hardy] as a regional novelist: the incomparable chronicler of his Wessex, the last voice of an old rural civilization" (197). Thus Hardy's fiction belongs "very much in a continuing world" (Williams 197). The juxtaposition between rural and urban life, between the past and the present, is complicated by the fact that Hardy depicts the continuing world of which he was part.

In the eighteenth century, agriculture comprised the largest sector of the economy. Social relations were hierarchical and paternalistic, characterized by, as Brooks explains, “reciprocal ties of responsibility and deference” (*Gothic Revival* 123). As a result, historian Pamela Horn attests, the “social differences between master and man were narrowest on the small enclosed farms of the western and south-western counties. Most farmers here worked alongside their men” (Horn 22). Strong kinship ties held together the traditions of country life among villagers as well as gentry. And so country inhabitants, George Stocking writes, “spent their lives in face-to-face village communities” (208). But as the century progressed, open-field villages, common rights, and manorial courts gave way to agrarian capitalism (Williams 82). The enclosure movement of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries forced workers to the cities even before there were many industrial jobs to occupy.<sup>4</sup> Williams writes,

Thus improvement of land required considerable capital, and therefore the leadership of the landowners. But this not only increased the predominance of the landed interest; it created, by enclosure and engrossing to make large profitable units, a greater number of the landless and disinherited, who could not survive or compete in the new conditions. (60)

Industrialization certainly played a role in this process, but was not the main factor (Williams 98). “What really happened,” Williams continues, “was that in the economically dynamic areas a capitalist social system was pushed through to a

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<sup>4</sup> Williams writes that from the sixteenth century, “many of the smaller farms were being suppressed, especially on improved arable land, while at the same time the area of cultivated land was itself steadily and at times dramatically increased. Even within the social relations of landowner, tenant, and labourer, there was a continual evolution of new attitudes” (60).

position of dominance, by a form of legalized seizure enacted by the representatives of a beneficiary class” (98). The Industrial Revolution transformed social relations and work. Contractual relations replaced the traditional interactions associated with paternalism while “individual identity,” Brooks writes, “replaced the public domain of community” (*Gothic Revival* 124).

In his preface to *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874) Hardy described “the shearing supper, the long smock-frocks, and the harvest home” which had, he explains:

nearly disappeared in the wake of the old houses [...] The change at the root of this has been the recent supplanting of the class of stationary cottagers, who carried on the local traditions and humours, by a population of more or less migratory labourers, which has led to a break in continuity in local history, more fatal than any other thing to the preservation of legend, folk-lore, close inter-social relations... (4)

Many were forced to either seek employment in the industrial towns or become migratory laborers, severing the close ties and traditions associated with a different way of life. Alterations to architecture and the landscape were among the more visible representations of the changes associated with the Industrial Revolution.

The changes brought about by industrialization coincided with a massive rise in population. In 1750 the population of England and Wales was approximately 6,500,000. By 1801, the year of the first census, the population had increased to 9,000,000 and by 1850 it had doubled (Brooks “Historicism in the Nineteenth Century” 3). It was not until the Agricultural Depression of the 1870s that the rural

population fell sharply.<sup>5</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century 75% of the population were living in cities. This is a fact Hardy lamented in “The Dorsetshire Labourer,” (1883),

The changes which are so increasingly discernable in village life by no means originate entirely with the agricultural unrest. A depopulation is going on which in some quarters is truly alarming [...] The occupants who formed the back-bone of the village life have to seek refuge in the boroughs. (56)

Industrial cities were thus overcrowded and, as Asa Briggs writes, “The building of the cities was a characteristic Victorian achievement, impressive in scale but limited in vision, creating new opportunities but also providing massive new problems” (Briggs 16). Briggs continues, “The pressure of rapidly increasing numbers of people and the social consequences of the introduction of new industrial techniques and new ways of organizing work involved a sharp break with the past” (18). These consequences are ever-present in Hardy’s depiction of the countryside, where the destruction of old buildings or alterations to a once familiar landscape represents this acute disconnection with the past.

Towards the end of his life, Hardy wrote an essay in support of the Royal Society of Arts campaign to save old country cottages from destruction. In “The Preservation of Ancient Cottages” (1927), Hardy drew attention to the architectural and cultural value of ancient laborers’ cottages. These buildings, he explained, were “often as old as the parish church itself” (“Preservation of Ancient Cottages”

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<sup>5</sup> According to John Burnett, “Rural depopulation [...] was not yet evident in 1851. No agricultural county showed an absolute decrease of population during the previous half-century; many showed a 50 per cent increase, some a rate of growth almost as fast as the population as a whole” (35).

549). Though simple structures lacking in “distinctive architectural features,” their very construction formed part of a traditional way of life, one that Hardy witnessed in the 1840s: “By the merest chance I was able, when a child, to see the building of what was probably one of the last of these old-fashioned cottages of ‘mud-wall’ and thatch” (459). He explains in detail the process involved in mixing the materials used to create these structures:

What was called mud-wall was really a composition of chalk, clay, and straw—essentially, unbaked brick. This was mixed up into a sort of dough-pudding, close to where the cottage was to be built. The mixing was performed by treading and shovelling—women sometimes being called in to tread—and the straw was added to bind the mass together, a process that had doubtless gone on since the days of Israel and Egypt and earlier. (“Preservation of Ancient Cottages” 459)

Hardy continues to describe the building process and suggests that these structures far outweighed their replacements, the “now ubiquitous brick-and-slate” (459). Thatch “drawn by hand from the ricks before thrashing” lasted far longer than that “which had passed through a threshing machine in the modern way” (460). Hardy points out that these cottages were strong, sustainable and often, compared to their modern counterparts, kept draught away.

To be sure, in many instances laborers’ cottages offered little protection from the elements or any form of sanitation, a topic covered in numerous periodicals over the course of the century. In his prize-winning essay “Construction of Labourers’ Cottages,” which appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England* in 1856, T.W.P. Isaac described what many believed was the

standard in rural housing. They were “miserable hovels” only “dignified by the name of cottages” (496).<sup>6</sup> It is important to point out, however, that Hardy is not ignoring these realities in order to paint a nostalgic picture of rural life in the 1840s. Rather, Hardy wants to preserve the memory of a way of life that has its origins in the ancient past. As social historian John Burnett attests, “the basic construction of a cottage was a matter of local custom and folk-learning which almost any man might be expected to possess” (32). Hardy is not simply advocating the preservation of picturesque cottages in the countryside but the process involved in creating them, a process that is written into the structures themselves. It is a tradition that is founded on social interactions and familial connections. Though these traditions may have disappeared, they can still be recalled because the cottages survive. The loss of ancient buildings threatened memory, association, and a personal experience of the past.

In *Jude the Obscure* (1895) the inability to register the traces of the past is most apparent in Stoke-Barehills. The railway has replaced the ancient road leading to the town. Hardy writes:

The great Western highway from London passes through it, near a point where the road branches into two merely to unite again some twenty miles further westward. Out of this bifurcation and reunion there used to arise among wheeled travellers, before railway days, endless questions of choice between respective ways. But the questions is now as dead as the scot-and-lot freeholder, the road waggoner, and the mail coachmen who disputed it; and probably not

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<sup>6</sup> The *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England* began publication in 1840 and remained one of the most widely circulated agricultural periodicals of the nineteenth century (Goddard 676).

a single inhabitant of Stoke-Barehills is now even aware that the two roads which part in his town ever meet again; for nobody now drives up and down the great Western highway daily. (278)

Those with knowledge of the road's original purpose have died. Dan Bivona examines the significance of this passage at length and argues,

With the lapse of its function, knowledge of [the road's] shape has been lost; the implication of this paradox being that the very shape of the 'present' is inaccessible without a knowledge of the past, a knowledge simultaneously precluded by modern civilization's rapid conversion of much of it into non-functional survivals. (*Desire and Contradiction* 96)

It is this lack of historical consciousness, of the inability to comprehend what has been lost, that is one of the most traumatic results of significant change. Because knowledge of the road's geography has been lost, the face-to-face interactions that it produced have disappeared as well.<sup>7</sup> The changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution altered the way people interact with the built environment and personal associations and memories have vanished.

### **Architecture and Victorian Historicism**

Hardy places value on architectural survivals because they connect humans to their past. At the same time, however, the past becomes a burden from which it

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<sup>7</sup> And such alterations remain significant today. A recent article in *The Guardian* discussed debates surrounding Network Rail's planned closure of numerous level crossings on the East Coast line, many of them remnants of the nineteenth century. While closures might have obvious benefits for health and safety, without the crossings, particularly in small towns and villages, the railway "becomes an endless barrier dividing communities" (Topham).

is, at times, difficult to escape. In *A Laodicean* (1881) Hardy describes the walls of Stancy Castle, “the ponderous thickness of whose walls made itself felt like a physical pressure” (26). In *Jude* Sue Bridehead experiences the emotional and physical weight of the past in her conjugal home: an “ancient dwelling” in a Wessex town rich in Medieval history (194). Jude observes her from outside:

He could see the interior clearly—the floor sinking a couple of steps below the road without, which had become raised during the centuries since the house was built. Sue, evidently just come in, was standing with her hat on in this front parlour or sitting-room, whose walls were lined with wainscotting of panelled oak reaching from floor to ceiling, the latter being crossed by huge moulded beams only a little way above her head. The mantelpiece was of the same heavy description, carved with Jacobean pilasters and scroll-work. The centuries did, indeed, ponderously overhang a young wife who passed her time here. (197-98)

This building, like so many in Hardy’s fiction, is composed of architectural layers that have accumulated over the course of centuries. Sue acknowledges: “I feel crushed into the earth by the weight of so many previous lives here spent” (194). The house is literally sinking under the weight of its heavy materials. Throughout the novel Sue is self-consciously aware of history and attempts to define herself as both a modern product of the age and a historical figure. At Melchester she prefers the railway station to the Cathedral, “The Cathedral was a very good place four or five centuries ago; but it is played out now [...] I am not modern either. I am more ancient than medievalism” (128). Sue’s inconsistency is perhaps a result of this

uniquely Victorian attempt to view oneself historically in the modern age, one that was undergoing massive transition. Brooks argues that this break with the past contributed to the “construction of history—the present’s invention of its past (“Historicism and the Nineteenth Century 5). The invention of the past thus “became a central project for British culture at every level. And it was a project that was enabled by the very fact of the break, by the way in which [...] self-consciousness brought historicism into being” (“Historicism in the Nineteenth Century” 5). Moreover, the notion of the century within a historical time frame “was taken up with a vengeance by Victorian writers, and the century they were primarily concerned to invent was their own” (“Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 1). As a result, Victorians had the weight of history on their shoulders: they were not only experiencing history, but simultaneously aware that they were making it. Raymond Chapman contends, “it can be said that the Victorians had a sense of modernity, of what it meant to be of their age rather than of another” (5). Victorian architecture symbolized this preoccupation with history and self-awareness; the buildings they designed and inhabited would form part of a legacy left to future generations.

The past had never been more accessible than during the nineteenth century, partly because of the development of middle-class leisure time and the spur to travel that the railroads brought. The growth of antiquarian interests and societies which developed in the eighteenth century, along with the development of tourism in the nineteenth, contributed to a flourishing of archeological and architectural societies. The growth of architectural societies in the 1840s coincided

with the Gothic Revival. These societies often had ties to Anglican dioceses.<sup>8</sup>

According to David Wetherall, “Although the prime focus was architecture, many of these societies were also involved with archaeology and natural history” (29). This illustrates that at times, and this was particularly the case in “amateur” societies, the boundaries between architecture and natural history were blurred. And, as Hardy shows in his fiction, the natural world was filled with its own architectural forms.

Architectural societies were so popular that they were seen as a possible threat to professional architects. In 1852 the *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal* claimed “While the Royal Institute of British Architects can scarcely find matter for its papers or for its transactions, or anything to do, *lay* architectural societies are springing up over the country, which find plenty to do, and seriously threaten the prerogatives of architects” [emphasis in original] (399). Periodicals devoted to architecture provided reports from various societies throughout the country and encouraged readers to develop an appreciation for historic buildings. Local history and the popular search for “survivals” became the leisurely occupation of many. History was both a professional and amateur occupation. The railway brought the masses to the historic relics of different parts of the country (Brooks “Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 16). Indeed, as Charles Dellheim explains,

Nowhere is the visual character of the Victorian sense of the past more strikingly evident than in the popularity of historical and archeological sightseeing [...] Victorians actively sought the survivals of the preindustrial past, especially those of Roman and medieval

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<sup>8</sup> In 1841 Durham, Lichfield, Exeter, and Bristol formed architectural societies (Wetherall 29).

England. (39)

The popularity of medievalism, in particular, was associated with the Romantic movement and Gothic literature. While searching for historical relics was a pastime through which one could return to an idealized past, free from the harsh realities of industrial life, the past was also invoked by professional historians as standard to use in interpreting the present.

Many saw their century, particularly in comparison to the past, as a sign of progress and improvement. As Thomas Macaulay's Whig view of history anticipated in an 1830 review of Southey's *Colloquies on Society*: "History is full of the signs of this natural progress of society. [...] We see the wealth of nations increasing, and all the arts of life approaching nearer and nearer to perfection..."(qtd. in Bowler 26). Peter Bowler explains that Macaulay's "approach left open the possibility that there was an underlying law of progress for civilization as a whole" (Bowler 27). The field of evolutionary anthropology contributed to the idea that human beings had progressed from a "primitive" to a "civilized" society. Victorians, Bowler claims, "sought reassurance through the belief that social evolution was moving in a purposeful direction. The idea of progress became central to their thinking precisely because it offered the hope that current changes might be part of a meaningful historical pattern" (3). Architects and architectural critics attempted to define a style that embodied these progressive ideals.

*Examples of the Architecture of the Victorian Age and a Monthly Review of the World's Architectural Progress* (1862) repeatedly attempted to define a style that was uniquely Victorian, that embodied the spirit of industrialization and moved away from the historicism associated with the Gothic Revival. The essays included

praised iron and glass railway stations and the Crystal Palace (Brooks, “Harris, Thomas”). Harris argued,

In every age except our own, architecture has been a faithful chronicler of the progress or decline of nations; but ours, which beyond all other is the age of progress, has not yet formed this expression of our present national culture in language in which we are content to convey it to posterity. (6)

Like so many of his contemporaries, however, Harris’s own architectural designs relied on past models. Despite this preoccupation with the past, architecture was becoming a modern enterprise, one in which architects saw themselves not just as artists, but, increasingly, as middle-class professionals. Historically new social types engaged, sometimes, in reviving the old.

### **The Professionalization of Architecture**

In *Desperate Remedies* (1871), Hardy’s first published novel, Cytherea Graye believes that architects are, “of all professional men [...] the most professional” (Hardy 25). Moreover, when asked by her employer about her father’s “trade,” Cytherea states, “He was not a trade [...] he was an architect” (Hardy 78). Architecture became increasingly professionalized through the nineteenth century. In his discussion of the relationship between the sisters Emily and Ellen Hall and their architect Norman Shaw, whom they hired to renovate their West Wickham home between 1869-1872, Trevor Keeble points out the difficulty one sister had in acknowledging Shaw as a professional. In a diary entry describing one of her encounters with the architect Emily wrote,

Mr. Shaw came—as he said: I felt so angry and indignant that I could hardly bring myself to speak to him—He insists upon it, that he did not understand that I objected to paint outside!!—& which only shows I was a fool not to have everything written down [...] to treat him as if he were a gentleman, he feels like a tradesman & I should have acted towards him as such. (qtd. in Keeble 36)

The growth in the building industry rested on economics but also arose out of necessity (Brooks “Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 12). The massive growth in population inevitably led to the need for new housing and public buildings. In addition to new technological innovations, the building trade was expanding to include new types of architecture, such as train stations, factories, schools, and hospitals (Wilton-Ely 197). Moreover, thousands of Anglican Churches were being built over the course of the century as a result of the Gothic Revival and Church Building Commission of 1818. In 1836 the *Architectural Magazine* examined the various factors that contributed to the expansion of architecture:

The exterior causes, or those not produced by architects themselves, which have led to the improvement of architecture, are various, but they may all be referred to the increasing wealth and prosperity of the country at one time, and to the stagnation of improvement at another. The prosperity creates a demand for improved buildings, and for numerous architects... (“A Summary View of the Progress of Architecture in Britain During the Past Year 539)

Citing the hundreds of skilful designs submitted for the new Houses of Parliament

that same year, the writer contends that the “increase in architects and architectural talent seems astonishing” (541). Because of this increase, architectural labor, with new accessible and affordable materials, was more economical than it had ever been before (540). And so by 1869 the middle-class Hall sisters could afford an architect to make plans for the renovation of their home.

But in many respects the architectural profession in the nineteenth century was characterized by instability. Architecture was indeed “an anxious and arduous profession,” as Sir William Tite claimed in an 1855 paper read at the Royal Institute of British Architects (1).<sup>9</sup> According to Andrew Saint, “the station which architects were to occupy within the growing, fragmentary building industry was still obscure” (*The Image of the Architect* 61). One of the reasons for this instability was that, even as late as the eighteenth century, there was little division between the different building trades (Saint, *The Image of the Architect* 57). Architects (usually the designers) were also masons, carpenters, craftsmen, and even engineers. But, as Saint explains, “Economic growth meant more and bigger buildings, fashioned from varying materials and equipped with a new range of services. The skills needed to erect these buildings were too diverse and technical for the old habits of work to deal with” (57). Architects were attempting to establish their own professional identity. There were architects and architectural critics, however, who believed the division of labor within the built environment was its downfall. In *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) Ruskin argued:

We have much studied and much perfected, of late, the great

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<sup>9</sup> Sir William Tite (1798-1873) was an architect. He was employed by railway companies and designed a number of new stations. His paper, “Some Remarks on the Present Condition and Future Prospects of Architecture in England” was delivered in 1855.

civilized invention of the division of labour; only we give it a false name. It is not, truly speaking, the labour that is divided; but the men: Divided into mere segments of men—broken into small fragments and crumbs of life; so that all the little pieces of intelligence that is left to man is not enough to make a pin, or a nail, but exhausts itself into making the point of a pin, or the head of a nail. (165)

In the nineteenth century, over-specialization, many believed, denied builders and craftsmen the freedom of artistic expression associated with medieval architecture. Professionalization and the division of labor turned the art of architecture into a capitalist enterprise.<sup>10</sup> The question as to whether architecture was an art or a profession formed the crux of a debate that lasted through the nineteenth century (Saint 63).<sup>11</sup> The architect Havill in *A Laodicean* finds nothing to praise with what he sees as the mere artistic pursuits associated with an architect's training:

Sketching and building are two different things, to my mind. [...] I began as a landscape gardener, then I became a builder, then I was a road-contractor. Every architect might do worse than have some such experience. [...] But nowadays 'tis the men who can draw pretty pictures who get recommended, not the practical men. Young prigs win Institute medals for a pretty design or two which, if anybody tried to build them, would fall down like a house of cards... (62)

For Havill, the practical knowledge gained from experience of the building world far

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<sup>10</sup> The construction of the Oxford Museum, which began in 1855, was built according to Ruskin's ideals. "All architectural ornamentation," Ruskin explained, "should be executed by the men who design it, and should be of various degrees of excellence, admitting, and therefore exciting, the intelligent co-operation of various classes of workmen" (*The Oxford Museum* 52).

<sup>11</sup> Norman Shaw and T.G. Jackson's edited collection of essays, *Architecture a Profession or an Art*, was published in 1892.

outweighs the intellectual and artistic component, but of course, this lack of artistic imagination is the cause of his professional downfall in the novel.

That Havill and Somerset have such different credentials is testimony to the fact that the architectural field had yet to adhere to a set of educational standards. With changes in the profession, Wilton-Ely explains, it became clear that architectural education in England “still depended largely upon the irregular standards of articulated pupilage, augmented by lectures at the Royal Academy and travel abroad” (197).<sup>12</sup> Pupilage had been the customary form of training from the middle of the eighteenth century. Architect’s pupils, according to Crinson and Lubbock, normally commenced their studies at sixteen or seventeen while others became articulated following University, with pupilage lasting anywhere from three to seven years (45). Generally, an architect’s pupil received training in “architectural drawing, measuring, and site work” (Crinson 45). The success of the system depended upon the quality and integrity of the masters.<sup>13</sup>

Increasingly, the majority of architect’s pupils represented the middle class. “With this change,” Crinson and Lubbock explain, “the social status of the architect was raised, codes of practice were established and professional ethics began to be sketched out” (36). The Professional Institute for Architects, which was founded in 1834, and received its Royal charter four years later, was established in order to define and defend the role of the architect as a professional. This in turn “led to the [...] regulation of entry into the profession, the institution of formal qualifications

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<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the most famous depiction of the problems associated with architectural education and articulated pupilage in the nineteenth century is Dickens’s portrayal of Mr. Pecksniff in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-4).

<sup>13</sup> Architects “could exploit the system by taking the premium and simply using their pupils as assistants” (Crinson 45).

based upon education, the augmentation of pupilage, and the shift to college-based training” (Crinson and Lubbock 38).<sup>14</sup> The RIBA was “founded for facilitating the acquirement of architectural knowledge, for the promotion of different branches of science associated with it, and for establishing an uniformity and respectability of practice in the profession” (qtd. in Wilton-Ely 193). However, educational reforms were not the foremost concern among members of the RIBA, particularly in its early years (Wilton-Ely 193).<sup>15</sup> In 1855 the architect Alfred Bailey addressed the need for formal qualifications during the general meeting of the society:

The want of proper knowledge on the part of the architect, combined as it is with a want of information, on the part of the public, leads to many of the anomalies which are now so frequently observable in the practice of the profession, and to the presence in its ranks of many who have not the power, and in some cases not the will, to uphold its credit. (*Papers Read at the Royal Institute of British Architects* 37)

Because architecture was undergoing the process of professionalization, it had to be credible, particularly to a public that was becoming more informed about architectural matters.

In 1842 the Association of Architectural Draftsmen which, in 1847 became known as the Architectural Association, was formed by a group of architect students (Wilton-Ely 198).<sup>16</sup> The main concern of the Architectural Association was

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<sup>14</sup> The RIBA excluded “surveyors, measurers, and those with interests in the building trades” (Saint 61).

<sup>15</sup> It was not until the 1840s that “the first serious attempt was made to provide specialized instruction, particularly in the technical aspects of design, at King’s College and University College, London” (Wilton-Ely 198).

<sup>16</sup> The RIBA required that its members had been engaged for seven years as a civil architect (Wilton-Ely 193). This exclusivity meant that it only represented nine percent of the profession (Wilton-Ely 200).

education. Although the information required to supplement their training existed, it was not always available and so as Tite explained in his lecture to the RIBA,

the first move that was made to obtain information was by means of an architectural association, where a few earnest young men met together to make a design or a sketch from a given subject, or to discuss a short paper read by one of the members. (407)

Junior architects sought recognition for their accomplishments in an increasingly competitive field. In 1863 they “held the first voluntary examination for entry to its associate membership” (Wilton Ely 199). Hardy considered sitting the exam while he was working in London in 1863 (Millgate 78).

Over the course of the nineteenth century, numerous periodicals devoted to the building trades contributed to the professionalization of architecture and brought architectural debates to a wider audience. The *Builder* (1842-1966) was originally intended for the working class but it was the building professionals who, according to Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, “actually bought the magazine” (Brake and Demoor 85).<sup>17</sup> The *Builder* covered every aspect of architecture, from artistic principles and ideological debates to the practical matters of housing improvements. It also gave reports of the construction and restoration of various buildings both in Britain and abroad. Other publications devoted to architecture and engineering included the *Architectural Magazine* (1834-39), the *Civil Engineer and Architect’s Journal* (1837-69), *Surveyor, Engineer, and Architect* (1840-43), and the *Builders’ Weekly Reporter* (1856-1886).

The division between art and science became the subject of numerous

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<sup>17</sup> Architect George Godwin was editor of the *Builder* from 1844 to 1883.

debates related to professionalization and the built environment. While the architectural field was becoming increasingly professionalized, science too, was undergoing a complicated process of professionalization: architectural historian Sophie Forgan explains that, in the nineteenth century, science and architecture “were emerging from that broad and somewhat undifferentiated field that was termed in Britain ‘the arts and sciences’ (181). In *A Laodicean*, architecture and engineering are considered separate vocations: architecture is aligned with art and engineering with the sciences. “Have you seen the tunnel my father made,” Paula asks Somerset, “the curves are said to be a triumph of science. There is nothing else like it in this part of England” (79). Visiting her father’s tunnel, Paula asks Somerset whether or not there is more value in one’s association with recent engineering feats, or ancestral ties to those who built a medieval castle. Somerset responds, “To design great engineering works [...] requires no doubt a leading mind. But to execute them, of course, only a following mind” (80). Thus, as Forgan argues, in the sciences, “The process of professionalization was of course fraught with problems and marked by fierce intellectual and territorial battles” (182). From the 1840s onwards, the establishment of numerous societies, including the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (1857), and the Anthropological Society (1867) contributed to this “professionalization of many distinct disciplines” within the field (Finchman 102). As Carla Yanni points out, “Architectural writers and practitioners gained legitimacy from the association with a burgeoning science” (229). Of course, this relationship was shrouded in debate. According Forgan,

the [RIBA] had always been uneasy about the role of science in

architecture and what scientific principles, if any, underlay the profession of their art. If art and aesthetic sensibility were the keys to producing creative, functional, and satisfying architecture, then science served merely a subservient engineering role. (184)

The professional architect was forced to strike a balance between scientific knowledge and artistic representation, however difficult that process may have been.

Architectural essays and books were increasingly written with a non-specialized audience in mind and made popular the notion that architecture had the power to change society. In *Contrasts* (1836), A.W.N. Pugin praised medieval architecture, not simply on account of its aesthetic virtues but its spiritual associations. He wanted to restore the religious feelings that had produced the original medieval designs and constructions. Catholicism, and the centuries prior to the Reformation, inspired Pugin to create an idealized vision of the past, where all members of society were united under one faith. Describing ecclesiastical edifices of the Middle Ages, Pugin wrote, “Here every portion of the sacred fabric bespeaks its origin; the very plan of the edifice is human redemption—each portion is destined for the performance of some solemn rite of the Christian church” (*Contrasts* 2). These architectural elements, “all alike conspire to fill the mind with veneration for the place, and to make it feel the sublimity of Christian worship” (*Contrasts* 2). Victorian society, and indeed its architecture, was in a degraded state because religious unity had ceased to exist (*Contrasts* 16). Pugin himself acknowledged in the preface to *Contrasts* that his theories were controversial but, as I will discuss in Chapter Two, and as Rosemary Hill has pointed out, he “did more than any other

individual” in making gothic the national style (2).

John Ruskin composed his architectural theories with a wide audience in mind, explaining, in *The Stones of Venice* (1851-3), “I am especially anxious to rid this essay of ambiguity, because I want to gain the ear of all persons. Every man has, at some time in his life, personal interest in architecture” (8-9). *The Stones of Venice*, particularly his chapter, “The Nature of Gothic” was widely influential. “No book of mine” Ruskin contended years later, “has had so much influence on contemporary art” (*Complete Works* 11). In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) Ruskin was convinced that architecture affected everyone, at every level of society and: “men may live without buying pictures or statues; but in architecture all must, in some ways, commit themselves,” even if they inhabited spaces that were “joyless” or “inconvenient” (*Stones of Venice* xi). In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), Ruskin argued that “Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man for whatever uses, that the sight of them contribute to his mental health, power, and pleasure” (7). Ruskin believed that gothic architecture in particular inspired higher moral and ethical aims. Gothic architecture embodied medieval craftsmanship and, as he argued in *The Stones of Venice*, a return to an idealized vision of artistic freedom and creativity, would improve Victorian architecture and society at large.<sup>18</sup>

In 1836 the *Architectural Magazine* argued that imaginative literature contributed to the professionalization of architecture:

Another stimulus to architecture seems to have been given by the

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<sup>18</sup> The notion that architecture either expressed or influenced the morals of society is one Hardy noted. His literary notebooks contain a quote from Balzac's *The Imaginary Mistress* (1843): “architecture is the expression of morals” (Bjork, vol. 1: 262)

progress of knowledge in literature, and in the arts and sciences; indirectly, by improving the taste, and thus creating a desire for improved buildings of every description; and directly, by leading to the erection of literary institutions, museums, academies, schools &c., which have risen up of late years not only in large towns, but even in smaller ones, and each of which has given employment to an architect. (“Progress of Architecture in Britain” 540).

The assumption, here, is that literature brings architectural debates, even if indirectly, to a wider public. The relationship between architecture and literature is reciprocal. Like architects, novelists were forming their own professional identity in the nineteenth century.<sup>19</sup> Hardy was a successful novelist by the time Max Gate was completed in 1885. He designed the sort of house one would associate with the Victorian middle class. Hardy, Millgate explains, “did not set himself up as a ‘landowning gentleman’ but as precisely what he now was, a man of the professional middle class, the social equal of the doctor, the solicitor, or, for that matter, the architect in private practice” (242). In turn, Hardy’s experiences as a professional architect helped shape the complex representation of the building world in his fiction.

### **An Architect’s Life**

The Hardys had been involved in the building trade from the eighteenth century. In 1881 Hardy informed Charles Kegan Paul that,

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<sup>19</sup> According to Richard Salmon, “The 1861 Census was the first to recognize authorship as a distinct professional grouping, or rather cluster of groups that include editors, journalists, artists, actors, musicians, amounting to some 1,673 individuals, and by the 1880s the number of self-declared authors had risen to 6,111” (6).

From time immemorial—I can speak from certain knowledge of four generations—my direct ancestors have all been master-masons, with a set of journeymen masons under them: though they have never risen above this level, they have *never* sunk below it—i.e., they have never been journeyman themselves. (*Letters of Thomas Hardy* 4: 37)<sup>20</sup>

Hardy reveals here his awareness of, and concern for, the social hierarchies of rural life.<sup>21</sup> Even the humbler occupations associated with the building trade in the nineteenth century were formed of these hierarchies. Hardy's great-grandfather John was a bricklayer and mason. It was John who built the family home at what was then called New Bockhampton, later Higher Bockhampton, for his recently married son Thomas and his wife, who lived there from 1801. And their son, another Thomas, carried on with the family trade, an "old-established building and master-masonry business," Hardy explains in his autobiography (8). Three miles from Dorchester, but very much isolated by an "uncultivated" landscape, it was, perhaps, not the most auspicious locale for a mason (Millgate 12; 29-30). And although Hardy's father lacked ambition, the business continued to expand over the years (Millgate 29).<sup>22</sup>

It was thus a social step upwards when, in 1856, Hardy became articled for three years to the gothic architect John Hicks at 39 South Street, Dorchester, his

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Kegan Paul was vicar at Sturminster Marshal and later a London publisher and writer. Hardy's letter was in response to an 1881 article in which Paul indirectly referred to Hardy as coming from a family of journeymen (Millgate 188).

<sup>21</sup> Although Millgate suggests that there might be some exaggeration in Hardy's account to Charles Keegan Paul, his ancestors "may not always have been employers" but "were certainly masons and for the most part self-employed and independent" (*Thomas Hardy* 9).

<sup>22</sup> According to the 1851 census, "Thomas Hardy senior is described as a 'bricklayer' employing only two men; by 1861 the number of his employees had risen to six; by 1871 there were eight men and a boy; and in a directory for 1880 he is described as a 'builder'" (Millgate 29).

parents having paid the reduced premium of £40 at the start. Church building and restoration comprised the majority of building projects conducted by Hicks. As I will discuss in Chapter Two, Anglican Church-Building was an idealistic enterprise founded on High Church principles. According to Ralph Pite, Hardy, who was at this time a devout young man, could therefore “see his architectural work in an idealistic light” (Pite 75-6): “Victorian Gothic in the hands of a decent and conscientious man such as Hicks allowed a sense of mission to flourish in young men like Hardy” (78). It is unfortunate, as Pite writes, that Hardy’s later regret over his involvement in church restoration has concealed his earlier views concerning the Gothic Revival and restoration (76). In his later years Hardy only expressed regret, particularly in his 1906 essay “Memories of Church Restoration,” over his involvement in the “destruction” of ancient buildings. While in Hicks’ office, Hardy also published accounts of local church restorations for the local paper. He was involved in a number of church restorations during his career as an architect but it is unclear as to when his views changed. In 1877, William Morris founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, a response to the destruction of mostly medieval structures in the name of “restoration.” Morris believed that buildings preserved the lives of those who created them and any changes made to the original fabric destroyed its living history. This was a particularly vexed issue during the industrial revolution, which had erased much of the craftsmanship associated with these ancient buildings, and Morris made repeated attempts to revive the sort of design practices that were meaningful. Throughout Hardy’s fiction and poetry are traces of medieval buildings that have been “destroyed,” or “pulled-down,” and he follows the impact of this loss of history on the figures he depicts. In

*Jude* the “original church” at Marygreen, along with the old thatched dwelling-places, have been destroyed (5). The well-shaft is, we are told, the only remaining relic of the town that was “absolutely unchanged” (5). And it is Phillotson and a young Jude who are associated with that only remaining piece of the past, the two figures in the novel who aspire to live in or near a place associated with medievalism.

For Hardy, literature and architecture were part of the fabric of his life from the moment he entered Hicks’ office. It was what Hardy referred to as a “life twisted of three strands—the professional life, the scholar’s life, and the rustic life, combined in the twenty-four hours of one day” (*Life* 12). As he recalls in his autobiography, he,

would be reading the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, or the Greek Testament from six to eight in the morning, would work at Gothic architecture all day, and then in the evening rush off with his fiddle under his arm [...] to play country-dances, reels, and hornpipes at an agriculturalist’s wedding, christening, or Christmas party in a remote dwelling among the fallow fields. (*Life* 32)

The study of gothic architecture and the ideals it represented coexisted with the humble dwellings of the Dorset countryside. The passage points to the rich representation of architecture that would manifest itself in Hardy’s fiction; from Classical thought to Christian ideology, and to the everyday domestic realms of the world he inhabited. Although Hardy was often free to engage his own intellectual pursuits while working for Hicks, the study of gothic architecture was, according to Crinson and Lubbock, demanding and would likely have taken up much of his time.

Pupils studying gothic architecture “learnt by painstaking touring, drawing and measuring, and restoration work, and most of the Revival’s architects were pupil-trained, with a fair element of autodidacticism” (40). Hardy’s architectural notebook, which dates roughly from 1862-1872, contains sketches of gothic churches, ruins, and ornamental details—the kind of sketches that preoccupy George Somerset in *A Laodicean*. Hardy describes in detail the meticulous process of sketching and taking measurements: “By means of a strip of lead called a laden tape, which he pressed around and into the fillets and hollows with his finger and thumb, he transferred the exact moulding of each contour to his drawing, that lay on a sketching-stool a few feet distant” (*A Laodicean* 3). Here, sketching is shown as a very tactile experience; the architect or draughtsman gains knowledge of buildings by touching them. Hardy’s novels provide numerous examples of this, when Jude feels the contours and shapes of Christminster’s medieval buildings, or when George Somerset takes Paula Power’s hand so she can feel the differences between early and late work within the layered walls of her castle (*A Laodicean* 77). In a series of articles which appeared in the *Architect* entitled “Holiday Tips for Students” (1876), the architect and designer William Godwin (1833-1886) provided detailed advice for the architect-student on holiday—which included everything from scientific drawing, measuring, out-door sketching, and “rapid sketching in the pocketbook” (Godwin 178-185). This form of architectural education, a supplement to pupilage, placed architects in direct contact with the multi-layered history of architecture. Indeed, it is the expertise gained from such practices that enables Somerset to identify what his opponent Havill cannot: the various historical moments that contribute to a building’s past.

Having completed his pupilage in 1860, Hardy worked as an architect's clerk for Hicks for two years.<sup>23</sup> Some of Hardy's designs from this period still survive. There is an elevation for gothic terrace houses in Greenhill, Dorset (1861) as well as drawings for Stinsford Church and Glastonbury Abbey. Hardy also did work for the restoration of Coombe Keynes, which was restored by Hicks in 1860-1. By this time, Millgate observes, it was clear that Hardy had learned everything he could from Hicks and, as he did not have the capital to start his own business, the best option was to gain experience in a larger practice (71). And so in 1862, at the age of twenty-one, Hardy left Dorchester for London, "to pursue the science and art of architecture on more advanced lines" (*Life* 35).

Hardy found work as a gothic draughtsman with Arthur Blomfield (1826-99), a talented architect who nonetheless possessed the social status and connections that contributed to success in the field. Blomfield's father was Bishop of London from 1826-1828. Despite the fact that young architects represented the middle class, it was still a difficult field in which to establish oneself, especially without social connections or private income. This is very much the case for Owen Graye and his friend Edward Springrove in *Desperate Remedies*. Edward informs Cytherea that "worldly advantage from an art doesn't depend upon mastering it. I used to think it did; but it doesn't. Those who get rich need have no skills as artists" (46). What they do need to have, Edward continues, are the skills associated with the gentleman-architect, "A certain kind of energy which men with any fondness for art possess very seldom indeed—an earnestness in making acquaintances and a love for using them. They give their whole attention to the art of dining out" (47).

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<sup>23</sup> The 1861 Census lists Hardy's occupation as an architect's clerk (Millgate 71).

According to Saint, it was the architects with private means who “were able to sustain themselves as gentleman, limiting their practices to what they felt befitted the true dignity of the architect” (Saint 62-3). There is a sense, from Edward’s perspective, that the gentleman-architect is one detached from the art of architecture, one that is more preoccupied with social connections than with the direct experience associated with appreciating buildings first-hand. In his autobiography Hardy recalls that as an architect in London he, “constitutionally shrank from the business of social advancement, caring for life as an emotion rather than for life as a science of climbing” (*Life* 53). Without financial means or social position, advancement in the profession rested on a “certain kind of energy” required of someone eager to make the sort of connections that would contribute to the gentleman’s lifestyle, a point that undermines the belief that architecture was a characteristically middle-class profession.

Following the death of his architect father in *Desperate Remedies*, Owen Graye, who had been his father’s pupil, is forced to find employment on his own.<sup>24</sup>

Hardy writes:

Owen’s progress in the art and science of architecture had been very insignificant indeed. [...] his knowledge of plans, elevations, and specifications, was not greater at the end of two years of probation than might easily have been acquired in six months by a youth of average ability—himself, for instance,—amid a bustling London practice.

But at any rate he could make himself handy to one of the

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<sup>24</sup> Ambrose Graye dies when he falls from the scaffolding while repairing a clock tower.

profession—some man in a remote town—and there fulfill his indentures. (20)

Owen struggles to find a position and can only secure short-term work tracing drawings in an office and at very little pay at a rural practice. Moreover, Edward, in addition to his architectural aspirations, is interested in poetry as well. In the novel, Hardy addresses the relationship between the work of a middle-class professional and the life outside of it. Edward tells Cytherea that he will keep with the profession in spite of its difficulties:

we must remember that the fame of Christopher Wren depended upon the accident of a fire in Pudding Lane. My successes seem to come very slowly. I often think that, before I am ready to live, it will be time for me to die. However, I am trying—not for fame now, but for an easy life of reasonable comfort. (*Desperate Remedies* 48)

Here, Hardy's characters struggle with the realities of the profession, that fame is difficult, if not impossible to achieve, and even a life of "reasonable comfort" requires professional discipline and sacrifice. Hardy continues,

It is a melancholy truth for the middle classes, that in proportion as they develop, by the study of poetry and art, their capacity for conjugal love of the highest and purest kind, they limit the possibility of their being able to exercise it—the very act putting out of their power the attainment of means sufficient for marriage. The man who works up a good income has had no time to learn love to its solemn extreme; the man who has learnt that has had no time to get rich. (*Desperate Remedies* 48)

The commitment associated with earning a living by architecture leaves little room for domestic happiness because it leaves little room for art. Here, professionalism has obliterated the artistry that Pugin, Ruskin, and Morris associated with medieval buildings and hoped to revive.

Hardy's time in London was productive. In 1862 Blomfield, then president of the Architectural Association, put Hardy forward for membership. The following year, Blomfield moved his practice to 8 Adelphi Terrace and here Hardy continued to restore and design churches. He submitted a drawing of a country mansion for the Architectural Association competition named after William Tite and won first prize.<sup>25</sup> Hardy's essay, "On the Application of Modern Bricks and Terra Cotta to Modern Architecture" won him a silver medal at the RIBA in 1863. In 1865 Hardy's first short story, "How I Built Myself a House," appeared in *Chambers's Journal*. The story is about the comic perils one family faces when designing and constructing their ideal home. Hardy writes,

The new residence was to be right and proper in every respect. It was to be of some mysterious size and proportion, which would make us both peculiarly happy ever afterwards—that had always been a settled thing. It was neither to cost too much nor too little, but just enough, to fitly inaugurate the new happiness. (36-7)

Before approaching an architect, Hardy's speaker has made his own plans, decisions, and decided on an appropriate cost. Once he and his wife meet with their architect, providing him with conflicting ideas as to design,

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<sup>25</sup> Hardy's biographers, including Millgate, have pointed out that Hardy's drawing was among only two entries. Millgate writes that it "became embarrassingly clear that the number of competitors had been extremely small" (Millgate 77). However, the drawing was clearly considered to have merit.

He settled everything in a miraculous way. We were told the only possible size we could have the rooms, that only we should be allowed to go upstairs, and the exact quantity of wine we might order at once, so as to fit the wine-cellar he had in his head. His professional opinions, propelled by his facts, seemed to float into my mind whether I wished to receive them or not. (37)

There is a conflict here between the family who, in their attempt to create the perfect home at a minimal cost, consider themselves designers, and the knowledgeable professional who asserts his power.

Numerous changes and additions plague the family and, no doubt, the architect. When the house is almost completed, the narrator explains, “In getting a house built for a specified sum by contract with a builder there is a certain pitfall into which unwary people are sure to step—this accident is technically termed, ‘getting into extras’ (39). In 1878 Godwin’s article “Bad Clients,” which appeared in the *British Architect*, illustrated the qualities that characterize bad architectural clients. “He begins,” Godwin writes, “by saying that he cares nothing about external appearance, that he wants so many rooms for so much money; but that he is determined not to expend a shilling beyond the sum mentioned” (127). This, Godwin attests, is “all very well” until, once construction has begun, the client, “demands something that has been carefully excluded from the cost, wonders his architect never thought of it, grumbles, that he should have to pay for it, extra, then veers round completely and says he is determined to have so and so, no matter what it costs” (127). Hardy’s story also points to the complex division of labor involved in the trade, to which the customers are subject. Hardy writes,

A surveyor is called in from somewhere and, by a fiction, his heart's desire is supposed to be that you shall not be overcharged one halfpenny by the builder for the additions. The builder names a certain sum as a value of a portion—say double its worth, the surveyor then names a sum, about half its true value. [...] All my accounts underwent this operation. (39)

Hardy's story engages with these very complex processes as the family builds the ideal middle-class home, complete with "ventilators in the nursery" and "a royal letters extraordinary kitchen range" (39). It is a very literal depiction of the construction of suburban middle-class domesticity within the building world.

Hardy himself experienced the perils associated with the life of a junior architect when, in 1866, Blomfield called upon him to supervise the night time exhumation of coffins near Old St. Pancras Church. The graves had to be moved in order to make way for the new Midland railway, the bishop having asked Blomfield to make sure matters were handled appropriately (*Life* 44). This would have been among what Saint refers to as one of the "less congenial tasks" that befell junior architects well into the nineteenth century (58). The kind of alterations Hardy witnessed, the removal and reordering of graves, is one that he refers to in his poetry and in "Memories of Church Restoration." Hardy's poem "The Levelled Churchyard" (1882) examines the impact of such changes. The dead address the passengers of a train, a modern invention of which many would have been entirely unacquainted with during their lifetime: "O Passenger, pray list and catch/Our sighs and piteous groans/Half stifled in this jumbled patch/of wretched memorial stones/We late-lamented, resting here/Are mixed to human jam/And each to each

exclaims in fear/“I know not which I am” (1-8). The removal and reorganization of headstones has undoubtedly wreaked havoc on the dead, who have been misplaced and forced into an even more claustrophobic setting. These changes have been caused by “wicked people,” who have shown little regard for the past (9). Although Hardy does not directly confront the effect this has on the living, it is implied. The signs of the past have literally been effaced and human memory destroyed. This represents the conflict between industrialized notions of progress and the past and it is one, as I discuss in Chapter Four, which has its counterpart in the natural world. The graves that were moved in the Old St. Pancras Churchyard have since acquired their own multi-layered history. Hardy’s association has contributed to this and the stones, still visible today, are jammed together against the base of a tree. The tree’s limbs have accommodated the stones, which have grown around them, demonstrating the timeless association between the human-built environment and nature. Victorian industrialization and the restoration of ancient buildings may have destroyed much of the past but have since accumulated an interesting history of their own.

In 1867 Hardy published the poem “Heiress and Architect,” which was dedicated to Blomfield. Similarly to “How I Built Myself a House,” the poem addresses the relationship between architects and their clients, in this case a well-known and talented architect and a young heiress whose preferences are ignored. Among these are “wide fronts of crystal glass/That I may show my laughter and my light/Like the sun’s by day, the stars’ by night/Till rival heart-queens envying wail, ‘Alas/Her glory!/As they pass” (25-29). But the practical architect denies such whims, reminding her that youth will fade, and suggests an eventual and universal

desire for privacy. Hardy writes, “O Maid Misled!/He sternly said/Whose facile foresight pierced her dire/Where shall abide the soul when sick of glee/It shrinks, and hides, and prays no eye may see?/Those house them best who house for secrecy/For you will tire” (30-6). The poem addresses the importance of privacy within the domestic sphere and the instinctual longing to “hide” within a protected, enclosed space. Although Hardy’s heiress in this early poem seems to lack foresight, Hardy’s later examination of women in the architectural field, particularly in *A Laodicean* and *Jude the Obscure*, suggests that women were capable of holding their own in a male-dominated profession.

As architectural historian Lynne Walker explains, women were excluded from the architectural profession in the nineteenth century because it was just that, a profession “practised in offices often organized by partnerships and firms, with legal obligations to apprentices, clients, and builders through legally binding contracts and under the control of local government boards and bylaws” (96). Because married women could not legally “make contracts or be sued in their own right,” Walker contends, they were excluded from the field (96). As a result, women were confined to the decorative arts; painting, sculpture, and interior design. According to Juliet Kinchin and Paul Stirton, although Godwin was critical of the majority of “female amateurs and writers on household taste, he openly supported increased educational and professional opportunities for women in the arts (105). In “Lady Architects” (1874), Godwin argued that, were a woman provided with the opportunity for formal architectural training, there would be “nothing to impede her progress as an architect” (“Lady Architects” 106). He acknowledged that there were already a number of female architects, but they were not professionalized.

They were often women of the upper-classes who made designs and superintended building projects and renovations, much like Paula Power in *A Laodicean*. Godwin writes,

We shall have lady architects yet, and the sooner an Architectural School is established for the purpose of educating in the technics of the art, the better for the art. Even as it is, lady architects are not so rare but they may be found practising in the quiet of their country homes, both in England and her colonies. We know of three who have so practised for years, making plans, sections, elevations, details, and superintending the workmen. (106)

Despite the fact that she has an architect in Somerset, Paula makes significant decisions regarding the restoration of her castle, and is well aware of the responsibilities she faces as its owner. In addition to her plans for Greek additions to which the gothic architect Somerset is opposed, we are told that, before his arrival, Paula commissioned her own gymnasium. Though designed and constructed with the aid of the architect, the building is undoubtedly Paula's own conception. It is constructed, "according to the latest light on athletics, and in imitation of the new colleges for women" (*A Laodicean* 150). Paula, a "prototype of the New Woman" has designed a structure to match her ideals (Thomas 43).

While women would make excellent architects, Godwin also pointed out ways in which women's talents could be utilized in the decorative arts, including illustration of old works, metal work, stained glass, painting on walls and ceilings, and tiles. It is the sort of work Sue Bridehead is undertaking in Christminster before she meets Jude. In a shop devoted to ecclesiastical objects, that "seemed to be

kept entirely by women,” Jude observes Sue: “Before her lay a piece of zinc, cut to the shape of a scroll three or four feet long, and coated with a dead-surface paint on one side. Hereon she was designing or illuminating, in characters of church text, the single word ALLELUJA” (82). Jude associates these objects with High Church ideals, believing that Sue is involved in a “sweet, saintly” business, though these objects do not hold any spiritual meaning for her (82). When Sue assists Jude in the relettering of the Ten Commandments in a local church, she “was quite pleased with her powers” but is unable to continue, her conspicuousness only draws attention to what others see as an irregular relationship. Walker argues that it was not until the “removal of the legal, ideological, and psychological impedimenta by the Married Women’s Property Acts,” that women gained entry into the profession. Ehtel Mary Charles was the first woman to be admitted to the RIBA in 1898.<sup>26</sup> Through Paula and Sue Hardy examines both the freedom and limitations women faced in architecture and its associated fields.

Hardy decided to leave Blomfield’s office in 1867. His health was in decline, “he had scarcely enough physical power left him to hold the pencil and square,” so Blomfield suggested he return to Dorset for the summer (Hardy, *Life* 53). Hardy once again received employment as an assistant to Hicks and remained in Dorchester. During this time Hicks, was occupied with numerous restoration and church building projects in Turnworth, West Lulworth, Hinton Martell, and St. Juliot (Millgate 97). Following the death of Hicks, Hardy, under the guidance of Weymouth architect G.R. Crickmay, undertook the supervision of the restoration

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<sup>26</sup> There were women who worked as architects even before the RIBA granted membership to women. According to Walker “the 1891 census records 19 women architects in England and Wales and five in Scotland, in addition to the women who designed buildings within the ‘amateur tradition,’ who would not have shown up in the census” (99).

or, “rebuilding” of Turnworth Church.<sup>27</sup> In 1870 Hardy went to St. Juliot, Cornwall, “to take a plan and particulars of a church” that Crickmay was going to rebuild. This was that very significant moment in Hardy’s life when he met his first wife, Emma Gifford. It also marked the beginning of the end of his life as a professional architect as Hardy was experiencing increasing success as a professional novelist. He returned to London for a short time in 1872, where he assisted the architect Roger Smith, a judge for the architectural association now working on submissions for the design of new schools (Millgate 129). Although he was offered further employment with Smith, Hardy declined and was able to write full-time. Despite the end of his architectural career, Hardy contributed to, responded to, and extended prominent architectural debates in his fiction and poetry. His essays, too, point to an active involvement in architectural history and preservation and it is in these essays that he broadens the definitions of architecture to include archaeological and geological formations, and the alterations made to an ancient rural landscape.

## **The Chapters**

Chapter One examines Hardy’s response to the Gothic Revival in the nineteenth century. The Gothic Revival was an ideological response to unprecedented social, economic, and technological change. In tracing the history of the Gothic Revival, I focus on the works of Pugin and Ruskin. Perhaps more than any architect or architectural critic, Pugin succeeded in transforming gothic architecture into a moral and ethical enterprise. Gothic architecture had the power to save Victorians from the so-called evils of industrialization. It inspired an

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<sup>27</sup> Crickmay’s practice assisted with Hicks’s unfinished projects following his death. Hicks had made all the plans for Turnworth and the instructions that Hardy followed are Hicks’s own.

idealized vision of medieval society centered on Catholicism and community.

Pugin, along with the Ecclesiologists, believed that architecture was a spiritual calling.

In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53), Ruskin praised medieval buildings and the society in which they were constructed. He sought a return to pre-industrial forms of labor, when, he believed, masons, builders, and craftsman possessed artistic freedom, which in turn produced edifying structures. Nowhere is Hardy's engagement with the Gothic Revival more prevalent than in *Jude the Obscure*. As I will show, Hardy questions the notion that gothic architecture fulfills the promises it is meant to convey. Christminster, the most "Christian city in the country," does not embody the social ideals Pugin attempted to revive. Rather, it is "a place full of fetishists and ghost-seers" whose medieval buildings are in a state of decay (145). Jude does not find fulfillment in repairing the ancient stones, but the intellectual realm of Christminster is kept behind a wall he can never traverse.

Chapter Three discusses restoration, the various architectural essays and lectures of William Morris, and the SPAB. Church restoration was a direct result of the Gothic Revival as architects, inspired by an idealized version of the medieval past, attempted to reorder existing medieval structures and make them their own. Morris responded to what many Victorians referred to as the "destruction" of ancient buildings by forming the SPAB in 1877, the first major preservation society in the nineteenth century. This chapter examines two significant themes in Morris's works: the preservation of ancient buildings and the revival of medieval forms of craftsmanship. In ways similar to Ruskin, Morris, a socialist, believed that a return

to medieval craftsmanship was the best way to improve the plight of the working classes. In addition to Hardy's own involvement with the SPAB and his essay "Memories of Church Restoration," this chapter examines the very complex notion of restoration itself, particularly in *A Laodicean*. Restoration is destructive and preservation should involve as little interference as possible. Like Ruskin and Morris, Hardy illustrates that architectural preservation is also the preservation of memories and this chapter explores the role of memory and the associative meanings attached to buildings. The question, then, of how best to preserve a building was a perplexing issue that Hardy explores throughout his works.

Chapter 4 examines "natural architecture" in Hardy's fiction. That is, architecture that is non-human but also the ways in which the landscape is itself formed of architectural components. While the proponents of the Gothic Revival believed that architecture was inherently human, evolutionary anthropology provided evidence that animals were capable not only of constructing buildings but making aesthetic choices in the process. I discuss the various scientists, including Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Grant Allen, who traced the evolution of architecture from its "primitive" beginnings. Hardy broadens the often narrow confines of nineteenth-century architecture to include archaeological traces of ancient structures, geological layers which mirror those of architectural ones, and the seemingly simplistic structures built by animals and humans alike. Throughout his fiction, Hardy challenges the notion that architecture is a product of cultivation or "civilization." This is particularly the case in *The Woodlanders*, *The Return of the Native*, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. I will show that the boundaries between nature and culture, inside and outside, are blurred, as Hardy's characters redefine

the meaning of architecture by building structures as animals build them, or living in close proximity to the natural world.

In Chapter Five, I discuss domestic space and social class in Hardy's fiction. In the nineteenth century, discussions of domestic space were centered on notions between public and private life. Debates about public and private space were often focused on the urban poor, in opposition to the middle-class home. I examine the history of rural housing and the notion of domestic space and the home in rural society. This involves a close examination of Hardy's 1883 essay "The Dorsetshire Labourer," as well as *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Many of Hardy's figures inhabit unusual homes that one would characterize as cultural survivals, while others simply do not have a space to call their own, a result of rural depopulation. This chapter examines Hardy's portrayal of the upper-class London home in *The Hand of Ethelberta* and its relationship to nineteenth-century discourse on privacy and domesticity. Referencing debates about middle-class respectability, I argue that Hardy defines the rural world in opposition to confirmed boundaries between public and private space.

I conclude the thesis with a discussion of Max Gate, Hardy's home and the one he designed with his own principles about middle-class respectability in mind. The heritage tradition arose out of nineteenth-century debates about the survival of the past in the built environment and how we experience it in the present.

Examining current attitudes towards Max Gate as a National Trust property allows for a discussion of the themes Hardy explores throughout his fiction; about historic preservation and the most authentic ways to commemorate or experience the past.

Hardy's examination of architecture was both an engagement with middle-

class male professionalism and a metaphorical presence in all his most important work. Hardy's fiction engages with a lengthy rumination on the meaning of building, its capacity to preserve as well as to erase historical memory. Architecture is central to Hardy's exploration with the meaning of the past, including the evolutionary past often discussed under the rubric of "instinct." In Hardy's work, we are all, human and animal, builders, leaving traces of our former existence in the form of structures which assert a claim to a lengthier residence than the duration of a mere human life. In Hardy architecture is vital, a living rebellion against the natural and social forces to which we all, as individual bodies, finally succumb.

## Chapter 2: Victorian Gothic and Hardy's Response

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us near to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection...

– Matthew Arnold, *Essays in Criticism* (1865)<sup>1</sup>

In Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* a hopeful Jude Fawley arrives for the first time in Christminster, "that ecclesiastical romance in stone," only to find, without at first realizing it, ancient buildings in a rotten state of decay. Hardy describes a medieval world, an accumulation of gothic structures that are neglected and seemingly cut off from the outside world:

Down obscure alleys, apparently never trodden now by the foot of man, and whose very existence seemed to be forgotten, there would jut into the path porticoes, oriels, doorways of enriched and florid middle-age design, their extinct air being accentuated by the rottenness of the stones. It seemed impossible that modern thought could house itself in such decrepit and superseded chambers. (73)

It is a portrait of architectural forms in a state of decline, a reality that an idealistic Jude is unable to recognize on his first night in the city. Both a product of the nineteenth century and a medieval survival, Jude believes that these structures represent spiritual, intellectual, and emotional fulfillment. The popular Victorian notion that the built environment in the industrial age, by returning to past models, can anchor us psychologically in the midst of mind-numbing change and reassert the highest of cultural ideals—the kind of ideals associated with the Gothic Revival

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<sup>1</sup> (Arnold 8).

in the nineteenth century, is one Hardy repeatedly rejects in *Jude*. Christminster's medieval buildings do not fulfil the ideological promises they are meant to convey.

As a young gothic draughtsman, Hardy himself developed a keen interest in the debates surrounding the Gothic Revival, and the restoration and preservation of ancient buildings. To an underappreciated degree, his outlook as a writer emerged from an understanding of the design, manual labor, and history of the gothic buildings he knew so well. For Hardy, both gothic architecture and poetry were characterized by “cunning irregularity,” which, Roger Ebbatson attests, is also “reproduced [...] in his large-scale plotting” (16). Hardy's architectural imagery, particularly in *Jude*, addresses the meaning of cultural survivals in a seemingly progressive society in ways similar to how various architects and essayists addressed the meaning of gothic architecture in the nineteenth century. This chapter examines the major ideas associated with the Gothic Revival, particularly those of A.W.N. Pugin and John Ruskin and the ways in which Hardy responds to them in his fiction. Both Pugin and Ruskin brought the Gothic Revival into the forefront of architectural debate in the nineteenth century, believing, for different reasons, that architecture could alter society. Hardy often challenges the view that gothic architecture enables the aspirations it inspires and questions the meaning of architectural survivals in a socially, culturally, and psychologically complex modern world.

For centuries prior to the Gothic Revival of the nineteenth century, medieval buildings served as reminders of the past in a present that continually altered them according to a changing set of religious, political, and social values. Even in its earliest stages, the Gothic Revival was an ideological movement in which

architectural structures were added to, demolished, or rebuilt in order to convey a certain message.<sup>2</sup> “In other words,” as Chris Brooks explains, gothic buildings “were semantic structures—structures of meaning—as well as architectural structures. When reformers shattered images, razed monasteries and stripped cathedrals they were engaged in ideological warfare, battles about meaning” (*Gothic Revival* 19). Christminster, in *Jude*, a place composed entirely around irreconcilable oppositions, is a sort of battleground on which ideological warfare is staged: between the past and the present, between Tractarianism and Low Church Anglicanism, between Classical and Medieval ideals and pagan and Christian values. The architectural debates of the period, which emerged as part of the Gothic Revival, amount to debates about antithetical values and ways of life.

With origins in Britain as early as the seventeenth century, the Gothic Revival in architecture was a way of conceptualizing the past. As classical architecture thrived in the eighteenth century, gothic architecture grew in popularity as it emerged in various public and domestic spheres (*Gothic Revival* 87). Medieval ruins were often invoked as examples of the picturesque or, over the course of the century, constructed from the ground-up to emulate the feelings such edifices produced. When construction began on Horace Walpole’s Strawberry Hill in 1749, it was, according to architectural historian Marian Harney, the first example of “an entire house [...] conceived in a picturesque native antique gothic style deliberately designed to convey a sense of accretion over time” (Harney xiv). Unlike the structures designed by his medieval predecessors, Walpole’s home was

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<sup>2</sup> Chris Brooks traces the ways in which Gothic was evoked for political, religious, and cultural purposes from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Early examples of a Gothic Revival were based on “a decision to retain a stylistic mode because it was understood as appropriate for specific contexts and specific purposes” (*Gothic Revival* 27).

the product of an antiquarian spirit—a creation that was the result of a conscious effort to recreate past models and to make them look as though they had withstood the ravages of time. Idealizing not just the past but its survival—in the form of contemporary buildings designed to look as though they had existed for hundreds of years—was entirely new.

The popularity for gothic increased in the second half of the century with various publications dedicated to the history of gothic buildings focused on English gothic. Among these were James Benthams's *History and Antiquities of the Conventual and Cathedral Church of Ely* (1777) and John Milner's *The History and Survey of the Antiquities of Winchester* (1798).<sup>3</sup> These texts contributed to the popular notion that gothic was both an indigenous and a national style, a point John Carter made in his architectural writings.<sup>4</sup> An architect, draughtsman, and journalist, Carter was perhaps the most adamant proponent of not only the revival of Gothic architecture but also its preservation (Sweet 261).<sup>5</sup> The survival of specifically English Gothic implied that the country's values would likewise persevere during times of crisis (Frew 317).<sup>6</sup> Sir Walter Scott's historical fiction depicted a romanticized version of the Middle Ages governed by a chivalric order that protected "the body of the state" (*Gothic Revival* 152). Moreover, as Michael Alexander attests, the Waverley novels, "not only turned men's minds in medieval

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<sup>3</sup> John Milner (1752-1826), was a Roman Catholic Bishop, antiquarian, and controversialist. He built, along with his friend John Carter, a gothic chapel in Winchester. His writings influenced Pugin (Hill 141).

<sup>4</sup> This notion, according to Brooks, was taken up with patriotic fervor during the course of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars. He argues, "the components of gothic's semantic—Britishness, martial prowess, free institutions, constitutional monarchy, national liberty—could all be wheeled out to do ideological battle with France" (130).

<sup>5</sup> Carter (1748-1817) was an early proponent of Gothic architecture and regular contributor for the *Builder's Magazine* which ran from 1774-86 (Curl 154).

<sup>6</sup> See John Carter, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1799.

directions but for the first time enabled readers to imagine in detail a pre-modern way of life” (102). And it was this version of history that influenced various aspects of art, politics, and religion. Even John Henry Newman went so far as to credit Scott with the development of his own religious views.<sup>7</sup>

Debates about gothic architecture were predominantly focused on the religious feelings such structures provoked. In 1778, Carter praised gothic buildings for their spiritual effect on the viewer in the *Builders Magazine*: ““by spending a few hours in St. Paul’s and St. Peter’s, Westminster, we may easily and seriously tell which has the greatest effect on the mind; which pile of building conveys the more devout ideas, which fills the senses to the heaven above us...”” (qtd. in Frew 315). It was, of course, Westminster, not St. Paul’s that had the greatest influence on the mind. While Wren’s building provoked emotions of ““pleasure and delight”” St. Peter’s was ““valuable and picturesque,”” and memorialized the skillful architects and devout priests who built it (qtd. in Frew 315). As Pugin would later argue, a return to gothic forms in the nineteenth century would not only have an inspiring aesthetic impact on the English landscape but an elevating emotional influence on its inhabitants.

In the complex history of its revival, gothic or, in the broader sense, medievalism, developed multivalent meanings. From the beginning of the nineteenth century it was cultivated as a form of both romantic conservatism – associated with the novels of Scott in which Gothic architecture can be seen as “a character in its own right” while for others it represented the individual freedom and liberty those celebrated values undermined (*Gothic Revival* 151). Gothic, Brooks

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<sup>7</sup> Newman addressed Scott’s influence in *Apologia pro Vita Sita* (1864). See Alexander’s discussion on Scott and Newman (101-2).

writes, “might connote political freedom, but gothic castles housed feudal tyrants; monastic ruins might connote medieval faith, but also recalled bigotry and religious persecution” (*Gothic Revival* 123). For Romantics, medieval structures promised freedom of thought and liberty but for others encouraged Christian ethics and morality.<sup>8</sup> And it was these often conflicting principles that sought a home in similar architectural quarters. As the nineteenth century progressed and the effects of industrialization were more keenly felt, gothic architecture signaled a desire to connect with an imagined past. Whether for religious, political, social, or aesthetic reasons, gothic was revered, constructed, and often manipulated for varying purposes.

Moreover, Victorians were keenly aware of their own value in history and how they would be perceived by future generations. In other words, Brooks contends, the “nineteenth century’s unprecedented historicism was the corollary of its unprecedented consciousness of its own present” (“Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 3). Numerous architectural critics were preoccupied with this very “unprecedented historicism.” It is therefore not surprising that one of the first extensive studies of the Gothic Revival in the Victorian age was published in the nineteenth century. Charles Eastlake’s architectural study, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (1872) traces gothic architecture from its early demise in the Middle Ages. Eastlake was a proponent of the gothic style and examines the people, debates, and ideals of James Wyatt, Pugin, Charles Barry, and Ruskin among others but his study is not limited to architecture. He discusses the Medieval Revival in literature, with particular attention to Scott’s *Waverley* novels. The next major study to

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<sup>8</sup> Nineteenth-century French architect Viollet le Duc believed Gothic buildings represented reason, not faith. Gothic architecture symbolized “the achievement of political rights” (*Gothic Revival* 275).

emerge was Kenneth Clark's *The Gothic Revival: An Episode in the History of Taste* (1928). Clark was "an anti-Victorian rebel" and it is clear that he detested the majority of Gothic Revival buildings: "only recently we have begun to notice these monsters, these unsightly wrecks stranded upon the mud flat of Victorian taste," he wrote (Dellheim 19, Clark 9). In spite of this, Clark contended, these buildings were "worth studying irrespective of their beauty, provided they once satisfied the imaginative demands of the majority of Englishmen" (9). He examines literary influences including Milton, Spenser, and Pope with chapters on Walpole, Pugin, and Ruskin. Both Clark and Eastlake established the framework for future scholars of the Medieval Revival (Dellheim 19).

In the 1970s literary critic Alice Chandler's *A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth Century English Literature* (1970), sparked a renewed scholarly interest in Victorian Medievalism. Chandler offers an in-depth analysis of the major works that helped shape the Revival from its origins with Scott and Cobbett to Ruskin and Morris. She explores the use of Medieval Revival "as a social and political ideal and its symbolic value as a metaphor of belief" (Chandler 10).

Architectural historian Mark Girouard's 1982 study *Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* is a social history that traces the invention of medieval chivalry in the nineteenth century. Charles Dellheim's *The Face of the Past: The Preservation of the Medieval Inheritance in Victorian England* (1982), examines the various ways in which Victorians returned to the medieval past: through antiquarian societies, popular histories, architectural essays, and tourism. Dellheim also examines specific gothic buildings and the ways "Victorians incorporated the survivals of their medieval inheritance into the first industrial society" (31).

Dellheim's study was the first to point to the complexities of Medievalism, reminding us that different writers, architects, and artists responded to or invoked the Middle Ages for different reasons: for either ideological or purely aesthetic purposes. Raymond Chapman's *The Sense of the Past in Victorian Literature* (1986) develops these historical ideals by focusing on major works of literature and Victorian historicism, and examines, in addition to the medieval past, the influence of Elizabethan, as well as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. *The Gothic Bequest: Medieval Institutions in British Thought, 1688-1863* (1987), by R.J. Smith is a comprehensive study of the gothic, or medieval tradition from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. Smith engages with various historical sources but his focus is predominantly political and religious thought. A collection of essays, edited by Vanessa Brand, *The Study of the Past in the Victorian Age*, (1998), examine the ways Victorians, self-consciously aware of their own place in history, engaged with different aspects of the past through history, archeology, and the natural sciences. Jules Lubbock's *The Tyranny of Taste: The Politics of Architecture and Design in Britain 1550-1960* (1995) is a broad study of the history of taste in Britain through the ages. His chapter on Pugin focuses on the novelty of Pugin's ideas while his discussion on Ruskin places emphasis on his critique of political economy. The most recent and major study of Victorian medievalism is Michael Alexander's *Medievalism: The Middle Ages in Modern England* (2007). It is, in Alexander's words, "a coherent brief history of the Medieval Revival as a whole" (xxi). Alexander's study begins with Medievalism in the mid eighteenth century and covers Scott, Romanticism, the major figures from the movement at the height of the nineteenth century, and medievalism in the twentieth century. His concern is,

first and foremost, literature of the Medieval Revival.

Numerous discussions of Medievalism are often subsumed by studies dedicated to the history of gothic architecture because the two are inextricably linked. Both Eastlake and Clark's texts on the Gothic Revival are useful histories of medievalism in the nineteenth century though they are ostensibly focused on architecture. In 1971, the architect Robert Macleod's *Style and Society: Architectural Ideology in Britain, 1835-1914* explored the ideologies associated with Victorian and gothic architecture. He argued, "a consideration of the ideals and intentions of the designers is more illuminative of the character of their architecture than in conventional stylistic comparison" (7). Girouard's *Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, 1860-1900*, (1977) discusses the later generation of architects who had grown tired of the Christian ideal embedded in the gothic architecture of Pugin and his followers and instead "began to think of themselves as artists, working by the light of their aesthetic sensibility" (12). Michael Bright's *Cities Built to Music: Aesthetic Theories of the Victorian Gothic Revival* (1984) considers the historical context in which the Gothic Revival developed and the ideologies, theories, and literature of which it was part. Megan Aldrich's *Gothic Revival* (1994), examines the history of the Gothic Revival from the eighteenth century, with emphasis on gothic in domestic architecture. In 1999 Chris Brooks's *The Gothic Revival* traced the history of the Revival from the seventeenth century. While the focus is predominantly architectural, it is, essentially, a history of ideas related to all manners gothic and from a global perspective. More recently, David Spurr's *Architecture and Modern Literature* (2012), situates the Gothic Revival in the nineteenth century, along with Ruskin's arguments about architecture, within

the modern movement; its relation to a more distant and perplexing past. His focus stretches beyond the Gothic Revival in Britain and examines key figures in European literature and philosophy.

For the purpose of this study, I am interested in the ways Victorians invoked gothic architecture for ideological reasons and how they repeatedly invented the past in order to suit their own social, religious, aesthetic, or political agendas. It is this conception of an ideal past that Hardy questions in the architectural imagery of *Jude* and by the ways in which his characters respond to past architectural models.

### **Gothic Architecture and Industrialization in the Nineteenth Century**

The Medieval Revival, Michael Bright contends, “offered [...] if not an escape, at least a nostalgic ideal of a golden age of order, faith, and meaning directly opposite to a modern world so lamentably deficient in those virtues” (23). Indeed, as the “stranger” Ergemont encounters in Benjamin Disraeli’s *Sibyl, or The Two Nations* (1845), states,

A density of population implies a severer struggle for existence, and a consequent repulsion of elements brought into close contact. In great cities men are brought together by the desire of gain. They are not in a state of cooperation but of isolation [...] Christianity teaches us to love our neighbour as ourself; modern society acknowledges no neighbour. (65)

An idealized version of medieval Christianity made possible a return to a life centered on the community. Nowhere perhaps is this desire to return to past models more clear than in the buildings architects designed, restored, and

preserved as part of the Gothic Revival in architecture. Many Victorians repeatedly returned to past models because they acted as signifiers for certain ideologies. John D. Rosenberg writes that the Gothic Revival, “embodied [...] nostalgia in stone—” a longing for a seemingly secure medieval past (1). “It was,” Brooks explains, “changes in society as a whole that were critical in creating a wider constituency for the past” (“Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 16). Architects, like many artists and novelists, repeatedly turned to the past for inspiration, so much so that it caused the architect George Aitchison to bemoan the lack of originality in contemporary design in an 1886 article for the *Builder*: “I am doing my best to dispel [...] dead styles [...] from students’ minds [...] if architecture cannot progress, it must be swept into the limbo where heraldry, necromancy, astrology, and perpetual motion now moulder in peace” (quoted in Crook 88).<sup>9</sup> Aitchison, languishing under what J. Mordaunt Crook calls “the inexorable burden of history,” attempted to define a style that encapsulated the modern age, but was unable to do so (Crook 78-9). And he was certainly not alone, as I discussed in the introduction, Harris and Godwin published similar articles calling on architects to create a style that was unique to the age.

It is therefore not surprising that even industrial institutions were being built in the gothic style, an example of, to use historian Charles Dellheim’s phrase, one of the “paradoxes of progress” (1). He argues, “The conspicuous presence of Gothic railway stations in the nineteenth century dramatizes a fundamental paradox of Victorian culture: fascination with the medieval inheritance in the age of progress” (1). But this paradox was more often bemoaned by critics than

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<sup>9</sup> Aitchison (1825-1910) was an architect and lecturer. He was president of the RIBA (1896-99).

celebrated by them. In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) Ruskin paid particular attention to the demoralizing experience of train travel in his diatribe against any sort of architectural decoration at railroad stations:

The railroad [...] transmutes a man from a traveller into a living parcel. For the time he has parted with the nobler characteristics of his humanity for the sake of a planetary power of locomotion. Do not ask him to admire anything. [...] Will a single traveller be willing to pay an increased fare on the South Western, because the columns of the terminus are covered with patterns from Nineveh? Or on the North Western, because there are old English-looking spandrels to the roof of the station at Crewe? He will only have less pleasure in their prototypes at Crewe house. (111)

For Ruskin, decorative architectural elements, whether gothic or classical, were entirely unsuited to industrial institutions which were utterly devoid of “the nobler characteristics of humanity.” Even the gothic architect George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) questioned whether gothic was the appropriate style for his terminus and hotel at St. Pancras Station (completed in 1873). In *Personal and Professional Recollections*, which was written between 1864-77 he explained, “It is often spoken of to me as the finest building in London; my own belief is that it is possibly *too good* for its purpose” (Scott 271).<sup>10</sup> There was an often confusing dichotomy between industrial life and gothic buildings. In 1851 Joseph Paxton’s Crystal Palace, composed of prefabricated iron and glass, housed a staged Medieval Court designed by Pugin as part of the Great Exhibition. It was an imagined

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<sup>10</sup> *Personal and Professional Recollections* was published after Scott’s death by his son, G. Gilbert Scott in 1879. See Simon Bradley’s *St. Pancras Station* (22).

glimpse into the Middle Ages set amidst exhibits devoted to the great scientific and engineering feats that highlighted the “progress” of the Western world

Pugin’s *Contrasts* (1836) engaged with this encounter between past and present through a series of architectural drawings that compared the purity of the Middle Ages to the corrupt landscape of industrial society and hoped for a return to the communal and religious spirit medieval architecture allowed.<sup>11</sup> In 1843 Carlyle’s *Past and Present* invoked a similar model. According to Bowler, *Past and Present* “was typical of the attempt to use an idealized version of the middle ages as a means of criticizing modern industrial society...The medieval world was orderly and wholesome because everyone knew his place in the hierarchy” (41). Like Carlyle, Disraeli’s *Sibyl* summarized the “feelings of his generation when he wrote of the ‘two nations—the rich and the poor’” (Chandler 4). Disraeli denounced various aspects of industrialization and compared them to the more favorable conditions of the Middle Ages which, he believed, fostered a sense of community (Alexander 90). He writes, “As for community...with the monasteries expired the only type that we ever had in England of such an intercourse. There is no community in England; there is aggregation, but aggregation under circumstances which make it rather a dissociating than a uniting principle (*Sibyl* 64). A uniting sense of community is one which Pugin hoped to resurrect through the construction of gothic buildings. In the second edition of *Contrasts* (1841), Pugin included a new image entitled “Contrasted Residences for the Poor.” Here, he compared a “modern poor house” to the “ancient poor house,” its fifteenth century counterpart. The modern version is a panopticon-style workhouse where the poor are beaten and starved while the

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<sup>11</sup> Unless specified, I have quoted from the first edition of *Contrasts* (1836). In the second edition (1841) Pugin significantly altered some of his earlier views. See Hill p. 248.

medieval almshouse, with its picturesque buildings and surrounding gardens, is a model of charity and spiritual devotion. This was Pugin's way of addressing the larger social problems of the 1840's and his arguments extended beyond public buildings. In *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841) he explained that meticulously planned medieval manor houses were Christian structures because they exemplified what he believed were the Christian values of community and generosity, elements so lacking in contemporary society. The original inhabitants of a medieval manor house:

did not confine their guests, as at present, to a few fashionables who condescend to pass away a few days occasionally in a country house; but under the oaken rafters of their capacious halls the lords of the manor used to assemble all their friends and tenants [...] while humbler guests partook of their share of the bounty dealt to them by the hand of the almoner beneath the groined entrance of the gate-house. Catholic England was merry England, at least for the humbler classes; and the architecture was in keeping with the faith and manners of the times, –at once strong and hospitable. (51)

For Victorians, contrasting contemporary life with an often biased view of history was another way of highlighting contemporary problems within society. It was Pugin and Ruskin who believed that architecture, by returning to Gothic models, could correct the problems brought about by industrialization.

### **Pugin's Catholic Revival**

Many Victorians held fast to an age which for them was "a charmed land of

dreams” and found in medieval architecture a cultural identity continually under threat by the modern world. (Bright 23). This was certainly the case for Pugin. In *Contrasts* he argued:

I feel acutely the fallen condition of the arts, when each new invention, each new proceeding, seems only to plunge them deeper in degradation. I wish to pluck from the age the mask of superior attainments so falsely assumed, and I am anxious to direct the attention of all back to the real merit of past and better days. (35)

The Gothic Revival was for Pugin a return to an idealized perception of the past. Alice Chandler contends, “As a social and political ideal the Middle Ages were usually invoked as a correction to the evils of the present” (Chandler 1). For Pugin the reversal of contemporary evils meant a return to medieval Christianity, or, more specifically, medieval Catholicism. “The Medieval Catholic Church,” Chandler explains, “was praised for performing a valuable social purpose in uniting all men in worship and using its wealth to give succour and alms to the poor” (6).<sup>12</sup> The ideal of medieval social unity was constructed as a highly idealized vision of the past to stand in opposition to the social disunity of the present, figured as religious disunity. It was through architecture, Pugin believed, that a medieval notion of community could be accomplished because gothic architecture could not divorce itself from the principles of Christianity. Mary Holmes succinctly summarized this view in *Aunt Elionor’s Lectures on Architecture: Dedicated to the Ladies of England* (1843): “Those architects who endeavour to separate church architecture from

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<sup>12</sup> Pugin’s belief in a “valuable social purpose” to use Chandler’s words, extended itself beyond church architecture. His illustrations in *Contrasts* and design for St. John’s Hospital at Alton hark back to a medieval ideal wherein the sick as well as the poor were cared for and educated (Hill 215-16).

church principles, make a mistake at the very outset, which does not fail to place an immovable barrier to their attaining anything like perfection in their art” (1).<sup>13</sup> If the arts were in a degraded state it was because society was as well and because gothic architecture had separated itself from medieval Christianity. One could look to the past for models on which society could improve, and it was through the building of gothic cathedrals, churches, and public buildings that this could be achieved.

As a young man Hardy himself did not separate gothic architecture from Christian ideals. In an article for the *World* (1886), an anonymous writer discussed Hardy’s early views:

Mr. Hardy rather humorously expresses his wonder whether his literary principles will go the way of his architectural canons. When he was in a state of pupillage in the art, he was taught, and firmly believed, that, as there was one true God, there was one true style of architecture—the style of the thirteenth-century Gothic; that all other styles were flat, stale, and unprofitable; in a word, wrong. (qtd. in Gibson 22)<sup>14</sup>

Hardy’s belief in “one true God” and “one true style of architecture” is indicative of the time in which he was a pupil (1856-62), when debates about architecture were intertwined with debates about religion. According to Pamela Dalziel, Hardy worshipped at both High and Low Churches: “From the late 1850’s until the mid-

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<sup>13</sup> Mary Holmes’ popular book appeared anonymously. She converted to Catholicism and, at the age of thirty, became governess to Pugin’s children at the Grange (Hill 356).

<sup>14</sup> Gibson notes that the author of the article entitled, “Celebrities at Home” was either penned by Hardy himself or based upon his notes (19). Evidence of this is given in *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy* as well as Hardy’s friendship with editor, Edmund Yates (19).

1860's [...] his active participation in both types of churchmanship, though somewhat unusual for a mid-Victorian, could simply reflect a tendency towards theological openness or even eclecticism" (73). Hardy was therefore well aware of the debates between High and Low church Anglicanism, and would certainly have been familiar with how those debates influenced the appreciation of older gothic buildings and the building of new, neo-Gothic ones.

From the 1830s to the mid-1840s the Oxford Movement contributed extensively to the Gothic Revival in architecture. C. Brad Faught explains, "the Gothic revival embodied the physical manifestation of this drive to catholicize the Church of England. Gothic churches came to symbolize the difference between sacramental worship and lower forms of Christian congregationalism" (44). The Oxford Movement, led by Newman, John Keble, Richard Hurrell Froude, and Edward Bouverie Pusey, lasted from approximately 1833-1841, during which the founders published *Tracts for the Times*. These ninety tracts, many overtly political in tone, culminated in Newman's *Tract 90* which supported the Church of England's Thirty-Nine Articles "so as to demonstrate their catholic soundness and to prove publicly Tractarianism's devotion to the Church" (Faught 93). *Tract 90*, written when Newman was still a member of the Anglican faith, associated Tractarianism solidly with the established Church. When he discovered that he could no longer adhere to the Thirty-Nine Articles, Newman had no choice but to leave the Anglican community and join the Roman Catholic Church, which he did in 1845. Tractarianism was, Brooks writes, "a rediscovered theology of the Church, a stress upon the sacraments more emphatic than anything that had been heard since the Jacobean divines, and a reassertion of the sacred nature of the

priesthood...” (Introduction 6). The theatrical rituals associated with the early church found prominence in church interiors and ornamental design. It was these elements Pugin and many of his contemporaries found most seductive. According to Hill, however, “Catholicism was for Pugin the faith of England in the Middle Ages. Of the modern Catholic church he, like most of his contemporaries, knew almost nothing”—at least initially (122). Similar to the Tractarians, Pugin believed in spiritual and architectural continuity between the Catholic Church and the medieval church (Symondson 193). But the whole idea of an architectural continuity which echoed a spiritual one was disrupted by the reformation.

Although architecture was not the foremost concern among the founders of the Oxford Movement, the Gothic Revival “physically embodied the Tractarian ideal” (Fraught 52). According to Raymond Chapman:

The demand for Gothic was not the result of a detached medievalism but rather an equation between the rediscovery of strongly sacramental and sacerdotal emphasis in worship and the fact that Gothic buildings had housed such worship before the Reformation. The Protestant style of building concentrated more on the pulpit and the reading-desk than on the altar. (44)

Not all members of the Oxford Movement believed that gothic architecture represented their personal beliefs. Newman, for example, did not find gothic appropriate for the modern Catholic church, preferring instead the Italian Classical Style. According to Alexander, “Newman’s own view was that church liturgy, which changed ‘according to the times,’ required a ‘living architecture”” (102). The implication here is that if architects of the revival were not willing to adapt medieval

churches to suit contemporary rituals, gothic was essentially dead (Doig 236). Gothic, Newman explained, “is now like an old dress, which fitted a man well twenty years back but must be altered to fit him now” (*Letters and Diaries* 12: 221). Pugin’s attempts to claim gothic architecture for Catholicism were met with debates from within the church itself. In spite of Newman’s objections the spirit of the Oxford Movement was made popular by discussions and debates about church architecture within Oxford, Cambridge, and beyond.

It was the Ecclesiologists who espoused Pugin’s architectural ideals but were also able to separate church architecture from its often unappealing association with Catholicism. The Ecclesiologists, Michael Brooks contends, “presented many of the same ideas in a form that members of the Church of England found more palatable” (M. Brooks 37).<sup>15</sup> The Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, later the Oxford Architectural Society, was founded in 1839, the same year as the Cambridge Camden Society. Members of the Camden Society, including John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb, published the first volume of the *Ecclesiologist* in 1841 which explored all aspects of ecclesiastical architecture, its preservation, renovation, and principles. It provided “both interesting and useful information to all connected with or in any way engaged in church-building, or the study of ecclesiastical architecture and antiquities” (*Ecclesiologist* 1). Directed towards those interested in but unable to attend the meetings of the society, the *Ecclesiologist* kept members of the general public up to date in matters pertaining to High Church Anglicanism and Gothic architecture. The society’s aim was to advocate the building of new churches along medieval

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<sup>15</sup> The *Ecclesiologist*’s also embraced Ruskin’s works and ideas. According to Michael Brooks, this had a major impact on Ruskin’s popularity (52).

lines and the proper restoration of old ones.

The influence of Tractarianism is ever-present in Hardy's Christminster, where medieval buildings conjure up the ghosts of its leaders. Their influence reaches beyond the confines of the University, having reached Jude in Marygreen: "among whom the most real to Jude Fawley were the founders of the religious school called Tractarian; the well-known three [...] the echoes of whose teachings had influenced him even in his obscure home" (*Jude* 74).<sup>16</sup> At different times both Jude and Sue find it difficult to escape the effects of the Oxford Movement: in Christminster "catholic antiquity" is something from which it is difficult for one to depart (*Apology* 32). Thus, it is not surprising that Jude is characterized as being in the "Tractarian stage" in the first half of the novel, or that Sue's return to Christianity at the end of the novel is of the High Anglican Church kind, signified by the smell of incense permeating her clothes (*Jude* 145). *Jude*, Patrick R. O'Malley contends, "engages the very questions of religious origin and authority that seized both the proponents of the Oxford Movement and their Protestant antagonists" (203). It is through Hardy's use of architecture that this is perhaps most clearly conveyed.

As a child Jude catches momentary glimpses of Christminster that are, ostensibly, in answer to his prayers: "Perhaps if he prayed the wish to see Christminster might be forwarded [...] He had read in a tract that a man who had begun to build a church, and had no money to finish it, knelt down and prayed, and the money came in by the next post" (15). When Jude sees or, rather, imagines that he sees Christminster from a distance, the city manifests itself in all its

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<sup>16</sup> Rev. Arthur Shirley, vicar of Stinsford church (1837-91), was a High churchman who brought his Tractarian ideals to the otherwise Low-Church Dorset countryside (*Dalziel* 72).

complex and layered architectural history: the view includes medieval spires and classical domes, highlighting the ideological conflict at work in Christminster. In spite of this, the moment is enveloped in the sort of mysticism associated with High Church Anglicanism. Hardy writes: “Whenever he could get away from the confines of the hamlet [...] he would steal off to the Brown house on the hill, and strain his eyes persistently; sometimes to be rewarded by the sight of a dome or spire, at other times by a little smoke, which in his estimate had some of the mysticism of incense” (*Jude* 17). The architectural outline of the city is illuminated by a “halo or glow-fog” set against the black sky (*Jude* 17). Hardy continues, “Suddenly there came along with this wind something towards him; a message from the place—from some soul residing there, it seemed. Surely it was the sound of bells, the voice of the city; faint and musical, calling to him, ‘We are happy here’” (17). Jude romanticizes and thus clings to the notion of Christminster as an ideal community, a medieval city of light and learning. He believes that the place “is what you may call a castle, manned by scholarship and religion” (20). Pugin himself argued that medieval buildings, particularly collegiate ones, were “abodes of piety and learning” and Jude sees Christminster through this very Victorian notion of medieval life (32).

Pugin’s romantic vision of the Middle Ages was expressed in his view that gothic architecture was “not a style but a principle” (*Apology* 44). Moreover, restoration, or designing buildings in the gothic style, was not only architectural but ideological: the restoration of an ancient building was the restoration of a common faith. In *Contrasts* Pugin argued that “the same feelings which influenced the old designers in the composition of their works, can be restored” (*Contrasts* iii). He bemoaned the “present degraded state of Architectural taste, and the utter want of

those feelings which alone can restore Architecture to its ancient noble position”—a position lost, he argued, after the reformation and the “destruction” of churches under Henry VIII (3, 6).<sup>17</sup>

Gothic architecture was the manifestation of a Christian ethic, and after his conversion to Catholicism in 1835, Pugin envisioned a return to the Catholicism of the middle ages, which would find expression in gothic buildings and create religious unity among the people. He wrote, “whilst we profess the creed of Christians, whilst we glory in being Englishmen, let us have an architecture, the arrangement and details of which will alike remind us of our faith and our country,—an architecture [...] whose symbols have originated in our religion and our customs” (*Apology* 6). The classical architecture of the previous century was a , “*perfect expression*” of “*imperfect systems*” (*Apology* 6). Thus Pugin sought, in the medieval past, a perfect system that expressed a unified set of truths for his contemporaries. He condemned the “confused jumble of styles” that had accumulated, layer upon layer, onto buildings over previous centuries, calling it “the carnival of architecture,” an expression of the schism within the church itself (*Apology* 2). Because church architecture in particular was “devoid” of aesthetic unity, it became the responsibility of architects to create the image of an integrated whole—to purify architecture as architecture would purify society. Despite the fact that Pugin’s vision of the rebirth of medieval Catholicism could never be fully reached, what is impressive is “the extent to which he succeeded” (Hill 2).

The Victorian confidence in progress coincided with a popular nostalgia for

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<sup>17</sup> Pugin would later change his view in the second edition of *Contrasts* (1841). Pugin argued, “that the English Reformation did not destroy Gothic but was itself the result of a general decline in faith. Thus he adjusted his theories to [...] the general antiquarian view later known as the ‘biological fallacy,’ that Gothic had blossomed and flourished and then declined, like a living thing” (Hill 248).

the past. As Hill explains, “To a generation sick of Georgian laissez-faire and frightened and excited in almost equal measures by the speed of its own steam-driven progress, Pugin offered a way forward—which was also a way back” (Hill 1). Though the way forward meant intellectual and emotional return to a romanticized vision of the past, Pugin acknowledged the importance of certain aspects of industrialization. He wrote, “In some respects [...] great and important inventions have been brought to perfection: but, it must be remembered that these are of a purely mechanical nature; and I do not hesitate to say that as works of this description progressed, works of art and productions of mental vigour have declined in far greater ratio” (*Contrasts* 30). Though, “the Christian architect should gladly avail himself” of mechanical improvements, adding to the efficiency of the overwhelming task of cathedral building, the ideas associated with industrialization were an entirely different matter (*Apology* 34). While the use of a steam engine would save time and money, “Putty pressing, plaster and iron casting for ornaments, wood burning &c., are not to be rejected because such methods were unknown to our ancestors, but on account of their being opposed in their very nature to the true principles of art and design” (*Apology* 40). It was important not to sacrifice artistic variety for the sake of convenience. Pugin was, however, willing to accept those aspects of industrialization which would aid him in completing his mission: “I should certainly set up an engine that would saw blocks, turn detached shafts, and raise the various materials to the required heights” (*Apology* 40). Industrial advancement would allow more time for the builders to work on decoration, but it also meant that gothic churches could be built at an alarmingly fast pace and it was during this time that the Gothic Revival entered the forefront of

architectural debate.

Thus the “battle between the styles,” between Classical and gothic architecture, culminated in the contest for the design for the New Palace of Westminster in 1843. Pugin had relished the moment when, in 1834, the Old Palace was destroyed by a fire: it was a symbolic moment when the more recent eighteenth century additions failed to survive. For the majority of witnesses it was, no doubt, a monumental occurrence. Hill explains, “The old Palace, like the old Parliament before the Reform Act, like so much of the old order in England, had been ripe for destruction. There was something rotten in it that was being swept away for ever” (128). It was certainly a victory for the Gothic Revival when Charles Barry’s Gothic plans were chosen and for Pugin, who designed the interiors as well as exterior ornamentation. Gothic was now the official “national style.”<sup>18</sup> In *An Apology* Pugin argued, “the erection of the Parliament Houses in the national style is by far the greatest advance that has been gained in the right direction” (10). As an advocate for gothic architecture, Pugin continually compared it to its counterpart, Classical or, “pagan.”

While Pugin stressed the structural and aesthetic merits of “pointed” architecture over the classical, it was essentially to reinforce the importance of Catholicism over the “pagan”—even the classicism of many eighteenth-century Anglican churches. The co-presence of classical and gothic stemmed from the fact that architects were still being trained in the Neo-classical style. He argued, “Can we ever hope to see a Christian architect come forth from the Royal Academy

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<sup>18</sup> Although gothic was considered the national style, the Classical revival continued in painting, sculpture, and architecture while others like Arnold and Swinburne evoked the classical tradition in poetry and essays (Bright 29).

itself, where deadly errors are instilled into the mind of the students, with the very rudiments of instruction? Pagan lectures, pagan designs, pagan casts and models, pagan medals, and, as a reward for proficiency in these matters, a pagan journey!" (*Apology* 20). Young architects were being trained in the Neo-classical style in an increasingly Neo-Gothic world. This conflict between pagan ideals and Christian practices is at the very heart of Christminster education, which teaches a classical ethos while housed in medieval or Christian buildings. As Sue points out, "At present intellect in Christminster is pushing one way, and religion the other; and so they stand stockstill, like two rams butting each other" (144). Pugin sought a solution to this schism in the architectural world by turning to the builders. Though "Christian" or gothic buildings were themselves composed of contrasts, it was "amidst the great variety of genius" where one could witness "the unity of purpose" which influenced builders (*Contrasts* 3). Thus, human beings were to be brought together in the same principles which would produce beautiful works of art. Architects were to design churches built on similar principles to teach the faithful who attend church a lesson about the unity of aesthetic and moral purposes. This fact is precisely what so separates Pugin from the later Aesthetes who share some of his aesthetic values while rejecting the moral ones.

For Pugin, gothic architecture inspired higher ethical aims. He sought to restore the human emotions that he believed were associated with the original structures. When describing the builders he explained, "Their whole energies were directed towards attaining excellence [...] They felt they were engaged in the most glorious occupation that could fall to the lot of man, that of raising a temple to the worship of a true and living God" (*Contrasts* 2). This belief that medieval workers

engaged in the building of cathedrals as a result of religious devotion is reflected in Hardy's poem "The Abbey Mason." Whilst constructing the cathedral, "Men toiled for pleasure more than pay/And all went smoothly day by day" (13-14).<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the artist, sculptor, and stonemason are anything but alienated industrial workers. Their work is an act of worship. The stonemason, "felt the glory of the work he was called on to compose [...] and produced splendid result" (*Contrasts* 23). The act of worship that is stonemasonry then serves as a moral inspiration for society at large: if the builders could work toward achieving excellence then surely those who witness it could be inspired to do the same.

Pugin believed that architecture in the gothic style would restore a lost faith and improve the morals of society at large. Buildings were meant to convey a set of religious truths which reflected their structural composition. Pugin explained, "the great test of Architectural beauty is the fitness of the design to the purpose for which it is intended, and that the style of a building should so correspond with its use that the spectator may at once perceive the purpose for which it was erected (*Contrasts* 1).<sup>20</sup> And this included secular structures as well. In *An Apology* he argued, "If our present domestic buildings were only designed in accordance with their actual purposes, they would appear equally picturesque with the old ones" (39). Since Pugin was, first and foremost, an architect, it is important to note that he did put his own theories into practice. Scarisbrick Hall, with its "archaeologically coherent style," was designed in 1836, the same year he published *Contrasts* (Lubbock 235). "There is" according to Jules Lubbock, "no pretence of the house

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<sup>19</sup> "The Abbey Mason" was first published in *Harper's Magazine* in 1911 (*Life* 357). It was dedicated to John Hicks.

<sup>20</sup> These "protofunctionalist" ideas were nothing new: "It was in his application of his ideas as an architect and designer [...] and romantic Christian visionary that Pugin inspired his age" (Hill 247).

having been built in the middle ages. It is emphatically a house of 1842, but one which aims to reinstate the architectural standards of the past, if not to reconstruct the whole way of life” (235). It is therefore not surprising that, as Hill notes, Pugin despised Strawberry Hill, a structure designed with a conscious effort to make it look older than it was (267). In Hardy’s *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), Lynchworth Court is an odd conglomeration of various styles, none of which seem to serve the purpose for which they were intended. Hardy writes:

it may be stated that everything here, though so dignified and magnificent, was not conceived in quite the true and eternal spirit of art. It was a house in which Pugin would have torn his hair. Those massive blocks of red-veined marble lining the hall [...] were cunning imitations in paint and plaster [...] The dark green columns and pilasters corresponding were brick at the core. Nay, the external walls, apparently of massive and solid freestone, were only veneered with that material, being, like the pillars, of brick within. (257)

Lynchworth Court is essentially an illusion, planned with “a total disregard of association,” the veneering covering industrial materials beneath, and while Pugin celebrated eclecticism—no architecture was more eclectic than gothic—it was the use of disguised materials he found problematic (256).

Such architectural trickery is not present in *Jude*. The reason Christminster’s gothic buildings disappoint is not simply due to the fact that the medieval buildings are in a state of decay: it is because the messages they originally convey to Jude turn out to be false. Hardy writes,

Passing out into the streets [...] he found that the colleges had

treacherously changed their sympathetic countenances: some were pompous; some had put on the look of family vaults above ground; something barbaric loomed in the masonries of all. The spirits of the great men had disappeared. (*Jude* 78)

The contrast between what Jude envisions as a “romantic” city of “light and lore” and the stark reality of the state of the buildings, “more or less defective,” point to a conflict within society that Pugin could not correct (29, 78). Resurrecting the original feelings that seemingly produced gothic buildings becomes problematic for *Jude* because those feelings are a Victorian invention.

### **Ruskin’s Gothic Ideal**

While Ruskin showed “no sign of being touched by high-church fervour,” the ideas produced by the Oxford Movement and Pugin’s Catholicism would have influenced his opinions on architecture (Hewison). At Oxford, he became a member of the “mildly ecclesiological” society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings and he responded to Pugin’s work publicly and critically (Hewison). During the early years of his career, Ruskin, Tim Hilton writes, “wished to disassociate his own work from any taint of Catholicism” by showing that Protestantism “could be the true inspiration of modern art” (149). Having been raised by Evangelical parents, it was Protestantism that “inspired” a “profoundly *ethical* reading of Gothic architecture” [emphasis original] (Spurr 114).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Although the reading public saw a resemblance between Ruskin and Pugin’s ideas, Ruskin never acknowledged in public Pugin’s influence on his work. Critics disagree on the extent of Pugin’s influence. According to Hill, Ruskin “owed almost nothing to Pugin [...] he resented the suggestion that his intensely subjective writings, the outpourings of his own curious inner life, were anything but original” (458). Unlike Hill, Alexander argues that it was Pugin who defined “the principles on which [...] Ruskin later elaborated with equal zeal and at far greater length” (72). For more on Ruskin’s

Ruskin's appraisal of gothic buildings stemmed not only from their aesthetic principles but from the conditions in which they were constructed. Unlike the architecture of ancient Greece which was produced by slave labor, medieval gothic celebrated the individual freedom of the builders to make aesthetic choices; a belief grounded in Ruskin's Christian thought. In *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53), Ruskin argued that Christianity acknowledged, "in small things as well as great, the individual value of every soul" (2: 159). It is this testimony to every individual involved in the creation of gothic cathedrals and those who witness its power that demonstrates Ruskin's liberal reordering of Victorian society. Linda C. Dowling writes, "Here the liberal hope for aesthetic democracy takes its firmest root, not in any overt requirement of sameness or equality among people but in the universally bestowed recognition of each person's rich and indelible individuality" (32). Modern life destroyed such creative agency. Ruskin explained: "It is verily this *degradation* of the operative into a machine, which, more than any other evil of the times, is leading the mass of the nations everywhere into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves" (*Stones* 2: 163). Ruskin wanted Victorian society to resurrect what had been lost: the built environment of the Middle Ages. He encouraged his readers—and this included the "least learned" and "desultory"—to:

go forth and gaze upon the old cathedral front [...] examine once more those ugly goblins, and formless monsters, and stern statues, anatomiless and rigid; but do not mock at them, for they are signs of the life and liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom

of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which it must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children. (*Stones* 2: 8, 162-3)

The celebrated imperfections that arose out of this natural response to building contributed to the contrasts within gothic architecture itself.

In *The Stones of Venice* gothic architecture was dominated by contrast: it simultaneously exhibited “savageness” and “rigidity” as well as “grotesqueness” and “redundance” (2: 154). These contrasts manifested themselves in architectural inconsistencies. Gothic architecture belonged to “a great system of perpetual change” (*Stones* 2: 179). Ruskin explained:

Every successive architect, employed upon a great work, built the pieces he added in his own way, utterly regardless of the style adopted by his predecessors; and if two towers were raised in nominal correspondence at the sides of a cathedral front, one was nearly sure to be different from the other...” (2: 179).

This lack of symmetry was a result of the practicality of its architects and builders and is witnessed by Jude when he arrives at the stone-mason’s yard in

Christminster:

He asked the foreman, and looked round among the new traceries, mullions, transoms, shafts, pinnacles, and battlements, standing on the bankers half worked, or waiting to be removed. They were marked by mathematical straightness, smoothness, exactitude: there in the old walls were the broken lines of the original idea; jagged curves, disdain of precision, irregularity, disarray. (79)

The virtuous builders of gothic cathedrals were, Ruskin argued, “utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance [...] knowing that such daring interpretations of the formal plan would rather give additional interest to its symmetry rather than injure it” (*Stones* 2: 179). Ruskin glorified the labour of builders and, as Martin A. Danahay points out, “In his definition of the Gothic Ruskin encouraged the reading of a building as if it were a text for signs of masculine labour”—signs which Jude sees as he studies the architectural layers of Christminster’s decaying structures (129). It was an idealized version of masculine labor in the Middle Ages, where men were free to follow their artistic instincts, and to make mistakes in the process in an environment where labor was undivided. Because gothic architecture was in a perpetual state of change, it allowed builders more freedom for individual expression.

It was in this that Ruskin could improve the plight of the laboring man. In his introduction to an edition of *The Nature of Gothic* in 1892 William Morris explained:

For the lesson that Ruskin here teaches us is that art is the expression of man’s pleasure in labour; that it is possible for man to rejoice in his work [...] and [...] unless man’s work once again becomes a pleasure to him, the token of change will be that beauty is once again a natural and necessary accompaniment of productive labour. (Morris vii)

Hardy questions this ideal in *Jude* where medieval buildings, though continually in a state of repair, are in an appalling state of decay, rendering the act of repair meaningless, devoid of aspirational qualities. Hardy writes:

The numberless architectural pages around him he read, naturally,

less as an artist-critic of their forms than as an artizan and comrade of the dead handicraftsman whose muscles had actually executed those forms [...] Cruelties, insults, had, he perceived, been inflicted on the aged erections. The condition of several moved him as he would have been moved by maimed sentient beings. (78)

Jude, himself a medieval survival, recognizes the parallels between his own life and that of his predecessors. Though he sees value in the muscular labor of these long-dead builders, he does not find the same fulfilment in labor that he does in intellectual pursuits: “For a moment there fell on Jude a true illumination; that here in the stone yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of the colleges [...] But he lost it under the stress of his old idea” (79). In a way similar to Ruskin, Sue acknowledges the ethical aspects of an idealized version of creative labor. When she meets Jude in Melchester, Sue notices his rough hands, the evidence of his trade: “I don’t dislike it, you know. I think it is noble to see a man’s hands subdued to what he works in” (127). Jude’s aspiration for self-transcendence remains unfulfilled. Ruskin’s belief that the labor associated with gothic buildings was both pleasurable and productive is treated as an illusory product of modern life in *Jude*.

The most important components of medieval gothic were the human associations of its buildings. Unlike Pugin, Ruskin was “stubbornly unwilling to grant that heavenward aspiration played any role whatever in shaping Gothic buildings” (M. Brooks 47). Architecture was therefore only “divine” because it was “human” (*Stones* 1: 39). Ruskin went on to explain: “it is not the strength, not the size, not the finish of the look which we are to venerate [...] but it is the intelligence

and resolution of man in overcoming physical difficulty which are to be the source of our pleasure and the subject of our praise” (*Stones* 1: 37). Here, the source of appreciation is the physical labor involved in the building process, the means of an end in itself.

The moral code of England was not only written in gothic stones, but in the landscapes from which her builders took their inspiration. Ruskin venerated the ability to incorporate the natural world into the built environment. He argued, “the moral habits to which England at this stage owes the kind of greatness that she has [...] were only traceable in the features which were the distinctive creation of the Gothic schools, in veined foliage, and thorny fretwork, and shadowy niche...” (*Stones* 2: 206).

Gothic did not emerge from natural forms but rather developed into them over time. He argued, “It was no chance suggestion of the form of an arch from the bending of a bough, but a gradual and continual discovery of a beauty in natural forms which could be...transferred into those of stone, that influenced at once the heart of the people, and the form of the edifice” (*Stones* 2: 201). As Pugin had argued, a “pointed building” was, quite simply, a “*natural building*” (*Apology* 15). The idea of “natural architecture” is one Pugin developed in *An Apology* (Hill 279). It was nature that inspired the builders: “The rocky coast, the fertile valley, the extended plain [...] are all grand points to work upon; and so well did the ancient builders adapt their edifices to localities, that they seemed as if they formed a portion of nature itself...” (*Apology* 21). Gothic architecture is recognized by its imperfections which mirror those found in nature. Both Ruskin and Pugin address the value of old-fashioned masonry and workers who naturally adapted

architectural forms to the landscape around them.

In Hardy's, "The Abbey Mason" we are told the master-mason who invented perpendicular gothic "Did but what all artists do/Wait upon Nature for his cue" (175-6). In the struggle to perfect his design, it is essentially nature that offers a solution. The Abbot, however, sees this only as divine inspiration and so Hardy's mason ends his days in obscurity. Indeed, the medieval cathedral builders who constructed the singular elements so often praised by Victorians were unknown to them. Ruskin wrote, "The patron at whose cost, the monk through whose dreaming the foundation was laid, we remember occasionally; never the man who verily did the work" (*Stones* 1: 38). It was the "poor and nameless builders" who, Ruskin claimed in an 1870 lecture, had done "the good building in the world" (*Works of John Ruskin* 28). Buildings could be read for the signs of "disarray," and "irregularity" that told the story of a building's life, but also the very human and personal artistic life of an anonymous builder.

As Brooks argues, "Ruskin had a driving concern with what buildings mean, a commitment to reading architecture..." (*Gothic Revival* 298). The past is written on the gothic buildings that Jude attentively reads, they are "historical documents" (78). When Jude arrives at Alfredston he examines the "new Victorian gothic church" having "guessed its origin in a moment or two" (118). One can see Jude, particularly in the first half of the novel, as someone carrying out the visionary ideals expressed by Pugin, who believed that a person need only look at a gothic building in order to find his faith. He wrote, "An Englishman needs no controversial writings to lead him to the faith of his fathers; it is written on the wall, on the window, on the pavement, by the highway" (*Apology* 49). These are the signs Jude

follows when he decides to leave Marygreen for Christminster: his carved initials on the back of a milestone pointing toward the city, and the “faint halo” on the horizon, “hardly recognizable save by the eye of faith” (68). It is a religious epiphany in which architecture is only visible to the faithful. Corinna M. Wagner argues, “Pugin’s treatises seem to measure a building’s aesthetic beauty and cultural power by its ability to act, in some sense, as a text”. (14) Similarly, Hardy describes the “regeneration” of one of Christminster’s colleges:

Here, with keen edges and smooth curves were forms in the exact likeness of those he had seen abraded and time-eaten on the walls. These were the ideas in modern prose which the lichened colleges presented in old poetry. Even some of those antiques might have been called prose when they were new. They had done nothing but wait, and had become poetical. How easy to the smallest building, how impossible to most men. (79)

The original gothic buildings are, in a sense, living beings subject to the course of decomposition into texts. Ruskin encourages “the concept by insisting over and over again that a building should be read” (Bright 88). The merit of architecture over poetry is that it “is mightier in its reality; it is well to have, not only what men have thought and felt, but what their hands have handled, and their strength wrought, and their eyes beheld all the days of their lives” (*Seven Lamps* 164).

Buildings, however, are more subject to natural elements as well and the whims of their creators and, as such, become more poetical. In *The Stones of Venice* Ruskin argues, “great art, whether expressing itself in words, colours, or stones does *not* say the same thing over and over again [...] the merit of architectural, as well as

every other art, consists in its saying new and different things..." (2: 174). The "poetry" of architecture was its ability to survive and evolve in a process of continual change.

Ruskin believed that one could not remember the past without the presence of architectural survivals. Of architecture he writes, "We may live without her and worship without her, but we cannot remember without her" (*Seven Lamps* 164). Similarly for Pugin, "The history of architecture" was, in fact, "the history of the world" (*Apology* 4). The architectural backdrop in *Jude* serves as a reminder that one cannot escape from history. Jude himself is "predestinate" and his familial history repeats itself through his unhappy marriage to Arabella but, more importantly, in his failed relationship with Sue (39). Once Jude returns to Christminster at the end of the novel, its buildings serve as a reminder of his once hopeful aspirations. Hardy writes: "They turned in on the left by the church [...] and pursued the lane till there arose on Jude's sight the circular theatre with that well-known lantern above it, which stood in his mind as the sad symbol of his abandoned hopes" (314). The past thus announces itself in the architectural symbolism in *Jude*, whose personal history repeats itself in cyclical fashion. Cyclicity is not progressive but about returning to repeat the mistakes of the past. Hardy's view that one does not necessarily learn from the past but continues to repeat it, is a truth which is clearly played out in Jude's marriage and remarriage to Arabella, his relationship with Sue, and his eventual and tragic return to Christminster at the end of the novel.

### **Christminster's Medievalism**

The novel itself opens with references to Christminster and all that it promises to an impressionable young Jude. Hardy writes:

And the city acquired a tangibility, a permanence, a hold on his life, mainly from the one nucleus of fact that the man for whose knowledge and purposes he had so much reverence was actually living there; not only so, but living among the more thoughtful and mentally shining ones therein. (16)

Jude learns to love the place by association through his relationship with the much-admired Phillotson. Christminster immediately offers more than Marygreen because the one person who has shown him kindness has gone to live there. And so Jude, much like the young Phillotson must have done, arrives in Christminster with the naive belief that his intellectual abilities and his desire to learn are enough to secure him a place in one of its colleges. Hardy writes, “‘For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to those who have it.’ His desire absorbed him, and left no part of him to weigh its practicability” (*Jude* 81). But the gothic spires, which are for Jude enveloped in a glowing halo from the moment he sees them in the distance, and all they represent of intellectual and spiritual life, are closed to him because of his social class. Hardy writes:

Those buildings and their associations and privileges were not for him. From the looming roof of the great library [...] his gaze travelled on to the varied spires, halls, gables, streets, chapels, gardens, quadrangles, which composed the *ensemble* of this unrivalled panorama. He saw that his destiny lay not with these, but among the

manual toilers in the shabby purlieu which he himself occupied (109). Pugin's belief that gothic architecture inspires higher ethical ideals is indeed the case for Jude in the first half of the novel. Hardy, however, addresses the consequences of what happens when all that gothic architecture inspires turns out to be a myth in *Jude*. The issue of aspiration raises important questions: is Pugin's aesthetic hostile to the modern notion of aspiration toward self-transcendence merely a mistaken idea that does not offer psychological peace, or is it the "ache of modernism" at the heart of *Jude*? (*Tess* 140). Pugin's ideals might be possible of realization but not in the modern world.

Hardy's architectural imagery addresses the meaning of cultural survivals in a seemingly progressive society in ways that are only ostensibly similar to the ideas of Pugin and Ruskin who believed architectural survivals would improve society at large. E.B. Tylor's definition of "survivals" as "the processes, customs, opinions" which "remain as proofs and examples of an older condition of society out of which a newer has been evolved," manifests itself in Hardy's medieval gothic aesthetic (Tylor 16). Christminster is itself a survival; its medieval buildings making it "the most Christian city in the country (*Jude* 88). Its buildings, however, are "wounded, broken, sloughing off their outer shape in the deadly struggle against years, weather, and man" (78). The city exists as a bastion for Christianity—a collection of material buildings and, at least early in the novel, an idealized mental conception of the past—but is decomposing in front of our very eyes. Andrew Radford argues, "Although Hardy calls Christminster 'extinct', this daunting citadel of medieval privilege and intellectual irrelevance is nevertheless poisoning the modern movement and conditioning the future" (Radford 86). Christminster is

trapped in the middle ages, unable to move forward in the modern world. Though its buildings are in a visible state of decay, it remains a fortress protecting the past from outside influences. Its colleges are “strongholds of learning,” its walls separating the outside from its gothic enclosures, proof of Pugin’s belief that the universities had “continued in uninterrupted succession from the time of their original foundation” (*Jude* 31; *Apology* 32). This is why Sue laments that she “had lived so much in the middle ages” in Christminster that she prefers the train station to the cathedral in Melchester, which “has had its day” (128).

Of course in *Jude*, the uninterrupted continuance of the past is the most damaging aspect of contemporary life. O’Malley discusses the Oxford Movement in *Jude*, arguing that it is Anglo-Catholicism that is “a new and oppressive force in England,” not a cultural survival from the deep past (197). Christminster’s oppressive nature is more clearly evident upon Jude’s return on Remembrance Day. These collegiate buildings, which Father Time mistakes for gaols, ironically comprise “the most religious and educational city in the world” (317). And this is not the first time Hardy invokes such an image. In his story “A Tragedy of Two Ambitions” (1894) the “theological college of a cathedral-town” is referred to by one of the characters as “a house-of-correction” (Hardy 25, 30). According to art historian Michael Camille:

The medieval town, although it stood for freedom from the feudal obligations of the land, was the most policed of all medieval spaces. Demarcated by different powers and jurisdictions, a street could belong to a local monastery, a bishop, the local count, or the commune. Every architectural element, every gate or boundary

stone, was a sign of social control. (60-61)

The medieval walls that separate Jude from the inner world of Christminster, the suspicious policeman who interrupts Jude's musings on his first night in the city, and the people who deny his family lodgings upon his final return—all serve as examples of surveillance. More often than not such signifiers are associated with medieval buildings. Sue's Training-School in Melchester, "an ancient edifice of the fifteenth century [...] with mullioned and transformed windows, and a courtyard in front, shut in from the road by a wall" invokes the strict codes and "severe discipline" to which the students are subject (125-6). When Jude and Sue begin the relettering of the Ten Commandments in a country church near Aldbrickham, visitors assume their personal lives make them unfit for the holy project. The middle ages—and a severe ethos of self-control—are continually announced through the form of the architecture they produced but the strict codes associated with their structures are maintained.

Jude is himself an evolutionary survival, carrying out the work of an ancient trade, his skills tying him to gothic buildings throughout the novel. While he works to restore medieval stone structures, "engaging himself awhile with the carcasses that contained the scholar souls," the task is unceasing and the buildings never efface the traces of decomposition in them (*Jude* 29). The buildings cannot be returned to their former state. The ideal of "restoration" in the literal sense is untenable, despite what seems to be the psychological comfort offered by the continuing presence of the signifiers of the past. Hardy writes, "Like all new comers to a spot on which the past is deeply graven he heard the past announcing itself with an emphasis altogether unsuspected by, and even incredible to, the habitual

residents” (80). This line indicates that Hardy bestows on Jude an awareness that comes with being an outsider. A cross between tourist and pilgrim, Jude can hear the past announcing itself precisely because he is not a long-time resident of Christminster, already habituated to its built environment and thus unconscious of the historical layering that has gone into the city’s construction.

To be sure, Hardy sees the architectural layering or stratification of Christminster as a metaphorically significant reality that has its counterpart in Jude’s mind, and the very unconsciousness of the past on the part of the Christminster denizens hints, as Bivona argues, at the limits to the individual’s ability to understand the nature of his own instinctual life (94). Jude’s life is ruled by the past: the medieval past, his own ancestral past, and the evolutionary past which lives on in him in the form of sexual instinct. His Christian ethic gradually unravels as it confronts the challenge of a pagan one while his relationship with Sue takes the form of an unconscious reenactment of their parents’ relationship. They are unable to move outside the forms of the past. O’Malley argues that in *Jude*, “Medievalism no longer has its romantic valence; it has become a symbol of the attempt to introduce stifling forms of religious and social control into modern English lives” (205). Though Jude and Sue attempt to live in “Greek joyousness,” they are unable to do so because the present is over-ruled by a Christian ideology (286). Sue notices the contrast at the beginning of the novel when she admires, and then boldly purchases, figures of Greek gods and goddesses: “the south-west sun brought them out so brilliantly against the green herbage that she could discern their contours with luminous distinctness; and being almost in a line between herself and the church towers of the city they awoke in her an oddly

foreign and contrasting set of ideas by comparison” (87). When Sue returns home with her figures in what, we are told, is a predominantly Christian and medieval city, she almost regrets her decision.

Christminster presents a conflict between its solid medieval foundations and the classical teachings of its colleges. It is, like Jude himself, “in a chaos of principles” (317). In the third volume of *The Stones of Venice*, which was published in 1853, Ruskin bemoaned the fact that in education, “the Pagan system is completely triumphant; and the entire body of the so-called Christian world has established a system of instruction for its youth, wherein neither the history of Christ’s church, nor the language of God’s law, is considered of the smallest importance” (110). Ruskin argued that the strict order of a Classical education denied young men any artistic, spiritual, and even human knowledge. Here, Ruskin quotes “that universal principle” [...] the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life” (3: 97). Hardy, of course, quoted the first part of this in his epigraph to *Jude*. For Ruskin, though the letter could destroy, the spirit could offer fulfillment, a truth denied Jude at the beginning of the novel and Sue after her Christian self-immolation near the novel’s end.

The “ancient feelings and sentiments” that, according to Pugin, “could alone restore gothic architecture to its former glorious state” are not ancient but rather nineteenth-century constructs by Pugin, which is why Hardy refers to it as medievalism. For Hardy, points of origin are not static but dynamic, nor does gothic architecture represent a golden age ideal that can be used to reassert a common faith in the present. Medievalism is a production of the modern age. Pugin’s own nostalgia for the past is an expression of a modern understanding of the past that

is often an imagined version of it. In *An Earnest Address on the Establishment of the Hierarchy* (1851), Pugin rejected his earlier beliefs in a Catholic utopia—the Catholicism of the Middle Ages. He wrote, “I once believed in this utopia myself but when tested by stern facts and history it all melts away like a dream” (13). Though Christminster continues to announce the Middle Ages in its gothic architecture, Medievalism is a Victorian invention which is rendered meaningless in *Jude*. When Jude first arrives in Christminster Hardy writes, “He did not at that time see that medievalism was as dead as a fern-leaf in a lump of coal; that other developments were shaping in the world around him in which gothic architecture and its associations had no place”. (79) Jude’s connection to gothic architecture is complicated by the fact that Medievalism has little relevance in contemporary life. In *Jude* the survival and revival of the Middle Ages points to the continual conflict between the past and present and between Jude’s hopes, which are inspired by gothic buildings, and the disappointments those buildings signify. Both Pugin’s and, to an extent, Ruskin’s belief that by returning to a specific point in the past one can reassert the highest of cultural ideals is impossible of realization.

Gothic buildings inspire the highest of cultural ideals for Jude. Hardy writes, “From his window he could see the spire of the Cathedral [...] The tall tower, tall belfry windows, and tall pinnacles of the college by the bridge, he could also get a glimpse of by going to the staircase. These objects he used as stimulants when his faith in the future was dim”(*Jude* 81). But these objects do not fulfil the promise of their aesthetic qualities. That “promise” in *Jude* is represented as always already about to be betrayed.



### Chapter 3: Restoration or Destruction? Hardy, Morris, and Architectural Preservation

“There are two duties respecting national architecture whose importance it is impossible to overrate:—The first, to render the architecture of the day historical; and the second, to preserve as the most precious of inheritances that of past ages.”

—John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*

“It is not a very artistic job,’ continued the messenger. ‘The clergyman is a very old-fashioned chap, and he has refused to let anything more be done to the church than cleaning and repairing.’ ‘Excellent old man!’ said Sue to herself, who was sentimentally opposed to the horrors of over-restoration.”

—*Jude the Obscure*<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most significant—certainly one of the most visible—results of the Gothic Revival in the nineteenth century was the restoration of approximately 7,000 medieval churches in England and Wales from the 1840s to the 1870s.<sup>2</sup> This comprised almost half of the surviving medieval churches (Eggert 24). Restoration was part of a wider church building program initiated by the Anglican Church which was undergoing various reforms. The restoration of medieval churches, abbeys, and cathedrals was an ideological reordering of the past. The Victorian architect, Brooks writes, “could make time’s muddled, rickety fabric stable, coherent, godly—just like people’s dreams of an ideal past” (*Gothic Revival* 252). Gothic buildings represented a multilayered past that had evolved naturally over the course of

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<sup>1</sup> (Ruskin 164; Hardy 289).

<sup>2</sup> These statistics are part of the parliamentary “Survey of Church Building and Restoration” (1874). See Miele, “A Small Knot of Cultivated People.”

hundreds of years. The old elements of a building, evidence of centuries of craftsmanship and artistry, were often sacrificed in favor of a more uniform style. In 1842 the *Ecclesiologist*, which instructed architects on church restoration, exclaimed, “To restore, is to recover the original appearance, which has been lost by decay, accident, or illjudged alteration. The method of the restoration depends on the idea of the original which the architect may form” (5: 66). Returning to the “original,” which the Camdenians defined as early fourteenth century gothic, meant the erasure of subsequent alterations to the fabric of buildings (*Gothic Revival* 247).

As a result, architectural historian Chris Miele explains, “Buildings that started the century as picturesque accents in the landscape ended it looking upright and four-square, as if centuries of wear and tear had never happened” (“First Conservation Militants” 18). When William Morris, Philip Webb, and George Wardle founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), in 1877, they set out to preserve what remained of ecclesiastic and secular medieval or “ancient” buildings, to put an end to what they referred to as “ignorant destruction and pedantic reconstruction” (Morris “Address to the First AGM of the SPAB 63).<sup>3</sup> The SPAB was part of a long-standing debate about the value of ancient buildings in modern industrial society.

In “Memories of Church Restoration,” his address to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (1906), Hardy examines the impact restorations, and, indeed, the destruction of ancient buildings have on art and humanity: “I think the damage done to this sentiment of association by replacement, by rupture of

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<sup>3</sup> Philip Webb (1831-1915) was an English architect and considered the father of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Wardle was his business manager.

continuity, is mainly what makes the enormous loss this country has sustained from its seventy years of church restoration so deplorable” (“Memories” 251).<sup>4</sup> Hardy had become involved with the Society in 1881, accepting a request that he act as its representative while repairs were taking place in Wimborne Minster (Beatty 9). Hardy lamented his involvement as a young architect in the restoration—or as many Victorians referred to it, “destruction” of ancient buildings at a time when the Gothic Revival was at its height (“Memories” 240). He had come to believe, as Ruskin and Morris had done, that architecture should be celebrated for the very inconsistencies and imperfections that many architects and builders had tried ruthlessly to obliterate in the name of restoration. For Hardy, architectural preservation in its broadest terms meant the preservation not only of aesthetic qualities but of human associations:

The protection of an ancient edifice against renewals in fresh materials is, in fact, even more of a social—I may say humane—duty than an aesthetic one. It is the preservation of memories, histories, fellowships, fraternities. Life, after all, is more than art, and that which appealed to us in the maybe clumsy outlines of some structure which had been looked at and entered by a dozen generations of ancestors outweighs the more subtle recognition, if any, of architectural qualities. (“Memories” 251)

Ancient buildings represent an accretive, irregular, and complicated past. As David Lowenthal explains, “Traces of cumulative creation also engender a sense of accretion where each year, each generation, adds more to the scene” (59). It was

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<sup>4</sup> Colonel Eustace Balfour read Hardy’s essay to the annual meeting on 20 June 1906.

a multi-layered past that members of the SPAB wanted to protect from the irrevocable damage caused by restoration. This chapter examines Hardy's engagement with debates about restoration and preservation, particularly the architectural writings of Morris and the SPAB. In Morris's view, ancient buildings were a record "of the whole external surroundings of the life of man" and as such marked the varying artistic instincts of the builders over the course of centuries ("The Prospects of Architecture in Civilisation" 64). I will discuss Morris's ideas about the built environment in Victorian society and his desire to revive the craftsmanship he associated with medieval buildings. Morris's view is representative of the general trend in restoration debates in the nineteenth century which were essentially about the relationship between the present and the past.

In a similar vein, in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* Ruskin claimed that ancient buildings record stories and facts (169). Memory depends on signs and signifiers from the past. Buildings in Hardy's fiction often suggest a sense of historical continuity: a house or church left untouched by Victorian restoration might represent the uninterrupted survival of the past. The memories brought about by ancient buildings resonate deeply with Hardy's characters whose own lives are often written in the fabric of their stones. But various structures, or their complete absence, also serve as reminders of a disturbed or ruptured past.

Architectural restoration appears in its most literal form in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) and *A Laodicean* (1881) where the figure of the young architect or draughtsman sets out to restore a rural medieval building. In particular, the restoration of Stancy Castle in *A Laodicean* engages with debates that were a direct result of church restoration; debates about the value of the "original," the

survival of the past, and national heritage. Hardy's novel takes place in the 1870's and addresses the legacy of the earlier years of the Gothic Revival and the preservation movement that followed. The castle is "Irregular, dilapidated, and muffled in creepers," and is undergoing both a process of continual decay and revival (*A Laodicean* 17). In addition, the ideals associated with restoration and preservation—this very direct and material engagement with the past, are visible throughout Hardy's collective works—his novels, poetry, and prose. As a result, this chapter examines a wide range of Hardy's works including *Far From the Madding Crowd* and *Jude*.

There is a significant amount of scholarship devoted to the history of architectural preservation. Studies focused on the broader themes of architecture and history examine preservation and its influence on the way we perceive the past. One of the most influential studies on this subject is David Lowenthal's *The Past is a Foreign Country* (1985). It examines approaches to the past throughout history, literature, and art and questions how conceptions of the past are always changing and dependent upon a particular time and culture.<sup>5</sup> *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain* (1996), includes essays by various scholars and is devoted to the beginnings of the preservation movement and its continued influence. In addition to Michael Hunter's introduction on the origins of British preservation, Chris Miele's "The First Conservation Militants: William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings" looks at Morris's response to decades of church restoration in the nineteenth century. Miele examines figures that featured prominently in the popular press and their advocacy for preservation.

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<sup>5</sup> Lowenthal's *The Past is a Foreign Country Revisited* will be published in 2015.

Paul Eggert's *Securing the Past: Conservation in Art, Architecture, and Literature* (2009) explores the concept of preservation across different disciplines and the often various and conflicting approaches involved.

In spite of the vast array of Morris scholarship, studies devoted to his engagement with the built environment are often subsumed by works dedicated to his social outlook. As architectural historian Chris Miele attests, "The intriguing story of the early years of the [SPAB] tends to be overshadowed by the reputation of its founder, [...] with the SPAB seen as a vehicle for the development of Morris's political philosophy" ("A Small Knot of Cultivated People" 73). Art historian Andrea Elizabeth Donovan's *William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings* (2008) is the first full-length study devoted to the history of the Society. Architectural historian Miele has published various articles and chapters devoted to Morris and architecture. "A Small Knot of Cultivated People: William Morris and Ideologies of Protection" (1995) examines the early years of the SPAB and its philosophy. Miele's introduction to the anthology of Morris's major architectural writings, *William Morris on Architecture* (1996) analyzes Morris's essays and his belief that the built environment shaped society and politics. Vanessa Brand's *The Study of the Past in the Victorian Age* (1998), includes Miele's discussion of George Gilbert's Scott 1840 restoration of Saint Mary, Stafford. *From William Morris: Building and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity* (2005) is a volume of essays edited by Miele that demonstrate the wide-ranging influence Morris had on various aspects of the conservation movement in Britain. It includes Miele's introduction "Conservation and the Enemies of Progress?," and his chapter "Morris and Conservation." In addition, Melanie Hall's "Affirming Community Life:

Preservation, National Identity, and the State, 1900” examines the formation of the National Trust and town planning in the twentieth century. Jukka Jokilehto’s *A History of Architectural Conservation* (1999), studies the origins of historic conservation in Europe from the Renaissance to the present. *Towards World Heritage: International Origins of the Preservation Movement* (2011), edited by Melanie Hall, is a transdisciplinary study that examines the preservation of buildings and landscapes. In it, Miele’s “Heritage and its Communities: Reflections on the English Experience in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries” discusses how the Church of England shaped utopian ideals of community through medieval churches. While the majority of studies that focus on Morris and architecture discuss his architectural works at length, they have yet to explore in detail how Morris and his ideas about architecture are featured in Victorian fiction. I am interested in Morris’s ideologies as well as broader notions of how Victorians defined their relationship with the past through the restoration and preservation of buildings and how Hardy traces this in his own life and fiction.

### **Anglican Church Building and Restoration**

Church building and restoration were among a number of noticeable reforms “intended to fight the steady erosion of the Established Church’s traditional privileges and power” (“First Conservation Militants” 17).<sup>6</sup> The old parish system, run by a ruling class associated with the Hanoverian church, was disintegrating

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<sup>6</sup> Brooks summarizes the issues the Anglican Church confronted at this time: “Clerical incomes were distributed with scandalous inequity; many parishes had no resident parson; pastoral care was often skimped; church services could be perfunctory; and Anglicanism’s alliance with the landed interest meant that ordinary people often perceived it as the morally coercive arm of the ruling elite” (*Gothic Revival* 224).

under the changes brought about by industrialization and urbanization (Brooks, *The Victorian Church* 4). Moreover, from the middle of the eighteenth century to the first decades of the nineteenth century, membership in dissenting churches continued to increase. Aestheticism was not always the foremost concern among dissenters. As Christopher Stell explains, “The majority of nonconformist congregations, particularly those in rural areas, continued throughout the first half of the nineteenth century to build within the simple Georgian tradition of plain rectangular structures pierced as necessary by sash windows and one or two domestic looking entrances in the front wall” (Stell 319). In *A Laodicean*, Hardy contrasts the gothic architecture Somerset visits early in the novel with its counterpart, the recently built Baptist Chapel composed of red brick and characterized by “pseudo-classic ornamentation” (8).<sup>7</sup> As he observes a building full of worshippers Somerset realizes that, “The chapel had neither beauty, quaintness, nor congeniality to recommend it: the dissimilitude between the new utilitarianism of the place and the scenes of venerable Gothic art which had occupied his daylight hours could not well be exceeded” (*A Laodicean* 9). Anglican Bishops, in opposition to nonconformists, directed their clergy to “restore the churches in their care lavishly as a practical contribution to the struggle against secularism and nonconformity” (“First Conservation Militants” 17). New churches were designed, and existing ones restored, to invoke High Church Principles (Brooks, *Victorian Church* 7). The Anglican Church, moreover, essentially needed more churches to cater to the growing population, particularly the working class. In 1818 the Church Building Commission provided £1,000,000 for the construction of

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<sup>7</sup> The Baptist Church in Hardy’s novel was built, not in the early part of the nineteenth century, but as late as the 1870s (8-9).

new churches. Various societies, including the Incorporated Church Building Society, founded the same year, raised funds for building and restoration projects in England and Wales. In addition to the rise of Tractarianism, it was the efforts of the Cambridge Camden Society in the 1840s that transformed church building into a “crusade” (Brooks, *The Victorian Church* 7).

Because church-building was a crusade, the Ecclesiologists sought architects who were themselves High Churchmen and for whom church building was a “religious calling” (Webster 15). Pugin himself regarded church building as a religious calling: a gothic church, he argued, could only be produced by those “who were thoroughly imbued with devotion for, and faith in, the religion for whose worship they were erected” (*Contrasts* 5). Whether or not this was always the case, the church-building program contributed to the professionalization of architecture and created the specialized ecclesiastical architect that became such a prominent figure in the building world of the nineteenth century (Brooks *Victorian Church* 20). According to T.P. Connor, John Hicks, a gothic architect specializing in the Second Pointed, or Decorated, style received support from the High Church clergy in Dorchester when he established his practice there in 1850 (1).<sup>8</sup> Although he did design a number of houses and secular buildings, restoration and church-building comprised the majority of projects supervised by Hicks.<sup>9</sup> Hicks believed that a building’s purpose outweighed the preservation of its historic elements. In 1865 he addressed the Committee of Architects regarding his restoration of St. Michael, Dorset:

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<sup>8</sup> His brother, John Hicks (1811-89) was a vicar and “prominent local spokesman of High Church principles” (Connor 5). His *Plain Sermons on the Teaching of the Church* (1856) examined the role of the church in the community and the importance of architecture and faith (6).

<sup>9</sup> For Hick’s secular work see Conner, p. 16.

I have always maintained [...] the principle of faithful restoration as far as this can be attained consistently with the higher considerations of solidity, permanency, and the uses for which our parish churches were originally designed namely the accommodation of Parishioners and the celebration of Divine Worship. (qtd. in Conner 32)

The restoration for Turnworth Church, which was completed in 1870 under Hardy's supervision, illustrates the extent to which many architects were willing to alter the original in order to fulfill an ideological purpose.<sup>10</sup>

The restoration at Turnworth involved, according to the *Builder* in 1871, “an entire rebuilding” of the church (*Builder* 28: 411). Hicks' instructions for the restoration, “Specifications to be done in taking down and rebuilding the Parish Church of Turnworth” directs the architect to “take down the whole of the present building except the tower” (Hicks 1).<sup>11</sup> Monuments and tombstones “that may be interfered with” were to be “carefully removed and re-erected” with the approval of the churchwardens (Hicks 1). In spite of these and many other drastic changes, Hicks designed a space that adhered to his principles, which included special children's seats on a raised level, the latest heating apparatus for the church, and proper ventilation (Hicks 7, 10). The extensive restorations involved the overall enlargement of the space which would accommodate 150 people (*Builder* 28: 411). The concern here, to use Hicks's own words when he addressed the architectural committee, is for the accommodation of “devout attendance of the people” which

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<sup>10</sup> Crickmay took over the remainder of Hicks's projects after his death in 1869. It was Crickmay who asked Hardy to supervise the building project. Hardy designed the capitals.

<sup>11</sup> According to the report from the *Dorset County Chronicle*, “Reopening of Turnworth Church (1870), the church's structure was “insecure” and restoration thus necessary (*Thomas Hardy's Public Voice* 5-7).

far outweighed its significance as an “antiquarian curiosity” (qtd. in Conner 32).

In spite of the damage inflicted upon numerous medieval churches throughout the nineteenth century it is important to note that many buildings were actually saved from a state of neglect and decay (Hunter 6).<sup>12</sup> This is the case when the young London architect Stephen Smith is called upon to restore Endelstow Church in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. The rector informs his architect: “This town of ours is, as you will notice, entirely gone beyond the possibility of restoration but the church itself is well enough. You should see some of the churches in this county. Floors rotten: ivy lining the walls” (18). This natural process of decay betokened the ephemeral beauty of architectural ruins—the kind that was celebrated by the Romantics and Ruskin alike. Of course, the problem with ruins is that they only serve an aesthetic function—at least for humans—Hardy’s fiction often reminds us that animals make a home out of decaying buildings. In the nineteenth century, gothic architects often transformed inhabitable spaces into spaces that were useful and sustainable. This is the case with Endelstow Rectory, where modern engineering is used to reinforce the walls of a decaying building: “Planks and poles had arrived in the churchyard, iron bars had been thrust into the venerable crack extending down the belfry wall to the foundation...” (*Blue Eyes* 152). In addition to being useful or necessary, restorations were often, Brooks argues, “extraordinary acts of the creative, or recreative, imagination” (*Gothic Revival* 252). Although the majority of Victorian restorations did not adhere to a set

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<sup>12</sup> Beatty argues that both Hicks and Crickmay saved a number of churches from complete destruction (72). However, the actual number of churches in need of repair was likely exaggerated by Ecclesiologists. According to Geoffrey K. Branwood, “Although there were undoubtedly plenty of cases of abysmal neglect which could be held up as icons of profanity, modern research has tended to show that the majority of late Georgian churches were probably kept in what we might regard as a reasonable state of repair” (63).

of principles for restoration, particularly before 1877, many were works of art in their own right.

The extent to which a building was “restored” thus depended upon the professional ideals of the architect and those who commissioned the project. George Gilbert Scott, for example, believed that buildings should conform to a “single coherent architectural style (preferably decorated Gothic)” (Harvey and Press 116). While others, particularly members of the Cambridge Camden Society, argued that “an architecturally correct copy of an ancient architectural feature was considered to be as good as, or even better than, the real thing” (Chitty 107). A High Victorian architect, Scott was known for his numerous restoration projects, and considered by many the “arch-villain of Victorian restoration” (Brooks, *Gothic Revival* 321). It was Scott’s restoration of Tewkesbury Abbey that elicited Morris’s famous letter to the *Athenaeum* in 1877, in which he called for an association “to keep a watch on old monuments, to protest against all ‘restoration’” (“To the Editor of the *Athenaeum*” 175). Scott repeatedly defended his restoration projects, as did his former pupil J.T. Micklethwaite after Scott’s death: “he could restore a design from a few remains with a skill that ensured a very close resemblance to the original work, and that faculty may have tempted him to carry out the work of restoration to a greater degree than modern criticism approves of” (qtd. in Stamp). It was, according to Micklethwaite, not just the architects who were to blame for restorations, but often the clients who ordered them in the first place. He continued,

the custodians of a building on which Sir Gilbert was employed would not have allowed him to do anything else than restore it in the manner he did, and those restorations he treated as he did would, in

all probability, have been done much worse if he had not done them, or if they had been done by men who did not possess his skill. (qtd. in Stamp).

Likewise, as Hardy illustrates in *A Laodicean*, aspiring architect Somerset, in charge of restoring Stancy Castle, is forced to come to terms with the fact that its owner, Paula Power, wants to add a Greek court to the medieval quadrangle, a “dreadful anachronism” that conflicts with his artistic principles (71). Of course in Somerset’s case, the desire to impress Paula is more the result of his romantic ambitions than professional ones but it is important to note that many architects, particularly those beginning their careers, were carrying out the wishes of their employers.

The journalist and clergyman Edward Garbett argued that the professionalization of architecture, because it relied significantly on church restoration, rested on the “destruction” of ancient buildings. In an 1870 article for the *Athenaeum* he stated, “No race can possibly enjoy both historic monuments and a profession living on—that is, paid according to—expenditure upon them” (504). But there was an important relationship between the architect and the clergy, who were promoting a style of architecture for ideological purposes and Morris, in his letter to the *Athenaeum*, blamed both (174). As Chris Miele explains, “Church restoration was a contract. Professional architects provided historically purified icons to an Anglican clergy seeking to inspire a revival in religious feeling; in return architects were allowed to monopolise a very lucrative practice” (“Professionalism and Restoration” 151). Aspiring architects, as part of their apprenticeship, were trained in restoration because it was such a lucrative field (Miele, “First

Conservation Militants 19). In *A Laodicean*, Somerset, on the brink of going into practice, is offered the opportunity to restore Stancey Castle with an expenditure of £100,000. Hardy writes:

for a young man just beginning practice, and wishing to make his name known, the opportunity of playing with another person's money to that extent would afford an exceptionally handsome opening, not so much from the commission it represented, as from the attention that would be bestowed by the art world on such an undertaking. (68)

The commission to restore an ancient building is a promising prospect for an aspiring architect and Paula is drawn to Somerset because of his extensive knowledge of ancient styles and building materials. Indeed, architects, “were the only people associated with building who consistently made it their business to know how to apply architectural history and archaeology” (Miele “Professionalism and Restoration” 156). Thus the “quack” architect Havill, whose untrained eye could compromise the historical integrity of Stancey Castle, cannot compete with Somerset’s antiquarian and archaeological knowledge (Hardy 68).

Examining the castle with Paula, Somerset

pointed out where roofs had been and should be again, where gables had been pulled down, and where floors had vanished, showing her how to reconstruct their details from marks in the walls, much as a comparative anatomist reconstructs an antediluvian from fragmentary bones and teeth. (*A Laodicean* 70)

Somerset’s education enables him to ascertain with scientific specificity, the similarities and differences between varying architectural styles. He is a member of

the Society of Antiquaries and his expertise is the result of studying and sketching gothic buildings, a habit in which he engages throughout the novel (67). Somerset is not the wilful and destructive restorer Hardy creates in the figure of Havill. On discovering that architectural rival Havill might restore the castle he experiences, “a sudden pang of regret at finding that the masterly workmanship in this fine castle was likely to be tinkered and spoilt by such a man as Havill (60). His concern for the castle, which at times is undermined by his love for Paula, nevertheless displays an awareness and appreciation for ancient buildings spurned by antiquarianism and the Gothic Revival itself.

### **Towards Preservation: The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and its Predecessors**

As a result of the Romantic Movement and the Gothic Revival, the various publications dedicated to the appreciation of medieval architecture at home and abroad contributed to the growing awareness of historic buildings and their preservation. Michael Hunter notes, that in “early nineteenth century England, one finds an increasingly widespread appreciation of historical relics as tangible reminders of the past” (5). Thomas Rickman’s *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture* (1817) remained popular throughout the nineteenth century as a guide to antiquarians, architects, and restorers of medieval buildings (Aldrich “Rickman, Thomas”). Given its significance, it is not surprising that in *A Laodicean*, Paula consults Rickman’s book in an attempt to discern between the differing medieval styles of Stancy Castle (Hardy 76). Other popular books included John Britton’s *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain* (1834) and

Charles Knight's *Old England: a Pictorial History of Royal, Ecclesiological, Baronial, Municipal, and Popular Antiquities* (1845) (Hunter 5).

The notion that ancient buildings should be preserved for future generations reached back to the final decade of the eighteenth century when John Carter published a series of articles in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, attacking architect James Wyatt for his restoration projects. What came to be known as Wyatt's "architectural innovations" for Lichfield, Durham, Hereford, and Salisbury were seen as antithetical to the very notion of preservation (Carter 927). From 1779-82, Salisbury Cathedral underwent significant alterations in the hands of Wyatt, who removed the nave's thirteenth-century choir screen, stained glass windows, and, among other "improvements," rearranged the medieval monuments into rows, earning him the nickname, "the Destroyer" (Brooks, *Gothic Revival* 223). It is work similar to this that Jude finds in Melchester well into the nineteenth century, "the Cathedral repairs [...] were very extensive, the whole interior stonework having been overhauled, to be largely replaced by new" (*Jude* 129). Carter believed that significant alterations to medieval buildings tampered with Britain's living national history:

I presume to profess myself a real Antiquary [...] I venerate the history of my country, I venerate the names of the great, the warlike, and the good, of former times; I venerate those astonishing, those magnificent fabricks, those enchanting monumental memorials, which they have left behind as proofs of their enlightened genius and skill!  
(Carter 926)

Carter valued ancient structures because they embodied every element of the

past; the good and the bad. Historic buildings were testimony to the rich history of the nation. But the preservation of ancient buildings was as much about maintaining history at a local level. Nineteenth-century historians argued that ancient structures “were often the only records of past events in the life of a parish and therefore had to be preserved as documents” (Miele, “Small Knot of Cultivated People” 73). Wyatt’s restorations of Salisbury, which began in 1789, were reversed by Scott in 1860. That same year Hardy visited Salisbury Cathedral as a young architect’s pupil. He recalled, in a letter to Sir Henry Newbolt (1920), “At that time the interior, as arranged by Wyatt, was still untouched by Scott, the organ being over the screen. The result was that a greater air of mystery and gloom hung over the interior than does now and it looked much larger from the subdivision” (*Letters* 6: 1).<sup>13</sup> Even restorations as late as the eighteenth century contributed to the historical layering of medieval structures and served as records of a more recent past, a truth often ignored by Morris in his work for the SPAB.

Significant alterations brought the notion of “restoration” into question. Writing about the practice in Bordeaux in 1847, historian Francis Palgrave stated, “Restoration is impossible [...] You cannot grind old bones new. You may repeat the outward form (though rarely with minute accuracy), but you cannot the material, the bedding, and laying, and above all the tooling [...] There is an anachronism in every stone” (qtd. in Lowenthal 278). Both Ruskin, and later Morris, argued that restoration was inconceivable. In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* Ruskin argued “it is *impossible*, as impossible as to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture” (161). The question as to how much a

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<sup>13</sup> Scott attempted to “recreate the church’s medieval polychromy, returning the cathedral to its ‘high religious purpose’” (Reeve 60).

building should be restored in order to make it relevant in a “progressive” age or how to preserve it for future generations continued to spark debates in the architectural world.

By the 1860s, the Royal Institute of British Architects recognized the need for “a moderate approach” to restoration “which showed a considerable respect for weathered surfaces and the irregular appearance of medieval fabrics” (Miele, “Professionalism and Restoration” 159). It was none other than Scott who, in his 1862 address to the RIBA, “On the Conservation of Ancient Architectural Monuments and Remains,” pointed out the danger historic buildings faced, including “natural decay,” “wilful destruction,” and “over restoration” (Scott 41). He called on fellow architects and the antiquarian societies which had become increasingly popular, to “take it into their serious consideration, both severally and jointly, what measures can be adopted to arrest the evil before it be too late” (Scott 41). In response to criticism from the Ecclesiological Society and “other amateur architecture societies,” the RIBA formed the Committee on the Conservation of Ancient Architectural Monuments and Remains in 1864 (Miele 161). In 1872 John Lubbock, who was then President of the Royal Anthropological Institute, suggested that a Parliamentary Act be passed to protect ancient monuments. Although the Ancient Monuments Protection Act was not passed until 1882, it required the protection of all prehistoric buildings in Britain.

It is perhaps surprising that Scott would continue with his restoration projects after his own plea to the RIBA, but it was his planned restorations for the Abbey Church at Tewkesbury that incited Morris’s 1877 letter to the *Athenaeum*, where he called on an association to “keep watch on all old monuments, to protest

against all ‘restoration’” (Morris “To the Editor” 175). Ancient buildings, Morris argued, were not the mere “ecclesiastical toys” of architects and the clergy but, rather, evidence of a “living history” and as such required protection and care (Morris “To the Editor” 174).

### **William Morris, Architecture, and the SPAB**

In his Manifesto for the SPAB (1877) Morris argued that the practice of restoration emerged because the nineteenth century had “no style of its own amidst its wide knowledge of the styles of other centuries” (53). He continued:

From this lack and this gain arose in men’s minds the strange idea of the Restoration of ancient buildings; and a strange and most fatal idea, which by its very name implies that it is possible to strip from a building this, that, and the other part of its history—of its life that is—and then to stay the hand at some arbitrary point, and leave it still historical, living, and even as it once was. (53)

Buildings, once restored, are rendered lifeless. Hardy illustrates Morris’s point in *A Laodicean* when Somerset reaches the conclusion, “that all styles were extinct, and with them all architecture as a living art” (Hardy 5). Ruskin had outlined the idea of a “living art” in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. “Living architecture,” Ruskin argued, had “sensation in every inch of it, and an accommodation to every architectural necessity, with a determined variation in arrangement, which is exactly like the related proportions and provisions in the structure of organic form” (148).<sup>14</sup> Of course, if the essence of “the living” is change, then a living architecture

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<sup>14</sup> Morris was certainly influenced by Ruskin’s ideas. Morris, according to Miele, is often referred to

would seem to suggest one that accommodates dramatic change over the centuries. This, Hardy points out, is a truth the young architect Somerset fails to recognize:

Somerset was not old enough at that time to know that, in practice, art had at all times been as full of shifts and compromises as every other mundane thing; that ideal perfection was never achieved by Greek, Goth, or Hebrew Jew, and never would be; and thus he was thrown into a mood of disgust with his profession. (*A Laodicean* 5)

An architect trained in the nineteenth century, Somerset sees value only in perfection, which ecclesiologists and restorers associated with the “original” but this original moment does not exist: architecture is continually subject to change, changes that one could read in the fabric of unaltered medieval buildings.

Ruskin praised change as an artistic quality in *The Stones of Venice*, “if, as in Gothic work, there is perpetual change both in design and execution, the workman must have been altogether set free” (2: 172). Moreover, the spirit of the builders, long dead, lived on in architecture. It was this Ruskinian notion that Morris developed in his Manifesto when he describes the value in preserving these elements of change and inconsistency, created instinctively by builders from the eleventh to eighteenth centuries. Morris celebrated this “living” element in architecture in one of his earliest publications, “The Churches of North France, No. 1 Shadows of Amiens,” which appeared in the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856), the periodical created by Morris and the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood:

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as Ruskin’s “child” (“Conservation and the Enemies of Progress” 34). This connection, however, “does not do justice to Morris as a thinker, or to his understanding of the role of ancient buildings in a modern society” (34).

And those same builders, still surely living, still real men, and capable of receiving love, I love no less than the great men, poets and painters and such like, who are on earth now, no less than my breathing friends whom I can see looking kindly on me now. Ah! do I not love them with just cause, who certainly loved me, thinking of me sometimes between the strokes of their chisels; and for this love of all men that they had, and moreover for the great love of God...(100)<sup>15</sup>

The nameless working-class builder, the craftsman, and the stonemason, whose work was witnessed in every element of a building, loomed as large as the well-known “great men” of history. Morris also places emphasis on their humanity, not only were they capable of receiving love but giving it as well. They created works of art in the spirit of the moments in which they lived, whilst looking toward the future. This was done out of devotional love for God and humans alike.<sup>16</sup> Morris’s devotion is centered not on the divine but on this human aspect of gothic architecture. Indeed, Peter Faulkner argues that his “sensibility was not at all religious; his energies were [...] directed to an end which he saw as distinctly human” (9). The “very foundation of architecture,” Morris explained, “rested on the fact that it be “human, serious, and pleasurable” (“Prospects of Architecture in Civilization” 85). This original spirit was lost in an industrialized society where “living architectural art” had been replaced by “mechanical drudgery” (Morris, “Revival of Architecture” 138). It was this “living” element of architecture, found most often in medieval buildings, that Morris wanted to protect from the business of restoration and to

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<sup>15</sup> Morris traveled to France in 1855 as part of a “Ruskinian Grand Tour” (MacCarthy 84).

<sup>16</sup> It was during his travels in France that Morris considered a break with Christianity (MacCarthy 84).

preserve as a model for how to live in the modern world.

When Morris entered Oxford in 1853 it was unaltered, the city and its colleges maintained much of their original medieval features. The colleges, Harvey and Press explain, “had not yet begun the substantial expansion and rebuilding work of the mid-Victorian period” (*William Morris: Design and Enterprise* 17). In 1856 an anonymous contributor to the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* exclaimed:

The past, it is written, ever explains to us the present; we feel this to be especially true of Oxford. Everything about us that we see or hear carries us back to far-off ages. Latin statutes, old-fashioned costume and names, the broad straight walks, Gothic buildings hoary or black with time, all speak of other days. We seem to live in the past. (234)

Indeed, according to Fiona MacCarthy, “There was enough of the old city left intact for Morris to adopt it as a paradigm of the perfect medieval city [...] His memories of that first and almost untouched Oxford fired and fuelled his opposition to what he regarded as its violation: it was his ‘jewel’ of a city cast away” (52).<sup>17</sup> It was during these formative years that Morris became a proponent of Ruskin’s ideas as well as an architect’s pupil in the Oxford office of gothic architect George Edmund Street.<sup>18</sup> The past not only explained to Morris the present, but could be used as a model for how to live, work, and create. Morris’s experience of the past was felt most keenly in architecture.

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<sup>17</sup> There were restorations taking place in Oxford even during this time. MacCarthy points out that the original Exeter College Chapel (1623-4) was “demolished in the year [Morris] came to Oxford to make way for George Gilbert Scott’s reworking of the Sainte-Chapelle” (55).

<sup>18</sup> Morris spent a year in Street’s office. After the formation of the SPAB he publicly criticized Street for his restorations (MacCarthy 378).

When Morris formed the SPAB in 1877, a significant amount of buildings had already been damaged in the name of restoration. The question arose as to whether or not it was too late to actually preserve what was left or how a profession that thrived on restoration would agree to make changes to the process. That same year, E.W. Gowdin argued, "We may be tolerably certain that the protest has come too late, and that the restorer's tools so mightily wielded by Sir George Gilbert Scott and Mr. Street will not be stayed until the time come when no more subjects shall remain for dissection and preparation. The case of the preservation party is well-nigh hopeless..." ("The Mania for Church Restoration" 153). The alterations brought about by restorations were irreversible. While Morris acknowledged the fact that too many buildings had been destroyed, he believed that it was worthwhile to protect those that remained undamaged. He explained, "It is encouraging to remark that so great has been the mass of fine architecture left us by our ancestors, that in spite of all the damage done by restoration and destruction, there is still much left quite untouched" (Morris, *Address* 59). Buildings are part of a legacy, an inheritance left to the present by the past.

Morris, Miele explains, preferred medieval architecture because of its association with an idyllic notion of "unalienated labour" which could not exist in a capitalist society (*From William Morris 2*). Preservation was thus "an act of defiance against capitalism" (Miele, *From William Morris 2*). If Anglicanism was the driving force behind church restoration, socialism became the incentive for preservation. Indeed, Anna Vaninskaya contends that for Morris and many of his contemporaries, Socialism was a religion (180). He argued, "if art which is now sick is to live and not die, it must in the future be of the people, for the people, and by

the people; it must understand all and be understood by all” (Morris 78). Medieval architecture embodied this spirit of community—the kind of community spirit Pugin believed gothic architecture inspired. Returning to past models was the best way to confront the present.

Morris “was nurtured in the neo-Gothic tradition” (Miele *From William Morris* 8). The Gothic Revival had “structured his whole way of conceiving history” (Miele 8). In spite of this, Morris did not consider himself a proponent of the Gothic Revival, as he made clear in the “Manifesto.” He held the revival responsible for the destruction of medieval churches. Of course, the revival that destroyed medieval buildings also contributed to an understanding of and appreciation for ancient structures. That Morris’s opinions changed is apparent in two lectures written during the 1880s, “The Revival of Architecture,” and “Gothic Architecture” (Miele, Introduction 19). Morris came to see the Gothic Revival as being in sympathy with medieval architecture. He celebrated the architecture of “...those who sympathized with the great period of the development of the human race, the historical sense which may be said to be a specific gift of the nineteenth century, and a kind of compensation for the ugliness which surrounds our lives at present...” (Morris, “The Revival of Architecture” 129). The Gothic Revival of the nineteenth century had its merits, but for Morris ancient buildings needed to remain in a “genuine condition,” an otherwise unaltered state (Morris, “Address” 57). What Morris detested most of all were the alterations made to original gothic structures, or historic buildings more generally.

Morris believed it was the responsibility of the nation to protect ancient buildings. As a socialist Morris argued that once society was “reconstituted” so “all

citizens will have a chance of leading a life made up of due leisure and reasonable work," society as a whole would contribute to architectural preservation and only then realize that ancient buildings were part of the living present, "for then at last they will begin to understand that they are part of their present lives, and in part of themselves" (Morris, "Architecture and History" 120). Morris advocates a sense of community in which everyone works freely and happily toward the same purpose: in this case, architectural preservation. Because buildings belonged to everyone, it was the responsibility of society to protect them. Ancient buildings were a monument to the nation's past and the people who built them and therefore belonged, not to individuals, but to the country. In an 1877 letter to the *Times*, Morris claimed that "our ancient historical monuments are national property and ought no longer to be left to the mercy of the many and variable ideas of ecclesiastical propriety that may at any time be prevalent among us" (qtd. in Miele, "First Conservation Militants" 22). Morris sought to remove medieval buildings from the hands of the architects and clergyman most likely to make alterations for the sake of High Church ideology.

In *A Laodicean* Paula Power, in reference to her castle, recognizes that "People hold these places in trust for the nation" (56). Restoration, she acknowledges, will not go unchecked by local antiquarian societies, "I fear what the antiquarians will say if I am not very careful. They come here a great deal in summer, and if I were to do the work wrong they would put my name in the papers as a dreadful person willfully destroying what is by rights the property of all" (67). Despite her awareness, or perhaps because of it, Paula later reveals anxiety over her plans for the addition of a Greek temple. Moreover, as Ruskin argued in 1849,

ancient buildings belonged to future generations: “*We have no right whatever to touch them*. They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them, and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow it. The dead have still their right to them...” [emphasis in original] (*Seven Lamps* 181). This raises an important question regarding the ownership of ancient structures. For Ruskin, Victorians were merely the caregivers: protecting ancient buildings out of respect to their creators and ensuring they would be passed on to future generations. This is the reasoning behind Paula’s decision to put the longevity of the castle before her own aesthetic principles. Havill advises “taking out some of the old stones and reinstating new ones just like them” (60). Paula responds: “But the new ones won’t be Saxon [...] And then in time to come, when I have passed away, and those stones have become stained like the rest, people will be deceived. I should prefer an honest patch to any such make-believe of Saxon relics” (60). This statement addresses both the issue of preserving a medieval structure for future generations while managing to keep it, to use Morris’s words, in “a genuine condition.”

Given the fact that the castle in Hardy’s novel belongs to the nation, it is not surprising that it does not actually appear to belong to an individual character: neither to Paula nor the De Stancys. In reference to the fact that the castle belonged to Charlotte De Stancy’s ancestors, though she never lived in the house, Somerset states, “This is home to you, and not home?” (*A Laodicean* 26). Not only is the definition of Charlotte’s status within the castle unclear, she is unable to imagine that it ever really belonged to her relatives. The displaced Captain De Stancy aspires to marry Paula in order to reinstate the family in their ancestral home. Paula’s repairs will return the castle walls “in their original intact shape to

the family dispossessed, by marriage with himself, its living representative” (*A Laodicean* 162). Like the Ecclesiologists who believed the restoration of medieval churches invoked a spiritual restoration within the Anglican Church, so the restoration of the castle becomes synonymous with the restoration of the De Stancy family in their proper home. In *A Laodicean* Hardy describes the moment in which “romanticism,” in spite of Paula’s association with modernism and industrialization, “had asserted itself in her. Veneration of things old, not because of any merit in them, but because of their long continuance, had developed in her” (242). Part of Paula’s attachment to the castle, and indeed the Stancy family, is that it ties her to an ancient past that she herself does not possess. The restoration of her castle is thus an attempt to restore a past she never experienced and become part of it. Lowenthal writes, “We alter the past to become a part of it as well as make it our own” (331). But this is impossible of realization in Hardy’s novel: the literal destruction of Stancy Castle at the hands of Dare suggests that nothing from the past can ever be fully restored.

In *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, John Durbeyfield attempts to restore his once noble family to its original state. Associating his own restoration with the preservation of ancient buildings, he states,

I’m thinking of sending round to all the old antiqueerians in this part of England [...] asking them to subscribe to a fund to maintain me. I’m sure they’d see it as a romantical, artistical, and proper thing to do. They spend lots o’ money in keeping up old ruins and finding the bones o’ things and such like; and living remains must be more interesting to ‘em still, if they only knowed of me. (366)

Durbeyfield's observations on nineteenth-century antiquarianism and the romanticism of the medieval past are perceptive. Of course, the irony is that this "living relic" has little value in the modern world and, in an ironic twist, his name which, Hardy writes, "sadly wanted such renovation," is restored by the very people with whom it shares no association (44). Moreover, the d'Urbervilles live in a house without a visible history, "I thought we were an old family," Tess exclaims, "but this is all new" (44).

But if restoration was impossible, was preservation possible? And how does one preserve a building or structure so that it will continue to exist for future generations? In "Shall Stonehenge Go?," an interview that appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* (1899), Hardy made it clear that Stonehenge should be made "the sure property of the nation by government purchase" (Hardy 153).<sup>19</sup> "What should next be done," in terms of preservation, was, Hardy explained, "a difficult question" (153). Stonehenge is vulnerable to the elements, particularly on the south west side where "Time nibbles year after year" (154). Hardy addresses the issue of how best to conserve Stonehenge without destroying its natural mystique. Preservation was itself a perplexing issue, architects and those associated with the built environment were forced to come to terms with the fact that, in order to preserve a building, one would have to make alterations to ancient fabrics. In other words, one could not easily preserve a building without restoring it. There was, Hardy acknowledged, no "satisfactory reconciliation," the only solution was "compromise" ("Memories" 253, 242).

If buildings should not be restored, or, if as Morris and others argued,

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<sup>19</sup> In 1918 C.H.E. Chubb of Salisbury gave Stonehenge to the nation (Millgate 153).

restoration by definition was impossible, there were ways to avoid further decay. In the “Manifesto” Morris pointed to the means by which this could be achieved:

to stave off decay by daily care, to prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof by such means as are obviously meant for support or covering, and show no pretence of other art, and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or the ornament of the building as it stands; if it has become inconvenient for its present use, to raise another building rather than alter or enlarge the old one; in fine to treat our ancient buildings as monuments of a bygone art, created by bygone manners, that modern art cannot meddle with without destroying. (“Manifesto” 55)

Morris would later state that additions to old buildings were acceptable only if obvious and not a forgery of the original fabric (F. Scott 50). As Morris, and later Hardy, would suggest, an ancient building was far better off in ruin than in repair. “What is to be done,” Hardy wrote, “in instances to prevent rapid decay to prevent the entire disappearance of such as yet exists? Shall we allow it to remain untouched for the brief years of its durability, to have the luxury of the original a little while, or sacrifice the rotting original to install, at least, a reminder of its design?” (“Memories” 252). Like Morris, he even goes so far as to suggest that an ideal alternative would be to enclose a ruinous church in a crystal palace, protecting it from the natural effects of wear and tear, and build a new, operational church next to the old one (252). However, this was not a realistic course. Hardy concludes by proposing that ancient buildings are better off in ruin than in repair. Hardy’s view is ruled by a complex contradiction: to preserve a church in its

“original” state means one must embrace an aesthetic which values ruination itself, the signs of the passage of time that are essentially marks left by the human use of a building. Here, he draws on the views outlined by Ruskin in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. Here, Ruskin privileged ruin in architecture for aesthetic purposes: “In architecture, the superinduced and accidental beauty is most commonly consistent with the preservation of original character, and the picturesque is therefore sought in ruin, and supposed to consist in decay” (178). In *A Laodicean* Somerset’s designs for the restoration include a new structure to be built alongside the existing castle. Hardy describes the moment his rival Havill sees the plans:

It was original; and it was fascinating. Its originality lay partly in the circumstance that Somerset had not attempted to adopt an old building to the wants of a new civilization. He had placed his new erection beside it as a slightly attached structure, harmonizing with the old; heightening and beautifying, rather than subduing it. His work formed a palace, with a ruinous castle annexed as a curiosity. (123)

Somerset’s sketches address the complicated issue of how best to preserve an ancient structure without marring its original features. The castle has become an antiquarian “curiosity,” no longer to fulfill its purpose original purpose as a medieval fortress.

It is significant that, before the restorations of Stancy Castle can be completed, all but the original Norman walls have burnt to the ground, offering what would appear to be a literal interpretation of Morris’s belief that restoration is impossible. Instead of rebuilding, Somerset exclaims, “We will remove the ashes, charred wood, and so on from the ruin, and plant more ivy. The winter rains will

wash the unsightly smoke from the walls, and Stancy Castle will be beautiful in its decay” (378-9). Decay, in the form of picturesque medieval ruins, is preferable to restoration.<sup>20</sup> This points to a contradiction in Morris’s thought: nothing is static because everything decays. If restoration is eschewed, you will get, nonetheless, ruination. “Such signs of decay,” Lowenthal writes, “also betoken imminent extinction. No product of man or nature endures forever” (125).

Like Ruskin before him, Morris believed that architecture was a “record” of human creativity, of the thoughts and beliefs of its original builders (Morris, “Architecture and History 101). As such it belonged to the past and could never be restored. This assignment to the past is what allowed it to be used for criticism of the present. Once buildings lost historical distance from the present, they lost that value. Ruskin and Morris were marshalling their arguments against powerful modernizing forces in Victorian culture, against people who saw value only in the new.<sup>21</sup> In *On Altering Architecture* (2008), Fred Scott argues that the problem with Morris’s theory of conservation is that it excludes nineteenth-century builders and craftsmen from the very agency he and Ruskin celebrated in their medieval predecessors (52). To be fair, Morris was attempting to revive the kind of craftsmanship that allowed artistic freedom which, he believed, had been destroyed by industrialization. Morris argued that the architectural forgery that was committed in the name of restoration in the nineteenth century was impossible in

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<sup>20</sup> The Society, Morris claimed, had been accused of favouring “that ruin and destruction from which we profess to defend our ancient monuments.” But, Morris continued, “what a grief it is to us to come across the results [...] of neglect and brutality, and what a pleasure to look on a building” which, having been properly cared for, still stands (Miele, Morris 62).

<sup>21</sup> Although Morris & Co. revived medieval craft and designed stained glass for ancient churches, Morris displayed his dedication to the principles of SPAB when “the firm announced that it would no longer supply glass for medieval buildings which were undergoing restoration or improvement” (Harvey 118).

“early times” (“Manifesto” 53). He explained:

if repairs were needed, if ambition or piety pricked on to change, that change was of necessity wrought in the unmistakable fashion of the time [...] but every change, whatever history destroyed, left history in the gap and was alive with the spirit of deeds done midst its fashioning. The result of all this was often a building in which the many changes, though harsh and visible enough, were, by their very contrast, interesting and instructive and could by no possibility mislead. (“Manifesto” 53)

Certainly, the originating aesthetic moment is not the moment, for example, in the fourteenth century when a gothic cathedral was “completed” (when, after all, can Chartres be said to have been “completed?” Medieval construction in particular involves the layering on of different styles over the course of hundreds of years). The value of an original construction lies in the visible traces of its use and thus ruination or, to put it less starkly, its departure from an originating conception—the results of multiple acts of decomposition and layering over the centuries caused by human use, natural wear, and the intervention of new architectural ideas in the form of new construction. Scott contends, “Having recognized the validity of past alterations in the manifesto, Morris disallows the possibility of any future permanent change” (52). Scott’s statement however, does not address “the permanent change” that nature inflicts, the result of which can be seen in the worm-eaten and rotting church in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Nature does not stop, only ideologically conceived notions of “originality” pretend to stop it.

As his involvement with the SPAB suggests, Hardy was opposed to

restoration, but he also acknowledged that more recent architectural alterations had a merit of their own. In a 1906 letter to Thackeray Turner, the secretary for the SPAB, Hardy discussed the value of preserving the eighteenth-century alterations made to the parish at Fordington St. George.

It seems to depend upon how far down in the centuries our sentiments of veneration extend, whether the Society should protest on the ground of antiquity. But it certainly could protest on the ground that there is no reason whatever for pulling down so substantial a piece of 18th century work merely to erect 20th century imitation Gothic in its place” (*Letters* 3: 236).

Ever the practical architect, Hardy also points out that such unnecessary alterations were costly and beyond the means of the small rural parish (236). Morris and members of the SPAB sought to protect all buildings, “of all times and styles,” with the exception of their own. According to the Society, architecture built after 1700 was “not considered part of the historical record” (Miele “Conservation and the Enemies of Progress 12). This is based on the very Ruskinian notion that the value of architecture lies in its age. In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* Ruskin claimed, “I think a building cannot be considered as in its prime until four or five centuries have passed over it” (178). Morris believed, moreover, that the nineteenth century lacked its own definitive style, without one there was very little to contribute, and indeed nothing worth saving for future generations.

Morris loathed the “jerry-built” houses of the Victorian suburbs and sought reform, not only in the way buildings were constructed, but also in how people experienced spaces and their surroundings (“Revival of Architecture” 138). In

*News From Nowhere*, (1890) the contrast between the grimy city streets of London society and the new, clean, and natural environment of its socialist counterpart is keenly felt. As Miele points out, this was Morris's response to Pugin's *Contrasts* (Miele, *From William Morris* 1). The architecture in Morris's utopian world offers "an exhilarating sense of space and freedom," the houses "were mostly built of red brick & roofed with tiles, & looked, above all, comfortable, and as if they were, so to say, alive and sympathetic with the life of the dwellers in them" (*News from Nowhere* 18, 11). This is in stark contrast to the late nineteenth-century world which the narrator William Guest leaves behind: "The soap-works with their smoke-vomiting chimneys were gone; the engineer's works gone [...] and no sound of riveting and hammering" (*News from Nowhere* 10). Morris advocated for an organic type of architecture, for houses that arose naturally out of their environment (McCarthy 56).<sup>4</sup> Part of what Morris recommended was the preservation of nature and its relationship to the built environment. Architecture was a "monument of history" but it was also "a piece of nature" (Morris "To the Editor of *The Times*" 177). Discussing the layout of villages in a lecture for SPAB, he described places where "old cottages are a worthy fellow to the magnificent medieval church, and seem, so to say, to have grown out of the ground by the same process as it has" (Morris, "On the External Coverings of Roofs" 162). The same could be said of larger towns and cities. In an unpublished letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Morris opposed the widening of Magdalen Bridge (1882) on account that, "these buildings of Magdalen are essentially part of the street, and look almost as if they had grown out of the roadway; any injury done to the street will injure them fatally" ("Magdalen Bridge" 72). The juxtaposition between this and modern "improvements" is

apparent when buildings are at odds with their surroundings.

In *A Laodicean*, Mr. Woodwell's house

stood upon its spot of earth without any natural union with it: no mosses disguised the stiff straight line where wall met earth; not a creeper softened the aspect of the bare front. The garden walk was strewn with loose clinkers from the foundry, which rolled under the pedestrian's foot and jolted his soul out of him before he reached the porchless door. (Hardy 227)

Woodwell's house is clearly out of touch with the natural environment, instead of being part of the surroundings it appears in stark contrast against them. As a result, it becomes as soulless as Morris's industrial city.

What Morris wanted to preserve, then, was not just buildings but entire villages and the surrounding landscape where structures were created using local materials. He continued,

we claim an old village as a unit of ancient building [...] It is the same with these old villages as with a great Gothic church [...] And, where [...] new buildings must be built, by building them well, and in a common-sense and unpretentious way, with the good material of the countryside, they will take their place alongside the old houses and look, like them, a real growth of the soil. (Morris, "On the External Coverings of Roofs" 163) <sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> In "The Preservation of Ancient Cottages," (1927), Hardy supported the Royal Society of Arts in its endeavor to preserve ancient cottages on the grounds that the structure, though simple in appearance, were sustainable and often more comfortable, in terms of warmth, than modern "brick-and-slate" structures (Hardy 459). Hardy also suggested that "their construction might be imitated when rebuilding is absolutely necessary" (Hardy 460).

As Mark Pearson explains, “It is this empathy with the environment that Morris wishes to applaud in ancient buildings, and ultimately motivates his propositions with regard to new architecture” (145). Thus, in her discussion on Morris and community, Anna Vaninskaya contends, “Primitive and medieval forms—literary no less than decorative and architectural—owed their superiority to their mode of production; they were collective creations of the common people” (65-6). The act of building in the medieval tradition, Morris repeatedly argued, returned work to “the people” and allowed them the pleasure and hope involved in meaningful labor.

In *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Hardy’s description of the great barn combines Ruskin’s and Morris’s theories about preservation and community spirit. It is therefore worth quoting at length:

One could say about this barn, what could hardly be said of either the church or the castle, akin to it in age and style, that the purpose which had dictated its original erection was the same with that to which it was still applied. Unlike and superior to either of those two typical remnants of mediaevalism, the old barn embodied practices which had suffered no mutilation at the hands of time. Here at least the spirit of the ancient builders was at one with the spirit of the modern beholder. Standing before this abraded pile the eye regarded its present usage, the mind dwelt upon its past history, with a satisfied sense of functional continuity throughout [...] For once medievalism and modernism had a common standpoint [...] Today the large side-doors were thrown open towards the sun, to

admit a bountiful light to the immediate spot of the shearers' operations [...] here the shearers knelt, the sun slanting in upon their bleached shirts, tanned arms, and the polished shears they flourished... (Hardy 143-4)

The shearing barn represents the historical continuity Morris sought in preservation. Here, continuity is possible because it is free from the religious or political ideologies associated with the medieval church or castle. The builders embody the “ancient spirit” of their predecessors. The accretion of the past is therefore both architectural and social. Lowenthal writes, “Residues of successive generations in ancient sites betoken partnership, harmony, and order. It is accretion, in particular, that generates the past’s enrichment” (59). One of the interesting things about this passage is that it requires an historically aware and therefore self-conscious Victorian to comprehend its value. It was this self-consciousness, Brooks contends, that “brought historicism into being” (“Historicism and the Nineteenth Century” 5). Morris argued that preservation was important in an age when “the newly-invented study of living history is the chief joy of so many of our lives” (“To the Editor of the *Athenaeum* 174). Moreover, while the building itself has been preserved, the original purpose for which it was built remains, a topic Hardy addressed in his essay on church restoration.

Buildings, in Hardy’s words, were always seen in “two contradictory lights” and “required for two contradictory purposes” (“Memories” 241). Medieval churches in particular were not only antiquarian relics but machines operative in the present. It was important that a gothic church “continue to discharge its original functions” without losing its original aesthetic qualities (242). He continued: ‘The quaintly

carved seat that a touch will damage has to be sat in...the bells whose shaking endangers the graceful steeple have to be rung” (242). Hardy’s essay points to the complexities associated with the restoration and preservation of ancient buildings. It raises the question as to how a building might be maintained for future generations without compromising its historical integrity, and how a building ought to remain operative without causing damage to its original features. In *Far From the Madding Crowd* the work is communal: it re-enacts a moment that had probably been going on for centuries.

### **“The Work Must be Worth Doing:” Architectural Labor in Ruskin, Morris, and Hardy**

As I discussed in Chapter Two, among the elements Ruskin praised in *The Stones of Venice*, was the expression of the “mental tendencies of the builders” which was found, most commonly, in gothic architecture. Ancient buildings articulate freedom of artistic expression in labor, a quality Ruskin and later Morris considered lost in the industrial age. In “Art and Socialism” (1884), Morris argued, “It is right and necessary that all men should have work to do which shall be worth doing and be of itself pleasant to do” (64). Ruskin, and indeed to a great extent Morris, believed that medieval society lent itself to better working conditions and that involved working as part of a community.

If architecture could not be restored, it was perhaps possible for society to reintroduce working conditions that represented social equality. According to P.D. Anthony, Ruskin’s preference for medieval architecture is “based on the reasoned belief that it required forms of social organisation and forms of manual labour that

are superior to those of contemporary society and that it reflected a social pattern based upon values which are essential to human development and happiness” (46). Morris argued that, without social equality, art would cease to exist. He placed emphasis on the fact that the most important point to be made in “The Prospects of Architecture and Civilization” was this: “that our daily and necessary work, [...] should be human, serious, and pleasurable, not machine-like, trivial, or grievous. I call this not only the very foundation of Architecture in all senses of the word, but of happiness also in all conditions of life” (85). Society could transform itself by transforming the characteristics of labour: from “mechanical toil” to “intelligent work” (Morris, “Prospects” 91). It was this philosophy that Morris attempted to achieve in his own designing firm.

In 1881 Morris moved the headquarters of Morris & Co. to Merton Abbey in South London. “‘Morris’, wrote Emma Lazarus, who visited the factory, ‘provided work that was not excessively arduous or tedious in clean, healthy, and pleasant surroundings. He encouraged the development of skills, making the workman ‘feel himself not the brainless “hand,” but the intelligent cooperator...’” (qtd. in Harvey, *William Morris* 146). Merton Abbey became the manifestation of Ruskinian ideals (qtd. in Harvey, *William Morris* 149). Its aestheticism was more akin to medievalism than that associated with Victorian factories. MacCarthy explains, “The factory at Merton was rambling, almost ramshackle: to a visitor from France it looked like a large farmhouse,” suggesting a communal life at harmony with its surroundings (431). Morris was unable to revive the medieval guild, a situation in which the craftsman “worked for no master save the public” and “made his wares from beginning to end himself, and sold them himself to the man who was going to use

them” (“Architecture and History” 107). Despite his attempts to revive medieval craftsmanship as part of the Arts and Crafts movement, Morris relied on industrial capitalism as a means of production. According to Harvey and Press, Morris’s factory “was a modern enterprise, employing modern workers, which had to abide by the rules of competitive commerce, not those of the medieval guild” (*William Morris* 156). There were aspects of the past that could never be resurrected in a post-industrial society.

In addition to improving the labor conditions of the working-classes, Morris believed that upper-class males would benefit from manual labor. In *Aratra Pentilici*, a series of lectures given in 1870, Ruskin encouraged Oxford undergraduates to “resolve upon this one thing at least, that you will enable yourselves daily to do actually with your hands, something that is useful to mankind” (93-4). According to Martin A. Danahay, “When Ruskin says something ‘useful’ he actually has in mind something artistic [...] Ruskin tried to raise activities like digging to the same status as art and architecture and saw manual labor as producing strong, healthy men as well as a healthy society” (134). Ruskin’s road-digging project at Ferry Hinksey in 1874 was an attempt for Oxford’s young undergraduates to experience working-class labor. Indeed, as Danahay argues, “Ruskin tried to create a brotherhood of work that transcends class distinctions in Victorian society by asserting a common bond between men through work and the rejection of idleness” (Danahay 131). The reality of this project was more complicated. In 1905 author and illustrator Charles George Harper explained that the failure of the project was due to the fact that the road had been constructed “without a foundation” and the result was that “the rustics in the

succeeding winter waded through such depths of mud as they had never known before” (236). The obvious implication here is that the upper classes are only pretending, or performing a process of labor without the skills or indeed the time required for success.

In his fiction Hardy examines the implications of the kind of idealized forms of manual labor Ruskin and Morris promoted for both the upper and working classes and questions whether or not working-class labor offers the promise of fulfillment Ruskin hoped for. In *The Return of the Native*, the partially blind Clym Yeobright takes up furze-cutting with an enthusiasm considered shocking for one so well-educated. Clym begins what he calls an “honest occupation,” and the labor associated with it brings contentment: “Though frequently depressed in spirit when not actually at work, owing to thoughts of Eustacia's position and his mother's estrangement, when in the full swing of labour he was cheerfully disposed and calm” (244). But while Clym's work unites him with Egdon Heath and the villagers, it separates him from his wife and family. Moreover, as Radford claims, “Instead of creating a vision of primitive man's ability to subject natural phenomenon to his will, Hardy presents a type of emasculation or even death, with Clym dissolving into the heath as part of the landscape's pigmentation” (93-4). Hardy writes,

This man from Paris was now so disguised by his leather accoutrements, and by the goggles he was obliged to wear over his eyes, that his closest friend might have passed by without recognizing him. He was a brown spot in the midst of an expanse of olive-green gorse, and nothing more. (244)

Here, Clym's loss of identity has its counterpart in industrial labor which, Morris

argued, reduced workers to a machine. Moreover, Danahay points to the fact that, where Ruskin's road-building projects were concerned, there is little evidence of enthusiasm on the part of the wealthy students to undertake manual labor. He explains, "while Ruskin idealized working class labour, the audience he was addressing in both cases did not" (135). Clym's return to a more primitive form of labor, one in which he becomes part of the natural environment, is equally unfulfilling, and the monotony of the task forces him to recount "Parisian life and character, and so while away the time" (*Return of the Native* 245). Clym's work "entails," Radford writes, "not so much a prelapsarian rapport with the creatures around him but a frightening loss of individuality" (93). If Clym loses his individuality, working within the natural environment is as threatening as working in a factory.

Morris believed that "purely mechanical" work stripped individuals of their identity, reducing them to mere machines (Morris, "The Prospects of Architecture in Civilisation" 89-90). But even medieval craftsmanship fails to offer the promise of fulfillment such arguments suggest. As I have pointed out, Morris and many of his predecessors argued that restoration was impossible because the process of production, materials, and indeed the historical moment, was gone. In "Architecture and History" Morris stated that in the nineteenth century,

the attempt at reproduction not only deprives us of a monument of history, but also of a work of art [...] consequently no man, and no body of men, however learned they may be in ancient art [...] can persuade, or bribe, or force our workmen of to-day to do their work in the same way as the workmen of King Edward I, did theirs. (103)

*A Laodicean* begins with Somerset sketching and taking measurements of a medieval church. Hardy writes, “He took his measurements carefully, and as if he revered the old workers whose trick he was endeavouring to acquire six hundred years after the original performance had ceased and the performers passed into the unseen” (3). At different points in the novel Somerset attempts to revive these medieval processes. As part of the restoration project Somerset and Paula “agreed to have the works executed as such operations were carried out in old times, before the advent of contractors” (Hardy 221). Hardy continues:

Each trade required in the building was to be represented by a master-tradesman of that denomination [...] By this means the thoroughness of the workmanship would be greatly increased in comparison with the modern arrangement, whereby a nominal builder, seldom present, who can certainly know no more than one trade intimately and well, and who often does not know that, undertakes the whole. (Hardy 221)

But restoring the castle on medieval terms is never quite possible, as Somerset’s use of Paula’s telegraph in order to convey messages about the restoration suggests.

The nineteenth-century architect was a product of industrialization: the means of production was based on capitalism, the local craftsmen, sculptors, and master-masons were replaced by firms who mass produced the items required for a building project or restoration and then disbursed them quickly throughout the country by the railways (Brooks, “Introduction” 20-1). Even London architects were transported to the rural parish by train, as is the case with Steven Smith in *A Pair of*

*Blue* (Brooks, "Introduction" 20-21).<sup>23</sup> To recreate the spirit in which the medieval builder worked is impossible. "Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art," Benjamin writes, "is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be" (13). Somerset is unable to recreate a moment that occurred six hundred years prior to the nineteenth century. This is a reality recognized by Sir William De Stancy. Sitting in his modern but cheerful home, "Myrtle Villa," De Stancy believes that the dusty and decaying remnants of his castle, even the objects inside, have lost their inherent value. He explains, "What is the utility of such accumulations? [...] Their originals are but clay now—mere forgotten dust, not worthy of a moment's inquiry or reflection at this distance of time. Nothing can retain the spirit, and why should we preserve the shadow of the form?" (*A Laodicean* 39). Without the medieval spirit, it was pointless to attempt to preserve what remained.

This notion of the failure of architectural replication manifests itself in *Jude*, where architectural models appear in different forms throughout the novel. When Sue views an architectural model of the ancient city of Jerusalem, she exclaims, "this model, elaborate as it is, is a very imaginary production. How does anyone know that Jerusalem was like this at the time of Christ?" (100). Sue's statement points to the fact that reproductions in any form never fully capture the moment they portray. Similarly, Jude replicates the gothic spires of Christminster, the place he likens to a "heavenly Jerusalem" (16). The medieval stonemason has been reduced to constructing, not gothic buildings, but small, idealized models of them. In addition to his model of Cardinal College, Jude's "Christminster cakes" which are

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<sup>23</sup> Brooks argues that this also contributed to the "end of the genuinely local practitioner" ("Introduction" 21).

described as “reminiscences of the Christminster Colleges,” little gingerbread cakes in the shape of “tracery windows” and “cloisters,” are a pitiful shadow of his life as a stonemason (*Jude*). Steven Hancock argues that this marks Jude’s “return to the physicality that is so imagined in his identity as an artisan” (181). Hardy questions Morris’s ideal of reviving medieval craftsmanship, which in *Jude* has been reduced from enduring handmade artistry to the consumption of disposable wares.

### **Memory and the Preservation of the Past**

In the nineteenth century, the restoration of ancient buildings disrupted the sense of historical continuity that many valued in unaltered buildings. “How cold is all history,” Ruskin wrote, “how lifeless all imagery, compared to that which the living nation writes, and the uncorrupted marble bears! How many pages of doubtful record might we often spare, for a few stones left upon one another” (*Seven Lamps* 164). One of Morris’s earliest publications, the short work of fiction “The Story of an Unknown Church” (1856), follows a medieval master-mason as he recalls significant events in his life, which he associates with the construction of a cathedral six hundred years prior. It is a story about one man’s emotional ties to a medieval church, a building that no longer exists. Morris’s narrator explains, “it is now two hundred years since that church vanished from the face of the earth; it was destroyed utterly, –no fragment of it was left [...] No one even knows where it stood” (“The Story of an Unknown Church 42). Morris’s story traces the multi-layered history of the church through the Mason’s personal memories; the early days of the church’s construction, the tragic death of his best friend during a siege

of the nearby castle, the loss of his sister, and how he spent the rest of his life perfecting their memorial in the cathedral, dying with his chisel in his hand. The story is filled with architectural detail and depictions of a beautiful, autumnal landscape that characterize the narrator's dream-like recollections. Though violence plays a significant role, it is the narrator's devotion to his art, to the memory of his loved ones, that is central to the story. "There is a strong feeling," Faulkner explains, "that this kind of beauty is part of a vanished world [...] Morris has a strong sense of how humans *ought* to live in a beautiful world, *ought* to create for themselves such a world, but the overall sadness of the story suggests that this hope is likely often to be frustrated" (11). The master-mason's emotional and personal commitment to his craft is the kind of beauty that Morris wants to revive. But this melancholy story points out that this great work of art, a true labor of love, has been obliterated. The memories only rest with the dead because the architectural remnants have disappeared.

Ancient buildings offered a record of the past: humans attached associative meanings to architecture and the destruction of it obliterated living memory. As architectural historian Eleni Bastea claims,

Architecture can transform words, needs, and desires into space. It can capture fleeting or insistent memories into tangible, buildable, or unbuildable forms. Architecture provides the stage on which we enact our lives. Memory, however, creates a special relationship with space, holding onto the essence of it, the best and the worst, letting the rest of the details fade into gray. (1)

Jude transforms his desires into space; his intellectual and spiritual aspirations, as

well as his desire to meet Sue after learning of her existence, are manifest in Christminster architecture. Even before their first encounter Sue represents “the only thing uniting him to the emotions of the living city” (79). Christminster thus becomes for Jude a “place of many memories,” that tell the history of his short life in its “wasted walls” (309). It is significant that Jude’s return to Christminster at the end of the novel occurs on “Remembrance Day,” as it is the day that calls to memory the moment in which Jude placed all his hopes on “buildable” and “unbuildable” forms—his relationship to Christminster is based on the visions of its buildings that he imagines as a child and the disappointing realities he confronts as an adult. Jude and his family,

pursued the lane till there arose on Jude’s sight the circular theatre with that well-known lantern above it, which stood in his mind as the sad symbol of his abandoned hopes; for it was from that outlook that he had finally surveyed the City of Colleges on the afternoon of his great meditation, which convinced him at last of the futility of his attempt to be a son of the University. (314)

Architecture produces associative meanings. Part of what Morris wanted to preserve in ancient buildings were these human associations. In *Jude*, however, memories from the past often become emotional burdens from which it is difficult to escape.

At the same time, to erase such significant relics of the past is equally damaging, as in the case with Marygreen. Like Paula Power, growing up without a sense of the past leaves Jude longing for one. The young Jude grows up with his aunt in a small village where local history has been obliterated by so-called modern

architectural improvements. Though an ancient hamlet, the “well-shaft was probably the only relic of the local history that had remained absolutely unchanged” (*Jude* 5). Hardy continues:

Many of the thatched and dormered dwelling-houses had been pulled down of late years, and many trees felled on the green. Above all the original church, hump-backed, wood-turreted, and quaintly hipped, had been taken down and either cracked up into heaps of road-metal in the lane, or utilized as pig-sty walls, garden seats, guard-stones to fences, and rockeries in the flower-beds of the neighbourhood. In place of it a tall new building of modern Gothic design [...] had been erected on a new piece of ground by a certain obliterator of historic records who had run down from London and back in a day. (5-6)<sup>24</sup>

Hardy’s description is significant because it shows that such drastic alterations in landscape and architecture have left an otherwise “old-fashioned” community deprived of any sense of historical continuity. What was once sacred has become profane: the medieval walls of a church have been converted into pig-sty walls. In Marygreen, the cultural and personal memories associated with the built environment have been lost as the inhabitants are unable to recognize the signs that connect them to their past. As Lowenthal argues, “Dubious owing to its very absence, inaccessible yet intimately known, the character of the past depends on how—and how much—it is consciously apprehended” (192). To “consciously apprehend” the past requires its presence, particularly in the form of architecture.

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<sup>24</sup> While it has been suggested that Hardy’s “certain obliterator of historic records” refers to G.E. Street, Beatty argues that “No ‘real life’ architect can ever be responsible for a building in fiction. Hardy is careful not to describe the church at Marygreen in any detail” (15).

Indeed, Jude is equally unaware of the human associations in a local corn-field which has been stripped “of all history beyond that of a few recent months, though every clod and stone there really attached associations enough and to spare—echoes of songs from ancient harvest-days, of spoken words, and of sturdy deeds [...] But this neither Jude nor the rooks around him considered” (8-9). Even alterations to the landscape have effaced the remnants of the past. In his discussion of Marygreen Bivona writes that “Farming itself [...] is an activity which constantly works to obliterate the traces of the past; in a newly-ploughed field, history is only accessible under the sign of erasure, as an inference one makes on the face of the evidence of its obliteration” (*Desire and Contradiction* 99).

Alterations to the natural environment thus have their counterpart in changes made to architectural structures. Such evidence of eradication is visible in Morris’s “Story of an Unknown Church.” Although no one knows the location of the church, “if you knew the place, you would see the heaps made by the earth-covered ruins heaving yellow corn into glorious waves, so that the place where my church used to be is as beautiful now as when it stood in all its splendour” (42). Such knowledge requires living memory, the ability to recognize the subtle traces in the landscape that only a witness to the life of a building can comprehend.

The preservation of the past relies on a level of authenticity that is difficult to protect or revive in the industrial age because the moment is gone. Not only did Victorian society rely on industrialization but its version of the past was flawed. It is thus a rare occurrence when Paula witnesses gothic architecture in harmony with the spirit of medievalism as she searches for Somerset in the medieval town of Lisieux: “It contained the shops of tinkers, braziers, bellows-menders, hollow-

turners, and other quaintest trades, their fronts open to the street beneath stories of timber overhanging so far on each side that a slit of sky was left at the top” (*A Laodicean* 350). Here, medieval trade and craftsmanship are still operational.

Hardy continues,

It was a street for a medievalist to revel in, toss up his hat and shout hurrah in, send for his luggage, come and live in, die and be buried in. She had never supposed such a street to exist outside the imaginations of antiquarians. Smells direct from the sixteenth century hung in the air with all their original integrity and without a modern taint. The faces of the people in the doorways seemed those of individuals who habitually gazed on the great Francis, and spoke of Henry the Eighth, as the king across the sea. (350-51)

The sights, smells, and even the thoughts from the past are alive and well. The scene is permeated with the sort of medieval sentiment that Morris wanted to preserve. But there is a sense of irony in the fact that the moment here alluded to is one in which Britain was at war with France (Schad 414). The celebratory moment in which medievalism becomes the place where the antiquarian would most happily reside is undermined by its historical reality. As Nadia Atia and Jeremy Davies argue in their recent study on memory, nostalgia “might seem to be not only a ‘betrayal of history,’ but a betrayal of memory itself,—a debilitating imposition upon our consciousness of the past [...] nostalgic thinking can become a force that complicates, rather than one that simplifies” (181). Indeed, church building and restoration projects obliterated the more complex and often violent history associated with the reformation by returning buildings to their “original”

state. But this, in turn, complicates the relationship between individuals and the past. To efface the past is to erase important records or signifiers of history.

Ancient buildings witness centuries of human life. In his lecture “Architecture and History,” Morris placed emphasis on the notion that ancient buildings have witnessed the past. He argued, “the untouched surface of ancient architecture bears witness to the development of man’s ideas, to the continuity of history [...] not only telling us what were the aspirations of men passed away, but also what we may hope for in time to come” (99). These histories were evident in the fabric of an ancient and untouched surface. “Hardy’s poem “The Two Houses” (*Late Lyrics and Earlier*, 1922) depicts an encounter between a newly-built house and its ancient counterpart, the latter characterized by “Loose casements, wormy beams, and doors that jam” (8). The old house has witnessed the lives of its various inhabitants and informs the newcomer, “You have not known/Men’s lives, deaths, toils, and teens/You are but a heap of stick and stone/A new house has no sense of have-beens” (17-20). The architectural components of the ancient structure are permeated with the lives therein and adapts to their individual traits. Hardy writes, “A dwelling’s character/Takes theirs, and a vague semblancy/To them in all its limbs, and light, and atmosphere” (42-44). A house, Ruskin argued, was, “inscribed with the summary” of the life lived within it (*Seven Lamps* 168). The house is written on by human history and alters accordingly. Moreover, this process of natural wear and tear, of evidence of human life, imparts on the ancient house wisdom that the recently built one cannot possess. In Hardy’s poem, the old house assures the new one that it too will record the lives of its inhabitants: “Such shades will people thee/Each in his misery, irk, or joy/And print on thee their presences as

on me” (55-6). This process of aging is natural and continuous. Hardy certainly values the aged structure but is open to the possibility that all structures can evolve and acquire their own rich, multi-layered past. Architecture has the ability to outlast us all and can therefore register historical truths, about the way humans interact with the built environment, how they live their daily lives, the ideals they have formed that are associated with a certain architectural style, as well as wars, diseases, and economic hardships—traces of which are often left in the fabric of ancient stones.

The destruction of architecture, in the form of restoration, erases this evidence of the past, a building is often the only surviving “witness” from the past. In his essay on Church Restoration Hardy writes,

The renewed stones at Hereford, Peterborough, Salisbury, St. Albans, Wells, and so many other places, are not the stones that witnessed the scenes in English Chronicle associated with those piles. They are not the stones over whose face the organ notes of centuries ‘lingered and wandered on as loth to die.’ (251)

Hardy engages with the idea that buildings witness historical events, that they act as a catalogue of artistic creativity and memories but also serve as reminders of an often difficult past, recording human activity, especially violent activity. Although Stancy Castle is no longer an operative medieval fortress, traces of its violent history still exist. Somerset climbs stone steps that were once traversed by “sunburnt tudor soldiers,” a reminder of a past plagued by wars (*A Laodicean* 19-20). It is this barbarous side to feudalism that Somerset calls to mind when he first discovers the castle. Stancy Castle is the “hoary memorial of a stolid antagonism to

the interchange of ideas, the monument of hard distinctions in blood and race, of deadly mistrust of one's neighbour in spite of the church's teaching, and of a sublime unconsciousness of any other force than a brute one" (*A Laodicean* 18). These realities are written in the impenetrable walls of the castle, their very weight inciting feelings of "physical pressure" (*A Laodicean* 20). John Schad points out that, because Stancy Castle was built by the Normans, it "owes its very existence to the violent enforcement of conquest" (xxviii). In the novel Lyons bears witness to an equally turbulent past. Somerset, "looked out upon the great city whose name associates silk, in the fantastic imagination, with some of the ghastliest atrocities, Protestant, Catholic, and Revolutionary, that the civilized world had beheld" (*A Laodicean* 246-7). Medieval buildings suggest that the "civilized world" is, in fact, one that perpetuates destruction. In his "Manifesto" Morris argued that the Victorian architect or restorer had caused more harm than any event a building might have endured over the course of its history. Restorations, he explained, had "done more for their destruction than all the foregoing centuries of revolution, violence, and contempt" (52-3).<sup>25</sup> What Morris's statement suggests, although it was likely not his intention, is that architectural destruction is in itself a continuous process.

The twentieth century brought with it new forms of destruction. While Morris and Ruskin believed that, in the nineteenth century, restoration had demolished much of the past, they could not anticipate the kind of destruction caused by modern warfare. In 1914, Hardy's widely-circulated essay, "Rheims Cathedral" discussed the loss felt over the German shelling of the gothic cathedral in

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<sup>25</sup> In his lecture "Gothic Architecture" Morris connected the construction of gothic buildings with a violent past. According to Ingrid Hanson, Morris "linked the creative and harmonious work of Europeans of the past with their ability and courage on the battlefield" (24).

September 1914. The shelling of the thirteenth-century cathedral destroyed statues and pillaring on the exterior. The rose window, along with other stained glass, was shattered, and the roof burned. As I discussed in Chapter Two, the history of gothic architecture is one of “ideological warfare,” and this turned out to be, both literally and figuratively, the case with Rheims. As Nicola Lambourne contends, much of the “rich wartime meaning acquired by Rheims Cathedral was a product of French propagandists” (22). While part of Hardy’s essay involves what was for him an uncharacteristic attack of the Germans, the crux of his argument lies in the fact that restoration is impossible. Hardy writes that, although many people “have found comfort” in the possibility “that the demolished parts can be renewed, even if not without a vast expense,” he recognizes that restorations would never recover what had been lost (351). He continues:

Only those who, for professional or other reasons, have studied in close detail the architecture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are aware that to do this in its entirety is impossible. Gothic architecture has been a dead art for the last 300 years, in spite of the imitations thrown broadcast all over the land, and much of what is gone from this fine structure is gone forever. (351)

Morris was perhaps correct when he stated that “civilization” destroys its own creations (“The Prospects of Architecture in Civilization” 76). Ruins, of course, could serve as reminders of the destruction caused in a more recent past, but the loss of architecture amid such catastrophe and loss of life represented a violent and abrupt break with the past, a loss of memory and history in the modern age that, for Hardy, could never be renewed.

Morris expressed a similar sentiment in “The Prospects of Architecture in Civilization,” where he warned that the loss of familiar associations, as experienced in old buildings, would inevitably lead to the fall of “civilisation” (73). Indeed, a “past lacking tangible relics seems too tenuous to be credible” and a world without a perception of the past seemed, for Morris, impossible (Lowenthal 247).

Referencing Morris’s beliefs about the value of the past, Miele writes, “The modern age has thrown a personal landscape out of balance, tearing the once whole self in two. [...] ‘Restoration’ denies the psychic importance of human memory”

(“Conservation and the Enemies of Progress” 60-1). In *A Laodicean* Somerset also reflects on the “fairer side of medievalism,” one characterized by

leisure, light-hearted generosity, intense friendships, hawks, hounds, revels, healthy complexions, freedom from care, and such a living power in architectural art as the world may never again see—civilisation having at present a stronger attachment to lath and plaster than to walls of a thickness sufficient for the perpetuation of grand ideas. (18)

The “fairer side of medievalism,” or, rather, the human side, which Somerset sees in the surviving medieval walls of Stancy Castle, can only be imagined, or called to memory if those walls remain standing. But it is the “living” quality Somerset reveres, one that nineteenth-century architects were trying to, if not successfully emulate, at least preserve to the extent that nature allows.



## Chapter 4: Natural Architecture

The tailor-bird with beak as needle, sews his nest of leaves with thread  
twisted of spiders webs and cotton shreds; the wasp chews the wood to pulp  
whereof it makes its nest; the bower-bird builds a love-abode of sticks and shells,  
and flowers and feathers, where he and his mate may flirt and dance.

Edward Clodd, *The Story of Primitive Man*

Under foot the leaves were dry, and the foliage of some holly bushes which grew among the  
deciduous tress was dense enough to keep off draughts. She scraped together the dead leaves till  
she had formed them into a large heap, making a sort of nest in the middle. Into this Tess crept.

Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*<sup>1</sup>

The “science of architecture,” argued Ruskin in 1837, was “one of the noblest of those which have reference only to the creations of human minds” (*Poetry of Architecture* 1). He continued, “It is not merely a science of the rule and compass, it does not consist only in the observation of just rule, or of fair proportion: it is, or ought to be, a science of feeling more than of rule, a ministry to the mind, more than to the eye” (1). As discussed in earlier chapters, various architects and writers believed that gothic architecture in particular inspired higher ethical and moral aims. As a result, architecture, Ruskin contended, was inherently human: it was feeling and emotion that produced such edifying structures (*Poetry* 1). While Ruskin acknowledged that animals could, “by brute instinct” produce architectural structures, humans were exceptional: “we have made ourselves superior as architects to the most degraded animation of the universe, only insomuch as we

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<sup>1</sup> (Clodd 19; Hardy 296)

have lavished the highest efforts of intellect, to do what they have done with the most limited sensations” (*Poetry* 132). But as evolutionary anthropology demonstrated in the second half of the nineteenth century, the “science of architecture” was not unique to humans. Moreover, it was not simply the act of building that was common to humans and animals, but a certain level of reason or intelligence required to make aesthetic choices in the process.<sup>2</sup>

The notion that architecture was a product of culture and cultivation was subverted by evidence that the complex process of building existed in the natural world. Artistic beauty was ultimately an expression of inner impulses and the question as to whether or not those impulses were cultivated by reason or instinct sparked significant debate among leading scientists and anthropologists, among them Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan, and Grant Allen. Indeed, Darwin himself acknowledged in the *Origin of Species* (1859) that evidence of animal architecture threatened his theory of evolution “so wonderful an instinct as that of the hive-bee making cells will probably have occurred to many readers, as a difficulty sufficient to overthrow my whole theory” (*Origin* 185). Architect Sydney Smirke (1798-1877) pointed out in “On the Architecture of the Honey Bee,” a paper read at the RIBA in 1855, that the “delicate and fastidiously correct architecture of the Honey-Bee” undermined nineteenth-century cultural achievements (287).<sup>3</sup> Smirke explained,

We of the present day are glorifying ourselves greatly in the discovery that ventilation is needed for our well-being; but here has been an

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<sup>2</sup> Irene Cheng points out that, “Before the nineteenth century, the dominant view of animal behavior, inherited in various forms from Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and Descartes, was that ‘brutes’ operated according to innate instincts given by a divine source for their own welfare” (4-5).

<sup>3</sup> Smirke was known for his various commissions, including his restoration of the choir at York Minster and his design for the Round Reading Room at the British Museum.

effective system of artificial ventilation—a sort of fan-blast—in regular practice among bees ever since God created them. (289)

Bees are not only architect-artists but also engineers: their cells are composed of perfectly formed shapes while their structures show evidence of “mechanical ingenuity” (288). Smirke describes cells as though they are a product of nineteenth-century industrialization and modern engineering: “On the outer edge is observable a thickening of the substance, forming a sort of lip or rim, and of course giving great additional rigidity to the work, exactly like the flange at the top and bottom of a cast-iron beam” (289). Bees, he showed, gave Victorian architects a lesson in “humility” (289). In an article discussing architectural ornamentation, the painter Frank Howard claimed in 1853 that,

In works of practical utility, and in constructive art, many animals, such as the beaver &c., with apparently very imperfect tools, exhibit a skill that rivals much ingenuity and handiwork, even with the best of tools. To build a bird’s, an ant’s, or a wasp’s nest, would be no easy task. (*Civil Engineer and Architect’s Journal* 69).

Evidence of the intricate science of animal architecture threatened complacent beliefs about evolution but also about the power of nature amid cultural attainments.

Recent scientific studies devoted to animal architecture and animal behavior tend to focus on the intricate and elaborate structures built by animals and the behaviors associated with construction. They address questions similar to those raised by scientists in the nineteenth century, including the reason as to why animals build and whether or not that process is determined by instinct or reason.

Michael Hansell’s *Built By Animals: The Natural History of Animal Architecture*

(2007), examines the “decision-making processes associated with animal behavior,” and the materials used in that process (5). James L. Gould and Carol Grant Gould’s *Animal Architects: Building and the Evolution of Intelligence*, (2007) discusses animal architecture along similar lines but attempts to explain, through speculation, why animals build; arguing that it is instinct, rather than reason, that guides architectural construction.

In 1964 the architect and social historian Bernard Rudofsky argued that we should move away from “our narrow concepts of the art of building,” in *Architecture Without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (2).<sup>4</sup> Non-pedigreed architecture, he argued, was “anonymous, spontaneous, indigenous, rural” (1). It was animals, Rudofsky claimed, who taught humans the art of building. Citing Darwin, he pointed out that, “long before the first enterprising man bent some twigs into a leaky roof, many animals were already accomplished builders” (*Architecture without Architects* 2). It was “Unlikely that beavers got the idea of building dams by watching human dam builders at work. It was likely the other way” (2). Rudofsky explored animal architecture and its relationship to culture in greater detail in *The Prodigious Builders: Notes Toward a Natural History of Architecture* (1977). He proposed that human builders, as they had done in prehistoric times, again look to animal builders for inspiration. He argued that modern architects, “had lost touch with their intuitions as a result of over-civilization” (Cheng 2). Perhaps the most significant point Rudofsky makes in *The Prodigious Builders* is that “architecture without architects” is “architecture without a dogma” (4). And this is what separates human from animal architecture. In the nineteenth century, however,

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<sup>4</sup> Rudofsky’s book was part of an exhibition of the same name at the Museum of Modern Art in 1964.

even the most humble or seemingly simplistic structures, though likely constructed without a set of architectural principles in mind, are subject to ideological debates.

Works devoted specifically to the study of animal architecture in the nineteenth century have only appeared in the last few years. Architectural historian Irene Cheng's "The Beavers and the Bees" (2006), discusses the history of science and animal architecture in the nineteenth century, focusing particularly on Morgan's observations on Beavers and their works as well as Darwin's studies on the bee-hive. Most recently, Carla Yanni's "Development and Display: Progressive Evolution in British Victorian Architecture and Architectural Theory" (2014), looks at architecture and geology as well as the relationship between reconstructive anatomy and architectural history. These, she argues are the two branches of science with the closest parallels to architecture. Yanni examines the relationship between Victorian architects and scientists, particularly in the design and construction of natural history museums. This builds on her earlier work, *Nature's Museums: Victorian Science and the Architecture of Display* (1999), which focuses on the natural sciences and conflicting conceptions of nature and how these were understood in the architecture of museums. While these works focus on the scientific debates related to animal architecture in the nineteenth century, there have yet to be any studies published on animal architecture in Victorian fiction.

Numerous literary scholars working in the nineteenth century have examined the mutual relationship between science and literature. Studies examining Darwinian themes and the novel include Gillian Beer's *Darwin's Plots Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (1983), and George Levine's *Darwin and the Novelists: Patterns of Science in Victorian Fiction*

(1988). In *The Evolutionary Self: Hardy, Forster, Lawrence* (1982), Ebbatson examines the ways in which “evolutionary theory acted as a creative stimulus to the novelistic imagination’ (ix). Evolution, Ebbatson argues, “is central to Hardy; it gives him sense of human littleness, a vast perspective on human affairs, and also provides a model for understanding social and human developments” (6). The essays included in *After Darwin: Animals, Emotions and the Mind* (2013) examine Darwin and biology from a wide range of scholarly perspectives; literary, scientific, psychological, and historical. *Evolution and Victorian Culture* (2014) is a collection of essays that address evolution and its relationship to different aspects of Victorian culture, including literature, poetry, art, photography and architecture. While many studies have focused specifically on Darwin, these essays include discussions of other key evolutionary figures in the nineteenth century, particularly Spencer. While various texts have dealt with the broader aspects of evolutionary science and literature, Adelene Buckland’s *Novel Science: Fiction and the Invention of Nineteenth Century Biology* (2013) examines the “golden age” of geology, the literary aspects of the field, and the complex relationship between geology and realist fiction.

In his fiction Hardy examines the way architecture, like the sciences, has its own complicated story to tell, not only about the more recent aesthetic values associated with the built environment but also about the deep evolutionary past. In this chapter I explore ways in which Hardy presents architecture as revealing both cultural and natural processes: a history of buildings, but also of gradual and accretive markings, natural change and erosion and how these serve as markers for the individual human histories he depicts. Scientific discourse figures prominently in

Hardy's depiction of architecture and the countryside that surrounds it. It is this encounter between the natural sciences and architecture that is the subject of this chapter. Hardy depicts the natural environment using architectural metaphors and much of his architectural imagery stems from ideas related to evolutionary anthropology, geology, and archaeology. In so doing buildings in Hardy's fiction are often formed out of the landscape, buried beneath it, or constructed out of it. The boundaries between that which is cultivated by "civilization" and the natural world are challenged as Hardy builds human stories upon a lengthy, layered, and complicated past. Yet, the statement in his autobiography that, "An object or mark raised or made by man on a scene is worth ten times any such formed by unconscious Nature. Hence clouds, mists, and mountains are unimportant beside the wear on a threshold, or the print of a hand," seems to overthrow this obscuration of boundaries between nature and architecture and seems to assume that architecture is a human pursuit. In his fiction, however, Hardy extends the meaning of architecture to include elements of the natural world, which also serves as a record of both human and animal life.

### **Architecture and the Scale of Civilization**

The new science of evolutionary anthropology often blurred the lines between nature and culture, or "civilization." In E.B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871) culture and civilization were synonymous: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities or habits acquired by man as a member of society" (5) Moreover, Tylor stressed, it was not simply the presence of

belief, art, morals, law...but their condition, allowing for a system through which these attributes could be “classified and compared” (5). Tylor thus created a “rough scale of civilization” which spanned from the “savage” to the “cultured” life (*Primitive Culture* 27). The “principal criteria of classification used” involved, among other aspects that formed a “complex whole,” the presence or lack thereof of the arts and architecture. Tylor explained, “In the various branches of the problem which will henceforward occupy our attention, that of determining the relation of the mental condition of savages to that of civilized men, it is an excellent guide and safeguard to keep before our minds the theory of development in the material arts” (68). Thus, it was among societies Tylor regarded as lesser-developed where one could find a closer relationship between the arts and nature. Regarding architecture and agriculture he explained, “Complex, elaborate, and highly-reasoned as are the upper stages of these arts, it is to be remembered that their lower stages begin with mere direct imitation of nature, copying the shelters which nature provides, and the propagation of plants which nature performs” (68). While the “civilized mind” had, according to Tylor, advanced far beyond its “primitive” counterpart, it still bore traces of a more rudimentary past (68-9).

Evidence of the more “primitive” past could thus be found even in the most civilized society. Tylor wrote, “When in the process of time there has come general change in the condition of the people, it is useful, notwithstanding, to find much that manifestly had not its origin in the new state of things, but has simply lasted on into it” (71). This theory of survivals showed how “old habits hold their ground in the midst of a new culture which certainly would never have brought them in, but on the contrary presses hard to thrust them out” (71). But survivals were not simply

reenactments of remnants from a more barbaric past, survivals could also be found in the built environment and the landscape. One could trace the history of architecture through its various stages of development over the course of history. In *Researches into the History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization* (1865) Tylor pointed out that:

A Romanesque or an early English cathedral is not to be studied as though all that the architect had to do was to take stone and mortar and set up a building for a given purpose. The development of the architecture of Greece, its passage into the architecture of Rome, the growth of Christian ceremony and symbolism, are only part of the elements which went to form the state of things in which the genius of the builder had to work out the requirements of the moment.

(*Researches* 4)

Verification that architecture had evolved over time was written into the very fabric of buildings. The architect or builder did not create structures out of thin air, but out of a multi-layered past where the various processes of building were learned, adapted, and transformed.

Various examples of survivals in England included superstitious beliefs, children's games, folklore, and the occult. Hardy's novels are filled with examples of cultural survivals: the ancient customs and beliefs of a more distant past continue to survive in the rural world he depicts. In his popular children's introduction to evolutionary anthropology *The Childhood of the World* (1873), the anthropological folklorist and Hardy's friend Edward Clodd informed his audience that while it was certain "civilized" society was in a state of continual progress, as Tylor himself

argued, there were constant living reminders of its relationship to the “primitive” past to be found everywhere.<sup>5</sup> Since Clodd believed that society was always moving forward he attempted to prove it using the archaeological sites and remnants he examined in *The Story of Primitive Man* (1895). At the same time, however, Clodd saw in Hardy’s characters a resemblance to what he called “the barbaric idea” and one that persisted in various societies.

Hardy summarized Clodd’s view:

December 18. Mr. E. Clodd this morning gives an excellently neat answer to my question why the superstitions of a remote Asiatic and a Dorset Labourer are the same: ‘The attitude of man at corresponding levels of culture, before like phenomena, is pretty much the same, your Dorset peasants representing the persistence of the barbaric idea which confuses persons and things, and founds wide generalizations on the slenderest analogies.’ (*Life* 230)

Despite attempts to prove the contrary, England itself contained its own “primitive” cultures.<sup>6</sup> Hardy continued, “This ‘barbaric idea which confuses persons and things,’ is, by the way, also common to the highest imaginative genius—that of the poet” (230). While the Dorset laborer in Hardy’s novels may show the persistence of elements of the “barbaric” idea, “civilized” society does as well. Bivona contends that not only does Hardy bring “the novel artistic translation of the conflict between

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<sup>5</sup> Hardy and Clodd exchanged a number of letters over the course of their friendship. Clodd “had, as Thomas Hardy (who knew him well) noted in 1915, ‘a genius for friendship’” (Haynes). It was Clodd who introduced Hardy to Grant Allen.

<sup>6</sup> In 1894 Hardy defended his portrayal of Dorset traditions and superstitions in a letter to Clodd, who had asked him about the folk beliefs depicted in “The Superstitious Man’s Story” (Millgate 233). Hardy wrote, “I may say, once for all, that every superstition, custom, &c., described in my novels may be depended upon as true records of the same (whatever merit in folklorists’ eyes they may have as such)—& not inventions of mine” (*Collected Letters* 2: 55). Hardy’s knowledge of these traditions, Millgate points out, was not always based on first-hand experience but on oral tradition (233).

civilization and the primitive to England itself,” he also denies the conventional privilege to the modern or the “civilized” and suggests that the categories themselves are permeable” (*Desire and Contradiction* 79). In *Jude the Obscure*, Christminster, “the intellectual and spiritual granary” of England, in other words, what appears to be the epitome of “civilization,” turns out to be a fortress for archaic modes of thought (*Jude* 106). As the effects of industrialization began to take hold and ethnographic discourse forced many to question their origins and place in the world, the whiggish association of progress with industrial civilization came into question (Bowler 26). Victorian art and architecture could act as evidence of a culturally and evolutionary progressive state. But with so many architects preoccupied with the past, many believed the opposite to be true; that the lack of original and innovative style proved society had not progressed as far as some had hoped. It was thus surprising to many Victorians that, in a society so advanced in the sciences, there was little originality in architecture. Bright writes, “some writers maddeningly persisted in making art answerable to the laws of progress and in wondering why it was perversely disobedient to them” (66). The geologist and architect Thomas Mellard Reade argued in 1862 that the “duty of architects” was “to promote and educate that taste and refinement without which we differ from the barbarian only in commanding a higher degree of physical comfort” (*Builder* 532). For Reade nineteenth-century architecture lacked the taste and refinement that was necessary if the “present generation” were to set themselves apart from their primitive ancestors (532).

Edward Clodd demonstrated that the original purpose of architecture has two components: a survival function and an aesthetic function. In *The Story of Creation:*

*A Plain Account*, (1898), which he dedicated to Grant Allen, Clodd wrote:

And the like of means to ends applies to the development of the useful arts [...]The primal needs of clothing and shelter [...] the need, under more settled conditions, of implements for the household and the field, set man's wits at work to supplement and improve that which nature supplies in the rough [...] Every instrument of his culture bears traces of its development from simpler forms [...] the house from sun-baked clay hut [...] the pyramid from the earth mound or cairn. (217)

The notion that humans, "improve that which nature supplies in the rough" shows Clodd's recognition that the very beginnings of architecture, both in ancient and contemporary times, emerge from natural surroundings. Moreover, architecture, in both ancient and modern times, serves evolutionary purposes; humans build structures because they are required for survival.

Interestingly, Hardy's fiction reverses evolutionary theory's conventional privileging of culture over nature, because he sees the terms themselves as permeable. Mary Rimmer argues, "For if his characters tend to set up binary oppositions between cultivated and natural worlds, Hardy recognized that culture in its older and newer senses remains in conflict but also in dialogue with nature" (261). And so certain "buildings" in Hardy's fiction arise, often organically, out of the natural environment, while others literally cut into the landscape. As Stephen Smith takes the train in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, he travels through tunnels, "vertical cuttings in metamorphic rock" (96), while in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, nature overtakes an otherwise uninteresting stone edifice: the Casterbridge gaol. Hardy writes:

On this much-desired spot outside the town rose a picturesque

building. Originally it had been a mere case to hold people. The shell had been so thin, so devoid of excrescence, and so closely drawn over the accommodation granted that the grim character of what was beneath showed through it [...] Then Nature, as if offended, lent a hand. Masses of ivy grew up, completely covering the walls, till the place looked like an abbey. (263)

Hardy's personification of Nature exemplifies the significant role it plays in the creation or indeed the aesthetization of buildings. A mere shell of a building has transformed into something resembling an abbey. If architecture is in part a component of culture, then it is not surprising, as Angelique Richardson shows, that Hardy, "turns to nature to produce culture" ("Hardy and the Place of Culture" 54), "arguing for his sense of the reciprocity of the two" (*Hardy and Biology*, forthcoming). Raymond Williams points out that "Culture, in all its early uses was a noun of process—the tending of something, basically crops or animals" (87). Thus, in *The Return of the Native* the Egdon Heath remains "uncultivated" and lacks the refinement associated with the culture Eustacia craves. Hardy describes the barrow, "Not a plough had ever disturbed a grain of that stubborn soil. In the heath's barrenness to the farmer lay its fertility to the historian. There had been no obliteration because there had been no tending" (20). In spite of this, Hardy's depiction of the Heath involves architectural components— "Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor" (9). As Hardy highlights natural architecture, the "open hills" become a "mansion" for Eustacia, as she attempts to escape the confines of her grandfather's cottage (69). Ruskin touched on this notion in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. He

argued that the architect could develop an appreciation of architectural forms by looking to nature: “An architect should live as little in cities as a painter. Send him to our hills, and let him study there what nature understands by a buttress, and what by a dome” (93). Here, nature does produce culture as the very shapes associated with it are embedded in an uncultivated landscape. Nature functions in ways similar to the built environment in *Far From the Madding Crowd*. Hardy describes the scene as Bathsheba walks a path that comprises part of her homestead:

Her way back to the house was by a path through a young plantation of tapering firs, which had been planted years earlier to shelter the premises from the north wind. To describe the spot is to call it a vast, low, naturally formed hall, the plummy ceiling of which was supported by slender pillars of living wood, the floor being covered with a soft dun carpet of dead spikelets and mildewed cones, with a tuft of grass blades here and there. (161)

Here, unlike the Egdon Heath, nature has been cultivated: the trees have been planted for a specific purpose in mind. The landscape provides shelter from the elements. In so doing it can be understood in architectural terms with its own walls, ceiling, and floor. As Gabriel Oak observes the landscape in anticipation of an impending storm we are told, “The moon as seen through these fields had a lurid metallic look. The fields were sallow with the impure light, and all were tinged in monochrome, as if beheld through stained glass” (*Far from the Madding Crowd* 236). Gothic elements, both architectural and literary, manifest themselves on a stormy and gloomy night on the Egdon Heath: “The spiky points of the fir-trees behind the house rose into the sky like the turrets and pinnacles of an abbey” (*The*

*Return of the Native* 340). Hardy demonstrates that it is possible to create an image of the outside world as though it were being viewed through an architectural lens. The barriers between the built environment and the natural world are often obscured—and at times the built environment and the natural world are very much one and the same.

Evidence of Hardy's engagement with the scientific ideas of his age spans the broad spectrum of his fiction, notebooks, and letters. As Richardson explains, "Etymologically, science means *knowledge*, and central to Hardy's work is the quest for knowledge in the broadest sense; for a deeper understanding of nature, of our place in it, and of ourselves, at a time when old certainties were crumbling, and new vistas of knowledge were jostling for attention" ("Hardy and Science" 156). These ideas are manifest in Hardy's architectural imagery, where buildings from the "old world" are in a seemingly perpetual state of decomposition, often at odds with that underpinned by the scientific advances of the age. When Hardy was just ten years old the Great Exhibition of 1851 "forced some to think about the origins and progress of civilization it epitomized" and though he did not attend he would continue to question the certainty many attached to the idea of progress (Stocking 5).<sup>7</sup> Moreover, his friendship with Grant Allen and Edward Clodd no doubt perpetuated an ongoing discussion on evolution, archaeology, and the Tylorian idea of "survivals."

In a well-known passage in Thomas Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, Henry Knight hangs dangerously from "the Cliff without a name," a treacherous piece of landscape composed of ancient geological formations and embedded fossils (*Blue*

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<sup>7</sup> For Darwin's influence on Hardy and a summary of scholarship devoted to the topic, see Levine, "Hardy and Darwin: An Enchanting Hardy?" in *A Companion to Thomas Hardy*, (ed. Keith Wilson).

*Eyes* 195). Waiting for help from Elfride, Knight comes into direct contact with the “immense lapses of time each formation represented” as he stares at the fossilized remains of an insignificant creature (200). Hardy writes:

Time closed up like a fan before him. He saw himself at one extremity of the years, face to face with the beginning and all the intermediate centuries simultaneously. Fierce men, clothes in the hides of beasts, and carrying, for defence and attack, huge clubs and pointed spears, rose from the rock [...] Behind them stood an earlier band. [...] Folded behind were dragon forms and clouds of flying reptiles: still underneath were fishy beings of lower development; and so on, till the lifetime scenes of the fossil confronting him were a present and modern condition of things. (200-201)

Knight is witness to the geological layers that have overlapped over the course of millions of years, reducing his own existence to that of a mere mortal within time’s massive framework. For Gillian Beer, Hardy’s famous scene signifies “The absolute gap between our finite capacities and the infinite time and space of the universe” and it is this gap which “burdens Hardy’s texts with a sense of malfunction and apprehension. There is a collapse of congruity between the human and the objects of human knowledge and human emotion” (237). Richardson argues that “There is no more striking evocation in fiction of geological time” while Radford attests, “This engrossing incident with its multiple ironies offers the most wide-ranging and comprehensive vision of former worlds in Hardy’s fiction” (Richardson 158; Radford 50). Although the passage has arguably now received sufficient critical attention, the architectural imagery is striking and deserves some mention. It certainly points to

Hardy's engagement with the scientific ideas of his contemporaries. Architectural structures compose part of a stratified landscape and, as such, are comprised of various layers compiled over time. For Hardy the term "architecture" takes on many forms: dwellings that are composed of the simplest natural substances, caravans, huts, ancient formations sculpted from the ground, and even the natural landscape which mirrors architectural forms. Architecture, in its broadest definition, undergoes its own evolutionary processes. Evidence of the scientific processes of the natural world could be found in buildings as well. Architecture records biological processes. The life of a building involves construction, reconstruction, decay, and destruction—all of which have their origins, more often than not, in the natural world. Evidence of history, geology, and evolution is ever present in Hardy's landscapes and buildings. As a result of this, Buckland points out, "Hardy and his heroes stand alone on emotional precipices gazing at the stars or into the depths of time, terrified and energized by its immensity" ("Physics, Geology, Astronomy" 243). Hardy's figures inhabit and travel across landscapes that encourage "long views"—views in which the evidences of deep evolutionary time are written in stone (*Tess* 19).

Buildings in Hardy's fiction, whether ancient or fairly modern, bear the marks of years of inhabitants. The wood floors in Bathsheba Everdene's barn are "black with age and polished by the beating of flails for many generations" (*Madding Crowd* 144). The bridges "near the lower part of Casterbridge" are "worn down to obtuseness, partly by weather, more by friction from generations of loungers, whose toes and heels had from year to year made restless movements against these parapets" (*Mayor of Casterbridge* 206). Hardy examines the memories, often faded, that exist behind the surface of things, where "hands behind hands" manifest

themselves in seemingly insignificant household objects (“Old Furniture” 11). The seats in The Quiet Woman Inn, which bear an ironic resemblance to “cathedral stalls” are “carved with the initials of many an illustrious drunkard of former times” who, Hardy tells us, “now lay as an alcoholic cinder in the nearest churchyard” (*Return of the Native* 216). Individual histories, however obscure, are marked in the very fabric of buildings and the objects within them. This acceptance of wear and tear is evident in the composition of buildings. It is also written into the individuals who inhabit them, offering not only an illumination of the past but also the passage of time. In Hardy’s poem “The Ageing House” the house and its once fair inhabitant age simultaneously. The walls, once red, are now “overspread/With a mouldy green” (3-4). It has become a living thing and, like its inhabitant, is subject to the physical effects of time. It was this natural process of wear and tear, the markings of human existence over time, that Hardy sought to protect in his essay on Church restoration: the preservation of a building and the objects within was also “the preservation of memories, history, fellowships, fraternities” (25). In addition to the signs of human existence, buildings also register the traces of animal life. Hardy describes the sheds at Talbothay’s Dairy in *Tess*:

Long thatched sheds stretched round the enclosure, their slopes encrusted with vivid green moss, and their eaves supported by wooden posts rubbed to a glassy smoothness by the flanks of infinite cows and calves of bygone years, now passed to an oblivion almost inconceivable in its profundity. (121)

Kevin Padian writes that Hardy “provides constant reminders that everything in the Universe has a history: not only humans and their culture, but all life” (222). These

reminders of human and animal life are evident in the alterations they have made to buildings over the course of hundreds of years. This inevitable process of aging is not a process to be resisted or regretted; it is to be accepted both as natural and as offering illumination of the past.

It was thus possible to trace the entire history of the built environment by examining the construction and components of one's house, from walls, ceilings, doors, and windows, to the mere decorative objects within its rooms. As the popular science writer and novelist Grant Allen claimed in his essay "The Origin of the Sense of Symmetry" (1879): "Ages of previous aesthetic culture, are presupposed in our kitchen fire-irons" (312). In "The Philosophy of Drawing-Rooms" (1880), Allen argued that the middle-class Victorian drawing-room was, in fact, "a fair instance of the persistence of type;" a survival from what he called "the aboriginal living room" (313). The "primitive and undifferentiated stage of combined dining and drawing-room" could, of course be found "in most of our original cottages and farmhouses" (313). Moreover, the evolution of the drawing-room is parallel to the evolution of animals, "the drawing-room archetype was preserved in Brompton and South Kensington as the vertebrate archetype is preserved alike in the fish, the bird, or the mammal" (313). The drawing-room, Allen contended, though it had lost the original purpose for which it was intended, acted as a reminder of a more barbarous—evolutionary past that continued to exist in a seemingly more refined present.

Similarly, in his essay on "Use and Beauty" (1852), Herbert Spencer argued that once a building loses its original function it becomes merely decorative: a castle in the nineteenth century no longer maintains its use as a fortress:

Ruined castles afford an obvious instance of this metamorphosis of

the useful into the beautiful. To feudal barons and their retainers, security was the chief, if not the only end, sought in choosing the sites of their strongholds. Probably they aimed as little at the picturesque as do the builders of cheap brick houses in our modern towns. Yet what were erected for shelter and safety, and what in those early days fulfilled an important function in the social economy, have now assumed a purely ornamental character. (386)

Although Spencer might be overstating his point—a nineteenth-century descendant of a feudal baron might find the remains of a castle habitable and therefore a useful means of shelter—he points to the fact that buildings undergo a sort of evolutionary process where traits change their usefulness and function over time, where “the appliances of one era serve as embellishments in the next” (Spencer “Use and Beauty” 385). As Darwin argued in *The Origin of Species* (1859), “The illustration of the swimbladder in fishes is a good one, because it shows us clearly the highly important fact that an organ originally constructed for one purpose, namely, floatation, may be converted into one for a widely different purpose, namely, respiration” (257). Darwin is citing two forms of usefulness rather than suggesting, as Spencer does, that one is useful and the other ornamental. Architecture, too, evolves over time and adapts itself to different purposes. A case in point is Stancy Castle in *A Laodicean* where medieval arrow-slits accommodate the telegraph wires of its modern inhabitant. What was once used as a means to keep intruders at bay is, in the nineteenth century, used to keep inhabitants connected to the outside world.

The debate between usefulness and beauty, science and aestheticism, is

one that plays itself out in Hardy's works. In *A Laodicean*, the architect Somerset's visit to a railroad tunnel forces him to "mentally" balance "science against art," or rather, the usefulness associated with modern engineering against the picturesque beauty of Stancy Castle (82). According to Spencer, however, the sciences and the arts were dependent on one another. In "The Genesis of Science" (1858), Spencer argued:

Science has been supplying art with truer generalisations and more completely quantitative previsions. Art has been supplying science with better materials and more perfect instruments. And all along the interdependence has been growing closer, not only between art and science, but among the arts themselves, and among the sciences themselves. (*Essays* 2:69)

This points to a complex relationship between aesthetic or artistic and scientific components. Architecture offers a perfect opportunity for discussing the important – and vexed–issue that Spencer raises in "Use and Beauty" in 1852: how does one distinguish between the "useful" and the "ornamental," or rather, in interpreting the signs of the past, whether reading the function of bodily traits or the function of inherited customs, how does one know to distinguish between those that are "useful" and those that are purely "aesthetic." Buildings that have been reconstructed over a lengthy period of years especially crystallize the issue because so many parts of a building seem to blend together aesthetic and functional purposes.<sup>8</sup>

The natural sciences certainly played a role in an architect's training. In *The*

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<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the most influential recent discussion of Darwinism and architecture is Stephen Jay Gould and R.C. Lewontin's "The Spandrels of San Marco or the Panglossian Paradigm" (1979).

*Elements of Natural Geology* (1838), Frederick Burr contended, “The value of a limited acquaintance both with minerology and geology to the architect and builder must be readily apparent, as without it they may often err both in the choice of materials and the laying out of foundations for buildings...” (264) As the 1857 *Edinburgh Review* explained, architectural remains proposed findings similar to geological ones:

The architectural remains of past generations, sometimes scattered over wastes in which the primeval solitude has regained its empire over civilization, sometimes buried under the strata of more recent periods of history, are the most conspicuous and enduring monuments of nations, of religions, and of empires which have left no other trace upon the earth [and] may be compared by their results to the knowledge extracted by the geologist and the naturalist from the physical condition or the organic remains of the globe. (qtd. in Radford 112)

Hardy’s buildings, if one reads them scientifically, are formed of the sort of geological layers that Knight encounters as he clings to the cliff and tell a historical narrative that reaches back in evolutionary time.

In *A Laodicean*, the architect Havill sees a chancel-wall where the builders “found imbedded a unique specimen of Perpendicular work—a capital from some old arcade—the mouldings wonderfully undercut” (60). The irregular curves associated with the gothic and celebrated by Ruskin are also akin to the various layers in time Knight sees on the cliff without a name. The history of a building is told in stratified layers that have built up over time. Hardy uses geological vocabulary in order to

describe ancient architectural structures. As Radford explains, “Christminster’s Gothic styles of the past show it to be a fossilized relic of the dark ages” (185). Indeed, this example of a “fossilized relic” which confronts Jude turns out to be representative of “a present and modern condition of things” (*Blue Eyes* 201). The surviving arrow slit in Stancy Castle is a “fossil of feudalism” (*Laodicean* 6). The structural components of the built environment echo that of a geological and archaeologically stratified landscape.

Nowhere is this notion of a stratified landscape more apparent than in *The Return of the Native*. Hardy describes the Egdon Heath: “The scene before the reddleman’s eyes was a gradual series of ascents from the level of the road backward into the heart of the heath. It embraced hillocks, pits, ridges, acclivities, one behind the other, till all was finished by a high hill cutting against the still light sky” (16). And the stratification of the landscape contains records of a continuous, uninterrupted ancient past. As such it becomes “a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity” (*Return of the Native* 10). Hardy writes, “everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead” (11-12). Geological change has created this multi-layered and irregular landscape:

With the exception of an aged highway, and a still more aged barrow [...] themselves almost crystallized to natural products by long continuance—even the trifling irregularities not caused by pickaxe, plough, or spade, but remained as the very finger-touches of the last geological change. (*Return of the Native* 12)

The heath is an enduring landscape because it rejects civilization and, as such, it

records or reflects human life; if one knows how to read its signs: "To dwell on a heath without studying its meanings was like wedding a foreigner without learning his tongue" (70). Nature has its counterpart in the multi-layered past of the built environment.

The past continually announces itself in Hardy's landscapes which are filled with cultural survivals and the archaeological remnants of a bygone age. As Rebecca Welshman attests, "For Hardy, archaeology afforded a point of reconciliation between the individual human life and the natural world—all the more significant in light of the increasing estrangement from landscape encouraged by the industrial revolution" (225-6). It is therefore not surprising that the division between contemporary life and the natural, or archaeological, world is often depicted as superficial. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Casterbridge,

announced old Rome in every street, alley, and precinct. It looked Roman, bespoke the art of Rome, concealed dead men of Rome. It was impossible to dig more than a foot or two deep about the town fields and gardens without coming upon some tall soldier or other of the Empire, who had lain there in his silent unobtrusive rest for a space of fifteen hundred years. (67)

While we are told that the townspeople are unaffected by ancient remains of a person with whom they share very little, Hardy's societies and individual characters often re-enact the brutal customs of their forbears, and in the very structures they built. The Ring at Casterbridge was "still smooth and circular, as if used for its original purpose not so very long ago. The sloping pathways by which spectators had ascended to their seats were pathways yet" (68-9). And, in more recent times, it

had been the location of the town gallows and the gruesome execution of a young woman in 1705, witnessed “in the presence of ten thousand spectators (68).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the Roman arena is the place where Henchard meets his estranged wife, Susan, and essentially “buys” her back with five guineas, a renewal of a primitive contract of sale. These pagan sites continue to carry out the original purpose for which they were built. In *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, Tess meets her end while resting on “the stone of sacrifice” and, as Radford shows, “Hardy implies that there may be little separating the rites enacted in the temple of primitive blood sacrifice and the atrocities committed at Wintonchester goal, where Tess is executed in the final chapter” (5). The boundaries between the present and the past gradually dissolve as Hardy’s figures cross Roman roads, plough fields that contain ancient graves, and inhabit structures composed of varying materials from different moments in time.

Hardy’s poem “Rome: On the Palatine,” written in 1887, has the speaker standing amid the ruins of ancient Rome whilst hearing a Strauss Waltz. Hardy writes, “It stirred me as I stood in Caesar’s house/Raised the old routs Imperial lyres had let/And blended pulsing life with lives long done/Till Time seemed fiction, Past and Present one” (11-14). The division between the past and the present is repeatedly blurred in Hardy’s fiction because remnants of the past overlap with contemporary life. It was during the construction of the foundations of Max Gate that Hardy discovered Roman remains and his paper, “Some Romano-British Relics Found at Max Gate, Dorchester,” was delivered at the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club in 1884. In his essay Hardy describes “the isolated resting-

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<sup>9</sup> Hardy recounts the execution in his article “Maumbury Ring,” which appeared in the *Times* 24 September 1908.

place” as “having been common along the roadsides near towns in those far-off days—a humble Colonial imitation, possibly, of the system of sepulture along the Appian way” (63). His poem, “The Clasped Skeletons,” was inspired by this event. The skeletons in an ancient barrow bring the distance of thousands of years closer together: “So long in placid dignity/Have you lain here!/Yet what is length of time? But dream!/Once breathed this atmosphere/Those fossils near you, met the gleam/Of day as you did here...(37-40). This discovery and, hence, the exposure of these skeletons has interrupted a sense of continuity that nature had protected for thousands of years. It is this kind of exposure of ancient remnants, once buried beneath the earth’s surface, that lends itself to stark imagery in Hardy’s work. In the poem “Rome: Building A New Street In The Ancient Quarter,” “...each arch, entablature, and dome/Lies bare in all its gaunt anatomy” (3-4). These ancient ruins seem rather vulnerable in their broken-down, excavated state, as though they have been robbed of their humanity. Hardy’s poem points to the fact that such exposure to the elements, whether the cause of human interference or natural occurrences, contributes to the decomposition of material objects.

Throughout Hardy’s fiction, buildings are subject to natural elements. Violent rain on the Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native* unleashes havoc on architectural structures: “It was one of those nights when cracks in the walls of old churches widen, when ancient stains on the ceilings of decayed manor houses are renewed and enlarged from the size of a man’s hand to the area of many feet” (344). The natural environment and the built environment are locked in a perpetual struggle for survival. Often, it is nature that has the upper hand. Clym observes this on the Egdon Heath, where, in spite of attempts to cultivate the land, nature

continually reasserts itself: “he could not help indulging in a barbarous satisfaction in observing that in some of the attempts at reclamation from the waste, tillage, after holding on for a year or two, had receded again in despair, the ferns and furze-tufts stubbornly reasserting themselves” (*Return of the Native* 172).

If nature was capable of destroying architecture it was capable of preserving it as well. In *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, Through the Actions of Worms, with Observations on their Habits* (1881), Darwin credited worms with the preservation of ancient objects and structures. He explained how worms ejected castings on top of ancient structures, essentially burying them. They were thus creating their own structures over Roman or medieval buildings: an interesting process that simultaneously destroys while it preserves. After examining various archaeological sites Darwin concluded that:

worms have played a considerable part in the burial and concealment of several Roman and other old buildings in England; but no doubt the washing down of soil from the neighbouring higher lands, and the deposition of dust, have together aided largely in the work of concealment. Dust would be apt to accumulate wherever old broken-down walls projected a little above the then existing surface and thus afforded some shelter. The floors of the old rooms, halls and passages have generally sunk, partly from the settling of the ground, but chiefly from having been undermined by worms; and the sinking has commonly been greater in the middle than near the walls. (Darwin 229-30).

There is a sense of mutual reliance here, between worms who are dependent upon

this process of burial and the inanimate objects they conceal but also preserve in the process. Moreover, the worms work alongside the natural processes of decay and change. In *Two on a Tower* (1882), the eighteenth-century tower, built in honor of Lord Constantine's great-grandfather, is situated on the foundations of a more ancient site, the details of which are an obvious point of contention, "The fir-shrouded hill top was (according to some antiquaries) an old Roman camp—if it were not (as others insisted) an old British castle, or (as the rest swore) an old Saxon field of Witenagemote" (7). The "Saxon field" raises the question Darwin asks in his study, have actions of builders, either worms or humans, changed the topography of the landscape? It is clear that what is a hill in the nineteenth century was quite possibly a field in ancient times.

### **Animal Architecture**

In Hardy's fiction, both humans and animals utilize the natural "built" environment in similar ways and, in so doing, alter the landscape of the rural world he depicts. As Mike Hansell contends, builders, both human and animal, "do change the world" (29). The notion that many animals were also builders had been acknowledged for centuries.<sup>10</sup> In the seventeenth century Christopher Wren pointed out that "the project of building" was "as natural to mankind as to birds," suggesting that the process was inherent to both humans and animals (qtd. in Stevenson and Heslop 1). But it was not until the nineteenth century that animal architecture was discussed at length—a result of the emerging field of evolutionary science.

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<sup>10</sup> Vitruvius examined animal architecture in "The Origin of the Dwelling House" in *The Ten Books of Architecture*, c 25 BCE. See Franklin, Heslop, and Stevenson, *Architecture and Interpretation: Essays for Eric Fernie* (2012).

In 1868 the anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan published *The American Beaver and His Works* in which he stressed both the intelligence and “architectural capacity” of these animals (267).<sup>11</sup> Beavers, Morgan argued, did not simply build out of necessity, but because the process of creating their structures brought them pleasure: “In a pre-eminent degree he requires artificial erections to promote his happiness, and to secure his safety” (18). In fact, as Morgan explained, dams were not an essential element of survival:

As the dam is not an absolute necessity to the beaver formaintenance of his life, his normal habitation being rather natural ponds and rivers, and burrows in their banks, it is, in itself considered, a remarkable fact that he should have voluntarily transformed himself, by means of dams and ponds, of his own construction, from a natural to an artificial mode of life. (83)

Morgan pointed out that it is not necessarily the presence of intelligence or reason that separates human and animal builders but rather the physical traits that make building possible:

As [the beaver] is capable of sitting up erect upon his hind legs, and of walking upon them, his paws are thus liberated, and by that means his architectural skill is rendered possible. Man’s great superiority over the inferior animals is shown in nothing more conspicuously than in the freedom of his hands. (27)

In addition to building these various structures Morgan argued that beavers made

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<sup>11</sup> Darwin made reference to Morgan’s study in *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871). He wrote, “among mammals the animal most remarkable for its instincts, namely the beaver, is highly intelligent, as will be admitted by every one who has read Mr. Morgan’s excellent account of this animal” (1: 36).

numerous repairs to existing ones, ensuring their existence for hundreds of years. This process, which Morgan refers to as “restoration,” contributes to their artistic appearance (103). Dams are in a relentless state of construction. “Consequently,” Morgan explains, “these dams are extremely rude at their commencement, and they do not attain their remarkably artistic appearance until after they have been raised to a considerable height, and have been maintained, by a system of annual repairs, for a number of years” (Morgan 86). “No one standing upon this dam and observing its fragile character” Morgan contends, “could fail to perceive that its maintenance would require constant supervision and perpetual labor” (95). This process of continuous building and repair is reminiscent of the construction of medieval cathedrals which were themselves adapted over the course of hundreds of years and, as Morris and Ruskin argued, acquired aesthetic value with age. Old buildings require constant repair, which is why Christminster’s and Melchester’s medieval buildings seem to be undergoing the same relentless process of construction in *Jude*. Decay is the inevitable result of neglect.

One of the most significant points raised by Morgan was that beavers adapted their structures according to a particular environment: “The lake, the island, and the bank are all different from each other, and the difference consists in changes of form to meet the exigencies of the situation. These several artificial works show a capacity in the beaver to adopt his constructions to the particular conditions in which he finds himself placed” (Morgan 264). In Hardy’s fiction both animals and humans make use of pre-existing structures and make them their own.

In *Two on a Tower*, animals have inhabited the neglected tower, rarely visited by humans. Hardy writes:

the masonry was lichen-stained and mildewed, for the sun never pierced that moaning cloud of blue-black vegetation: pads of moss grew in the joints of the stonework, and here and there shade-loving insects had engraved on the mortar patterns of no human style or meaning, but curious and suggestive. [...] The rarity of human intrusion was evidenced by the mazes of rabbit-runs, the feathers of shy birds, the excuviae of reptiles; as also by the well-worn paths of squirrels down the sides of trunks... (7)

This seemingly neglected space is bursting with natural life. The “rarity of human intrusion” has allowed the natural world to thrive as moss overtakes the stones and insects engrave patterns that, Hardy acknowledges, may not adhere to style as humans understand it, but nonetheless present a perplexing and curious image. These creatures have altered the fabric of the building and adapted it to their purposes. The squirrels, too, have altered the landscape surrounding it, as evidenced by their well-worn paths. The implication here is that animals and their structures flourish when left undisturbed by human influences. Moreover, animals assert a sense of ownership over human structures. The old thatched cottage containing Mrs. Stoke-d’Urberville’s fowls in *Tess* is “overrun with ivy, its chimney being enlarged by the boughs of the parasite to the aspect of a ruined tower. The lower rooms were entirely given over to the birds, who walked about them with a proprietary air, as though the place had been built by themselves” (64).

Morgan examined the relentless struggle between beavers and humans in his study, one that manifested itself in the built environment. He describes an incident where beavers constructed their dam near an existing railroad, which, for

the beaver, provided a convenient barrier to one side of their “proposed pond:”

A conflict of interests thus arose between the beavers, on the one hand, and one of the chief commercial enterprises of the country, on the other. The track-master, fearing the effects of an accumulation of water against the railroad embankment, cut the dam through the centre, and thus lowered the water to its original level. As this was no new experience to the beavers, who were accustomed to such rents, they immediately repaired the breach. For ten or fifteen times it was cut through, and as often repaired before the beavers finally desisted from their proposed work. (102)

The beavers have become accustomed, or rather, have adapted, to the repeated destruction of their dams and thus persistently reassert themselves through the process of rebuilding. It is an interesting conflict because the beaver dams pose a threat to an already existing human structure. In his recent discussion of *The American Beaver and His Works*, Bivona points out that Morgan understands beaver life in anthropomorphic terms: “What makes the beaver humanlike here is both his constructive and destructive activities, his architectural ingenuity as well as his humanlike destructiveness” (“Disrupting Nature Through Building: Animal Architecture and Natural Selection” 2). Hardy reminds us that, while humans construct buildings, they are often apt to destroy them and the evidence of this process is embedded in the landscape.

Such alterations to the landscape, whether made by humans or animals, have long-lasting effects. While Stephen Smith journeys to Endelstow in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, he sees the “common is being broken up for agricultural purposes” (10).

“The man who built” the rectory, according to William Worm, “scraped all the glebe for earth to put round [it], and laid out little flowers and trees in the soil he had got together in this way, whilst the fields he scraped have been good for nothing since” (*Blue Eyes* 12). Building processes have permanently altered the landscape because construction essentially relies on destruction. As Morgan pointed out, one could see evidence of the construction of a beaver dam by observing the alterations inflicted upon the landscape: “The great age of the larger dams is shown by their size, by the large amount of solid materials they contain, and by the destruction of the primitive forest within the area of the ponds” (84). The woodland setting of Little Hintock in *The Woodlanders* is made almost oppressive by the very density of its forest and its overabundance of vegetation. The trees Grace observes from Giles’s window are actually “wrestling for existence, their branches disfigured with wounds resulting from their mutual rubbings and blows” (307). That the woodlands are abounding with natural life almost obscures the fact that, throughout the novel, they are also being destroyed. Grace’s father is, after all, a timber-merchant. Hardy writes:

Each tree doomed to the flaying process was first attacked by Upjohn; with a small bill-hook he carefully freed the collar of the tree from twigs and patches of moss which encrusted it to a height of a foot or two above the ground, an operation comparable to the “little toilette” of the executioner’s victim. (134)

Evidence of this destruction is evident throughout the novel. Beneath the trees, Grace sees the “rotting stumps of those of the group that had been vanquished long ago” (*The Woodlanders* 307). Hardy describes another scene in which both humans

and animals have altered the landscape, “The bases of the smaller trees were nibbled bare by rabbits and at divers points heaps of fresh-made chips, and the newly cut stool of a tree, stared white through the undergrowth. There had been a large fall of timber this year” (*The Woodlanders* 53-4). The trees have been felled and the timber is transported for building purposes: “A load of oak timber was to be sent away before dawn that morning to a builder whose works were in a town many miles off” (96). As Tess journeys through varying landscapes towards Flintcomb-Ash, Hardy writes, “There were few trees, or none, those that would have grown in the hedges being mercilessly plashed down with the quickset by the tenant-farmers, the natural enemies of tree, brush, and brake” (*Tess* 300). Nature supplies humans and animals with the materials required for the construction of their buildings.

The woodlands repeatedly undergo a cyclical process of destruction and regrowth. And while humans and the environment are in opposition, they are also in sympathy with one another. Giles plants, “a thousand young fir trees [...] in a neighboring spot which had been cleared by the woodcutters” (Hardy 64). Giles, Hardy continues,

had a marvelous power of making trees grow. Although he would seem to shovel in the earth quite carelessly there was a sort of sympathy between himself and the fir, oak, or beech that he was operating on; so that the roots took hold of the soil within a few days. When, on the other hand, any of the journeymen planted, although they seemed to go through an identically similar process, one quarter of the trees would die away in the ensuing August. (Hardy 64)

Of course, with Giles’s death at the end of the novel, Little Hintock has lost the one

person with the ability to replace its lost vegetation. As George Levine writes, “The small dying area in remote England is losing out in the battle for existence” (*Darwin the Writer* 263). This is the result of alterations made by humans and animals.

In Hardy’s fiction, buildings often take advantage of the surrounding environment. Thus, in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Oak visits a shed “the site being a cutting into the slope of the hill, so that at its back part the roof was almost level with the ground” (18-19). In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Mixen Lane is described as though it is literally spilling into the nearby landscape: “The lane and its surrounding thicket of thatched cottages stretched out like a spit into the moist and misty lowland” (236). The relationship between the built environment and nature is reciprocal: although humans alter the landscape in order to build, nature simultaneously overtakes structures. As a result, the boundaries between nature and man-made structures are not clearly defined. In Hardy’s story “Interlopers at the Knap,” the front door of the “old house with mullioned windows of Ham-hill stone, and chimneys of lavish solidity” can be reached “by a large sycamore tree, whose bared roots formed a convenient staircase from the road below” (140). Here, the house and its inhabitants have adapted to nature’s alterations, which have become architectural.

And so nature and the built environment are locked in a relentless struggle for survival. In *Jude*, Christminster’s buildings are “wounded, broken, sloughing off their outer shape in the deadly struggle against years, weather, and man” (78). The erosion of structures is part of an inevitable and natural process. As Michael Irwin writes, “For Hardy the process of erosion that will eventually dissolve all man-made objects is not merely an effect of Nature, and does not begin with the death of the

owner. All living things and all inanimate ones are locked into an unending system of mutual attrition” (Irwin 92). As a result, the boundaries between inside and outside are often dissolved. Such is the case with the decaying Oxwell Hall in *The Trumpet Major* (1880):

The rambling and neglected dwelling had all the romantic excellencies and practical drawbacks which such mildewed places share in common with caves, mountains, wildernesses, glens, and other homes of poesy that people of taste wish to live and die in. Mustard and cress could have been raised on the inner plaster of the dewy walls of any height not exceeding three feet from the floor; and mushrooms of the most refined and thin-stemmed kinds grew up through the chinks of the larder paving. (32)

The marks of human life and the natural world permeate the walls. Hardy continues, “Nature, in the ample time that had been given her, had so mingled her filings and effacements with the marks of human wear and tear upon the house that it was often hard to say in which of the two, or in both, any particular obliteration had its origin” (32). Hardy’s personification of nature demonstrates its very human-like ability to inflict change.

If the natural environment can be understood in architectural terms, various structures also reflect animal forms. In Hardy’s story “A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork” (1885), the Iron-age hill fort, Mai Dun, is formed of animal-like shapes:

The profile of the whole stupendous ruin, as seen at a distance of a mile eastward, is cleanly cut as that of a marble inlay. It is varied with protuberances, which from hereabouts have the animal aspect of

warts, wens, knuckles, and hips. It may indeed be likened to an enormous many-limbed organism of an antediluvian time – partaking of the cephalopod in shape—lying lifeless, and covered with a thin green cloth, which hides its substance, while revealing its contour. (171-2)<sup>12</sup>

These animal shapes, which remind the narrator in Hardy's story of some unknown figure only traceable in geological forms, offer further signs of the evolution of architecture. The structural components of Mai Dun and its animalistic formations were likely constructed with aesthetic principles in mind. As Grant Allen argued, the symmetrical objects in nature are exactly those with which the primitive man has most to interest himself [...] The reindeer and the mammoth, whose horns and tusks form his earliest material for incipient works of art [...] the very fossil echini and rhychonellae which he drills to make his primaeval necklets—all impress the same idea upon his developing mind. ("Sense of Symmetry" 307)

It is also important to note that Mai Dun, like Hardy's shed built into the side of the mountain in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, is literally cut out of the earth, and into shapes associated with the natural environment. But this earthwork is itself formed of a multi-layered past. Hardy writes, "Here one observes underfoot from what has gone on before: scraps of Roman tile and stone chippings protrude through the grass" ("A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork" 177).<sup>13</sup> It is a location in which the "past and present have become so confusedly mingled," that the narrator forgets the purpose for his visit (179). Indeed, the past and the present are "confusedly

<sup>12</sup> Hardy's story was first published in the *Detroit Post* in 1885. It was printed in England in 1893.

<sup>13</sup> Millgate points out that the archaeologist in "A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork" is likely a reference to local antiquary Edward Cunnington, who had a reputation for incompetence (227).

mingled” throughout Hardy’s novels, stories, and poetry perhaps because the natural landscape and the buildings that form part of that landscape have undergone natural and aesthetic changes over the course of centuries. The past is compounded in the very walls of structures, or layered within the landscape. It is not surprising that Roman ruins are found at an Iron age fort, nor that Victorians coexist with the remnants of a seemingly bygone past.

In *The Story of “Primitive” Man*, Clodd examined the “rude” beginnings of architecture and traced the way it evolved, as humans developed, over the course of centuries, with evidence of “the barbaric peoples of every age” existing all over the world (Clodd 126). He wrote, “Between Stonehenge and the fair cathedral whose spire we see as we turn to Salisbury the chain in continuity is complete” (127). The cathedral at Melchester, which is Salisbury, figures prominently in *Jude*. However, the “most graceful architectural pile in England,” represents a break with continuity. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Melchester is undergoing a process of extensive restorations. One could argue that Hardy views this sort of restoration, or destruction, as an interruption of the natural ways in which buildings evolve over time.

According to Edward Clodd, architecture requires “no higher degree of adaptive intelligence than the lower animals” (*The Story of Primitive Man* 19). He continues:

The beaver builds his log-house where neither flood nor foe can reach it, cuts long canals, and even makes locks where the stream-levels render the canals useless. The tailor-bird, with beak as needle, sews his nest of leaves with thread twisted of spiders’ webs and cotton

shreds; the wasp chews the wood to pulp whereof it makes its nest;  
the bower-bird builds a love-abode of sticks and shells... (Clodd 19)

These processes are inherited instincts required for the survival of the species. In their attempts to survive amid natural elements Hardy's characters create simple structures using natural resources at hand: similar to the way animals utilize the natural environment. So, after Bathsheba flees the home she shares with Troy, she finds shelter outdoors. A temporary home is found in a "thicket overhung by some large oak and beech trees" where she finds "a break in the fern" (295). Hardy continues:

She could think of nothing better to do with her palpitating self than to go in here and hide: and entering she lighted on a spot sheltered from the damp by a reclining trunk, where she sank down upon a tangled couch of fronds and stems. She mechanically pulled some armfuls round her to keep off the breezes, and closed her eyes. (295)

Bathsheba's actions are instinctual: she "mechanically" adapts the natural elements into a shelter. While Bathsheba does not "build" a structure in the literal sense, the refuge she creates is akin to those built by animals. In *The Descent of Man* (1871), Darwin wrote, "The orang is known to cover itself at night with the leaves of the Pandanus; and Brehm states that one of his baboons used to protect itself from the heat of the sun by throwing a straw mat over its head" (1: 51). Acknowledging that animals did "possess some power of reasoning" (45) Darwin saw in these examples, "the first steps toward some of the simpler arts; namely, rude architecture and dress, as they arose among the early progenitors of man" (1:51). Like Bathsheba, Tess is forced to create a makeshift shelter out of doors. Encountering a "well-to-do-boor"

who recognizes her, Tess escapes to a nearby plantation where she spends the night (*Tess* 296). Hardy writes:

Under foot the leaves were dry, and the foliage of some holly bushes which grew among the deciduous trees was dense enough to keep off draughts. She scraped together the dead leaves till she had formed them into a large heap, making a sort of nest in the middle, into this Tess crept. (296)

Tess awakens to find that she has shared the spot with hunted pheasants, and they become her “fellows in nature’s teeming family” (298). Within this natural domestic sphere the familial narrative is characterized by tragedy. It is often Hardy’s more “primitive” characters that tend to exist in shelters of “the roughest kind,” and whose living arrangements equal the rusticity of birds’ nests. Giles Winterborne, a figure who embodies the woodlands, is forced to create a makeshift shelter within nature when he lets Grace Melbury stay in his humble dwelling:

His snug place without the hut proved to be a wretched little shelter of the roughest kind, formed of four hurdles thatched with brake-fern. Underneath were dry sacks, hay, and other litter of the sort, upon which he sat down; and there in the dark tried to eat his meal.  
(*Woodlanders* 229)

These characters are essentially building structures as animals build them, creating crude buildings utilizing nature’s surrounding resources. The living conditions of animals, too, could be understood in human terms. In his autobiography Hardy recounts,

There is what we used to call ‘The Bird’s Bedroom’ in the plantation at

Bockhampton. At this time of year the birds select the hollies for roosting in, and at dusk noises not unlike the creaking of withy-chairs arise, with a busy rustling as of people going to bed in a lodging-house; accompanied by sundry shakings, adjustings, and pattings, as if they were making their beds vigorously before turning in.

Animals partake in a domestic routine that mirrors that of humans.

After Michael Henchard's demise, he, too, inhabits a "primitive" dwelling. Hardy describes the moment Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae discover his final home: "The walls, built of kneaded clay originally faced with a trowel, had been worn by years of rain-washings to a lumpy crumbling surface [...] its grey rents held together here and there by a leafy strap of ivy which could scarcely find substance enough for the purpose" (*Mayor of Casterbridge* 307). In comparing "savages" to "civilized" men, E.B. Tylor argued that, "the lower stages" of agriculture and architecture, "begin with mere direct imitation of nature, copying the shelters which nature provides, and the propagation of plants which nature performs" (*Primitive Culture* 61). It wasn't until "civilization" became more developed, Tylor argued, that the arts became more elaborate and decorative. Hardy's characters return to a more primitive existence that reflects the living conditions of the lesser-developed animals.

In *The Poetics of Space* (1964) Bachelard examines the relationship between a bird's nest and the notion of a "home." "It is striking," he writes, "that even in our homes [...] our consciousness of well-being should call for comparison with animals and their shelters" (91). The construction of a "nest," of a refuge from the outside world, is an instinct shared both by animals and humans. Citing the painter Maurice

de Vlaminck, Bachelard continues: “The well-being I feel, seated in front of my fire, while bad weather rages out-of-doors, is entirely animal. A rat in its hole, a rabbit in its burrow, cows in the stable, must all feel the same contentment I feel.’ Thus well-being takes us to the primitiveness of the refuge” (91). Indeed, both Bathsheba and Tess create these outdoor shelters, hiding from forces and situations beyond their control while Henchard retreats to his pitiful dwelling following Elizabeth-Jane’s rejection of him. These places have been transformed into temporary sanctuaries. A nest, Bachelard explains, shares characteristics of a simple house. A thatched cottage in particular is built out of the same materials. He writes, “Thick, coarsely plaited straw emphasizes the will to provide shelter by extending well beyond the walls. [...] Under the roof’s covering the walls are of earth and stone. The openings are low. A thatched cottage is set on the ground like a nest in the field” (98). And so even Hardy’s simple mud-and- thatch cottages, the kind inhabited by the d’Urbervilles, or Giles’s paternal cottage, are composed of, and situated on, a natural landscape.

Many of Hardy’s characters inhabit the natural world to the extent that they are actually part of that landscape. Yeobright is physically part of Egdon Heath because he demonstrates an instinctual knowledge of the landscape. Hardy writes:

If anyone knew the heath well it was Clym. He was permeated with its scenes, with its substance, and with its odours. He might be said to be its product. His eyes had first opened thereon: with its appearance all the first images of his memory were mingled: his estimate of life had been coloured by it. His toys had been the flint knives and arrow-heads which he found there, wondering why stones should ‘grow’ to

such odd shapes... (171)

It is as though Clym was actually born into this natural world, away from all signs of “civilization.” Hardy’s image of flint-knives and arrow-heads shows how nature is manipulated by humans (in this case to make tools and weapons) but how these small, ancient objects have once again become a part of the landscape as the small figure of a child tries to comprehend their odd forms. One of the ideas explored in the novel, that one cannot return, is interesting given Clym’s complete immersion with the countryside surrounding his home. J. Hillis Miller contends that Clym has, like Diggory Venn, “not always lived absorbed into the life and prejudices of the community. To go away even for a short time is to cease forever to be a real ‘native’” (162). Clym’s harmony with the heath is thus natural and instinctual rather than social. In *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, Tess, “felt akin to the landscape” as she journeyed to Talbothay’s (118). When Hardy describes her as “a figure which is part of the landscape,” the landscape of which Tess is a part is the bleak winter landscape that coincides with her work as a traveling fieldwoman towards the end of the novel (299). In an attempt to repress her identity, Tess has become enveloped by agrarian capitalism. By contrast, Gabriel Oak is at home in the natural world and takes pleasure in it. Indeed, after he becomes a wandering shepherd, he finds rest outdoors on a bed of hay, “feeling, physically, as comfortable as he had been in his entire life” (*Madding Crowd* 46). These characters, which are identified as part of the landscape, have an instinctual response to their surroundings.

It is important to note, however, that a developed sense of aesthetic value within the built environment was considered by late nineteenth century evolutionary thinkers to be instinctual. In his discussion on bee hives Smirke argued that, “I must

not be supposed to labour under the error of referring their ingenious devices and sagacious ways to anything but an instinct, or natural impulse, planted in them by that Hand which has shaped all things” (288). Herbert Spencer, and Grant Allen who developed some of Spencer’s ideas in *Physiological Aesthetics* (1877) and in essays published in *Mind*, believed that “the sense of symmetry,” or, the idea that humans create order out of the natural environment in the structures they build, was inherited from the lower animals. Spencer explained, “The connexion between symmetrical architecture and animal forms, may be inferred from the *kind* of symmetry we expect, and are satisfied with, in regular buildings” (Spencer 396). Unsymmetrical buildings, he believed, were “displeasing” to the viewer (396). Moreover, as Allen argued in “The Origin of the Sense of Symmetry” (1879), one could trace the evolution of architecture by studying this inherited sense of symmetry:

And when we go back in time to the earliest prehistoric monuments of our race, we find, the like regularity in the huge circles of Stonehenge or Avebury [...] Yet this last and qualified assertion shows us that the love for symmetry among mankind is something that has grown and developed during the whole of historic and prehistoric time: and we are consequently led to inquire what is the origin of taste which we see thus displayed in every existing race of men. (21)

Architecture was something that had evolved, but the origins of taste, though changeable, had existed from the very beginning. As I have mentioned before, Hardy’s built environment is composed of the prehistoric and the historic: a place like Stonehenge is a remnant of man’s sense of symmetry in the built environment,

as are the various structures of subsequent centuries. The order of development, as Spencer and Allen showed, could thus be traced from “the roughly-chipped stone implements of the very first humans inhabitants of the earth” to gothic cathedrals and the modern train tunnels that cut through the landscape.

In tracing the tendency for animals to build symmetrical structures, Allen suggests that seemingly “purely aesthetic” functions are nonetheless useful in the evolutionary sense of the term. Indeed, Allen argues that an inborn preference for symmetry, whether in buildings, nests, or bodies, is instinctive among mammals, an idea Darwin developed in *The Descent of Man*. In *Physiological Aesthetics* Allen “joined beauty to function” (Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* 80). He argues, “the facts on which Mr. Darwin basis his theory of sexual selection thus become of the first importance for the aesthetic philosopher, because they are really the only solid evidence for the existence of a love for beauty in the infra-human world” (“Aesthetic Evolution in Man” 447). He believes it stems from ingrained habits in humans, and emerges from the needs of sexual selection rather than serving a natural selection function. In choosing a mate, bilateral symmetry is often a sign of health and thus of evolutionary promise in a potential mate (“Aesthetic Evolution in Man” 449). As Spencer argued, “Thus in a Greek temple we require that the front shall be symmetrical in itself, and that the two flanks shall be alike; but we do not look for uniformity between the flanks and the front, nor between the front and the back. The identity of this symmetry with that found in animals is obvious” (396). In *Tess Hardy* describes the Durbeyfield household objects piled onto a cart, which, “was built on a well-nigh unvarying principle, as peculiar, probably, to the rural labourer as the

hexagon to the bee" (380). While Hardy contends that bees, being unable to comprehend the complexity of their symmetrically shaped cells, are building their cells out of a natural instinct, he also suggests that humans rely on a similar instinct. This is design without a conscious designer. Hardy sees all of Tess's life that way: she is a victim of natural patterning. Nature is not kind to individuals, only to successfully adapted species. Buildings that are meant to signify human progress and accomplishments can also be traced back to their evolutionary origins. Even the curved, uneven lines Jude sees buried within the walls of one of Christminster's colleges represent a series of patterns found in nature which, as Allen argued, was itself composed of symmetrical shapes and lines.

Part of Darwin's theory of sexual selection showed how animals respond to beautifully built structures, particularly in the case of bowerbirds. Darwin explained, "The bower-birds, by tastefully ornamenting their playing-passages with gayly-coloured objects, as do certain humming-birds their nests, offer additional evidence that they possess a sense of beauty" (1: 61). Moreover, male bowerbirds utilize their decorative nests in order to attract females and this is its sole purpose (Hansell 218). That animals not only build, but make their structures aesthetically pleasing in order to attract a mate, is one echoed in human behavior and can be seen in Hardy's fiction. Henchard's refurbishment of his home in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is a case in point. Hardy writes:

Lest she should pine for a deeper affection than he could give, he made a point of showing it in some semblance of external action. Among other things he had the iron railings, that had smiled sadly in dull rust for the last eighty years, painted a bright green, and the

heavy-barred, small paned, Georgian sash windows enlivened with three coats of white. (82)

Henchard's sign of affection, written in the aesthetic repairs he has made to his home, is performative, and certainly used as a marker for social class and refinement, but it is nevertheless significant. His "external action" shows how architecture still serves an evolutionary purpose: its power to attract a mate. In *The Woodlanders* Giles Winterborne attempts to impress Grace by giving a Christmas tea at his home, an event which does not go as planned and ends in the realization that Grace is too refined for Winterborne's rustic ways (79). It is quite obvious that Boldwood's Christmas party in *Far From the Madding Crowd* is not for the villagers but for Bathsheba. Hardy describes the preparations for the party,

A large bough of mistletoe had been brought from the woods that day and suspended in the hall of the bachelor's home. Holly and ivy had followed in armfuls. From six that morning till past noon the huge wood fire in the kitchen roared and sparkled at its highest. (348)

Despite these attempts we are told, "the proceedings were unnatural to the place and the lone man who lived therein, and hence not good" (348). The decorations in his home, no doubt part of the venture to win Bathsheba's hand, are contrived and untimely do not result in the happy ending Boldwood desired. It is as though Boldwood is going against his natural instincts: "Such a thing had never been attempted before by its owner, and it was now done as by a wretch" (349). Here, Hardy is aware that humans build and enhance their buildings in the hopes that marriage will ensue. As part of his discussion of *The Woodlanders*, Levine calls attention to the fact that "there is virtually no reproductive success" in Hardy's novel

(263). One could extend this argument to *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Far From the Madding Crowd*. The failure of the built environment to attract has resulted in the fact that these male protagonists do not have any offspring.

In *A Pair of Blue Eyes* the view outside the Rectory consists of “long-armed trees and shrubs of juniper, cedar, and pine varieties [...] the eternal hills and tower behind them were greyish brown” (32). For Hardy, nature is eternal, but aspects of the built environment, which is always subject to change, are permanent as well: it is the instinct to create structures that continues and the fact that these creations are often aesthetic, even the most humble constructs, exist in evolutionary time. Hardy, “slides easily among the scales of time from years to eons, accepting slow but relentless change through time—evolution—as the natural order of things” (Padian 223). Like the passage of time, the boundaries between architecture and evolution are blurred as they coexist and inform one another.

## Chapter 5: Private and Public Spaces:

### The Architecture of Social Class

‘And where do we raise our smoke now, parson, if I may make so bold; I

mean, where do we d’Urbervilles live?’

‘You don’t live anywhere. You are extinct—as a county family.’

*Tess of the d’Urbervilles*<sup>1</sup>

In *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, the Durbeyfield family, having been expelled from their home owing to the death of its patriarch, are forced to leave Marlott, with the household belongings piled onto a hired waggon. Hardy writes:

When the large articles of furniture had been packed in position a circular nest was made of the beds and bedding, in which Joan Durbeyfield and the young children were to sit through the journey. [...] at length, about two o’clock, the whole was under way, the cooking-pot swinging from the axle of the waggon, Mrs. Durbeyfield and family at the top, the matron having in her lap, to prevent injury to its works, the head of the clock which, at any exceptional lurch of the waggon, struck one, or one-and-a-half, in hurt tones. (380)

It is this scene, which makes public the very private life of the family, that undermines the notion of home as a sacred and enclosed architectural space—a notion grounded in Victorian middle-class values. As Karen Chase and Michael Levenson explain:

The wall represents a barrier that separates privilege from dispossession, and privacy from public life. It converts free space into

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<sup>1</sup> (Tess 15)

a series of domestic parcels, and while it stands within a complex array of social meanings—legal, economic, symbolic—it also stands as a conspicuous physical object, which signifies through its heavy materiality. (143)

Without the shelter of their cottage, the Durbeyfield's themselves become conspicuous objects, piled precariously onto a cart with their domestic belongings, having created a "nest," or temporary refuge, in the midst of a public spectacle. They are forced to wander the countryside in search of lodgings, their "indoor articles abandoned to the vicissitudes of a roofless exposure for which they were never made" (*Tess* 382). Hardy depicts spaces whereby social class, gender, and domestic roles are performed as revealed through various forms of surveillance as seemingly private realms are exposed to public life.

Hardy's depiction of rural migration in *Tess* reveals a society in a state of continual change. A result of this process of change is the instability of the built environment, as a structure with a roof and walls that provides shelter from the elements as well as protection from the public gaze. Because social class in Hardy's fiction, as numerous literary critics contend, is continually in flux, the definition of domesticity, of notions surrounding the meaning of the "home," are as well, as Hardy's characters inhabit spaces that point to the complexities of social class and the precariousness of one's social status. The architectural spaces portrayed both conform to and go against prevailing Victorian notions about domesticity and the home. This chapter examines Hardy's use of space, particularly domestic space, in his novels and poetry and examines the ways in which he extends or redefines the boundaries between public and private spaces. In addition, I discuss the ways his

characters inhabit and negotiate these spaces and the meanings they convey.

Throughout his fiction, Hardy engages with the very Victorian obsession with the domestic sphere and the social divisions between inside and outside, private and public. Chase and Levenson contend, “Victorian domesticity was as much a spatial as an affective obsession. Increasingly, to imagine a flourishing private life was to articulate space, to secure boundaries, and to distribute bodies” (143). As I discussed in the previous chapter, these boundaries were often blurred by the broad definition of architecture itself. The natural world Hardy’s characters inhabit— the bed of hay in which Gabriel Oak creates a “home,” or the small walls of his shepherd’s hut, for example—are reconsiderations of nineteenth-century discussions of space, particularly the private realm of the home. And Hardy’s engagement with these preconceived notions about architectural space and private life emerge from the historical and cultural realities of a shifting and socially complex rural world, the one he depicts in his 1883 essay “The Dorsetshire Labourer.”

While significant literary and cultural studies have examined the Victorian home of the industrial middle classes and the living conditions of the urban poor, little attention has been paid to its rural counterpart and the laboring classes who inhabited the farms and cottages of the countryside. John Burnett’s *A Social History of Housing 1815-1970*, (1978) is perhaps the most thorough historical study of the architecture of the laboring classes, both rural and urban. Despite the lack of resources on domesticity and rural society, works that focus on urban settings or middle-class spaces prove useful in a study on Hardy. Perhaps this is because, as Penny Boumelha argues, “Rural society, for Hardy, is just that: a *society*, in which exploitation, solidarity, and the struggle for survival are experienced quite as keenly

as they are in urban settings” (Boumelha 131). Studies that focus on the middle class include Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall’s groundbreaking study, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (1987), which explores the formation of middle-class identity and gender during the industrial revolution. Elizabeth Langland’s *Nobody’s Angels: Middle Class Women and the Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture* (1995) shows how middle-class women negotiated domestic practices, particularly in the figure of the Angel in the House. John Tosh’s *A Man’s Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (1999) examines Victorian debates about masculinity and the domestic realm. Among the essays published in *Domestic Space: Reading the Nineteenth Century Interior* (1999) is Moira Donald’s “Tranquil Havens? Critiquing the idea of home as the middle-class sanctuary,” which, while focusing on the middle class, questions the boundaries between public and private spaces, as well as work and home. This volume also includes Martin Hewitt’s “District Visiting and the Construction of Domestic Space in the Mid-Nineteenth Century.” Hewitt points out that much of what we do know about working-class domesticity emerges from the middle-class ideologies of social reformers, a fact Hardy addresses in “The Dorsetshire Labourer.” More recent studies include Karen Chase and Michael Levenson’s *The Spectacle of Intimacy: A Public Life for the Victorian Family* (2000) which examines the exposure of the private life of the family and the desire for privacy through mediated spaces in Victorian literature and culture. In *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life* (2005) Victoria Rosner discusses the way modernism created a private life that attempted to define itself in opposition to Victorian values. Finally, Andrea Katson Tange’s *Architectural Identities:*

*Domesticity, Literature, and the Victorian Middle Classes* (2010), explores how British middle-class identity was shaped by architecture from the 1830s through the 1870s (Tange 6). It was, she writes, “was carefully constructed from the building blocks of family name and gentility, and it was maintained through the vigilant creation of a house that would not just be a home but also a stage for displaying the successful achievement of middle-class identity (6). These works collectively demonstrate that the boundaries between public and private spaces were often indistinct as were the gendered roles within them. In their discussion on domestic debates in the middle classes, these studies, particularly Chase and Levenson’s, often point to the threat posed by working class mores to the sacred sphere of domesticity. The middle-class notion of the domestic sphere was consolidated in public consciousness by the increasing focus on the way of life of those who violated its prescriptions (Bivona and Henkle 36-62).<sup>2</sup>

In her recent study *Thomas Hardy and Desire: Conceptions of the Self*, (2013), Jane Thomas examines the meaning of desire, which she defines as the “essential yearning that defines the human condition” and its relationship to the home in Hardy’s fiction (2). She argues that the lost moment of “plentitude and self-propriety,” which can be understood in Lacanian terms is,

desired and imagined nostalgically in the trope of the home:  
particularly the lost childhood home which many of his poetic narrators  
yearn for but find themselves unable to return to or are shut out from.  
The adult house—the present construction of the self—offers a placed  
condition for meaningful interaction with others but constrains, inhabits

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<sup>2</sup> The best example of this is *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* (1883).

or traps its dweller or tenant. (8)

I am interested, like Thomas, in the homelessness experienced by Hardy's characters and the childhood home as a site of memory. As I have argued in previous chapters, various structures, including houses, weigh heavily on the adults inhabiting them as they experience the cultural weight of the past. In addition, Thomas discusses Hardy's female characters, who attempt to live outside patriarchal domestic space. Where I depart from Thomas is my methodology: I am predominantly interested in these topics from the social, cultural, and historical perspective of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries.

Many of Hardy's characters attempt to move between the different social classes and often with tragic results. But the so-called barriers that exist between social groups are not always clearly defined. As Christine DeVine explains, "Class division in the novels is not simply a rift between the rich and the poor, or master and worker, nor is it a straightforward tripartite division between the upper, middle, and lower classes" (173). Hardy's communities, "contain a fluid, less stable class system than one might expect to find in a Victorian novel" (DeVine 174). Hardy's characters often exist on the fringes of a particular social class. Michael Henchard, for example, moves between hay-trusser, prominent mayor, and, in the end, a poverty-stricken figure whose only shelter is the "humblest" of dwellings (*Mayor of Casterbridge* 307). "This fluidity" DeVine argues, "the possibility of a move downward in class status being just as likely as a move upward—suggests instability rather than the absence of class boundaries" (174). In *The Woodlanders* Grace Melbury, through careful education, is poised for a more refined social life but wavers between the more "primitive" traits associated with Little Hintock and her

aspirations for upward mobility. This conflict of class is illuminated in Hardy's use of architectural imagery where Grace is shown inhabiting varying levels of domesticity. When Giles points out the difference in farm buildings upon her return at the beginning of the novel, Grace sees something entirely different: "where he was seeing John-apples and farm-buildings she was beholding a much contrasting scene: a broad lawn in the fashionable suburb of a fast city" (43). In her attempt to flee Fitzpiers towards the end of the novel, Grace becomes "mistress," for two nights, of Winterborne's hut, "a square cot of one story only, sloping up on all sides to a chimney in the midst" (295). Giles's simple dwelling is well-stocked with provisions and Grace runs her temporary household with typical middle-class efficiency: in addition to preparing their meals, "She managed to while away some portion of the afternoon by putting Giles's home in order, and making little improvements which she deemed that he would value when she was gone" (Hardy 301). Here, even the most basic household is managed according to a set of domestic standards, illustrating the instability of social boundaries and conceptions of the home. As Hardy showed in "The Dorsetshire Labourer," many laborers cottages were run according to what many believed were the laws of middle-class domesticity.

### **Rural Housing and Social Reform**

In "The Dorsetshire Labourer," Hardy attempted to create a more nuanced portrait of agricultural laborers and the dwellings they inhabited. Published in 1883, Pite points out that Hardy "claimed to be putting before the public nothing more than a faithful account of how the people around him lived and worked so that his

discussion of a controversial topic—the condition of the labouring poor—would be quite neutral (275). Hardy’s essay does not directly address the agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1880s but he depicts the complexities of a society in flux, and the results of depopulation on a traditional way of life. This was in part a response to pervading notions, often constructed by the urban middle class, regarding rural life. Throughout the nineteenth century, various middle-class social reformers published reports, investigations, or essays in books and periodicals devoted to what they described as the shocking living conditions of rural laborers.

When the Vicar Henry Moule entered Fordington Parish in 1829, the cottages, he wrote, were “‘of the most wretched description’ and their inhabitants ‘utterly destitute of the ordinary conveniences of life’” (qtd. in Pite 79-80).<sup>3</sup> In 1843 the *Reports of special assistant poor law commissioners on the employment of women and children in agriculture*, written by Alfred Austin, an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, included excerpts from those who had witnessed the state of laborers’ cottages, describing them as breeding grounds for dirt, disease, overcrowding, and sexual immorality. Austin wrote “Everywhere cottages are old, and frequently in a state of decay, and are consequently ill-adapted to for the increased number of inmates of late years” (20). The rise in population, and the lack of new housing required for the accommodation of increasing numbers, contributed to overcrowding. A Dorset surgeon described the living conditions of a cottage housing ten individuals:

Generally the cottages are too small for the families living in them, and tend to produce and aggravate disease, from the inmates living so

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<sup>3</sup> See *Monographs*, no. 27, “Paupers, Criminals, and Cholera at Dorchester in 1854.”

closely together. Two years ago typhus fever occurred in a neighbouring parish, which I attend; and there was one cottage I attended which consisted of one room on the ground-floor and two small bed-rooms upstairs. The floor was earthen, with no ceiling but the thatch of the roof. (Austin 22)

The boundaries between inside and outside were almost nonexistent, as humans and animals often coexisted in close proximity. Austin writes of cottages with pigsties adjoining them, a contributing factor to general uncleanness (21). But most importantly, particularly from the perspective of outsiders, was the lack of divisions between humans themselves. The Rev. S. Godolphin Osborne from Dorsetshire described the state of living conditions in a “typical” laborer’s cottage:

from infancy to puberty his children for the most part sleep in the same room with his wife and himself; and whatever attempts at decency may be made (and I have seen many most ingenious and praiseworthy attempts), still there is the fact of the old and the young, married and unmarried, of both sexes, all herded together in one and the same sleeping apartment. (21)

Although Osborne does not elaborate on his observation, it is significant that there are obvious attempts made by the inhabitants to construct barriers that offer a sense of privacy within these overcrowded spaces. By the 1870s the rural depopulation had increased the concerns of the urban middle-class and this in turn made rural housing “an issue of national importance” (Burnett 123). The rural laborer, “needed a secure, comfortable, sanitary cottage, with sufficient bedrooms to ensure decency for his larger-than-average family [...] and with enough garden to grow his own

vegetables, otherwise he would continue to desert for better opportunities elsewhere” (Burnett 124). It was thus poor housing conditions, many reformers believed, that were the cause of depopulation.

The solution, however, was not entirely straightforward. And so various landlords, squires, and members of the upper middle classes set about designing “ideal cottages” for rural laborers. The *Builder Magazine* printed numerous designs for cottages during the course of the nineteenth century. These designs often promised improved living conditions, including sanitation and privacy, and, most importantly, the economical materials required for their construction. In 1863 the carpenter Peter Thompson, a “practical workman of forty years experience,” published *Healthy Moral Homes for Agricultural Labourers*. Thompson wanted to transform the laborer’s cottage into a “Home” (v). These homes, Thompson explained, were designed “to a minimum size [...] at a cost to yield a good investment for a moderate rent” (31). In *A Laodicean* Charlotte informs George Somerset that Paula has designed a new plan for the town, “She is going to grant cheap building leases, and develop the manufacture of pottery” (30).<sup>4</sup> The model cottage movement, Burnett explains, “was relatively unimportant as a contribution to the rural housing problem, but more so as an indication of ideals to which reformers aspired throughout the [...] century” (48). More often than not, the laborer could not afford the standard of housing that reformers considered acceptable (Burnett 124). As a result, Burnett explains, “cottages were frequently let at rates at which it did not

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<sup>4</sup> A well-known example of cottage reform, or attempts to design better housing for rural laborers, can be found George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* (1871-2). Dorothea Brooke makes plans for model cottages on her uncle’s estate, stating, “Life in cottages might be happier than ours, if they were real houses fit for human beings from whom we expect duties and affection” (Eliot 229).

pay to build new ones” (124).<sup>5</sup> In urban centers, model housing often brought with it further surveillance from social reformers: “Philanthropists who built model houses—cleaner, better equipped, fully supervised, and with higher rents—failed to see why their bounty was often refused, not calculating the psychic cost of moral surveillance” (Chase 149).<sup>6</sup>

Despite these challenges there were certainly improvements. In 1878 the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England* claimed, “The low mud-and-stud thatched tenement, with its two rooms on the ground-floor, has almost entirely disappeared. Such dwellings have been replaced by commodious and comfortable buildings of brick and slate, which contain every needful accommodation” (“Domestic Life” 779). The article points out that architectural improvements outweighed any consideration for the aesthetic presence of these ancient cottages, “the lover of the picturesque finds rapidly swept away those frail abodes which, however they might gratify his artistic taste, were yet sometimes a scandal to the country in which they abounded” (“Domestic Life” 779).<sup>7</sup> Although there was certainly truth in the fact that many rural laborers were living in a state of squalor and improvements were welcomed, numerous reformers failed to acknowledge how the destruction of a familial home might affect its inhabitants. In “The Dorsetshire Labourer” Hardy questions this rather biased view of rural society. He writes:

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<sup>5</sup> According to Burnett, “Much of the discussion” during the first half of the nineteenth century “was either about the possibility of cheapening costs, of construction by changes in building methods, or about the humanitarian responsibility of landlords and farmers in effect to subsidize the accommodation of their workforce by devoting as much care and expense to it as they did to the accommodation of their livestock.”

<sup>6</sup> Burnett provides examples where landlords were unhappy with the ways in which their inhabitants were utilizing the new spaces provided for them.

<sup>7</sup> According to Burnett some model cottages were designed with only aestheticism in mind: “Many of the designs of the period were in the romantic ‘Picturesque’ style, which viewed cottages as part of an idealized rural landscape and sometimes paid scant attention to the comfort of their occupants” (48).

English peasants who are not proprietors live in model cottages copied out of a book by the squire, the latter are so much happier [...] as the dignity of their architecture is greater. It were idle to deny that, other things being equal, the family which dwells in a cleanly and spacious cottage has the probability of a more cheerful existence than a family narrowly housed and draggled-tailed. (43)

For Hardy, it was the perpetual fear of losing one's home that was the greatest plight of the Dorsetshire laborer. Because social class and rural life were in flux, the figure of the rural laborer or cottage dweller was more complex than the various essays and articles of social reformers would suggest.

Hardy begins his essay with a description of the "supposed real but highly conventional Hodge" and shows that "It seldom happens that a nickname which affects to portray a class is honestly indicative of the individuals composing that class" (Hardy 38). Hardy suggests that visitors from London only see the surface of things and, were the outsider to lengthen his stay, he would discover the rich complexity and varied personalities of these cottage dwellers (40). Hardy alludes to the "uninformed conclusions" made by social reformers or middle-class visitors:

Nothing, for instance, is more common than for some philanthropic lady to burst in upon a family, be struck by the apparent squalor of the scene, and to straightaway mark down that household in her notebook as a frightful example of the misery of the labouring classes. (41)

As Martin Hewitt points out, "The working classes were rarely able to establish control over information about their daily lives achieved by the middle classes. But this does not mean they lacked a sense of the private, that the working classes were

not able to construct their own domestic space” (123).<sup>8</sup> And this is a fact Hardy recognized, that, despite precarious living conditions, rural laborers *were* able to construct their own domestic space even if it went unnoticed by visitors.

In his description of these domestic spaces Hardy shows that appearances are often deceiving. He writes,

‘I always kip a white apron behind the door to slip on when the gentlefolk knock, for if so be they see a white apron they think ye be clane,’ said an honest woman one day, whose bedroom floors could have been scraped with as much advantage as a pigeon-loft; but who, by a judicious use of high lights, shone as a pattern of neatness in her patrons’ eyes. (42)

This figure is aware that she is being observed in what should be the private realm of her home but is repeatedly subject to “moral surveillance.” Hardy also points out, in a rather subtle way, that these visitors are unable to see beyond the obvious signifiers associated with domestic respectability. Hardy cites another example of a woman who had a “passion for burnt umber,” which she used to cover every surface of her home, giving the overall appearance of “slovenliness” despite the fact that she and her children’s bed-linen and under-clothes were “like the driven snow” (42). The domestic sphere is formed of intricate layers that is, at first, difficult to perceive and it is this private world, however humble, however mediocre the housekeeping, that was often ignored by middle-class visitors.

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<sup>8</sup> An example of this sort of exposure can be seen in Henry Roberts’ model houses, which were exhibited at the Great Exhibition in 1851, having been funded by Prince Albert. The purpose of this exhibition was to draw attention to the living conditions of the poor. As Barbara Leckie explains, “The Exhibition Model Dwellings, after all, were a response to the many exposés of the domestic interiors of the poor” (“Prince Albert’s Exhibition Model Dwellings”). In 1851 Roberts included the designs in his *Dwellings of the Labouring Classes, Their Arrangement and Construction; Illustrated by a Reference to the Model Houses of the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes*.

Hardy was not alone in his view that the lives of rural laborers, and indeed their domestic situations, were more complex than they might have appeared. Richard Heath's "Peasant Life in Dorset," which first appeared in the family periodical *Golden Hours* in 1872, was a sympathetic and thought-provoking portrayal of rural Dorset and its inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> He acknowledged that much was wanting in the living conditions of its rural laborers. As Henry Moule had argued decades earlier, Heath reached the conclusion that "Nothing can well exceed the description of those in the village of Fordington [...] and I saw enough as I passed through the village last autumn to enable me to testify against the place" (122-3). And in Dorchester he found "some of the worst cottages in the county" (123). In spite of these realities, Heath believed that destroying these structures severed the relationship between their inhabitants and their past. Visiting an elderly schoolmistress in her ancient cottage Heath writes,

The greatest trouble she had was that the landlord wanted to pull down the old house, the home of her father, and build a new one. And this touches a chord which is very common amongst the rural poor. For the old house is full of sweet memories, and if you destroy it, you destroy the only life left for the old—to dwell in the thought of the past (123-4).<sup>10</sup>

As I have argued in previous chapters, buildings record human memories. When these rural cottages are destroyed, the memories associated with them are lost. Heath points out that such emotional attachments to domestic spaces are not

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<sup>9</sup> Heath's essays on rural life in England appeared in *Golden Hours: A Monthly Magazine for Family and General Reading* (1871-1892).

<sup>10</sup> Heath repeatedly cites William Barnes in order to illustrate the value placed on the notion of "home" and its importance for the inhabitants of Dorset.

confined to middle-class society. In a description which greatly corresponds to that of the d'Urbervilles, Heath points out that there is dignity in this association with the past: "The Dorset peasantry are gentlefolk by birth. It is not that veneer which the most thorough scoundrel can easily assume, but that native inbred refinement, that perception of beauty and fitness, which is at most, if not quite, a divine gift" (121). In *Tess* the genuine descendants of the noble Durbeyfields have been reduced to wandering the countryside in search of shelter, their very homelessness threatens their existence.

Hardy repeatedly points to the precariousness of rural structures by showing how unstable the notion of "house" or "home" could be during the course of rural depopulation. When Henchard makes inquiries about housing near Weydon Priors in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* he is told that there is none, "Pulling down is more the nater of Weydon. There were five houses cleared away last year, and three this; and the volk nowhere to go—no, not so much as a thatched hurdle; that's the way of Weydon Priors" (7). Similarly in *Tess*, "the cottage accommodation at Marlott" had been "considerably curtailed by demolitions" (373). In addition to the social forces arrayed against them, the lack of housing pushes Hardy's characters into extreme levels of poverty, exposure, and loss of social status. As the parson informs Durbeyfield of his ancestors, "You don't live anywhere. You are extinct..." (15).

Part of what Hardy illustrates in "The Dorsetshire Labourer" is the fact that rural depopulation not only contributed to homelessness but was removing inhabitants from the home and the village in which they had lived for generations, separating people and families from a culture that was already quickly disappearing. In *Tess* Hardy writes "These annual migrations from farm to farm were on the

increase here. When Tess's mother was a child the majority of the field-folk about Marlott had remained all their lives on one farm, which had been the home also of their fathers and grandfathers" (371). Though such change brings with it more economic freedom and introduces laborers to a wider range of ideas, the result, Hardy explains, is "a less intimate and kindly relation with the land he tills than existed before enlightenment enables him to rise above the condition of a serf who lived and died on a particular plot like a tree" ("The Dorsetshire Labourer" 49-50). The "long personal association" with a particular farm or piece of land had disappeared ("Dorsetshire Labourer" 50). Hardy points out that the families, many of whom had been life-holders, "who built at their own expense the cottages they occupied, [...] would have been glad to remain as weekly or monthly tenants of the owner" (56). But the landlords, Hardy explains, disapprove of the tenants who are not employed by them and so they "pull down each cottage as it falls in, leaving standing a sufficient number for the use of the farmer's men and no more" (36). There is little regard for the inhabitants or their local ties and, as such, they are forced into a nomadic existence. Hardy describes the removals taking place on Lady Day in *Tess*: "With the younger families it was a pleasant excitement which might possibly be an advantage. The Egypt of one family was the land of promise to a family who saw it from a distance; till by residence there it became in turn their Egypt also; and so they changed and changed" (372). It is as though the loss of the original family home, and the associations brought with it, have resulted in the inability to settle anywhere. Moving from place to place, Hardy explains that the landlord does not even know his tenants by name ("Dorsetshire Labourer" 50). He continues, "They come and go yearly, like birds of passage, nobody thinks whence

or whither. This disassociation is favoured by the customary system of letting cottages with the land, so that, far from having a guarantee of a holding to keep him fixed, the labourer has not even the stability of a landlord's tenant" (50). Rural depopulation has resulted in the loss of home, and of any sense of domestic stability. It has threatened, even destroyed, the relationship between these rural inhabitants and their past.

Giles Winterborne cannot comprehend the possibility of losing his home in *The Woodlanders*. So significant is his relationship to his home that the reality of John South's death, on whose life rests the survival of these dwellings, that Giles is unable to imagine a life anywhere else. Hardy writes,

Winterborne walked up and down his garden next day thinking of the contingency. The sense that the paths he was pacing, the cabbage-plots, the appletrees, his dwelling, cider-cellar, wring-house, stables, weather-cock, were all slipping away over his head and beneath his feet as if they were painted on a magic lantern slide, was curious. (91)

The "pulling down" of Giles's house, "and a half dozen others that had been in the possession of various Hintock village families for the previous hundred years [...] is considered by Felice Charmond "the natural course of things" (91, 107). Of course, the loss of Giles's home goes against what should be the natural course of things in the novel. Following the destruction of his home, Giles "noticed that the familiar brown-thatched pinion of his paternal roof had vanished from its site, and that the walls were levelled, according to the landlord's principle at this date of getting rid of cottages whenever possible" (183). As a result, Giles revisits the spot, which bears traces of the house where he was born. "Even in the gloom" Hardy writes,

he could trace where the different rooms had stood; could mark the shape of the kitchen chimney-corner, in which he had roasted apples and potatoes in his boyhood, cast his bullets, and burnt his initials on articles that did not belong to him. (184)

The memories are vivid and Giles's visits to the spot are so frequent as to be characterized as "morbid" (184). And so, with the loss of his ancestral home, Giles, too, becomes extinct. Hardy writes, "The poignant regret of those who are thus obliged to forsake the old nest can only be realized by people who have witnessed it—concealed as it often is under a mask of indifference" ("Dorsetshire Labourer 56). Tess experiences such regret the night before her family is forced to leave their cottage. She asks her siblings, "This is the last night we shall sleep here, dears, in the house where we were born. [...] We ought to think of it, oughtn't we?" (377). As the novel progresses it becomes for Tess almost a sacred place. After the death of their father she and the younger children commemorate the last night spent in the house with a melancholy song, in keen awareness of material loss but also the loss of a family unit, and identity. The removal of the Durbeyfields results in the family being landless and homeless. Moreover, without the sanctuary or protection of the home Tess is forced to live with D'Urberville.

The idea of home and its relationship to identity cannot be underestimated. It is not surprising that Hardy's nomadic characters, particularly after the loss of their home, often lose their lives by the end of the novel. The valence of home as a location of memory is key to understanding the way it shaped one's existence. Walter Pater's *The Child in the House: An Imaginary Portrait* (1878), a reflection of what it means to return to one's childhood home once the people and things no

longer inhabit it, is a case in point. The middle-class domestic space Pater depicts is a “half-spiritualized house,” where he can witness the

the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be, there—of which indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children’s lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture... (5).

The material fabric of the home, its wood, brick, stones, colors and forms, shape this rich texture of identity. The home acts as “a sort of material shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents [...] become parts of the great chain wherewith we are bound” (Pater 13). One’s first or childhood home signifies “a love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place” (Pater 16). It is a “place enclosed and sacred,” a place where one seeks shelter from the outside world (Pater 17). It is where “brain-building” takes place and this “house of thought,” Pater writes, “gets itself together like some airy bird’s nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws” (24). The interpenetration of mental world and house world is crucial to establishing Pater’s architectural point that early experience of architecture shapes our whole mode of perception for the rest of our lives.

Pater’s exploration of the child’s desire for rest in the familial churchyard suggests an ironic parallel with *Tess*. Pater describes the “peculiarly strong sense of home—so forcible a motive with all of us—prompting to us our customary love of earth, and a large part of our fear of death” which is intermingled with “some power

of solace to the thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at least—dead cheek by dead cheek, and with the rain soaking upon one from above” (13-14). John D. Rosenberg writes, that “Death as sacred is laden for Pater with ancestral associations of home and of the earth, our final home. Womb and tomb, birthplace and grave, are near neighbors” (194). The grave offers the same solace and protection as the childhood home. When Angel sleepwalks after he learns of Tess’s past, he takes her to the “ruined choir” of the nearby empty church and places her in an empty stone coffin. Hardy writes, “Against the north wall was the empty stone coffin of an abbot, in which every tourist with a turn for grim humour was accustomed to stretch himself. In this Clare carefully laid Tess” (268). It is evident that, on the eve of their separation, Clare subconsciously “buries” Tess. Tess is also given a spiritual, if temporary home near the residence of one of her ancestors. At the end of the novel, Tess returns to a different ancestral home, which becomes a symbolic resting place, combining qualities of home and earth. At Stonehenge Tess, “flung herself on an oblong slab that lay close at hand, and was sheltered from the wind by a pillar. Owing to the action of the sun during the proceeding day, this stone was warm and dry, in comforting contrast to the rough and chill grass round (416). Tess has no desire to leave the spot, “One of my mother’s people was a shepherd hereabout, now I think of it. And you used to say at Talbothays that I was a heathen. So now I am home” (416). Stonehenge is a structure that is also exposed to the elements, visible from the surrounding countryside but offering Tess a momentary shelter, one that she associates with the ancient people of her mother’s family. It is home and earth, and it is also a resting place. Hardy renegotiates definitions of space but also definitions of home.

To leave home means that one sees these once familiar images in a different way. When Grace Melbury returns home Hardy writes:

Grace took a candle and began to ramble pleasurably through the rooms of her old home, from which she had latterly become well-nigh an alien. Each nook and each object revived a memory, and simultaneously modified it. [...] Her own bedroom wore at once a look more familiar than when she had left it, and yet a face estranged. (47)

Her education means that Grace is out of place with the familiar Hintock ways: that she is estranged from the familiarity of her childhood home means that she is equally alienated from the relationships she formed as a child—including her relationship with Giles.

For Pater the home represents “The love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place,” as a space it is “a typical conception of rest and security” (17, 14). But, more importantly, it is where identity is shaped. Pater writes, “In that half-spiritualized house he could watch [...] the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be, there—of which indeed [...] it had actually become a part” (4-5). To be part of the house is to actually become part of its architectural fabric. The soul is part of the color, the wood, and the bricks (6). When Tess returns to the Durbeyfield cottage near the end of the novel Hardy writes:

In the direction of her mother’s house she saw a light. It came from the bedroom window [...] As soon as she could discern the outline of the house—newly thatched with her money—it had all its old effect upon Tess’s imagination. Part of her body and life it ever seemed to be: the

slope of its dormers, the finish of its gables, the broken courses of brick which topped the chimney, all had something in common with her personal character. (366)

Tess's history is written in the fabric of the cottage. Like Pater's "child" the experience of and connection to the house is bodily. Part of her identity is indeed architectural. As the novel progresses it becomes for Tess almost a sacred place. Indeed, after the Durbeyfields have left and Clare searches for Tess upon his return, there are no traces of the cottage's long-time inhabitants. Thus

The house in which Tess had spent the years of her childhood was now inhabited by another family who had never known her. [...] They walked about the garden paths with thoughts of their own concerns entirely uppermost, bringing their actions at every moment into jarring collision with the dim ghosts behind them (395).

Tess's associations with home are private and not part of the realm of public knowledge. The loss of their home precipitates the near extinction of their familial line. According to John Barrell, "It is this loss of a home" that is a "destruction of [Tess's] way of knowing and of her identity alike" (109). The notion that home was a sacred space where identity was formed did not belong solely to middle-class domesticity although it was an ideal perpetuated by the middle-classes as they set about defining public and private spheres.

The importance of home as separate from the outside world, a place of refuge and sanctuary, is one that firmly took hold in the nineteenth century, particularly among the middle classes. Discussing the notion of an ideal domestic realm, Tosh explains that by the nineteenth century, it had "acquired immense

cultural authority. While a consistent strand of domesticity is to be found in both aristocratic and bourgeois circles throughout the eighteenth century, it was only in the 1830s and 1840s that the ideal home was raised to the level of a cultural norm” (30). Publications written by architects for the upper and middle classes, including Richard Brown’s *Domestic Architecture* (1841) as well as Robert Kerr’s *The Gentleman’s House* (1864), taught the public how to design, build, and stage their homes while conduct manuals gave women guidelines on which to establish a moral foundation within the domestic sphere (Tange 38). According to Tange,

For the Victorians, home was an idea that was explicitly rooted in a material object—a house that was properly laid out [...] A house was made into a home not merely through the emotions, behavior, and ideological investment of its occupants, but also through careful attention to the interplay between space and the identities created within. (5-6)

The attempt to create an ideal picture of domestic comfort, where all the components are in perfect balance with one another, is also an attempt to construct a specific identity.

### **Architecture and Upward Mobility**

If in Hardy’s novels architecture signifies a decline in social standing, it also signifies the desire for upward mobility. Nowhere is this more apparent than in *Jude*, where the buildings of Christminster represent Jude’s longing to be part of the University, which I discuss in Chapter Three. In *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876) Ethelberta, upon seeing Lord Mountclere’s mansion for the first time, exclaims, “His

staircase alone is worth my hand!" (296). Mountclere's wealth becomes the sole motivation for Ethelberta's acceptance of his proposal. Moreover, Ethelberta's hope that her true social status will not be discovered means that she and her family must follow upper-middle class social codes within their London home. Ethelberta tells Christopher:

'Two more sisters of mine, whom you have never seen at all, are also here. [...] The eldest, Gwendoline, is my cook, and Cornelia is my housemaid. I suffer much sadness, and almost misery sometimes, reflecting that here are we, ten brothers and sisters born of one father and mother, who might have mixed together and shared all the same scenes and been properly happy, if it were not for the strange accidents that have split us up into sections as you see, cutting me off from them without the compensation of joining me to any others.' (127)

The division between siblings is thus architectural as well as social. Ethelberta's brothers and sisters are forced to enter the back door, in order to keep the pretence that they are unrelated to their "mistress." According to Moira Donald, the "middle-class Victorian home must surely rate as one of the most consciously contrived creations of domestic space in history" (106). She continues, "Within the middle-class house, space was divided into more or less private areas, as well as between 'upstairs' and 'downstairs' or 'front' and 'back' and only some of the inhabitants had the freedom to cross over these boundaries" (106-7). Due to their social circumstances Ethelberta and her family are forced to perform middle-class respectability within the privacy of their home, a performance that numerous Victorian families enacted daily within the domestic sphere.

That is not to say that everyone followed this ideal to the letter. The home became the place, Tange contends, where experiments in identity took place (10). She writes, “In some cases, it was the site for fighting against ideological restrictions of middle-class identity as they intersected with notions of proper gendered identities. [...] For while ideals of domesticity provided a benchmark to which people might aspire, their home gave them a space to work through or against these definitions” (Tange 10). Thus, for Ethelberta, the home is the place where she enacts the rules of middle-class life in order to cover the truth of her origins. In *A Laodicean*, in her attempts to restore her castle, Paula Power is a sort of “new woman” whose experiments in architecture associate her with modern notions concerning the use of space. As Rosner notes, it is “possible to trace a literary genealogy of domestic reform with roots in the early feminism of the New Woman novel” (6). Similarly, Sue Bridehead’s domestic restlessness in *Jude* is a result of her own “modern” spirit and unhappiness in marriage.

In *The Mayor of Casterbridge* it is clear that Henchard, from Susan’s and Elizabeth-Jane’s first glimpse of him, holds a prominent position within the community. It is therefore no surprise that his house is “one of the best in town” (59). The interior, too, points to Henchard’s social status. His home is:

furnished to profusion with heavy mahogany furniture of the deepest red-Spanish hues. Pembroke tables, with leaves hanging so low that they well-nigh touched the floor, stood against the walls on legs and feet shaped like those of an elephant, and one one lay three huge folio volumes,—a family Bible, a *Josephus*, and a *Whole Duty of Man*. (64)

The monumentality of these objects suggests not only wealth but the sort of

“primitive” masculinity associated with their owner. The interior of Henchard’s home represents “a temperament which would have no pity for weakness, but would be ready to yield ungrudging admiration to greatness and strength” (*Mayor* 32). For the preface to *Art Furniture*, EW Godwin wrote, “We have no set of rules for furnishing a home, for every man’s house should not only be to him a castle for security, but a field for the display of individual taste and through it of individual character” (qtd. in Watt iv).<sup>14</sup> Godwin thus associates the private realm and its furniture with masculinity—the domestic sphere is very much a man’s domain. It is also the place where Henchard performs social class—his books point to his wealth but also the perceived notion that he holds refined, educated tastes.<sup>15</sup>

Henchard’s attempt to thrive in his role as patriarch undermines the gender roles of the female members of the family. Again, Hardy shows that gender roles within the home are more flexible than they appear on the surface. The male “stance towards the home was influenced not only by the particular web of relationships they found themselves in, but by their sense of what was right and proper as men” (Tosh xiv). After Henchard loses all that he has acquired, his home, his furniture, and indeed, his family unit, he retreats into the role of domestic figure. When Elizabeth-Jane visits him in his cottage, Henchard “had set the breakfast in readiness [...] looking into the fire and keeping the kettle boiling with housewifely care, as if it were an honour to have her in his house” (270). It is possible to equate Henchard’s social demise with his “unmanning” but that would suggest that the categories of “male” and “female” are themselves stable categories. That is not the

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<sup>14</sup> See Victoria Rosner for a discussion of *Art Furniture* and the novelty of Godwin’s proposal to have “no set of rules” (Rosner 46).

<sup>15</sup> In his notes to *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Dale Kramer points out that Henchard’s books signify his social status more than his reading, citing the fact that Henchard does not consider himself a “read man” (Kramer 321).

case. Indeed, the category of “masculine” is locked in perpetual antagonism with the “female” and that antagonism expresses itself here in the delineation of architectural features as things which diminish the role of women within the household.

When Ethelberta takes to the stage as a story-teller, she unites domesticity and work. Her “plan was to tell her pretended history and adventures while sitting in a chair—as if she were at her own fireside, surrounded by a circle of friends. By this touch of domesticity a great appearance of truth and naturalness was given” (119). As a public figure, Ethelberta converts work into a refined activity by associating it with domesticity. Indeed, she is repeatedly associated with the domestic sphere and viewed by her suitors as a choice commodity to place within their own. She is seen as a possible “ornament” to one’s “parlour fire” (312). If Ethelberta is a working woman, then she can never really retreat to the private sphere. According to Elizabeth Langland, “Victorian working women could not lay claim to any spaces that were genuinely private in the sense that they could function freely and autonomously within them” (*Telling Tales* 78-9). Despite the fact that the Victorian middle-classes attempted to separate work and home, this was not always the case. Moira Donald writes, “Research in recent years has shown that the extent to which work was separated from the home environment during the industrialization process has been overestimated. [...] Ironically, just at the very point in history when ‘work’ began to be defined as something done outside the home, the number of people employed within the home expanded to new heights” (103-4). In Hardy’s rural world the line between home—however home is defined, whether it be the reddleman’s caravan or shepherd’s hut—and work is quite obviously blurred. One of the most striking images in *The Woodlanders* is when Marty is seen working at night in her

cottage, making spars. The reader is introduced to Marty through the eyes of another, viewing her from outside while she works within the domestic sphere.

It is important to stress, as Chase and Levenson have shown, the fluctuating nature of categories within the domestic sphere. Domesticity “is no single object [...] the lines of status and gender, work and wealth, conviviality and solitude, food and cleanliness intersected at countless points. Home contained a thousand regions and a thousand pleasures, but it could go wrong in a thousand ways” (Chase and Levenson 66). If it goes wrong for Henchard it also goes horribly wrong for Tess and her family. After the loss of their family home, the Durbeyfields are forced to create one out of makeshift arrangements. Arriving at the church where the d’Urberville mansion once stood, Tess and her mother create shelter for the children, “in a quarter of an hour the old four-post bedstead was dissociated from the heap of goods and erected under the south wall of the church [...] Joan drew the curtains round the bed so as to make an excellent tent of it, and put the smaller children inside” (383). It is a rather pitiful and desperate attempt to recreate the comforts of privacy and home-life. Poverty was thus “in its essence an antidomesticity” but Hardy shows that traces of the domestic ideal do not necessarily require typical architectural structures (Chase 147).<sup>16</sup> It is significant that, observing the general removal of various families, Tess’s “eyes fell upon a three-pint blue mug, which was ascending and descending through the air to and fro from the feminine section of the household, sitting on the summit of a load that had also drawn up at a little distance from the same inn” (380). These objects thus associate domesticity with women and, although outside of the home, have not lost their significance as

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<sup>16</sup> Chase and Levenson point out that for Henry Mayhew, domesticity and family were two separate entities, particularly for the poor, “antidomestic families” are “families without walls” (147).

household objects.

The notion of keeping one's house in order meant maintaining the morals of those within it. To fail in this regard would no doubt result in other, inevitable evils. Henchard's domestic mishaps—his inability to act as a father-figure to Elizabeth-Jane, or to pay his creditors, quite possibly unveils his "true" background, as his bourgeois foundations crumble beneath him. Hardy, however, interrogates bourgeois values because it is this mismatch between appearance and behavior which, he suggests, typifies them. In *Tess* Hardy blatantly acknowledges the prejudices inherent in Marlott. When the Durbeyfields leave their cottage, it is partly due to circumstances beyond their control but it is also because of their perceived lack of morality that they are unable to stay:

Ever since the occurrence of the event that had cast such a shadow over Tess's life, the Durbeyfield family [...] had been tacitly looked on as one which would have to go, when their lease ended, if only in the interests of morality. It was, indeed, quite true that the household had not been shining examples of temperance, soberness, or chastity.

(373)

The village, we are told, "had to be kept pure" (373). Thus the rural classes in *Tess*, comprised of tenant farmers and laborers, echo the prevailing desire of the bourgeois family—to keep immorality at bay. This is yet another instance of Hardy's metaphorical matching of village space and the space of the self. The issue of "purity" runs throughout the text. The "pure woman" who somehow remains pure to Hardy despite being sexually violated. Much of what is meant to take place within doors takes place when Tess is unhoused, including her rape. Donald defines the

home as,

a physical structure which provides privacy and shelter for its inhabitants; a space within which the necessary bodily functions of sleeping, eating, and reproducing can be executed by individuals living on their own, or more commonly by groups linked by ties of blood and mutual dependence. (103)

Once Tess is visibly pregnant, she retreats into her family home, hiding from public view. The bedroom she shares with her siblings becomes a tomb, “Here, under her few square yards of thatch, she watched winds, snows, and rains, gorgeous sunsets and successive moons at their full. So close kept she that at length almost everyone had gone away” (*Tess* 96- 97). There is a parallel here between the tomb Tess inhabits in the first part of the novel, and the one in which Angel places her in the second half. And in both instances this can be seen as a retreat into home.

In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Hardy’s portrayal of Mixen Lane echoes the sort of urban underworld that Henry Mayhew and George Godwin depict in their studies of the urban poor. Hardy writes:

Much that was sad, much that was low, some things that were baneful, could be seen in Mixen Lane. Vice ran freely in and out certain of the doors of the neighborhood; recklessness dwelt under the roof with the crooked chimney; shame in some bow-windows; theft [...] in the thatched and mudwalled houses by the swallows. (236)

The state of the houses which themselves show signs of neglect and poverty, signify the state of the families living within. In *London Shadows* (1854), the architect George Godwin exclaimed, “the health and morals of the people are

regulated by their dwellings” (qtd. in Chase 146). Attempts at domestic cleanliness are out of place and essentially inexplicable. In *Mixen Lane*, the “frequency of white aprons over dingy gowns among the women” is a “suspicious vesture in situations where spotlessness is difficult” (*Mayor* 237). One questions whether or not this is a failed attempt at respectability or an odd image of domestic order amidst chaos—in effect a world turned upside down. In spite of the vice associated with this notorious neighborhood, human decency survives. Hardy explains, “Yet amid so much that was bad needy respectability also found a home. Under some of the roofs abode pure and virtuous souls whose presence there was due to the iron hand of necessity, and to that alone” (237). In Hardy’s novel then, the vice associated with a certain group of *Mixen Lane* and the honorable, respectable class forced to live within its precincts, are dangerously close. Although this is obviously not the realm of the bourgeoisie, the fear of inhabiting similar spaces meant that architects attempted to construct ways of separating these coexisting spheres.

Victorians stressed the importance of walls in order to protect private life from the chaos of the public sphere. These architectural walls are not merely employed within the domestic sphere. It is certainly, both literally and metaphorically, a very large wall that prevents Jude from entering one of Christminster’s colleges, for example. Victorian architects, most notably Robert Kerr, believed that one could construct walls that separated the middle and upper-classes from their working-class or poverty-stricken counterparts. This sort of division is laid bare in microcosmic form in *Jude*, when Jude and Arabella encounter one another in a recently renovated Christminster bar. Hardy writes, “The bar had been gutted and newly arranged throughout [...] The room was divided into compartments in the

approved manner, between which were screens of ground glass in mahogany framing, to prevent toppers in one compartment being put to blush by recognition of those in the next" (171).<sup>17</sup> These interior divisions, put in place as a form of privacy, are thus reproduced in very public settings. Similarly, in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, public places are used for private encounters. Hardy describes the Ring at Casterbridge, a remnant of Roman architecture cut into the landscape—an otherwise large enclosure. Hardy writes, "Melancholy, impressive, lonely, yet accessible from every part of town, the historic circle was the frequent spot for appointments of a furtive kind. Intrigues were arranged there; tentative meetings were there experimented after divisions and feuds" (67). The public sphere, in its social encounters, recreates the partitions established in the domestic spaces of the middle-class. The same can be said about domestic furnishings within the public sphere. In *Tess*, in order to sit down and have a drink inside the off-licence Rolliver's inn, the locals sit on a "gaunt four-post bedstead which stood in the room" it "afforded sitting-space for several persons gathered round three of its sides; a couple more men had elevated themselves on a chest of drawers [...] two on the wash-stand; another on the night-stool; and thus all were somehow seated at their ease" (31). This setting is a reversal of the concept of home as a sanctuary and the inn as a public place. The sanctity of the bedroom is diminished by its use as a place of consumption. The most private realm of the household is a gathering spot for Marlott's inhabitants.

In *The Human Condition* (1958) Hannah Arendt wrote, "the four walls of one's private property offer the only reliable hiding place from the common public world,

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<sup>17</sup> According to Peter Bailey, "The barmaid and the pub were [...] part of a larger nexus of people and institutions that stood athwart the public/private line and provided the social space within which a more democratised, heterosocial world of sex and sociability was being constituted..." (173).

not only from everything that goes on in it but also from its very publicity, from being seen and being heard. The only efficient way to guarantee the darkness of what needs to be hidden against the light of publicity is private property, a privately owned place to hide in” (71). No doubt this notion has its roots in the nineteenth century. The Victorian middle-class home created a network of rooms, doors, staircases, and windows that gave people a place to “hide in,” but in reality this hidden world was difficult to attain. In *The Gentleman’s House*, Kerr established a set of architectural requirements if one were to attain a respectable level of privacy. He explained:

It is a first principle with the better classes of English people that the Family Rooms will be essentially private, and as much as possible, the Family Thoroughfares. It becomes the foremost of all maxims, therefore, however small the establishment, that the Servants’ Department shall be separated from the Main House, so that what passes on either side of the boundary shall be both invisible and inaudible on the other. (Kerr 67)

To divide the family and servants is to protect the privacy of both. The best way this can be carried is through separate stairways, passages, and entrances. In spite of these efforts “A house remains an object in social space, inevitably exposed to the winds of public life, and walls designed to keep inside and outside apart only sealed them in intimate antagonism” (Chase 155). In *The Hand of Ethelberta*, Picotee, having accompanied Ethelberta to Mr. Doncastle’s house, is shocked to find the servants dancing in one of the rooms. After exclaiming that they will be heard, a servant replies, “These are some of the best built houses in London—double floors,

filled in with material that will deaden any row you like to make” (225). Despite the fact that this is a well-built establishment, the servants are only too aware of the happenings of the upper-classes, and vice versa.

Thus, surveillance becomes a key act in novels that negotiate seemingly private realms. Hardy continues with the scene in *Ethelberta*:

Her nerves were screwed up to the highest pitch of uneasiness by the grotesque habits of these men and maids [...] and resembled nothing so much as pixies, elves, or gnomes, peeping up upon beings from their shady haunts underground, sometimes for good, sometimes for ill—sometimes doing heavy work, sometimes none; teasing and worrying with impish laughter half suppressed, and vanishing directly mortal eyes were bent upon them. (226)

Everyone is being observed. Even Picotee, in her eagerness to watch Ethelberta at dinner, is able to view her indirectly by observing her reflection in a mirror. It is this scene, which Picotee views amid all the opulence and finery of the objects that surround Ethelberta, that “reinforces the specious artificiality of the new middle and upper classes” (Widdowson 72). Once again there is a sense that social status is performed, and that the performers know, but will not acknowledge, that they are being observed.

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* is a novel of surveillance. The characters, particularly Elizabeth-Jane, witness or observe the goings-on of a town comprised architecturally of close-quarters and vantage points. The narrator actively draws our attention to this trope of surveillance and frames it through an architectural lens: “Let us follow the track of Mr. Henchard’s thought as if it were a clue line, and view the

interior of High-Place Hall on this particular evening,” Hardy writes (140). Entering interiors or enclosed spaces is a segue into the inner world of the mind.

Architectural historian Bearitz Colomina argues, “Architecture is not simply a platform that accommodates the viewing subject. It is a viewing mechanism that produces the subject. It precedes and frames its occupant” (160). From the outset, the novel is likened to the theatre, to observe the contrast between the rough scenes at Weydon Priors Fair and the peacefulness of the surrounding countryside “was like looking at some grand feat of stagery from a darkened auditorium” (*Mayor* 14). Stories are revealed as they are played out for the viewers. Lucetta’s house, High Place Hall, is situated within the hustle and bustle of town, overlooking the marketplace. Despite the fact that “the reason for its unpopularity” is that this view “was not considered desirable or seemly by its would-be occupiers” its very public location and vantage point are the very reason Lucetta chooses to live there and why Elizabeth-Jane finds it so captivating (131). Hardy writes, “For in addition to Lucetta’s house being a home, that raking view of the market-place which it afforded had as much attraction for her as for Lucetta. The *carrefour* was like the regulation Open Place in spectacular dramas, where the incidents that occur always happen to bear on the lives of the adjoining residents. [...] It was the node of all orbits” (155). The *carrefour* not only serves the purpose of a public, theatrical stage, but also as a reflection of the private sphere which also creates a space for “spectacular dramas” none of which are safe from public knowledge.

From the moment Susan and Elizabeth-Jane arrive in Casterbridge, they are surveying scenes through windows, listening to conversations between rooms, and navigating interior spaces to reach conclusions about the town’s inhabitants.

Henchard is first seen through a window at the King's Arms, constructed, it would seem, to accommodate viewers from the outside:

A spacious bow-window projected into the street over the main portico, and from the open sashes came the babble of voices, the jingle of glasses, and the drawing of corks. The blinds moreover being left unclosed the whole interior of this room could be surveyed from the top of a flight of stone steps to the road-waggon office opposite, for which reason a knot of idlers had gathered there. (31)

Thus, the "interior of the hotel dining room was spread out before" Elizabeth-Jane, allowing she and Susan the opportunity to observe and construct an identity of their relative. Similarly, the Three Mariners is a space that encourages observation. Elizabeth-Jane and her mother are able to reach conclusions about Henchard's identity:

The room allotted to the two women had at one time served as a dressing room to the Scotchman's chamber, as was evidenced by signs of a door of communication between them—now screwed up and pasted over with wallpaper. But, as is frequently the case with hotels of far higher pretension than the Three Mariners, every word spoken in either of these rooms was distinctly audible in the other. (43)

The Three Mariners is a "moderate" and "homely" place, but even hotels of a "far higher pretension" offer little privacy. For Hardy, social status does not guarantee privacy.

Interior structures allow Elizabeth access as a hidden observer. The "black-settle which, projecting endwise from the wall within the door, permitted Elizabeth to

be a spectator of all that went on, without herself being particularly seen" (48). After moving into Henchard's house the position of her room, "afforded her her opportunity for accurate observation" of what goes on in the garden, hay-stores, and granaries (85). Her lodgings in town offer her glimpses of Donald and Lucetta's married life (210). The purpose of Elizabeth-Jane's placement within these perfectly-placed locales means that she becomes privy to knowledge other figures in the novel do not have and enables her to step in at crucial moments. Moreover, this practice of surveillance shows that the barriers between public and private spaces are an illusion. As Antoine Prost argues in *A History of Private Life*, "The boundaries of private life are not laid down once and for all; the division of human activity between public and private spheres is subject to change" (qtd. in Rosner 4-5).

Because the boundaries of private life are subject to change, it is not surprising that in Casterbridge, actual boundaries, those between inside and outside, are practically non-existent. Martin Hewitt notes that "the working-class home was constructed not only with permeable walls but also without threshold or even doors. [...] in middle-class accounts of the working-class home the door tends to disappear, if it is mentioned at all it is only to note that it is ajar" (127). In Casterbridge, such boundaries do not signify class divisions but represent rural ways of life. In Casterbridge, "The front doors of the private houses were mostly left open at this warm autumn time" and the various door-steps, overhanging walls, and scrapers, "spoke so cheerfully of individual unrestraint as to boundaries" (57). The disappearance of these divisions between public and private encourages observation but it also signifies that divisions can be crossed. Here, the lack of architectural partitions serves as a metaphor for Hardy's characters—the "individual

unrestraint to boundaries” is emotional, social, and cultural. One could argue that Henchard, Farfrae, and Lucetta ignore boundaries as they encroach upon the spaces, livelihoods, and relationships of their counterparts. The fact that the door is always ajar is tied to social class—the door of Abel Whittle’s cottage is never locked because “the inmates had nothing to lose” (92). However, as mayor, Henchard’s door is also ajar and he certainly has something to lose. Perhaps this is because his middle-class sensibilities are merely performed on the stage of the domestic sphere. There is also a sense that Casterbridge exists and thrives upon “old world” standards. This is not the industrial urban city with its middle-class homes and refined sensibilities. But this also suggests that those modern, carefully constructed worlds that attempt to draw a veil between the private and public are failing to do so.<sup>18</sup>

The fact that Casterbridge exists predominantly without middle-class boundaries places it within a more “primitive” and less civilized category. One thing Kerr attempted to do in *The Gentleman’s House* was to stress the notion of architectural progress, if only for a specific social class—English residences of “the better sort” (Kerr v.). Tracing the history of the English home from its origins in the Saxon hall, Kerr paints a picture of what he considers the most “primitive” living conditions. In the Saxon hall, everyone lived in one great room, thus Kerr associates the walls of privacy with progress. He writes,

The ordinary Saxon Hall constituted the sole dwelling-room and eating-room for lord and lady, guest and serf alike; it was kitchen and scullery, of course; nursery also incidentally for both high-born and

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<sup>18</sup> If *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is read in terms of the “carnavalesque,” then it is a novel that reflects and inverts Victorian values including marriage, the family, social class, and architecture.

low; and quarters nonetheless for the sheepdogs and wolf-hounds.

(Kerr 4)

Here, Kerr “becomes the evolutionist of domestic life” (Chase 162). The living conditions in Casterbridge point to the complexities involved in defining the domestic sphere, the ways in which finer houses exist side-by-side with lesser ones, how humans coexist with animals, the ease with which one loses all that one has acquired within the domestic sphere, and how the more private realms are beholden to the public or the “crowd.” Hardy describes the Labyrinth that is the Three Mariners:

A Long, narrow, dimly lit passage gave access to the inn, within which passage the horses going to their stalls at the back, and the coming and departing human guests, rubbed shoulders indiscriminately, the latter running no slight risk of having their toes trodden upon by the animals. (40)

As discussed in the previous chapter, evolutionary anthropology showed that humans and animals not only inhabited the same spaces, but constructed them according to similar principles. John Burnett points out, “As late as 1850 James Caird reported that in some parts of Northumberland the labourer’s cows were still lodged under the dwelling-house roof, ‘the cow house being divided only by a slight partition wall’” (33). Human living conditions have not progressed to the state of separation and confinement Kerr set out to achieve. Hardy depicts domestic spaces that coexist precariously with the public sphere. His characters attempt to navigate these spaces in their efforts to create private and public identities that are performed according to a set of Victorian standards for the built environment—a set of

standards that are associated with middle-class domesticity but are repeatedly redefined, disrupted and confused within architectural space.



## Conclusion: The Writer's House

Pleasanter now it is to hold  
 That here, where sang he, more of him  
 Remains than where he, tuneless, cold,  
 Passed to the dim.

—Hardy, “At a House in Hampstead: Sometime the Dwelling of John Keats,” 1920<sup>1</sup>

In March 1920, Hardy joined the National Committee for acquiring Wentworth Place, the Hampstead House occupied by Keats (*Life* 404). Wentworth Place had been threatened by demolition and the committee was established in order to raise money to purchase the house, repair it, and keep it as a memorial to the late poet. The house became a museum in 1925. Hardy's poem, published the same year, imagines Keats's ghost visiting the house in Hampstead from Rome, where he died and was buried.<sup>1</sup> It is a poem about confronting change in what once was a familiar place and the value of architectural preservation. The ghost of Keats confronts the changes made to the structure and Hampstead itself, where streets, “have stolen up all around” (4). Hardy imagines Keats's ghost astonished to behold more change in Hampstead than in Rome: “What will you do in your surprise/At seeing the changes wrought in Rome/Are wrought yet more on the misty slope/One time your home?” (9-12). He questions whether the ghost will be displeased by these changes and react in a disruptive way, or respond in a calmer way, grateful for someone's efforts at preserving his “nook” (20). There is a sense here that Hardy venerates the house at Hampstead because it is under threat and

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<sup>1</sup> (Hardy 29-32).

<sup>1</sup> The poem was included in the *John Keats Memorial Volume* (1921) and published in *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922).

thus valuable. Memories are preserved under the conditions of the threat of loss of the structures that give shape to memories. Hardy's poem functions as a metaphor for the issues of memory, restoration, and return to a past that Hardy knows is ever receding.

In the poem, Hardy recounts his own memories of visiting the place where Keats passed away and the site of his burial. He recalls a personal and memorable moment in his own life; of the literary pilgrimage he made in honor of the poet. He writes, "I once stood, in that Rome, and thought/ 'Twas there he died'/I drew to a violet-sprinkled spot/Where day and night a pyramid keeps/Uplifted its white hand, and said/'Tis here he sleeps'" (23-28).<sup>2</sup> The preservation of the house opens up the possibility for similar opportunities. For Hardy, it is the house that commemorates the presence of its former inhabitant even more than his resting place. It becomes a memorial to the life lived rather than the one that has passed.

This thesis has provided a study of Hardy's engagement with the prominent architectural debates of the nineteenth century. But, as I have pointed out in previous chapters, this involvement continued well into the twentieth century. Up until the time of his death Hardy continued to publish poetry and prose that examined issues related to architectural preservation and destruction; about our relationship to the past in a world that is continually subject to change.<sup>3</sup> Max Gate underwent its own evolution after Hardy's death in 1928. It passed to Florence Emily Hardy, who had spent the remainder of her life living in Max Gate. Max Gate and the contents of the house that had not been donated by Florence to the Dorset

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<sup>2</sup> Hardy picked violets from Keats and Shelley's grave when he visited Rome with Emma in 1887. The violets were sent to Gosse (Tomalin 235).

<sup>3</sup> Hardy continued to correspond with members of the SPAB until 1926, when Florence started answering letters on his behalf (*Thomas Hardy: Conservation Architect* 68).

County Museum were sold at auction.<sup>4</sup> The house itself was purchased by Kate Hardy. She left it to the National Trust, and they obtained it in 1948 (Tomalin 377).<sup>5</sup> Hardy's architectural legacy within the heritage movement is an area open for further study, particularly the notion raised by Hardy in his poem about Keats; that the house can act as a memorial to its inhabitants.

In *Writers Houses and the Making of Memory* (2012), Harold Hendrix traces the way a writer's house evolves from a private space to a public one, where it becomes a site of collective memory. The house, he argues,

changes from being a medium of expression to becoming one of remembrance, and slides from the sphere of personal and individual into that of collective and cultural memory. The meanings being projected onto the house, in fact, cannot any longer be controlled by the author's personal perspective, but may indeed, and increasingly are being appropriated by others, who in their turn may project their meanings and memories onto the house. (5)

Once a private space becomes part of the public sphere, it develops multivalent meanings. Max Gate is particularly interesting in this view because it was a "medium of expression" in more ways than one; it is the location of Hardy's creativity as a novelist, poet, and architect. Even during Hardy's own lifetime visitors to Max Gate formed their own opinions, interpretations, and memories of the house and the man associated with it. After visiting Hardy at his home in 1926 Leonard Woolf commented, "I saw him last Spring [...] in the house which he had built for himself at Dorchester, and which, with its sombre growth of trees, seemed

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<sup>4</sup> The Dorset County Museum received various letters, manuscripts, and books as well as the contents of Hardy's study.

<sup>5</sup> The National Trust acquired Hardy's birthplace at Higher Bockhampton the same year.

to have been created by him as if it were one of his poems translated into brick, furniture, and vegetation” (Woolf 598). Here, Hardy’s house has become synonymous with his poetry. But Woolf’s comment also points to the way visitors associate the home with the character of its inhabitants. Writers’ houses, Hendrix argues, “not only recall the poets and novelists who dwelt in them, but also the ideologies of those who turned them into memorial sites” (Hendrix 5). In its own way Max Gate is part of a multi-layered past. It is formed of architectural layers; a Victorian middle-class home built on the site of ancient Roman remains, designed by a well-known figure who was once an architect, built by a local Dorset master-mason and his son; it had additions built, updates made (even if the owner was not enthusiastic about modern improvements), and rooms reordered, rearranged, the purposes altered according to the requirements of the inhabitants. It was transformed into a place that was part house, part museum and is now undergoing a process of refurbishment, the incentive being to reopen the majority of the home and make it look like Hardy’s again. But, as this thesis has shown, the very history that makes a building rich in historical layers is more than architectural; it is based upon its social and cultural past as well. The people who visited Max Gate during Hardy’s lifetime and left with their own personal memories contribute to that complex past, to the way we see the famous writer’s house when we visit it today.

Other visitors to Max Gate during Hardy’s lifetime included Siegfried Sassoon, Charlotte Mew, JM Barrie, E.M. Forster, John Galsworthy, and T.E. Lawrence. The Prince of Wales visited in 1923. Max Gate was also a site of pilgrimage for many seeking the actual counterparts to Hardy’s Wessex, in part the result, Millgate points out, of various publications in the early twentieth century

devoted to “Hardy Country” (389-90).<sup>6</sup> Millgate writes,

Like Tennyson at Farringford in the previous century, Hardy was much annoyed by ‘pilgrims’ who lurked outside the gate to get a glimpse of him as he walked out to the letter-box [...] Visitors who made a polite approach, preferably by letter, were rarely turned away, whether they were famous or unknown, local or foreign. (501)

The respectable middle-class home Hardy designed was not what all of his visitors expected, particularly those from London who imagined him, as Millgate writes, “in an old manor house or thatched cottage” (242). Again, Millgate points out that “it is clear that the impressions formed by visitors depended very largely upon their particular architectural and social preconceptions” (241). Despite his various works on church restorations, Max Gate is the only structure Hardy designed and built. And Hardy did not devote himself, on any grand scale, to an architectural style when he designed it. Its decorative elements, as Millgate explains, invoke Gothic, Queen Anne, neo-classical, and even Saxon (241). “Both as a technique of self-fashioning and a mnemonic device,” Hendrix writes, “houses of writers originate in what is fundamentally the private sphere of the author’s creativity” (4). The transformation from a private home to a public museum is a complicated process that is based on both museum curators and expectations of visitors.

Max Gate is currently being refurbished in order to present most of the rooms as they were when Hardy lived there. Martin Stephen, the current Visitor Services Manager for Max Gate, explains that, although much of this is based on conjecture, it is the best way for visitors to imagine Hardy and Emma there. The

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<sup>6</sup> These included, Bertram Windle’s *The Wessex of Thomas Hardy* (1902), Charles G. Harper’s *The Hardy Country* (1904), and Hermann Lea’s *A Handbook to the Wessex Novels of Thomas Hardy’s Novels and Poems* (1905).

decision to present the rooms this way is based on feedback from visitors to Max Gate and other National Trust properties. This, in turn, helps visitors relate to Hardy and establishes an ongoing discussion about his life and work. Although some items within the house did indeed belong to Hardy (these are currently on loan from the Dorset County Museum), the majority of the furniture and objects are only those similar to what Hardy did have or might have had. Stephen points out that, "By being able to touch the objects, sit in the chairs etc, visitors are able to feel 'at home with the Hardys,' rather than walking solemnly around a museum, behind rope barriers." The visitor experience of Max Gate thus revolves around this conception of Hardy's house as a home. It is possible to sit in a chair that looks like one Hardy may have occupied, tap the keys on an old typewriter that did not belong to any of the inhabitants, and make yourself tea in the kitchen. As such the house becomes perhaps less of a memorial, and more of an experience based on an imagined conception of the past. The authenticity of such an experience is up for debate. Eggert explains, "We need to know that *that* life was rooted in *this* place and that a professional conservation and curation are presenting the place to us [...] But we do expect what we visit to be authentic, even if partial, even if ruined" (22). Max Gate is a museum that pretends to be both a home and an exhibit, it is, to paraphrase Somerset in *A Laodicean*, a home, and not a home (26).

In his essay on church restoration Hardy showed how difficult it was to preserve a building in its original state, because buildings are always changing, recording human and animal life. Eggert contends, "Thinking in terms of origin—the moment of production as the sole legitimizing one—does not get us far enough with buildings, since [...] their fate, if they survive, is to undergo continuous

change” (23). And so once again Max Gate is undergoing change, but that is inevitable. To erase the traces of the past, or create an idyllic version of what life may have been like at the house while Hardy inhabited it, is to ignore the rich fabric of its history.

This thesis has examined Hardy’s engagement with architectural ideas, ideas about the built environment, about the present and the past. Hardy engaged with crucial debates about architecture that were, in effect, about the remnants of the past in a modern age. Hardy’s own early career in a very ancient but also modern “profession” placed him at the center of these debates—by Pugin, Ruskin, Morris, and even scientists writing about evolutionary anthropology. Hardy’s own experience of social class illustrates his awareness of that very middle-class concern for privacy, one that he saw echoed in the rural laborers who inhabited ancient cottages. Architectural survivals are everywhere, but they become part of contemporary life when they enter the public sphere, and are the subject of continuing debates about architectural preservation. As I have shown, even notions of construction, destruction, and preservation are intertwined with the natural world as animals and humans attempt to live within close proximity in Hardy’s fiction. And Hardy’s architectural survivals illustrate the way humans in particular negotiate and reinvent spaces, making them their own.

The house is never an object of isolation from the subject. Max Gate shapes Hardy’s way of living—his subjectivity—and represents his individual handiwork to the outside world. As ants are not easily understood in isolation from the architectural feats, the anthills, the house is Hardy’s “humanization” of the rough world, to make a life that is of necessity short into a habitable and tolerable

existence (and life is short even if, like Hardy, one is longlived). Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" calls poetry, "cold pastoral," but at least it "teases us out of thought" because thought is what tortures us with the remembrance of the reality of eternal change (44-5). The building gives us, at least for awhile, the illusion of a stasis necessary for our psychological wellbeing even if we are too selfconscious not to realize that it will once be as structurally unsound as Tintern Abbey.

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