Assuming the purple:
the rehabilitation of ancient Rome in Victorian culture, 1837-1901.

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Abstract

This thesis argues that ancient Rome was rehabilitated in English culture during the mid-Victorian period, following a period of effective displacement that began during the late eighteenth century. Devalued through its appropriation by revolutionary polities on both sides of the Atlantic, Rome's profile in England was eclipsed by the contemporary popularity of Hellenism as a classical model. Yet, as a result of the coalescence of a diverse set of internal and external factors from around 1850 to 1870, Roman antiquity regained credibility and status as a central parallel for Victorian society and empire for the rest of the century.

Although founded upon concepts of reform and progress, as well as defined by its industrial and technological capabilities, mid-to-late-Victorian society became incongruously in thrall to the Roman past for guidance and support at a time of unprecedented commercial development, domestic security and overseas colonial expansion. Presenting a unique episode in the classical framing of the English national experience, this period therefore demands evaluation of the role played by classical Rome in contemporary constructions of domestic and imperial identity.

Taking a culture-wide, integrative approach, this thesis explores the chronological trajectory of the reception of Rome during the Victorian era. Surveying the interplay of domestic and external causes behind the Roman revival, it seeks to achieve three fundamental ends:

- To trace the re-emergence of Rome as a comparative model at this time.
- To identify and analyse the matrix of causes behind Rome's restoration.
- To evaluate the impact of Rome's revival on Victorian society and empire.

Accordingly, the thesis shows how the shifting dynamics of Victorian responses to Rome were intimately bound to contemporary trends and events.

The first chapter, 'Eclipse', sets Rome's nineteenth-century reception in a broad historical context, before investigating the recession suffered by its profile as a result

of the events of the revolutionary age. The second and third chapters, 'Rehabilitation I' and 'Rehabilitation II', examine respectively the set of internal and external factors that motivated Rome's renewal as a cultural model. The final chapter, 'Impact', assesses the influence that this resurgence exercised across the spectrum of mid-to-late Victorian culture. Thus, through a diachronic and interdisciplinary approach, the thesis portrays the diverse ways in which Victorians assumed the purple of ancient Rome.

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1. Introduction

Quid est enim aliud omnis historia, quam Romana laus.
[What is all history, but the praise of Rome?][1]

Petrarch, 1373.

[I]t may seem to the historian a thousand years hence that […] the history of Rome was repeated in that of England.[2]

Bernard Holland, 1901.

1.1. Wedded to ancient Rome?

Although she has been said to have possessed only a 'smattering'[3] of the language, Queen Victoria was hailed by the most superb Latin title of any British monarch to date: *Victoria Dei Gratia Britanniae Regina, Fidei Defensor, Indiae Imperatrix*, while also having the punning motto *Ubi virtus, ibi Victoria* associated with her reign – 'Where courage is, there is victory/Where virtue is, there is Victoria'.[4] Similarly, her husband Prince Albert had received a broad education in his native Germany that placed no special emphasis upon classical language or history.[5] Yet, despite their superficial personal acquaintance with antiquity, Victoria and Albert became the figure-heads of a society that venerated classical learning arguably more than any other body of knowledge.[6] Even more significantly, the span of Victoria's reign saw ancient Rome evolve from a diminished component of contemporary cultural discourse to assume a central importance in the framing of England's domestic and imperial character.

Interestingly, however, Victoria and Albert were joined in matrimony in a spirit of appreciation for classical Rome, rather than another historical culture. On 15 October 1839 – in a deviation from contemporary social convention owing to her royal position –, the twenty-year-old Queen Victoria asked for Albert's hand in marriage. When the young couple came to choose an engagement ring, they decided upon one based upon a Roman design: an emerald-set gold serpent coiling about itself as a symbol of good luck and eternal love.[7] Victoria wore this ring throughout her life,

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[1] Petrarch (2003: 417).
[2] Holland (1901: 266).
[3] Strachey (1971: 32).
[4] See Lucht (2012: 35) and Hyam (2010: 12).
[5] On their respective educations, see Gordon and Lawton (1999: 140-7).
[6] For an account of their activities and influence, see Feuchtwanger (2006).
[7] See Flower (2002: 17).

while its design became a popular one for engagement and wedding rings for the rest of the Victorian era. Thus, setting the tone for so much of the culture of nineteenth-century Britain, Victoria and Albert also marked their union with an emblem from the Roman world, whose culture, history and literature would prove so influential to certain constructions of Victorian identity.

Although Victorian society was marked by its cultural eclecticism, interest in Greco-Roman civilisation embodied one of its most prominent and influential intellectual discourses. In the mid-eighteenth century, Lord Chesterfield had remarked that '[c]lassical knowledge […] is absolutely necessary for everybody; because everybody has agreed to think and to call it so'[8]; but this unthinking credo remained at the heart of Britain's intellectual culture during the subsequent century, too. Indeed, if anything, the veneration of antiquity in England reached a new zenith during the Victorian age. At the very heart of this was the central role played by classics in contemporary education, which made the nineteenth century 'the golden age […] of classical education'.[9] Importantly, England's elite public schools and ancient universities possessed curricula devoted almost exclusively to classical language and history.[10] Moreover, most classical education was founded primarily on the linguistic comprehension of Latin, which was claimed by the historian John Robert Seeley to be 'eminently suited to drill the mind into method and accustom it to the satisfaction of certainty'.[11] Since the Victorian mind so often searched for certainty in the face of change, this positioned antiquity as a fundamental reference point for contemporary culture, while endowing the Roman world with a unique cachet within that worldview.

Importantly, Greek and Roman classics presented two separate, though related, discourses that remained in rivalry with each other in English culture throughout the

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[8] Letter 40, 27 May 1748; Chesterfield (2007: 77).

[9] Clarke (1959: 84).

[10] At Eton College in 1884, for instance, there were 28 classics masters employed in contrast to six maths masters, one history master, and no modern language or science masters. (Cited in Mack (1938: 366).) On the reasons for this prevalence, see Honey (1977: 128-35). The classical curricula of Oxford's *Literae Humaniores*, or 'Greats', course and Cambridge's Classical Tripos remained central to study at each university until the twentieth century. On school and Oxbridge classics respectively, see Stray (1998b) and (2001).

[11] Seeley (1864: 9). See Stray (2005).

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[12] Each articulated a differing vision of the ancient world to which commentators could add their own biases and concerns; often leading to the juxtaposition of the Greek and Roman experiences in relation to contemporary events.[13] Yet, while Hellenism enjoyed a vogue for much of the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, Rome undoubtedly possessed a longer historical tradition in English culture. Although largely out of fashion during the heyday of English Hellenism, from the mid-Victorian period classical Rome was employed increasingly as a means to evaluate Britain's contemporary society and empire.

In 1857, in his inaugural lecture as professor of poetry at Oxford, the poet Matthew Arnold suggested that the Roman world was 'to be classed among the leading, the significant, the modern periods of the world'.[14] In particular, he singled out late-Republican and Augustan Rome as being 'perhaps […] the greatest, the fullest, [and] the most significant [age] on record'.[15] Arguing that this period was 'greater […] than the age of Pericles'[16], he closed his address by outlining his broader belief about the relationship of Greek to Roman antiquity:

> In the Roman world […], we have found a highly modern, a deeply significant [and] interesting period – a period more significant and more interesting, because fuller, than the great period of Greece.[17]

Although he lamented that Rome did not possess 'a commensurate literature' to match its Hellenic forebear, he still claimed that the Greek experience was of 'less magnitude and importance'[18] than the Roman. From then until the end of the century, many Victorians seemed to agree with him.

For, unlike the fashionable trend for Greek culture that occurred from the mid-eighteenth century, English links to ancient Rome went back to the Roman occupation of Britain during antiquity. Although a socio-political link to Rome was

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[12] See Stray (1998a: 12-19).
[13] See Sachs (2009).
[14] Arnold (1960: 31).
[15] Ibid., 32.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., 36-7.
[18] Ibid., 37.

sundered with the end of Roman rule in A.D. 410, Latinate culture in the British Isles was maintained by the development and dominance of the Roman Church throughout the medieval era. Modified by the events of the Reformation, Rome's cultural position fluctuated during the early-modern period, but arguably reached an apogee in the eighteenth-century 'Augustan' era. Yet, the cultural ascendency enjoyed by Rome during the first decades of the Georgian age was challenged by the exceptional events of the revolutionary age. As a result, the concept of Rome inherited by the Victorians was one circumscribed by its recent appropriation by the foreign, enemy polities of the United States of America and France. Despite the vagaries of its usage, however, classical Rome remained a powerful source of authority and precedent that was guaranteed by its lengthy historical association with English culture.

The purpose of this thesis is to elucidate the changing reception of ancient Rome in English culture over the Victorian era; venturing to explore why it appeared to decline in popularity during the first half of the century, before returning revived over the second. Focussing upon a diachronic trajectory, this enquiry seeks to interrogate the matrix of factors that motivated both the apparent displacement and the subsequent resurgence of Rome as an influential reference in English culture. Representing an 'invented tradition' – 'a set of practices […] of a ritual or symbolic nature' that 'seek to inculcate certain values and norms' to 'impl[y] continuity with the past'[19] –, there can be no doubt that Victorian culture's imagined relationship to Roman antiquity provided a potent comparative model. Facing the challenges and responsibilities of unprecedented industrial, military and political hegemony, it was useful for Victorians to imagine themselves following in the footsteps of the Roman Empire. Thus, this thesis will examine the dynamics surrounding the rehabilitation of Rome as an animating analogue; portraying how it both affected and reflected the trends and events that defined the Victorian age.

By way of evidence for the theory that Rome underwent a transition in English culture during the nineteenth century, moving from an eclipsed to a rehabilitated position, one needs only to search for a few key terms in contemporary newspaper or parliamentary sources. Dividing the 'long nineteenth century' of *c.*1789-1914 into rough halves of

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[19] Hobsbawm (1983: 1).

1800-60 and 1860-1914, while utilising a number of major online resources, it is possible to gain a simple perception of the basic dynamics of classical reception at work in Victorian culture. Covering local, regional and national British newspapers, the British Library's *Nineteenth-Century Newspapers Database* offers an excellent resource to distinguish popular trends that cut across both class and district. In contrast, having remained the privileged newspaper of record throughout the Victorian era, *The Times Digital Archive* presents a largely elite view of contemporary society. Lastly, the online version of the *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* communicates a record of the same cultural dynamics among Britain's political leadership. By analysing the results from these cross-sections of Victorian culture, one can detect definite trends emerging even from a simple survey. Allowing for the fact that 'Rome' and 'Roman' could also refer either to the city itself or to the Catholic Church, a search for a few other relevant terms returns much in the way of evidence to support the claims at the heart of this study regarding the varying contemporary reputation of classical Rome.

Employing 'ancient Rome' as a keyword phrase in the *Nineteenth-Century Newspapers Database* returns 1,281 results from the period 1800-60, but 2,265 from 1860-1914.[20] By way of comparison, 'ancient Greece' returns figures of 1,200 and 1,550 respectively over the same periods. Searching for 'Roman Republic' during 1800-60, yields 1,063 instances, but only 538 for 1860-1914. When one searches for 'Roman Empire', though, one discovers 2,374 results for the period 1800-60 and 3,701 for 1860-1914. Even taking into account the large increase in the number of regional newspapers published from the mid-Victorian era onwards, these figures indicate a number of clear shifts.

Searching the *Times Digital Archive* with 'ancient Rome' as a keyword phrase returns 222 citations for 1800-60 and 459 for 1860-1914.[21] In contrast, 'ancient Greece' returns 183 and 310 results respectively. Utilising the same time-frames, 'Roman Republic' offers 162 and 117 hits, while 'Roman Empire' returns 414 and 1,003. The appellation or term 'Caesar' occurs 317 and 829 times during the same respective periods. Meanwhile, 'Augustus' occurs 6,316 and a sizeable 19,764 times, in contrast

[20] http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/bbcn/basicsearch.do [accessed 2 July 2014].
[21] http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/ttda/basicsearch.do [accessed 2 July 2014].

to 'Pericles' – representing a similar figure from Greek history – with a far lower count of 202 and 1,038. To take two of the most renowned orators and politicians from each classical society, 'Cicero' appears 1,236 times during 1800-60 and 1,704 during 1860-1914, which is in contrast to 'Demosthenes' with only 194 and 336 during the same periods.

In a full search of the same terms as keywords in the online version of the *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*, 'ancient Rome' returns 77 matches during 1800-60 and 111 during 1860-1914, while 'ancient Greece' returns 44 and 113 respectively.[22] 'Roman Republic' offers 42 matches for the period 1800-60 and 34 for that of 1860-1914, but 'Roman Empire' results in 209 and 369 records for the same time-frames. Such searches ignore the numerous specific classical allusions made by many British parliamentarians throughout this period, but a term such as 'Caesar' returns 437 records for 1800-60 and 980 for 1860-1914. Meanwhile 'Augustus' yields again substantial results of 2,989 records for 1800-60 and 4,451 for 1860-1914. In contrast, 'Pericles' returns only 38 results for 1800-60 and 113 for 1860-1914. Similarly, one finds that 'Cicero' yields 265 instances for 1800-60 and 499 for 1860-1914, but 'Demosthenes' only respective hits of 96 and 244.

While all of these figures are necessarily unrefined and not indicative of the subtleties involved in their usage, they are broadly suggestive of a number of trends with which this thesis endeavours to engage. Firstly, the above results indicate that ancient Rome became a more active reference over the latter half of the nineteenth century than it had been over the first. When viewed in comparison with those relating to ancient Greece over the same period, references to Rome also appear to have been far more common. Secondly, there seems to be a definite differentiation in frequency between terms related to the Roman Republic and to the Roman Empire; the former being always less commonly referenced than the latter – particularly during the second (1860-1914) period under analysis. Thirdly, the high incidence of references to particular figures from Roman history over their ancient Greek counterparts appears to imply a clear tendency to refer more to Rome than to Greece. Together, these results indicate a consistent profile for classical Rome throughout the 'long nineteenth

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[22] http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk./search/search.do [accessed 2 July 2014].

century', though it possessed a clearly increased incidence during the mid-to-late Victorian era.

Accordingly, this study asserts that these rudimentary statistics are indicative of a much wider and more complex set of trends that saw Rome transformed from a much-devalued cultural component during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century to a central comparative model in English society in the latter half of the century. Motivated by a variety of trends and events that influenced it both directly and obliquely, nothing less than a panoptical survey can attempt to explain the reception of Roman antiquity in English culture during the nineteenth century. This thesis will therefore seek to engage comprehensively with a wealth of sources derived from all aspects of the culture of the Victorian world to delineate and elucidate the nature of Rome's profile in contemporary English society. Focussing in particular upon the terms of its renewal at a time of unprecedented national security, industrial progress and overseas expansion for mid-Victorian Britain, this study will argue that a cultural model associated with Rome played a key role in contemporary constructions of domestic and imperial identity. Though complex and contested, and invoked at times of crisis as much as confidence, ancient Rome still offered the Victorians a multivalent term to appreciate and evaluate their world.

In this way, parallels to the Roman experience provided a powerful, yet accessible, culture-wide framework for self-reflexive interrogation of Britain's society and empire at a unique juncture in their history. This survey suggests therefore that the restoration of Rome that occurred in English culture between 1850 and 1870 represents a defining episode in the classical framing of the English national experience; an event that witnessed a classically-educated elite mediate the country's remarkable domestic and imperial advance with intensive reference to antiquity – and Rome in particular. So, through tracing the trajectory of the contemporary reception of Rome, this study will undertake to provide a fresh perspective on this most well-known period of British history; exploring how – much like the golden snake on the queen's engagement ring –, ancient Rome came to entwine itself around and through Victorian culture and society.

1.2. Argument and methodology

Matthew Arnold once counselled that one 'must begin with an idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness'.[23] In this thesis, English culture during the period of 1837 to 1901 represents the chief ground under examination, but the central idea that unifies the work will be the set of cultural dynamics that relate to the Victorian reception of ancient Rome. More precisely, this study focuses upon the chronological trajectory relating to the apparent decline and revival of Rome as a cultural model. Since this was manifested across a diverse range of contemporary spheres, the diachronic nature of Roman antiquity's Victorian reception represents a subject that demands elucidation.

Entering a recession in its popularity during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, Rome re-emerged in the mid-Victorian era in a revived form that remained a definite presence and influence until the Edwardian era. The transition that it experienced deserves scrutiny because it invites an interrogation of the various motivations that lay behind the changing status of Rome in Victorian culture. In addition, it also encourages an investigation of the continued part played by the classical past in constructions of national identity at a time of unparalleled advance for Britain. Although a complex and disputed reference-point that bore only limited similarity to the British imperial project, classical Rome still offered to contemporary English society a powerful and resonant historical model. Thus, this thesis argues that it is a valuable scholarly objective to try to ascertain Rome's claims upon the Victorian imagination, while exploring how its reception was shaped by contemporary trends and events.

As the largest and wealthiest city in the world for most of the nineteenth century, London came to represent a *caput mundi*, or 'head of the world', in the same way that the city of Rome had been perceived in antiquity.[24] Compared to Augustan Rome by Prince Albert, among others, the capital led British society from strength to strength on the back of the military, political and trade advantages achieved, for the most part, as a result of victory at Waterloo.[25] Nevertheless, these had been won at great cost

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[23] Arnold (1932: 97).
[24] A phrase deriving from Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 5.655, though used extensively thereafter.
[25] Owen (1982: 2).

during the preceding twenty years of conflict, which meant that nineteenth-century Britain was in many ways the product of the revolutionary age. So, like the Augustan age of Roman history to which some harked back, the Victorian era was one defined by unprecedented peace, prosperity and power that had been born out of a preceding period of challenge.

Defining the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the revolutionary era witnessed Britain threatened both at home and abroad by the forces of radical politics. In conflict with its American colonies in the American War of Independence (1775-83), and France in the Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802) and Napoleonic Wars (1803-15), Britain endured a considerable period of socio-political upheaval as a result. Significantly, the leadership of the United States, Revolutionary France and the Napoleonic Empire all drew in significant ways upon the political heritage of ancient Rome in its republican and imperial incarnations to define these newly-founded polities. Since English culture had staked a particular claim upon Roman antiquity during the early-to-mid-eighteenth century, when 'Augustan' literature and neoclassical architecture had proved defining fashions, this adversarial appropriation of Rome proved a problematic development. More than any other factor, these alternative, revolutionary exploitations of its terms by Britain's foes appear to have disestablished classical Rome from its previously privileged position in English culture.

Absorbing the impact of these foreign appropriations, the standing of ancient Rome can be seen to have been significantly devalued as a result of the events of the revolutionary era. Clearly, it would be absurd to suggest that the culture, history and literature of the Roman world disappeared entirely from English culture during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century as a consequence, but the evidence suggests that Rome certainly assumed a more diminished profile. Any survey of cultural productions from this period – such as the novel *The last days of Pompeii* (1834) or the verse cycle *The lays of ancient Rome* (1842) – suggests that major allusions to Rome were reoriented into alternative or unconventional representations that emphasise its seeming latency. Yet, although Latin remained central to English education throughout this period, while Romano-British archaeology was also

developed, this does not seem to have translated into widespread use of Rome as a comparative reference-point.

Instead, during this interlude in its popularity, Rome appears to have been largely eclipsed as a classical model by the continued high profile of English Hellenism, which was assisted by its appeal to the Romantic Movement, as well as the contemporary vogue for Greek Revival architecture. Yet, in contrast to the long Latinate heritage in English culture, the popular fashion for all-things-Greek represented merely a brief craze that drew to an end during the 1830s and 40s; evolving into a far more elitist discourse still important to intellectuals and scholars, but few others. Around the same time, Britain began to assume a dominant global position that was founded upon unsurpassed industrial capability and trade dominance, which, in turn, created its growing international political and military ascendency. Symbolised by the Great Exhibition of 1851 and British participation in the Crimean War (1854-6), by the 1850s English culture had begun to abandon the isolationism that had defined its outlook since Waterloo, realise the unrivalled international position that it had attained, and envision itself in fresh ways. Crucially, it is in this period that one begins to find evidence of the renewed appeal of ancient Rome as a potentially-applicable comparative for the increasingly prominent international position of Britain and its empire.

As a classic historical template of civic and imperial administration, Rome presented a renewed relevance to Britain's ongoing domestic reforms and burgeoning imperial project, which induced the profile of Rome to evolve positively in English culture during the 1850s and 60s. Applied with growing confidence, allusions to the Roman Empire in particular lent not only superficial grandeur, but also instructive guidance on what Britain should both do and avoid doing to ensure its success as an imperial nation. Having been disassociated over time with the sites of its former corruption, between 1850 and 1870 the significance of Roman antiquity to mid-Victorian society as a comparative model was reassessed and revitalised. Importantly, this rehabilitation occurred as a result of the interconnected influence of a number of coincident domestic and external factors – deliberate and accidental, direct and incidental – during the years between 1850 and 1870. Together, this network of influences

stimulated both elite and popular appropriations of ancient Rome, which rejuvenated its reputation and encouraged its wider application in contemporary society.

Domestically, this resurgence was motivated primarily, from within, by England's social and intellectual elite, and, from without, by the rise of the British Empire into its most active phase under the influence of European 'new' imperialism. While the 'upper ten-thousand' looked to antiquity for guidance owing to their profoundly classical educations, the Roman world appeared to represent to many of its members the most apt and useful parallel, as they directed the British Empire's exceptional contemporary expansion. Regarding themselves as effective heirs to the Roman Empire, many English colonialists perceived their imperial mission as a *translatio imperii*, or a passing of the torch of civilisation, from Rome to Britain. In addition, this elite's status as the most prominent and literate group in English society endowed these ideas with influence among the other classes in Victorian Britain. So, the intersection of this elite's classical predisposition with the nature of contemporary British imperialism highlighted the utility of Roman parallels to English society and empire, which worked to render Rome a key idiom in Victorian culture.

Externally, increasing tourism to Italy and Rome during the mid-nineteenth century brought more Britons than ever before into contact with the material remains of Roman civilisation, which extended awareness and knowledge of the Roman past. Perhaps, more importantly, though, English cultural relations with the Roman Catholic Church, France and Germany can be seen to have had a definite influence on the direction and terms of the Victorian reception of Rome throughout the nineteenth century. Yet, it was the crucial watershed of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1) that seemed to alter English relations with all three in the most significant fashion, which had the coincidental and indirect effect of re-permitting the use of Rome as a comparative model.

Hence, as a consequence of all of these factors, domestic and external, a rehabilitated vision of classical Rome rose again to an exceptional level of cultural prominence in the years following 1870. Redirected to fresh ends during the mid-to-late Victorian era, Rome retained a broad level of popularity until at least the close of the century. Referenced in numerous newspaper items and periodical articles, as well as political

speeches and imperial appellations, Rome assumed a critical role as a contemporary model. Appealing across a range of cultural productions, diverse visions of Rome appeared in everything from academic painting to *Punch* cartoons, 'toga plays' to theatrical spectacles, popular poetry to classical music, children's stories to novels. While this use of Rome reached its symbolic apex with the colourful and triumphalist Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1897, the death of Queen Victoria in 1901 brought this era of self-assured certainty to an equally emblematic end. Instead, while a Roman model remained engaged frequently up to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, it was one increasingly problematised by fears of social decadence and imperial decline in the light of increasing challenges from Britain's international rivals. So, defining the span of its overt restoration as the mid-to-late Victorian period of *c*.1870-1901, this thesis asserts that a rehabilitation of Rome in English culture occurred as the result of a series of domestic and external factors that popularised its nature and terms. Moreover, the nature and span of this restoration encourages investigation, since it is remarkable that such a progressive and forward-looking society as Victorian Britain placed so much emphasis on the precedents of classical civilisation.

In order to find evidence to establish the veracity of this account of the dynamics surrounding the Victorian reception of Rome, this thesis will apply a methodology based upon a broad and interdisciplinary approach to cultural history. To this end, it will survey a range of contemporary cultural productions, touching upon the fields of architecture, painting, sculpture, literature, theatre and politics. Within this wide-ranging framework, however, this study seeks to answer three related questions:

1. Why did rehabilitation occur between 1850 and 1870?
2. What were the agents of this cultural shift?
3. What was its impact upon Victorian society, culture and empire?

Over the course of its four full-length chapters – 'Eclipse', 'Rehabilitation I', 'Rehabilitation II' and 'Impact' –, this thesis will endeavour to provide answers to each of these queries.

Firstly, 'Eclipse' will set in historical context the Victorian reception of Rome by considering England's long Latinate tradition. The chapter will then explore the

reasons behind Rome's devaluation during the revolutionary era, and investigate its relationship with contemporary Hellenism. Lastly, it will survey the various continuities and survivals that maintained a latent profile for Rome during its period of unpopularity.

The two succeeding chapters, 'Rehabilitation I' and 'Rehabilitation II', will represent two sides of the same enquiry, as well as the crux of this thesis: focussing upon the domestic and external vectors that restored Rome to cultural prominence from the mid-century period. In doing so, they will attempt to provide answers to the first and second questions posed above regarding why Rome's rehabilitation appeared to occur at exactly this point, and what the apparent agents of its revival were.

'Rehabilitation I' will analyse the processes of bureaucratisation and militarisation that defined Victorian society, before explaining the way in which England's ruling elite turned increasingly to the Roman world for guidance in the light of the unprecedented challenges and responsibilities that they experienced during the mid-Victorian era. It will also evaluate how Rome began to be more positively appreciated during the same period, which reached a vital watershed with the rise of the British imperial project to an exceptional summit in the years around 1870.

'Rehabilitation II' will first assess the ways in which English tourism to Italy and Rome brought Victorians into contact with the cultural and material remains of the Roman past. It will then investigate the vital related influence of English relations with the Roman Catholic Church, France and Germany upon perceptions of classical Rome. Lastly, it will explain how the Franco-Prussian War provided a crucial stimulus that united all of these factors to encourage a revival of ancient Rome conclusively.

Finally, 'Impact' will evaluate the results of this process during the subsequent period of 1870 to 1901 in order to answer the third question; portraying how the Roman cultural model became a major ground for comparative reflection and debate about society and empire. It will also explore the chief reasons for Rome's popularity as a cultural model, as well as some of the difficulties involved in its usage that ultimately

fed into its negative modification in the Edwardian era. Hence, together, these chapters will attempt to furnish answers to the three central queries above.

One of the reasons why most studies of the reception of Rome in Victorian culture have concentrated on a number of specific aspects has been the difficulty of gaining a culture-wide understanding of the subject. In contrast, this thesis has been predicated upon a methodology that attempts to maintain a proportional understanding of English cultural appreciation of Roman antiquity throughout this period via the employment of a wide-ranging set of sources. As a result, this is not a project that has been based upon one major documentary source, such as a single archive, but, instead, has been developed from close readings of a range of primary sources, buttressed by an authoritative array of secondary materials. Altogether, this methodological approach attempts to create a comprehensive panorama of Victorian receptions of Rome that keeps in perspective the various factors behind its eclipse and rehabilitation.

Finally, two definitions are necessary to outline the temporal and spatial limits that demarcate the scope of this study. Firstly, as its sub-title makes clear, this work is concerned specifically with the Victorian era of 1837 to 1901. In relating the complex dynamics of contemporary classical reception, though, it will extend back to the mid-eighteenth century in 'Eclipse', and ahead to the Edwardian era in its conclusion. Secondly, this study will be focussed upon English rather than British culture, which will remove any major discussion of classical reception in Scottish, Welsh or Irish contexts.[26] Primarily, the latter delineation is due to the dominant historic influence of English culture over its neighbouring counterparts in the British Isles, though the fact that these latter cultures were Celtic in origin further contrasts with the Anglo-Saxon basis of the English 'race'.[27]

As the dominant historical polity in the British Isles from the Middle Ages onwards, England controlled its neighbouring states from its metropolitan nucleus of London and its environs. With the Industrial Revolution, this existing influence of English culture was fortified in socio-economic terms by the chief sites of manufacture and

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[26] On the debate between these definitions, see Hoppen (1998: 516-18) and Davies (1999: xxvii-xxxiii). See also, Crick (1991b: 90-104), Evans (1995: 223-43) and Yeandle (2004: 274-86).
[27] On the relationship of Rome to English racial origins, see Hingley (2000: 61-108 and 2001a).

trade being located across a number of Midlands and Northern English cities, such as Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool. Similarly, by the Victorian era, the nation's leading educational and intellectual *loci* were situated in Oxford and Cambridge, while all of the country's leading public schools were also to be found in England.[28] In population terms, England also dominated its neighbours. In 1841, for instance, England made up 80.2% of the population of the island of Britain and 55.7% of that of the United Kingdom; while, by 1901, these figures had grown to 82.5% and 73.6%, respectively.[29] As a result of this dominance, the British imperial project that developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was guided by an ideology derived chiefly from metropolitan English cultural discourse. Indeed, confused and conflated throughout the nineteenth century, 'England' and 'English' were often employed by colonial advocates when they were referring more rightly to 'Britain' and 'British'.[30] Taking all of these facts into account, this study will focus almost exclusively upon Victorian English attitudes, opinions, figures, institutions and trends.

Norman Vance, one of the key historians of the Victorian reception of ancient Rome, has suggested that, in comparison with English Hellenism, 'the [Victorian] Roman heritage is […] largely unexplored'.[31] Yet, related to everything from art to literature, engineering to politics, he argues there was a 'sense of ultimate connection with Rome rather than with Greece', which bound numerous aspects of domestic culture and linked them with external cultural developments to create the 'narratives of Victorian Rome'.[32] Accordingly, while some progress has been made in surveying Victorian understandings of Roman antiquity, studies exploring only one element of its reception perceive only one of its many faces. Reasoning that the pervasive presence of Rome in Victorian society deserves a more holistic, interdisciplinary approach, this thesis is based upon a multiplicity of sources. Since culture does not occur in a vacuum – being interwoven with a great system of influences and results –, it is imperative to try to locate and identify each major thread that has played a part in

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[28] While England boasted over a hundred public schools for most of the Victorian era, Scotland could count only Edinburgh Academy, Fettes School, Glasgow Academy, Loretto School and Gordonstoun School, while Wales possessed only Monmouth School.
[29] Quoted in Hoppen (1998: 513).
[30] For instance, in its title and throughout *The expansion of England* (1883), J.R. Seeley refers to England when he is referring truly to Britain; making only one reference to the 'British Empire'. (Seeley (1883: 284).)
[31] Vance (1997: vi).
[32] Ibid.

creating any culture-wide tendency. Thus, the argument and methodology of this study will endeavour to forge an integrated view of the changing dynamics of Victorian cultural relations with ancient Rome and, in particular, those surrounding its evident rehabilitation between 1850 and 1870.

1.3. Literature review

Apart from contemporary studies, such as *Greater Rome and Greater Britain* (1912) by Charles Prestwood Lucas, no individual saw fit to explore the link between ancient Rome and English culture in any extensive manner until the later twentieth century. Following the destruction during the Great War of many of the values that had defined the Victorian era, there appears to have been little interest in disinterring the posturing comparativism that had been often associated with its reception of Roman antiquity.[33] No doubt reinforced by the disruption occasioned by the Second World War, and the complex process of British decolonisation during the 1950s, this negative attitude prevailed until the 1960s.

The first scholar to explore this link in any comprehensive manner was the classicist Peter Astbury Brunt in his pioneering article 'Reflections on British and Roman imperialism' (1965).[34] Passing mention was made of the comparison in Richard Faber's survey of British imperialism, *The vision and the need* (1966), but Raymond F. Betts' article 'The allusion to Rome in British imperialist thought of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' (1971) represented only the second major study to engage with the potential influence of Rome on Victorian society and empire.[35] Respectful mention should also be made of the *Pax Britannica* trilogy (1968-78) by Jan Morris, which presents a survey of the British Empire that frequently places its history in a Roman context.[36]

Marking a transition from the study of the classical 'tradition' to 'receptions' of the ancient world, the 1990s brought renewed interest in understanding the relationship

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[33] The only notable exception to this trend during this period being Faries (1923), though, since this was written by an American and published in the United States, one might discount it in this context.
[34] Brunt (1965).
[35] Faber (1966: 25 and 100). Betts (1971).
[36] Morris (1979a, 1979b and 1979c). See, for example, Morris (1979b: ch. 1: 21-34).

between Roman antiquity and Victorian society.[37] While the interim had witnessed a number of key studies on Victorian Hellenism, far less scholarly attention was directed towards contemporary attitudes to Rome.[38] Yet, starting with Philip Freeman's article 'British imperialism and the Roman Empire' (1996), a number of key works opened a fresh seam of scholarship on Victorian views on the Roman world.[39]

Significantly, Norman Vance's groundbreaking study *The Victorians and ancient Rome* (1997) represented the first full-length work to focus exclusively on the Victorian reception of Rome.[40] This was followed by Catharine Edwards' edited volume *Roman presences* (1999), which featured a number of valuable articles on Victorian and Edwardian reception, such as Javed Majeed's 'Comparativism and references to Rome in British imperial attitudes to India'.[41] Moreover, these works were published within the context of a renewed effort to understand the nature of Victorian classical culture that was spearheaded by Christopher Stray's *Classics transformed* (1998), which explored its extensive social and educational influence.[42]

Since 2000, a plethora of studies have emerged that have examined a number of significant aspects of the Victorian reception of Rome. Among the most important of these have been Norman Vance's 'Imperial Rome and Britain's language of empire' (2000), Phiroze Vasunia's 'Greater Rome and Greater Britain' (2005), and Eric Adler's 'Late Victorian and Edwardian views of Rome and the nature of "defensive imperialism"' (2008).[43] These have been supplemented by useful full-length studies from Continental scholars, such as *Latin; or, the empire of a sign* (1998; English trans. 2001) by Françoise Waquet and *Writing empire* (2012) by Bente Lucht, which

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[37] Martindale (1993) represented the first major study to define itself as a study of classical 'reception'. On the definition and terms of classical reception studies, see Hardwick (2003), as well as Martindale and Thomas (2006).

[38] Jenkyns (1980) and Turner (1981) presented major studies of the place of ancient Greece in Victorian culture. Scholarship on the Victorian reception of Rome in this period remained much smaller in scale and spread across a number of academic fields; ranging from articles on Rome in the context of contemporary art (Landow (1984)), historiography (Dowling (1985)) and politics (Turner (1986: 588-95)), as well as contemporary understandings of individual figures such as Cicero (Rosner (1986)).

[39] Freeman (1996).

[40] Vance (1997).

[41] Edwards (1999b) and Majeed (1999). In Edwards' volume, six of the fourteen articles are devoted to elements of Victorian or Edwardian reception.

[42] Stray (1998a). See also, Larson (1999).

[43] Vance (2000a), Vasunia (2005) and Adler (2008).

have elucidated the nature of Europe's Latinate heritage, including its relation to English society and empire.[44] From outside of classical studies, Piers Brendon's *The decline and fall of the British Empire* (2007) also contributed an incisive and original narrative of British colonialism that foregrounded its appropriations of Rome.[45]

As is evident from their titles, the majority of these studies have examined various intersections between the Victorian reception of Rome and contemporary imperialism. Indeed, much recent scholarship has concentrated specifically upon Roman parallels in relation to British India, which has necessarily excluded some of its alternative contemporary applications.[46] Even when such works have explored more unconventional aspects of the Victorian appropriation of Rome, they have still included significant portions devoted to its colonial aspect – such as Richard Hingley's *Roman officers and English gentlemen* (2000) and *The recovery of Roman Britain* (2008), or Ali Parchami's *Hegemonic peace and empire* (2009).[47] Consequently, while this strand of Victorian classical reception is undoubtedly one of the most important, it has tended to occlude Rome's more extensive profile within a range of contemporary cultural contexts.

In the last few years, there has been an upsurge in the number of full-length works published on classics in Victorian culture, such as Simon Goldhill's *Victorian culture and classical antiquity* (2011) and Edmund Richardson's *Classical Victorians* (2013).[48] Yet, despite Catharine Edwards' counsel that – to the detriment of its Roman counterpart – too much scholarly emphasis had been placed on the Hellenic heritage of this period, only a few works have concentrated directly on Roman reception.[49] Two of the most important of these have been a pair of volumes in the Oxford University Press *Classical Presences* series, Jonathan Sachs' *Romantic*

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[44] Waquet (2001). Lucht (2012).

[45] Brendon (2007).

[46] Chiefly, Hall and Vasunia (2010), Hagerman (2013) and Vasunia (2013). See also, Patterson (2009: 129-68.)

[47] Hingley (2000: pt 1, 17-60 and 2008: ch. 4, 238-325). Parchami (2009: pt 2, 61-164).

[48] Goldhill (2011) and Richardson (2013). In addition, the forthcoming fourth and fifth volumes of *The Oxford history of classical reception in English literature*, covering 1790-1880 and 1880-present, as well as Christopher Stray's *Classics in Britain, 1800-2000*, should offer many new perspectives on nineteenth-century classical reception.

[49] Edwards (1999: 4). This being despite a major historian of Victorian Hellenism, such as Richard Jenkyns, claiming that throughout the Victorian era 'the inevitable comparison was with ancient Rome', (Jenkyns (1980: 333). More recently, Edmund Richardson has also remarked that 'Greece never came close to crowding out Rome' in Victorian culture. (Richardson (2013: 3 n. 11).)

antiquity (2010) and the multi-edited *Romans and Romantics* (2012), which have emphasised the continuities that existed in Roman reception in the period that succeeded its apparent decline during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras.[50] Nevertheless, no full-length works have yet surveyed receptions of Rome into the Victorian age that followed the Romantic period explored in these works.

Crucially, only a few studies have taken a comprehensive and broadly chronological view of ancient Rome's position in contemporary society and empire, such as Vance's *The Victorians and ancient Rome* and, more recently, Sarah J. Butler's *Britain and its empire in the shadow of Rome* (2012).[51] Yet, even these have been inhibited by certain features of their methodologies, such as the former's compartmentalised approach, or the latter's omission of a number of key topics. Indeed, in a review of Butler's volume, Simon Goldhill has recorded some of the remaining gaps that exist, not only in that particular study, but in wider contemporary scholarship.[52] Highlighting the relationship of classical reception to Victorian religion, the varying association between Greek and Roman antiquity, interactions with external influences such as German culture, and the influence of Edward Gibbon, Goldhill has presented a useful set of neglected areas that this thesis will include in its exploration of the Victorian reception of Rome.

Although mentioned in passing in a number of works, the specific dynamics concerning the decline and revival of Rome's profile during the nineteenth century, as well as the motivations that animated them, have not been examined previously in any comprehensive manner.[53] Despite a few efforts to do so, neither has the chronology or scope of the Victorian reception of Rome been adequately mapped.[54] Although most scholars have noted the prevalence of ancient Rome as a relevant cultural model in late-Victorian and Edwardian society, few have examined the particular dynamics of its changing reception during the nineteenth century. Instead, generally, what have

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[50] Sachs (2010). Martindale, *et al*. (2012). Salmon (2000) has also emphasised these continuities in the context of contemporary architecture.
[51] Butler (2012).
[52] Goldhill (2013).
[53] See Vance (1997: 197) and Parchami (2009: 75).
[54] Although neither highlights a specific notion of rehabilitation, Vance (1997) and Butler (2012) divide their studies of the Victorian reception of Rome into discrete sections, defined respectively by theme and chronology.

emerged are studies of particular intersections between the Roman model and specific individuals or institutions.[55] Furthermore, most scholars who have written about the Victorian reception of Rome appear to have envisioned it as an unchanging, if disputed, entity in contemporary culture.[56] In contrast, this study argues that Rome functioned as a multivalent cultural agent that reflected trends both domestic and external, as well as reactions to them in English culture. As a result, this study will endeavour, through its exploration of the terms of Rome's apparent recession and revival, to fill this *lacuna* by making a chronological and culture-wide analysis of the Victorian reception of Rome that takes account of its shifting character and dynamics.

Hence, in the context of the pre-existing literature on the subject, this thesis will endeavour to make an original contribution to the scholarship of nineteenth-century classical reception on three separate grounds. Firstly, no work has yet outlined fully the chronological arc of Roman reception in English culture during the nineteenth century, which would expose the subtleties inherent in the evident decline and restoration of Rome in this period. Into this gap, this thesis sets its study of how the profile of Rome was rehabilitated over the course of the nineteenth century; engaging with its shifting reputation and seeking to discover the reasons behind it. Secondly, in an effort to avoid an overly impressionistic vision of Roman reception in Victorian culture, this study will provide a panoramic exploration of its nature and terms that will draw upon a wide variety of sources. Thirdly, it will attempt to integrate many of the separate perspectives outlined in other studies to provide a more complete overview of the changing status of ancient Rome in Victorian culture. Thus, altogether, this study seeks to employ the concept of rehabilitation as a means through which to understand the miscellaneous ends to which Roman antiquity was put in nineteenth-century English culture.

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[55] For instance, Reid (1996) has examined the influence of classics on Lord Cromer, while Hoselitz (2007) has explored the effect of the Roman past on the development of British archaeology.

[56] Norman Vance has suggested, for instance, that the Victorians inherited a 'disabling respect for classical permanency', which presented the Roman cultural heritage to many as 'exemplary, coherent and dead'. (Vance (1997: 8 and 10).)

1.4. Why the Romans and not the Greeks in Victorian Britain?

Echoing inversely the title of an article by Frank M. Turner, this final section speculates on why classical Rome should have provided such a powerful theoretical model upon which to cast various elements of the Victorian experience.[57] Since its original decline, the cultural heritage of Rome has been exploited by numerous societies, which have often attempted to present themselves as its heirs.[58] The apparent universality of the Roman historical experience has made it invaluable as a cultural model, while its unique cachet as a political and imperial muse has reinforced such appropriations. The schoolmaster Thomas Arnold once suggested, for instance, that 'the History of Rome must be in some sort the History of the World'[59]; while the later Victorian commentator J.A. Cramb asserted that Rome had 'mould[ed] every [subsequent] form of Imperialism in Europe', since it represented 'a synthesis of the empires of the past, of Hellas, of Egypt, of Assyria'.[60] Perceived rarely as merely one classical polity among others, the Roman Empire represented to many Victorians the effective keystone of civilisation in the ancient world; one that had appeared to dismantle identities of place, race and religion, while uniting its inhabitants under an imperial *aegis* that provided law and order, as well as free trade.

To some, such as the historian Edward Augustus Freeman, writing in 1859, Rome represented almost a historical singularity, contiguous with both ancient and modern history:

> Ask for the last despatch and the last telegram, and it will tell us that the history of Rome has not yet reached its end. It is in Rome that all ancient history loses itself; it is out of Rome that all modern history takes its source.[61]

Consequently, the vision of ancient Rome that was communicated to Victorian culture was one that possessed an unparalleled cultural profile that was accorded authority through past historical usage. Since there had been no comparable urban

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[57] Turner (1989).
[58] On the terms of these appropriations of Rome, see Mattingly (2011: ch. 1, 3-42) and Wagner (2011).
[59] Quoted in Stanley (1844: i, 203).
[60] Cramb (1900: 14 and 262).
[61] Freeman (1859: 237).

centre or international empire to match Rome in terms of population or political influence until the rise of Victorian London and the British Empire, it was, perhaps, natural for comparisons between the two societies to emerge.[62] Since Britain itself had once been a part of the Roman Empire and possessed a long Latinate tradition, the use of Rome as a cultural model seemed endowed further with meaning and relevance for English society.

As already noted, classical education represented the chief means of instruction from school to university in nineteenth-century English society.[63] Crucially, the study of Latin retained a central position in its curriculum from its lowliest schools to its most elite institutions, which created a definitively Latinate aspect to English education.[64] Echoing Edward Gibbon, the writer John Chetwode Eustace remarked early in the century upon the way in which this emphasis on Latin study encouraged individuals to assume Roman characteristics:

> Our early studies […] allow us to sympathise in the feelings of a Roman; and one might almost say of every school-boy not insensible of the sweets of his first studies, that he becomes in feeling and sentiments, perhaps even in language, a Roman.[65]

This can be seen to have remained the case throughout the Victorian era, which presented a formative stimulus for Englishmen to perceive themselves and their times through Roman eyes.

Furthermore, as 'the best expression of Roman grandeur' because of its 'clear, logical order'[66], Latin was claimed to be an ideal means of educating England's ruling elite for fulfilling their civil or colonial duty. '[F]avouring suppleness of mind', the language was declared to be a useful way to inculcate the "adaptability"[67] necessary in serving their nation and empire. Clearly, the study of the language of the Roman

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[62] Following the decline of ancient Rome, history did not witness a city with a million inhabitants again until London *c*.1800. See Jongman (2003: 100).

[63] See Turner (2005).

[64] On Victorian Latin studies in the British Isles, see Sandys (1914: 409-14) and Stray (1998a: 274-7).

[65] Eustace (1821: 57).

[66] Stobart (1971: 8 and 132).

[67] Waquet (2001: 188).

Empire through the study of key texts on Roman conquest and administration, such as Tacitus' *Agricola*, offered a potent conduit to understanding their own burgeoning imperial project with reference to the Roman example.[68] As a consequence, the products of the English education system – particularly those within public-school and Oxbridge institutions – were unusually exposed to the language and history of ancient Rome.

Within this context, Victorian society also developed a comparative mindset that played a major role in contemporary intellectual theorising, while deriving in large part from its dominant educational practices. Predicated upon a methodology that presented authors, texts, philosophies and periods as objects to evaluate through contrast and comparison, public schools and Oxbridge colleges encouraged their students to compare ancient and modern. The educationalist George Andrew Jacob, for instance, once explained the utility of pairing a linguistic training with a political awareness of relevant historical parallels; suggesting that it allowed students to 'give their greatest attention to the events or courses of action which the most nearly affected the nation's life or most forcibly displayed its character', while 'compar[ing] by way of contrast or resemblance those ancient times and doings with modern ones'.[69] With comparativism between ancient and modern central to contemporary political thought, the journalist George Smith observed that there might have been 'no reason for the existence of antiquity except to instruct posterity'.[70]

This 'Comparative Method' has been said to have 'reached its heights in the second half of the nineteenth century at a time when the British Empire was also reaching its greatest point of expansion and […] entering its aggressive […] phase'.[71] Though 'ambivalent and highly selective'[72], as well exceedingly presentist in mindset, the use of Rome as a comparative model appealed directly to the intellectual authority of classics in Victorian society, while 'endors[ing] the British Empire both on its own terms and in contrast to the Roman'.[73] Though parallels related to it were often

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[68] See Bradley (2010b).
[69] Jacob (1872: 57). As Ronald Hyam has pointed out, Victorian comparativism did not extend to other contemporary empires, but only ancient ones. (Hyam (2010: 3-4).)
[70] Smith (1892: 578).
[71] Vasunia (2005: 60).
[72] Bell (2006: 742).
[73] Vasunia (2005: 61).

'evasive, unhelpful, and self-promotional'[74], Rome could be employed as a positive or negative comparative vehicle to interrogate numerous aspects of contemporary society and empire; being deployed eventually not only by colonial advocates, such as Lord Cromer, but also by prominent anti-imperial voices, such as J.A. Hobson. As a consequence, many Victorians deployed such comparativism as a way of claiming kinship with their Roman forebears, while uniting the Roman and Victorian experiences, despite their evident differences.

Frank M. Turner has written of how '[t]he classical world stood at the heart of major areas of Victorian thought'; presenting 'a means for achieving self-knowledge and cultural self-confidence', while making 'the antique past and its peoples uniquely [the Victorians'] own'.[75] In this context – and despite scholars such as Turner arguing to the contrary –, it must be wondered whether ancient Rome did not have a greater influence on Victorian culture than Greece.[76] Firstly, it must be recalled that while English Hellenism enjoyed a vogue from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, thereafter it appears to have declined in the popular mindset. Instead, interest in the Greek historical experience became centred upon the elite locales of public school and Oxbridge education and Hellenic scholarship, which gave it a consummate intellectual profile, but put it beyond the reach of much of the Victorian public. Contemporaneously, English Hellenism also became associated with members of a number of domestic sub-cultures, such as feminists and homosexuals, who sought to appropriate it for their own ends, which further undermined its populist credentials. As a consequence, while ancient Greece continued to hold appeal for select groups, it no longer possessed a popular standing in English culture. In the context of Britain's extraordinary domestic and imperial advances during the mid-Victorian era, the fleeting and divergent experiences of the Athenian Empire – the only apt model offered by Greek history – seemed to bear little resemblance to the still-expanding British Empire. So, while Hellenism may have retained a unique appeal to some Victorians, in general, Rome surpassed its other classical rivals as a cultural model.

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[74] Vasunia (2005: 38).
[75] Turner (1981: xi).
[76] Other cultural discourses relating to England's Celtic, Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon heritage existed, but appear to have possessed less influence than Rome. For comparison, see MacDougall (1982).

Thus, ancient Rome possessed a unique cachet in Victorian culture; authorised by its lengthy Western appropriation, validated by a long domestic Latinate tradition, and made relevant by Britain's unprecedented contemporary advances as an imperial society. While Britain's contemporary progress as a civilisation had effectively thrown both the present and the future into uncertainty, the past should have remained stable and aloof from all of these developments. Yet, in a period of major intellectual upheaval, the Industrial Revolution had altered the traditional historical basis of English society from rural to urban, while evolutionary theory had begun to generate uncomfortable scientific truths about humanity's origins – all of which made history a much-contested intellectual sphere. Consequently, the authorised and seemingly-unchanging classical past seemed to present itself as one of the few 'safe' conceptual spaces left. Endowed with meaning through its unrivalled position in classical education, and informed by the contemporary comparative mindset, Rome prevailed as one of the most powerful and resonant cultural models available for appropriation. In the context of the rise of Britain and its imperial project to a position of unrivalled global ascendency, as well as the struggle of the nation's ruling elite to direct this process, Rome seemed to many to offer the only natural parallel to inform and validate Victorian progress.

1.5. Conclusion

This study has been titled 'Assuming the purple' because the phrase represents well many of the subtleties apparent in Victorian appropriations of ancient Rome, since the course of its rehabilitation represented in many ways a 'purple passage' of affectation in English cultural history.[77] Obviously, the word 'assume' is a verb derived appropriately from the Latin *assumere* meaning 'to take' and, according to most dictionaries, possesses five chief meanings:

1. To suppose; i.e. to think that something is true without evidence for that opinion.
2. To adopt; i.e. to take on a particular quality.
3. To undertake a role; i.e. to take a particular function or office upon oneself.

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[77] A phrase originating in Horace, *Ars poetica* 14-15, where he speaks of '*purpurei panni*', or 'purple patches/passages'.

4. To take responsibility for; i.e. to start to be responsible for
   something.

5. To pretend; i.e. to put forth claims or pretensions, usually to hide
   true feelings or opinions.[78]

All of these tender some metaphorical relevance to Victorian perceptions of Rome as they are understood in this work; suggesting something of the complex cultural relations that led to the most dynamic nineteenth-century society fashioning an important element of its identity through reference to classical antiquity.

For a start, many in English culture throughout the mid-to-late-Victorian era supposed with little supporting evidence that a clear parallel existed between their society and the Roman world. This was then adopted, employed, and exploited by relevant participants and commentators, which reinforced the idea that English culture had accepted as part of its imperial responsibilities the authoritative mantle of the Roman Empire through an imagined *translatio imperii*. At base, though, comparisons to classical Rome were more often than not predicated upon a grand pretence that sought to conceal, not only dissimilarities between ancient and contemporary society, but also numerous contemporary anxieties.

As will be shown, ancient Rome – at first latently, but later overtly – played a key role in constructions of Victorian identity; sometimes as a model to be emulated, sometimes to be avoided. Though it featured numerous contradictions, idiosyncrasies and incongruities, a Roman cultural model grew to possess broad appeal for English culture during the mid-to-late Victorian era. Functioning as a popular discourse possessing wide attraction, it also furnished a vital cultural cipher to the nation's social and intellectual elite, as well as a 'heuristic reinforcement'[79] to the British imperial project. Validated by its use in English education and relevance to a comparative mindset, a Roman cultural model found itself activated through a singular set of coincidental events that took place between 1850 and 1870. Focussing

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[78] Deriving from the Latin *ad* meaning 'to' and *sumere* meaning 'to take'. The *Oxford English Dictionary* notes eleven separate definitions of the word, though some of these are more subtle interpretations of the five general ones culled via reference to the *OED* and a number of other authoritative dictionaries. (http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/12036 [accessed 20 August 2014].)
[79] Betts (1971: 158).

directly upon the chronological trajectory of its apparent recession and rehabilitation, this study will explore the circumstances of this transformation in Rome's profile in English culture during the nineteenth century.

Undoubtedly, the Victorian age represented one of the most vigorous and successful periods in British history; during which English society found itself triumphant, not only economically and industrially, but also in direct command of a quarter of the earth's territory and a fifth of its population. Bookended by major global conflicts in the Napoleonic Wars and the Great War, in these years Britain became the proud paragon of economic, industrial, social, political and imperial progress in the world. Thus, it is intriguing to discover that classical culture in general, and Roman antiquity in particular, appeared to play such a dominant role in articulating responses to this extraordinary age of progress.

Though complex and often contested, a rehabilitated vision of classical Rome came to possess a major cultural presence in Victorian society, while being engaged as a guiding historical comparative. Offering a malleable, multivalent term that possessed appeal across both elite and popular cultural spheres, Rome's exceptional cachet and variable application were valuable across a range of contemporary socio-political debates. By exploring the dynamics of nineteenth-century classical reception, this study endeavours to pursue the manifold ways in which the Victorians sought to create fresh visions of their image and identity by assuming the purple of ancient Rome.

2. Eclipse

> The stream of World History has altered its complexion; the Romans are dead out, [and the] English are come in. The red broad mark of Romanhood, stamped ineffaceably on that Chart of Time, has disappeared from the present, and belongs only to the past.[1]
>
> **Thomas Carlyle, 1840.**

2.1. Salvaging the wreck of Rome: the Latinate tradition in English culture, 55 B.C.-*c*.1750

While they may have thought otherwise, the vision of ancient Rome that was inherited by the Victorians was one shaped by almost two millennia of reception in Western culture. This was further influenced by a long Latinate heritage in English society that dated back to the original Roman conquest and occupation of Britain in the first century A.D. While Roman rule had lasted only a few centuries, its cultural influence was sustained by the Roman Church throughout the medieval and early-modern eras, while manifesting itself in Romanesque art and architecture, as well as a vast quantity of Latin-inspired literature.[2] Although the concept of a Latinate tradition is not wholly tantamount to a Roman one, it is founded so completely upon the Roman cultural heritage – particularly via the central use of Latin in educational and intellectual terms – that it is difficult to separate one entirely from the other.[3]

As the chief component of such a tradition, Roman antiquity was connected in a greater or a lesser degree to English society throughout history, which makes it necessary to define its influence. By viewing the apparent recession and rehabilitation of Rome that took place during the nineteenth century in the context of this long historical heritage, one can understand that its Victorian reception did not occur in isolation. Instead, it seems to demonstrate that the period of 'eclipse' outlined in this chapter represents effectively an anomaly in this extensive historical tradition; making Rome's mid-Victorian revival appear like the return of a time-honoured *status quo*. Thus, in order to comprehend fully the reception of ancient Rome during the

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[1] Carlyle (1840: 202).

[2] See Toman (2002) and Haynes (2003: ch. 3, 74-103).

[3] See Watson (2012). On the nature of this tradition, see Farrell (2001), and, on its persistence in the British Isles, Burnett and Mann (2005). Continental scholars have also produced important works on this Latin heritage, such as Waquet (2001) and Leonhardt (2013).

Victorian era, it is necessary to perceive it first in the context of an already-lengthy historical appropriation in English culture.

Before the Romans' arrival to its shores, the island of Britannia was perceived by ancient Mediterranean civilisation largely as a territory lying outside the limits of the *oikoumene*, or the civilised world.[4] Even after Julius Caesar's series of invasions during 55-54 B.C., Britain remained an object of apprehension for most Romans. In this period, Catullus wrote of 'the horrible and most distant Britons', and Horace referred to Britain as 'remote' and 'most distant'; while Virgil's Meliboeus feared that exile would take him to Syria, the Sahara and to 'the Britons utterly divided from the whole world'.[5] Even Cicero wrote in a tone of complacency about Britain in a communication with his brother, who had accompanied Caesar's second mission to the island:

> With regard to British affairs, I have realised from your letters that there is nothing over there at which we should either tremble or rejoice.[6]

All of this changed with the Claudian conquest that began in A.D. 43, which, over the subsequent decades, turned Britain into the Roman Empire's most outlying western province.[7] Before the arrival of Julius Caesar, to Mediterranean civilisation, Britain was – as Joseph Conrad's narrator in *Heart of Darkness* (1899) claimed – 'one of the dark places of the earth'.[8] Representing 'the first date in English history'[9], the arrival of the Romans in 55 B.C. marked the end of the *tabula rasa* that had defined the British Isles to external civilisation up to that point, while making Julius Caesar effectively the first definable figure in British history. Moreover, Caesar's *Gallic Wars*, Cassius Dio's *Roman History* and Tacitus' *Agricola* all provide some of the earliest historical sources on the people and places of the British Isles. So, in effect, it

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[4] Pytheas of Massalia allegedly travelled to the British Isles in the fourth century B.C., while Ptolemy also took note of this outlying island in his *Geographia*. Though Pytheas' account of his voyage has been lost, fragments of his narrative are available via other authors' works, such as Strabo's *Geographica* and Pliny's *Natural history*. See Romm (1992: 140-2, 197-98 and 206-7) and Cunliffe (2001).

[5] Catullus, *Poems*, 11.11. Horace, *Odes*, 4.14.47. Virgil, *Eclogues*, 1.64.

[6] Cicero, *Ad Quintum fratrem*, 21 (III, i), 10.

[7] See Todd (2004b).

[8] Conrad (2007: 5). A sentiment that echoes early descriptions of Britain, such as in Caesar's *Gallic Wars*, 5.12-14 and Tactitus' *Agricola*, 1.10-13.

[9] Sellar and Yeatman (1998: 9).

was Rome that put Britain both on the map and in the history books for the first time.[10]

Throughout its four centuries of Roman rule, Britain represented a relatively undistinguished province, though one that still provided a solid source of revenue to merchants and traders, as well as offering major agricultural yields.[11] Only very occasionally was Britain thrust into the forefront of imperial politics, instead spending the majority of its period of Roman occupation and rule as a reliable province, possessing a fair complement of defence and trade advantages.[12] As one of Rome's arguably more successful provincial projects, during its occupation Britain benefitted immeasurably from the period that it spent as part of the Roman Empire. Urban life in Britain was originated and developed entirely under the Romans, along with a money-based economy founded upon long-distance trade, and a liberalised system of religious observance that fused native and Roman cults.[13] Rome also provided the country with a new language in Latin, alongside a system of law that regularised conduct and maintained order in an unprecedented manner.[14] Significantly, even London, the later metropolitan heart of the British Empire, was founded originally as an administrative centre for Roman Britain.[15] Additionally, later key national symbols, such as the figure of Britannia, also made their first appearance during the Roman occupation of Britain.[16]

While the barbarian invasions of 367 and 409 may have marked the conclusion of Rome's rule in Britain, many Roman institutions continued to function in varying manners for many years in certain parts of the country.[17] As one historian of Roman Britain has asserted, '[t]he [Roman] imperial system was so old and so full of prestige

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[10] See Petrie and Sharp (1848), which collected all of the texts of the ancient authors' writings about Britain. Among these were Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Ptolemy, Julius Caesar, Tacitus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio, Herodian, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Ammianus Marcellinus, Zosimus, Orosius and Gildas. See also, Cayzer (1878), where the largest bloc of quotations derives from Tacitus' *Agricola*.
[11] See Mattingly (2006).
[12] Arguably, empire-wide attention fell on Britain only twice after Claudius' initial sixteen-day visit during its conquest: firstly, in A.D. 211, when Septimius Severus died at Eboracum and his sons, Caracalla and Geta, were acclaimed in his stead; and, secondly, in A.D. 306 when Constantius also died at Eboracum and was replaced by his son, Constantine, who would make Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire.
[13] See Jones (2004), Fulford (2004) and Henig (2004).
[14] See Adams (2007: ch. 9, 577-623) and Korporowicz (2012).
[15] See Hassell (1996).
[16] See Hingley (1994).
[17] See Esmonde Cleary (1990: ch. 6, 188-205) and Jones (1996: ch. 4, 108-43).

that for generations to come the British continued to regard themselves as in some sense members of it still'.[18] Importantly, any lasting influence that Rome did impart was mostly in what would become England, since Wales and Scotland were affected far less in the long term.[19] Crucially for the context of this study, these original processes of the establishment of a Latinate tradition represent a predominantly English phenomenon in the history of the British Isles. Thus, although actual Roman rule lasted only a few centuries, it introduced many of the elements that later created many of the defining components of English identity regarding language, law and religion. In short, as one scholar has put it, '[a]lthough the racial ancestry of the English was Nordic, their cultural ancestry is predominantly Mediterranean'.[20]

When Roman power collapsed in the fifth century, Britain was subjected to a series of foreign invasions, out of which emerged a patchwork of kingdoms that defined the post-Roman era.[21] With this shift, however, came continuity, in the form of the Christian Church, which retained as its focal point the city of Rome and as its *lingua franca* the Latin language.[22] So, although direct Roman influence upon domestic British culture decreased in the centuries that followed the departure of the legions, the arrival and development of Christianity following Augustine of Canterbury's mission (597-604) ensured that a tangible connection both to the city of Rome and to the associated legacy of the Roman Empire continued throughout this period.[23] During this time, for instance, one finds Anglo-Saxon kings from Athelstan (r. 927-39) onwards commonly employing Greek and Latin terms, such as *basileus* and *imperator*, to describe themselves.[24] Indeed, when the future Alfred the Great was taken to Rome in 853 as a young boy, he was alleged to have been invested with the ceremonial office of a Roman consul by Pope Leo IV.[25] The tradition of Christian pilgrimage from Britain to Rome also began in the eighth century, assisted by the formal custom of archbishops of Canterbury travelling to Rome in person to receive

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[18] Frere (1967: 404).

[19] See Hechter (1975: 53). On Roman Wales and Scotland, see Laing (2006: ch. 11, 249-70 and chs 13 and 14, 292-329).

[20] Fox (1978: 2).

[21] See Fleming (2010).

[22] See Woolf (2003).

[23] On Anglo-Saxon interactions with the Roman cultural heritage, particularly in its linguistic forms, see Hall (2010b) and Timofeeva (2010).

[24] See Mantello and Rigg (1996: 207-8) alongside Yorke (2003).

[25] See Abels (1998: 60-1).

their *pallium* of office from the pope.[26] Although six weeks on horseback separated Britain and Rome, the city gained a reputation as a central site of pilgrimage with medieval Britons.[27] Most of these early pilgrims were ecclesiastical visitors to Rome, but, during the course of the medieval era, they were joined by a more diverse and inclusive group.[28] Most significantly, this link culminated in the election in 1154 of Nicholas Breakspear as Pope Adrian IV, the only Englishman to sit upon the papal throne.

Only a century before, in 1066, Britain had suffered another major invasion, this time by the Normans, which overturned the socio-political structures of the Anglo-Saxon era and established arguably the most efficient system of government enjoyed by Britain since the Romans. Indeed, the arrival of the Normans brought a fresh injection of Roman-inflected continental culture to British shores that is exhibited in the aptly-titled Romanesque style of architecture that they favoured. Matthew Arnold once noted, for instance, that 'the governing point in the history of the Norman race […] is not its Teutonic origin, but its Latin civilisation', which endowed it with 'the Roman talent for affairs [and] the Roman decisiveness in emergencies'.[29] Later, the historian C.R.L. Fletcher reinforced this notion by suggesting that the Normans had restored and reinforced the original structures of Roman civilisation and good government:

> Such remains of Roman ideas of government and order as were left in Europe were saved for us by the Normans. The great Roman empire was like a ship that had been wrecked on a beach; its cargo was plundered by nation after nation.[30]

Hence, although the direct link to Rome had been sundered, in the centuries that followed the end of Roman Britain a number of significant threads remained, or were

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[26] See Brooks (2000: 106-7).
[27] See Champ (2000: chs 2 and 3, 13-64).
[28] Indeed, the first British expatriate community in Rome dates from this period. A 'Saxon' quarter of the city grew up on the right bank of the Tiber at the foot of the Vatican Hill, now known as the *Borgo* after the Saxon word *burh*, or borough. This settlement included a *Schola Anglorum* founded in *c*.720 by the King of Wessex that lasted as an institution for a number of centuries. See Parks (1954: i).
[29] Arnold (1962: 349 and 350).
[30] Fletcher and Kipling (1911: 44).

reintroduced, to connect Britain to Roman culture – out of which was formed a defined Latinate heritage.[31]

Throughout the medieval and early-modern era this Latinate tradition can be seen to have developed in a variety of ways that demonstrate a continued interest in referring back to Rome. An important text in the mediation of this tradition was Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (1138), which suggested that the legendary founder of Britain was Aeneas' descendant, Brutus.[32] This *ur*-myth was reinforced throughout the late-medieval and early-modern era – indeed, down to Edmund Spenser's *The faerie queene* (1590/1596) –, which glorified the notion that the English might be descended from Trojans and/or Romans.[33] For instance, in an episode from Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (*c*.1470), King Arthur travels to Italy to be crowned emperor of Rome by the senators and cardinals of the city, thus suggesting a direct link between ancient Rome and the chief protagonist of British legend.[34] Around the same time, Edward IV commissioned an elaborate and expensive manuscript biography of one of his heroes, Julius Caesar, entitled *La grant hystoire Cesar*, which was completed and presented to him in 1479.[35]

The Roman Church remained the chief arbiter of this Roman cultural heritage in medieval and early-modern English society, however, employing Latin as its *lingua franca* and making it the hallmark of its education.[36] Even with the advent of Renaissance humanism, the possession of Latin and the associated cachet attendant upon its knowledge was essential to any individual who sought to gain a clerical position and advance himself in medieval intellectual society.[37] Of course, a major challenge to this Latinate tradition came with Henry VIII's dispute with the Roman

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[31] On the broader European trends of the post-Roman world, see Heather (2013).

[32] See Geoffrey of Monmouth (2008: 44-59). Suggesting that the first settlement in Britain may have been established by, and named after, a descendant of the founder of the Roman people offered a powerful mythological link between the two societies. A century after the notion of an English 'nation' was first recorded in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (*c*.730), this legend was reported in Nennius' *Historia Brittonum* (*c*.830), though it finds its most detailed account in Geoffrey of Monmouth's history. See Jones (1996: 134-5).

[33] See Spenser (1978: 330-1) and Curran (2002: 110-16).

[34] Malory (1868: bk 5, ch. 12, 109-11).

[35] The manuscript can be viewed in full online on the British Library's website: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_17_F_II [accessed 18 July 2014].

[36] On the various uses of Latin in the Middle Ages, see Mantello and Rigg (1996: pt 2, 71-502). On its use in medieval education, see Orme (2006: ch. 3, 86-127).

[37] See Jensen (1996).

Church that ended with the English Reformation of 1534, which, as part of his establishment of the Church of England, sought to excise Romanism from both ecclesiastical and temporal elements of English culture.[38] Yet, the medieval Latinate tradition had become so closely related to the dynamics and structures of intellectual life in early-modern Britain that it proved almost indivisible from them, and impossible to disestablish entirely.[39]

Almost simultaneously, the sixteenth century marked the beginning of a new, historicist type of Roman reception, informed by texts and objects from antiquity itself, rather than the half-fabulous legends of medieval chroniclers, such as Geoffrey of Monmouth.[40] For instance, Caesar's *Gallic Wars* gained its first English translation in 1530 and Tacitus' *Agricola* its first in 1591; each representing seminal works on the origins of British history, which, in being translated and published, allowed the truth of Britain's past to be widely disseminated for the first time.[41] The rediscovery of these texts, along with a growing awareness of the Roman archaeological heritage underfoot – particularly in the south of England and around Hadrian's Wall – helped to 'recover' Roman Britain, and implant a fresh knowledge and understanding of Britain's history.[42] In addition, works such *Britannia* (1586; English trans. 1610) by William Camden and *The historie of Great Britaine* [*sic*] (1611) by John Speed offered commentaries that presented detailed accounts of Romano-British history and the monuments the period left behind.[43] Importantly, the sixteenth century also witnessed the beginnings of what would one day become the British Empire.[44] Indeed, one can already see an example of imperial paralleling between the nascent English empire and its Roman forebear in George Chapman's *De Guiana, carmen epicum* (1596), a miniature Latin epic that celebrated Walter Ralegh's first expedition to Guiana.[45] Thus, the early-modern period was defined by a textual and material rediscovery of Britain's Roman past, which preserved England's Latinate tradition in such a way that it transcended even the despoliations of the Reformation.

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[38] See Curran (2002: ch. 1, 15-36).
[39] On early-modern English receptions of Rome, see Yates (1975), Miller (2001) and Cox Jensen (2012).
[40] See Hingley (2008: 2-4).
[41] See Piggott (1989: 88).
[42] See Hingley (2008: 17-101).
[43] See ibid., 24-36 and 44-53.
[44] See Canny (1998a).
[45] On the use of Rome to justify England's early colonial endeavours, see Canny (1973: 588-90).

The period from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century was among the most turbulent in British history, however, being marked by an unprecedented cycle of civil war, monarchical overthrow, republicanism and restoration. Perhaps most significantly, the execution of Charles I in 1649 and the English Commonwealth that followed offered a broad parallel to the origins of the Roman state, when its last king, Tarquinius Superbus, was denounced as a tyrant and replaced with a republican government.[46] Despite the unstable and often chaotic political situation that dominated the British Isles at this time, though, the Latinate tradition remained in currency, often being appropriated by opposing sides in these political disputes. On the parliamentary side of the English Civil War, for example, the poet John Milton called the English Commonwealth 'another *Rome* in the West'[47], while the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell once threatened to 'make the name of an Englishman to be as much feared as ever was the name of *civis Romanus*'.[48] Yet, following the Restoration in 1660, the court of Charles II drew repeatedly on Augustan Rome for political reinforcement, which gave birth to the 'Augustan' moment in the English arts.[49] Occasionally, even the same classical ciphers were appropriated; such as the figure of Britannia, which appeared on British coinage first on a Protectorate medal of 1654, but became a feature of Restoration coins from 1665.[50]

Events that book-ended the seventeenth century also helped to reinforce the continued currency of ancient Rome. In particular, the union of England and Scotland that occurred with the accession of James I in 1603 put many in the mind of the last time when Britain enjoyed such a political unity under the Romans; while the 1707 Act of Union buttressed this notion and, in the process, created the modern United Kingdom. At the time of the 1603 union, for instance, two Scottish writers, John Gordon and James Maxwell, hailed James I as the successor to the Roman emperors, though many other commentators also looked to a Roman imperial parallel.[51] A century later, John Clerk's Latin history *De imperio Britannico* (1750 [written 1724-30]) dealt with the

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[46] A parallel explored by John Milton, the Commonwealth's chief Latinist and 'Secretary for Foreign Tongues', in his *Defence of the People of England* (1651). See Milton (1991: 166-73) and Barnaby (1993).
[47] Milton (1980: vii, 357).
[48] Quoted in Miller (2001: 8).
[49] See Jenkinson (2010: 58-63).
[50] See Brown (1994: 80).
[51] See Levack (1994: 225-6).

1707 union of England and Scotland in context of their original attempted union under the Romans.[52] Although the period of struggle that occurred between 1603 and 1707 undermined many traditional bases of English culture, the restorations that followed the War of the Three Kingdoms (1639-51) and the Glorious Revolution (1688) encouraged parallels to the period of Augustan peace that followed the Roman Civil Wars, so giving late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century culture the moniker 'Augustan'. So, during one of the most challenging periods for the traditional political structures of British society, a domestic Latinate tradition remained never far from the tongues and the pens of the participants of these struggles.[53]

Hence, throughout the ancient, medieval and early-modern history of Britain, the Latinate heritage played its part in the creation of English cultural identity; finding itself preserved throughout, owing to its central place in national cultural discourse in a legacy drawn down from the original Roman conquest of Britain. Initially absorbed at the point of a sword under the Roman occupation, Latin culture offered the essential elements of contemporary Mediterranean civilisation to the backward and isolated province of Britannia. Although many of these advances were swept away with the decay of Roman power, and consequent departure of the forces of civil and military order from British soil, some vestiges of Latinate culture survived the series of foreign invasions and internecine struggles that defined the period between the degeneration of Roman power and the rise of the Normans.

During this difficult era, the Church helped to preserve and protect Britain's Latinate heritage as a result of its position as effective heir to Roman power, even if it was more in spirit than in concrete terms. With the rise of the Church to a position of increasing cultural and political prestige in the medieval era, Latin became the language, not only of the academic, clerical and ecclesiastical professions, but of contemporary knowledge and power. Consequently, one of the chief thrusts of English education from the Middle Ages onwards became the study of Latin and its use as the *lingua franca* of the educated individual, while antiquity itself became a prime frame of reference under the influence of contemporary Renaissance humanism.

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[52] See Clerk (1892: 106 and 160; and 1993).
[53] On the broader trends in classical reception over this period, see Hopkins and Martindale (2012).

Even the Reformation in the sixteenth century and the series of civil wars that marked the seventeenth do not appear to have been capable of detaching a significant Latinate element from English culture. If anything, such disturbances seem to have confirmed its place, as the political settlements that followed the Restoration and the Glorious Revolution were couched in terms that were drawn specifically from the Augustan peace that followed the Roman Civil Wars. Thus, the country's Latinate cultural tradition represented a significant component of English identity throughout its ancient, medieval and early-modern incarnations that preserved a key place for Rome in subsequent domestic culture.

2.2. Rome-less? The devaluation of ancient Rome, *c*.1750-1815

Between 1750 and 1815, Europe underwent a seismic historical shift that wholly altered the previous *status quo* in the creation of a brand-new political order. In these years, a series of revolutions overturned the traditional foundations of European society and formed out of their ruins the political structures that were to dominate the nineteenth century. Along with a number of contemporary domestic factors, the Industrial Revolution, the American Revolution and the French Revolution together wrought a complex series of responses in British society that included a demotion for the place of Roman antiquity in English culture. Although the early-to-mid-eighteenth century marked a high-point for Rome as an allusive model in English culture, with the development and popularity of 'Augustan' literature and neoclassical architecture, the revolutionary era that followed it negatively affected Rome's status; witnessing a number of Britain's foreign adversaries seizing and distorting its cultural cachet, while Hellenism rose to replace it in the national imagination.

As mentioned, the political settlements that followed the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 and the Glorious Revolution in 1688 created the conditions for what was perceived to be an 'Augustan' era of peace and prosperity in Britain that mirrored that once enjoyed by the Roman world.[54] Although its origins were political, the forms of this Augustanism were chiefly aesthetic and literary; being defined primarily by influential panegyrics to the results of these settlements, such as *Astrea redux* (1660)

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[54] See Erskine-Hill (1967) and Weinbrot (1978).

by John Dryden and *Epistle to Augustus* (1737) by Alexander Pope.[55] Looking back to the Augustan period in Latin literature, works such as Dryden's verse-translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* (1697) sought to emulate the aesthetic standards of that era, while also reflecting a number of contemporary cultural developments, including the use of empirical philosophy and political satire, as well as a devotion to strict classical principles in the arts. An increased interaction with the Roman past was also evidenced by the establishment in 1722 of the Society of Roman Knights, or *Equites Romani*, by the antiquarian William Stukely as an organisation for those who wished to study Roman antiquities.[56]

Provided with a context and vocabulary by England's long Latinate tradition, literary Augustanism translated into a political discourse that was inspired chiefly by the example of the ancient Roman Republic.[57] As an essayist for the *Monthly Review* in 1764 put it, 'many profitable comparisons may be drawn from a comparison between the Roman State and our own'.[58] These were nearly always centred upon the shared Polybian or 'mixed' constitutions of the two states, however; while being predicated upon a concept of decline and fall derived from Niccolò Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy* (1531).[59] As a result, contemporary political culture was often guided by a moral account of the destruction of the Roman Republic that demonstrated how the alleged luxury that followed Rome's victory in the Punic Wars, alongside the unchecked ambitions of its military commanders, had upset its political balance.[60] In this way, eighteenth-century Augustanism became entwined with the lengthy English Latinate heritage outlined above; having been developed from the political settlements of the late seventeenth century to insinuate itself deeply into Georgian political and social life.[61] So, as has been remarked, 'from its unassuming presence in the arts, the image

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[55] See Johnson (1967), Erskine-Hill (1983) and Coltman (2006).
[56] See Ayres (1997: 91-104).
[57] For an exploration of the broader history of the reception of the Roman Republic in British culture, see Turner (1986).
[58] *Monthly Review*, vol. 30, 108.
[59] See Mansfield (1979: 46-8, 83-4 and 206-19).
[60] Two major, multi-volume histories of the Roman Republic emerged from this period from either side of the Tory/Whig political divide, Nathaniel Hooke's *Roman history* (1738-71) and Adam Ferguson's *History of the progress and termination of the Roman Republic* (1783; rev. 1799).
[61] See Sambrook (1993: 195-202).

of Rome was translated into a cultural and political force in eighteenth-century England' – all of which gave Georgian England 'a distinctively Roman flavour'.[62]

Yet, the Industrial, American and French revolutions that defined the 'revolutionary' age which developed during the mid-to-late eighteenth century undermined many of the cultural bases that had characterised this previous era – along with the prominence of Roman antiquity within it.[63] Having gained a measure of global supremacy for the first time with the conclusion of the Seven Years War (1756-63), Britain emerged from the conflict possessing significant colonial territories, along with many of the challenges and responsibilities imposed upon a major international power. Within just over a decade, though, the revolutionary era intervened; challenging all of these gains, bringing an end to the so-called 'First' British Empire, and placing in jeopardy the very survival of the British state.

Opening with the advances of the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, this period witnessed the introduction of numerous new technologies that modernised traditional manufacturing processes and transformed British society in countless ways.[64] In 1776, while Britain was adjusting to these developments, the American Revolution occurred; an act which forced Britain into a lengthy conflict with its 'Thirteen Colonies' and resulted in their loss from the British Empire in 1783.[65] Nonetheless, it was the French Revolution in 1789 that provoked the greatest reaction in British society and defined the unprecedented nature of the revolutionary period.[66] Indeed, to the lawyer and philosopher Edmund Burke, it represented nothing less than 'the most astonishing thing that has happened in the world'.[67] British participation in the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802) then segued almost seamlessly into conflict with the subsequent Napoleonic Empire in an even lengthier set of wars that lasted until 1815. Like the French Revolution to Burke, the Napoleonic Wars appeared to the British prime minister William Pitt the Younger to be 'the most important and momentous conflict that ever occurred in the history of the world'.[68] As is clear from the

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[62] Parchami (2009: 64 and 65). See Ayres (1997).
[63] See Binns (2005). On another factor behind this apparent decline, see Thompson (1987).
[64] See the essays in O'Brien and Quinault (1993).
[65] See Conway (1998).
[66] See Duffy (1991).
[67] Burke (1993: 8).
[68] Speech in the House of Commons, 31 January 1799; Debrett (1799: vii, 637).

hyperbole of these statements, all of these events were perceived as largely unprecedented developments in European history that together wrought an enormous impact upon English society and culture.[69]

Crucially, when these events are viewed from the perspective of American and French political appropriations of ancient Rome, they assume a different character; demonstrating how revolutionaries on both sides of the Atlantic, followed by Napoleon and his empire, effectively abducted a formerly central element of eighteenth-century English identity.[70] From the outset, the classical educations of the American 'Founding Fathers' influenced their use of Rome as a political model upon which to construct many of the structures of the nascent United States.[71] Deriving from the same political tradition as their British Whig and Tory counterparts, these rebels-turned-statesmen similarly found in Roman republican history a much-needed cultural reinforcement for their own unprecedented political project. Applied as a central model in the political discourse of the fledgling United States, many of these same Roman republican parallels provided direct inspiration to the French revolutionaries who overthrew their own monarchy in 1789. Yet, if the Americans had appealed in broad terms to the spirit of classical Rome to animate their newly founded state, the French surpassed them entirely in the depth and extent of such appropriations of antiquity – viewing their new-found French Republic as nothing less than 'Rome reincarnate'.[72]

From political titles to structures, the French revolutionary system became, like the United States, predicated upon a Roman republican model.[73] While creating political offices such as a tribunate, consulate and senate that derived directly from the ancient Roman republic, the French revolutionaries also took inspiration for much of their iconography and ideology from the same source – as exemplified by their use of the Roman cap of liberty as a symbol, and the classicism of artists they patronised, such

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[69] For a useful overview on their combined impact on domestic culture, see Mori (2000).
[70] See Cole (2009).
[71] See Richard (1994), Sellars (1994) and Shalev (2009).
[72] Benjamin (1940: 253).
[73] See Talbot Parker (1965). While most scholarship on the subject has been published in French, such as Mossé (1989), a few English-language studies have been of particular value on specific appropriations, such as Baxter (2006).

as Jacques-Louis David.[74] Though criticised later by commentators such as Karl Marx for assuming the cosmetic mantle of 'Roman costume […] and Roman phrases'[75], these appropriations informed and validated the French revolutionaries' political project in an extensive manner.

While the American Founding Fathers had authorised the use of ancient Rome as a political model for a new form of Enlightenment-driven republican polity, it was the French revolutionaries on the other side of the Atlantic who developed and extended its application in a manner that came to define almost every aspect of their state. As a consequence, many on the other side of the English Channel began to perceive the French situation through Roman parallels. One editorial in *The Times* in 1794, for instance, drew a comparison between the divisiveness of the Roman and French republics, asking: 'How was ancient Rome destroyed? By a *Republican Faction*. How was modern France ruined? By a *Republican Faction*. Can any State long exist where all men are supposed to be *equal*?'[76] So, as a consequence of this new departure in the contemporary European reception of Roman antiquity, traditional parallels to the Roman world within English culture became problematised, leading to Rome's decline as a useful cultural model.

Throughout the 1790s, the French Republic descended further into an anarchy from which it was rescued only by Napoleon Bonaparte's seizure of power in 1799, which was succeeded by his assumption of single-handed dictatorial authority.[77] Both of these events were predicated upon the sovereignty wielded by Napoleon in consequence of his military command, which made it easy for him to apply the example provided by Julius Caesar, who assumed similar powers in the final years of the Roman Republic through his control of the army.[78] Indeed, throughout his rule – although the career of Alexander the Great may have offered a closer parallel –, first Julius Caesar, and later Augustus, provided the key models for Napoleon's actions,

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[74] See Harris (1981: 283-5) and Roberts (2000: pt 2, 195-322).
[75] Marx (2000: 330).
[76] *The Times*, 1 September 1794, 2.
[77] See Bergeron (1981).
[78] See Hemmerle (2006: 286-92).

behaviour and self-image, as he maintained the pretence of a republican state while transforming France into an empire that he hoped would become a 'New Rome'.[79]

Like Julius Caesar, he first created a dictatorship based upon a combination of charisma and military force; yet, like Augustus, he affected continuity with the previous republican polity while creating an imperial state constructed around a sophisticated personality cult. Whether in the titles he assumed or the offices to which he pretended, Napoleon's state was saturated in Roman allusions that appeared to add to his Romantic mystique.[80] These appropriations ranged from the most utilitarian, such as the redesign of the Parisian sewer-system along the plan of ancient Rome's own, to the Nilotic fascination that he shared with Augustus, and which motivated his Egyptian campaign; from making his birthday a public holiday to self-aggrandising visual propaganda, such as his 1806 portrayal by Antonio Canova as the Roman god Mars, as well as the military eagles that he appropriated directly from the Romans as a symbol of French martial power.[81]

So, in a very tangible sense, throughout his rule Napoleon possessed Rome in a way that seemed to deny its cultural authority to other contemporary societies. Not only did he declare himself ruler of Italy in 1805, he also gained actual possession of the city of Rome from 1809 to 1814, when he made it a free city of his empire; an act that offered him a milestone conquest in his domination of Europe and a unique riposte to any rival appropriations of Roman cultural authority, ancient or modern.[82] Crucially, under the terms of the 1805 Treaty of Pressburg, he also dissolved the Holy Roman Empire, which represented arguably the only remaining direct historical heir of Roman political *imperium*.[83] In order to assume its symbolic mantle further, in 1810 he also married Marie-Louise, the eldest daughter of Francis II, the last Holy Roman

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[79] See Tollfree (1999), Huet (1999) and Rowell (2012). This Caesarism seemed to extend beyond political posturing to Napoleon's own self-image of himself. For instance, Napoleon took Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars* as a *vade mecum* on his Egyptian campaign and, later, while exiled on St Helena, compiled *Précis de guerres de Jules César*.

[80] See Cheeke (2010).

[81] See Assali (1996).

[82] See Vandiver Nicassio (2009). On the ways in which he encouraged archaeological exploration of the city's Roman heritage, see Ridley (1992).

[83] Napoleon reduced the Holy Roman Empire from 365 states to only 40, and transformed it into his own Confederation of the Rhine. See Forrest and Wilson (2008).

Emperor. In 1811, when she bore him a son, also named Napoleon, he was titled –
like all sons of the Holy Roman Emperors historically – 'King of Rome'.[84]

In this way, the coalescence of all these Roman parallels pushed any Roman cultural
model further beyond the use of English culture, and reinforced its effective
disestablishment by the American and French revolutionaries. In 1807, for instance,
an editorial in *The Times* was forced to admit that Napoleon possessed 'an empire
more extensive than that of ancient Rome, reaching from the straits of Scylla to the
Frozen Ocean, and from the pillars of Hercules to the gates of [the] Caucasus'.[85] As
Britain's arch-nemesis and military opponent from 1803 to 1815, Napoleon
represented not only a tyrant bent on creating a personal European empire, but also a
thief of the Roman political model formerly possessed by English culture.[86] Thus,
within English society, given the martial climate that dominated the era of the
Napoleonic Wars, recourse to the same Roman allusions appropriated and exploited
contemporaneously by Napoleon represented a virtually unfeasible prospect.

Crucially, any survey of contemporary newspapers and parliamentary debates of the
period from 1789 to 1815 evidences a definite recession in the profile of ancient
Rome that fits with the impact of its revolutionary and Napoleonic appropriation.
Take *The Times*, for example. Over this timeframe, the term 'ancient Rome' occurs in
its pages only 21 times and 'ancient Roman' only twice. In contrast, during a similar
quarter-century period from 1825 to 1850, 'ancient Rome' appears 113 times and
'ancient Roman' 45 times.[87] Similarly, although its records begin only in 1800, the
Nineteenth-Century British Newspapers catalogue records 'ancient Rome' mentioned
25 times from 1800 to 1815, but 633 in the subsequent period from 1825 to 1850.
Likewise, 'ancient Roman' returns only 13 results for 1800 to 1815, but 210 for 1825
to 1850.[88] Furthermore, the *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* registers only
six mentions of 'ancient Rome' in parliamentary speeches from 1789 to 1815, but 43
for the period from 1825 to 1850; while 'ancient Roman' received two mentions from

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[84] See Wesson (1967: 384).
[85] *The Times*, 4 December 1807, 2.
[86] See Semmel (2004) and Bainbridge (2006).
[87] http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/ttda/basicsearch.do [accessed 24 August 2014].
[88] http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/bbcn/basicsearch.do [accessed 24 August 2014].

1789 to 1815, but 18 from 1825 to 1850.[89] Although rudimentary, these statistics remain suggestive of a clear reduction in the profile of Rome during the period of its revolutionary and Napoleonic appropriation.

The contested nature of Roman antiquity in English culture over this same period can also be perceived through the terms of many of the contemporary political debates, which continued to draw upon classical references. Since the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars represented a practically continuous conflict from 1792 to 1815, many perceived it as Britain's own version of the Punic Wars.[90] Yet, with France seizing the cachet of ancient Rome, Britain seemed compelled to play the role of Carthage in such an allusion. As part of the parliamentary debate on potential peace negotiations with the French in 1797, for instance, the MP French Laurence noted that '[Britain's] enemies continually affect to put themselves in the place of ancient Rome, and us in that of its rival, Carthage […]'.[91] This came after a comment from another MP William Young, which warned against any attempt to negotiate with France through a parallel to Carthage's fate:

> [The seizure of the Royal Navy] would be the final demand of the enemy, and we should be permitted at last, like Carthage under the tyranny of ancient Rome, to keep up so many ships only on the sea as must eventually destroy our commerce, our liberties, our security, and our existence. In Livy we find *Carthago delenda*, and when the Romans had limited her ships the sentence was fulfilled, and *Carthago deleta* followed.[92]

Indeed, as far back as 1759, the MP Edward Wortley Montagu had claimed that the prolonged nature of wider Anglo-French conflict put him in mind of the Punic Wars, with Britain playing the part of Carthage:

> Of all the free states whose memory is preserved to us in history, Carthage bears the nearest resemblance to Britain both in the commerce,

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[89] http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk./search/search.do [accessed 24 August 2014].
[90] See Franceschi and Weider (2008: 97).
[91] Speech in the House of Commons, 10 November 1797; Cobbett (1818: xxxiii, 1020).
[92] *The Times*, 3 November 1797, 3.

opulence, sovereignty of the sea and her method of carrying on her land wars by foreign mercenaries. If to these we add the vicinity of the Carthaginians to the Romans, the most formidable and most rapacious people at that time in Europe […] the situation of Carthage with respect to Rome seems greatly analogous to that of Britain with respect to France, at least for this last century.[93]

Nonetheless, while Britain represented a similar maritime and mercantile power, Carthage was too much associated with defeat and destruction to provide an equivalent alternative model to Rome.[94]

Although devalued by its revolutionary and Napoleonic appropriations, a number of commentators from both sides of the British political spectrum attempted to continue to draw upon Rome to rationalise the unprecedented events of the period. Edmund Burke, for example, made extensive use of Rome in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), in which he attacked the French Revolution for destabilising Europe. In it, Burke argued that, like ancient Rome, England enjoyed a 'mixed', Polybian constitution, and quotes examples throughout from Roman history and Latin literature, which built a subtle portrayal of aristocratically-led Britain as a paradigmatic political model, in contrast to the apparent anarchism of the French Republic.[95] Later, from the opposing pole of the British political spectrum, huge crowds attended a series of lectures on Roman history by the Radical commentator John Thelwall, which he published subsequently as *Prospectus of a course of lectures ... in strict conformity with Mr Pitt's Convention Act* (1796).[96] Much controversy followed in the wake of these lectures because of the militant bent of Thelwall's politics, which supported the French Revolution, and appealed to numerous examples from Roman history to augment his arguments.[97] Yet, probably the majority of contemporary commentators steered a middle course between these extremes; continuing to employ selective classical parallels, but often in some satirical or updated form. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's articles in the *Morning Post* during 1802,

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[93] Montagu (1759: 176).
[94] See Vance (1997: 71-3).
[95] See Burke (1993: 6, 91, 178, 184, 245 and 265). See also, Sachs (2010: 52-65).
[96] See Sachs (2010: 49-51).
[97] See Scrivener (2009: ch. 2, 43-86).

for example, attacked French Revolutionary and Napoleonic exploitations of Rome through ironic appreciation of their use of such classical parallels.[98] Hence, while revolutionary appropriations of Rome did not entirely eliminate its presence from contemporary English cultural discourse, it did alter the terms of its employment.

So, throughout the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, it seemed as if the cultural cachet related to ancient Rome was increasingly distorted and demoted from potential use in English culture. Moreover, the zeal that motivated the American and French revolutions seemed to transform many of the idle antique pretensions of British parliamentarians into actual political reality, which altered the entire concept and usage of the classical parallel in English culture. No longer was it merely a form of intellectual gilding for an established society like eighteenth-century Georgian England, but a means of negotiating unprecedented political environments of state-making – as demonstrated by the birth of the United States and the French Republic. Since the appropriation of Roman republican and imperial parallels by these unique Enlightenment political projects was so explicit and incontrovertible, it seemed almost impossible for English intellectual culture to exploit Rome's traditional cultural authority for its own ends.

While the American patriots had drawn upon the Roman republican tradition in a central, but restrained manner, the revolutionaries in France took appropriation of classical Rome to an entirely new level. Indeed, between 1789 and 1815, the French transformed their nation from a republic to an empire in a type of fast-forward version of Roman history. As a result of this comprehensive appropriation, Rome appears to have been more difficult to integrate into traditional political modelling, except – as evidenced by Burke, Thelwall and Coleridge – as a means of reactionary response to its foreign exploitation. Since victory at Waterloo represented the defeat not only of Napoleon, but also, indirectly, of the forces unleashed by the French Revolution, after 1815 English society appeared to be in a potential position to recoup and restore ancient Rome to its former central position of cultural authority.[99] Yet, since Britain had been at war with the French for much of the period of 1689 to 1815 in a series of conflicts that transcended its immediate struggle with Revolutionary and Napoleonic

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[98] See Kooy (1999).
[99] See Gash (1978).

France, it was difficult for anything associated with French power to regain popularity in England for many decades.[100] Indeed, French appropriations of ancient Rome were sustained even after the restoration of the monarchy in 1815; continuing even through the 'July Monarchy' of Louis-Philippe (1830-48).[101] When France invaded Algeria in 1830, for instance, French officers were told that the 'Arab interval' was over and that the 'Romans' (i.e. the French) had returned, since 'we Romans were here before the Arabs'.[102]

Importantly, victory at Waterloo also created a powerful 'Second' British Empire that boasted double the number of colonial territories with which Britain had begun the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars.[103] Although the revolutionary era opened with the loss of the American 'Thirteen Colonies', the subsequent period saw the development of a British Empire more powerful than its predecessor, which included the expansion of British India and a series of fledgling 'white' colonies in Australia and New Zealand, along with a series of diverse colonies in Africa and Asia.[104] Secured by Britain's maritime supremacy and a sophisticated trade network, this imperial edifice proved to be the source of much of the Victorian age's subsequent power and wealth.[105] Accordingly, although the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars had posed a serious threat to the safety and stability of Britain, they also had an invigorating effect on the acquisition and administration of colonial territories. As Piers Brendon has written, '[…] in the crucible of the French wars Britain fused together its commitment to liberty and its will to power'.[106] Moreover, the possession

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[100] See Scott (1992).
[101] See Vance (1997: 50).
[102] Quoted in MacKendrick (1980: 319).
[103] In 1792, Britain had 23 overseas colonies, but, by 1816, this had risen to 43. In 1750, the empire possessed a population of *c*.12.5 million, but – even taking into account the loss of the American colonies –, by 1820, this had exploded to over 200 million. (Cited in Brendon (2007: 28).) See Porter (1991: 64-5).
[104] Interestingly, comparisons were made between ancient Rome and some of these nascent colonial polities. James Tuckey, a British naval commander who assisted in the expansion of New South Wales in the early 1800s, for example, perceived a new, antipodean Rome developing out of the British settlement of Australia:

> I beheld a second Rome rising from a coalition of banditti. I beheld it giving laws to the world, and superlative in arms and in arts, looking down with proud superiority upon the barbarous nations of the northern hemisphere. (Quoted in Brendon (2007: 60).)

[105] See Gough (2014).
[106] Brendon (2007: 29).

of such an extensive empire suggested that, having discovered real international political dominance, English culture might no longer need the pretence of political posturing that had largely defined its eighteenth-century use of Roman antiquity as a model. In short, it seemed as if Englishmen no longer needed to pose as Romans when they possessed all of the material advantages and attributes to match, or even exceed, the achievements of the Roman Empire.

So, within the context of the major challenges posed by the wider revolutionary age, the French Revolution and Napoleon cast long shadows because of their far-reaching political influence, which made the extensive Roman political vocabularies employed by each difficult to revive and rehabilitate in the aftermath of the defeat of their former French masters.[107] Yet, while the corrupting influence of these dangerous and destabilising forces in European affairs could not disestablish it entirely from English culture as a useful historical model, ancient Rome came to represent an awkward and problematised intellectual commodity that had begun to be eclipsed by other cultural developments in Britain.

2.3. 'No roads lead past Hellas': the rise and fall of English Hellenism, *c*.1750-1850

While the revolutionary interlude of 1789 to 1815 had diminished and distorted the profile of Roman antiquity, ancient Greece – the other pole of classical culture – continued to grow in importance to English society.[108] Although it had entered the country's cultural discourse as far back as the fifteenth century, the Hellenic historical inheritance did not possess any major popular cachet in England until the eighteenth. During the middle decades of this century, a number of key works ignited interest in the Hellenic past across the fields of literature, architecture and scholarship, giving birth to a formal revival of Greek culture by the century's close. Fortified by the

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[107] During the nineteenth century, the dramatic events of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era continued to loom large in the English psyche. Thomas Carlyle's three-volume *The French Revolution* (1837), for instance, represented a key text for the Victorians to negotiate the events of the revolutionary era, while the period also remained a touchstone in their popular culture, as evidenced by the popularity of Charles Dickens' *A tale of two cities* (1859), among other literary and theatrical works set during the period. In addition, the fact that France underwent a series of lesser political revolutions in 1830, 1848 and 1871 seemed to keep the revolutionary spirit alive throughout the nineteenth century, which meant that its historical terms remained relevant and, consequently, problematic. See Varouxakis (2002).

[108] On the means through which ancient Greece eclipsed Rome in this period, see Stray (1998a: 17-30) and Parchami (2009: 67-8).

purchase and display of the Elgin Marbles from 1816, as well as domestic support for the Greek War of Independence during the 1820s, English Hellenism grew to gain a superlative, though relatively short-lived, popular cultural prominence in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Yet, the immediate allure of Hellenism failed to replace entirely the more wide-ranging cultural claims of Rome, which, as has been shown, possessed a far longer and more influential heritage in English culture. Perhaps crucially, despite its eminence, actual travel to Greece remained rare, which removed a vital material link, and contrasted sharply with the increasing popularity of Italian tourism. Furthermore, in the context of contemporary culture, Hellenism was only ever equal to another popular vogue of the time, the Gothic Revival, which competed with it in similar terms during the same period. Although the proverb maintains that all roads lead to Rome, it has been suggested that, owing to Hellenism's more high-culture reputation, '[n]o roads lead past Hellas'.[109] In other words, while ancient Rome has often provided a practical cultural model within the broader classical tradition, ancient Greece has often proved more difficult to integrate fully within traditional culture – something apparently true in the case of England. Thus, this study argues that the Greek revival that overtook English society during the century between 1750 and 1850 represented a cultural movement that may have obscured the profile of Rome temporarily, but could only reduce – and not eliminate – its deeply ingrained influence.

While a Latinate tradition stretched back to the Roman conquest, common appreciation of ancient Greece in Europe, let alone England, was rare until the Renaissance.[110] Although the Council of Florence (1439) failed in its aim to reunite the Latin and Greek churches, it succeeded in drawing eastern and western scholars together, which encouraged the immigration of many Greek scholars to the West.[111] Fitting into contemporary humanism's admiration of antiquity, many of these scholars found employment at various European educational institutions where they taught Greek to individuals, who would themselves transmit the study of the language to

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[109] Stephens (1989: 238).
[110] See Sandys (1903: i, 448-51).
[111] See Reynolds and Wilson (2013: 120-2 and 147-60).

their own countries. In the case of England, the fifteenth-century cleric William of Selling was taught Greek by the Italian humanist Politian and by the Athenian immigrant-scholar Chalcondyles, which made him arguably the first Englishman to study Greek in any comprehensive manner.[112]

Selling, in turn, taught his nephew Thomas Linacre, who influenced his Oxford friend William Grocyn to take up the subject. As a result of Linacre's and Grocyn's residency at the University of Oxford from 1491, Greek began to be taught there, which led to the establishment of the first permanent teaching position in Greek with the foundation of Corpus Christi College in 1516.[113] Other early pioneers of the study of Greek in England included John Colet, William Lily and William Latimer[114]: in 1509, Colet founded St Paul's School, London, which was the first English school to include Greek in its curriculum; a friend of Colet, Lily, became the institution's first headmaster, while Latimer enjoyed a key influence on Greek studies not only in England, but throughout Europe.[115] From 1511 to 1514, the residency of the great humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam at the University of Cambridge also had an invigorating effect upon the study of Greek in England, leading to the foundation of the Regius chair of Greek at Cambridge in 1540.[116] The Flemish grammarian Clenardus produced the first major Greek grammar in 1530, though Lily and Colet produced their own in 1545, which was only replaced in 1597 by that of William Camden.[117] Together, this shows how the first English Hellenists were a select group of individuals who were influenced by Renaissance humanism to learn Greek from foreign scholars; leading to the establishment of the formal educational means for the study of Greek in England.[118]

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Greek grew to become a common feature of grammar-school education in Britain, though not so much university curricula; instead, it always remained a less popular subject than Latin, which retained

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[112] See Sandys (1908: ii, 223-5).
[113] See ibid., 225-8 and 230-1.
[114] See ibid., 228-9.
[115] See Charlton (1965: 159-60).
[116] See Sandys (1908: ii, 230-1).
[117] See Clarke (1959: 18-19).
[118] See Henderson (1970).

its position as the essential subject for a gentleman.[119] One can gain a measure of how the two were perceived in this period from the philosopher John Locke, who suggested in *Thoughts on education* (1693) that Latin was necessary for the gentleman, but Greek only for the scholar.[120] The profile of English Hellenism was also raised throughout this same period in literature by the rediscovery and popularisation of the Pindaric form of poetry by Abraham Cowley and Thomas Gray, alongside popular translations of Homer's *Iliad* (1715-20) and *Odyssey* (1726) by Alexander Pope.[121]

Arguably, the most crucial development in the rise of English Hellenism, however, was the foundation in 1732 of the Society of Dilettanti, an association of a diverse group of aristocrats and scholars whose activities incorporated the patronage of a number of key projects on Greek subjects.[122] Among these was the famous trip to Greece by James 'Athenian' Stuart and Nicholas Revett, which led to the publication of their *Antiquities of Athens measured and delineated* (1762/1787), as well as the Greek travels of Robert Wood, which informed his *Essay on the original genius and writings of Homer* (1769). One of the chief results of the support of the Society of Dilettanti for these enthusiasts was the Greek architectural revival that followed in the wake of Stuart's and Revett's researches into the physical remains of Hellenic civilisation.[123] As a result, over the subsequent hundred years the austere, dignified and serious Greek Revival style became especially favoured for English public architecture, particularly galleries and museums.[124]

Contemporaneously, Greek scholarship began to grow in stature in England through the work of a number of high-profile classicists, such as Richard Bentley and Richard Porson.[125] In particular, the study of Homeric literature emerged as one of the chief academic thrusts of English Hellenism, boasting groundbreaking works like *An*

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[119] See Clarke (1945: 10-39).
[120] Locke (1836: 248).
[121] See Clarke (1945: 146-7/162-3 and 124-8).
[122] See Kelly (2010).
[123] See Webb (1982: 89-92). Their *Antiquities* was followed by further major works that defined the terms of Greek Revival architecture in England, such as *Ionian antiquities* (1769/1798) by Richard Chandler, and *The antiquities of Magna Graecia* (1807) by William Pars, Nicholas Revett and William Watkins.
[124] See Crooke (1972).
[125] See Clarke (1945: 48-101).

enquiry into the life and writings of Homer (1735) by Thomas Blackwell.[126] During the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, a diverse group of scholars, such as Samuel Butler, brothers Charles James and Edward Valentine Blomfield, James Scholefield, and Thomas Williamson Peile, built upon these advances to make Britain a world leader in Greek scholarship – as enshrined in defining works, such as Liddell and Scott's *Greek lexicon* (first edition, 1843).[127] Moreover, the tradition of pioneering English scholarship on Greece that developed in the late eighteenth century continued deep into the nineteenth in epic histories, such as William Mitford's ten-volume *History of Greece* (1784-1810), Connop Thirlwall's eight-volume *History of Greece* (1835-45) and George Grote's dozen-volume *History of Greece* (1846-56), which also often underscored contemporary political arguments.[128] So, by the opening of the nineteenth century, English Hellenism had begun to flourish as a robust cultural discourse that had been activated across a range of literary, architectural and scholarly contexts.

Two subsequent episodes related to events in contemporary Greece served to reinforce this Hellenic vogue further, while also feeding into the interest in Greek culture within the Romantic Movement. Firstly, the 'Elgin Marbles', a series of frieze sculptures removed from the Parthenon between 1801 and 1812 by Thomas Bruce, the seventh Earl of Elgin, became one of the most potent touchstones of the Hellenic cultural spirit in Britain.[129] Upon arrival to British shores, the sculptures were shown privately, and immediately caused a sensation among artistic and intellectual circles; encouraging numerous aesthetic responses, of which the most famous became John Keats' poem 'On seeing the Elgin Marbles for the first time' (1817).[130] Following a public debate, they were purchased by the British government in 1816 for the sum of £35,000 and put on display in the British Museum – a crucial official authorisation and recognition of English Hellenism as a national cultural creed. As William Gaunt has said of their arrival, purchase and display, this was 'how the gods came to

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[126] See Clarke (1945: 123-43).
[127] For a useful survey of nineteenth-century Greek scholarship in England, see Sandys (1915: 394-408).
[128] See Turner (1981: ch. 5, 187-263) and Demetriou (1996).
[129] See Vrettos (1974).
[130] See Aske (1985: 15-16).

Britain'[131]; the country gaining a literal piece of ancient Greece at the heart of its capital.[132]

The second event that influenced the depth and direction of English Hellenism was the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence (1821-32), which witnessed an outpouring of public sympathy for the Greek patriots that was often bound to notions of freedom derived from ancient Greek history.[133] Expressed in poetic works, such as *Hellas* (1822) by Percy Bysshe Shelley, appreciation for the Greek cause encouraged a form of contemporary philhellenism that suggested that the struggle of the modern Greeks against the Ottomans was tantamount to that of the ancient Greeks against the Persian Empire.[134] Publicised extensively by Lord Byron, who travelled to Greece to become a freedom-fighter, the Greek War of Independence was supported and celebrated by Romantics like Shelley, which proved a potent stimulus to English Hellenism.[135]

Since the European Hellenic revival and Romanticism both derived effectively from a number of the same key works – especially Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *Thoughts on the imitation of Greek works in painting and sculpture* (1755), Friedrich Schiller's *The gods of Greece* (1788), and Friedrich Hölderlin's *Hyperion* (1797/1799) –, it was natural for one to reinforce the other.[136] Yet, while English Romantics seem to have believed that Hellenism underlay their art and literature – Shelley's claim that '[w]e are all Greeks' being one of their most well-known mottoes –, ancient Rome also played its part, albeit in a less high-profile manner.[137] Recently, Jonathan Sachs has challenged the apparent pre-eminence of Hellenism at this time by emphasising the continuities possessed by Roman antiquity, especially regarding the invocation of republican discourse in contemporary political debate.[138] Explaining that Rome remained 'important during the Romantic period, though its increasingly vexed role […] has been little noted', he has argued that 'the importance of Rome in the

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[131] Gaunt (1953: 9).
[132] See Challis (2006).
[133] See Brewer (2001), and, on the conflict's domestic influence, Rosen (1992).
[134] See St Clair (2008).
[135] See Beaton (2013).
[136] See Stern (1940), and, for examples portraying the variety of English Hellenism, Webb (1982).
[137] Shelley (2009: 549). On Rome's relationship to Romanticism, see Gaull (2005).
[138] See Sachs (2009).

Romantic period has been not merely ignored, but actively denied'.[139] Thus, the period of the 1810s and 1820s proved crucial to the development of English Hellenism through the arrival of the Elgin Marbles and the extensive public interest in the Greek independence movement, both of which were popularised by contemporary Romanticism.

Importantly, during the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century period, when Hellenism became celebrated so profusely in Britain in conceptual and intellectual terms, few actually travelled to Greece itself – a problem not experienced by Rome, which remained a regular destination on the traditional Grand Tour.[140] Throughout this era, Greece remained out of bounds to most tourists on account of the ongoing instability of its political situation, and of the brigands who victimised travellers on its roads. Compounding this issue, Greece also remained largely inaccessible except on horseback until railways penetrated the Peloponnese in the early twentieth century, while facilities for any visitors who did manage to reach the country remained poor.[141] Interestingly, one of the chief architects of the Hellenic revival itself, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, never got any further than Italy, while most of the famous literary figures who did so much to propagate Hellenism as a cultural creed, such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Percy Bysshe Shelley, never set foot on the Greek peninsula either.

Only a few English travellers to Greece bucked this general trend, such as Charles Robert Cockerell, who studied Greek architectural remains, and William Gell and William Martin Leake, who explored Greece's topography – all of whom travelled there during the Napoleonic era.[142] Undoubtedly more English authors, artists and architects ended up visiting, living and working in Italy than Greece, though many visited the ruins of Magna Graecia in Naples or Sicily in *lieu* of an actual voyage to Greece.[143] Among the Romantics, for instance, Percy and Mary Shelley lived in Rome in 1819, where he wrote *The cenci* (1819) and *Prometheus unbound* (1820); while, famously, John Keats died in the city and was buried in its Protestant

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[139] Sachs (2009: 3 and 4).
[140] See Osborn (1963).
[141] See Stray (2006a).
[142] See Angelomate-Tsounkarake (1990).
[143] See Cesarani (2012).

Cemetery.[144] Even Lord Byron, who famously sought literary and philosophical enlightenment in Greece, possessed a lifelong attachment to Italy and the city of Rome. Upon arriving to Rome for the first time in April 1817, for instance, Byron pronounced himself 'delighted with Rome as a whole, ancient and modern; it beats Greece, Constantinople, *everything*, at least, that I have ever seen'.[145] Although he is remembered chiefly as a freedom-fighter in the Greek War of Independence, during his time in Italy Byron also supported the nascent Italian independence movement, and may have been more involved in it than has been traditionally presumed.[146] So, although domestic English culture witnessed an aesthetic and literary vogue for Hellenism from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, it never extended to a touristic interaction with the actual sites of Greece.

In 1859, the historian John Dalberg-Acton, remarked on the opposing appeal of the classical and medieval ages to the Victorian mindset:

> Two great principles divide the world and contend for [its] mastery,
> antiquity and the Middle Ages. These are the two civilisations that have
> preceded us, the two elements of which ours is composed. All political
> as well as religious questions reduce themselves practically to this. This
> is the great dualism that runs through our society.[147]

In other words, these two cultural streams offered two rival historical visions, representing 'antiquity and the Middle Ages, Hellenism and Hebraism, Jerusalem and Athens, Socrates and Christ'.[148] Indeed, this was a theory seemingly confirmed by the architectural 'battle of the styles' that developed in the nineteenth century between neoclassicism and the Gothic Revival.[149] Since Dalberg-Acton equated the two, this

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[144] See Brand (1957).

[145] Byron (1837: 136, n. 1).

[146] See Origo (1949: 15) and Quennell (1955).

[147] Quoted in Butterfield (1955: 212).

[148] Turner (1981: xi).

[149] The winner in this contest was Gothic Revival architecture, which continued to flourish long after its counterpart had waned as a dominant style in England; arguably the last major Greek Revival building constructed in England being Charles Robert Cockerell's Ashmolean Museum and Taylorian Institute in Oxford (1841-5).

seems to suggest a dualism between them that places the Gothic revival on a par with the Hellenic revival, which occurred during much the same period.[150]

Yet, while English Hellenism possessed little culture-wide popularity until the later eighteenth century, the cultural vocabulary of Gothic – at least in architectural terms – remained a low-key, but continued, cultural presence from the close of the Middle Ages to its revival in the mid eighteenth century, owing to the numerous extant Gothic cathedrals and other buildings.[151] Originally an insult levelled by Renaissance critics, Gothic represented an alternative discourse from the allegedly more 'civilised' Greco-Roman culture of the classical world.[152] Broadly contemporary with the rise of the Hellenic spirit, notions associated with Gothic regained a particular impetus between 1790 and 1820 on account of the architectural and literary forms of Gothic that seemed to merge alongside the Romantic ideas gaining credence and popularity.[153]

Novels such as *The monk* (1796) by Matthew Lewis and *Northanger Abbey* (1818) by Jane Austen all drew inspiration from the contemporary Romantic taste for dark, ruined vistas and melodramatic plot-lines.[154] Receiving its fullest manifesto with Kenelm Digby's *The broad-stone of honour* (1822-7), a guide to the knightly medieval tradition, this revival gained a popular edge through the historical novels of Walter Scott that renewed the concept of chivalry for the nineteenth century.[155] A vogue for the legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood also developed, alongside those surrounding other national heroes, such as Saint George and King Alfred, which – following in the wake of the revolutionary and Napoleonic era – provided a rich seam of domestic pride independent of Continental trends.[156] Moreover, the fact that so many of England's elite establishments – such as its numerous public schools,

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[150] James Sambrook has suggested, however, that Hellenic and Gothic culture found common ground in their shared concept of political liberty. (See Sambrook (1993: 210).) On contemporary Gothic culture, see ibid., 209-15.

[151] See Woodworth (2012).

[152] During the nineteenth century, however, the influence of Roman antiquity on medievalism was also accorded attention. See Smith (1987: 158-63).

[153] See Duggett (2010), as well as the essays in Byron and Townshend (2014).

[154] On Gothic literature in this period, see Davison (2009).

[155] See Girouard (1981).

[156] On the reception of Arthur and Robin Hood in this period, see Barczewski (2000). On the myths that developed around St George and King Alfred respectively, see Riches (2000) and Keynes (1999).

Oxbridge colleges and parliament – were themselves originally medieval institutions reinforced this general interest in the concept of a Gothic Revival.[157]

Yet, arguably, it was the pioneering architectural and literary work of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin – particularly his works, *Contrasts* (1836) and *The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture* (1841) – that granted the Gothic Revival lasting legitimacy as a cultural movement.[158] Further assisted by the establishment of influential bodies, such as the Cambridge Camden Society (founded in 1839), and its organ *The ecclesiologist* (founded in 1841), the Gothic Revival architectural style had risen to prominence by the opening of the Victorian age.[159] While Pugin was a Roman Catholic, the majority of the style's practitioners sought to excise Catholicism from their buildings and *décor*, in order to present an authoritative architecture endowed with the principles and taste thought proper to a Protestant nation.[160] Providing a native fashion that offered a vernacular source of cultural authority and value, architectural Gothic Revival therefore represented a useful 'house style' for official buildings – as demonstrated by the new Houses of Parliament (1840-70) by Pugin and Charles Barry, and the Law Courts in London (1866-82) by George Edmund Street.

Thus, while the Hellenic and Gothic revivals stemmed from the same reaction against the cultural traditions that had defined the early-to-mid- eighteenth century – especially the 'Augustan' and neoclassical movements –, they also shared the common purpose of offering an authoritative alternative to ancient Rome during its period of unpopularity. In this light, the Hellenic revival resolves into its proper context as an important cultural movement, though one only roughly equal in influence to its contemporary Gothic counterpart.

So, from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, Hellenism gained an unprecedented dominance in English culture, boasting major influence upon the arts in particular. This ascendancy was all the more remarkable because the Greek

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[157] On the nineteenth-century invocation of Gothic, see Chandler (1971) and Smith (1987: chs 5 and 6, 132-200).
[158] See Wagner (2005).
[159] See White (1962) and Bright (1984).
[160] See Burstein (2005).

language and Hellenic culture had played only a minor role in English cultural affairs up to that point. Born out of a reaction against 'Augustanism', a Greek revival occurred in artistic, literary and scholarly terms across English culture during the mid-to-late eighteenth century. Buttressed by the arrival of the Parthenon friezes and the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence – both of which were celebrated by the contemporary Romantic Movement –, this Hellenic revival arguably reached its apex in the 1810s and 20s.

While English Hellenism represented a potent aesthetic model, however, it rarely extended to a material interaction with Greece's physical *loci* because of the difficulty of travelling there. In addition, this movement was only ever equal to another contemporary cultural trend, the Gothic Revival. Ancient Greece's reception was complicated further by the fact that Hellenism became both a traditional source of cultural value to the English Establishment and a source of bohemian inspiration to the Romantic Movement; being adopted, for instance, by officialdom through the Greek Revival houses and follies built by the aristocracy, along with the official purchase of the Elgin Marbles for the nation, yet remaining a key inspiration to numerous Romantic authors, such as Shelley and Byron.

In this light, many of these incongruities seem to have led to a gradual decline in the popularity of Hellenism – except as an elite discourse –, which allowed for the potential reclamation of cultural modelling associated with Roman antiquity. A number of other lesser factors may have also occasioned a pull towards Rome, such as the fact that Latin always remained more accessible and better-known than Greek. Although Greek literature may have possessed greater prestige than its Latin counterpart, traditionally more people have understood the literature of the Roman world.[161] Hence, while Latin remained the chief vehicle of almost all discourse related to ancient Rome during the nineteenth century, the perceived inaccessibility of Greek in some quarters, owing to its non-Roman alphabet and other factors, meant that popular Hellenism was mediated primarily through images, objects and translations, rather than original textual sources.[162]

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[161] See Waquet (2001: 179-85).
[162] See Stray (1998a: 12-14).

As other scholars have agreed, to propose that Hellenism became such an all-encompassing creed to English intellectual society during this period that it obscured entirely other cultural influences is to blind oneself to the complex, eclectic cultural environment of the era.[163] So, although the Hellenic revival that overtook English society in the late eighteenth century has been accorded a privileged position in cultural history, it was not the only active classical discourse of the time. Significantly, such a view obscures the continuance of a diminished, but extant, Roman cultural model throughout the same period. Thus, although, in Norman Vance's phrase, '[…] the grandeur that was Rome has often been overshadowed by the glory that was Greece'[164], a closer exploration of English cultural dynamics throughout the period of Rome's relative unpopularity reveals a far more contested ground.

2.4. No place like Rome? Ancient Rome in English culture, *c*.1815-60

While Hellenism proved to be a popular strand of early-to-mid-nineteenth century English culture, it could not remove and replace ancient Rome entirely. Instead, although it had been damaged by its association with the revolutionary and Napoleonic polities, Rome possessed a cultural heritage so deeply embedded in English culture that it could not be disestablished through their negative impact. Yet, while such foreign appropriations could not extinguish its influence entirely, Rome certainly seems to have been distorted and displaced by their combined impact, and receded to some degree in popular culture as a result. Thus, it is this study's contention that Rome experienced a definite reduction in its profile and influence in this period, though this never amounted to a complete removal.

By examining the reception of Latin literature and Roman history in early-to-mid-nineteenth century English culture, as well as Rome's profile across a range of artistic and literary productions, it is possible to evaluate the nature and extent of its apparent eclipse, however. Since the cultural *loci* of Roman history derived traditionally either from Rome's republican or imperial phases, alterations were necessary for it to remain relevant to domestic society. As a result, in this period cultural objects involving Rome often portray some modified version of its traditional image in order

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[163] See Edwards (1999a: 4-5).
[164] Vance (1997: vi).

to circumvent the sites of its contemporary unpopularity. Hence, through a series of subtle adaptations, additions and alterations to its conventional depiction, Rome remained present in English culture throughout the early-to-mid nineteenth century. In this light, it is Rome's continuities and survivals that are the most revelatory about its reception at this time because they demonstrate what was palatable to contemporary public tastes in regard to Roman antiquity. Thus, through a survey of Romano-British archaeology, Latin scholarship and Roman historiography in this period, as well as Roman-themed architecture, painting, sculpture, theatre and literature, it is possible to understand how ancient Rome remained a potential cultural model, despite some scholarly claims to the contrary.[165]

Significantly, one of the lynchpins of the reception of the Roman world throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries remained Romano-British archaeology, which grew from strength to strength despite the vagaries of Rome's contemporary profile. As Richard Hingley has related, Roman Britain was effectively rediscovered by English culture in the sixteenth century, but it took until the eighteenth for its extant remains to be charted, and until the nineteenth for comprehensive archaeological excavations to begin.[166] Inspired especially by the discovery of the lost Roman towns of Herculaneum in 1738 and Pompeii in 1748, some in Britain sought to explore the archaeological heritage of their own Roman past.[167] Initially, however, this interest was focussed primarily upon Roman Britain's military remains, which culminated in the Scottish military engineer William Roy's posthumous study *Military antiquities of the Romans in North Britain* (1793).[168] Yet, the fact that the Continent was isolated for much of the period from 1789 to 1815, owing to its constant warfare, meant that the traditional Grand Tour could not take place. As a substitute, many decided to investigate the remains of Britain's own classical heritage, which 'resulted in the worlds of classical Rome and Roman Britain being drawn closer together'.[169] Under the further impact of contemporary works on the value of archaeological remains, such as Constantin de Volney's *Les ruines* (1791; English trans. 1795), as well as of French excavations in the Roman Forum (1809-14), many Romano-British sites

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[165] For instance, see Turner (1989: 61-4).
[166] On the reception of ancient Britain up to this period, see Piggott (1989).
[167] See Sweet (2004: 182) and ibid., ch. 5, 155-88.
[168] See Hingley (2008: 139-7).
[169] Ibid., 249.

gained their first formal archaeological investigations in this period.[170] So, despite the Hellenic turn that the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras encouraged, their events also stimulated a contrary, if less immediately evident, growth of interest in Britain's own Roman past.

Among the key works on Roman Britain that emerged from this period were Samuel Prout's *Relics of antiquity…in Great Britain* (1811) and Samuel Lysons' *Reliquae Romano-Britannicae* (1813-1817). During the early-to-mid nineteenth century, the Roman remains of Bath, Colchester, Chester, and the area around Hadrian's Wall came in for major archaeological scrutiny, though any surveys or excavations that took place were performed entirely by interested amateurs, rather than official organisations.[171] Major architectural remains were uncovered at Bath in the late eighteenth century, including the famous Roman baths themselves in 1790-1, while a number of villa sites in the south of England also became the focus of archaeological interest during the early-to-mid nineteenth century.[172] Interest in the Antonine Wall and Hadrian's Wall had also been recently renewed, as well recognition of the importance of ancient Roman urban sites, such as Cirencester, Colchester and Chester.[173] Only in the 1830s and 40s were specific archaeological societies founded to excavate, interpret discoveries and publish findings, however; though the impetus was again local rather than national.[174] Importantly, the majority of the members of these societies were not members of the country's social elite – who might have had a national influence –, but usually clergymen or professionals drawn from the middle classes.[175] For instance, one of the central figures in this movement was Charles Roach-Smith, a London chemist whose *Collectanea antiqua* (1848-80) represents arguably the most important work to emerge from these amateur activities, and whose

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[170] See Ginsberg (2004: 490-1) and Vandiver Nicassio (2009: 183-5).

[171] On the Victorian archaeology of Roman Britain, see Zimmerman (2007).

[172] See ibid., 177-9 and Hingley (2008: 247-54).

[173] See Hingley (2008: ch. 2, 85-156) and Zimmerman (2007: chs 5, 6 and 7, 95-141).

[174] For a list of these organisations, see Levine (1986: Appendix 4).

[175] In comparison to the Hellenic spirit that seemed to possess officialdom – as demonstrated by the purchase of the Elgin Marbles for the nation –, Britain's governing elite appear to have had little regard for Britain's Roman heritage in this period. Indeed, the British government might be said to have expressed a wilful disregard for the nation's Roman past; being responsible, for instance, for the destruction of almost twenty miles of Hadrian's Wall during the construction of a road between Carlisle and Newcastle. Significantly, only in 1850 did the British Museum create a room devoted exclusively to British, let alone Romano-British, artefacts. In the meanwhile, its trustees invested their attentions and budget in more exotic acquisitions, such as Charles Newton's Halicarnassian and Cnidian marbles. See Hoselitz (2007: 19 n. 52 and 24-5), as well as Beard and Henderson (1999).

Illustrations of Roman London (1859) was the first major archaeological survey of Roman London.[176]

Importantly, many of the archaeological excavations that took place during this period occurred as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution and the developments that followed it. Often, in the course of road or railway construction, or other civil engineering projects, relics and remains of Roman Britain were exposed, which led to important discoveries of ancient structural remains and mosaics, as well as countless smaller finds.[177] In August 1848, for example, in the course of works by the Health of Towns Commission on improving sewers in Cirencester, a Roman mosaic portraying the seasons was discovered at Dyer Street in the town.[178] So, ironically, in the course of embracing its status as the most advanced and forward-looking nation in the world, Britain, largely absent-mindedly, revealed and rediscovered its ancient Roman past. In addition, the involvement of civil and military engineers in these projects meant that many came face to face with the engineering skills of their Roman forebears through the discovery and excavation of their roads, military camps, civil dwellings and other assorted structures. Since many of these same individuals went on to design and construct the British Empire's railways, canals and bridges, it is difficult to believe that they remained uninfluenced at least on some level by their interaction with Britain's buried Roman past.[179] Thus, the rediscovery of Roman Britain during this period was driven by a large group of amateur individuals drawn from the middle classes, working on a regional level, and often prompted by the construction projects necessary to an industrial nation. Taken together, these mostly low-profile, local developments led to Roman Britain becoming gradually 'acknowledged as a significant influence on national development'.[180]

Yet, Romano-British archaeology represented merely a peripheral adjunct to traditional Roman history and Latin literature, which remained the primary repository

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[176] See Sheppard (1991: 9-21).
[177] Numerous discoveries of the city's Roman past were made in London, for instance, during a series of projects to improve and update the city's infrastructure, such as the redevelopment of London Bridge and its environs. See Rhodes (1991).
[178] See Johnson (2002: 23-4).
[179] On the intersection between domestic Roman archaeology and British imperialism, see Hingley (2000).
[180] Hoselitz (2007: 1).

of cultural value concerning the Roman world. In this regard, their reception represents arguably the most significant index of ancient Rome's reception in both popular and scholarly terms. By surveying the character and frequency of these works, it is possible to determine some of the wider trends regarding the reception of Rome in English culture. Moreover, interest in one author or period above another represents a useful means of discovering what aspects of the Roman experience were most popular.

Although it has been claimed to have been 'on the whole little regarded in nineteenth-century England [during] the first half of the century'[181], Latin literature remained a keystone of English education, and a subject whose knowledge was widespread. While English classicists dominated Greek scholarship throughout the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, however, their contribution to the study of Latin literature largely fell behind that of their Continental counterparts.[182] Indeed, even the forays of popular contemporary authors into Latin translation, such as the renderings of Catullus composed by Wordsworth, Shelley and Byron, failed to meet with much critical acclaim.[183] Consequently, the demonstrably few major new translations or critical works published on Latin literature from the turn of the century to the 1850s is symptomatic of the general stagnation of English Latin scholarship for most of this period.

In an author-by-author survey of the Latin literature published in this period, from 1800 to 1850, it is clear that there was a definite dearth of new editions generally.[184] To take two of the most popular Latin authors of the Victorian era, Virgil and Horace, it is indicative of the prevailing trend to discover that there were no new translations of the *Aeneid* published between 1820 and 1847, nor any new edition of Horace's

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[181] Clarke (1959: 76).
[182] See Habinek (1992).
[183] See Vance (1997: 115-17).
[184] In examining these works, this thesis has employed the University of Oxford's S.O.L.O. catalogue in order to gain as full a perspective as possible: http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ [accessed 25 August 2014]. Since it has functioned for most of its existence as a copyright library that receives a copy of every book published in the British Isles, the Bodleian Library represents one of the most complete resources available. Searching only for book-length works in their original Latin or in English translation, this study has ignored foreign works, reprints of previous editions, and versions or studies regarding certain parts of full-length works.

works from the turn of the century until 1853.[185] Certainly, many eighteenth-century translations of Latin literature continued to be reprinted – such as John Dryden's *Aeneid* (1697) and Philip Francis' four-volume translation of the works of Horace. (1742/1746) –, but there were few new editions until the middle of the nineteenth century. Consequently, these statistics indicate that even the most important Latin authors suffered a decline in their reputation during this wider period of eclipse for Roman antiquity.

While a major Latin author such as Cicero remained relatively well served throughout this period by a number of new editions, and even an 1847 verse drama by Henry Bliss, the first major piece of nineteenth-century scholarship devoted to his works was George Long's four-volume edition of his orations, published from 1851 to 1858.[186] Similarly, while Juvenal's *Satires* received new translations in 1801, 1803, 1807 and 1818, its first Latin editions were published only in 1835 and 1853.[187] More typically, there were no new editions or translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* from 1807 to 1851, nor of Lucretius' *De rerum natura* from 1813 to 1864; likewise, the first nineteenth-century edition of Plautus was published in 1852, and of Julius Caesar in 1853.[188] While there were new editions of Sallust, Livy and Tacitus published during this period, some Latin authors, such as Seneca and Suetonius, received no scholarly attention at all.[189] As a result, this evidence all seems to suggest an interruption of interest in traditional Latin literature that lasted from the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars until around 1850.

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[185] The *Aeneid* enjoyed no new translations between that of Charles Symmons in 1820 and that of John Meyers King in 1847. The first nineteenth-century edition of Horace was that of Arthur John MacLeane in 1853.

[186] Richard Garde produced a translation of Cicero's select orations in 1826, for instance, which was followed by an anonymous, two-volume edition of Cicero's *Epistles to Atticus* in 1840, *Cicero, a drama* by Henry Bliss in 1847, and Cyrus Edmond's translation, *Cicero's four books of offices* in 1850. George Long's four-volume edition of Cicero's orations represented the first significant piece of nineteenth-century British scholarship on Cicero.

[187] These translations having been made respectively by William Rhodes, William Gifford, Francis Hodgson and Charles Badham. Charles William Stocker produced an edition of Juvenal's *Satires* alongside those of Persius in 1835, while J.E.B. Mayor published an edition of thirteen of his satires in 1853.

[188] In other words, from John Jarrard Howard's blank-verse translation in 1807 to George Bomford Wheeler's Latin edition in 1851. The first nineteenth-century translation of Plautus was Henry Thomas Riley's two-volume 1852 edition for Bohn's Library, while George Long's 1853 Latin edition of *The Gallic Wars* represented the first edition of Caesar to be published since the turn of the century.

[189] In 1836 Charles Anthon produced an edition of the works of Sallust, in 1838 and 1846 Charles William Stocker published a two-volume edition of Livy's *History of Rome*, and an anonymous translation of Tacitus' *Annals* and *History* was published in 1839. On the first nineteenth-century editions of Seneca and Suetonius, see 209, n. 71.

Although Frank M. Turner has claimed that Charles Merivale's eight-volume *History of the Romans under the empire* (1850-64) represents the only major Roman history to have been published in Britain in the nineteenth century, a survey of other contemporary works reveals a more subtle state of affairs.[190] Certainly, Merivale's work represented one of the most lengthy and sophisticated studies undertaken during the century, but it was only one of a number of scholarly volumes on Roman history that were published, along with a host of numerous popular works.[191] For, while Turner elsewhere excepts Thomas Arnold's unfinished *History of Rome* (1838) and posthumous *History of the later Roman commonwealth* (1845) from his claims regarding the dearth of quality, nineteenth-century British historiography on Rome, he ignores the many other good, if unexceptional, works also available throughout this period.[192]

Firstly, many late-eighteenth century works on Rome continued to be both revised and reprinted during the early nineteenth century, such as Oliver Goldsmith's *Roman history* (1769) and Richard Johnson's *New Roman history* (1770), which were often employed in educational contexts. Secondly, while there may not have been many new works published on Roman history, there were some, such as William Godwin's *History of Rome* (1809) and Henry Bankes' *The civil and constitutional history of Rome* (1818). Thirdly, such works were reinforced by foreign works of pioneering contemporary Roman scholarship available in English translation, such as Barthold Georg Niebuhr's *Römische Geschichte* (1811-12/1832; English trans. 1827-32) and Jules Michelet's *Histoire romaine* (1831; English trans. 1847). Finally, Edward Gibbon's *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) remained crucial to nineteenth-century conceptualisations of Roman antiquity; fresh editions of the work being produced by Thomas Bowdler (1826), Henry Hart Milman (1838-9) and Henry

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[190] Turner (1989: 62).

[191] For example, the many largely anonymously-authored works, such as *An outline of ancient and modern Rome* (1839), *The new aid to memory: containing the most remarkable events in the history of Rome, illustrated by eighty symbolic engravings* (1840), *Rome, as it was under paganism and as it became under the popes* (1843), *The history of Rome from the earliest times to the fall of the empire. For schools and families.* (1848), *Regal Rome: an introduction to Roman history* (1852) and *Two hundred questions on the history of Rome* (1859). Even histories by known authors could be similarly mediocre, such as Henry Fynes Clinton's *An epitome of the civil and literary chronology of Rome and Constantinople from the death of Augustus to the death of Heraclius* (1853), which has been alleged to possess 'an unselective inclusiveness and disregard of causality, narrative, and human action'. (Dowling (1985: 589).)

[192] Turner (1986: 588).

George Bohn (1853-5), while its influence was aided by secondary editions, such as William Smith's *Student's Gibbon* (1856).

Selling more copies in Britain than it did in Germany, Georg Niebuhr's *History of Rome* was arguably as influential on the direction of Roman historiography in England during the first part of the century as Theodor Mommsen's proved in the second. Significantly, however, he devoted particular attention to the early history of Rome, which represented an alternative historical perspective to the problematic nature of republican and imperial history at the time.[193] While it is clear from reading influential commentators on Rome from this period, such as Thomas Arnold, that traditional historical figures like Julius Caesar and Augustus were out of fashion, exceptions to this trend existed.[194] 'The Caesars' (1832-4), Thomas de Quincey's series of articles for *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, for instance, celebrated the Roman Empire over its Republican forebear, while, in a break with the prevailing attitudes of the period, reserving particular praise for Julius Caesar.[195] Thus, despite suggestions to the contrary, the continuing presence of various works on Roman history throughout the early-to-mid nineteenth century suggests that Rome continued to play a didactic role during this period of unpopularity for its traditional incarnations.

Yet, while Latin scholarship and Roman historiography maintained an inconspicuous, but enduring presence for Roman antiquity within English society, the period's cultural productions reveal how Rome interacted with contemporary trends. Whether in the fields of architecture, painting, sculpture, theatre or literature, Rome's portrayal exposes the problematised nature of its reception in this period. Moreover, the often alternative or unorthodox interpretations of the Roman world that dominated in these years illustrates how ancient Rome remained a valid, though latent, component of contemporary cultural discourse despite the disputed character of its terms at the time.

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[193] See Murray (2004: ii, 807-8) and Vance (2000b).
[194] Arnold condemned the 'tyranny' of Julius Caesar and censured Augustus for his alleged bureaucratic failings – each of which contrasted with the morally driven, reformist political agenda of contemporary Britain. (Arnold (1853: 422).) Elsewhere, Arnold even questioned the Roman influence on his own country; remarking that 'the history of Caesar's invasion has no more to do with us, than the natural history of the animals which then inhabited our forests'. (Arnold (1843: 30).)
[195] Later collected in De Quincey (1851).

In 1830, the architect James Elmes commented favourably on the architectural legacy of the Regency by proclaiming that '[London is] the ROME of Modern History'.[196] Although Elmes was referring to the Roman architectural forms inherited from the eighteenth century that continued to be employed as a guiding style for certain buildings, the Greek Revival continued to hold court. In 1835, for instance, a contributor to the *Quarterly Review* remarked that '[i]n proportion as pseudo-Greek is in the ascendant, so is Roman art slighted, and falling into disrepute'.[197] Yet, with Greek Revivalists, such as Robert Smirke and William Wilkins, dominating contemporary architecture during this period, as well as neoclassical architects, such as John Soane, also submitting to the charms of the Hellenic revival, it is useful to investigate the state of Roman-inspired architecture in this period in the light of Elmes' claim.

As Frank Salmon has argued, the fifteen years that followed Waterloo represented a crucial period for young British architects to visit Rome and interact with the archaeological discoveries made while the Continent was off-limits during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras.[198] This interest can be seen evidenced by the many artistic restorations of Roman buildings and monuments made by architects, such as Charles Robert Cockerell, who recreated the entire Roman Forum in an 1817-19 depiction.[199] Having gained unprecedented access to the archaeological remains of Rome, many of these individuals were sufficiently advanced in their careers by the 1830s and 40s to submit and construct designs for public buildings inspired by the Roman remains that they had explored during the 1810s and 20s. In addition, even if Victorians often decried it as dull and monotonous, they were still surrounded by the Roman-inspired styles of neoclassical architecture created by their eighteenth-century predecessors, which continued to dominate British towns and cities.[200]

Significantly, ancient Rome inspired the construction of a variety of public monuments and buildings in England during the 1820s, 30s and 40s. Many of these derived their terms from a number of influential contemporary works on Roman

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[196] Elmes (1827: 2).
[197] Anon. (1835: 370).
[198] Salmon (2000: 19 and 64-72).
[199] See Spiers (1911).
[200] See Briggs (1968: 44).

architecture. Among the most important of these were *The architectural antiquities of Rome* (1821-2) by Edward Cresy and George Ledwell Taylor, and *The topography and antiquities of Rome* (1831) by Richard Burgess, though other related studies also possessed an influence, such as William Gell's *Pompeiana* (1817-32). For example, a few major revivals of the Roman triumphal arch and commemorative column were constructed in London, for example. Among the most high profile of these were Decimus Burton's Wellington Arch (1826-30), John Nash's Marble Arch (1827-33), Benjamin Dean Wyatt's Duke of York Column (1831-4), and William Railton's Nelson's Column (1843-7), which all commemorated some aspect of Britain's participation in the Napoleonic Wars.[201] While both columns compare favourably in dimensions with the Roman forebears upon which they were modelled, Wellington Arch and Marble Arch were much reduced in scale and decoration from both their inspirations and their original intended forms.[202] Intrinsic to Burton's original design, for instance, were a series of sculptures above the structure's central frieze and an impressive *quadriga*, or sculptural equestrian scene, to crown it, but these were ultimately excluded owing to the project's limited budget. Similarly, while Nash modelled Marble Arch directly upon Rome's Arch of Constantine, he was forced to reduce the intended attic storey of the structure, and omit both its decorative frieze and the statue of George IV that was supposed to top the edifice.[203] So, while Rome clearly remained invoked at least in spirit in these works, the contemporary vagaries of cost and taste prevented any grandiose reincarnations of the triumphal Roman past.

By far the most extended and sophisticated examples of this trend were the neoclassical *fora* designed for Birmingham and Liverpool; centred respectively around Joseph Hansom's and Edward Welch's Birmingham Town Hall (1832-50), and Harvey Lonsdale Elmes' St George's Hall (1841-56).[204] These structures were designed not only to resemble Roman civic buildings, but also decorated to match − as in the Roman coffering of the former and the 'S.P.Q.L.' (*Senatus populusque*

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[201] See Matthews (2013: 127-9, 101-3, 112-13 and 9-11).
[202] See Brindle and Robinson (2001).
[203] See Hoock (2010: 367-8).
[204] Birmingham's civic centre consisted of its Town Hall, Midland Institute and Public Library (1855-63), Council House (1874-9), City Museum and Art Gallery (1881-5), and Post Office (1890-1); while Liverpool's was made up of St George's Hall, William Brown Library and Museum (1857-60), Picton Reading Room (1875-9), and Walker Art Gallery (1875-7). See Salmon (2000: 153-68 and 210-26), as well as Little (1971) and Hughes (1964).

Liverpudliensis) motto embossed throughout the latter. Nor was it only in these provincial cities of Britain's industrial heartland that one finds this trend exhibited, as evidenced by the Roman design of George Basevi's Fitzwilliam Museum (1837-48) in Cambridge.[205] Yet, its only major metropolitan manifestation was William Tite's Royal Exchange (1842-4), which was built as a centre-piece for the commercial heart of the City of London. Boasting an external *façade* based upon that of the Pantheon in Rome, the building was imbued inside and out with Roman architectural allusions, and was even constructed on a site containing Romano-British remains.[206]

In this light, although there was a definite architectural trend in this period for the design and construction of Roman-inspired buildings, it was limited primarily to England's industrial cities and provinces. Moreover, for every such building constructed in this period, there were just as many unbuilt Roman visions, such as John Goldicutt's 1832 concept for a 'London Amphitheatre' in Trafalgar Square, modelled on the Roman Colosseum.[207] Thus, from James Elmes' notion that Regency London represented a modern Rome to the early-Victorian St George's Hall designed by his son Harvey, a brief 'Roman moment' in English neoclassical architecture can be identified as having occurred during the early-to-mid nineteenth century. Importantly, however, this trend appears to have been one qualified by circumspect use, and possessed no long-term influence on the styles of Victorian buildings.[208]

Across English visual arts over the same era, it is clear that, while Rome remained relevant as a subject matter, it was interpreted in a subtly different form to that which had dominated during the eighteenth century. In addition, while architectural designs usually represent the product of collective decision making, painting and sculpture present a set of far more individual responses to cultural trends. Consequently, when one examines the artistic works on Roman themes that emerged in this era, one discovers artists seeking, on the one hand, to forge continuity with Rome's traditional depiction, yet, on the other, responding to its contemporary unpopularity through the production of alternative portrayals.

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[205] See Salmon (2000: 169-88).
[206] See ibid., 189-209 and Society of Antiquaries (1841: 266-71).
[207] See Salmon (2000: 151).
[208] Ibid., 24. See Broughall (2014).

In general, Roman themes in English painting were out of favour throughout the early-to-mid-nineteenth century owing to their association with the politicised French classicism that had been defined by Jacques-Louis David and his successor Jean-Dominique-Auguste Ingres.[209] Known for their large-scale historical scenes, such as David's *The oath of the Horatii* (1784), these artists had focussed on presenting illustrations of an *exemplum virtutis* in their works, or a heroic spectacle of duty and self-sacrifice that accorded with the nature of contemporary French patriotism.[210] So, as a consequence of their paintings having been central to the visual myth making of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic polities, traditional neoclassicism's dominant styles and themes were effectively tarnished for use by English artists.

Take an English work on a similar Roman theme from the late eighteenth century, such as Benjamin West's *The departure of Regulus from Rome* (1769), and compare it with one from the early-nineteenth, such as J.M.W. Turner's *Regulus* (1828).[211] While both works portray episodes from the life of the early-Roman general, West's painting depicts him as a central figure in a heroic pose, about to sacrifice himself for the Roman state; yet, contrastingly, in Turner's work, Regulus is hardly visible among the throng of figures, while it is the startling sunrise or sunset that dominates the picture. Similarly, while the legendary early-Roman figure of Marcus Curtius had represented another model of patriotic self-sacrifice during the previous century, efforts to portray his myth had to fit new trends in art, or else meet with limited popularity. In John Martin's *Marcus Curtius* (1827), for instance, he depicts the mythological hero in the pose of a traditional *exemplum virtutis*, but, like Turner's works, the hero is hardly visible among the multitude of figures that crowd the painting, which were a hallmark of Martin's *oeuvre*.[212] Later, when Benjamin Haydon portrayed the same scene in *Curtius leaping into the gulf* (1843), he was criticised, not only for the alleged imperfect perspective of the work, but also for the outmoded classical heroics on display.[213] So, it is clear that these particular works evoke a sense of the broader transition taking place in artistic depictions of the Roman world during this period.

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[209] See Porterfield and Siegfried (2007).
[210] See Rosenblum (1967: ch. 2, 50-106).
[211] See Caffey (2008: 165-76) and Crary (2009: 67-70).
[212] See Morden (2010: 49).
[213] See Pidgley (1986).

Yet, as has been seen to have occurred with architects, the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 induced an influx of English painters and sculptors to Italy, who enjoyed a major influence on British art for the rest of the century. Charles Lock Eastlake, for instance, lived in Rome from 1816 to 1830, and largely built his career upon painting panoramic views of the city's ancient ruins[214] According with the Romantic attraction to ruined vistas, and the preceding century's interest in Roman architectural antiquities, Rome presented an inspiring site of extraordinary visual experiences in a location saturated with historical resonances.[215] In addition, the showcase of artwork inspired by these artists' sojourns in Italy and Rome back in Britain maintained visions of Rome on the walls of the country's mansions and galleries, while also feeding into the explosion in tourism that defined the first decades of Victoria's reign.[216]

Arguably, the most important British artist of the early-to-mid nineteenth century was Joseph Mallord William Turner, so it is useful to explore his interactions with the Roman past. For a start, Turner visited Rome twice in this period, in 1819 and 1828, which resulted in a series of works on Roman themes.[217] After producing over 1,500 sketches during his time there, one of the major works to emerge from his first trip to the city was *Rome, from the Vatican* (1820), which portrayed a threefold vision of Rome that captured a panoramic view of its historical cityscape, including its Roman ruins, Church architecture and Renaissance culture.[218] Subsequent works also owed much to his Roman sojourns, including *Ancient Italy – Ovid banished from Rome* (1838), *Modern Italy – the Pifferari* (1838), *Ancient Rome; Agrippina landing with the ashes of Germanicus* (1839), *Modern Rome; Campo Vaccino* (1839) and *Cicero at his villa* (1839). Yet, Turner's ancient Rome diverges from traditional depictions in being merely the subject of his virtuoso portrayals of light on landscapes, rather than an object of realistic historical recreation.[219] So, while evidencing a continued interest in portraying Roman antiquity, Turner's *oeuvre* demonstrates that early-to-mid-nineteenth-century British painting sought to interact with Rome differently; perhaps as a result of its downgraded contemporary profile.

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[214] See Robertson (1978).
[215] See Thomas (2008: ch. 4, 68-94) and Pinto (2012).
[216] See Faunce (1996) and Liversidge (1996).
[217] See Hamilton (1997: 241-3 and 288-96).
[218] See Finlay (1986).
[219] See Halloran (1970).

Indeed, the incongruous position of Roman antiquity in English painting as a popular, yet problematised, model appears to have persisted into the 1840s – even if Victoria and Albert still indulged it: making William Dyce's *Neptune resigning to Britannia the empire of the seas* (1847) the centrepiece of the main stairwell of Osborne House.[220] In 1843, for instance, two of the three works that received the highest prize in the competition for the murals in the central corridor of the new Houses of Parliament were on Romano-British themes: Edward Armitage's *Caesar's first invasion of Britain* and George Frederic Watts' *Caractacus led in triumph through the streets of Rome*.[221] Despite their prevalence, however, Roman subjects hardly featured at all in the works finally commissioned for the complex – something, perhaps, suggestive of a continued difficulty in depicting Rome in English painting, as well in portraying the classical past within a Gothic Revival building.[222] Moreover, from 1848, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood took the Victorian art scene by storm, but, in spite of their intense interest in historical portrayals, its members hardly employed the Roman world at all as a setting.[223] Thus, for the most part, ancient Rome remained a part of English painting throughout this period, though in a manner seemingly forced to circumvent its recent popular depiction in French neoclassicism.

Representing an amalgam of individual and corporate artistic choices, English sculpture expresses many of the same attitudes to the Roman past during the early-to-mid nineteenth century as one finds in the other visual arts. Although part of the broader classicism that continued to represent the chief model for sculpture, Rome continued to influence the forms employed by English sculptors, but enjoyed no special position as an aesthetic inspiration.[224] As in architecture and painting, though, the city of Rome proved a major draw for British sculptors in the immediate post-war period. Take, for example, the neoclassicist John Gibson, who travelled to Rome in 1817 to study under one of Napoleon's favourite sculptors, Antonio Canova, before

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[220] See Herrmann (2000: 224).
[221] See Knight Hunt (1846) and Willsdon (2000: ch. 2, 27-61).
[222] Out of the 140 entries to the competition, seventeen were on Roman themes – with five on the figure of Caractacus alone –, which clearly evidences an aesthetic interest in Britain's Roman past. See Boase (1954).
[223] Only a few rare works emerged in the movement's classic period, such as William Bell Scott's *The Romans cause a wall to be built* (1857), though some later Pre-Raphaelites experimented with the theme, such as John William Waterhouse in *After the dance* (1876), *St Eulalia* (1885) and *Marianne leaving the judgement seat of Herod* (1887).
[224] For context, see Read (1982) and Drott *et al.* (2014).

spending a successful career in Italy producing works for the domestic market, such as the toga-ed statue of William Huskisson in Pimlico Gardens (1836).[225]

Yet, while the contemporary popularity of Hellenism was embodied in works such as Richard Westmacott's statue of Achilles in Hyde Park (1822), many examples of Roman-themed public sculpture continued to be created.[226] Westmacott was also responsible, for instance, for a number of statues that presented Britain's great and good in Roman senatorial guise, including Charles James Fox in Bloomsbury Square (1816), William Pitt the Younger at Pembroke College, Cambridge (1819), and George Canning in Parliament Square (1832).[227] Other contemporary sculptors also produced Roman-inspired works, though these were primarily public pieces, such as Francis Leggatt Chantrey's Roman-style bust of George Canning (1821), rather than privately-created works, such as John Stevens' large bust *The last of the Romans* (1845).[228] In addition, such sculpture also interacted frequently with public architecture, which is demonstrated by the fact that Westmacott and Chantrey were both employed to design sculptural elements of John Nash's Marble Arch.[229] Thus, while Roman antiquity continued to furnish inspiration to British sculptors, it was primarily deployed for public commissions, which underscores the sustained value of Rome in official aesthetic contexts, outside of painting.

Like the rush of artistic visitors to the city of Rome, English theatre witnessed a short-lived revival of Roman-themed plays immediately following the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars. This vogue lasted for much of the decade following Waterloo, though – excepting regular performances of Shakespeare's Roman plays, such as *Julius Caesar* in particular – a general paucity occurred thereafter.[230] Importantly, this trend arose in the context of the widespread instability and calls for political reform

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[225] See Hussey (2012) and Matthews (2012: 146-7).
[226] See Busco (1994: 51-5).
[227] See ibid., 70-3, 74-5 and 79-80.
[228] Chantrey's Canning bust can be viewed on the National Portrait Gallery's website: http://www.npg.org.uk/search/portrait/mw01044/George-Canning [accessed 1 September 2014]. A photograph of the latter sculptor and his work can be viewed on the National Gallery of Canada's website: http://national.gallery.ca/en/see/collections/artwork.php?mkey=23889 [accessed 1 September 2014].
[229] See Hoock (2010: 368).
[230] See Ripley (1980: ch. 4, 74-99) and Vance (1997: 41-9).

that defined the immediate post-war period in Britain.[231] Among the most popular and frequently-staged of these plays were John Howard Payne's *Brutus* (1818), as well as James Sheridan Knowles' *Virginius: a tragedy* (1820) and *Caius Gracchus* (1823), which were reinforced by the frequent restaging of the similarly-themed *Cato* (1712) by Joseph Addison. Crucially, all of these works possessed some context, plot or theme relevant to the recent or contemporary political scene – drawing especially upon the pertinent themes of revolution, reaction and reform.

Brutus, for instance, offered a clear parallel to the French Revolution and Napoleonic Empire in its plot, which concerns a regicide, and the development of a state from a kingdom to a republic, to an empire. Similarly, *Caius Gracchus* provided a controversial parallel for contemporary civil dissent and unrest in Britain through a retelling of the story of the Gracchi, who had challenged the political *status quo* in the name of the Roman people.[232] Even as maligned a historical figure as the conspirator Catiline found his reputation transformed in this period into a symbol of righteous sedition against an unjust regime, which mirrored contemporary attempts to extend the franchise within the corrupt and inefficient British political system.[233] Interestingly, a number of other works were written in the 1820s, but went unstaged, such as George Croly's *Catiline* (1822) and Joseph Lunn's *Amor patriae* (1823) and *Camillus* (1827), which may suggest a gradual decline in the popularity of these Roman-themed plays.[234] Still, with most of the works that were produced employing stage-sets inspired by the recent archaeological and topographical discoveries in Pompeii, Herculaneum and Rome itself, the Roman world on display was one predicated on spectacular visual *tableaux* that prefigured the late-Victorian 'toga-play'.[235]

As far as productions of original Roman plays were concerned, however, relatively few appear to have been performed in England during the period from 1800 to 1860.

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[231] See Sachs (2010: 224-5).
[232] See ibid. 231-47 and 247-61.
[233] See ibid., 262-7.
[234] In the 1830s, one finds a few works related to the Spartacan Revolt of 73-71 B.C., however, such as Robert Montgomery Bird's *The gladiator* (1831) and Jacob Jones's *Spartacus; or, the Roman gladiator* (1835). Again, this theme seems to relate to the spirit of rebellion against the *status quo* that accords with the contemporary Chartist movement and other reform-based associations. See Vance (1997: 46).
[235] See Vance (1997: 46-7).

A search of the University of Oxford's *Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama*, for instance, reveals that Terence was the most frequently-staged Latin playwright during this period, with fifty-one performances recorded, which is in contrast to only three for Plautus and two for Seneca. Since almost all of these were performed at Westminster School – which presented an annual Terence play –, this suggests that Roman drama possessed little or no popular appeal throughout this period and, indeed, for much of the Victorian era.[236] Thus, while there was a brief vogue for portrayals of Roman subjects in Regency theatre, the indifference to Latin drama evidenced in the first half of the nineteenth century underlines elements of the broader unpopularity of Roman antiquity during its period of eclipse.

Instead, arguably, the two most influential cultural productions from this period to engage with ancient Rome came from literature, in the form of Edward Bulwer-Lytton's novel *The last days of Pompeii* (1834) and Thomas Babington Macaulay's poetry cycle *The lays of ancient Rome* (1842). In their separate ways, each work engaged Rome as a significant context and subject, though their depictions of the Roman world present it in a subtly alternative manner to its traditional portrayal, in order to circumvent its problematic contemporary profile.[237] Since the authors of both works were also high-ranking members of British officialdom, this suggests that they may also have been influenced to choose Rome as a context because of the increasing impression that British society and empire were superseding their Roman forebears.

In 1834, Edward Bulwer-Lytton published *The last days of Pompeii*, a melodramatic novel that follows a number of diverse plots within a context of the famous volcanic destruction of the Roman town.[238] While visiting Milan, he had gained the immediate stimulus for his work from Karl Pavlovich Bryullov's painting *The last day of Pompeii* (1830-3).[239] Yet, Bulwer-Lytton also derived inspiration from a variety of other sources, too, including John Gibson Lockhart's novel *Valerius: a Roman story*

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[236] http://www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk/research-collections/performance-database [accessed 25 August 2014]. During the period 1860 to 1910, this increases to figures of 31 for Plautus and 60 for Terence, though none at all are recorded for Seneca. Again, most of these relate to productions performed at public schools, such as Dulwich College and Radley College.

[237] Other fiction set in a Roman context from this period were Henry Godwin's anonymously-published *Stonehenge; or, the Romans in Britain* (1842) and Wilkie Collins' debut novel, *Antonina; or, the fall of Rome* (1850).

[238] See Harrison (2011).

[239] See Easson (2004: 101).

(1821), John Martin's painting *The destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum* (1822), Giovanni Pacini's opera *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* (1825), and, perhaps, most importantly, William Gell's archaeological study *Pompeiana* (1817-32). An overnight bestseller, *The last days of Pompeii* was republished in over a dozen editions during the Victorian era, which helped to make Bulwer-Lytton one of the wealthiest authors of the nineteenth century.[240] Although the work is set in the Roman world of A.D. 79, the chief protagonists are Glaucus and Ione, both Greeks, and their nemesis an Egyptian named Arbaces, so the work attempts to engage with the diversity of contemporary classical civilisation. In his own words, Bulwer-Lytton presented Pompeii as a 'half-Grecian colony of Hercules, mingling with the manners of Italy so much of the costumes of Hellas'.[241] In this way, the English public might digest a work like this without compromising their interest in the contemporary Greek revival, while accepting a more latent portrayal of Roman antiquity, in accordance with its unfashionable contemporary position.

Another major literary sensation of the time set in the Roman world was *The lays of ancient Rome* (1842) by Thomas Babington Macaulay.[242] This presented a cycle of four long poems purporting to represent early oral Roman works of Saturnian verse – 'Horatius', 'The Battle of the Lake Regillus', 'Virginia' and 'The Prophecy of Capys' –, which Macaulay used 'to transform some portions of early Roman history back into the poetry out of which they were made […]'.[243] Selling over 23,000 copies in its first twelve years of publication in the United Kingdom alone, *The lays of ancient Rome* became a set-text in many schools, where it was employed as a means to introduce children to both English poetry and to Roman history.[244] Indeed, much of the popularity of *The lays* seems to have derived from Macaulay's use of the Romantic rediscovery of the oral ballad tradition, coupled with the historical fiction of Walter Scott, sources which the author emphasises in a lengthy preface.[245] So, by binding echoes of the Homeric oral epic with the Romantics' interest in the historical ballad

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[240] The Bodleian Library's S.O.L.O. catalogue returns fifteen separate editions of the work from the Victorian era.
[241] Bulwer-Lytton (1836a: i, 154).
[242] See Sullivan (2009: 251-8).
[243] Macaulay (1888: 50).
[244] Between 1842 and 1939, the book went through 63 separate editions. (Cited in Grafton *et al.* (2010: 551).) See Gray (1984).
[245] Macaulay (1888: 15-23).

tradition, Macaulay blended popular interest in Hellenism and Romanticism in a work that presented Roman antiquity within a non-traditional historical context. Crucially, Macaulay's work portrayed neither the republican nor the imperial incarnation of Rome currently problematised, but, instead, its early, half-legendary history. In this way, the author bypassed both polities through an *ad fontes* approach that returned to the foundation of the Roman state. This context also seemed to possess increasing relevance for those who perceived Britain to be similarly developing from a small state into an empire, which was emphasised by its high-profile conflict with China in the First Opium War (1839-42), as well as the formal settlement of New Zealand in 1840.

Since Bulwer-Lytton and Macaulay each held significant political positions and gained peerages, they embody many of the broader attitudes of both the English intelligentsia and the political establishment – along with their educationally and socially conditioned perceptions of classical Rome.[246] Yet, the extensive popularity of their two works among all classes of British society seems to indicate the continued, though evidently more latent, presence of a Roman model within early-to-mid-Victorian English culture. While Bulwer-Lytton's and Macaulay's works offered entertainment and edification, however, ancient Rome was also employed in fiction during the 1830s and 40s as means to negotiate a number of serious contemporary controversies.

In this period, English religion entered a turbulent period that witnessed the established Church of England facing dissent from a nascent Romanist element within and a resurgent English Catholicism without.[247] Significantly, some of those on both sides of these debates turned to fiction to propound their arguments and, in particular, novels set in late antiquity that pitted pagan *versus* Christian.[248] Since contemporary debate had focussed chiefly upon Protestant opposition to the Oxford Movement, many of these novels were subsequently written by the leading advocates on the two sides, such as the Protestant cleric Charles Kingsley representing the former, and

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[246] Bulwer-Lytton was an MP (1831-41 and 1852-66) and colonial secretary (1858-9); while Macaulay was an MP (1832-4, 1838-47 and 1852-6) and, variously, member of the Supreme Council of India (1834-8), secretary for war (1840-1), and paymaster general (1846-8). Macaulay was raised to the peerage as a baron in 1857, while Bulwer-Lytton was also made a baron in 1866.
[247] See Rehabilitation II, 153-62.
[248] See Wolff (1977) and Rhodes (1995).

Catholic churchmen John Henry Newman and Nicholas Wiseman the latter.[249] Undoubtedly, the use of late antiquity as the context of these works served to remove some of the sting from the divisive contemporary debates by transferring their terms to a 'safe' historical context, and activating a number of key cultural discourses – particularly that associated with ancient Rome.[250]

Kingsley's *Hypatia, or new foes with old faces* (1853) presented a plot that fictionalised the life of the eponymous Greek female philosopher, while translating contemporary anti-Catholic sentiment into a negative portrayal of the early Church.[251] In response, Wiseman and Newman respectively produced *Fabiola. A tale of the catacombs* (1855) and *Callista: a sketch of the third century* (1855). Set in the fourth century, *Fabiola* narrates the story of a high-class female Roman convert at the time of Diocletian's persecutions of the Christians, while focussing upon the close-knit community and spirit of the early Church.[252] Meanwhile, Newman's *Callista* represents effectively a 'prequel' to *Fabiola*, being set in the third century, while also following the fate of a tragic female protagonist and a group of early Christians during a period of persecution.[253] Significantly, almost all of these works appear to use Roman antiquity more as a contrasting background to the deeds of its Christian heroes than as the focus of any fictional interpretation of the Roman historical experience. Crucially, none of these novels present republican or imperial Rome as a primary context; instead, like *The last days of Pompeii*, they portray characters drawn from across the classical world – Greek, Roman and 'other'.

When one surveys the reception of ancient Rome during the early-to-mid nineteenth-century, it is clear that while Rome had certainly been diminished by its foreign employment during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, it retained a definite – if demoted – profile in English culture. Yet, the isolation imposed on Britain during the course of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars led to an increased exploration of the country's Roman archaeological heritage, which established a low-level discourse that encouraged local and middle-class interest in Rome. Moreover, the conclusion of

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[249] On the use of fiction on both sides of this debate, see Baker (1932) and Griffin (2004).
[250] See Jenkyns (1996: 146-9).
[251] See ibid., 150-3.
[252] See Goldhill (2011: 207-9).
[253] See Jenkyns (1996: 153-4).

the conflict in 1815 encouraged an influx of architects, painters and sculptors to visit the city of Rome, which often inspired life-long interactions with the Roman world in their works. So, even as the impact of revolutionary and Napoleonic appropriations diminished Roman antiquity as an applicable cultural model in England, it still stimulated a number of trends that maintained a latent position for Rome.

As has been shown, classical Rome was occasionally drawn upon for inspiration in architecture or the visual arts, but, for much of the thirty years following Waterloo, it was defined primarily by its lower profile. This can be seen evidenced through the paucity of new editions of the major Latin authors in the period from 1820 to 1850, which lent English Latin scholarship a relatively unremarkable profile. Similarly, while there were plenty of reprints and general works on Roman history, there were very few major new histories published up to the middle of the century. Even though Rome did not enjoy a high-profile standing during this period, however, it still possessed a significant latent presence within a range of contemporary fields.

Arguably, popular English literature did most to uphold the relevance of ancient Rome by producing the high-points of its standing during this period, owing to the bestselling works *The last days of Pompeii* and *The lays of ancient Rome*, as well as topical popular novels, such as *Hypatia*, *Callista* and *Fabiola*. Crucially, though, these works and other cultural productions tended to present the Roman world in some modified fashion that took account of the downgraded position of Roman antiquity in English culture. Consequently, it is typical of the works involving Rome in this period that it is portrayed in some alternative manner that sought to evade the problematic contemporary elements of its heritage; reimagining and reconstructing it in such a way to make it acceptable to Victorians.

Thus, during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, owing to the negative influence of its revolutionary and Napoleonic appropriations, ancient Rome entered a definite phase of recession that was in stark contrast to its eighteenth-century high point. Yet, as has been shown, throughout this period English culture registered numerous interactions with the Roman past that maintained Rome's profile during a time of evident unpopularity. As a result, while Rome certainly underwent a period of eclipse, it remained a constant cultural presence that possessed continued application and

value. All it needed was the correct set of cultural conditions to motivate its restoration as a cultural model.

2.5. Conclusion

In the opening quotation, Thomas Carlyle made clear his belief that, by 1840, the Romans were 'dead out [and the] English […] come in'.[254] While this statement was intended to highlight the extraordinary advances his nation had achieved by the first years of Queen Victoria's reign, however, it also emphasises the cultural displacement that ancient Rome suffered during the period of its apparent eclipse in the early-to-mid nineteenth century. For, while it had remained a constant reference point in the English cultural landscape throughout history, Rome was defined during this half century by a relative unpopularity occasioned by a series of foreign appropriations.

Although England's lengthy Latinate tradition reached its arguable height with the 'Augustan' culture of the early-Georgian period, the irruption of the revolutionary age brought its popularity to an end. Disturbed and distorted by its radical expropriation by the newly-founded United States, Revolutionary France and the Napoleonic Empire, Rome could no longer function as an apt or useful cultural model in English culture. As a result, it was largely replaced as a classical model by Hellenism, which represented a profound shift in the traditional reception of antiquity in England.

Yet, Roman antiquity was too enmeshed in the fabric of English cultural life to be entirely removed by its external appropriation and a Hellenic vogue. Instead, it remained present, though not privileged, as a cultural discourse; actuated across a range of contexts, but not as part of any major popular movement. Consequently, classical Rome remained a relevant and resonant source of inspiration to some throughout the early nineteenth century – though one compelled to assume a more latent position within wider contemporary culture.

Remaining a downgraded, but always accessible, component of contemporary culture, interest in Rome was sustained across a range of cultural productions that spanned art, architecture, literature, scholarship and theatre. Crucially, though, these often

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[254] Carlyle (1840: 202).

presented the Roman world in some alternative manner that sought to circumvent the contemporary unpopularity of its traditional republican and imperial incarnations. As a result, the vision of Rome that dominated in this period was one conditioned by its revolutionary and Napoleonic exploitation, but still possessing a definite cachet that retained a continued relevance, however diminished.

So, while ancient Rome did not disappear entirely from English cultural discourse during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, it clearly suffered a demotion in usage. In this light, the concept of an eclipse is a useful one to explain the reception of Rome in this period; for, while Rome certainly receded in contemporary culture, it was only ever obscured by other cultural trends – it never disappeared. Instead, a number continuities and survivals kept active many of the terms that had defined the Latinate tradition throughout English history. Always present, but often latent, Rome's eclipse was therefore always partial, rather than total.

Hence, by the opening of the Victorian age, the profile of Rome was one still shaped by its recent foreign appropriations, which fostered a continued caution about associating with such a potentially deficient source of cultural value. Despite the downgraded position accorded to Rome up to the accession of Queen Victoria, however, the early-to-mid-Victorian eras were to register a gradually more positive reception for cultural productions related to Roman antiquity that were to demonstrate that the Romans were anything but 'dead out'.

3. Rehabilitation I

We seem capable of doing anything.[1]

Queen Victoria, 1851.

And we shall fly for refuge to past times, / Their soul of unworn youth, their breath of greatness.[2]

Matthew Arnold, 'Empedocles on Etna', 1852.

I felt proud that my nation was more truly the descendant of that matchless race [of the Romans] than any other in the world.[3]

Lady Elizabeth Eastlake, 1858.

3.1. *Divide et impera*: the bureaucratisation and militarisation of English society, *c*.1830-70

In 1856, while attempting to synthesise the anti-malaria drug quinine from coal-tar, an eighteen-year-old assistant at the Royal College of Chemistry in London named William Henry Perkin discovered the first organic chemical dye.[4] An intensely-coloured purple, Perkin's invention was termed 'Tyrian purple' – later 'mauveine' or 'Perkin's mauve' –, which, as a durable dye that did not fade, possessed a major commercial application. Until his breakthrough, purple fabric and textiles were stained with pigments derived from molluscs or guano in much the same processes as were performed in antiquity. As a consequence, purple garments had remained almost as difficult and expensive to produce as they had been for the Romans.

In 1857, Perkin opened a dye-works at Greenford in London, which commenced commercial production of his invention for the domestic and international market. By the next year, 'mauve mania' had begun to sweep Britain and a number of European cities, owing to its use in the material-rich crinoline dresses favoured by fashionable ladies and, in particular, those worn by Queen Victoria and Empress Eugénie of France. Indeed, so rapidly grew the subsequent vogue for purple in ladies' fashions and interior *décor* that one author declared that it had become so prevalent that '[w]e shall soon have purple omnibuses and purple houses'.[5] Only in the 1870s, when other

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[1] Queen Victoria's diary, 29 April 1851 via http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org [accessed 12 July 2014].

[2] Act II, lines 383-4 in Arnold (1852: 65).

[3] Eastlake (1895: ii, 107).

[4] See Travis (1990) and Garfield (2000).

[5] Quoted in O'Brien (1993: 394). This is confirmed by other contemporary sources, such as the *Illustrated London news*, April 25 1857, vol. 30, 387.

artificial dyes were invented, did mauve's popularity diminish, but it remained a popular shade for mourning dress for the rest of the Victorian era, owing to the British monarch's preference for the colour.[6]

So, from being the hallmark of exclusive luxury for millennia, Perkin's serendipitous discovery democratised purple into a mass phenomenon that served to underline English society's growing sense of itself as an imperial race whose burgeoning power offered comparison to the Roman Empire. Set in context, Perkin's breakthrough seems to symbolise neatly a central proposal of this study: that mid-Victorian culture began at this time to resume the purple of popular allusions to Roman antiquity that had been cast off a half-century before.

While English society only appears to have registered during the 1850s the exceptional international position that it had achieved in the first part of Victoria's reign, the country had arguably been evolving towards a position of dominance – and a potential reoccupation of parallels to ancient Rome – since at least 1832. Over this time, the United Kingdom gained an unprecedented position of global supremacy, having won pre-eminence in a range of political, military and trade spheres. In addition, although the unique achievements of Britain's Industrial Revolution bore increasing fruits for the nation throughout the nineteenth century, it was in this immediate period that the country secured a level of seemingly unmatchable economic capability.[7]

With a global mania for railways and shipping underpinning a boom in British steel, iron and coal, Britain began to gain ascendancy in international trade. Simultaneously, the City of London grew to become a centre of international finance, which occurred owing to a number of related factors.[8] While the 1844 Bank Act had bound sterling to the gold standard to create a stable currency, this was reinforced by the 1862 Companies Act, which laid the foundations for sharehold capitalism in the United Kingdom.[9] Underwritten by the stability of the London stock market, and the trade security provided by the Royal Navy, Britain began to flourish as an economic

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[6] See Rappaport (2011: 147).
[7] On the background to this rise, see Brown (1991: chs 8, 9, 10 and 12, 94-130 and 145-54).
[8] See Loftus (2012: 202-3).
[9] See Sheppard (1971: 5-6).

powerhouse. In addition, the period of *c*.1815-50 also saw the greatest exponential growth in the history of the British Empire, though true awareness and comprehension of the nation's possession of these colonial territories did not occur until the rise of 'new' imperialism in the 1870s.[10]

Until around 1850, when Britain began to display a new-found confidence and openness, isolationism remained the central feature of British foreign policy.[11] One of the chief developments motivating this change was the country's escape from the political upheavals that had occurred on the Continent with the 1848 Revolutions, which concluded the domestic challenge of Chartism and confirmed Britain's inherent social stability.[12] As a result, the Great Exhibition of 1851 announced Britain to the world again, along with the industrial and trade dominance that it had recently accrued. Taken together, these advances positioned the United Kingdom at the forefront of international developments, fostered a new-found national confidence, and encouraged some to think in terms of their likeness to other historical precedents – such as imperial Rome.

Awareness of the worth of classical Rome as a relevant model seems to have been occasioned by two contemporary trends in response to the unprecedented advances of English society during this time: on the one hand, a fear of inefficiency and, on the other, an amplified sense of self-confidence – both of which found value in Roman parallels. One can suggest therefore that the first trend found expression in the bureaucratisation enacted by British officialdom from the 1832 Reform Act onwards, and the second in the process of militarisation undergone by English society in the same period. Thus, an exploration of the socio-economic situation of the early-Victorian era demonstrates how it created the conditions for a fresh cultural climate; bureaucratisation and militarisation being two of its chief manifestations, whose circumstances conspired together to create a socio-cultural context in which ancient Rome represented an increasingly relevant parallel.

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[10] See Porter (2004: ch. 5, 83-114).
[11] See Lowe (1998: 17-48).
[12] See Royle (2000: ch. 4, 139-98) and Taylor (2000).

The long-awaited 'Great' Reform Act of 1832 that extended the franchise, and did so much to combat political corruption, led directly to a process of bureaucratisation that sought to reform all aspects of society, whose failings had been exposed by the Reform movement that had been active from the turn of the century.[13] Although he did not live to see it, the philosopher Jeremy Bentham was the chief architect of this development, having advocated state interventionism as one of the primary planks of his theory of Utilitarianism.[14] Yet, this bureaucratising process appears to have represented in part another consequence of the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, since one of the major reasons behind the success of both French political projects had been their administrative efficiency.[15] Furthermore, the term itself derived from the French word *bureaucratie*, which Napoleon had used to describe his reform of French officialdom in the 1804 *Code Napoleon* – itself predicated partly upon Bentham's ideas.[16]

Having gained currency in the 1820s through dissemination by the 'Philosophic Radicals' and Bentham's own periodical, the *Westminster Review*, bureaucratisation became part of official government policy following the Whig victory of 1830.[17] Under the influence of Utilitarian adherents, such as Edwin Chadwick and John Stuart Mill, a set of modernisations were enacted that sought to rationalise and reform British society.[18] Many important individuals supported this process, such as the Thomas Arnold, who demanded in 1832 a level of reform that would be 'deep, searching, and universal'; that must 'extend to church and state, to army, navy, law, trade and education; to our political and social institutions; to our habits, principles and practice both as citizens and men'.[19] Indeed, having become headmaster of Rugby School in 1828, Arnold was in the process of making similar small-scale reforms within his own institution, which would help to transform Britain's public schools from 'nurseries of all vice' to 'nurseries of our statesmen'.[20]

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[13] See Hoppen (1998: ch. 4, 91-124, esp. 95-105). For context, see MacDonagh (1977) and Chester (1981).
[14] See Hume (1981).
[15] See Church (1981) and the case studies in Broers *et al*. (2012). On the European context, see Leonhard (2006).
[16] See Friedrich (1998).
[17] See Finer (1972: 21-7) and Thomas (1979).
[18] See Seaman (1973: chs 9 and 10, 168-205).
[19] Arnold (1832: 236).
[20] Fielding (1970: 198). *Clarendon Report*, (1864: xx, 56).

Beginning with the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, a series of acts, commissions and enquiries were set up by the British government to intervene, regulate and reform numerous aspects of society, which, in the process, created the paternalist Victorian state.[21] During the subsequent thirty years, these informal schemes developed into an official bureaucratic system that possessed rigorous organisation and structure, as well as enjoying a major influence on wider cultural discourse.[22] Consisting of departments and sub-departments in all branches of the government, this system formed an efficient and sophisticated network that succeeded in administrating both a state and an empire.[23]

Take education, for example: before 1833, despite the 1816 Brougham Commission and a series of reports from the charity commissioners, there was not a penny of public money spent on English education. By 1870, however, this situation had changed dramatically: the Newcastle, Clarendon and Taunton commissions having cleared the way for the 1870 Elementary Education Act, which created a national system of education.[24] In the meantime, the 1854 and 1856 University Reform Acts had also overhauled the ancient universities, and created the conditions to allow the 1871 Universities Test Act, which finally allowed non-Protestants full educational rights within their colleges.[25]

As a result of all of this, the example of the Romans – traditionally viewed as the most efficient administrators in history – seemed to offer much to the advocates and adherents of officialdom, especially following the domestic concord that followed 1848.[26] While most studies of Victorian bureaucracy have ignored parallels to Rome, some scholars have noted an interaction. Duncan Bell, for instance, has argued that bureaucratisation kept Roman allusions *out* of the popular mindset because, with this set of political reforms, 'arguments for the role of corruption and oligarchy resonated less, so Rome lost some of its centrality.'[27] Conversely, however, this study argues that Roman antiquity began to re-enter popular culture exactly because of the

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[21] See Lawes (2000) and Smith (2004).
[22] See Goodlad (2003).
[23] See Bartrip (1983), as well as the essays in Schultz and Varouxakis (2005).
[24] For an account of its evolution, see Roach (1986 and 1991).
[25] See Vernon (2004: 24-5 and 30-1).
[26] See Lendon (1997: ch. 1: 1-29).
[27] Bell (2006: 742, n. 36).

pervasive, society-wide nature of early-to-mid-Victorian official reorganisation and reform, which could find so much inspiration in Roman imperial administration.[28]

Despite the prestige that it won during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, throughout much of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the British Army was perceived as standing largely in opposition to popular sentiments.[29] While Britain's land forces had held a key position in national defensive and offensive operations since the seventeenth century, the British Army possessed little esteem in the popular consciousness, in comparison to the honoured standing reserved for the so-called 'senior service', the Royal Navy.[30] Instead, as evidenced by its repressive use in the Gordon Riots in 1780 and the 'Peterloo Massacre' in 1819, the British Army was often seen as a tool of government coercion and oppression.[31] From around 1850, however, English culture began to display what has been termed a 'military paradigm', which saw the British Army assume a more honoured and privileged position in domestic society.[32]

Bearing a series of setbacks for Britain's forces, the Crimean War (1854-6) proved to be a watershed in positively altering domestic responses to the British Army. As a result of unprecedented press coverage, as well as the aid efforts of Florence Nightingale, the sufferings of its ordinary soldiers were exposed.[33] Witnessing the institution in 1856 of the Victoria Cross that recognised ordinary soldiers for the first time, the Crimean War also led directly to the Cardwell Reforms (1868-74) that reorganised and modernised the British Army.[34] Reinforced by a similar set of adverse circumstances during the Indian Mutiny in 1857, public pride in Britain's military had increased to an all-time high by the 1860s, which was expressed, for instance, through its increasing portrayal in contemporary art.[35] Hence, by the mid-

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[28] See Argyriades (1996: 77-83).
[29] See Carpenter (2002: 373).
[30] See Yorke (1996: 91-2).
[31] See Babington (1990: 21-31) and Beckett (1991: 135-7).
[32] Hilton (2006: 35). See Myerly (1996: 14-29 and 139-65).
[33] See Markovits (2009: ch. 1, 12-62) and Bostridge (2008: pt 2, 213-300).
[34] On the Victoria Cross, see Raugh (2004: 332). On the subsequent reform of the British Army, see Sweetman (1984) and Spiers (1992: ch. 1, 1-28).
[35] On perceptions of the Indian Mutiny, see Merritt (2013) and Malik (2013). On the British Army's depiction in contemporary art, see Hichberger (1988: chs 3 and 4, 49-74).

Victorian era, a potent association had grown up in popular culture between the nation's military and wider notions of duty, loyalty and sacrifice.[36]

Arguably, there was not a year in Queen Victoria's sixty-four-year reign in which the proverbial Temple of Janus was closed, since British or colonial forces were engaged almost continuously somewhere throughout the world in what Rudyard Kipling later called the 'savage wars of peace'.[37] With the publishing explosion and the increase in literacy that occurred during the mid-Victorian period, these distant conflicts and their chief personalities gained a larger public profile than they had enjoyed previously, and soon numerous aspects of contemporary culture seemed to assume some military aspect, including art and literature.[38] Consequently, one witnesses in this period a new and potent incarnation of the British Army, alongside an increasing 'militarisation' of English culture, which would have found a clear historical endorsement in ancient Roman culture.[39]

In describing the destruction of Lord Elphinstone's army during the First Afghan War (1839-42), for example, *The Times* suggested that Jalalabad had been held by the British commander Robert Henry Sale with 'the soldier-like spirit of an English gentleman', which was as proud as 'the noble spirit of an old Roman'.[40] Later, in 1869, the art critic John Ruskin seemed to draw upon a similar comparison when he gave an address to a group of soldiers at Woolwich College entitled 'The future of England', in which he endowed them with a Latin moniker:

> I, one of the lower people of your country, ask of you in their name, – you whom I will not any more call soldiers, but by the true name of Knights; – Equites of England – how many yet of you are there […] who still retain the ancient and eternal purpose of knighthood, to subdue the wicked, and aid the weak?[41]

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[36] See Parry (2006: 77).

[37] Quoted in Farwell (1973: xvii). Others have suggested only two years of peace. (Morris (1979b: 406).) In all, Farwell records 230 separate military actions fought by Britain during Queen Victoria's reign. Interestingly, Augustus claimed that the portals of the temple had been closed only twice before he came to power, but he had managed to have them closed three times in his reign. (*Res gestae*, 13.)

[38] See Hichberger (1988) and Peck (1998).

[39] See Bastable (2004: 5-6), and, more generally, Spiers (1992).

[40] *The Times*, 5 April 1842, 5.

[41] Ruskin (1869: 499).

In addition, other correspondences, such as the fact the British Army base at Colchester was built close to the site of the Roman legionary fortress of Camulodunum, seemed to draw England's martial past and present closer together. Similarly, the honours accorded to some of Victorian Britain's greatest generals, such as Garnet Wolseley, mirrored closely many of the awards and titles granted to Roman generals in antiquity.[42] In contrast to ancient Rome, however, English civil society always maintained authority over its military, since there remained far more of an overlap between the two aspects of its society.[43] As a result, the British military never threatened the political order of the state itself in the same way as it did in Rome. Despite these differences, however, many of the elements of this militarisation seemed to bring English society closer to its Roman forebear, a civilisation to which military culture was central.

One incident in particular is conspicuous in demonstrating this growing assertiveness, which – crucially for this study – was expressed in terms derived directly from Roman history. In 1847, David Pacifico, a Portuguese Jew working as a trader in Athens, had his home robbed and vandalised by an anti-Semitic mob. Seeking unsuccessfully for compensation from the Greek government, the next year he appealed for help from the British government on the grounds of his birth in Gibraltar. In 1850, the foreign secretary Lord Palmerston ordered a naval squadron to blockade the Athenian port of Piraeus, in order to force the Greek government to compensate this titular British citizen. Lasting two months and creating great international tension, this blockade ended only when Athens agreed to Palmerston's terms following the seizure of Greek ships.[44]

Yet, the significance of this incident lies in Lord Palmerston's justification of his actions, which centred on Britain's new and growing international *imperium*:

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[42] During his long career, Wolseley served in numerous theatres of war, including Crimea, India, Canada, West Africa, South Africa and Egypt. Following his suppression of the Urabi Revolt in 1882, he was voted a baronage by Parliament, as well as a grant of £30,000. (See Kochanski (1999: 145).) Such a system of titles and rewards for Britain's military heroes had a direct parallel to those accorded to victorious Roman generals as part of their triumphs. For comparison to those won by Pompey the Great, for instance, see Beard (2007: ch. 1, 7-41).
[43] See Spiers (1992: ch. 6, 152-78).
[44] See Whitten (1986) and Brown (2002: 101-18).

[A]s the Roman, in the days of old, held himself free from indignity
when he could say *Civis Romanus sum*; so also a British subject, in
whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and
the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong.[45]

The expression '*civis Romanus sum*' makes one of its most famous appearances in
Cicero's *Against Verres*, where the orator narrates how the Sicilian dictator Verres
had tortured and crucified Publius Gavius of Consa for spying, despite all Roman
citizens being immune from corporal punishment. Since Gavius' repeated
protestations of his status were ignored, this provided Cicero with a damning
indictment of Verres' tyrannical behaviour that struck at the very heart of what it
meant to be a Roman.[46] This same phrase also emerges in the New Testament, where
St Paul invoked it after being taken into Roman custody in an effort to gain legal
protection and have his case heard in an imperial court.[47] Since both of these *in
extremis* personal defences ultimately ended with the deaths of their claimants, they
set down in history two instances of the injustice that could be visited upon the citizen
of a nation without the due intervention of the state.

In conflating these ancient examples with those of a contemporary Jewish merchant,
Palmerston attempted to defend his 'gunboat diplomacy' by calling upon a Roman
parallel that went all the way back to the Porcian Law of 197 B.C., which had
established a host of rights for Roman citizens.[48] In doing so, he was also implicitly
arguing that the remit of British hegemony had begun to extend beyond the country's
domestic waters and colonial territories to protect the country's citizens in whatever
nation in which they found themselves. Moreover, by taking on Don Pacifico's
specific case as a pretext for his actions, Palmerston was suggesting that the

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[45] Speech in the House of Commons, 25 June 1850; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 112, col. 444. This
argument was prefigured over a decade previously, in 1840, by a comment made by Thomas Babington
Macaulay to the House of Commons before the outbreak of the First Opium War (1839-42), which
celebrated Britain's achievement in making 'the name of Englishman as much respected as ever had
been the name of Roman citizen'. (Ibid., vol. 53, col. 719.) In the same year, a similar deployment of
the *civis Romanus sum* defence of 'gunboat diplomacy' occurred when a Mrs Fry Norman, a black
British subject from Sierra Leone, was kidnapped by a tribe at the Gallinas River in West Africa. The
British response was the deployment of three naval vessels, which released the captive, destroyed the
local tribes and eliminated the slave trade they had been plying in the estuary. (See Morris (1979b: 41-
4).)
[46] Cicero, *Against Verres*, 2.5.162. See DePalma Digeser (2004: 5-8).
[47] Acts 16:37-39 and 22:25-29. See Rapske (1994: 83-90).
[48] See Keaveney (1984) and Karatani (2003: 58-9).

government's protection covered not only citizens' personal safety, but also their material assets. Naturally, such a policy did not meet with universal support: William Ewart Gladstone, for one, objecting to Palmerston's *blasé* use of a classical parallel to set a dangerous precedent for justifying British interference in other sovereign territories over any perceived infringement of a citizen's rights:

> What then, Sir, was a Roman citizen? He was a member of a privileged caste; he belonged to a conquering race […] Is such, then, the view of the noble Lord, as to the relation that is to subsist between England and other countries[?][49]

Deriving from the 'association of high notions of citizenship with unwarrantable privilege derived from conquest'[50], Gladstone's criticism focussed on the use of a classical Roman concept to justify a newly-aggressive, imperialist shift in British foreign policy. While Palmerston's invocation of '*civis Romanus sum*' integrated Roman history into a high-profile public debate, his critics demonstrated that Roman antiquity still contained many problematic aspects to adapt and relate to contemporary circumstances.

Yet, the popular support that Palmerston's stand received over the affair seems to testify to the fact that Englishmen were already presenting their nation as a significant international player, unafraid to use military force against opponents, and to invoke a Roman parallel to justify it.[51] Indeed, the irony that Palmerston had employed a Roman allusion to browbeat the Greek government seems to suggest an end to officially endorsed philhellenism, and to emphasise a potential transition between a Hellenic and a Roman model in English culture. So, the Don Pacifico Incident represented not only a harbinger of the end of Britain's isolationism and a more aggressive foreign policy, but also one of the first incidents in which Roman antiquity was engaged as an allusive parallel in a major political event.

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[49] Speech in the House of Commons, 27 June 1850; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 112, col. 586.
[50] Ibid.
[51] See Fenton (2012: 108-13).

Hence, though largely separate trends, the bureaucratisation and militarisation undergone by English society during the first decades of Victoria's reign possessed a number of subtle historical parallels to the administrative and military example of ancient Rome. Significantly, these occurred alongside the unprecedented advance of Britain as an industrial, political and military power, as well as its gradual move away from an isolationist foreign policy to a more assertive one, which had the effect of giving all such trends an increased potency. Indeed, the increasingly aggressive and involved nature of Britain's overseas activities from around 1850 seemed to encourage the relevance of direct allusions to the Roman Empire.

During the Indian Mutiny, for instance, Thomas Babington Macaulay expressed his anger by wishing that the *sepoy* garrison at Delhi might suffer the same fate as the Capuan senate that Quintus Fulvius Flaccus had put to death during the Second Punic War.[52] Moreover, the failings in British officialdom that were revealed by the logistical incompetence of the British military during the Crimean War, and the wider institutional failings that had induced the 'cartridge crisis' that provoked the Indian Mutiny, seemed to give impetus to the related processes of bureaucratisation and militarisation. As Duncan Bell has identified, the increasing profile of the British Empire represented one of the keys to the mounting use of Rome in contemporary discourse:

> It was only when people began to theorise more systematically about the British Empire, and to develop arguments about how to administer it effectively in light of the lessons of the past, that Roman imperialism assumed a more prominent position [in English culture].[53]

One could further argue that the processes of bureaucratisation and militarisation outlined above reached an effective terminus with the Second Reform Act in 1867 and Gladstone's first ministry (1868-74).[54] While the former broadened the country's political franchise, Gladstone's Liberal administration accomplished many of the remaining reforms necessary to complete both processes, which increased the

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[52] See Cotter Morrison (1882: 179) and Livy, *History of Rome*, 26.15.
[53] Bell (2006: 743).
[54] See Cowling (2005) and Matthew (1997: 170-232).

potential relevance of Rome as a parallel.[55] This was also reinforced externally by the unifications of Germany and Italy that occurred during 1870-1, which compressed over thirty minor states into two major new European nations, and impacted greatly upon Britain's international hegemony. Since the guiding states of both unifications, Prussia and Piedmont, were both constitutional monarchies that prided themselves upon their efficient bureaucracies, their successful example would have done much to encourage Britain to complete its own set of national reforms in order to remain a competitive force on the European political stage.[56] As a result, broad awareness of the importance of these political improvements seemed to occur in the years from 1850 to 1870, which accords with the revival of Roman antiquity that occurred in English culture during the same period. Thus, it was chiefly in administrative and martial terms that the metaphorical purple of ancient Rome found itself invoked in English culture during the first decades of Victoria's reign – at the same time as William Perkin's novel invention was colouring domestic tastes a similar shade.

3.2. An 'affinity of spirit'? England's 'upper ten-thousand' and the Victorian reception of ancient Rome

Within upper and upper-middle-class households, Victorian children often referred to their parents as *pater* and *mater*; reflecting not only the Latin study that was usually a major feature of their educations, but also a potential parallel between the patriarchal characters of the Roman and the Victorian home.[57] Indeed, the French social psychologist Émile Boutmy once remarked that he knew of 'no personage in the modern world who puts me more in mind of the ancient Roman *paterfamilias* than the head of an English family'.[58] With both societies distinctly patriarchal in their familial and social structures, the notion of paternal leadership held great appeal to the Victorians; one that found itself enacted as a masculine ideal, not only within the home, but also on a national level – as a character in John Galsworthy's novel *The country house* (1907) enunciated:[59]

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[55] See St John (2005: 88-90 and 2010: 174-96).

[56] On comparisons between Prussia and Piedmont as political models, see Breilly (2013: 160-4).

[57] See Deslandes (2005: 37).

[58] Boutmy (1904: 218). On the concept of the *paterfamilias* in Victorian political culture, see Roberts (1978). On its legal and cultural nature in Roman culture, see Watson (1975: 40-51) and Johnson (2007).

[59] On its private and public manifestations, see Griffin (2012: chs 2 and 6, 37-64 and 164-200). For context, see Tosh (1999).

I believe in my father, and his father, and his father's father, the makers and keepers of my estate, and I believe in myself and my son and my son's son. And I believe that we made the country and shall keep the country what it is.[60]

Hence, in the same way that the father of the household ruled his family, the country's aristocracy and gentry were perceived to represent the natural leaders of the nation. Although representing only *c*.0.5% of the population, Victorian England's ruling elite were the wealthiest and most powerful social group in the country.[61] As the most well-educated and literate sector of society, this so-called 'upper ten-thousand' also wielded a disproportionate cultural influence upon the other contemporary classes.[62] Since its members had enjoyed almost-exclusively classical educations at England's leading public schools and Oxbridge colleges, their worldview was profoundly influenced by antiquity.[63] Yet, owing to its growing relevance as a socio-political model, classical Rome seemed to represent to many in this elite an increasingly useful bolster to their collective identity, as well as a useful guide to their leadership of a burgeoning society and empire.[64]

Consisting primarily of England's aristocracy and gentry, this elite was also buttressed by chosen members of the contemporary intelligentsia. While the aristocracy was divided into five ranks – dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts and barons –, the gentry consisted of the country's non-noble baronetcy, knights of the realm, judges and local worthies.[65] Meanwhile, the intellectuals who made up the rest

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[60] Galsworthy (1907: 58).

[61] On the history of this elite, see Wasson (2000), and, on its position in the Victorian class system, Steinbach (2012: ch. 6, 113-31).

[62] Coined originally in 1852 by Nathaniel Parker Willis to describe the social elite of New York, the phrase 'upper ten-thousand' found its way into British publication first in Matthew Higgins' *Letter on administrative reform* (1855), where it was employed to criticise the country's political elite. Yet, the phrase only entered popular parlance through its appearance in William Makepeace Thackeray's novel *The adventures of Philip* (1861-2), whose hero contributes to a New York journal entitled *The Gazette of the Upper Ten Thousand*. Later, in 1875, Adam Bissett Thom compiled *The upper ten thousand: an alphabetical list* (1875), a gazetteer that attempted to present an alphabetical catalogue of Britain's domestic and colonial elite. Since the phrase 'the Establishment' was not coined until 1923, 'the 'upper ten-thousand' represents arguably the more current contemporary term. (See http://www.oed.com/view/Entry64536 [accessed 15 December 2014].)

[63] On the respective masculine environments of Victorian public schools and Oxbridge, see Sharpless (1997) and Deslandes (2005). For a perceptive overview, see Joyce (2013: chs 6 and 7, 229-307).

[64] See Hagerman (2012: ch. 3, 54-67).

[65] Catalogued in publications such as *Burke's peerage and baronetcy* (1826-), *Burke's landed gentry* (1837-1972) and *Walford's county families* (1860-1920), the rigid strata of this elite is evident. Despite

of this elite's numbers derived from a select number of families, often involved in education or scholarship.[66] Attending the same select public schools and Oxbridge colleges, the members of this elite rose to prominence within the country's key *loci* of power, including Westminster, the City of London, the Inns of Court, as well as the more informal environment of the West End's gentleman's clubs.[67] As a result, the members of England's 'upper ten-thousand' enjoyed a close relationship, not to mention a unique influence over the content and direction of contemporary cultural trends.

Importantly, the use of ancient Rome as an allusive model possessed a more personal character to England's social and intellectual elite than it did to other classes in English society.[68] They could look, for instance, to the life and career of the poet Horace for a model of elite gentlemanly behaviour, since he seemed to inhabit a similar homosocial *milieu* to them; having balanced a career as a public servant with one as a man of letters, while also enjoying close relations with the ruling elite, including the emperor Augustus.[69] In terms of numbers alone, the 'upper ten-thousand' and their Roman counterparts, the *patricii*, certainly bore comparison, since the Roman aristocracy represented 600 senators and their families, along with 1800 members of the equestrian class and theirs – figures that compare roughly with the membership of England's elite.[70] Similarly, the *gentes maiores* and *gentes minores* of the upper echelons of Roman society could be said to mirror broadly the aristocracy and gentry of the Victorian era; each individual and their family taking their place in a rigidly-structured social hierarchy, according to their inherited status and political accomplishments.[71]

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the developments that occurred within its membership, the rough number of members of this group remained stable throughout the nineteenth-century. (See fig. 3.1 of Hilton (2006: 127), which portrays the country's elite during 1801-3 numbering much the same as it did a century later when the 1901 census was taken.) On Britain's aristocracy, see Bush (1984) and Beckett (1986), and, on its gentry, Wingfield-Stratford (1956) and Nicolson (2011).

[66] See Annan (1990: Appendix, 304-41).

[67] See Wilkinson (1964). As well as familial and educational associations, this elite was also bound together by more informal ties that derived from membership of various select gentlemen's clubs and freemasons' lodges, which often possessed some of the cachet and secrecy that had been attendant upon the Roman Mithraic cult. See Rich (1991), Harland-Jacobs (2007) and Milne-Smith (2011).

[68] On appropriations of Rome by Britain's imperial elite, see Patterson (2009: 129-68).

[69] See Harrison (2007 and 2009).

[70] See De Ste. Croix (1981: 372-408) and Scheidel (1999).

[71] See Smith (2006: 254-5).

Each elite also represented highly conservative, traditional social groups that depended upon external validation, such as their family heritage and political advancement, which they attained through the achievement of various public offices on their respective *cursus honorum*, or 'ladder of honours'.[72] As a result, each appeared to obsess over the customs and institutions that constituted their mutual versions of the *mos maiorum*, or 'way of the ancestors', while maintaining their socio-economic dominance through opposition to major reform.[73] Perhaps, this parallel is arguably best exhibited in the *imagines maiorum*, or 'images of the ancestors', created by both elites; the Roman bust and English society portrait each seeking to portray the *nobilitas* through which both elites claimed their patrician descent and reinforced their oligarchic power.[74] Thus, England's social and intellectual elite found much in parallels to the patrician elite of ancient Rome to authorise, inform and reinforce their position as the leaders of their own society.

Such superficial comparisons were reinforced by the exclusive public-school and Oxbridge educations absorbed by this elite, which were founded upon the study of Latin and, to a lesser extent, Roman history.[75] In view of this, Roman antiquity would have represented 'a familiar world for Britain's ruling classes'[76] that could be

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[72] See Loewenstein (1973: 55-6).

[73] See De Ste. Croix (1981: 375) and Van der Blom (2010: ch. 1, 12-17).

[74] For comparison, see Flower (1996: chs 1 and 2, 16-59) and Davis (2013). Some, such as the travel writer Henry Vollam Morton, have even posited a physical resemblance between Roman patricians and their Victorian counterparts:

> The great number of Roman portrait busts in [Italian] galleries remind one again how closely the Victorians resembled the Romans in their appearance. There are Roman faces in the Capitoline Museum which might be those of mid-Victorian Birmingham manufacturers or temperance reformers; there are also among them Victorian statesmen, soldiers, and churchmen. Why the Roman type, which has now vanished from Rome should have accidentally cropped up in England a century ago, I do not know, nor can I offer a guess. (Morton (1987: 261).)

[75] See French and Rothery (2012: chs 1 and 2, 39-136). The *Headmaster's Reports* from Winchester College offer a useful impression of the Latin and Roman history absorbed by this group across the school's six divisions of pupils. In 1885, for example, it records that, while the most junior form was studying Benjamin Kennedy's Latin primer, the next division had begun already to study books 25 and 26 of Livy, selections from Horace's *Satires* and the fifth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and the next above them, Cicero's *Pro Milone* and second *Philippic*. Moving to the more senior divisions, the next form were studying Juvenal's *Satires* 7 to 15, alongside Pliny's *Letters*, while the second most senior group in the school were exploring the first two books of Horace's *Satires*, the fourth book of the *Aeneid*, Cicero's *Pro Milone* and the fifth book of Livy. Finally, the highest division in the school were studying Plautus' *Trinummus*, the third book of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, the seventh book of the *Aeneid*, Cicero's *Letters*, and seventh, thirteenth and fourteenth *Philippics*, and the first book of Tacitus' *Annals*.

[76] Landow (1984: 33).

employed alternatively as a 'political mirror or political lamp'[77] – either reflecting or illuminating contemporary matters.[78] Indeed, it has been suggested that the educational reforms inspired by Thomas Arnold's improvements at Rugby School may have 'implanted concepts of privileged service that led logically to the idea of a new Rome'[79], which is backed by the recollections of the poet Henry Newbolt about his education at Clifton College:

> It was a Roman rule, particularly fitted to the needs of the English schoolboy […] that demand[ed] of us the virtues of leadership, courage, and independence; the sacrifice of selfish interests to the ideal of fellowship and the future of the race. […] [In short,] to play the Horatian man of the world, the Gentleman after the high Roman fashion, making a fine art, almost a religion, of Stoicism.[80]

Similarly, others have believed that 'recollections of the practice of divide and rule, the building of buffer states, and the use of local auxiliaries'[81] absorbed from the formative study of Roman history influenced the later political policies of the members of this elite who gained administrative positions in the British Empire. Regardless of how it was employed subsequently, though, ancient Rome became a central component of upper-class Victorian discourse through its central use in elite education.

Although this group would have been one of the few in English society to be exposed to ancient Greek literature and history as part of their educations, the characteristics and conventions of the Roman world seem to have appealed more to them, owing to the increasing profile of the British imperial project during the mid-Victorian era, not to mention the devotion to public service, or *negotia publica*, which they shared with Rome's senatorial and equestrian classes.[82] Furthermore, the model of patrician

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[77] Edwards (1996: 8).
[78] Classical references also functioned as a source of restricted knowledge that united this elite wherever they found themselves in the empire. See Hagerman (2008).
[79] Morris (1979a: 23).
[80] Newbolt (1932: 165).
[81] Symonds (2000: 694).
[82] On the study of Greek in English public schools, see Bowen (1989). On the Victorian reception of Roman ideals of public service, see Patterson (2009: 138-40).

manhood espoused in traditional Roman history and literature bore a close resemblance to the Victorian model of masculinity extolled by influential commentators, such as Charles Kingsley and Samuel Smiles: commonsensical, dutiful, hard-working and patriotic, yet possessed of 'character' and sustained by stoicism.[83] Indeed, the code of gentlemanly conduct that defined the membership of this elite perceived discipline, disinterested duty and self-sacrifice in many ways that associated it with the similar model of Roman *virtus*.[84]

With the rise of the British Empire, the Romantic concept of 'sensibility' that had defined much late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century culture was replaced by the stoic 'stiff upper lip' that seemed more appropriate to a commercial people and an imperial 'race'.[85] Since the British imperial project was said to represent 'a gigantic system of outdoor relief for the upper classes'[86], this elite's financial, political and cultural investment in the British Empire encouraged parallels to their Roman imperial forebears. Often taking the form of an imagined *translatio imperii et studii*, or an alleged transfer of power and knowledge from Roman civilisation to Victorian society, this notion had a long heritage in Western culture.[87] In its Victorian incarnation, such a transmission provided a crucial legitimating support to England's domestic and imperial identity that presented the country's elite as the heirs of Rome.[88] Thus, the mature, masculine identity embodied by ancient Rome as a cultural model held direct appeal for the members of England's 'upper ten-thousand', owing to their profoundly classical educations and the conceptions of duty embodied in their social class – between them, creating a unique 'elixir of empire'.[89]

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[83] During the mid-Victorian era, Roman Stoicism gained increasing appeal. While Edward Poynter's painting *Faithful unto death* (1865) embodied the notions behind Stoic philosophy, the popularisation of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* focussed attention upon its essential precepts. Works such as George Long's 1862 edition of the work and Matthew Arnold's response, 'Marcus Aurelius' (1862), presented Stoic thought in an accessible manner to the literate Victorian public. See Behlman (2000) and Ellis (2012).

[84] See Cain (2007).

[85] On this transition, see Barker-Benfield (1992: ch. 2, 37-103) and Tosh (2007: 184-5).

[86] Bright (1882: 287).

[87] A concept that originated in Roman historiography and was introduced into Christian thought by St Jerome (i.e. Sallust, *De coniuratione Catilinae*, 2.6, and Jerome's commentary on Daniel 2.40), though developed into a useful legitimating political model during the medieval and early-modern eras. See Robinson (2011: 52-5).

[88] See Vasunia (2009: 109 and 113-14).

[89] Thornton (1959: 312).

Yet, while the 'upper ten-thousand' represented arguably the most influential social force in shaping the Victorian reception of Rome, the middle classes were key to its wider dissemination as a relevant cultural model.[90] Born out of the prosperity and urbanisation wrought by the Industrial Revolution, the Victorian middle classes provided an educated, receptive and upwardly-mobile group that made them a vital mediator of Roman reception. Centred upon family life and professional enterprise, this group looked to their alleged 'betters' among the upper classes for direction in 'gentrifying' their cultural choices; suggesting that elite attitudes to the Roman world were disseminated widely by it as a result.[91] Moreover, during the Victorian age, the upper and middle classes came to enjoy an increasingly close socio-political relationship, though this was not the case in the earlier part of the century.

Much like the 'Conflict of the Orders' that once occurred between the Roman patricians and plebeians, England's newborn middle classes were at odds with the country's elite for much of the first half of the nineteenth century, as the popular Reform movement clashed with the forces of political conservatism in Britain.[92] By the beginning of the Victorian era, however, the 1832 Reform Act and other associated legislation had largely resolved these differences by increasing the middle-class political franchise. In addition, the political challenges of the Corn Laws and Chartism were effectively settled in 1848, after which the country enjoyed largely peaceful social relations.[93] With membership of the upper classes made increasingly permeable throughout the Victorian era, the higher echelons of the professional middle class came to represent, in many respects, a social annexe of the 'upper ten-thousand'.[94] As a result, the Victorian upper and middle classes came to share much common ground, which encouraged the percolation of elite interpretations of Roman antiquity throughout this top fifth of British society.

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[90] On this group's origins, see Wahrman (1995), as well as Davidoff and Hall (2002). On its Victorian incarnation, see Thompson (1988).

[91] See Thane (1989). On the ways in which the Romans regulated access to their elites, see Hopkins (1965).

[92] See De Ste. Croix (1981: 332-7) and Raaflaub (2005).

[93] See Saunders (2011: ch. 1, 27-54).

[94] See Reader (1966).

While doctors, lawyers and the clergy represented the effective leaders of the middle classes, its membership and structure remained far more fluid than the upper classes.[95] Although the power of the nation's ruling elite rested ultimately upon its control of vast swathes of the country's landed property, the concept of 'gentility' lay ultimately at its heart – suggesting that a gentleman was made and not born.[96] Nor was wealth the only vector of standing, since classical knowledge was 'considered indispensable to the rank of a gentleman'[97], and offered one of the few social portals that regulated access to such a status outside of property or wealth.[98] Consequently, the acquirement of enough resources to send one's son to a public school and an Oxbridge college became a key conduit of potential social advance that was predicated upon the classical learning that dominated their respective curricula.[99] William Sewell, the founder of Radley College, for instance, once proclaimed that 'one of the many great uses of our public schools' was 'to confer an aristocracy on boys who do not inherit it'[100]; suggesting that public schools could empower this gentility through their attendance, rather than class, background or wealth.

In this context, the Victorian middle class could aspire to join the ranks of their social 'betters' through personal enterprise and the acquisition of enough capital or knowledge.[101] Indeed, Seneca's well-known ancient defence of Rome's *novus homo*, or 'new man', might well have represented the aspiration of the entire Victorian middle class, too.[102] Moreover, at the same time that bureaucratisation enlarged the British government administration, it made recruitment and advancement within its ranks more meritocratic, which led to an unprecedented level of middle-class participation in public life.[103] Gaining a stake in Victorian political culture, a large number of middle-class individuals achieved a higher social status through

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[95] See James (2006: 250-64).

[96] See Stanworth (1980), and, for a general study of the English gentleman, Mason (1982).

[97] Amos (1845: 263).

[98] For a contemporary reflection on the Victorian theory of classical education, see Sidgwick (1867). See also, Stray (1998a: 30-4).

[99] See Rubenstein (1986).

[100] Sewell (1872: 59). In the 1860s, the population of the public schools never exceeded *c*.7,500 pupils, which was spread between thirty-odd schools, including the *c*.2,700 that attended the nine Clarendon schools; meanwhile, during the same period, Oxbridge boasted a student population of just under 2,500. Thus, even if a meritocratic educational or intellectual 'aristocracy' was allowed to develop, it was still restricted to a very small elite. (Cited in Anderson (1992: 22).)

[101] See Anderson (2012).

[102] *Epistles,* 44. See Wiseman (1971).

[103] See Musgrove (1959).

educational advancement and professional preferment.[104] Later, the American historian Henry Pratt Judson divined a parallel between the Romans and the Victorian middle class, in which he suggested that their character found a clear analogue in Roman culture:

> The old Romans were in many ways like the modern English. They were hard-headed merchants and acute lawyers. They were keen, shrewd civilised men, using adroitly the means at hand. They were, in short, much what Englishmen would be without the printing press, steam and the telegraph.[105]

So, through cultural imitation and social absorption, the *homines novi* of the Victorian middle class came to enjoy a close association with the attitudes of the 'upper ten-thousand', while also growing to perceive much of value in their increasing use of Roman antiquity to make sense of the present.

An Edwardian nursery rhyme held that '[t]he Germans live in Germany; the Romans live in Rome; the Turkeys live in Turkey, but the English live at home'[106]; a piece of nonsense verse, though one nonetheless that bears an essential truth about the English reputation for domesticity. Since English middle-class life was effectively founded upon the twin bases of domestic security and public duty – each of which represented ideals extolled by Roman culture –, its private and public spheres registered parallels to ancient Rome. While a domestic sensibility was not exclusive to Victorian culture, its devotion to the hearth as the focal point of community life seemed so close to the Roman ideal that some commentators remarked upon the comparison.[107] The German diplomat Stefan Muthesius noted, for example, that '[t]he fireplace is the domestic altar before which, daily and hourly, [the Englishman] sacrifices to the household gods'.[108] Even the word 'vesta' that entered contemporary parlance from the 1830s to

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[104] See Annan (1990: 5-23).
[105] Judson (1894: 105).
[106] Quoted in Cohen (2006: x).
[107] For comparison of their respective domestic arrangements, see Croom (2011) and Flanders (2004).
[108] Muthesius (1987: 181).

describe matches derived from an early match-brand called *Vesta* that was named after the Roman goddess of the hearth.[109]

Significantly, statements made by the Victorians on the importance of hearth and home often closely resemble remarks made by the Romans. Take, for example, Cicero's reflection following the destruction of his home in 57 B.C., which emphasised the importance of domesticity to the Romans:

> What is more holy, more fortified by every sort of numinous awe than the home of every individual citizen? Here are his altars, his hearth, his household gods; here are located his rites, ceremonies and observances; here for all men is a refuge so inviolate that it is a sacrilege for anyone to be torn away from it.[110]

Echoing Cicero's assertions closely, the art critic John Ruskin presented the Victorian home in a similar manner in *Sesame and lilies* (1865):

> This is the true nature of home – it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but from all terror, doubt, and division. In so far as it is not this, it is not home; so far as the anxieties of the outer world penetrate into it, and inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society of the out world is allowed by either husband or wife to cross the threshold, it ceases to be home; it is then only a part of that outer world, which you have roofed over, and lighted fire in. But so far as it is a sacred place, a vestal temple, a temple of the hearth watched over by the Household Gods […] so far as it is this, and roof and fire are types only of a nobler shade and light, – shade as of the rock in a weary land, and light as of the Pharos in the stormy sea; – so far it vindicates the name, and fulfils the praise of home.[111]

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[109] See http://www.oed.com/view/Entry222887 [accessed 25 September 2014].
[110] *De domo sua*, 41.109.
[111] Ruskin (1865: 122).

Even Lord Leighton who, as a painter of Hellenic-themed works, was often critical of the Roman contribution to culture allowed that they shared with the Victorians 'the worship of the Goddess of the hearth: *Hestia – Vesta*'.[112]

Like the elite's veneration of the ancient concept of *virtus*, the ideals that Victorians sought to inculcate around this hearth could be translated from some of the chief Roman virtues. One could easily extrapolate some typical Victorian values from their Roman forebears, for instance, such as 'decorum' from *dignitas*, 'character' from *gravitas*, 'respectability' from *honestas*, 'hard work' from *industria,* or 'duty' from *pietas*.[113] Often used to encourage moral betterment in society, these ancient terms were often invoked by Victorians, such as Benjamin Disraeli, who once appealed for the 'greater cultivation of the old Roman values of *pietas* and *gravitas*'.[114] With the rise of the British imperial project into its most active phase, there was an opportunity to prove all of these ideals in challenging contexts that called for stoic bravery and self-sacrifice, such as the Siege of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny. Since Ennius had famously suggested that 'the Roman state stands through its ancient morals and its great men'[115], the Victorian middle classes could find plenty of inspiration in the ideals of duty and self-sacrifice of Roman heroes to the state, such as Scipio Africanus.[116] So, by making daily obeisance to their own particular household gods – the *Lares* and *Penates* of family and community, the domestic hearth and public duty –, the members of the country's middle class could identify more than a passing likeness to their Roman forebears.

While elite and middle-class interpretations of Roman antiquity dominated English culture, however, viewing only their exclusive vision of Rome ignores the other *c*.80% of the population among the country's lower classes.[117] While it is far more difficult to evaluate classical reception among this group – primarily owing to a lack of surviving evidence about their exposure to antiquity –, the data that does emerge

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[112] Leighton (1896: 113). Interestingly, one of his only two Roman-themed works was *Vestal* (*c*.1882-3).
[113] For comparison, see Mattingly (1937) and James (2006: 231-49).
[114] Quoted in Dawson (1930: 35).
[115] *Annals*, 156.
[116] On the Victorian reception of Scipio, see Hagerman (2013: 95-6).
[117] For a pioneering treatment of working-class intellectual life, see Rose (2001). On the ways in which elite and popular receptions of Rome could coalesce on one issue, see Wood Cordulack (2003).

suggests that they appreciated Greco-Roman culture differently. [118] While more much work needs to be done on the subject, it is clear that their understandings of the classical world were mediated for the most part through actual experiences and visual displays, rather than textual sources.[119] Certainly, there were always individual autodidacts, but the establishment of numerous mechanics' institutes and provincial colleges, as well as the work of organisations such as the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, aided working-class classical knowledge significantly.[120] Yet, the majority of the lower classes derived their knowledge of the ancient world from a combination of visual culture and theatrical events.

As advertising developed during the Victorian era, it drew upon a wealth of visual references to appeal to the consumer – including the Roman world, which offered a plethora of colourful sights and settings.[121] Numerous examples of the visual ephemera of the time invoked Roman allusions, such as the membership certificates of the Operative Bricklayers' Society from *c*.1861, which portrayed images of construction techniques in ancient Rome and contemporary London.[122] Indeed, the figure of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom appeared to possess particular resonance for Victorian advertisers as an emblem of prudence and security. For instance, the academic painter Edward Poynter's 1874 advertisement for the Guardian Fire and Life Assurance Company presented a vivid reincarnation of the goddess in the 'Third Style' of Pompeian mural painting; while an anonymous 1886 pen-and-ink advertisement for Chancery Lane Safe Deposit offered a similar, though less sophisticated, vision of her as a commercial protectress.[123] Even a major contemporary brand like Pears' Soap can be seen to have drawn upon the Roman world, as in its 1886 advertisement that portrayed the actress Lillie Langtry relaxing in a palatial Roman bath clearly inspired by Lawrence Alma-Tadema's visions of

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[118] See McElduff (2006).

[119] While her scholarship is concerned primarily with classical reception on the other side of the Atlantic, many of Margaret Malamud's conclusions regarding American working-class understandings of the classical past are also true of their British contemporaries. See Malamud (2009: ch. 2, 34-69 and 2012: 274-82).

[120] See Hunt (2004: 124-6) and Vernon (2004: ch. 3, 93-132). On working-class knowledge of Latin, see Rose (2001: 226-7).

[121] See Hindley and Hindley (1972).

[122] See Dixon and Muthesius (1985: 9).

[123] See Hindley and Hindley (1972: 75). *Illustrated London News*, 20 October 1886. See Piotrowski (2011: 228-30).

Roman antiquity.[124] So, despite the eclecticism of the Victorian commercial sphere, classical Rome held an esteemed place that made it a regular visual reference for even the lower classes.

Yet, it was arguably through public exhibitions and theatrical productions that the majority of the lower classes would have experienced their main exposure to Roman culture. Of course, the Great Exhibition represented the flagship public exposition, but there were numerous others held throughout Britain during the Victorian era – many of which included exhibits and reconstructions relating to the ancient world.[125] During the early years of Victoria's reign, Britain's working classes also gained the monetary and transport means to visit such exhibitions, which exposed them to the content of their displays.[126] In George Gissing's novel *The nether world* (1889), for example, he devotes an entire chapter entitled 'Io Saturnalia' to a working-class visit to the Crystal Palace, where he invokes the Roman Saturnalia as an emblem of the excessive consumption on display.[127] While these visions of antiquity were produced largely by the 'upper ten-thousand' to edify members of other classes, commercially-minded businessmen and impresarios soon realised the value of ancient Rome as an exotic historical setting for the spectacular entertainments that defined contemporary popular theatre.[128] This meant, however, that the Roman world was often envisioned in artificial and unrealistic manners in order to satisfy the Victorian appetite for sensation.[129]

Originally, Roman scenes were reconstructed in 'hippodramas', or equine spectacles, that dated back to the late eighteenth century, though it was in the form of *tableaux vivants* and 'toga plays' that this trend became chiefly manifested in the Victorian era.[130] Sharing with the Romans a passion for spectacular forms of circus

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[124] *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 16 January 1886, 3. See Piotrowski (2011: 225-6).

[125] Along with the Great Exhibition, London hosted an International Exhibition in 1862, a series of expositions in 1871, 1872, 1873 and 1874, and a Colonial Exhibition in 1886. In addition, there were a series of smaller, provincial exhibitions in Cork, Dublin, Manchester, Edinburgh, Liverpool and Glasgow. On the working-class experience of these exhibitions, see Gurney (2001).

[126] See Barton (2005: chs 2 and 3: 23-72).

[127] See Gissing (1982: 104-13).

[128] See Booth (1981).

[129] See Diamond (2003), and, for an example of Rome's use in one such 'sensation', ibid., 284.

[130] See Saxon (1968). Again, more research has been completed on these Roman-inspired entertainments on the other side of the Atlantic, though many of these same shows also toured to Britain. See Malamud (2001). In contrast, the Hellenic world provided little in the way of similar

entertainment, Victorian populist theatre often took the form of shows modelled upon entertainments available in the ancient amphitheatre, such as displays of horsemanship, the exhibition of exotic animals and the performance of mock battles – all of which found a ready audience among the lower classes.[131] As such, the Victorian working classes experienced antiquity principally through public exhibitions and theatrical performances, which meant that their understandings of Rome were mediated by the melodramatic and sensationalist content of many of these displays.

So, in examining the social dynamics behind Victorian classical reception, it is clear that the 'upper ten-thousand' played the most influential role in conditioning responses to ancient Rome among the rest of society. Already primed to perceive similarities between themselves and their Roman forebears through their classical educations and paternalist social position, this elite also possessed the means to transmit their attitudes and opinions to the increasingly-literate members of the middle class. Since the upwardly-mobile middle classes sought to emulate their alleged 'betters', they imitated many of their structures, interests and values – which included a veneration for classics, and Roman antiquity in particular. Reinforced by the improved educational and employment prospects opened to them by bureaucratisation, the middle classes developed an affinity with the 'upper ten-thousand' that was centred upon their mutual devotion to their family and community, as enshrined in their domestic devotion and public duty. Yet, while they experienced the lowest levels of education and literacy, even the working classes were exposed to the Roman world, though primarily through non-textual frames of reference, such as exhibitions and performances.

As a result, Victorian appreciation of the Roman world was more socially integrated than it had been even during the 'Augustan' era of the eighteenth century, which created a distinct cultural discourse regarding Rome with which all classes would have been familiar. Certainly, there remained key differences in conceptions of Rome across the upper, middle and lower classes, but, for the most part, they shared a set of

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spectacle, excepting, perhaps, the display of Greek 'living statues'; upon which see Richards (2009: ch. 3, 66-98).

[131] For comparison of the respective forms of spectacular entertainment enjoyed by the Romans and the Victorians, see the essays in Ewiglebe and Köhne (2000) alongside Assael (2003).

similar understandings. Due to the foremost influence of England's classically-educated social and intellectual elite, the middle classes were conditioned by their prominent responses to antiquity, though they, in turn, influenced the working classes beneath them with their impressions. While complicated by a number of socio-cultural factors, such as class, education and geography, a general top-down percolation is evident in the contemporary reception of Roman antiquity.

As the Victorian era proceeded and Rome rose to become more of a viable cultural model for English society and empire, many within and without England began to conceive of significant parallels between Roman and Victorian society. Matthew Arnold, for one, noted that 'the affinity of spirit in our best public life and greatest public men to those of Rome, has often struck observers, foreign as well as English'.[132] In 1851, for instance, Michelangelo Caetani, the Duke of Sermoneta, proclaimed that he believed that the true successors of the Romans were not the Italians, but the English:

> When I read Cicero's letters, I fancy myself reading the correspondence
> of one of your statesmen. All the thoughts, all the feeling, almost all the
> expressions are English.[133]

Thus, throughout the mid-nineteenth period, Victorian culture registered an increasing resurgence of interest in Roman antiquity, which transcended even the rigid boundaries of the English class system to become a relevant cultural model.

3.3. Rome-ward bound: the revival of ancient Rome, *c*.1850-70

Following Waterloo, British foreign policy was defined by an isolationist stance that set it apart from international developments. With the Great Exhibition in 1851, however, English society announced its return to international prominence.[134] Representing a watershed in English culture, this was the first major occasion where

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[132] Arnold (1962: 352). He may have been thinking of an 1859 conversation that he had had with François Guizot, in which the French statesman had remarked that '[y]ou and the Romans are the only two governing nations of the world'. (Arnold (1928: 44).)
[133] Senior (1871: ii, 100). A few years later, the Duke's countryman Giuseppe Garibaldi mirrored these sentiments by remarking that 'of all modern nations', England was 'most like ancient Rome'. (Quoted in *The Times*, 20 February 1875, 9.)
[134] See Auerbach (1999).

Britain heralded to the world the advances that it had achieved as a domestic and imperial power. Although intended to display European and American manufacturing achievements, the pioneering nature of the Great Exhibition as the first 'world's fair', as well as the innovative design of the Crystal Palace in which it was held, showcased to all the position of Britain at the forefront of international industrial developments.[135] Importantly, until the Crystal Palace was built, the Roman Colosseum was claimed to represent the largest architectural structure in history, which made the exhibition's venue a satisfying symbol of Britain's achievements as a nation when compared to those of ancient Rome.[136] When the structure was moved to Sydenham in south London in 1854, fresh areas were added, and many of its displays made permanent. Significantly, among its new exhibits were a 'Roman Court' and a 'Pompeian Court', which had been designed by the architect Matthew Digby Wyatt and filled with reconstructions of life in the Roman world.[137] So, while the Great Exhibition advertised Britain's position as the most modern of nations, this was undercut by a paradoxical number of resonances to, and reconstructions of, Roman antiquity that suggested the growing importance of classical Rome to Victorian culture.

During the next twenty years, English culture registered an increasing interest in Rome that was manifested across a range of cultural productions, including a revival in the excellence of Latin scholarship and Roman historiography produced in England, as well as both amateur and professional interactions with the Roman past. Popularised by a number of diverse figures, while given visual form by the 'Olympian' art movement, Rome can be seen to have gained an increasingly pervasive influence in Victorian society between 1850 and 1870. Capped by the simultaneous development of Britain's imperial project into a significant component of Victorian life, the 1850s and 60s witnessed the effective revival of Roman antiquity in English culture. Manifested through the more assertive employment of relevant allusions and parallels, during these decades Rome began to enjoy a growing centrality to domestic and imperial discourse in England.

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[135] See Young (2008).
[136] See Woodward (2001: 5).
[137] Described in Scharf (1854). Kate Nichols' forthcoming volume in the *Classical Presences* series, *Greece and Rome at the Crystal Palace*, promises to explore much more of the classical culture on display at the Crystal Palace during its lifespan.

To return to some of the statistics cited previously in relation to the changing profile of ancient Rome, it is possible to see evidenced from the mid-century period increasing references to the Roman world.[138] Taking the term 'Roman Empire', for instance, one can see how its frequency echoes the wider reception of Rome in English culture: occurring on 93 occasions in *The Times* during the period 1789-1815, 189 during 1825-50, 424 during 1850-75, and 486 during 1875-1900; in the *Nineteenth-Century Newspapers Database*, 155 times during 1800-15, 1,075 during 1825-50, 2,402 during 1850-75, and 2,380 during 1875-1900; and in the *Parliamentary Papers*, 39 times during 1789-1815, 97 during 1825-50, 170 during 1850-75, and 162 during 1875-1900. Significantly, this is in contrast to the term 'Roman Republic', which is mentioned in 30 separate instances in *The Times* during the period 1789-1815, 108 during 1825-50, 116 during 1850-75, but only 46 during 1875-1900; in the *Nineteenth-Century Newspapers Database*, 11 times during 1800-15, 659 during 1825-50, 797 during 1850-75, but only 224 during 1875-1900; and in the *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*, 7 times during 1789-1815, 20 during 1825-50, 37 during 1850-75, but only 6 during 1875-1900. Hence, in contrast to diminishing attention being given to Republican Rome, one can see a definite turn towards interest in Roman imperial history from the mid-century period, which concurs with the simultaneous development of a new high-profile phase of the British imperial project.

Similarly, the term 'Latin' is seen to occur in *The Times* on 1,936 occasions during the period 1789-1815, 8,420 during 1825-50, 16,001 during 1850-75, and 16,507 during 1875-1900; in the *Nineteenth-Century Newspapers Database*, 3,684 times during 1800-15, 20,658 during 1825-50, 51,341 during 1850-75, and 80,347 during 1875-1900; and in the *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*, 222 times during 1789-1815, 715 during 1825-50, 1,288 during 1850-75, and 2,011 during 1875-1900. Perhaps, most significantly, the incidence of the very word 'Rome' itself accords exactly with the broader trajectory of Roman reception identified in this study: appearing in *The Times* in 2,225 instances during the period 1789-1815, 12,902 during 1825-50, 28,562 during 1850-75, and 45,889 during 1875-1900; in the

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[138] http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/ttda/basicsearch.do [accessed 4 October 2014].
http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/bbcn/basicsearch.do [accessed 4 October 2014].
http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk./search/search.do [accessed 4 October 2014].

Nineteenth-Century Newspapers Database, 4,085 times during 1800-15, 47,031 during 1825-50, 160,663 during 1850-75, and 210,963 during 1875-1900; and in the *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* 349 times during 1789-1815, 1,531 during 1825-50, 2,047 during 1850-75, and 3,192 during 1875-1900. So, again, despite the unrefined nature of such figures, it cannot be disputed that there was a positive shift in references to Rome during the mid-century period, after which Roman antiquity was restored to distinct cultural prominence.

In 1864, William Gladstone observed that it was 'the proud boast of England to have a very large body of highly-educated gentlemen deeply imbued with the spirit of ancient […] literature'.[139] Yet, with the notion of what made a gentleman broadened throughout the first decades of the Victorian era by the growing influence of middle-class education and wealth, more and more English men and women outside of the upper classes could begin to claim not only awareness, but understanding of antiquity. Much of this occurred due to the publishing revolution of the 1850s and the explosion in adult literacy that followed, which created a literate and informed populace interested in subjects such as the ancient world.[140] This can be seen evidenced, for instance, by the increased incidence of classical allusions in mid-Victorian fiction, which often derived from the Latin knowledge absorbed through middle-class schooling.[141] Furthermore, with the contemporary trend for self-education that emerged in the wake of Samuel Smiles' *Self help* (1859), more people than ever before had an interest in acquiring learning, which encouraged the culture-wide appreciation of ancient Rome.[142] Indeed, the fact that a group of working-class Devon tradesmen in the 1860s sought a Latin education for their sons indicates, not only the contemporary social prestige of classical knowledge, but, perhaps, also the percolation of a Roman revival throughout English society.[143] As a result, the socio-political developments of the mid-century period era led to an unprecedented

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[139] Speech in the House of Commons, 6 May 1864; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 175, col. 129.
[140] This occurred due to a number of key reforms. Firstly the Public Libraries Act of 1850 made an unprecedented level of information available in the public domain, while the abolition of advertisement tax in 1853, newspaper tax in 1855, and the duty on paper in 1861 together allowed the evolution of a burgeoning British newspaper and periodical industry. In addition, the greater liberalism that followed the 1867 Second Reform Act encouraged increased freedom of the press, while the 1870 Education Act created a generation for whom literacy was not a luxury, but an essential. On the wider context of these developments, see Vincent (1989).
[141] See Skilton (1988) and Osborne (2001).
[142] See Stephens and Roderick (1983).
[143] See Clarke (1959: 86).

expansion in the forms and levels of popular knowledge, which assisted the revival of Rome in English society.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, classical publishing, such Abraham John Valpy's reprinted *Delphin Classics* (1819-30) and the German Teubner series (1828-), had been aimed primarily at the educated upper classes, which was expressed by the fact that they contained no English translations.[144] Around 1850, however, with the publication of a number of new series of translations aimed at the middle-class market, this changed. Inaugurated by the extensive popularity of Henry George Bohn's *Classical Library* (1848-1913), other publishers realised the market for such translations, leading to series such as Rivington's *Catena Classicorum*, though it was Blackwood's *Ancient Classics for English Readers* (1870-1932) that enjoyed arguably the most success.[145] While often expurgated for their middle-class audiences, these publishing series still allowed the Victorian middle, and even lower, classes unprecedented access to Greek and Latin literature, which stimulated popular interest in and knowledge of antiquity.[146] Moreover, their popularity made the Roman world an increasingly familiar cultural locale, owing to the now-increased availability of the original Latin sources in English.

While Roman historiography remained present in a low-profile form throughout the early-to-mid nineteenth century, English works on Rome seem to have increased in originality and frequency during the 1850s and 60s. Initially, works that took a light-hearted and playful approach to Roman history seemed to enjoy the most popularity, especially Gilbert Abbott á Beckett's *A comic history of Rome* (1851-2), though others, such as Thomas Francis Dillon Croker's poetic burlesque *Romulus and Remus* (1859) also enjoyed success. Yet, perhaps, the majority of works sold on Roman history were those designed for educational purposes, such as Henry George Liddell's two-volume *History of Rome* (1855) and William Smith's *Smaller history of Rome* (1860), which fed into the contemporary publishing explosion and new-found vogue for self-education. So, as one can see, from the mid-century period Roman history

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[144] See Grafton *et al*. (2010: 145).

[145] On Bohn, see O'Sullivan (2009). On Blackwood's series, see Oliphant (1874a and 1874b).

[146] For a useful example, see Leary (2012). More broadly, see Vance (2007: 96-7).

began to provide much of value to the Victorian public in terms of both amusement and edification.

Such volumes were also joined by more sophisticated examinations of Roman history, especially as they applied to contemporary affairs. Richard Congreve's *The Roman Empire in the West* (1855), for instance, was based on the assertion that the Roman Empire deserved renewed attention because it offered a far more relevant comparison for contemporary Britain than the more widely-studied Roman Republic.[147] While Congreve's work could not compete with the scholarly achievements of Connop Thirlwall and George Grote in their recent, multi-volume Greek histories, its imperial emphasis indicates a definite shift towards an increased scholarly interaction with the Roman Empire. Yet, as exemplified by Goldwin Smith's review of the work, not everyone was convinced by the alleged worth of the Roman imperial model. Condemning Congreve's argument, Smith explained how '[h]itherto we have believed that the Republic was the youth and manhood of Rome, the empire its decline[,] [but] Mr Congreve has arrived at the opposite conclusion'.[148] By proclaiming Julius Caesar the tyrannical antecedent of Napoleon, he also associated Roman imperialism with the still-potent shadow of the revolutionary age.[149] Smith further contended that the Roman Empire was a unique historical edifice, which made it ineffective as a comparative model.[150] Most damning of all, Smith dismissed the Roman Empire as a 'tyranny' that was 'the natural offspring and scourge of a society without morality and without a God', while hoping that 'humanity will never see its like again'.[151] Despite its contested reception, however, it is clear that a study like Congreve's was representative of Victorian culture's growing interest in Rome's imperial incarnation.

One of the few Roman histories that rivalled contemporary accomplishments in Greek studies was Charles Merivale's eight-volume *History of the Romans under the empire* (1850-64). Opening in the late Republic and concluding in the Antonine Age, this work demonstrated an increasing scholarly emphasis on Roman imperial history,

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[147] See Congreve (1855: 5-7 and 10-11).
[148] Smith (1856: 296).
[149] See ibid., 297-301.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., 310 and 312.

rather than its republican forebear.[152] Although critical of the Romans on certain issues, throughout the work Merivale highlighted the achievements of autocratic figures, such as Julius Caesar and Augustus, focussed upon the contribution of the ancient 'middle classes', and emphasised the relevance of Roman imperial history to contemporary Britain and its empire.[153] Although a churchman and eventually Dean of Ely Cathedral, he was in touch with many of the colonial issues of his day, owing to the fact that he had been educated at the East India college at Haileybury and was the younger brother of Herman Merivale, who served as permanent under-secretary at the Colonial Office (1848-59) and the India Office (1859-74).

In addition, the fourteen-year span of his multi-volume work's research and publication shows how Merivale's opinions evolved on a number of key issues during the course of its writing, which accords with the similar transition that occurred in English society regarding Roman history. Altering his historical conception of the Augustan era, for instance, Merivale opened his work with the Arnoldian-inspired belief that Roman decline began with Augustus, but modified it by his final volumes to the view that Augustus had been the architect of a workable political system that had endured until late antiquity.[154] Citing its 'extension of rights, […] protection of property, and […] multiplication of enjoyments and expansion of the natural affections'[155], Merivale implicitly venerated the Augustan system as a potential model for the British imperial project. Representing the most extensive English study of the Roman past since Edward Gibbon's *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire*, Merivale's history exemplified many of the preoccupations of his times, which makes it a vital cultural artefact in understanding the revival experienced by Rome during the period of its composition.

Combined with the pioneering scholarship of Theodor Mommsen's *History of Rome* (1854-6; English trans. 1862-7), Merivale's work set the tone for the subsequent English concentration on Roman imperial history, which accorded closely with the

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[152] This transition in popular interest from the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire during the 1850s and 60s was noted soon after by Goldwin Smith, though recent scholars, such as Peter Wiseman, have also agreed with its timeline. (See Smith (1881: 286) and Wiseman (2005: 42).)
[153] See Turner (1986: 589-92).
[154] Most of the fourth and fifth volumes of Merivale's work are devoted to Augustus' contribution to Roman history. See Butler (2012: 37).
[155] Merivale (1856: 555).

rise of the British imperial project into a more active phase during the 1860s.[156]
Indeed, George Long's five-volume *The decline of the Roman Republic* (1864-74)
appeared to justify this greater concentration on imperial Rome by surveying the
degeneration of the republican polity that it replaced. This position was further
reinforced in the 1860s by a number of key articles in popular periodicals by
influential commentators, who reassessed major figures from Roman imperial history,
such as Nero and Marcus Aurelius.[157] Consequently, the 1850s and 60s represented a
time of rejuvenation for academic and popular interpretations of Roman history in
England.

Similarly, Latin scholarship in England enjoyed a clear resurgence during this same
twenty-year period, which was expressed in both institutional and scholarly
developments.[158] Perhaps, most importantly, while chairs of Greek at the ancient
universities date back to the reign of Henry VIII, chairs of Latin were only established
at Oxford in 1854, and at Cambridge in 1869.[159] While Latin remained a central
curricular component of English education throughout the nineteenth century, the
enhanced institutional profile of Latin studies offered opportunities for increasingly
eminent English Latinists to gain national reputations, such as John Conington and
Henry Nettleship at Oxford, and Hugh Andrew Johnstone Munro and John Eyton
Bickersteth Mayor at Cambridge.[160] Meanwhile, others who were less bound to
Oxbridge, such as the Scottish classicist William Young Sellar, also assisted the
contemporary revival of Rome.[161] In addition, many of the most important Latinists
and Romanists of the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras learned their trade during this
period, including schoolmasters such as John Eyre Yonge and Thomas Ethelbert
Page, and dons such as James Leigh Strachan-Davidson at Oxford and William
Emerton Heitland at Cambridge. Most importantly of all, a series of major editions of

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[156] In his work, Mommsen challenged the Gibbonian trajectory of Rome's alleged rise, decline and fall;
replacing it with a far more subtle set of complex historical continuities that extended into modern
history. As a result, imperial Rome was freed of some of its negative connotations of decadence, which
made it available for potential employment as a parallel to explain the expansion of Britain's own
imperial project. See Croke (1990).
[157] Lewes (1863). Arnold (1865: 344-79).
[158] See Sandys (1908: 431-6).
[159] John Conington was the first Corpus professor of Latin at Oxford (1854-69) and Hugh Andrew
Johnstone Munro the first Regius professor of Latin at Cambridge (1869-72).
[160] For context, see Brink (1986: ch. 7, 114-49).
[161] Sellar was educated at the University of Glasgow and Balliol College, Oxford, but held positions at
Oriel College, Oxford, Durham, Glasgow and St Andrews. During his career, he produced a significant
oeuvre of scholarship on Republican and Augustan Latin poetry that focussed on recapturing its spirit.

Latin authors, such as J.E.B. Mayor's Juvenal (1853) and H.A.J. Munro's Lucretius (1864), as well as more general works, such as Theophilus Hall's and William Smith's *English-Latin dictionary* (1870), and Henry John Roby's *Grammar of the Latin language from Plautus to Suetonius* (1871-4), began to establish English Latin scholarship as a rival to Germany's traditional philological supremacy in the classical languages.[162]

One of the main areas in which a successive decline and revival in Latin studies can be perceived is in the mid-century reception of one of the keystones of Latin literature, the *Aeneid*.[163] Like much associated with Rome during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, Virgil's work had diminished in popularity from the venerated position that it had enjoyed during the eighteenth century.[164] In the interim, the heyday of English Hellenism had denigrated Virgil's epic beside its Homeric predecessors, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. William Gladstone, for instance, once criticised the *Aeneid* for being a poor derivative of Homer by remarking that 'Homer walks in the open day, Virgil by lamplight [....] From Virgil back to Homer is a greater distance, than from Homer back to life'.[165] Throughout the mid-century period, however, an increasing number of works related to the *Aeneid* were published, including Francis Edward Jackson Valpy's etymology of the epic *Virgilian hours* (1849) and James Henry's *Notes of a twelve years' voyage of discovery in the first six books of the* Aeneid (1859). Yet, only with John Conington's renowned translation of the *Aeneid* (1866) – part of his three-volume edition of Virgil's works (1858-71) – was the epic effectively rehabilitated in England.[166]

Outside the cloisters of the academy, the profile of Latin in England was also being transformed. At the most elementary level of education, Benjamin Hall Kennedy's *Public school Latin primer* (1866) and *Public school Latin grammar* (1871) revolutionised the teaching of Latin by replacing the antiquated *Eton Latin grammar*,

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[162] See Turner (2014: 171-8).
[163] See Turner (1993b), esp. 300-5.
[164] See ibid., 291-2.
[165] Gladstone (1858: iii, 512).
[166] Conington's work was also bookended by two new translations of the *Aeneid*, Robert Corbett Singleton's two-volume *The works of Virgil* (1855), and James Lonsdale's and Samuel Lee's *The works of Virgil rendered into English prose* (1871). See Rogerson (2007).

first published in 1758.[167] With his *Revised primer* (1888) becoming the standard Latin textbook until the later twentieth century (and still in print today), Kennedy's volumes represent arguably the most celebrated and influential cultural artefacts of the Victorian reception of Roman antiquity. In addition, with the publication of a set of guidelines for schools and universities, *Syllabus of Latin pronunciation* (1872), a settlement was reached on the vexed issue of Latin pronunciation, which had exercised schoolmasters and scholars throughout the nineteenth century.[168] In the same year, the historian E.A. Freeman observed that 'the true glory of the Latin tongue is to have become the eternal speech of law and dominion'[169], which made the terms of its scholarly and popular extension over the 1850s and 60s highly relevant to the burgeoning nature of contemporary Victorian society and empire, as well as a crucial component of the rehabilitation of Rome. So, despite having been a relative backwater for Latin scholarship for much of the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, England witnessed an upsurge in the quantity and quality of Latin studies during the 1850s and 60s, as well as an associated increase in popular knowledge of Latin literature.

Significantly, certain individuals played more of a part than others in popularising the revival of Rome in English culture during the 1850s and 60s, such as George Long. Enjoying a lengthy and varied career, Cambridge-educated Long began his career as a lecturer at the University of Virginia (1824-8), served as first professor of Greek at University College London (1828-31), and professor of Latin there (1842-6), before lecturing in law at the Middle Temple (1846-9), and ending his career teaching classics at Brighton College (1849-71). The author of numerous articles and books, Long was known in particular for his editions of Cicero's *Orations* (1851-62), Caesar's *Gallic Wars* (1853) and Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* (1862), though he also revised editions of Juvenal/Persius (1867) and Horace (1869), as well as writing a major, multi-volume history of the late Roman Republic (1864-74). Yet, outside of his career as a scholar, he also worked tirelessly to extend popular knowledge and understanding of the classical world among the lower classes. To this end, he was a leading light in the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and the Central

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[167] See Stray (1998a: 191-6).
[168] See ibid., 196-8.
[169] Freeman (1873a: 324).

Society of Education, as well as serving as editor of both the *Penny Cyclopaedia* (1833-46) and the *Bibliotheca Classica* series (1851-8), which presented some of the first popular classical editions boasting English commentaries. As an individual whose expertise was validated by his scholarly credentials, Long presented Latin literature and Roman history to those classes of Victorian society who had not received exclusive classical educations, which helped to transmit the Roman revival far beyond the academy.

Other individuals had more idiosyncratic, though still valid, contributions to make to this renaissance of Rome, such as the lawyer and antiquarian Henry George Coote.[170] Although an amateur, Coote published a number of works that speculated upon the influence of the Roman past on English identity. While many had emphasised the cultural legacy inherited by England from its Roman occupation, Coote's *A neglected fact in English history* (1864) – developed from an original 1845 article – suggested that the English 'race' were descended genetically from the Romans, who therefore represented 'the creator[s], under providence, of the […] modern greatness of England'.[171] His theorising fitted well with contemporary investigations into England's Celtic origins, such as Luke Owen Pike's *The English and their origin* (1866) and Thomas Nicholas' *The pedigree of the English people* (1868), which had begun to challenge its traditional Teutonic genesis in the light of the rise of Prussia.[172] Yet, since the received opinion was that the Roman occupation had made no significant impact on the racial make-up of the British Isles, Coote's ideas were controversial.[173]

Later revised in *The Romans of Britain* (1878), Coote's reconception of Britain's Roman past argued that it was absurd to imagine that the English 'race' owed nothing to the Romans. Instead, he proposed that Romano-Britons must have 'continued to exist […] as a separate and indefeasible caste and nationality' after the arrival of the

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[170] See Hingley (2008: 275-8).
[171] Coote (1845). Coote (1878: 4-5).
[172] See Young (1994: 73) and MacDougall (1982: 128-9).
[173] Coote's theory received little attention until 1870, when E.A. Freeman attacked it in an article in *Macmillan's Magazine*. (See Freeman (1870).) Freeman received support from eminent individuals, such as the scientist Thomas Henry Huxley, who suggested that Roman blood and the Latin language had made 'no more impression on the ancient British people than the English blood and language have on the Hindoos [*sic*]'. (Beddoe *et al.* (1870: 198-9).)

Saxons; while any loss suffered was rectified by the subsequent Norman conquest that 'rehabilitated' the 'Roman element', which continued its task 'in preserving and transmitting the deposit of civilisation' in the British Isles.[174] As a result, Coote claimed that England is 'as much a Latin country as Spain or Gaul, though, unlike them, she has disguised her pedigree by her adopted Teutonic idiom'.[175] Thus, in attempting to transform England's Roman cultural heritage into a biological one, Coote's work was indicative of the increasing trend during the 1850s and 60s of attempting to integrate the Roman past into the English present.

Although Roman-themed works continued to feature in the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibitions throughout the early-to-mid nineteenth century – such as the architect Arthur Ashpitel's watercolours *Rome, as it was, restored after existing remains* (1858) and *Rome as it is, from the Palatine Hill* (1859) –, they remained largely unrelated to any popular trend.[176] In 1865, however, among the other works shown, this exhibition displayed six paintings set in Roman antiquity that helped to instigate the neoclassicist art movement that became known as Victorian 'Olympianism'.[177] Together, Edward Poynter's *Faithful unto death*, Simeon Solomon's *Habet!*, John Everett Millais' *The Romans leaving Britain*, William Maw Egley's *Glaucus and Ione in the cave of the Witch of Vesuvius*, William Henry O'Connor's *A priestess of Vesta*, and Paul Falconer Poole's *A suburb of the Roman city of Pompeii during the eruption of 79 A.D.* all presented variant visions of the Roman world.[178]

Reviewing the exhibition, the *Pall Mall Gazette* noted not only 'the prevalence of historical incidents' among the paintings, but also that 'Roman subjects are much in fashion this year'[179], while marking out those of Poynter and Solomon for specific praise. Meanwhile, in *Fraser's Magazine*, William Michael Rossetti (brother of the artist Dante Gabriel) identified a 'phase of classic revival among our painters'[180], and

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[174] Coote (1878: 2-3 and 5).
[175] Ibid., 11.
[176] Both of which were also left to the nation upon Ashpitel's death in 1869. See Thomas (2008: 93-4).
[177] See Wood (1983).
[178] See Prettejohn (1996: 64). Demonstrating the cultural self-reflexivity of the arts in nineteenth-century Britain, half of these works – Poynter's, Egley's and Poole's paintings – were derived, not from ancient sources, but from Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The last days of Pompeii* (1834).
[179] *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 May 1865, 10.
[180] *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1865, 743.

drew his readers' attention in particular to the works of Solomon, Poole and Millais.[181] In this way, the inclusion of these six paintings can be said to have arguably fixed ancient Rome in the public mindset for the first time as an appealing visual reference point; presenting the Roman world as an exciting and exotic locale that held great appeal to the Victorian taste for the melodramatic and the sensational. Hence, from then until the Edwardian era, the Olympian depiction of reconstructions of Roman antiquity would largely define English historical genre painting.

Interestingly, Lawrence Alma-Tadema, the artist who undoubtedly did most to popularise representations of the Roman world in British art, painted his first Roman-themed work *Gallo-Roman women* (1865) in this same year, which suggests that he may have been influenced by the positive reception of the six works in the Summer Exhibition.[182] Similarly, Edward Poynter followed up his success in the exhibition with *The catapult* (1868), another work set in antiquity that portrayed Roman soldiers manning a siege engine outside the walls of Carthage during the Punic Wars. Appealing as much to the Victorian interest in engineering and technology as antiquity, this work also directly gained Poynter's election as associate of the Royal Academy, which seems to suggest the resurgent recognition of Roman themes by the English art establishment.[183] Consequently, the sudden popularity of ancient Rome in the visual arts over the subsequent decade seems to stem from the 1865 Summer Exhibition, though its influence would stretch up to the Great War.[184]

Just as the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras overshadowed much of the nineteenth century, the neoclassicism that had defined their art prevented the adoption of many similar styles and themes – especially those involving Roman antiquity. With the death of Dominique-Auguste Ingres in 1867, French classicism departed in fresh directions through the influence of 'Neo-Grecs' or 'Pompeistes', such as Louis Hamon, Gustave Boulanger and Jean-Léon Gerôme.[185] As a result of their more humane and everyday depictions of antiquity, classical subjects involving the Roman

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[181] See *Fraser's Magazine*, June 1865, 743-4, 745-6 and 746.
[182] Having travelled to Italy for the first time in 1863 and visited Pompeii, Alma-Tadema may already have been considering a new, Roman-inspired direction in his art, but this high-profile exhibition may have convinced him. See Barrow (2001: 20-1 and 28).
[183] See Gaunt (1953: 82).
[184] See ibid., ch. 3, 96-165.
[185] See Ackerman (1990).

world were divested of much of their political messages and regained popularity; meaning that they could again be produced with the hope of finding a potential audience in Britain. Moreover, when the impact of the 1865 Royal Academy exhibition is placed in the context of the conservative state of British art in the 1860s, sandwiched between the Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic 'moments', the resurgence of artistic classicism makes sense as a return to tradition, but in a new form.[186] Yet, while art involving Rome in the British Isles during the first half of the nineteenth century was marked chiefly by representations of the contemporary city of Rome, the second was dominated largely by recreations of the Roman world by Olympian artists.[187]

Developing in the 1860s, 'Olympianism' represented an informal school of artists specialising in historical genre works set in antiquity that thrived until the Edwardian era.[188] Leading figures of the movement, such as Alma-Tadema and Poynter, painted works that portrayed the classical world in a manner that differed from its traditional neoclassical representation in historical and mythological scenes. Instead, their paintings were, on the whole, artistic exercises that offered 'images of comfort and congratulation'[189], rather than heroic, politically motivated works. Often paralleling contemporary domestic life, and peopled with the ordinary inhabitants of the ancient world, rather than its political or military leaders, these Olympian visions of antiquity have gained them the moniker of 'Victorians in togas'.[190] Although criticised for their alleged superficiality, there can be no doubt about the commercial demand for Roman-themed Olympian works, which pleased Victorian tastes for familiar domestic narratives.[191] Possessing definite popular appeal to the Victorian public, developments in engraving technology also allowed the copying of works by Alma-Tadema and others, which granted every middle-class household the possibility of owning a reproduction – a development that served to publicise these works and put

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[186] See Staley (2011).

[187] See Liversidge (1996) and Prettejohn (1996), as well as respective catalogues exemplifying each trend in Edwards and Liversidge (1996: 70-124 and 125-70).

[188] The term 'Olympian' was coined by the art critic William Gaunt, though Olympianism was never so much a school, as, rather, a group of artists pursuing similar themes, and presenting their work to the same buyers, dealers and galleries. See Gaunt (1953).

[189] Landow (1984: 37).

[190] The phrase belongs to Richard Jenkyns, though others, such as the art critic Ernest Chesneau, have suggested that Alma-Tadema did not put the Victorians in togas as 'the antique world into slippers and dressing gown'. (Jenkyns (1991: 111). Quoted in Spalding (1978: 64).) See Jenkyns (1980: 315-21).

[191] See Landow (1984) and Prettejohn (1996).

representations of Roman antiquity above the fireplaces of not only the rich, but also of the moderately well-to-do.[192] Thus, during the mid-Victorian era, ancient Rome shifted from a largely unfashionable position in domestic art to a central one; becoming a chief subject of Olympian painting, as well as a key visual mediator of Rome's rehabilitation and revival in the later Victorian era.

In a section of his essay 'The air mothers' (1869), Charles Kingsley imagined what the reaction of a Roman emperor might be upon visiting Victorian London.[193] Envisioning that this 'august shade'[194] would undoubtedly admire the architectural and engineering achievements of the Victorians, Kingsley also suggests that he would be amazed to discover that the city did not possess any public baths in the Roman sense.[195] Although Victorian society is intimately acquainted with the classical languages, he suggests that they remain 'northern barbarians'[196], since they do not possess the same command of water or levels of public hygiene as the Romans had enjoyed in antiquity.[197] Through this conceit, Kingsley manages, on the one hand, to draw a parallel between Roman and Victorian society, yet, on the other, to caution against contemporary pride in surpassing the ancients. Whether comparisons to Rome were perceived positively or negatively, however, Kingsley's brief fantasy intimates that the Roman world had become an established reference point for Victorian society by the time of its writing.

In the twenty years that followed the Great Exhibition, Victorian society emerged from its former isolationism to reconnect with a number of aspects of English cultural identity that had been distorted by the events of the revolutionary era – including an esteemed position for ancient Rome. Manifested in the domestic revival of Roman historiography and Latin scholarship, the study of the Roman world in England was reassessed and revitalised during the mid-century period, as well as popularised by individuals from diverse backgrounds, such as George Long and Henry Coote. With

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[192] See Verhoogt (2014: ch. 7, 427-506).
[193] Kingsley (1880: 158-63). This conceit had been attempted previously in fiction by Mary Shelley in *Valerius: the reanimated Roman*. (See Shelley (1976: 332-44).) It was also later employed by Edwin Lester Arnold in *Lepidus the centurion: a Roman of today* (1901).
[194] Kingsley (1880: 158).
[195] See ibid., 158-60.
[196] Ibid., 160.
[197] See ibid., 159.

the publishing revolution of the 1850s, an abundance of new works were published on all aspects of the Roman world, which encouraged a spate of comparisons between the Roman and Victorian experiences. Moreover, these parallels registered a shift from the alternative manifestations that had defined the early-to-mid Victorian reception of Rome to an increasingly relevant cultural model predicated, not on republican, but on imperial Rome.

Yet, while many of these developments were diffuse and separate in their origins and influence, the presence of six major Roman-themed paintings at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1865 directed public attention towards the growing rehabilitation of ancient Rome, as well as providing a potent visual focus for its advance as a comparative cultural model. Leading directly to the birth of the Olympian movement, the exhibition also helped to spark the career of Lawrence Alma-Tadema, who would effectively create and define the late-Victorian and Edwardian vision of Roman antiquity. Since all of these developments chimed with the increasing confidence of a culture becoming conscious of its true potential, Rome regained a cachet and relevance in this era that gave it a renewed centrality to contemporary affairs. Thus, with Rome effectively rehabilitated as a cultural model during the 1850s and 60s, it is clear that Victorian society was increasingly Rome-ward bound throughout this period.

3.4. The empire's new clothes: ancient Rome and the British Empire, *c*.1815-70

In December 1803, in one of those coincidences of history, labourers working opposite the headquarters of the East India Company at Leadenhall Street in London discovered a Roman mosaic portraying Bacchus riding a tiger.[198] Symbolising the god's own mythological conquest of India, the mosaic accorded neatly with Britain's own new-found supremacy on the sub-continent, which was directed from literally across the street. In a similar way, nineteenth-century colonialism in general, and British imperialism in particular, can be said to have been founded extensively upon the example of antiquity – and the Roman Empire especially.[199]

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[198] See Johnson (2002: plates 17 and 27).
[199] See Pagden (2006) and Dietler (2010: ch. 2, 27-54).

Deriving a number of its fundamental principles and structures from Roman history, such as the notion of 'absent-minded' imperialism, or a political term like *pax Britannica*, the British Empire increasingly projected itself into Rome's shadow during the Victorian era.[200] Looking back upon its evolution, the colonial administrator C.P. Lucas suggested that 'all or nearly all the terms which indicate the political status of Greater Britain and its component parts are a legacy of Rome'[201]; remaking that while '[t]he British Empire is in the main an Anglo-Saxon creation […] its political nomenclature is Latin'.[202] More recently, Ronald Hyam has explained how '[a]ll empires occupy simultaneously two different kinds of space: the world stage […] and alien localities over which some degree of rulership is established'; yet they 'also occupy a third arena, the historical imagination, as the Roman Empire did for the British'.[203] Consequently, the Victorian imperial project was framed by a series of direct correspondences to the Roman Empire that alleged a definitive and legitimating *translatio imperii* between their two polities.

Arguably, the most active and aggressive phase of the British imperial project opened in the 1870s and continued until the Edwardian era, but this had been preceded by a largely 'absent-minded' and apathetic phase of development that lasted roughly from 1815 to 1860.[204] Altered by a number of internal challenges to its colonial hegemony, Britain's empire began a latent, but definite, phase of political and territorial expansion during the 1850s and 60s, which led to imperialism gradually rising in the public consciousness and becoming central to British statehood.[205] Yet, developing so suddenly, Britain's myriad mosaic of territories demanded a theoretical structure upon which to project some definitive imperial composition and configuration. As a result of the classical education of Britain's 'upper ten-thousand', comparative models derived from antiquity predominated, though it was ancient Rome rather than Greece that came to be favoured.[206]

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[200] See Butler (2012: ch. 1, 17-68).
[201] Lucas (1912: 1).
[202] Ibid., 72.
[203] Hyam (2010: 1).
[204] See Lynn (1999) and Porter (2012: ch. 2, 11-32).
[205] See Laidlaw (2012) and Brantlinger (2012). More generally, see Mycock (2013).
[206] See Brunt (1965) and Betts (1971). While the Roman imperial model represented the chief analogue, republicanism also played its part in the self-definition of some 'white' settlements; on which, see Lowry (2003).

Entering its 'classic' phase from the 1870s with the rise of 'new' imperialism, the late-Victorian British Empire evolved largely in the shadow of comparisons to Rome – many of which were generated for political purposes by Benjamin Disraeli and the Conservatives. Deployed in a wide variety of contexts, comparisons to Rome ranged from the theoretical to the practical, the happenstance to the deliberate, though all bent towards the same end of determining the nature and ideals of British imperialism. British India offered the chief colonial ground for such parallels, however, owing to its unique position within the British Empire as its most extensive and varied possession. Thus, overall, the development of the British Empire into its highest political phase created the immediate cultural conditions for English society to re-engage with Roman antiquity, and perceive it as a valuable component of contemporary discourse.

Although victory at Waterloo in 1815 had secured Britain's possession of an overseas empire, until the 1860s further colonial acquisitions were slow and halting, while free trade remained the watchword of British domestic policy, and isolationism its foreign policy.[207] Still, throughout this period, Britain collected an assortment of trading-stations, dependencies and protectorates, though this brand of colonialism was defined chiefly by a *laissez-faire* attitude and a less interventionist policy.[208] A number of well-publicised reverses, such as the infamous 'Retreat from Kabul' in 1842 during the First Afghan War, seemed to encourage the belief that Britain would be better off without an empire. In the 1840s, for example, the colonial secretary Lord Grey, wrote to the governor general of Canada, explaining how a general indifference appeared to define conceptions of colonialism in official circles:

> There […] prevail[s] in the House of Commons, and I am sorry to say, in the highest quarters, an opinion […] that we have no interest in preserving our colonies and ought to make no sacrifice for that purpose.[209]

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[207] On the background to this trend, see MacDonagh (1962) and Howe (2007). This period has also been compared to a similar lull in Rome's expansion during the second century B.C. See Liska (1999: 133-5).

[208] See Darwin (1997: 634-40). Elsewhere, Darwin dates the beginning of this active phase of the British Empire to *c*.1830. See Darwin (2009: 17-19).

[209] Quoted in Bodelson (1924: 44).

Broadly contemporaneous with the period of eclipse for Rome, imperial apathy can be seen to have marked the early-to-mid-nineteenth century; while the colonial territories were highlighted in the public mindset by only a few largely negative events.[210] Moreover, the continued popularity of Hellenic discourse for much of this period also seemed to encourage Britain to abandon its colonies for fear of sharing a demise like Athens had suffered, allegedly as a result of its attempt to build a territorial empire.[211] Indeed, the representative government accorded to 'white' territories in this period, such as a number of Canadian territories (1848-67) and Australian states (1856-9), represented a direct result of this regressive conceptualisation of British colonialism.

Significantly, when Rome was invoked in this period, it was usually in some pessimistic form that highlighted the potential pitfalls of empire-building, such as Archibald Alison's article for *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1846 on the alleged Roman indicators of imperial decline in Britain's colonies.[212] While the Roman overtones of the Don Pacifico Incident of 1850 represented a watershed in Britain's foreign and colonial policy, indifference or outright criticism continued to remain the hallmark of imperialism in Britain until the later 1850s. The commentator Richard Congreve, for instance, who had advocated the relevance of the Roman Empire as a potential model, published two polemics in 1857 arguing that Britain should surrender some of its colonies.[213] Similarly, in 1856, the historian Edward Creasy wrote that 'the heart of England' did not possess 'the old Roman thirst for military excitement and glory or to learn to love conquest for the mere sake of conquering'; instead preferring to take a role as 'civilisers' to 'spread the gains of our best glory throughout the world'.[214] Even the future architect of British 'new' imperialism, Benjamin Disraeli, complained famously in 1852 that Britain's fifty-odd colonies represented merely a 'mill-stone round our necks'.[215]

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[210] See Martin (1975).

[211] George Grote's recent *History of Greece* had highlighted how Athens' imperial decline had occurred as a result of its transition from a maritime to a territorial power, which threatened other land-based neighbours. At a time of similar transition for the British Empire, Grote's lesson was clear. See Lambert (2013: 27-9).

[212] Alison (1846).

[213] Congreve (1857a and 1857b).

[214] Creasy (1856: 21).

[215] See Stembridge (1965).

Perhaps, more importantly, while a Colonial Office was founded in 1854, it remained a political backwater until the 1870s.[216] For much of the mid-century period, the proto-Colonial Office was run almost single-handedly by James Stephen as under-secretary of state for the colonies (1836-47). Significantly, Stephen never visited a single British possession; believing Britain's colonies to be 'wretched burdens which in an evil hour we assumed and have no right to lay down again'.[217] An emblematic manifestation of this indifference is the fact that Britain voluntarily ceded its first territory in 1864 when it returned the Ionian Islands to Greece – an act that also suggests a passing of the heyday of English Hellenism.[218] Consequently, Jan Morris has written that '[in this period] England's sense of imperial duty was still intermittent, and shared only by a minority'; the British Empire having 'no pride of cause or mission yet, and no conviction of destiny':[219]

> Empire was not yet a popular enthusiasm. The British public was still half-illiterate, imperialism was seldom an electoral issue, and there was nothing gaudy or flamboyant yet to the idea of imperial dominion. Grave authority was the keynote of the British Empire in the fifties and sixties, and the piety of the old reformers had become institutionalised.[220]

Ultimately, it took a series of crises to occasion a shift from apathy to activity in official and popular attitudes to Britain's empire, which began from this period to assume some of the confidence and pomp that we associate with its late-Victorian incarnation.[221] While all empires suffer some level of native discontent, the widespread insurgency experienced by the British Empire during the late 1850s and 1860s proved marked and unusual. The Indian Mutiny (1857), Second Maori War (1863-6) in New Zealand, Morant Bay Rebellion (1865) in Jamaica, Fenian Rising (1867) in Ireland, and Red River Rebellion (1869) in Canada all threatened the British

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[216] Pratt (1978). Dating back to 1768 in its initial incarnation as part of the portfolio of the secretary for war, the Colonial Office was established in 1854 and divided into three departments: the Dominions Department, the Crown Colony Department and a General Department. Operating out of dilapidated offices at 13 and 14 Downing Street, it possessed a staff hardly greater than the number of territories it administered, with its employees numbering only 62 in 1857. (Cited in Williams (2011: 1).)

[217] Quoted in Farwell (1973: 137).

[218] See Holland and Markides (2006: ch. 3, 46-80).

[219] Morris (1979b: 167).

[220] Ibid., 301.

[221] See Porter (2012: 34-61).

colonial edifice in this period. Of these, the Indian Mutiny of 1857 was easily the most serious: appearing without warning, involving great loss of life, and taking a long time to contain.[222] Indeed, the impact of the Mutiny on the empire was far-reaching, leading directly to the assumption of greater official control of the British imperial project by London than ever before.[223]

Although initially threatening its very survival, during the 1860s these threats worked to consolidate the British imperial project into an increasingly integrated and secure structure. As a result, it was no longer possible for administrators to operate independently, enrich themselves or marry natives, as they had done for much of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Instead, a greater sense of civilised and dutiful mission, officially encouraged and supervised, came to define British imperialism, though this was located squarely within an elitist and masculine discourse.[224] Yet, almost simultaneously, a paradigm shift in British imperial discourse appeared to occur: moving from an often Greek-inspired notion of a mother country and colonial children, to a more sternly-paternalist concept derived from Roman imperialism.[225]

Embodied by the jingoistic attitude of Podsnap in Charles Dickens' *Our mutual friend* (1865), the increasingly belligerent confidence that accompanied many of these actions can be recognised as a defining feature of late-Victorian and Edwardian imperialism.[226] When placed in the further context of other contemporaneous developments, one can see why increasing numbers came to identify the British imperial project through comparison to ancient Rome. Clearly, a growing awareness of Britain's imperial responsibilities was developing, which was evidenced, for instance, by the erection of George Gilbert Scott's combined Foreign, Colonial and India Office (1861-8). Providing a purpose-built headquarters for the British imperial project for the first time, the fact that the building's architectural design was so much

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[222] See David (2002) and Chakravarty (2005). On the parallels that the Mutiny suggested to insurgency campaigns experienced by the ancient polities, see Hall (2010) and Thorne (2010).
[223] The legislative result of the Indian Mutiny being the 1858 Government of India Act, which removed authority from the East India Company and replaced it with a viceroy under London's direct control. See Burroughs (1999).
[224] See Deane (2014).
[225] See Kumar (2012b).
[226] See Poon (2008: 1).

debated, and finally constructed in classical, rather than Gothic, style indicates the prime direction of metropolitan imperial discourse.[227] At the same time, there remained a prevailing wariness that sought to protect the empire, but not extend it; as exhibited, for instance, by the 'get-in, get-out' Peking Expedition (1860) and Abyssinian Campaign (1868).[228] In addition, notes of caution about imperial expansion continued to be sounded by influential voices with specific reference to ancient Rome. The novelist Anthony Trollope, for example, worried in his unpublished novel *The New Zealander* (written in 1856) that a burgeoning British Empire would decline and fall like Rome.[229] Still, it is clear that, while reservations about imperialism continued to exist during the 1850s and 60s, they were being gradually replaced by a new sense of officially-driven duty and mission: stern, efficient and professional, not to mention almost Roman in its character and terms.

By 1870, Terminus, the Roman god of frontiers, would have found it difficult to contain the manifold, yet often happenstance, nature of the British Empire, which 'displayed no Roman logic'[230] and seemed in need of a structure upon which to project itself as a political and cultural entity. Consisting topographically of 'one continent, a hundred peninsulas, five hundred promontories, a thousand lakes, two thousand rivers [and] ten thousand islands'[231], this was an empire 'stuck together more by habit than design, […] acquired piecemeal over the centuries, and […] held together by force'.[232] Even at its height, the British Empire always remained 'a heterogeneous collection of trade colonies, Protectorates, Crown colonies, settlement colonies, administrative colonies, Mandates, trade ports, naval bases, Dominions, and dependencies'[233]; 'unfinished, untidy, a mass of contradictions, aspirations and anomalies' – and ultimately, an act of 'management', rather than command.[234] Since the Victorian mindset thrived on definition and systematisation, it was vital that English society should find parallels for the mosaic of their own empire, and natural that they should look to antiquity in the form of Rome.[235]

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[227] See Porter (2011).
[228] See Farwell (1973: 138-41 and 165-76).
[229] Trollope (1972: 10).
[230] Morris (1979a: 11).
[231] Hyam (1999: 48).
[232] Morris (1979b: 422).
[233] Cleary (2004: 253).
[234] Darwin (2009: xi and 13).
[235] See Miles (1990).

Unlike the empires of Athens or Alexander that collapsed soon after their consolidation, the lengthy chronological and geographical span of the Roman Empire provided an ideal analogue in some ways. Like Britain, Rome, too, possessed a variety of imperial territories, including *municipia*, *coloniae*, *liberae*, *foederatae* and *peregrini*, as well as effective protectorates like Greece.[236] A turn to Rome was further inspired by an evolution in the structure of Britain's imperial project itself during this period, as it developed from a largely maritime empire of ports, islands and coastal strips protected by the Royal Navy to an increasingly territorial empire defended by the British Army.[237] Since there was little to suggest comparison to Carthage or any other maritime empire, recourse to a Roman parallel allowed commentators to view the British Empire as the pink-hued singularity in which it appeared on maps, but never existed in disordered reality. In this light, ancient Rome provided a crucial colonialist vocabulary for the British imperial project, which was often in need of a guiding theoretical structure.[238]

Importantly, many familiar elements of British imperial discourse found their origins or justification in Roman historical examples. For instance, the famous theory of 'absent-minded' imperialism that originated in J.R. Seeley's *The expansion of England* (1883) can be traced back to a similar theory of unintentional imperial acquisition in Theodor Mommsen's *History of Rome*, which he derived from a number of ancient sources.[239] Elsewhere, the lengthy spell of international peace that followed Waterloo under the auspices of growing British supremacy was termed the

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[236] The differences between such possessions would have been highlighted by Theodor Mommsen's seminal volume on the subject *The provinces of the Roman Empire* (1885; English trans. 1886), which was published as part of his multi-volume *History of Rome*.

[237] England's identity as a maritime power originated with John Dee in the sixteenth century, who had conceptualised it in quasi-Roman terms centering upon its *dominium maris*, or maritime supremacy. Yet, by the mid-Victorian era, the power of the Royal Navy had secured Britain access to territorial acquisitions that were extending further and further inland from the coast. See Armitage (2000: 105-7).

[238] See Richardson (1991).

[239] In his history, Mommsen appeared to provide a useful *apologia* for the Roman form of imperialism:

> [T]he universal empire of the Romans, far from appearing as a gigantic plan contrived and carried out by an insatiable thirst for territorial aggrandisement, appears to have been a result which forced itself on the Roman government without, and even in opposition, to its wish. (Mommsen (1862: i, 312).)

This theory found backing in both ancient Greek and Roman authors. (See, for instance, Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 1.76.2 and Polybius, *Histories*, 1.63.) Other colonial commentators had already suggested an 'absent-minded' imperial policy in common between the Roman and British empires, such as Goldwin Smith in the 1860s, and, later, Alfred Lyall also cited Mommsen specifically in regard to this defence of imperialism. (See Smith (1863: 259) and Lyall (1893: 334).)

pax Britannica, which has been said to have been 'hailed in Latin because the *Pax Romana* served as a model for comparison and inspiration'.[240] In this way, imperial Rome provided much-needed structure to the British Empire, and accorded with its transformation from a maritime to a territorial empire. While works such as *An essay on the government of dependencies* (1841) by the politician George Cornewall Lewis drew heavily on general comparisons between the ancient empires and the British imperial project, these grew more biased and specific throughout the Victorian era.[241] Indeed, during the 1850s and 60s, there was a definite transition in the application of comparisons surrounding the British imperial project from the Athenian Empire to the Roman Empire.

During the 1830s and 40s, an idealised vision of the ancient Greek imperial model seemed to prevail, which was predicated upon Britain as a mother colony possessing a family of implanted 'white' colonies.[242] Harking back to the *apoikia*, or colonies, established by Greek city states, this view also accorded with the popularity of the Hellenic 'moment' that had dominated English culture during the early-to-mid-century period.[243] In comparison to the perceived authoritarian, expansionist and militarised nature of Roman imperialism, Greek colonialism – and particularly that of Athens – was perceived as being predicated traditionally on the civil plantation of communities overseas throughout the Mediterranean as a *Magna Graecia*, or 'Greater Greece'.[244] One of those who looked to the Greek colonial model was the politician Edward Gibbon Wakefield, a distant relation of his namesake, the historian.[245] Deploring 'the miserable despondency of those who contend that the decline and fall of England have commenced'[246], he became convinced that Britain should found a

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[240] Faber (1966: 25). See Parchami (2009: pt 2, 59-164). Parchami has traced the first use of the term to 1872, but claims that it did not reach popular currency until the Edwardian era. (Ibid., 225, ns 168 and 131.)

[241] Cornewall Lewis (1841: 96-135). Not all believed in the universal applicability of the ancient empires to contemporary situations, however. For instance, in his work *Colonial constitutions* (1856), the commentator Arthur Mills remained wary of utilising comparisons to antiquity, whose empires represented to him potentially corrupting colonial models, owing to their alleged militarism and use of slavery. (See Walker (1943: xvii-xxv).)

[242] See Bernal (1994).

[243] The short-lived nature of Alexander the Great's empire was rarely invoked except in a rhetorical sense and usually in relation to India. See Hagerman (2009).

[244] See Roberts (1989) and Liddel (2009).

[245] See Bloomfield (1961).

[246] Quoted in ibid., 51.

series of colonies along Greek lines.[247] To this end, he founded the Canterbury Association in 1848 with Robert Godley, an initiative that sought to colonise New Zealand as an antipodean 'Little Britain'.[248] Although the settlement of Christchurch by these 'Canterbury Pilgrims' was successful, the experiment was not repeated; suggesting that the Hellenic colonial model was unsuited on a practical level to the British imperial project, apart from occasional invocations, such as during the Crimean War.[249]

In general, throughout the mid-century period, the ancient Greek colonial model remained referenced in imperial discourse, but only certain commentators and politicians continued to believe in its practicability, such as John Arthur Roebuck and William Gladstone.[250] Interestingly, a compromise between the Roman and Greek models was posited soon after by the Conservative MP Charles Adderley, who proposed in 1869 that an internal division existed in the British imperial edifice between 'Grecian' and 'Roman' elements: 'Grecian' referring to its 'white' settlement colonies, and 'Roman' referring to those territories held by imperial authority.[251] Overall, however, as Duncan Bell has remarked, ancient Rome increasingly appeared to dominate such imperial comparativism:

> During the second half of the century, it became increasingly common to draw comparisons between the British empire and Rome. This was not only true of theoretical texts, it also assumed a central position in the national imagination, encoded in administrative practices and even cityscapes.[252]

As a result, the Roman Empire became the leading comparative model for the British imperial project, since it appeared most analogous to the British Empire's increasingly aggressive and expansionist nature.

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[247] See Bloomfield (1961: 103).
[248] Quoted in Martin (1997: 12).
[249] See Richardson (2013: 75-93).
[250] See Roebuck (1849) and Gladstone (1855: 11-14).
[251] Adderley (1869: ii, 193).
[252] Bell (2006: 745).

While now a commonplace, the term 'imperialism' was first used extensively in its popular sense only in the 1870s.[253] Since the word imperialism – as well as many other associated terms, such as 'colony' and 'dominion' – derived from Latin, the Roman influence on the concept of colonialism seemed inescapable.[254] Assisted by the twenty-year economic boom that followed the Great Exhibition, by 1870 Britain had gained a deep national confidence that seemed to encourage the adoption of new-found concepts to explain and justify its new-found position. Since the 1860s witnessed a large number of colonial engagements, attention was drawn increasingly to Britain's imperial commitments, which encouraged a more martial national spirit. With the assistance of the contemporaneous publishing revolution and advance in adult literacy, the Indian Mutiny (1857), North-West Frontier Wars (1859-60, 1863-4, 1868, 1872), Second Maori War (1863-6), Morant Bay Uprising (1865), Second and Third Ashanti Wars (1863-4 and 1873-4), and Abyssinian Campaign (1868) were all covered heavily by the burgeoning print media of the time, and read by an enthusiastic public.[255] Consequently, an imperial consciousness developed among the British public that eventually found expression in the aggressiveness and chauvinism of so-called 'jingoism'.[256]

During his brief premiership in 1868, Disraeli sought a political platform that would appeal to the million mostly urban, working-class voters who had been enfranchised by the Second Reform Act in 1867. Turning to the concept of imperialism as a means for the Conservatives to regain power, he made this agenda explicit in his famous Crystal Palace speech of 1872.[257] In it, Disraeli tried to motivate his electorate

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[253] In its modern sense, the first recorded use of 'imperialism' in published form in Britain was in an article by Goldwin Smith in 1857. (See Smith (1857).) In relation to British expansionism, however, its first mention occurs in a parliamentary debate about Ireland in 1870. (*The Times*, 3 September 1870, 7.) Previously, the term had been in use, but only with negative connotations in the context of the Napoleonic Empire. With French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, and the fall of the Second Empire in 1871, the term appears to have been released for alternative appropriations. (See http://www.oed.com/view/Entry92285 [accessed 15 July 2014].) Later, C.P. Lucas was forced to preface *Greater Rome and Greater Britain* (1912) with an essay suggesting how the terms 'imperialism' and 'empire' could be justified as relating to British history. See Koebner and Schmidt (1964).

[254] This can be seen evidenced by the fact that Lucas devoted the first chapter of *Greater Rome and Greater Britain* purely to 'Roman terms'. (See Lucas (1912: 1-9).)

[255] See Wilkinson-Latham (1979: ch. 2, 62-101).

[256] A term that originated during the Turkish Crisis of 1877-8, and derived from a popular music-hall piece called 'MacDermott's War Song' (1878). See Mackenzie (1992: 67), and, for an overview, Porter (2008: 36-40).

[257] See Harcourt (1980) and Eldridge (1996).

towards an imperialist agenda by claiming that they had a choice between 'a comfortable England' and 'an imperial country'.[258] Yet, as 'new' imperialism took hold during the 1870s, his interest in creating a Roman-inspired imperial policy became more explicit. Consequently, by 1879, Disraeli was quoting 'one of the greatest of Romans' and asserting that '*imperium et libertas*' should represent the twin planks of Britain's colonial policy.[259]

Like Disraeli, many Victorians believed that they might succeed where the Romans had failed, and bind the seemingly contrary notions of *imperium* with *libertas* – authority and freedom – by uniting national aggrandisement with the extension of civilisation to 'lesser' races through the British imperial project.[260] Of course, the Indian Mutiny and other rebellions had evidenced the apparent incompatibility of these two notions, but this merely led some commentators, such as J.R. Seeley, to suggest that the liberty of Britain's colonial subjects could in effect be ransomed to the end of their ultimate 'civilisation'.[261] Remarking that there were 'other good things in politics beside liberty', such as 'nationality' and 'civilisation'[262], Seeley contended that new-found contemporary interest in the Roman Empire demonstrated the power of patriotism to advance civilisation beyond democracy alone.

When he became prime minister again in 1874, Disraeli made good on his promises to aggrandise Britain overseas by purchasing just under half of the shares available in the strategic, newly constructed Suez Canal in 1875, while developing British interests in the Middle East through increasing involvement in the Balkans and the acquisition of Cyprus in 1878.[263] Other, more superficial, gestures, such as endowing Queen Victoria with the title of 'Empress of India' in 1876, focussed attention on Disraeli's imperialist agenda, while projecting British power in terms clearly derived from Roman antiquity.[264] Disraeli's propensity toward these grand, but often shallow,

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[258] Quoted in Disraeli (1882: ii, 534).

[259] A speech at the Guildhall, London, 9 November 1879; quoted in Buckle and Monypenny (1912: ii, 1367). Disraeli first employed the term in a parliamentary speech on 11 February 1851. (See *Hansard*, third series, vol. 114, col. 414). For a fuller discussion of the derivation of this phrase, see Vance (1997: 231-2).

[260] See Hagerman (2012: ch. 4, 68-88).

[261] See Armitage (2002).

[262] Seeley (1883: 238).

[263] See St John (2005: ch. 7, 165-208).

[264] See Longford (1964: 507-10).

gestures was noted by his foreign secretary Lord Derby, who remarked that '[t]o the Premier, the main thing is to please and surprise the public by bold strokes and unexpected moves; he would rather run serious national risks than hear his policy called feeble or commonplace'.[265] Yet, in truth, these 'Caesarist' manoeuvres were merely a development of the belligerent brand of 'gunboat diplomacy' first exhibited by Lord Palmerston during the Don Pacifico Affair, though Disraeli upgraded this into an arguably more aggressive and opportunistic brand of foreign policy.[266] Thus, assisted by a press that sought to encourage a jingoistic patriotism, and entertained by a receptive public, the rise of the British Empire into its highest-profile phase was overseen and secured primarily by Benjamin Disraeli, who inflected his brand of imperialism with grandiose Roman overtones that gave direct and durable impetus to the broader rehabilitation of ancient Rome.

Despite its rich mosaic of possessions, of all Britain's colonial territories, India has been recognised as the prime site of comparisons to Rome because of both its substance and its scale.[267] Since the Indian sub-continent represented a patchwork of ancient races, religions and cultures that had to be accommodated – if not assimilated – by the British imperial administration, the Roman Empire provided an excellent example of how to attempt such a seemingly impossible task. Primarily, it was perceived as the most 'Roman' of Britain's imperial territories, owing to the autocratic government and military presence through which it was administered. As Lord Curzon suggested, 'India is indeed the only part of the British Empire which is an empire'; the only part of the empire where the king 'is rightly termed the Emperor, or King-Emperor, because there his power is that of the Roman Imperator'.[268] Yet, the Romans' use of triumphal displays also fed into the 'staging' of British power in India through the imperial durbars of 1877, 1903 and 1911.[269]

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[265] Quoted in Charmley (2011: 218).
[266] See Baehr (1998: 104-6).
[267] See Bell (2007a: 209-10) and Patterson (2009: 146-52). For broader studies, see Majeed (1999), Hagerman (2013) and Vasunia (2013). In addition, India was also a region known to the Romans; on which, see Parker (2008).
[268] Curzon (1909: 10).
[269] See Trevithick (1990) and Gregory (1991).

With its rule predicated upon 'despotic' principles and seized more by conquest than by compromise, India represented a special case within the British Empire.[270] In addition, the British imperial project derived much of its economic and military power from its possession of India, not to mention almost all of its cultural prestige. The historian and politician James Bryce claimed, for instance, that '[t]he government of India by the English resembles that of […] Rome in being virtually despotic. In both cases, whatever may have been done for the people, nothing was or is done by the people'.[271] As what Thomas Babington Macaulay once termed 'the strangest of all political anomalies', few other components of Britain's imperial project loomed as large in either colonial policy-making or the public mindset – especially following the Indian Mutiny that had threatened its imminent loss.[272] As early as the 1830s, and inspired by Macaulay's *Minute on Indian education* (1835), the colonial administrator Charles Trevelyan suggested in *On the education of the people of India* (1838) that Britain should Anglicise Indians as the ancient Britons had been Romanised:

> In following this course we should be trying no new experiment. The Romans at once civilised the nations of Europe, and attached them to their rule by *Romanising* them. [….] The Indian will, I hope, soon stand in the same position toward us in which we once stood to the Romans.[273]

Yet, while the Roman example was accepted and employed on the one hand, on the other, the unprecedented size and variety of the Indian sub-continent suggested a departure from any model derived from antiquity – something that inherently implied that the English may have superseded the Romans.[274] Again and again, throughout the nineteenth century, the Roman parallel was activated in relation to British India: Lord Granville once comparing the British district collectors in India to 'the *pro-consula* [*sic*] of ancient Rome'[275], while J.R. Seeley remarked later that Britain had given to India 'something like the *immensa majestas Romanae pacis* [the great majesty of

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[270] See Pernau (2012).
[271] Bryce (1901: i, 28).
[272] Macaulay (1833: 20).
[273] Trevelyan (1876: 195-6).
[274] A work such as John Watson McCrindle's *Ancient India in classical literature* (1901) seemed to emphasise the achievement of the British in India by showing how the ancients had perceived the people and places of the Indian sub-continent.
[275] Quoted in *The Times*, 6 August 1853, 2.

Roman peace]'.[276] India's vast railway network was also suggested by some, not only to resemble, but to exceed Roman engineering achievements: representing 'a magnificent system of railway communications […] vastly surpassing in real grandeur […] the aqueducts of Rome'.[277] Indeed, the closest that the British Empire came to the notion of imperial tribute as it was known to the Romans was the £16 million in gold paid annually by the Indian government to the British Exchequer.

With ancient Rome remaining in eclipse in English culture up to the 1860s, however, such comparisons often retained a semblance of criticism for the Roman Empire, in contrast to the allegedly more civilised nature of the British imperial project. The Oxford classicist Alexander Grant, for example, delivered a lecture before the Bombay Mechanics' Institution in 1862 entitled 'How the ancient Romans governed their provinces'.[278] In it, he suggested that the Roman Empire represented a model to avoid rather than emulate, owing to the prevalence of Roman provincial corruption and maladministration. However, such voices of criticism or protest were soon drowned out by the clamour of popular endorsement for the Roman colonial model, which developed into a central theoretical reinforcement with the rise of 'new' imperialism. By the 1860s, Britain's empire consisted of *c*.9.5 million square miles containing just over 148 million people, but, with 94% of these in India alone, it is evident how crucial a keystone the *raj* was to the imperial project – and how relevant Roman comparisons increasingly were to it.[279]

If '[e]mpire is the language of power', the idiom of the Roman Empire must represent one of its chief historical dialects[280]; boasting a political heritage that has been exploited for two millennia – as demonstrated by the Leadenhall Street mosaic. In short, there were few other comparative models as relevant as the Roman Empire to the British imperial project, as it reached an exceptional level of territorial expanse, political influence and public awareness in the years approaching 1870. One can divine a transition occurring in the 1860s between the 'absent-minded' colonial attitudes that had dominated both official policy and popular opinion during the

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[276] Seeley (1883: 304).
[277] Anon. (1846: 242).
[278] Grant (1862).
[279] Cited in Davis and Huttenback (2009: 27-8).
[280] Armitage (2000: 29).

period between 1815 and 1860, and the more brazen and expansionist imperial discourse that defined the late-Victorian incarnation of the British Empire.

Moreover, the increasing militarism associated with 'new' imperialism was compared by J.R. Seeley in 'The great Roman revolution' (1870) to the transformation experienced by Rome during its Augustan era, which he suggests represented the triumph of military organisation over constitutional empire.[281] In contrast, the Greek colonial model that had appealed to some during the early-to-mid-Victorian period seems to have declined steeply in popularity during the years leading up to 1870. Instead, throughout the 1860s and 70s, there was a growing divergence between Greek and Roman colonial models, as Gladstone's reformist Liberal administration (1868-74) gave way to Disraeli's pro-imperialist Conservative one (1874-80).[282] Ultimately, however, it was Disraeli's Roman-inflected visions of British imperial expansion that won out, with even Gladstone forced to engage in his own version of 'gunboat diplomacy' in the Anglo-Egyptian War in 1882.[283]

When placed in the context of British India, which itself represented an empire almost of its own, the Roman parallel seemed to resolve into clarity; creating a comparative model that informed the British Empire's 'civilising' activities on the Indian sub-continent, even as it allowed Englishmen to feel as if they had outdone the Romans by conquering a land to which even Rome's imperial limits did not extend. Even the fact that Ireland, the British Empire's longest-held possession, had been a territory left unconquered by the Romans offered Englishmen a further feeling of exceeding their accomplishments.[284] Despite understandable reservations about such comparativism, the rise of the British Empire encouraged parallels to Rome because, ultimately, 'the impulses to empire were ancient rather than modern'.[285] Thus, around 1870, a potential *translatio imperii* between the Roman and British empires became an increasingly central component of colonialist discourse, which was activated by the development of British imperialism into its most dynamic phase. As the 'empire's

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[281] Seeley (1870b: 13).

[282] On the conflicting reception of the ancient world by Gladstone and Disraeli, see Broughall (2011).

[283] See Harrison (1995).

[284] The notion of following Roman methods of colonisation, yet attempting to exceed their achievements had been evident in the British rule of Ireland since the sixteenth century; on which, see Canny (2001: 121-3).

[285] Cannadine (2001: 126).

new clothes', ancient Rome therefore dressed Britain's imperial project in an imaginary raiment that sought to cover its inadequacies, even as it projected a glorious and unified colonial edifice through its association with antiquity.

3.5. Conclusion

In an extensive note in *The fall of Rome and the rise of the new nationalities* (1861), the historian John George Sheppard imagined what Britain would look like if it truly resembled ancient Rome.[286] Writing in the context of the recent appropriation of the Roman past as a relevant parallel for English society and empire, Sheppard worried that such comparativism would have a negative effect on English culture. To make his point, Sheppard presented a brief fantasy in which Victorian Britain represents a darkly distorted version of the Roman world. In his alternative reality, with no parliament or free press, power is concentrated in the hands of an oligarchy, who keep the masses satisfied through 'bread and circuses', and employ imported slave labour. Populating his vision with real personalities, Sheppard relates how a coup by the British Army has put Baron Rothschild on the throne, while Benjamin Disraeli has been beheaded, Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby await execution, and Lord Brougham, the archbishop of Canterbury and William Gladstone have all committed suicide, rather than face the new *status quo*. Although presenting an exaggerated, negative vision of Victorian Britain reincarnated as Rome, Sheppard's concern at increasing Roman comparativism underlines its increasing pervasiveness in English culture in the mid-nineteenth century.

After the eclipse that defined Roman reception during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, the 1850s and 60s witnessed a gradual, sometimes halting, but definite reclamation of the terms of ancient Rome as a cultural model in England. As such, this period represents a period of transition in the reception of Rome; showing how the Victorians began to reassess its dismissal by their forebears and recover its value as a comparative model. Yet, while this process was undoubtedly lengthy and contested, a definite cultural momentum mounted in the twenty-year-period leading up to 1870. Consequently, such a period of evolution in the Victorian reception of

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[286] Sheppard (1861: 104-6).

Rome is crucial to understanding its broader development and dynamics in English culture throughout the nineteenth century.

Between the passing of the 1832 and 1867 Reform Acts, English culture witnessed a period of unparalleled domestic and international advance, which transformed society and defined the Victorian age as one of unprecedented progress. Moreover, as a result of Britain's escape from the 1848 Revolutions, much of the negative cultural impact of the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras was dissipated by the country's exceptional social, political and economic development. Indeed, by 1850, Britain had become the first industrial nation in the world and head of the most extensive global empire, which allowed it to lose the isolationism that had defined it for decades. Within this context of growing confidence and openness, a number of key trends encouraged and exemplified a revival of Roman antiquity during the mid-nineteenth century.

Firstly, the reformist processes of bureaucratisation and militarisation that defined the Victorian era created a practical context for the invocation of Rome as a comparative model. As the most educated and influential social group in the country, England's classically-educated 'upper ten-thousand' played, perhaps, the most central role in initially establishing Rome as a guiding parallel. Nevertheless, members of the middle, and even lower, classes soon discovered much of value in the Roman world, which made its revival a society-wide phenomenon. Heralded by the increasing profile of Roman historiography and Latin scholarship in England throughout the 1850s and 60s, Rome also began to be employed in a wealth of popular contexts. Yet, it was the display of Roman-themed works at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1865 that represented a watershed in the revival of ancient Rome in this period by providing a visual focus to its increasing cultural profile. Undoubtedly, however, the most immediate motivator of the resurgence of Rome was the rise of the British Empire into its 'high' phase, which represented an unparalleled national episode that appeared to demand Roman historical parallels.

Like Perkin's mauve, synthesised at the same time, the vision of classical Rome that gained currency in this period was artificial and superficial, yet seemingly all the more commercial and popular because of that glamorous surface attraction. Both also represented alluring cultural objects; boasting an exclusive appeal that had been

democratised and popularised into vogue largely to adorn and aggrandise, rather than for more practical purposes. Though the Rome that was rehabilitated around 1870 was chiefly an ornamental and selective vision designed to draw attention to Victorian accomplishments in a self-congratulatory manner, it developed into a far more complex and contested cultural component.

So, when English culture resumed the purple of ancient Rome during the mid-Victorian era, it was in the context of its previous popular eclipse, which had been challenged and overcome through a series of developments that restored its perceived relevance. With all of these factors appearing to combine in the years approaching 1870, many of the conditions were present to complete Rome's rehabilitation in English culture. Yet, while the expansion of the British imperial project provided the domestic context for the growing centrality of Rome to national discourse, such cultural kindling still needed some immediate spark to provoke its complete application to contemporary affairs in England. As will be portrayed in the following chapter, this stimulus was to come largely from abroad.

4. Rehabilitation II

[T]he legitimate descendants of the old Romans, the true inheritors of their spirit, are still to be found in Rome; and in no inconsiderable numbers. In the morning [the English] may be seen in Monaldini's reading-room poring over *The Times* or Galignani, galloping over the Campagna, driving about the streets and never looking to the right hand or the left, or gathering in groups in the Piazza di Spagna to hear the last news from home. [....] They stalk over the land as if it were their own. There is something downright and uncompromising in their air. They have the natural language of command, and their bearing flows from the proud consciousness of undisputed power. [...]

The English, indeed, are the true Romans. [...] [They] are haughty to the proud and forbearing towards the weak. They force the mood of peace upon nations that cannot afford to waste their strength in unprofitable war. They are law-makers, road-makers, and bridge-makers. They are penetrated by the instinct of social order, and have the organ of political constructiveness. [....]

A new sense of the greatness of England is gathered from travelling on the Continent; for let an Englishman go where he will, the might and majesty of his country seem to be hanging over him like an unseen shield.[1]

George Stillman Hiliard, 1853.

4.1. All roads lead to Rome: Victorian society's external cultural relations and the case of Italy

In 1863, Giuseppe Fiorelli, director of the archaeological excavations at Pompeii, discovered a new means to reveal the lives of the city's ancient inhabitants. Using plaster to fill the cavities left in the lava by the bodies of the victims of the famous eruption of A.D.79, he was able to produce vivid likenesses of their faces, bodies and clothing at the time of their deaths.[2] *The Times* reported on this breakthrough by focussing upon the discovery of what appeared to be an entire Roman family: an adult male, two adult females and a younger female.[3] As these forms were found complete with some silver coins, a gold ring, four gold earrings, two iron keys and the remains of a purse, it was possible to recreate something of the identities of these individuals, as well as some narrative of their final moments.[4]

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[1] Hiliard (1853: ii, 267-8 and 274).
[2] See Dwyer (2007).
[3] *The Times*, 17 June 1863, 5.
[4] See Berry (2007: 54).

Unlike other accounts and artefacts that conveyed the events of the eruption of Vesuvius, this resurrection of a complete Roman 'family', along with a partial narrative of its fate, represented a unique event in contemporary archaeology.[5] Imagining a narrative of their final moments, the author of the *Times* article suggested that the 'man appears to have perished in a vain attempt to rescue the terrified woman, who thought they could be nowhere so safe as in their own home'.[6] Deducing from the money and keys found with her body alongside her clothing and hairstyle, the author posited that this adult female must have been the mistress of the house, while the other was a member of the 'lower class' and, judging from her features and iron ring, probably a family servant. He concluded by remarking that he could not conceive of 'a more affecting scene' or a more 'heartrending drama' than that of this family from 'the last days of Pompeii'.[7]

Since this discovery revealed a domestic scene familiar to Victorians, any reader of this article could draw ancient and modern together in such a way as to provoke easy comparison between the two societies. As such, the resurrection of these Romans offered a culture, in which classical Rome had until recently been playing a diminished role, a powerful vision of the Roman past: mundane, yet endowed with remarkable power because of that very ordinariness, which spoke of the familiar Victorian values of home, hearth and family. Consequently, this episode demonstrates clearly how developments abroad could inspire and shape mid-Victorian perceptions of Roman antiquity, and its increasing contemporary rehabilitation.

Significantly, throughout this period of revival for Rome, Victorian Britain stood alone as the pre-eminent international power, which had a potent effect on its external cultural relations and their influence at home.[8] While France represented arguably its closest rival, like many other European nations, it had suffered a political upheaval in 1848, which led to the short-lived Second Empire and, upon its fall, the unstable Third Republic. Beyond France, the German states were dominated throughout this period by a resurgent Prussia that fought wars with Denmark (1864), Austria (1866) and France (1870-1) to establish a united German Empire. Similarly, the Italian states

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[5] See Dwyer (2010: ch. 2, 32-71).
[6] *The Times*, 17 June 1863, 5.
[7] Ibid.
[8] See Davis (2004) and Parry (2006), though Seton-Watson (1937) remains a useful overview.

were chiefly under the influence of Piedmont, which followed a similar trajectory to Prussia in pursuing the creation of a unified Italy. Though it remained an important power in Central Europe, the vast Austrian Empire was racked with internal division, owing to its multiplicity of cultures and ethnicities. Elsewhere, Spain was convulsed by a series of political crises that culminated in the short-lived First Republic (1873-4) that was followed by a monarchical restoration, while Portugal remained only barely more stable. Further afield, Russia was subject to various internal dissents throughout this period, despite its abolition of serfdom in 1861; while the American Civil War (1861-5) divided the United States and postponed its further rise to international prominence.[9] In comparison to these states, mid-Victorian Britain represented a beacon of peace, prosperity and progress that placed it at the centre of global developments, while reinforcing its growing claim to be considered a valid heir of Roman political hegemony.

In 1862, Benjamin Disraeli claimed that Britons were living through an 'age of brilliant and rapid events', where '[t]hrones tumble down' and the most powerful people in the world were those who had once been mere 'adventurers [and] exiles'.[10] Certainly, Britain continued to advance throughout this dynamic and unstable period of European history, though the recent revolutions in steam and telegraph technologies encouraged the country's increased interaction with the outside world.[11] While the dramatic events that shaped European and international politics during the 1850s, 60s and 70s seemed to leave Britain at least outwardly untouched by their effects, they possessed a number of latent consequences for English culture and its reception of Rome. For, from *c*.1850 Britain stood at the centre of a vast web of cultural communication that saw it re-engage with the international community and absorb the influence of a wealth of external trends, which motivated a broad shift in domestic attitudes and opinions.[12] Thus, as a result of international developments, the revival of ancient Rome in mid-Victorian culture can be seen to have occurred within the context of a set of major international events, which overturned the geopolitical *status quo* that had lasted in Europe since Waterloo.

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[9] On the context of these developments, see Bridge and Bullen (2005: ch. 5, 126-74, esp. 126-8), as well as Abbenhuis (2014: ch. 4, 96-143).
[10] Quoted in Wilson (2003: 262).
[11] See Gourvish (1988) and Sussman (2009: ch. 4, 98-115).
[12] See Hoppen (1998: 221-36).

Increasingly open to outside influences following 1850, English cultural relations with many of its neighbours altered in this period to accommodate the dynamic nature of events. With the advent of affordable steam travel in the 1840s, travel to the Continent became common, with Italy becoming one of the most popular destinations for British tourists. Bringing Victorians into contact with the Roman past in an unprecedented fashion, tourism to Italy – and the city of Rome especially – served to make Roman antiquity a familiar historical location. Significantly, this same period also witnessed the revival in England of the Roman Catholic Church, one of the last true heirs of Roman power. Though a source of much controversy, the resurgence of English Catholicism put concepts associated with Rome increasingly on lips and in print, which increased the profile of the Roman world alongside that of the contemporary Church. Yet, it was arguably Victorian Britain's relations with France and Germany that did most to alter the English reception of Rome, owing to their influential respective relations both to Britain and to the Roman past. While English relations with France improved during this period, those with the German states began to deteriorate, with the Franco-Prussian War providing the central pivot of this shift. As a result, the domestic factors behind Rome's revival during the period from 1850 to 1870 were matched by a set of external ones, which enjoyed a parallel influence on the character and direction of English classical reception. Indeed, in the light of external trends and events of the period, many foreign commentators, such as the American author George Stillman Hiliard, began to dub Victorians the 'true Romans' of the nineteenth century – an identity that most were pleased to cultivate.

One of the most relevant external influences on the Victorian reception of Rome was Italy, which appealed at home as a source of cultural interest, and abroad as a site of tourism.[13] While it had a long history as a destination for British travellers, it was only in the nineteenth century that the expense and inconvenience of getting there was surmounted.[14] With the revolution in steam transport of the 1830s, the exclusivity of travel to the Continent was challenged and overcome, which made it cheaper and

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[13] See O'Connor (1998) and the essays in Vescovi *et al*. (2009).

[14] The Welsh rebel leader Caratacus is the first known British visitor to Italy; having been captured and taken to the Roman capital in A.D.51, where his life was spared and he settled into expatriate life there. After the passing of the Roman imperial era, the first recorded British visitor was the Anglo-Saxon abbot Benedict Biscop, who journeyed to Rome in 653. See Parks (1954) and Barefoot (1993).

faster to travel there.[15] While at the opening of the nineteenth century, it took about a month on horseback or by coach to travel from London to Rome, by 1870 this had been reduced to around sixty hours by steamboat and train.[16] Intrigued by its seductive blend of Catholicism, climate and culture, northern Europeans have always been fascinated by the Mediterranean world.[17] In the South, they were said to have found relief from their '*fatigue du nord*', as well as opportunities for edification and leisure in its more relaxed cultural environment.[18] Although France proved to be the most popular destination for Victorian travellers because of its proximity, Italy followed a close second, while enjoying a far more eminent reputation as a repository of Western cultural and historical value – with the legacy of Roman antiquity at its core.[19]

The lexicographer Samuel Johnson once remarked that 'a man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority'[20] – and, indeed, he should have known, since he never got any further than France. Throughout the eighteenth century, a visit to Italy had represented a climax to the traditional Grand Tour, while the entry for *voyage* in the French *Encyclopédie* (1765) claimed that one made a journey to Paris, yet *the* journey to Italy.[21] Of course, the high-point of any trip to Italy was a visit to Rome, which possessed a unique heritage as a site of cultural and spiritual pilgrimage; representing not only the former capital of the Roman Empire, but also the heart of the Roman Catholic Church and, from 1870, the first city of a united Italy.[22] Although a number of other Italian cities, such as Venice and Florence, laid claim to Victorian travellers' loyalties, Rome stood alone as a unique locus of Western civilisation,

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[15] On the middle- and working-class travel experience during the nineteenth century, see Buzard (1993) and Strong (2014), respectively.

[16] Pemble (1987: 27). The first steamer crossed the English Channel in 1816, and a regular service between Dover and Calais was established in 1821. The Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the first major railway line in the United Kingdom, was inaugurated in 1830, which led to the creation of other lines throughout the country. Following Britain's pioneering example, in the 1830s France, Belgium, Bavaria, Saxony and Naples all developed railways that facilitated the expansion of tourism and fed into the railway mania that swept the Continent during the 1840s. See ibid., 22-9.

[17] See Fox (1978) and Pemble (1987).

[18] De Staël (1813: 243).

[19] See Pemble (1987: 39).

[20] Boswell (1949: ii, 25).

[21] See Van der Abbeele (1992: vii). On the Grand Tour, see Chaney (1998) and Sweet (2012), as well as the essays in Black (2003).

[22] See Pemble (1987: 39-40).

whose only conceivable rival in age and importance was Athens.[23] Thus, at the heart of the Victorians' passion for the Mediterranean lay Italy, and, at its core, the city of Rome.

The author John Addington Symonds once suggested that '[t]he magnetic touch which is required to inflame the imagination of the North is derived from Italy'[24], which is, perhaps, why it became one of the most popular Mediterranean destinations for the Victorian traveller.[25] Yet, many other Mediterranean countries were simply inaccessible or unsuitable: Spain and Portugal being seen as backward places, slumped in socio-economic torpor, and lacking any art collections or ruins of major note; Greece and the Balkans remaining politically unstable and prone to brigandage until the late-Victorian era; while the Levant, the Holy Land, Egypt and North Africa remained too distant and difficult a prospect for most casual travellers.[26] Consequently, this effectively left only the French Riviera and Italy. While the south of France received a large share of British tourists throughout the Victorian era, it could not boast the wealth of culture to be discovered in Italy, which united the material achievements of antiquity with those of the Renaissance. Indeed, not even the civil disturbance and outright conflict that marked the activities of the Young Italy and *Risorgimento* movements during the 1850s and 60s seems to have dented British tourism to the country.[27]

Since there were few tourist guides available at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a number of fictional representations of the journey to Italy provided inspiration to potential travellers, especially Madame de Staël's novel *Corinne* (1807) and Lord Byron's epic poem *Childe Harold's pilgrimage* (1812-18).[28] Although Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Italian journey* (1816-17) represented arguably the

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[23] Since the days of the Grand Tour, Venice and Florence had been perceived differently to Rome; on which, see Sweet (2012: chs 5, 2 and 3, respectively, 199-235, 65-98 and 99-163). Florence became a regular stop-off for Victorians as a result of the fame of the Anglo-Italian literary circle there led by Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, while Venetian tourism received an enormous boost from the publication of John Ruskin's architectural and cultural study *The stones of Venice* (1851-3). On the Brownings' Anglo-Florentine *milieu*, see Treves (1956), and, on Ruskin's influence on contemporary tourism, Hanley and Walton (2010).
[24] Symonds (1879: 185).
[25] See Pfister (1996).
[26] See Pemble (1987: 48-50).
[27] On the mid-Victorian reception of Italian politics and culture at this juncture, see Simpson (1962) and Gilbert (1984).
[28] See Casillo (2006) and Schaff (2008).

most famous travelogue of this period, the most popular English-language guide was John Chetwode Eustace's *A classical tour through Italy* (1813).[29] With Italy largely inaccessible for much of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the explosion in visitor-numbers there from 1815 led to a need for more guides, which resulted in the publication of a large number in the immediate post-war period.[30] Yet, with the advent of steam-travel during the first decade of Victoria's reign, *c*.5,000-10,000 British travellers visited the Continent, which encouraged the publication of a host of new travel manuals for the middle classes.[31] Among these were the definitive *Murray* and *Baedeker* guides, as well as popular personal travelogues, such as Charles Dickens' *Pictures from Italy* (1845).[32]

Along with these tourists also arrived large numbers of British emigrants and expatriates, who settled in the major cities and resorts of Italy, which Percy Bysshe Shelley once called 'the paradise of exiles'.[33] Making their residences in British communities in Venice, Florence or Rome, many of these expatriates developed a sentimental attachment to their adopted homeland, such as the poet Robert Browning, who claimed that Italy was engraved upon his heart.[34] Indicative of the increasing numbers of British expatriates in Italy during the first decade of the Victorian era, *The Roman Advertiser*, the first English-language newspaper to be published in Italy, began its three-year run in 1846.[35] Some members of this group even came to dominate the industries and utilities of these cities, as in the case of Rome, which represented the heart of the British community in Italy. In the 1850s, for example, the businessman James Shepherd built Rome's first gasometer on the site of the Circus Maximus and, a decade later, joined with the aptly-named G.H. Fawcett to form the Anglo-Roman Water Company to restore the function of the *Aqua Marcia*, the longest

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[29] See Hachmeister (2002: chs 1 and 2, 13-59) and Sweet (2012: 155-6).
[30] Among the best-known of these were Richard Colt Hoare's *Hints to travellers in Italy* (1815), Henry Coxe's *A picture of Italy* (1815), Henry Sass's *A journey to Rome and Naples* (1818), and James Hakewill's *A picturesque tour of Italy* (1820).
[31] Cited in Pemble (1987: 40).
[32] See Parsons (2007: chs 8 and 9, 177-215) and Hollington (1991).
[33] Line 57 in Shelley (2003: 214). For a bibliography of Anglo-American travel to Italy during the first half of the nineteenth century, see Pine-Coffin (1974).
[34] From Romantics, such as Byron and Shelley, to Victorian women poets, Italy seemed to possess combined artistic and touristic appeal. See Thorpe (2013) and Moine (2013).
[35] See Pantazzi (1980).

aqueduct to supply water to the ancient city of Rome.[36] Thus, Italy became more accessible to Britons in both literary and literal terms throughout the nineteenth century, which presented a destination offering culture as well as climate that 'tapped [Victorian society's] sunniness, its optimism, and its belief in a liberal future'.[37]

As the travel writer Augustus Hare pointed out in the introduction to his famous guide to the city, *Walks in Rome* (1871), '[a]n arrival in Rome is very different to that in any other town in Europe. It is coming to a place new and yet most familiar, strange and yet so well known'.[38] This echoes the initial perceptions of many other visitors, such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who exclaimed that '[w]herever I walk, I come upon familiar objects in an unfamiliar world; everything is just as I imagined it, yet everything is new'.[39] Both of these statements reflect the fact that the Roman world was a familiar one to any product of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century European education, owing to the central role played by the study of Latin and Roman history. Moreover, by presenting a location that was 'at once the site of historical change and the *urbs aeterna*'[40], it was the incongruous antiquity and eternity of Rome that appeared to define it as a unique experience for the traveller.[41] As a symbol of permanence and transience, the city of Rome therefore portrayed to Victorians the grandeur to which their own empire might aspire, as well as the potential ruin it might face if decline was not guarded against.

Accordingly, Rome represented a place visited by almost every British tourist to Italy, which led the majority of guides and travelogues to deal with the city at length.[42] With

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[36] Upon completion, this project was opened on 18 September 1870 by no less than Pope Pius IX, in what turned out to be his last public engagement as sovereign of the Papal States. See Martini and Drusiani (2012: 459).

[37] Wilson (2003: 84). See Leicester Museums and Art Gallery (1968).

[38] Hare (1871: 2).

[39] Goethe (1982: 29).

[40] Martindale (1999: 247).

[41] On the city's alleged eternity, see Pratt (1965).

[42] By far the largest part of Dickens' *Pictures from Italy* (1845) is given over to Rome itself – i.e. 116-62 –, though, interestingly, he undercuts the glory usually associated with the Eternal City through an ironic comparison with Victorian London:

> [T]he Eternal City appeared, at length, in the distance; it looked like – I am half afraid to write the word – like LONDON!!! There it lay, under a thick cloud, with innumerable towers, and steeples, and roofs of houses, rising up into the sky, and high above them all, one Dome. I swear, that keenly as I felt the seeming absurdity of the comparison, it was so like London, at that distance, that if you could have shown me, in a glass, I should have taken it for nothing else. (Dickens (1998: 115).)

its British community centred upon the Piazza di Spagna, Rome welcomed *c*.8-10,000 British visitors to the city every year for its winter tourist season, while around a thousand took up expatriate residence there.[43] Since the Roman Forum and the Vatican appeared to draw Victorian tourists in equal measure, it is clear that English visitors to Rome enjoyed experiencing both its pagan and its Christian incarnations.[44] Yet, behind all stood the spectre of ancient Roman power, through which the identity of so many historical polities had been predicated – from the Catholic Church to Victorian Britain. Hence, as the centrepiece of any Victorian trip to Italy, a visit to Rome marked a communion with the Roman past that embodied its decay and its immortality, while also allowing tourists to experience first-hand its status as a unique repository of Western culture.

At home, early-to-mid-Victorian society also conveyed an elevated interest in contemporary Italian culture that derived in large part from the Romantic Movement's recent, influential veneration of Italy.[45] Significantly, for instance, Italian became – arguably, after French and alongside German – one of the most popular second languages for Victorians to learn.[46] Meanwhile, other elements of Italian culture gained particular popularity, such as its Renaissance art and literature – particularly the works of Dante –, while the operas of Rossini and Verdi also enjoyed a contemporary vogue.[47] This attraction was also exemplified by the popularity of the 'Anglo-Italian' architectural style, whose most famous example was Victoria and Albert's residence, Osborne House (1845-51).[48] From the mid-nineteenth century, the United Kingdom became a focus for Italian emigration, too, with expatriate numbers rising to *c*.25,000 by the turn of the century to comprise the largest group of

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[43] Cited in Pemble (1987: 40) and Barefoot (1993: 145).

[44] This is borne out by the fairly equal coverage given to ancient and Catholic Rome in the most popular mid-Victorian guidebooks. In the second edition of Baedeker's *Central Italy and Rome* (1869), for instance, ancient Rome's monumental remains were accorded 45 pages, while much of the 42 pages of the next section were devoted to the Vatican. (Anon. (1869: 167-212 and 213-55).) Similarly, in Augustus Hare's *Walks in Rome* (1871), the Forum and the Colosseum were granted 59 pages, while the Vatican received 51 pages. (Hare (1871: 110-68 and 532-83).)

[45] See Brand (1957) and Cavaliero (2005). On Anglo-Italian cultural relations more broadly, Trevelyan (1920) remains a useful overview, while Churchill (1980) explores the wider influence of Italy on English literature.

[46] See Bandiera and Saglia (2005: 16-18).

[47] On Victorian interactions with the Italian Renaissance, see Fraser (1992), as well as the essays in Law and Østermark-Johansen (2005). On the contemporary reception of Dante, see Milbank (1998), and, on the vogue for Italian opera, Fox (1978: 147).

[48] See Girouard (1979: 147-52).

immigrants in Britain.[49] In addition, the contemporary 'Italian Question' was much debated in Victorian society, and led to the foundation of a number of 'Philo-Italianist' organisations, such as the Society of the Friends of Italy in 1851.[50]

During the mid-century period, Victorian public opinion on the *Risorgimento* shifted from concern about the anarchic nature of the short-lived Roman Republic (1848-9) to broad support for the political unification of the peninsula, which was perceived as a democratic means of reducing papal power and increasing stability in the Mediterranean.[51] Its influence is evidenced by the fact that many famous literary figures and political commentators supported Italian independence, including Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray and Thomas Carlyle, who contributed to pamphlets, such as *An appeal on behalf of the Italian refugees* (1849), and maintained contact with key figures, such as Giuseppe Mazzini.[52] Meanwhile, William Gladstone's visit to prisons in Naples during 1850-1 effectively transformed his political philosophy and led him to become a highly-reformist Liberal.[53] Providing crucial diplomatic assistance to the *Risorgimento* during the unification crisis of 1859-60, the British government of the time was also significantly led by three confirmed Italophiles, the prime minister Lord Palmerston, the foreign secretary Lord John Russell and Gladstone as chancellor of the exchequer.[54] Perceiving Italian independence in similar terms to its support for Greek self-determination in the 1820s, the government championed the political transition from Mazzini's extremism to Camillo Benso di Cavour's liberalism, following unification in 1861.[55] Yet, it was arguably Giuseppe Garibaldi's visit to Britain in 1864 that set the seal on Anglo-Italian relations; witnessing the Italian patriot feted by thousands on outings to Woolwich Arsenal, the Crystal Palace and Eton College, as well as dining with the cabinet and becoming a freeman of the City of London.[56]

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[49] Cited in Sponza (1988: 13). See ibid., ch. 1, 11-21.
[50] See Riall (2007: 142-4).
[51] See Sutcliffe (2014: ch. 3, 84-114).
[52] See Rudman (1940).
[53] See Reidy (2005).
[54] See McIntire (1983: chs 5-8, 114-221). On the British government's continued interest during the 1860s, see O.J. Wright (2008).
[55] See Beales (1961) and Sutcliffe (2014: ch 4. 115-143).
[56] See Pilletteri (1992).

Like Madame de Staël's *Corinne* a half-century previously, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The marble faun* (1860) employed the city of Rome as the setting of his novel, whose extensive popularity encouraged a whole new generation to explore the city themselves.[57] Following in the wake of this novel, and supported by the consummation of Italian unification during the 1860s, Thomas Cook inaugurated the first of his tours to Italy in 1863, while an Anglo-Italian Bank was also founded in the same year.[58] In addition, unification also amalgamated the separate systems of customs and travel regulations of its former states, which made travel within Italy far easier.[59] Soon afterwards, the city of Rome received a set of major new English-language handbooks with Augustus Hare's *Walks in Rome* (1871) and Robert Burn's *Rome and the Campagna* (1871), both of which ran through numerous editions and reprints into the twentieth century.[60] Following the capture of Rome and the declaration of a fully-unified Kingdom of Italy during 1870-1, Italy gained a newfound political stability that proved useful to its further development as a holiday location, while also further assisting English Protestants to accept it as a valid tourist destination.[61] Indeed, this was given the royal seal of approval in 1879 when Queen Victoria took a villa for a month at Baveno on Lake Maggiore.[62] Nor was this Italian resurgence short-lived, as is evidenced by the popularity of the Italian Exhibition held at Earl's Court in 1888, as well as the stability of British visitor-numbers to Italy up to the Great War.[63]

Although the British tourist industry took off during the Victorian era, travel to Greece remained rare enough for Oscar Wilde's trip there in 1877 to be considered

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[57] See Levine (1990).

[58] See Cottrell (1991: 42-3).

[59] Until unification, Italy was divided into a number of polities, including the Kingdom of Sardinia, the Kingdom of the 'Two Sicilies' and the Papal States, as well as a variety of smaller duchies like those of Parma and Tuscany – all of which possessed their own separate currencies, weights and measures, administrations, laws and armies. Consequently, every Italian state – with the exception of Piedmont – imposed strict customs and travel regulations upon the foreign visitor. Following the peninsula's final unification in 1871, however, most of these regulations were either relaxed or removed, which facilitated tourism and travel. See Hearder (1983: ch. 10, 240-53).

[60] By his death in 1903, Hare's work had gone through sixteen editions and remained regularly republished until 1925. Burn's work also went through a number of editions up to the turn of the century, and was said by the archaeologist Thomas Ashby to represent 'the best book on the subject in English'. (Quoted in Sandys (1908: iii, 446).)

[61] See Boswell (1996: ch. 8, 159-81).

[62] See Nelson (2001: 18-19).

[63] See Lowe (1892: 121-224) and Pemble (1987: 40).

unusual.[64] Significantly, from 1840 to 1914, Thomas Cook published no guide to Greece, while John Murray and Karl Baedeker issued only eleven editions of guides to Greece between them, in comparison to the 112 editions of guides to Italy produced by Cook, Murray and Baedeker combined.[65] Indeed, crucially, Murray's handbook for the *Ionian Islands, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor and Constantinople* (1840) subsumed Greece within the whole eastern Mediterranean; while, in contrast, Murray's accorded Italy four separate volumes – *North Italy* (1842), *Central Italy* (1843), *Southern Italy* (1853) and *Rome* (1858). One episode in particular also put off potential British travellers to Greece. In March 1870, three Britons, Edward Herbert, Edward Lloyd and Frederick Vyner, were seized from their tourist party near Marathon and held hostage by bandits for a ransom. In what became known as the 'Massacre at Dilesi', however, they were murdered when Greek government troops attempted a rescue.[66] Creating outrage in Britain, this incident reflected negatively upon Greece, and led to such a downturn in tourism that, by 1882 it was noted that 'so rare have travellers [to Greece] become that the entire Hellenic kingdom only boasts four first-class guides'.[67] In this light, the distance and danger associated with travel to Greece was in contrast to the explosion of visitor-numbers to Italy during the Victorian era, which remained – after France – the most popular destination for Victorian tourists.[68]

Thus, by bringing Victorians into contact with its ancient and modern incarnations, this revival of Italy encouraged the increasing pervasiveness of ancient Rome in English culture during the mid-Victorian era. While the Mediterranean possessed a distinct allure to all northern Europeans, Victorian travellers were much focussed upon Italy, which boasted a rich classical heritage centred upon the city of Rome itself. Unlike relations with its French or German neighbours, the Victorian connection to Italy was 'aesthetic, nostalgic and […] emotional'[69], which endowed its influence with a level of sentiment not enjoyed by other cultures. Owing to the

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[64] See Ellmann (1987: 66-70).
[65] Cited in Pemble (1987: 49).
[66] *The Times*, 6 May 1870, 5. See also, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* vol. 108 (1870), 240-5, and *The Illustrated London News*, 30 April and 7 May 1870.
[67] Farrar (1882: v-vi).
[68] Increasing from *c*.5,000 per annum in the 1830s to *c*.10,000 in the 1880s, the number of British visitors to Italy rose still further in the years leading up to the Great War, with *c*.90,000 travelling in 1913. (Cited in Pemble (1987: 40).)
[69] Davis (2014: 40).

revolution in transport that occurred during the early years of Victoria's reign, Italy was increasingly accessible to Britain's middle classes, who were able to discover the material remains of its Roman past for the first time. As a vital element of any visit to the 'Eternal City', the experience of discovering these large-scale vestiges of the Roman Empire undoubtedly left a distinct impression on the ordinary English tourist. Moreover, with their own burgeoning society and empire perceived increasingly in comparison to the Roman state, Victorians would have found it enlightening to interrogate the rise and fall of Roman civilisation while exploring its monumental ruins.

Consequently, for the Victorian tourist to Italy, all roads can be said to have led to Rome – and, with it, a unique connection back to Roman antiquity. Since mid-Victorian society registered increasing comparison to its Roman forebear, middle-class touristic interaction with the original sites of Rome's power on the Italian peninsula embodied a key popular buttress to its burgeoning recovery in English culture. Reflected in Britain through a number of Anglo-Italian cultural trends, and reinforced through the topicality of the contemporary *Risorgimento*, Italy represented a key external influence that possessed many relevant, reinforcing influences on the contemporary revival of Rome. While it may have been in some regards 'fleeting, delirious, and […] removed from reality'[70], the Victorian passion for Italy possessed a definite contextual influence on framing the contemporary revival of classical Rome. So, as the interest in Fiorelli's resurrected Pompeian family showed, events in Italy could prove to be powerful stimuli within English culture; inspiring and shaping responses to antiquity as much as contemporary events at home.

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[70] Davis (2007: 13).

4.2. 'An Englishman Italianate': Victorian culture and the Roman Catholic Church

Arguably, the apex of the Victorian tourist season in Rome was Easter, which provided one of the most colourful and striking spectacles to be seen, not only in the city, but in Roman Catholicism itself. Centred upon St Peter's Basilica, the religious ceremonies of Holy Week drew large crowds of pilgrims and tourists, who were attracted by the unique celebration of the Catholic faith on display.[71] Escorted by guides, such as Charles Michael Baggs' 1839 handbook, Victorians experienced the Vatican in its most remarkable and vibrant incarnation for the occasion.[72] There, they came face to face with a set of rituals that they often termed 'ridiculous', 'absurd', 'pitiful', 'puerile', 'childish', 'hideous', 'grotesque' and 'ludicrous'.[73] Yet, the fact that Charles Dickens estimated that three-quarters of the congregation attending Holy Week in 1845 were English indicates the exceptional Victorian interest in Roman Catholicism.[74] While much of this curiosity derived from the alleged medieval superstition associated with its rites and practices, the Church enjoyed a reputation in Western culture that was founded solidly upon its status as one of ancient Rome's chief historical heirs. So, as what Thomas Hobbes once termed 'the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire'[75], the Catholic Church represented a key historical conduit back to Roman antiquity, which makes its nineteenth-century reputation relevant to the contemporary reception of Rome.

Though it has registered little in studies of the period's classical reception, Victorian culture often understood the word 'Rome' more in connection with the Roman Catholic Church than ancient Rome.[76] Since Catholicism had been a *bête noire* of English culture since the Reformation, a potential conflation between the Rome*s* of antiquity and the Church complicates the era's reception of ancient Rome.[77] In contrast to being a harmless touristic spectacle abroad, the Roman Church appeared to

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[71] On the Victorian tourist experience of Vatican ceremonies, see Martens (2010).

[72] One of the most popular Victorian guides to Rome was Murray's *Handbook for Rome and the Campagna*, which devoted eight pages to the sites of ancient Rome, but fourteen to Catholic Rome, including a lengthy section on 'Church festivals' and a short account of 'A papal election'. (Young (1908: 40-8, 49-63, 52-60 and 81).)

[73] Pemble (1987: 213).

[74] Dickens (1998: 153).

[75] Hobbes (1996: 463).

[76] For one of the few studies that examines the intersection between the Victorian reception of biblical and ancient history, see Reisenauer (2009).

[77] On the historical background of their relationship, see Bossy (1975).

represent an increasingly potent domestic threat during the first decades of Victoria's reign, owing to its resurgence in England. Yet, this period also witnessed a gradual, though halting and often resisted, acceptance of Roman Catholicism as a legitimate faith in English society.[78] As a result, it is valuable to explore how events relating to this English Catholic revival, as well as opposition to it, may have influenced the Victorian reception of classical Rome.

Considering the anti-Catholicism that marked much of the mid-Victorian period, it is interesting that, after a difficult eighteenth century, the years preceding the accession of Victoria registered a *détente* in English cultural relations with the Roman Church.[79] Between 1789 and 1815, among around 150,000 other European refugees, *c*.7,000 French priests gained sanctuary in Britain, following the upheavals of the revolutionary period.[80] However, this followed two centuries in which Roman Catholics in Britain had been considered second-class citizens and faced a range of social limitations.[81] Only following a lengthy agitation did the Corporation and Test Acts (1828), along with the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829), remove religious persuasion as a barrier to civic advancement for England's *c*.60,000 Catholics.[82] Symbolically, in 1831, the London Monument's anti-Catholic inscription accusing 'ye Popish faction' of being responsible for the Great Fire of London was also removed.[83] Despite these moves, an increasing trend towards Roman-inspired rituals within Anglicanism seemed to position Catholicism as a continued potential threat to English society.

Only with the development of the Oxford Movement in the 1830s, however, did the alleged threat of Catholicism became pronounced.[84] Leading proponents of this movement, such as Edward Bouverie Pusey, John Keble and John Henry Newman, all

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[78] On the interaction of Victorian religion and society, see Brown (2008).
[79] See Haydon (1993).
[80] See Bellenger (1986).
[81] A range of acts were passed during the late seventeenth century to exclude Roman Catholics and other Dissenters from social and political life, including the Corporation Act (1661), the 'Clarendon Code' Acts (1661-5), and the Test Acts of 1673 and 1678. Finally, in 1701, the Act of Settlement made it illegal for Roman Catholics to inherit the British throne, while a separate set of Penal Laws were passed throughout the eighteenth century specifically relating to Irish Catholics.
[82] Following Catholic Emancipation, all public offices were opened to Roman Catholics except those of lord lieutenant, lord chancellor, regent and monarch. See Machin (1964) and Hinde (1992).
[83] See Black *et al*. (2006: iii, 727).
[84] See Faught (2004).

argued for a move back towards Rome within the Church of England. To this end, they published *Tracts for the Times* (1833-41), a controversial set of pamphlets on the subject. As a result of the increased enfranchisement of English Catholics and these 'Romanising' tendencies within the Church of England, a Protestant backlash occurred.[85] Manifested through the establishment of organisations such as the British Reformation Association (1827), the Protestant Association (1835), the National Club (1845), and the Protestant Alliance (1851), anti-Catholic xenophobia was reinforced by Britain's contemporary isolation.[86] Indeed, this discrimination was so prevalent that it has been remarked that anti-Catholicism 'was an integral part of what it meant to be Victorian'.[87] This trend was also expressed in a range of contemporary publications, including anti-Catholic pamphlets, such as George Bull's *The corruptions of the Church of Rome* (1835) and John Rogers' *Antipopopriestian* (1839), as well as sensationalist works of fiction, such as the respective novels of brother and sister, William and Elizabeth Sewell, *Hawkstone* (1845) and *Margaret Percival* (1847).[88]

Directed not only towards obvious foreign targets, such as the French, this anti-Catholicism was also aimed at their English co-religionists, who were alleged by Thomas Arnold to possess a dangerous divided loyalty to their state and their church:

> The one is the Frenchman in his own uniform and within his own praesidia; the other is the Frenchman disguised in a red coat, and holding a post within our praesidia, for the purpose of betraying it. I should honour the first, and hang the second.[89]

Since the largest proportion of Catholics in the United Kingdom lived in Ireland, anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiments were also sometimes blended together, which became especially acute as the Irish immigrant community in Britain grew following

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[85] On anti-Catholicism in the wake of this backlash, see Arnstein (1982), Paz (1992) and Wallace (1993). For an overview, see Norman (1968).
[86] See Wolffe (1991).
[87] Paz (1992: 299).
[88] See Foster (1977) and Moran (2007). For a broader exploration, see Griffin (2004).
[89] Stanley (1844: ii, 285).

the Irish Famine (1845-52).[90] Thus, despite moves to improve the lot of British Catholics, the Roman Catholic Church continued to embody a potent source of cultural insecurity for English society as Victoria took the throne – proving that there was still truth in the Renaissance adage that 'an Englishman Italianate [was] a devil incarnate'.[91]

Despite the anti-Catholicism that swept English society sporadically during the mid-nineteenth century, however, in these years the English Catholic Church entered a period of renewal unwitnessed since the Reformation.[92] Between 1840 and 1850, the number of Roman Catholics in Britain is estimated to have doubled to *c*.846,000, owing to the successes of the Oxford Movement and increased Irish immigration.[93] By 1850, this meant that Roman Catholics made up around 5-6% of the population of Britain, and just over 20% of the United Kingdom.[94] Indeed, during this period, Victorian London came to possess more Roman Catholics than the city of Rome.[95] Such advances were also literally set in stone through the completion of major sites of Catholic worship in this period, such as A.W.N. Pugin's St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham (1839-41) – the first Roman Catholic cathedral to be built in Britain since the Middle Ages –, as well as one of his acknowledged masterpieces, the Church of St Giles (1841-6) in Cheadle, Staffordshire. So, by 1850, all of this made English Catholicism an increasingly visible cultural force whose successes were clear for all to see.

As an increasingly influential social group, Roman Catholics began to have a bearing upon national issues, not to mention altering some of the traditional shapes of English culture. In 1845, for instance, the prime minister Robert Peel attempted to increase the grant provided to the Irish Catholic seminary in Maynooth, which led to a major political debate and the resignation of William Gladstone as president of the Board of

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[90] See Curtis (1968). Overall, there was a three-way social divide amongst British Roman Catholics that saw the majority made up of recent Irish immigrants to industrial cities such as Liverpool, as well as two smaller groups composed of recent, post-Oxford Movement converts and old Catholic families.
[91] A phrase said to have been inspired by the activities of the fourteenth-century English mercenary John Hawkwood, though made current by Roger Aschem's reference to it in *The scholemaster* [*sic*] (1570), and most famous by Philip Sidney's version of the proverb: 'An Englishman that is Italianate / Doth lightly prove a devil incarnate'. (See Ascham (1863: 78 and 223).)
[92] See Parsons (1988: i, 146-183). For an overview, see Holmes (1978) and Norman (1984).
[93] Quoted in Sager (2005: 43).
[94] Cited in Hoppen (1998: 2).
[95] See Ackroyd (2000: 576).

Trade.[96] As a result, from around 1850 interaction with the Roman Church played a significant role in British politics, whether the Liberal or the Conservative parties were in power.[97] During the mid-century period, the Church of England also registered a significant turn towards 'High Church' or 'Ritualist' rites that sought to imbue Anglicanism with the spirit of the pre-Reformation Church in England.[98] By 1853, the Anglican Church was divided effectively in three: out of the *c.*18,000 clergy in Britain, 41% were 'High' Church, 38% Evangelical and 21% 'Broad', but twenty years later, this had altered to 50% 'High', 25% 'Low', 7% 'Broad' and 18% 'Nondescripts'.[99] According to the 1851 census, out of the 7,261,915 who attended a place of worship on 30 March 1851, only 3,773,474 attended Anglican churches, making Dissenters – many of whom were Catholic –, outnumber Church of England worshippers for the first time.[100] This was also reflected in English education, where Roman Catholic schools, such as Ampleforth and Stonyhurst, gained increasing eminence, while Nonconformists were allowed to take degrees at Oxford from 1854 and at Cambridge from 1856.[101] Thus, during the mid-century period, Victorian Catholicism began to enjoy an influence even upon the most ancient and protected traditional *loci* of English identity.

In 1850, within the context of these gains, the Vatican made the momentous decision to restore an ecclesiastical hierarchy to England and Wales, which represented the first formal renewal of the Roman Catholic faith in Britain since the Reformation.[102] Occasioning a crisis in Anglo-papal relations, the British government responded in 1851 by passing the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, which refused recognition to any offices endowed by Rome.[103] Yet, while the British government remained officially hostile to papal power, during the period between 1850 and 1870 it appeared to allow the tacit return of its ecclesiastical influence among its citizens.[104] In the 1859-60 Italian

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[96] See Jenkins (2006: chs 2 and 9, 43-72 and 287-334).

[97] See Quinn (1993), esp. chs 1-3, 4-86.

[98] See Shelton Reed (1996) and Yates (2000).

[99] Cited in Conybeare (1855: 158) and Littledale (1874: 304).

[100] Roman Catholics made up 305,393 of this group. (Cited in *Census of Great Britain* (1851: 90).) See Ell and Snell (2009: appendices A and B, 423-30).

[101] See McClelland (1980) and Brown (2008: 191-2).

[102] From 1623 to 1850, English and Welsh Catholics were under vicars-apostolic as a mission church without a domestic hierarchy, while Scotland remained in a similar position until 1878. On the political fall-out of this event, see Ralls (1974).

[103] See Flint (2003), and, on the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, ibid., 166-76.

[104] On the context of this development, see Althoz (1964).

unification crisis, for instance, Britain lent crucial support to the *Risorgimento* movement through its embassy in Rome; while, significantly, throughout this same period, no one was ever prosecuted under the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, which was quietly repealed in 1871.[105] Thus, during the mid-century period, Victorians expressed an incongruous attitude to Catholicism that sought to limit its influence, yet responded with only half-hearted official measures to contain it.

Throughout this time, the Roman Church also became a more visible cultural presence in Victorian society, owing to the work of a number of key figures in English Catholicism, such as John Henry Newman and Henry Manning.[106] Both Anglican clerics who had converted to Rome, they were ordained as Roman Catholic priests and rose through the ecclesiastical hierarchy to become cardinals. Significantly, Newman and Manning also came from wealthy mercantile families, enjoyed public-school and Oxford educations, and were ordained first in the Church of England.[107] Although Roman converts, this provided each with Establishment credentials that granted them acceptability and status among England's social and intellectual elite. While Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua* (1864) and *Grammar of Assent* (1870) presented admired intellectual defences of the Roman Catholic faith, Manning's social activism won him plaudits for engaging with some of the most deprived groups in Britain.[108] One a keen and incisive theologian, the other an indefatigable organisational wizard, together, Newman and Manning represented two acceptable faces of resurgent Catholicism, who mediated their religion in a palatable form to the highest and the lowest echelons of Victorian society.

In *The idea of a university* (1852), John Henry Newman argued that the Hebraic and Hellenic cultures had created ancient Roman culture – endowing it with what he termed the 'gifts' of Athens and the 'grace' of Jerusalem.[109] Although one could separate the two historical 'Romes' of antiquity and the Church, they remained bound together on a physical level in the city of Rome and elsewhere, which often conflated

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[105] See McIntire (1983).
[106] On English Catholic resurgence during the second half of the Victorian era, see Sidenvall (2005).
[107] See Newsome (1993).
[108] On Newman's two works, see Cornwell (2010: 154-72 and 183-91), and, on Manning's activism, Brown (2008: 356-7).
[109] Newman (1852: 230).

and confused their cultural resonances.[110] On the one hand, classical Rome represented the original persecutor of Christianity; yet, on the other, the Church was the clear heir of many of its historical elements. For example, the title of *pontifex maximus* assumed by Pope Leo the Great in the fifth century, and used by all popes since, was derived directly from the highest office in the ancient Roman religion.[111] As a result, Victorian understandings of the Roman Catholic Church were often complicated by the fact that it inherited in its character and structure many elements of the historical heritage of imperial Rome.

This incongruity also induced others to compare and contrast these two 'Romes' in other terms, with the novelist Henry James, for instance, viewing them in explicitly masculine and feminine terms:

> When you have seen that flaccid old woman [i.e. the pope] waving his ridiculous fingers over the prostrate multitude and have duly felt the picturesqueness of the scene – and then turn away sickened by its absolute *obscenity* – you may climb the steps of the Capitol and contemplate the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius. […] As you revert to that poor sexless old Pope enthroned on his cushions – and then glance at those imperial legs swinging in their immortal bronze, you cry out that here at least was a *man*![112]

Others, such as Thomas Babington Macaulay, saw in the contemporary Roman Catholic Church the last material vestiges of the Roman Empire; remarking how, in the Vatican, he had been '[…] struck by observing the confessionals for all the nations of Europe, with the inscriptions Lingua Hispanica – Lingua Anglica – Lingua Germanica – &c', which led him to conclude that there was 'something very imperial, very metropolitan in this'.[113] In an 1840 review, Macaulay was even clearer, suggesting that the Church represented a bridge between antiquity and the nineteenth century:

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[110] On the original historical transition between Roman imperial power and the Church, see Lançon (2000: chs 8 and 13, 98-112 and 157-62).
[111] See Draper (1992).
[112] Quoted in Lyon (1999: 144). On the mid-Victorian reception of papal power, see McNees (2004).
[113] Quoted in Sullivan (2009: 212). On Macaulay's understandings of Rome, see Edwards (1999c).

The history of the [Roman Catholic] Church joins together the two great ages of human civilisation. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre.[114]

The Roman Catholic Church therefore offered an institution at once attractive to the sometimes vain contemporary airs of British imperial domination, and repellent to the country's pride in its own historical independence in political and religious terms. As a genuine relic of classical Rome's original pomp and majesty, the Church continued to offer a seductive souvenir of the glory of antiquity that, if not to be emulated explicitly, could be still appreciated surreptitiously – as demonstrated by those Victorian tourists who flocked to Rome for Holy Week. With Britain perceiving itself increasingly as an heir of ancient Rome's imperial power, the Catholic Church consequently stood as both an obvious rival and a constant reminder of the loss of this tangible link back to antiquity during the Reformation. Reflecting upon the lengthy historical span of the Roman Church, Macaulay even projected the eventual ruin of Britain in the context of the Church's anticipated survival:

[The Roman Catholic Church] was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple at Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St Paul's.[115]

In this light, it is clear that many Victorians viewed the Roman Catholic Church in some ways as a surviving artefact of the ancient Roman past, whose changing contemporary reputation underpinned their reception of classical Rome in certain key regards. Although Victorian culture bore an incongruous relationship to Catholicism that expressed enmity towards its alleged conservatism and superstition, it also

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[114] Macaulay (1900: iii, 2).
[115] Ibid., 3. On Macaulay's visit to Italy and Rome, see Sullivan (2009: 211-18).

venerated the Church for its antiquity and enduring character, which was founded to a large extent upon its status as partial successor to the Roman Empire.

Since the English Catholic revival occurred in the context of Victorian society's first self-comparisons to classical Rome, a general relationship between both of these developments can be inferred. This can be seen evidenced, for instance, in the series of religious novels set in late antiquity that were published during the 1850s, which fictionally explored many of the contemporary debates about Christianity in Britain.[116] With such works usually focussed upon the period of historical transition between the Roman Empire and the Roman Church, this suggests that mid-century English culture was interested in one's influence upon the other. Consequently, the Roman Church represented both an inspiration and a rival to Victorian appropriations of Rome, though the contemporary advances of English Catholicism made such a connection highly pertinent.

So, throughout the early-to-mid Victorian era, Roman Catholicism represented a controversial force in English culture, though one that possessed a supporting role in the revival of ancient Rome that was occurring at the time. While the early part of the century had witnessed some *détente* in English cultural relations with Catholicism, the Tractarian controversies of the 1830s and 40s led to outbreaks of anti-Catholicism based on the threatening incursion of Ritualist practices into the Church of England. This was further aroused by the extraordinary revival experienced by English Catholicism during the same period, which derived from the successes of the Oxford Movement and increased Irish immigration to Britain. Culminating in the formal re-establishment of an ecclesiastical hierarchy in 1850, by this time the Roman Church had grown to represent a prominent and influential institution in English society. Yet, despite the opposition that these events stimulated, the mid-Victorian period registered an increasing recognition of the Catholic faith in Victorian society, owing to the work of talented churchmen such as John Henry Newman and Henry Manning. As a result, the Roman Catholic Church gained an unprecedented profile during the mid-century period that accorded it a position in contemporary culture and society that it had not enjoyed since the Reformation.

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[116] See Goldhill (2011: 202-15).

Attracting its interest as much as repelling its sensibilities, the Roman Church was claimed by some Victorians to be merely 'a matter of music and millinery'[117], but it still presented an institution that remained one of the most legitimate historical heirs to ancient Roman power. Preserving in many of its titles, traditions and rituals features of the Roman Empire, the Church represented both a challenge and a stimulus to other cultures seeking to appropriate the cachet of Roman antiquity. When placed in the context of the contemporary reception of Rome, Catholicism can be seen to have played a significant, though under-appreciated, role in conditioning general perceptions of classical Rome as a cultural model. Though peripheral to classical reception in embodying a divergent discourse to pagan Rome, mid-Victorian understandings of Catholicism possessed a reinforcing effect on the growing resurgence of Roman antiquity in English culture. In particular, tourism to Rome drew the Roman Empire and Roman Church together, where they were found overlaid upon each other in the material archaeology and architecture of the city. In this way, concepts originating from classical Rome were often indirectly communicated by the Roman Catholicism, which served to link one with the other. Thus, the reception of ancient Rome in Victorian culture was mediated indirectly by the contemporary Roman Church, which was perceived by many as an effective reliquary for many of its original cultural components.

4.3. Friends or foes? English cultural relations with France and Germany, *c*.1815-70

On 18 April 1855, only forty years after the Battle of Waterloo, Windsor Castle played host to what Queen Victoria termed 'a most curious page of history'[118], when Britain received a state visit from Napoleon's grandson, Napoleon III.[119] Having landed at Dover the previous day, the French emperor and empress were greeted on their way to Windsor by a fifty-foot, temporary triumphal arch bearing the French imperial crown and eagle, and, when they arrived, a military band playing the Marseillaise.[120] Invested with the Order of the Garter earlier in the afternoon, Napoleon III was welcomed on the evening of the eighteenth to St George's Hall for an elaborate state dinner, followed by a ball in the castle's Waterloo Chamber, which

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[117] Sala (1869: 330).
[118] Victoria (1907: iii, 155).
[119] On the visit, see ibid., 155-60 and Hibbert (2000: 231-7).
[120] *The Times*, 16 April 1855, 6.

had been tactfully renamed the Picture Gallery for the evening.[121] '[A]gainst all expectations', Victoria pronounced the event to have been 'a wonderful dream'; finding the French emperor to have been a 'very *extraordinary* man' with a 'great *power of fascination*', whom she significantly described as 'more *German* than French in character'.[122] Indeed, the queen felt especially excited by the notion that 'the granddaughter of George III, should dance with the Emperor Napoleon, nephew of our great enemy', who now represented Britain's 'dearest and most intimate ally'.[123] Marking the conclusion of their visit the next day, the French imperial party travelled into London, where an estimated 100,000 lined the streets to cheer '*Vive le Hemperor* [*sic*]'.[124] Making their way into the City, Napoleon III and Eugénie enjoyed a final reception at the Guildhall, where they were seated upon two purple velvet thrones embroidered with a golden 'N' and 'E', and beneath an elaborate purple canopy surmounted by golden eagles.[125]

With Anglo-French alliance in the Crimean War providing its immediate stimulus, Napoleon III's visit represented a watershed moment in British foreign affairs. Emphasising a contemporary transition from isolationism in the country's external relations, the event embodies Britain's move towards reconciliation with former foes in the light of a changed international situation. As exemplified by the superficial pomp of the occasion, it is significant that the episode also included a display of imperial culture arguably not seen in the British Isles since the coronation of George IV in 1821.[126] Although portrayed in a Napoleonic incarnation to honour the Second Empire, much of the pageantry laid on – such as the triumphal arch and the use of purple – clearly evoked the spectacle of the Roman imperial court. Certainly, many at the time, such as Lord Palmerston and William Gladstone, compared the French Second Empire to its Roman forebear, though, more often, such an association was tainted with negative connotations.[127] Yet, the Roman overtones of the event suggests the increasing comfort of Victorian culture with concepts derived from Roman

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[121] *The Times*, 19 April 1855, 12.
[122] Quoted in Hibbert (2000: 233).
[123] Quoted in ibid. On Victoria's relationship to the Bonaparte dynasty, see Aronson (1972).
[124] Quoted in Hibbert (2000: 232).
[125] *The Times*, 20 April 1855, 7.
[126] Compare, for instance, to the description of the *décor* for George IV's coronation in Anon. (1821: 3-5).
[127] See Parry (2001: 155-6 and 156 n. 30).

antiquity – something assisted by the burgeoning nature of Britain's own imperial identity. Thus, Napoleon's visit captures not only Britain's unexpected *rapprochement* with France, but also a contemporary shift in Victorian perceptions of imperial Rome that fed into its increasing rehabilitation in English culture.

Undoubtedly chief amongst Britain's outside influences during the nineteenth century were France and Germany, which alternated in their relations with Victorian society in the context of the changing international political situation. Crucially, conflict with each bookended the 'long nineteenth century': first, in Britain's lengthy struggle against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France and, latterly, in its conflict with Germany in the Great War. There were significant divergences in the nature of English relations with the two powers, however, since each was predicated upon entirely opposing cultural foundations. As England's traditional enemy since the Middle Ages, France had represented an especially potent threat to the country in its recent Revolutionary and Napoleonic incarnations. At the opening of the Victorian age, this left it still positioned as an adversary, though one that had been dealt such a devastating blow at Waterloo that it had been removed as a serious contender in European affairs. In contrast, the German states were deemed to represent largely friendly polities that were bound to England through royal blood and lengthy cultural connections. Indeed, this sense of cultural cousinhood was personified in particular by Prince Albert, whose marriage to Victoria bound England and Germany closer together, while his activities as prince-consort imported much of the German intellectual spirit to Britain.

During the mid-Victorian period, however, a change appears to have taken place in English cultural relations with France and Germany that witnessed a gradual rehabilitation of the former, and the beginnings of a decline in perceptions of the latter. Moreover, the exponential nature of this revision in England's cultural interactions with both seems to suggest a correlation associated directly with contemporary events. Significantly, this reversal in relations with French and German culture also appears to have had a gradual, but ultimately profound, effect on a number of domestic trends in England over the Victorian era. When placed in the context of the Victorian reception of Roman antiquity, these foreign stimuli possessed an influential dynamic in altering the contemporary cultural environment to allow a

reclamation and rehabilitation of Rome in English society. Thus, it is crucial to examine the impact that this external relationship had on the direction of classical reception during the mid-Victorian period, when England's relations with France and Germany became crucial arbiters of its appreciation for classical Rome.

In addition, this situation was complicated by the fact that French and German culture also drew upon Roman antiquity for much of this period, which made them contemporary competitors for its cultural aura.[128] While classical Rome had remained a sustained part of French culture as a legacy of its Revolutionary and Napoleonic use, it assumed a fresh immediacy with the birth of the Second Empire in 1852.[129] Meanwhile, Prussia rose to prominence as a European power during this same period, which induced its revival of a number of national symbols derived originally from the Roman past, such as the *Reichsadler*, or double-headed eagle, that had been an emblem of the Holy Roman Empire.[130] Of course, as in Britain, both cultures bore a contested relationship to their Roman past in which they venerated figures who had rebelled against Roman power, even as they sought national comparison to the Roman Empire. Between 1841 and 1875, for instance, Prussia raised a statue of the Germanic rebel Arminius at the site of the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest; while Napoleon III responded in 1865 by erecting a fifty-foot statue of the Gaulish hero Vercingetorix at the site of the Battle of Alesia.[131] In this context, mid-Victorian culture would have perceived France and Germany as contenders for the cultural heritage and political legitimacy of ancient Rome, which added another intellectual layer to their relations.

Like England, France and Germany also had separate traditions of classical scholarship that informed their respective reception of antiquity in various ways.[132] As a result of its Revolutionary and Napoleonic regimes, there was a broad backlash

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[128] Like Britain, much of France and Germany had once been part of the Roman Empire, which offered both nations a potent connection to Rome's cultural heritage. In addition, Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars* and Tacitus' *Germania* provided two of the earliest accounts of their respective national characters.

[129] See Green (2011: 8).

[130] See Baehr (1998: 165-221). On Prussia's contemporary appropriation of Greek antiquity, see Roche (2012).

[131] On the German reception of Arminius, see Benario (2004: 89-90) and Struck (2001). On the French reception of Vercingetorix, see Dietler (2002: 740-4) and King (2001).

[132] Even the respective space allotted to French and German classical scholarship in studies is often instructive of their contemporary importance. For instance, see Sandys (1908: iii, 47-240 and 248-73), where German classics is accorded almost 200 pages to French classics' twenty-plus.

against French culture during the first half of the nineteenth century that extended to English classics.[133] While it had enjoyed a previous seventeenth and eighteenth-century dominance, French classical scholarship endured a general torpor for much of this period.[134] Indeed, it boasted only a few truly eminent figures, such as Jean François Boissonade and Louis Marius Quicherat, while many of its leading classicists were actually of German origin, such as Karl Hase and Henri Weil.[135] In contrast, German scholarship set the contemporary standard of international scholarship through its pioneering scientific approach to classics, which led English classicists to look to their German colleagues for much of the half-century following the French Revolution.[136] Termed *Altertumswissenschaft*, this study of the 'science of antiquity' was embodied in landmark scholarship, such as August von Pauly's *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1839-52).[137] Led by renowned classicists, including Karl Lachmann, Karl Otfried Müller and Friedrich Wilhelm Ritschl, German classics had few rivals for most of the nineteenth century.[138] Significantly, in the wake of the advances of Barthold Georg Niebuhr early in the century, the Germans led the way in Roman historiography. In particular, the scholarship of Theodor Mommsen altered the face of the subject with his groundbreaking *History of Rome* (1854-6), *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum* (1861-1903) and *Roman constitutional law* (1871-88).[139] Consequently, if anyone could lay claim to occupying the scholarship of Roman antiquity at the midpoint of the nineteenth century, it was the Germans, rather than the French – or the English.

Yet, while German scholarship remained a force with which to be reckoned for the rest of the century, French classics entered a renaissance of its own during the mid-Victorian period. Though a French School at Athens was founded in 1846 and another at Rome in 1873, it was arguably the foundation of the *École pratique des Hautes-Etudes* at the Sorbonne in 1866 that was the most significant development in

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[133] On this wider shift, see Newman (1997: 128-55), and, on its connection to classics, Frisch (1953).
[134] For a sense of the state of French scholarship during this period, see the essays in Sandy (2002).
[135] See Sandys (1908: iii, 249, 251-2, 272 and 259).
[136] See Ellis (2012: 66-75) and (2014: 35-7).
[137] Dating back to Friedrich August Wolf in the late eighteenth century, *Altertumswissenschaft* emphasised the essential unity of the various disciplines that made up classical scholarship, while striving to unite them in a scientific manner that steered classics away from its traditional amateur character to become a sophisticated, scientific and professional field of knowledge. See Turner (2014: 168-71).
[138] See Jens (1974) and Grafton (1983).
[139] See Sandys (1908: iii, 197-200).

encouraging a formal resurgence of French classical studies.[140] Led by the veteran scholar Gaston Boissier, the later Victorian era witnessed a flowering of the subject in France that saw the emergence of a generation of eminent classicists, including Maurice Croiset, Louis Havet, Émile Chatelain, René Cagnat and Charles Graux.[141] At the same time, English classical scholarship began to catch up on its German cousin, particularly in the field of Latin studies, which was largely due to German influence on the first professors of Latin at Cambridge, H.A.J. Munro and J.E.B. Mayor.[142] As Prussia rose to become the leading German state during the 1850s and 60s, it sought to lead a united German Empire, which put an end to the *Kleinstaaterei*, or 'small statism', that had created and secured German intellectual dominance since the eighteenth-century.[143] Instead, assuming a more militaristic dimension through this Prussian influence, German identity became associated increasingly with right-wing politics, which had an injurious effect on the country's classical scholarship.[144] As the historian Oswald Spengler later noted, there seemed to be a connection between the birth of a united German identity/imperial consciousness and its contemporary appropriation of 'Romanism', which 'possessed a 'rigorous realism – uninspired, barbaric, disciplined, practical, Protestant [and] Prussian'.[145] Hence, during the mid-Victorian period, there was a three-way shift in academic classical reception that saw the Germans' traditional pre-eminence challenged by French and English scholarship, which altered their mutual appreciations of Roman antiquity.

Unlike its antagonism with other historical enemies such as Spain, England's rivalry with France was not confined to a century or two, but extended from the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) to the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1802, 1803-15).[146] Laying aside medieval and early-modern conflicts between the two nations, between 1690 and 1815 there were seven separate wars between England and

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[140] See Sandys (1908: iii, 271).
[141] See Tilley (1922: 397-8).
[142] See Sandys (1908: iii, 429-32) and Ellis (2014).
[143] See Wuthnow (1989: 231-4).
[144] On the interaction between nineteenth-century classics and politics, see the essays in Gildenhard and Ruehl (2003).
[145] Spengler (1991: 22).
[146] See Gibson (1995), as well as Tombs and Tombs (2006).

France.[147] Indeed, such was the persistent, episodic nature of Anglo-French conflict in this period that it has been termed the 'Second Hundred Years' War'[148], as nothing else could parallel its nature. Since France was not only Britain's nearest Continental neighbour, but also a major Roman Catholic state, it represented a strategic threat to the nation's security, though one to whose throne the British monarchy did not surrender a claim until 1801.[149] Yet, it was only with the French Revolution in 1789 that France became perceived as an acute menace to British peace and prosperity. What followed over the next quarter-century embodied an unprecedented crescendo in Anglo-French confrontation, owing to its expansive, intense and protracted character.

Known to some as the 'Great French War', this conflict was predicated upon an ideological struggle between English traditions of constitutional democracy and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic polities.[150] Exhausted by extraordinary levels of losses during the war's twenty-five-year span, Britain was determined to remove France as a threat following its victory at Waterloo. Stripped of its European and colonial empire, France was transformed into an unstable state with an ill-restored monarchy.[151] While these acts reduced France to the position of a second-rate power and largely removed it as a risk to Britain's security, however, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars exerted a potent and long-lasting impact on English culture; leaving a profound distrust of the French and a powerful cultural spectre in Napoleon.[152] As a result, when Victoria assumed the throne in 1837, France still represented a potential menace to British hegemony, though one perhaps more in fear than in reality.[153]

In the context of Victorian classical reception, it has already been outlined how Revolutionary and Napoleonic exploitations of Roman antiquity diminished the

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[147] These include a number of colonial clashes in India, the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-8), the Seven Years' War (1756-63) and the American War of Independence (1775-83), along with the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1802/1803-15).

[148] Seeley (1883: 24).

[149] In 1429, Henry VI was the last monarch to be crowned King of England and, in 1431, also King of France, but, up to 1801, all subsequent monarchs maintained an anachronistic claim. See Panton (2011: 198-9).

[150] See Harvey (2007).

[151] See Price (2007).

[152] On their respective cultural 'afterlives', see Halévy (1935) and Hazareesingh (2004).

[153] On Anglo-French cultural relations during this period, see Varouxakis (2002) and Romani (2002). See also, the essays in Charle et al. (2007), as well as Otte and Stone (2013).

profile of Rome in England for much of the first half of the nineteenth century. While the defeat of the revolutionary spirit at Waterloo undermined French claims that their society represented the rightful heir of Rome, it took many decades for English perceptions of Rome to recover, owing to its distorting usage by French culture. Furthermore, as long as France remained weak and prone to political upheavals, such as the July Revolution of 1830, it did not appear to represent a political threat to England. During the 1848 Revolutions, however, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of Napoleon, became president of the Second Republic, which seemed to resurrect the spirit of Revolutionary and Napoleonic France.[154] Indeed, the worst fears of many appeared to be confirmed in 1851 when Bonaparte staged a coup, seized full dictatorial powers and established himself as Napoleon III, the head of a revived French empire, one year later.[155]

Upon seizing power, Napoleon III had declared that he wished to be 'a second Augustus'[156], which made reference not only to the Roman emperor, but also to his uncle's Augustan affectations. In this way, he set out from the beginning of his rule his wish to resume the mantle of the Napoleonic Empire and reclaim many of its defining Roman allusions.[157] Though occasioning renewed fears of French expansionism and potential invasion, the French coup enjoyed backing in some quarters of English society, including from the foreign secretary Lord Palmerston, who was forced to resign over his tacit support for it.[158] Napoleon III soon made it clear, however, that his Second Empire intended to pursue only friendly relations with his European neighbours – though more through his relative military and political weakness than through moral imperatives.[159] In particular, the new French emperor focussed upon improving relations with Britain, which by now represented the first industrial nation of Europe and one of the most important international players.[160]

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[154] See McMillan (1991: 35-49).
[155] See ibid., 49-52.
[156] Quoted in Pinkney (1958: 3).
[157] Throughout his rule, Napoleon III maintained a claim that his empire represented the rightful heir to ancient Roman political and cultural hegemony, which he reinforced through a synthesis of the legend of Napoleon I's achievements with his own programme of state-building. Beyond such affectations, though, he appears to have possessed a genuine interest in Julius Caesar: sponsoring a number of archaeological excavations to uncover his campaigns in Gaul, and even producing a two-volume biography, *Histoire de Jules César* (1865-6). See Nicolet (2009) and Baguley (2000: 77-89).
[158] See Fenton (2012: 122-4).
[159] See Plessis (1985: 53-7).
[160] See ibid., 140-2.

Having spent intermittent periods of exile in England during the 1830s and 40s, Napoleon III was accustomed to English society, which proved of immeasurable assistance in his attempts at *rapprochement* with the United Kingdom.[161] His opportunity for a formal renewal of good relations came with the diplomatic crisis in Eastern Europe in 1853, which led to a formal military alliance with Britain to fight Russia in the Crimean War (1854-6).[162] Of course, out of this arose Napoleon III's state visit to Britain in April 1855, which produced such a watershed moment in Anglo-French relations. In August of the same year, Victoria and Albert made a return state visit to France, which made history in its own ways. Most significantly, it marked the first time that an English sovereign had visited Paris since 1431, though it also witnessed the extraordinary sight of Victoria kneeling at the tomb of Napoleon in the Invalides.[163] Afterwards, a number of trips were paid back and forth, including a visit to Britain by Napoleon and Eugénie in 1857, and two further journeys to France by Victoria and Albert, in 1857 and 1858 – all of which aided Anglo-French cooperation.[164]

Yet, even before Napoleon III's diplomatic manoeuvrings of the 1850s, a number of subtle indicators of increasing Anglo-French *détente* were evident. On a cultural level, the extensive popularity and influence of Thomas Carlyle's *The French Revolution* (1837) emphasises the contemporary English interest in French history and politics.[165] In current affairs, the state visit of Victoria and Albert to France in 1843 was, like Napoleon III's later visit, another historic moment in Anglo-French relations, since it was the first time that an English monarch had visited the country since 1520.[166] Repaid with a return visit by the Anglophile French king, Louis-Philippe, in 1844, Anglo-French relations were improved to such a degree that the term *entente cordiale* was coined to reflect the newfound rapport between the nations.[167] Inspired by a number of French expositions during the 1840s, the Great

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[161] Napoleon III had once almost married an English girl named Emily Rowles, and had even acted as a special constable during the Chartist disturbances of 1848. See Guest (1952).
[162] See Lambert (2008).
[163] On this exchange of visits, see Smith (2005: 156-7).
[164] On the influence of Napoleon III on mid-Victorian foreign policy, see Parry (2001).
[165] See Simmons (2000: ch. 2, 63-98) and Cumming (2004: 169-70).
[166] See Price (2007: 313-14).
[167] Louis-Philippe had spent time in England and spoke English fluently. Following his abdication in 1848, Victoria provided tacit diplomatic and monetary assistance to the French royal family, while allowing the deposed monarch to live in exile in Surrey until his death in 1850. See Bastide (1927).

Exhibition in 1851 saw France represent the greatest foreign contributor to the event, as well as win more prizes than British exhibits; while improved Anglo-French relations were symbolised in a model of a proposed suspension bridge that sought to link Britain and France.[168] Still, it was Napoleon III who placed the seal upon these advances in Anglo-French relations, while reaping the benefits through a set of key military alliances and trade deals.

Entering not only the Crimean War, but also the Second Opium War (1856-60) as allies, Britain and France demonstrated their cooperation in both the European and the colonial political theatres.[169] Later, Napoleon III even allowed the British Army to pass through France in order to rush troops to India during the Mutiny of 1857.[170] In 1860, Britain and France also signed the Cobden-Chevalier Treaty, which established freer trade between the United Kingdom and France through the reduction and elimination of respective duties, which led to the doubling of British trade with France.[171] Finally, the rise of Prussia during the 1860s under the direction of Otto von Bismarck drew Britain and France closer together in fear of this new rival.[172] Yet, despite these advances, there were still three major French invasion panics in Britain during 1847-8, 1851-3 and 1859-61.[173] Though these scares all came to nothing, they remain representative of the broader suspicion of French motives that underlay contemporary *détente*. So, though ambivalent and complex at times, the evolution of a new Anglo-French relationship occurred during the 1850s as a result of their shared commercial and political pragmatism.[174]

Improvements in Anglo-French transport and communications also allowed increased cultural interaction between the two societies, which reinforced these political developments. In the first decade of Victoria's reign, a number of railway routes from London to channel crossing-points were opened, such as those to Brighton and Dover, which offered services to Dieppe and Calais, respectively.[175] As a result,

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[168] See Heffer (2013: 291 and 692) and Anon. (1851: 40, no. 750). On France's contribution to Victorian exhibitions, see Walton (1992).
[169] On the Anglo-French alliance during the Second Opium War, see Hurd (2008).
[170] See Smith (2005: 167).
[171] See Iliasu (1971).
[172] See Breilly (2011: chs 5 and 6).
[173] See Pennell (2012: 18-19).
[174] For an overview of chiefly nineteenth-century English opinions on France, see Campos (1965).
[175] See Jackson (1988: 233-4).

permanent British expatriate communities were established in Paris, Normandy and the French Riviera.[176] Indeed, during the 1860s and 70s abortive attempts were made to link the two nations physically together through the construction of a Channel Tunnel.[177] Like Italy, French tourism received its greatest imprimatur in the 1870s, when Queen Victoria began to make annual summer visits to the Riviera.[178] Yet, from the mid-century period, even if it was at times tentative, a revival of French mores can be perceived. This is, perhaps, best exhibited in contemporary English fiction, which registered an increasing interest in France, as well as a more positive attitude to its culture.[179] With their authors having both been one-time residents of Paris, as well as frequent visitors to France thereafter, William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity fair* (1847-8) and Charles Dickens's *A tale of two cities* (1859) represent two of the best-known examples of this trend.[180] At the same time, major contemporary works of French literature, such as Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* (1862) and Ernest Renan's *Vie de Jesus* (1863), enjoyed major acclaim and influence in England.[181]

Even as maligned a figure as Napoleon Bonaparte found his reputation revived during this period; becoming transformed from arch-nemesis to romantic hero, and from tyrant to self-made man.[182] While there had been an immediate rush of interest in him after his defeat at Waterloo, Napoleon remained a subject of opprobrium in English culture.[183] Following the admission of the French emperor to Thomas Carlyle's pantheon as a 'kingly' hero in *On heroes* (1841), however, Napoleon's reputation began to improve; leading him to be perceived less as a tyrant and more as an inspiring example of what one man could achieve.[184] This shift also occurred at around the same time as the birth of the Victorian self-help movement, which derived from Samuel Smiles' *Self-help* (1859), and venerated the self-made man for his hard

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[176] On the English in Paris, for instance, see Roche (2007).
[177] See Wilson (1994: ch. 1, 10-54).
[178] On Victoria's interaction with the French Riviera, see Nelson (2001).
[179] See Embry (2008).
[180] After spending time in France in his twenties, Thackeray produced *The Paris sketchbook* (1840) and remained interested in French culture and politics. (See Grego (1875: 116-23).) Dickens wrote *A tale of two cities* after an extended residence in the city during 1855-6, and subsequently visited France no less than sixty-eight times between 1862 and 1865. (See Tomalin (2011: 324).) On the French settings of these novels, see Simmons (2000: 102-17 and 135-66).
[181] See Hooker (1966: ch. 7, 143-53) and Pals (1982: 31-9).
[182] See Semmel (2004: chs 8 and 9, 221-50).
[183] Immediately after the war, for example, Napoleon's carriage and assorted paraphernalia toured Britain, while excursions to the battlefield of Waterloo became commonplace. See Pascoe (2006: ch. 3, 85-109) and Semmel (2000).
[184] Carlyle (1841: 382-92).

work and willpower – Napoleon representing, perhaps, to some the ultimate archetype of this ideal.[185] A student article in *The Malvernian*, for example, offered an account of a student's visit to St Helena and referred to the French emperor as 'the greatest man the world ever saw'.[186] Since much of Britain's nineteenth-century rise had occurred as a result of its victory over Napoleon, it was now in the national interest to emphasise the extent of his ambition and power, in order to accentuate the magnitude of England's victory, whose fruits the country was still enjoying. As a result, the fear and disdain in which he had been formerly held found itself replaced in many quarters with awe, and even admiration, for his achievements. In particular, this can be seen expressed in the many Victorian institutions and individuals who created collections of Napoleon memorabilia, or made special studies of his life and career.[187] Thus, thanks to increased communication between the two nations, even the most potentially problematic elements of French culture – such as the reputation of Napoleon Bonaparte – found themselves rehabilitated during the mid-Victorian era.

In almost inverse relation to English cultural relations with France up to the mid-nineteenth century, those with the German states had long been, not only cordial, but almost fraternal, owing to the racial, religious and royal connections that linked England and Germany.[188] Unlike its relationship with France, English society often perceived a sense of historical affinity with the German states that assumed an original 'arrival' of the English from that region during the Anglo-Saxon invasions.[189] Setting the ancestral homeland of the English in the Teutonic heartland of Denmark/Germany, this created a sense of cousinhood with the region's subsequent inhabitants, who continued to share many English cultural identities, such as socio-political conservatism and Protestantism.[190] Thomas Arnold, for instance, once wrote that '[o]ur English race is the German race, for though our Norman fathers had

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[185] Indeed, Napoleon's life and career gained a number of largely positive mentions in *Self-help*. See Smiles (2002: 194-5 and 231-3).

[186] *The Malvernian*, no. 17 (December 1871), 88.

[187] Throughout the Victorian era, Madame Tussaud's boasted a permanent display of Napoleon memorabilia, while senior political figures, such as Lord Rosebery and Lord Curzon, also assembled similar private collections. A number of later figures from the British imperial project also produced amateur studies on Napoleon, such as J.R. Seeley's *A short history of Napoleon the First* (1886) and Lord Rosebery's *Napoleon: the last phase* (1900).

[188] On the evolution of Anglo-German cultural relations during the nineteenth century, see Bertolette (2012), and, for a general overview, Seymour (2013: pt 1).

[189] See Melman (1991).

[190] In particular, this discourse was shaped extensively for Victorians by the German historian Leopold von Ranke; on which, see McClelland (1971: ch. 6, 91-107).

learned to speak a stranger's language, yet in blood, as we know, they were the Saxons' brethren: both alike belong to Teutonic or German stock'.[191]

Consequently, it followed that Britain endured few conflicts with the German states and, more often than not, found itself allied to many of them during the European wars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[192] At Waterloo, for example, the British Army fought against Napoleon alongside troops from Prussia, Hanover, Brunswick and Nassau.[193] Importantly, during the century-long period of Anglo-French conflict from 1690 to 1815, England forged even closer ties with the German states following the accession to the British throne in 1714 of the King of Hanover as George I – a man who never learned English and maintained a largely German-speaking court.[194] Since the House of Hanover lasted from George I to William IV, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the English monarchy was in the hands of a solidly German family, with clear and constant connections back to their homeland.[195] Indeed, it is testament to the inherent Germanic culture of the British royal family that, between 1714 and 1901, every single British monarch was married to a German spouse – which meant that every sovereign had a German-born mother and a German-speaking father.[196]

Although born in England, Queen Victoria was conceived in Germany and possessed three German grandparents, while also being technically heir to the throne of Hanover – facts that demonstrate the continued royal link to Germany well into the nineteenth century.[197] Her marriage in 1840 to Prince Albert of the small Saxon duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha sustained this connection, however, which maintained an association to Germany, even after that to Hanover had been severed.[198] Emblematic of the importance of their Germanic heritage, the royal couple spoke German to each

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[191] Arnold (1842: 33-4).

[192] See Wishon (2013). On Anglo-German cultural relations in this period, see McClelland (1971: pt 2, 27-60).

[193] The only exceptions being when the British faced Bavarian troops at Blenheim in 1704, and the period of 1807 to 1812 when Britain found itself at war with Prussia.

[194] On the Hanoverian influence on Britain, see the essays in Simms and Riotte (2007).

[195] See Harding (2007).

[196] See Davies (1999: 752 and Appendix 53, 1166-7).

[197] Females could not inherit the throne of Hanover, but it remained a close dynastic connection for Britain throughout the nineteenth century. See Cannadine (1989), as well as Thompson (2007) and Riotte (2008).

[198] See Davis (2008) and Stewart (2011: 100).

other in private and raised their children in a bilingual household[199]; Victoria once explaining that 'the German element is the one I wish to be cherished and kept up in our beloved home'.[200] Mother to an empress of Germany, a grand-duchess of Hesse and a countess of Battenberg, Victoria was also the grandmother of Britain's future nemesis, Kaiser Wilhelm II.[201] Beyond the royal household, the British and German states appeared to follow largely similar political trajectories throughout the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with each engaging in a set of reforms that defined their constitutional political characters and secured much of their contemporary socio-economic progress.[202] Thus, when Queen Victoria took the throne in 1837, the German states played such a significant role in English culture that it has been suggested that 'Britain possibly enjoyed a greater variety of contacts with Germany than with any other country'.[203]

In addition, for most of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries German art, literature, music and philosophy dominated European cultural discourse.[204] Led by figures such as Johann von Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottfried Herder and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a German cultural renaissance possessed an extensive influence, especially in England.[205] Buttressed by the pioneering nature of its scholarship in diverse fields, such as biblical criticism and historiography, Germany led the world as an intellectual powerhouse. Moreover, owing to the large amount of English translations of German works, English culture was able to absorb all of these developments and integrate them into its own burgeoning progress.[206] In the field of classical reception, for instance, this can be seen evidenced by the prominent dominance of Hellenic discourse in Germany during its cultural renaissance, which influenced the growth of its English variety.[207] In addition, this interaction was further facilitated by a two-way exchange between the

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[199] See Davies (1999: 752).

[200] Quoted in Rappaport (2011: 162).

[201] On the influence of these family connections on Anglo-German relations, see Kohut (1982) and Cecil (1982).

[202] See Hellmuth (1990), as well as the essays in Blanning and Wende (1999).

[203] Searle (2004: 518).

[204] See Davis (1969) and Davis (2007: ch. 1, 25-66).

[205] See Davis (2007: chs 2 and 5, 67-106 and 193-250). For individual examples of this influence, see Stokoe (1926), Stockley (1929), as well as Hohlfeld and Morgan (1949).

[206] See Stark (1999) and, for examples of its influence, Davis (2007: chs 3 and 4, 107-92).

[207] See Butler (1935) and Marchand (1996: chs 1-4, 3-151). Interestingly, during the mid-nineteenth century, a number of German historians identified Britain as a 'new Rome' in opposition to contemporary French claims; on which, see McClelland (1971: 104-5).

two nations, which witnessed large numbers of German immigrants move to Britain, as well as increasing Victorian tourism to the German states during the same period.[208] Hence, for much of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, Germany represented a potent cultural influence on England, which accorded Anglo-German relations a prominent status within its domestic discourse.[209]

Throughout the turbulent mid-century phase of German history that pivoted upon the 1848 Revolutions, English culture remained exercised by the struggle of the German Confederation to remain a viable political project.[210] While England carefully watched the political development of the 'German question' in this period, however, Germany continued to represent a model for British reform, especially in education.[211] Moreover, with the celebrations surrounding the millennium of Alfred the Great's birth in 1849, there was a renewed interest in Britain's Anglo-Saxon past, which led to an outbreak of so-called 'Teutomania' that sought to rediscover a Germanic national identity for England.[212] Historians, such as E.A. Freeman, focussed upon the Anglo-Saxon contribution to English history, for instance, while works such as J.G. Sheppard's *The fall of Rome and the rise of the new nationalities* (1861) and Charles Kingsley's *The Roman and the Teuton* (1864) explored the early-medieval transition between Roman and Germanic power.[213] Yet, while in England many looked back to a shared Teutonic past, others, such as Thomas Carlyle played a key role in mediating current events in Germany through commentary in contemporary periodicals, while at the same time emphasising Germanic greatness through his epic biography of Frederick the Great (1858-65).[214] Inherent within the early-to-mid-Victorian celebration of German culture lay the basis for cultural rivalry, though, which would come increasingly to define Anglo-German relations as the century continued.[215]

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[208] On German immigration to Britain, see Ashton (1986) and Panayi (1995). On British tourism to Germany, see Davis (2007: ch. 7, 303-40) and Scully (2012: ch. 6, 53-61).

[209] See Mander (1974) and Davis (2007).

[210] See Hahn (2001).

[211] On British views of the 'German Question', see Müller (2002), and, on the influence of the German educational model, Davis (2007: ch. 6, 251-302).

[212] See Melman (1991) and Mandler (2006: ch. 3, 59-105, esp. 86-105).

[213] On the influence of Freeman's analysis, see Koditschek (2011: 240-50), and, on Sheppard's and Kingsley's respective views, Wood (2013: 200-2) and Kightley (2012).

[214] For a survey of Carlyle's writings on Germany, see Cumming (2004: 189-91) and Ashton (2005).

[215] On the reception of the 'Germanic' in nineteenth-century England and Germany, see Oergel (1998), and, on its subsequent development in English culture, Scully (2012).

Despite Britain's *détente* with France, throughout the mid-century period Britain and the German states had never seemed closer.[216] This was a *status quo* that changed irrevocably, however, with the death of Prince Albert in 1861, which was said to have left the royal household 'like Pompeii, the life suddenly extinguished'.[217] Although he had been in poor health for a number of years, his death at only forty-two came as a shock to the royal household and to the Victorian public at large.[218] Moreover, his demise represented far more than a personal loss for Queen Victoria, since it also left a significant *lacuna* in Anglo-German relations, which he had striven so hard for two decades to cement.[219] During his time as prince-consort, Albert had become arguably the most famous German in Britain, while demonstrating through his tireless activities the aptitude, efficiency and work ethic popularly associated with German society.[220] With the organisation of the Great Exhibition representing his flagship project, Albert was an influential patron of the British arts and sciences, who sponsored numerous educational and industrial projects.[221] As a result of these efforts, Albert gained an unparalleled influence that was registered throughout Anglo-German relations in small and great ways – from his introduction of the Christmas tree to Britain as a festive tradition to his successful marriage of Vicky, his eldest daughter, to the heir to the Prussian throne in 1858.[222] Through his labours, he hoped for an Anglo-German alliance that would be strengthened throughout the nineteenth century; claiming that that '[t]he invincible combination of Germany by land and England by sea, inspired by the most exalted ideals, would bring peace and prosperity to Europe'.[223] Hence, Albert's loss left a gap at the heart of Anglo-German relations at the very time when they were beginning to experience discord and tension.

For most of the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, Prussia and Austria represented the most influential states in Central Europe, though each vied with the other for

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[216] See McClelland (1971: pt 2, 61-160).
[217] Quoted in Rappaport (2011: 129).
[218] See ibid., chs 4, 5 and 6, 57-104.
[219] On the early-to-mid-Victorian shift in Anglo-German relations, see Sontag (1938) and Stafford (1982).
[220] On the breadth of Albert's activities, see the essays in Davis (2004).
[221] See Weintraub (1997: ch. 11, 245-66) and Allen (2004).
[222] For an overview of his influence, see Ames (1968).
[223] Quoted in Benson (1936: 7-8).

influence over the other, smaller states of the German Confederation.[224] With the accession of Wilhelm I to the Prussian throne in 1861, and his appointment of Otto von Bismarck as chancellor, however, the geopolitics of the region altered and Prussia began its rise to dominance – not only over the other German states, but also over Europe.[225] Overcoming its nearest rivals in short, successful wars with Denmark in 1864 and Austria in 1866, Prussia gained an unprecedented supremacy that altered the balance of power on the Continent that had existed since Waterloo.[226] Although Britain had a direct connection to the Prussian court through Queen Victoria's son-in-law, Crown Prince Frederick, he was sidelined by Bismarck, who disliked his Anglophilia and liberalism.[227] In addition, the aggressive militarism that defined Prussian foreign policy in the 1860s struck a sharp ideological contrast with Britain's reform-driven agenda, which continued to impel its society to fresh gains, even as its empire entered an increasingly active phase.[228] As a result of these developments, Britain began to grow wary of Prussia's rise, as well as the industrial, political and military challenges inherent in the creation of a new and powerful Continental rival – however close Anglo-German cultural connections might once have been.[229]

So, as one can observe, a remarkable reverse in Victorian relations with France and Germany occurred during the mid-Victorian period. This witnessed Britain's old enemy France become largely rehabilitated, while its long-standing cultural cousin Germany registered the first harbingers of a shift from ally to rival. Continuing to develop throughout the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras, the relationship between these two trends eventually reached a crisis in 1914 when the Great War broke out – Britain finding itself allied to France and at war with Germany. Yet, the origins of that adjustment date back to the 1850s and 60s, when a *détente* with France occurred largely due to the diplomacy of Napoleon III, while Prussia began its contemporaneous rise to European supremacy under the forceful *Realpolitik* of Otto von Bismarck.

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[224] See Breuilly (2002: chs 4 and 5, 38-60), and, on domestic views of these developments, Müller (2002: ch. 3, 108-56).
[225] See ibid., chs 6 and 7, 61-84.
[226] See Williamson (2011: pt 2, 17-40).
[227] On Frederick's ostracism, see Williamson (2011: 89-90 and 106-7), and, for an overview of his life, Kollander (1995).
[228] On the contrasting anti-militarism of mid-to-late-Victorian culture, see Morton (1981).
[229] See McClelland (1971: pt 4, 161-236).

Within the context of the contemporary reception of ancient Rome, France and Germany represented rivals for the Victorian appropriation of Roman antiquity, though in separate manners intimately related to the political climate and events in each country. While German scholarship dominated the study of antiquity for most of the nineteenth century, during the mid-Victorian era English and French classics began to challenge that ascendency. This had the potential of opening up Rome for cultural reclamation by both societies, which were already enjoying closer relations owing to their shared concern about the rise of Prussia. Yet, England, France and Germany all sought to employ classical Rome differently as a cultural model as a result of their divergent political circumstances, which only grew more pronounced as the century proceeded.

Since it occurred in such a gradual and incremental manner during the mid-nineteenth century, this alteration in England's cultural relations with France and Germany seems to have been little appreciated at the time. When placed in the context of wider European cultural history, however, this shift assumes an importance that would define, not only the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras, but much of the early twentieth century. Merely one of a number of battlefields upon which these three countries fought subsequently, classical Rome therefore represents only a small-scale object of contention between them, though one that is reflective of their wider political trajectories. Yet, if one seeks the turning-point in their tripartite cultural and political relations, one event in particular stands out: the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1 – an event that also possessed a decisive and unifying influence on the mid-Victorian rehabilitation of ancient Rome.

4.4. '[A] greater […] event than the French Revolution': the impact of 1870 and the Franco-Prussian War

Certain junctures recommend themselves as effective pivots upon which history appears to turn, with a number of elements appearing to coalesce at that moment to transform a culture or a society. As many have noted, 1870 seems to be one of those:

> Some years are more eventful than others. Some seem more full of history's milestones; they contain more beginnings and endings. The year 1870 was such a year, for in it a remarkable number of extraordinary things happened.[230]

A number of commentators – both at the time and since – have noted how the period surrounding this year appears to mark a definite transition. Significantly, in writing about the arrival of the new decade of the 1870s, the *Pall Mall Gazette* ended its reflection by remarking that Britain currently possessed 'the greatest opportunity of setting its stamp upon mankind that ever fell in the way of any nation since the days of ancient Rome'.[231] Referring to the period from 1867 to 1872, the economist Walter Bagehot referred to it representing 'a change not in one point, but in a thousand points […] a change not only of particular details but of pervading spirit'.[232] Later, in 1901, the social commentator Sidney Webb looked back upon this period and noted that '[d]uring the last twenty or thirty years, we have become a new people [and] "[e]arly Victorian" England now lies, in effect, centuries behind us […]'.[233] Thus, during the period that ancient Rome's rehabilitation was completed, Victorian culture was undergoing a deeper and wider sense of cultural transition.

In historiography of the period, numerous scholars have also identified this year and the surrounding era as a transitional epoch in British and European history. Donald Read, for instance, has defined the period from 1868 to 1880 as '[t]he Victorian turning point'[234], while Martin Hewitt has referred to it as the 'Victorian *entr'acte*', suggesting that it provided an effective intermission between the two historical eras of

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[230] Farwell (1973: 179).
[231] *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 January 1870, 8.
[232] Bagehot (1872: 3).
[233] Webb (1901: 3).
[234] Read (1994: 1). See ibid., pt 1, 3-202.

1815-70 and 1870-1914.[235] Some, such as A.N. Wilson, have even gone so far as to identify in this shift the birth of the modern world; writing that '[t]he world of the 1870s is in touch with our world, in a way that earlier decades of Victoria's reign [are] not.'[236] In the field of economics, John Clapham once called the period 1866-73 a 'gigantic hinge'[237] that definitively shifted the fulcrum of the British economy to London and the South. Similarly, in British science and technology, the year 1870 has been noted by Margaret Gowing as being particularly significant, while representing 'one of the dates which form natural breaks in history books'.[238] As well as effectively dividing the Victorian era into two separate halves of 1837-70 and 1870-1901, the period around 1870 also marked the first time that contemporary Britons began to refer to themselves as 'Victorians', which makes it vital to understanding the entire age.[239]

Meanwhile, a wider socio-political transition can be said to have begun with the Second Reform Act (1867), which democratised British politics by doubling its electorate and building upon the legislative improvements inaugurated by the 1832 Reform Act. In its wake, a number of key cultural commentators, such as Thomas Carlyle and Matthew Arnold, recognised and responded to the shift that mid-Victorian society was undergoing. In *Shooting Niagara: and after?* (1867), for example, Carlyle saw this transformation in entirely negative terms; suggesting that the future would witness a 'sheer fight' between the forces of 'Anarchy' and 'Anti-Anarchy'.[240] Meanwhile, Matthew Arnold's *Culture and anarchy* essays (1867-8), attempted to make similar sense of contemporary society by dividing the positive and negative cultural forces that he perceived around him into those of 'Hebraism' and 'Hellenism'.[241] Hence, it is within this wider context of transition that a revival of ancient Rome in English culture occurred; drawing force from the broader cultural conditions that had defined its early-to-mid-Victorian reception, as well as from the coincident events that occurred at this time.

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[235] Hewitt (2012a: 23-4).
[236] Wilson (2003: 352).
[237] Clapham (1944: ii, 271).
[238] Gowing (1978: 3).
[239] See Rappaport (2011: 107).
[240] Carlyle (1867: 50).
[241] Arnold (1869: 143). See ibid., 143-66.

One of the most perceptive contemporary accounts of English society and culture during this period was Hippolyte Taine's *Notes on England* (1872), which he wrote after a series of trips to Britain. Significantly, in his wide-ranging survey, the author makes a number of references to the growing contemporary parallel between classical Rome and mid-Victorian society. Believing that 'London resembles ancient Rome as Paris resembles ancient Athens', Taine described how the imperial edifice of 'this modern Rome', like all of the ancient empires, represented 'an accumulation of efforts [and] an excess of fatigue'.[242] Later, however, in discussing the wealth of culture and industry on display at the Crystal Palace – itself in many ways an embodiment of the Victorian mindset itself –, Taine identified the nature and limits of Rome's similarity to classical Rome:

> [D]oes not this conglomeration of odds and ends carry back one's thoughts to the Rome of Caesar and the Antonines? At that period, also, pleasure-palaces were erected for the sovereign people; circuses, theatres, baths wherein were collected statues, paintings, animals, musicians, acrobats, all the treasures and all the oddities of the world; pantheons of opulence and curiosity; genuine bazaars where the liking for what was novel, heterogeneous, and fantastic ousted the feeling of appreciation for simple beauty. In truth, Rome enriched herself with these things by conquest, England by industry. Thus it is that at Rome the paintings, the statues, were stolen originals, and the monsters, whether rhinoceroses or lions, were perfectly alive and tore human beings to pieces; whereas here the statues are made of plaster and the monsters of goldbeater's skin. The spectacle is one of the second class, but of the same kind.[243]

Thus, at the very point of Rome's rehabilitation, Taine recognised how comparisons between Roman antiquity and contemporary England even then possessed an essence of artificiality and affectation, which made Victorians appear like 'powerful barbarians who, trying to become refined, had utterly failed'.[244]

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[242] Taine (1872: 30).
[243] Ibid., 233.
[244] Ibid.

Refocussing upon domestic society, it is clear that a number of cultural developments seem to converge coincidentally upon 1870. For a start, the decade leading up to this year witnessed the deaths of a number of key figures who had defined the early-to-mid-Victorian political scene, including the Whig peer Thomas Babington Macaulay (d.1859) and the Radical/Liberal MP Richard Cobden (d.1865). While Lord John Russell retired from politics in 1866, this period also represented the end of an era, owing to the deaths of the other prime ministers Lord Aberdeen (d.1860), Lord Palmerston (d.1865) and Lord Derby (d.1869). Significantly, 1870 itself also witnessed the death of the author who had arguably done most to define the Victorian era up to that point, Charles Dickens, which seemed to emphasise the shift that Victorian society was undergoing at this time. Yet, even many of those cultural giants of the first half of Victoria's reign who did not die on or before 1870, such as John Stuart Mill or Thomas Carlyle, were coming to the close of the main phases of their careers, which induced the arrival of younger, often more dynamic, individuals to replace them.[245] With these departures also went the conclusive passing of the revolutionary and Napoleonic ages that had overshadowed so much of the early-to-mid nineteenth century, which was embodied by the deaths of some of the last participants of that period's conflicts.[246]

In addition, the process of bureaucratisation that had been proceeding since the first decade of Victoria's reign appeared to reach both its climax and its conclusion in this period, owing to the set of reforms enacted by the Liberal administration of 1868-74. Assisted by the expansion of the electorate that followed the 1867 Second Reform Act, William Gladstone's election victory in 1868 has been claimed 'to symbolise a shift from one world to another'[247], as a consequence of the reformist agenda that defined his subsequent premiership. With convict transportation abolished in 1867 and public executions outlawed in 1868, a more tolerant, but interventionist, breeze was blowing through British society, upon which Gladstone capitalised. Among the legislation passed by his administration, for instance, was the Forster Education Act, which established the foundations of elementary schooling in the United Kingdom for

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[245] See Ensor (1936: 136).

[246] The last verified participant of the American War of Independence, John Gray, died in 1869, aged 109. (See Dalzell (1888: pt 3, 189-243).) Similarly, the last person involved in storming the Bastille, Arthur Dardenne, died in 1872, aged 96, though the final survivor of the Napoleonic Wars, Vincent Marciewicz, did not die until 1903. (See Anon. (1873: 286) and Hazareesingh (2004: 260-1).)

[247] Aldous (2006: 198).

the first time.[248] In the same year, Gladstone's government also enacted the findings of the 1854 Trevelyan-Northcote Report that had recommended competitive examinations for entry to the civil service, which – alongside the Cardwell Reforms that abolished the purchase of army commissions – established a meritocratic basis for British officialdom for the first time.[249] This led to government employment increasing fourfold during the latter decades of the Victorian era, in order to meet the challenges of a new phase of socio-political developments.[250] Indeed, with the occurrence of worrying, topsy-turvy changes, such as the first working-class MPs being elected to Parliament in 1874, and the first peer joining the Stock Exchange in 1875, only an efficient, bureaucratised state seemed capable of maintaining the forces of order and progress.[251]

Of course, the British imperial project entered arguably its most important phase around 1870. While the empire did not reach its symbolic apex until Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, nor its greatest territorial extent until after the Great War, the years surrounding 1870 were the time in which it appeared to be most robust and secure.[252] With the development of 'new' imperialism, the essential goals that had driven the British Empire since its inception were modified and replaced with fresh priorities.[253] Above all, the Indian Mutiny had led to increased public investment and intervention in the colonies, which was assisted by the establishment of the first transatlantic telegraph cable in 1866 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.[254] In 1870, the long-standing Great Trigonometrical Survey of India was concluded and direct telegraph communication between London and the sub-continent established, which increased metropolitan control over the British *raj*.[255] Other contemporary developments, such as the discovery of diamonds in South Africa in 1867, facilitated the winding-up of many of the empire's original mercantile interests, including the

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[248] See Jackson (1997: chs 7, 8 and 9, 136-206).

[249] On the report's impact, see Greenaway (2004).

[250] Cited in Harris (1993: 11-12).

[251] The first working-class MPs were Thomas Burt and Alexander MacDonald, who were former miners elected for the Liberal Party in the constituencies of Morpeth and Stafford, respectively. (See Whitfield (2001: 240).) Lord Walter Campbell was the first aristocrat to join the Stock Exchange. (See Robinson (1997: 28).)

[252] See Ferguson (2003: 241-2) and Kumar (2012a: 311, n. 36).

[253] On this period of transition, see Porter (2012: ch. 3, 33-68).

[254] On the transatlantic telegraph, see Steele Gordon (2002), and, on the importance of the Suez Canal, Haddad (2005).

[255] On the Great Trigonometrical Survey, see Edney (1997: pt 3, 199-292), and, on the mid-Victorian imperial telegraphic network, Headrick (1988: 98-101).

Hudson's Bay Company in 1870 and the East India Company in 1874.[256] Up to this point, colonial discourse had remained a largely underlying aspect of English society, though from the 1870s imperial pomp and spectacle became a more marked and resonant feature of national culture.[257] Yet, with the increasing pageantry of the empire went a superficiality that began to distort the actual substance, scale and supremacy of Britain's imperial project.

While the number of Britain's overseas territories expanded only incrementally during the 1850s and 60s, the public profile of the empire was amplified in an unprecedented fashion by a number of diverse developments around 1870.[258] In this period, imperial awareness was raised by the establishment of new bodies, such as the Royal Colonial Institute (founded in 1868), and bestselling books, such as Charles Dilke's imperial travelogue *Greater Britain* (1868). Yet, it was probably the well-publicised episode of Henry Morton Stanley's search for the Scottish missionary David Livingstone during 1870-1 that did more than anything to promote the development of an imperial consciousness.[259] Moreover, since British emigration to the colonies continued to increase throughout the mid-Victorian period, there had never been more cultural interaction between Britain's imperial metropole and its overseas territories.[260] As a result, during the 1870s the Victorian public began to identify the British Empire – despite its manifold nature – as one socio-political entity.[261] Bringing to a close its alleged 'absent-minded' phase, the British imperial project entered one of increasingly aggressive acquisition, which made the Roman Empire a perfect foil for those who wished to project Britain's imperial power within a historical context.

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[256] On the importance of the discovery of South African diamonds, see Porter (2012: 85-6), and, on the end of the Hudson's Bay and East India companies, Galbraith (1957: ch. 18, 391-430) and Webster (2009: ch. 7, 129-50), respectively.

[257] See Cannadine (2001).

[258] Such territories that were acquired in this period were mostly piecemeal and strategically unimportant, including the province of Pegu in Burma (1852), Bahrain, Muscat and Oman (1861), Lagos in Nigeria (1861), Zanzibar (1862), Basutoland (1868), and Qatar (1868). See Dalziel (2006: 136-7).

[259] For an account of the impact of Livingstone's and Stanley's adventure, see Pettitt (2007).

[260] During the period 1853-80, almost 2.5 million emigrants left the United Kingdom and, while many sought new lives in the United States, plenty also headed to Canada, Australia and the other 'white' colonial territories. (Cited in Thomson (1950: 164).) On the interaction between metropolitan culture and colonial migration, see Mackenzie (1999) and Harper (1999).

[261] Although the impact of imperial consciousness on the Victorian public has been debated, few can doubt that it was in the 1870s, with the advent of 'new' imperialism, that Britain's empire entered a fresh phase. For an extended examination of the dynamics of this trend, see Porter (2004).

At the very centre of this newly-forged imperial identity was the British crown, which also enjoyed a new phase of relevance and influence from around 1870.[262] In this period, the concept of monarchy was redefined, which gave it a prominence in national culture that it had arguably not enjoyed since the time of George III.[263] Yet this resurgence followed a period of unpopularity for the monarchy that had been occasioned by the withdrawal of Queen Victoria from public life following the death of Prince Albert.[264] Indeed, such was its poor reputation by 1870-1 that there were serious calls for the abolition of the monarchy from a nascent British republican movement led by the Liberal MP Charles Dilke.[265] In late 1871, however, there was a dramatic turnaround in public opinion when the Prince of Wales fell seriously ill, only to recover in near-miraculous circumstances, followed soon after by an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Victoria's life.[266] Together, these events occasioned much public sympathy and worked to restore the reputation of the monarchy, which was capped by a Service of National Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral in February 1872.[267] Thereafter, Victoria entered a period of renaissance that saw the queen and her family portrayed as a central pinion of the British imperial project.[268] Thus, considering the importance that a Roman imperial model had gained in English culture by 1870, it is little wonder that English republicanism failed as a movement, while the British crown was reinforced as the symbolic keystone of the British imperial project.

Yet, one event above all seemed to unite the various external factors that coalesced to occasion a rehabilitation of Rome: the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1.[269] Norman Vance has suggested that '[t]he Roman metaphor was invoked at crisis-points in European history'[270], and this, 'the greatest war of the nineteenth century'[271], proved to be one such fault-line. As the first military struggle on European soil since Waterloo, the conflict represented a dramatic breach in the political *status quo* that

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[262] See Bentley (2007).
[263] See Riotte (2007: 82-3).
[264] See Homans (1998: ch. 2, 58-99).
[265] On this movement, see A. Taylor (2003), and, on Dilke's interaction with republican *versus* imperial discourse, M. Taylor (2003).
[266] See Longford (1964: 488-91).
[267] See Rappaport (2011: 226-9).
[268] On the monarchy's renewed importance, see Cannadine (2001: ch. 8, 101-20).
[269] For insightful accounts of the conflict, see Wetzel (2003), Wawro (2003) and Barry (2007).
[270] Vance (1997: 5).
[271] Fletcher and Kipling (1911: 244).

had dominated the Continent since the Congress of Vienna (1814-15).[272] Underlining the fierce intensity of the conflict, Queen Victoria suggested that 'there has perhaps never been a worse [war]'[273], while its extreme violence cut at the heart of Europeans' sense of themselves as the most civilised and cultured society in the world. Moreover, the dramatic nature of the clash was emphasised by the fact that it seemed to emerge unexpectedly as far as European diplomats were concerned: the British foreign secretary Lord Granville having declared in the months before its outbreak that he could never recall 'so great a lull in foreign affairs', while French prime minister Émile Ollivier had remarked that 'at no period has the maintenance of peace seemed better assured'.[274]

When war did arrive, it came suddenly and sensationally: witnessing ten battles in only a month in which *c*.300,000 were killed, wounded or taken prisoner; the surrender of the fortress of Metz and its *c*.120,000 French forces in the largest military surrender in history up to that point; the ruthless Prussian invasion of France, and the capture of Paris in the first siege of a European city since the French Revolution; as well as the near-destruction of the city in the Paris Commune that followed. Yet, beyond the immediate scope of the conflict, the Franco-Prussian War had a major bearing upon European affairs outside of the fall of the Second Empire in France, and the subsequent declaration of a German Empire; leading to major changes on the Italian peninsula, including the defeat of the Papal States and the final unification of Italy. Leaving in its wake a powerful German Empire, a deeply unstable French Third Republic and a freshly-created Kingdom of Italy, the Franco-Prussian War remade the map of Europe and cast a lengthy historical shadow.[275] Thus, the conflict represented a major irruption in the socio-political fabric of Europe that irredeemably altered how circumstances had stood since 1848, or even 1815, while creating a fresh *status quo* that lasted until the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.[276]

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[272] On the background to its outbreak, see Wawro (2000: chs 4 and 5, 73-123).
[273] Quoted in Longford (1964: 474).
[274] Quoted in Horne (2004: 290). On British foreign policy in the lead-up to the conflict, see Millman (1965).
[275] In particular, the cession of Alsace-Lorraine by France to the German Empire remained a key diplomatic issue up to the Great War. See Heffernan (2001).
[276] See Hamilton (2003: 72-7).

Although not involving Britain in any political or military respect – and, indeed, 1870 registered as an unusually peaceful year throughout the empire –, the consequences of the Franco-Prussian War upon English society and culture were profound.[277] Having already thrown off much of its isolationism, English culture could not detach itself from such a major European episode, which left it influenced by these events in any number of subtle, yet significant ways.[278] Some, like the prime minister William Gladstone, immediately realised the consequences of the conflict for English society, which he enunciated in an 18,000-word article in the *Edinburgh Review* that attempted to make sense of its effects.[279] Likewise, his great rival, Benjamin Disraeli, explained to the House of Commons shortly afterwards that the conflict had been 'no common war', but had instead created 'a new world, new influences at work, new and unknown objects and dangers with which to cope':[280]

> This war represents the German revolution, a greater political event than the French Revolution of last century […] What has really come to pass in Europe? The balance of power has been entirely destroyed, and the country which suffers most, and feels the effects of this great change most, is England.[281]

As historians have since noted, the unprecedented nature of the Franco-Prussian War as a swift, mobile conflict that made full use of the most up-to-date military technology had a major psychological effect:

> [W]e must not disregard [the] impact [of the conflict] on the English mind. For sheer swift drama nothing in the war of 1914-18 quite compares with [it]. Few episodes, save the outset of the latter Armageddon, were so mobile; and none were ever so fully, freely and immediately reported in the press.[282]

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[277] See Parry (2006: ch. 6, 276-322).
[278] See Simmons (2000: ch. 5, 167-98).
[279] Gladstone (1870).
[280] Speech in the House of Commons, 9 February 1871; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 204, cols 81-2.
[281] Ibid.
[282] Ensor (1936: 7).

As a result, the conflict had an oblique, yet important, effect, not only upon British foreign policy, but also upon English culture and society.

During its course, English opinion largely shifted from pro-Prussian support in the initial stages of the conflict to pro-French sympathies in its latter, which can be seen displayed, for instance, by contemporary newspaper coverage of the hostilities.[283] So, while the *Illustrated London News* was pro-Prussian, its rival, the *Ilustrated Times* remained pro-French throughout; meanwhile, *The Times* altered its outlook from initially backing the Prussian offensive to latterly sympathising with the French defeat.[284] Similarly, major public figures differed in their opinions on the war. Hence, while Thomas Carlyle was clear in his support for '[n]oble, patient, deep, pious and solid Germany' against 'vapouring' and 'quarrelsome' France, Florence Nightingale was a staunch pro-French supporter, owing to her concerns about the humanitarian crisis in Paris and how a Prussian victory might destabilise Europe.[285] Perhaps, naturally, Victoria and her court remained pro-German for most of the war – the Queen having once referred to Paris as 'that Sodom and Gomorrah'[286] –, yet London still received thousands of refugees from the city, and sent thousands of supplies in relief following its fall.[287] Ultimately, however, works such as the jurist Frederic Harrison's article 'The duty of England', written in January 1871, seem to reflect the wider public opinion in its support for French 'civilisation' against alleged German 'barbarism'.[288]

In this light, one can recognise the ambivalence among the English public about which side to support in this clash between Teuton and Gaul, each of which staked variant claims upon English loyalty. Yet, it was the creation of the German Empire in the aftermath of the conflict that arguably turned English opinion against Germany, since it created a powerful new rival on the Continent that had already proven its industrial and military capabilities.[289] Following the Franco-Prussian War,

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[283] See Ensor (1936: 6) and Horne (1990: 162-6). For an overview, see Raymond (1921).
[284] See Martin (2003) and Pratt (1985: 562).
[285] Carlyle (1899: xxx, 59). On Nightingale's evaluation of the European situation, see McDonald (2013).
[286] Quoted in Aronson (1972: 114).
[287] See Horne (1990: 248-50).
[288] See Harrison (1908: 35-69).
[289] See Pratt (1985: 567-75).

uncertainty remained about whether, in the new world order that was emerging in Europe, Britain should support France or Germany. Yet, the fact that Napoleon III was given asylum in Britain following his abdication as French emperor, while his only son, Louis-Napoleon, the *Prince Impérial*, died in the Zulu War in 1879 fighting for the British Army, should indicate the prime direction that late-Victorian culture took.[290] So, in this way the Franco-Prussian War acted as a crucial historical and cultural 'pivot' that had a major influence on developments in Britain despite being fought away from British soil.

Having a greater impact on Continental affairs than any event until the Great War, the conflict and its direct consequences altered the European cultural environment in countless ways. One of these was classical reception, which found itself affected by its political consequences, which led to its division – at least in some circles – along pro-French and pro-German lines.[291] Across the Channel, however, the greatest influence of the war on English classics was on the profile of Rome in the country's culture, which had its revival indirectly confirmed and encouraged by events. This occurred as a result of the Franco-Prussian War altering the three main external cultural relationships that had defined the Victorian reception of Rome: the Roman Catholic Church, France and Germany. In the case of the Catholic Church and France, the pope lost his temporal powers, while the French Second Empire was transformed into the unstable Third Republic – effectively removing both as actual and cultural threats to English society. In contrast, the unified and militaristic German Empire that emerged from the Franco-Prussian War replaced France as a possible threat to Britain that only grew in menace during subsequent decades. Since the Roman Catholic Church and Napoleonic France had effectively controlled the Roman cultural model for much of the period when it had been in eclipse in English society, their defeat represented an opportunity for Rome to be potentially repossessed again. So, in effect, the Roman Church found itself more acceptable to English culture because it had been reduced from a temporal power to an ecclesiastical one, while a similarly chastened France was shown to be no longer a military threat to British security or interests, thus opening the way to further *détente* with both.

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[290] Louis-Napoleon had even been considered as a prospective husband for Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, Princess Beatrice – a potential Anglo-French alliance that was lost with his demise. For an account of his life, see John (1939).
[291] See Wood (2013: chs 10 and 11, 174-221).

Of course, the city of Rome represented the ultimate focus of all appropriations of Roman antiquity, so it is valuable to take account of its role in the Franco-Prussian War and the resulting cultural effects.[292] Since 1859, Rome had been protected from the advances of the *Risorgimento* by a garrison of French soldiers provided by Napoleon III. With the outbreak of war, however, these troops were withdrawn, which led Italian nationalist forces to seize the city and annex the surrounding Papal States, finally uniting the peninsula as one kingdom under Victor Emmanuel II.[293] In response, Pope Pius IX withdrew inside the walls of the Vatican, where he declared his controversial doctrine of papal infallibility.[294] Having gained a new master, the city was asserted to have gained 'temporal and spiritual liberation'[295] from Franco-Papal rule, which reopened its actual and cultural portals to all. In this light, Rome's capture appeared to release the city from its literal possession by Napoleonic France and the Catholic Church, which made its historical tradition available for alternative appropriation and use. Yet, at the same time, this also introduced a fresh rival for its historical claims in the form of a unified Italy, which was attempting to recover its own classical Roman heritage.[296] Consequently, though merely a sideshow of the Franco-Prussian conflict, Rome's seizure occasioned a symbolic liberation of the city and its cultural inheritance for reclamation by other societies, such as Victorian Britain.

Hence, it is evident that 'round about 1870 [there] occurs a watershed in English life'[297], which presented a definite cultural turn that seemed to combine a number of separate trends that had been growing in influence during the 1860s and 70s. Reinforced by a related sense of transition that was produced by the effective conclusion of the process of bureaucratisation and reform, alongside the development of the British Empire into its most active and expansionist phase, English cultural discourse seemed to evolve anew at this time. Yet, whatever domestic influences had been responsible for this gradual evolution during the mid-Victorian period, it was arguably a number of external factors that had the greatest and most immediate bearing on the contemporary profile of Roman antiquity. Above all, the outbreak of

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[292] See Halperin (1968: 28-65).
[293] On the background to these events, see Duggan (2007: 242-58).
[294] See Kertzer (2004), esp. chs 1-4, 9-58.
[295] Riccardi (2002: 284-5).
[296] See Atkinson *et al.* (2003) and Edwards (2008).
[297] Ensor (1936: 136).

the Franco-Prussian War appears to have transformed the contemporary English cultural climate by dramatically altering Victorian society's relations with Italy, the Roman Catholic Church, France and Germany – all of which possessed influential bearings on the English reception of Rome.

Rupturing the *status quo* that had been in place in European relations since Waterloo, the Franco-Prussian War redrew the map of Europe; creating new states in the form of the German Empire and the Kingdom of Italy, while overthrowing old ones in the French Second Empire and the Papal States. Although not involving Britain directly, the conflict had a profound effect, not only upon British foreign policy, but also upon English culture. While the swift and dramatic pace of the war's events shocked the nation with their immediate impact, its consequences seemed to overturn many of the certainties that had guided British culture and politics since Victoria took the throne. Moreover, in the context of the contemporary rehabilitation of Rome, this event embodies the one common denominator that seemed to unite all of the disparate trends that had encouraged a revival of Rome in English society up to this point. Provoking entirely new cultural relations with Italy, the Roman Catholic Church, France and Germany, it was also the beginning of a shift from kinship with the Teutonic nation of Germany to affinity with the Latin identity of France, which was to possess long-term consequences. Furthermore, the largely unprecedented nature of events also seemed to induce English society to look increasingly for stability in repositories of defined and secure cultural value, such as Roman antiquity.

Thus, despite its Continental nature, the Franco-Prussian War had a significant influence upon Victorian culture in both minor and major regards. Among the small, indirect, results of the conflict, for instance, is the fact that Lawrence Alma-Tadema, the prime mover behind the visual revival of Rome, chose to live and work in London, rather than another European city. Having moved there in 1869, his alternative choice of Paris was made impracticable by its near-destruction following the Prussian siege and the Paris Commune, so he stayed in London for the rest of his life.[298] Elsewhere, it has been suggested that Gladstone lost the 1874 election as a result of the fall-out of the Franco-Prussian War, which underscored the need for

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[298] See Walkley (1994: 127-8).

Britain to assume a more aggressive foreign policy to stay ahead of its now-nearest rival, the German Empire.[299] As a consequence, one could say that Disraeli's subsequent premiership – and many of the Roman cultural permutations that he called upon to inform his political decisions – could be traced back to the Franco-Prussian War.[300] So, in great and small ways, it can be argued that this brief conflict set the spark to the kindling that had been building in English culture for some time to incite a complete rehabilitation of ancient Rome.

4.5. Conclusion

When one explores English society's separate cultural interactions with Italy, the Roman Catholic Church, France and Germany during the mid-Victorian era within the context of the contemporary reception of ancient Rome, one discovers a plausible relationship between them all. Since Britain was in a position to experience an elevated level of interaction with other European cultures, owing to the revolution in transport, communications and tourism that defined the early-to-mid-Victorian era, it was open to the absorption and assimilation of external influences in a manner that it had probably not been since before the French Revolution. As this shift coalesced with an active and dynamic phase in European affairs, this allowed English culture to be affected more than usually by occurrences on the Continent. In the crucial context of the changing profile of Roman antiquity in English culture, many of these developments proved important and influential, though largely as a series of cumulative events, rather than singly. Taken together, events on the Continent and relations with its chief protagonists seemed to encourage subtle, yet powerful, domestic shifts that facilitated compelling changes in the Victorian reception of Rome.

Firstly, increased travel to the Italian peninsula exposed Victorians to the physical remains of the Roman world, which allowed them to gain exposure to its culture and understand it on its own terms. Secondly, the 'foreign' presence of a renascent Roman Catholic Church on English soil – itself one of the most valid remaining heirs of Roman power – gave the name of Rome a renewed profile. Mediated and modified by debate about the place of Catholicism in English society, concepts regarding Rome

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[299] On this connection, see Parry (2006: ch. 6, 276-322).
[300] On Disraeli's imperial policy in the context of his Roman analogies, see Parchami (2009: 70-3).

gained a level of cultural exposure during the mid-Victorian period that they had arguably not achieved since the Reformation. Thirdly, English cultural relations with its two most influential European neighbours, France and Germany, also played a major role in shaping the reception of Rome in English society, as a result of their own changing and competing claims on the Victorian imagination.

Since alliance and conflict with France and Germany bookend the period of 1815-1914, one can detect an exponential shift in Anglo-French and Anglo-German relations during the mid-Victorian era, which saw France evolve gradually from enemy to ally, and *vice versa* in the case of Germany. Moreover, since French culture in its Revolutionary and Napoleonic incarnation had been the prime former appropriator of classical Rome, its own rehabilitation helped to release and restore Rome as a viable cultural model for Victorian society. Finally, the Franco-Prussian War induced a conclusive watershed for many of these separate developments, which seemed to secure the conditions necessary to restore Rome to a position of authority and legitimacy in England. Furthermore, the conclusive defeat of not only France in the conflict, but also the temporal form of the Roman Catholic Church, worked simultaneously to diminish the perceived threat associated with each of these former pretenders to Roman cultural authority, while disconnecting Rome from the sphere of their influence.

So, the Victorian reception of ancient Rome was altered by the influence of a series of external trends and events during the two decades leading up to 1870, which amended previous perceptions and encouraged a revision in the position of Rome. Alone, most of these shifts in cultural relations may have had only a limited effect on English classical reception, but, together, in the context of their coincident nature, they stimulated the complete rehabilitation of Roman antiquity. As portrayed in the previous two chapters, many of the domestic vectors of potential revival were put in place between 1850 and 1870, but they needed some external stimulus to provoke the wholesale return of a Roman cultural model in England. Thus, mid-Victorians' growing perception of themselves as the 'true Romans' of their own era was founded not only upon a novel domestic projection of their own self-image, but also upon their external relations with their nearest national neighbours and rivals. The final section of this study will examine the forms and terms that this revival of Rome assumed in

the final decades of the Victorian era, when it was activated across a wide range of contexts, for ends both affirmative and critical.

5. Impact

There are, indeed, several points in which the resemblance between [the Romans and the English] is so striking that they seem to throw upon those who would impugn it the burden of denial. Like old Rome, England is the general refuge and asylum of all who come prepared to make her their home, and to do their duty as sons. Like Rome, we assimilate all who come to us till the nationality disappears, or only appears in that variety of power and quality which is so necessary to the interests of human affairs. As in Rome, our Constitution has undergone for centuries continual development in the direction of liberty and power, yet without the sacrifice of the virtues usually ascribed to the earlier and simpler arrangements of society. Like Rome, we have established an immense Empire in many climes and over many races quite as much by policy as by arms, and always to the unquestionable benefit of the people themselves. [….] We shall not inquire how it is that England has so much of Old Rome in her, but it certainly is something that so mighty a Power was the master and tutor of her infancy. It was in a Roman cradle and under Roman nurses that young England grew her strong nerve and her resolute will for three or four centuries.[1]

The Times, **1875.**

[N]othing can be more fundamentally unsound, more practically ruinous, than the establishment of Roman analogies for the guidance of British policy.[2]

William Gladstone, 1879.

5.1. 'A Roman moment': ancient Rome in late-Victorian culture, *c.*1870-1901

Historians may debate when the British imperial project reached its greatest socio-economic height, military zenith, or even territorial extent, but its symbolic summit undoubtedly arrived on 22 June 1897 with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.[3] The celebrations surrounding this anniversary witnessed an unprecedented display of imperial might that included a parade of 46,000 British and colonial troops through London, as well as a fleet review in the Solent involving over 160 Royal Navy vessels.[4] Naturally, the focal point of the celebrations was the queen herself, who travelled along the temporary *via triumphalis*, or triumphal way, from Buckingham Palace to St Paul's Cathedral within the vanguard of the day's military procession.[5] Attending the thanksgiving service at St Paul's alongside the monarch were members

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[1] *The Times*, 20 February 1875, 9.
[2] Gladstone (1971: 157).
[3] See Arnstein (1997).
[4] See Rappaport (2003).
[5] See Richards (1987) and King (2007).

of the royal family, the cabinet and both houses of parliament; as well as eleven colonial premiers, numerous foreign ambassadors, Indian maharajahs, and native royalty from across the empire. With the streets of the British capital decorated at a cost of £250,000, the event drew an estimated three million visitors to the city, not to mention representing one of the first major occasions to be captured on film.[6]

Covering the celebrations for the *Daily Mail*, the journalist George Warrington Steevens captured the expansive nature of the imperial spectacle on display:

> Lean, hard-knit Canadians, long-legged, yellow Australians, all in one piece with their horses, giant long-eyed Maoris, sitting loosely and leaning back curiously from the waist, burned South Africans, upstanding Sikhs, tiny lithe Malays and Dyaks, Chinese with white basin turned upside-down on their heads, grinning Hausas, so dead black that they shone silver in the sun – white men, yellow men, brown men, black men, every colour, every continent, every race, every speech – and all in arms for the British Empire and the British Queen. Up they came, more and more, new types, new realms at every couple of yards, an anthropological museum – a living gazetteer of the British Empire. With them came their English officers, whom they obey and follow like children. And you begin to understand, as never before, what the empire amounts to.[7]

Summing it up, he termed it a 'pageant which for splendour of appearance and especially for splendour of suggestion has never been paralleled in the history of the world'.[8] Yet, to some at least, the extraordinary scene on show called to mind similar dramatic and exotic displays from Roman imperial history – becoming, as Jan Morris has termed it, Victorian Britain's very own 'Roman moment'.[9]

Since the late-Victorian British Empire often projected style over substance, an occasion such as the Diamond Jubilee represented an excellent opportunity to portray

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[6] See Brendon (2007: 208).
[7] Steevens (1897: 193-4). For his full account of the occasion, see ibid., 185-218.
[8] Quoted in Morris (1979a: 31).
[9] Morris (1979c: 21). See Morris (1979a: 21-34).

British power to the world.[10] By emulating ancient Rome, at least unconsciously, in the scale of such a contemporary 'triumph', its organisers were implying that the British imperial project was the current heir to Roman hegemony. Originally to be called the Latinate-sounding *Jubilissimee*, the event's Roman overtones have been noted by many commentators both at the time and since.[11] For instance, Joseph Chamberlain's biographer quoted Edward Gibbon and compared it with the secular games in classical Rome; embodying a 'great spectacle that the oldest have never seen before and the youngest will never see again'.[12] A historian of the Second South African War has also looked back upon the celebrations as bearing a clear affinity with Roman antiquity:

> The whole affair harked back to the days of Imperial Rome, with tributes brought from throughout the Empire, and long processions of foreign soldiers playing the role of the old barbarian contingents once drawn from the fringes of Gaul, Iberia and Britannia.[13]

Even the French newspaper *Le Figaro* was compelled to declare of the celebrations at the time that Rome itself had been 'equalled, if not surpassed, by [British power]'.[14] As a whole, it is easy to see how it could be perceived as 'a properly Roman sight'; representing 'a pageant of citizens and barbarians […] summoned from the frontiers to that grey eternal city.'[15]

Primarily, it seems to have been the ancient Roman triumph that provided the symbolic model for many of the chief events of the jubilee celebrations.[16] In this, the military parade through the capital undoubtedly bore the most resemblance to such a triumph, though the naval review in the Solent could also be compared to the similar

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[10] See Andrews (2000) and Hölscher (2009).
[11] See Millidge (2012: 30).
[12] Garvin (1934: iii, 195).
[13] Fremont-Barnes (2003: 75).
[14] Quoted in Morris (1979a: 28).
[15] Ibid., 32.
[16] For comparison with the Roman triumph, see Beard (2003 and 2007). The tradition of staging elaborate displays of British imperial might began with the 1877 Delhi Durbar, which drew upon both the Roman triumph and Mughal customs. (See Lucht (2012: 39).) Others have suggested alternative Roman parallels for the jubilee celebrations, such as Piers Brendon, who has compared it to a *Lectisternium*, a propitiatory feast in sacrifice to the Roman divinities. (See Brendon (2007: 210).)

nautical triumphs held for successful Roman naval leaders.[17] Like its ancient counterparts, these events represented grandiose displays of military power that possessed a political function in demonstrating imperial supremacy. Yet, in contrast to Rome's use of the triumph, the organisers of the jubilee wished to portray, not its empire's victory over 'lesser' peoples, but, rather, its ability to integrate diverse cultures and societies into one unified whole. Indeed, as had become normal during the late-Victorian era, many poetic tributes to the event portrayed Britain as having exceeded the achievements of classical Rome. For example, in Alfred Austin's official homage as poet laureate, 'Victoria, June 20 1837-June 20 1897' (1897), he claimed that Britain's purpose was '[t]o harvest Empire wiser than Greece, / Wider than Rome!'[18] Yet, 'Recessional' (1897), Rudyard Kipling's poetic note of elegy over the jubilee, while warning British civilisation that it might eventually be 'one with Nineveh and Tyre', significantly made no mention of Rome.[19] So, both then and now, many have noted the superficial overtones surrounding Victoria's Diamond Jubilee that owed so much to the Roman triumph, while creating a positive self-comparison between Rome and Britain.

Overall, the mid-to-late-Victorian period of c.1870-1901 witnessed Britain grow, at least outwardly, from strength to strength as a nation and an empire. With the effective completion of the process of bureaucratisation and reform in the 1860s and 70s, the majority of Britain's domestic socio-economic issues were resolved, which created a populace that was, for the most part, content with its lot. Following the 'scramble for Africa' during the 1870s and 80s, the British Empire acquired a significant proportion of the 'Dark Continent', as well as adding considerable other territories across Asia and the Pacific. As Jan Morris has noted, with the advent of 'new' imperialism, the British imperial project reached an apogee of public exposure, which served to create a burgeoning imperial consciousness at home, and a sense of escalating colonial competition abroad:

> [B]etween the 1870s and the 1900s everything seemed to happen at once
> to the British Empire – a plethora of champions arose to glory, battles

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[17] See Versnel (1970: 90).
[18] Lines 62-3 in Austin (1898: 17).
[19] Line 16 in Kipling (1990: 261).

were fought all over the world, enormous new territories were acquired, roads and railroads were audaciously built, great explorations were concluded, unforgettable pro-consuls blazed across that stage, troops of artists hymned the imperial mission, politicians shamelessly exploited it, and the whole nation seemed seized or even possessed by the craze.[20]

After the success of Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, the sixtieth anniversary of her ascent to the throne in 1897 represented a fresh opportunity to celebrate and advertise British power again, in even grander style. Funded by a budget surplus over 1896, the Diamond Jubilee therefore effectively represented a national celebration of the achievements of the entire Victorian age. Indeed, the chancellor of the exchequer, Michael Hicks Beach, remarked that it would likely be years before the British people would reach again 'so high a level of widely diffused comforts, of financial ease, both public and private, of social and political contentment, of class union, of world power, and of superiority to foreign rivalry and competition'.[21] Yet, despite this concentration on Victorian Britain's accomplishments, as some have noted, increasing harbingers of potential decline could be detected across a range of economic, political and military spheres:

Not Spain in the sixteenth century, nor France in the eighteenth, had so demonstrably led the world as Victorian England with its utilitarian outlook, liberal policy, maritime power, and exuberant vitality; and now there were signs, visible at least to some shrewd observers, that the best days were over. English supremacy, unchallenged in the eighteen-sixties, the Age of Palmerston, had been asserted a little too self-consciously in the eighteen-seventies, the Age of Disraeli, and was openly challenged in the eighteen-eighties, the Age of Gladstone.[22]

From this point of view, it seemed as if 'Britain's drumbeat sounded louder as its Empire grew more hollow'[23]; the grander and more ornamental the event, the more it

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[20] Morris (1982: 14-15). See Mackenzie (1986: 1-16) and Cain (1999).
[21] Quoted in Shannon (1996: 475).
[22] Carrington (1970: 19).
[23] Brendon (2007: 331).

appeared to disguise the growing anxiety and unease that lay beneath the confident surface of such spectacles.

From the 1870s to the 90s, one gains a portrait of a state that continued to expand in every outward way, yet found itself steadily undermined by a series of negative economic trends.[24] While the mid-Victorian boom and all of its associated progress had been achieved largely as a result of the successes of the Industrial Revolution, Britain was slow in diversifying its concentration upon manufacturing to take account of the chemical, electrical and metallurgical advances that defined European industry from the 1870s.[25] In this, the newly reunited nations of Germany and the United States led the way, which fuelled the growing sense of international rivalry that was already dominating the colonial political theatre. In 1870, for instance, Britain produced 32% of the world's factory output, but, by 1900, this had been halved to only 16%; meanwhile, in 1893 the country's gross domestic product was outstripped for the first time in the Victorian era when the United States surpassed it, followed closely by Germany.[26] Yet, the most immediate result of this economic downturn was an agricultural depression, which descended upon Britain in the 1870s, owing to foreign competition; leading to the increasing transfer of capital and labour from the rural to the urban economy.[27] This situation further fed into a more general domestic slump during the 1880s that Britain only thwarted as a consequence of the continued supremacy of its coal industry, which masked increasing decline in its iron and steel sectors.[28]

While some have suggested that this 'Great Depression' was a myth, there can be no doubt that the majority of Britain's late-Victorian economic statistics indicate a downward trend that was largely offset and obscured by continued advances elsewhere.[29] In particular, sustained performances within textiles and shipping, as well as 'invisible' commercial components, such as banking and insurance, maintained London as the capital of international finance.[30] Most significantly of all,

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[24] See Pollard (1989).
[25] See Church (1975).
[26] Cited in Dalziel (2006: 106).
[27] See Perren (1995: 7-16).
[28] See Greasley (1986).
[29] See Saul (1985).
[30] See More (1997: 129-30).

the British imperial project continued to expand throughout this period, defeating a host of colonial enemies and acquiring fresh territory in almost every year of the late-Victorian era; all of which fuelled imperial bombast at home and prestige abroad.[31] Indeed, during this 'classic' phase of British colonialism, a multitude of adventurers, explorers, soldiers and missionaries upheld the standing of the British Empire by maintaining the maxim of the eighteenth-century empire-builder Robert Clive that '[t]o stop is dangerous; to recede, ruin'.[32] Thus, while the period around 1870 marked an apex for Britain across a range of spheres, many historians have claimed that it also represented the time at which the country began its decline as a first-rate power.[33]

Since a state's political power rests upon its economic capability, many within the guiding metropolitan elite of the British Empire – whether formally in Whitehall, or informally in the clubland of St James – realised the need for fresh means of reinforcing the country's socio-political *façade*.[34] Since Britain's empire has been said to have represented little more than 'a bluff, held together less by overwhelming force than by a mixture of cajolery and guile'[35], imperialism recommended itself as the ideal conceptual edifice upon which to project cosmetic displays of prestige. Taking into account the classical educations enjoyed by the country's 'upper ten-thousand', one of the most convenient measures available was comparison to the ancient world, which offered a wealth of authoritative allusions and references to fortify the imperial project.[36] Owing to its recent rehabilitation and supposed relevance to British imperialism, however, Rome came to occupy a position as the leading classical model to which elite commentators made reference in debates or discussions regarding contemporary colonial matters. Indeed, one has only to look at some of the leading British imperial adherents to note a relationship between their influence over colonial affairs and their recourse to Rome as a cultural model. Among the founder members of the Imperial Federation League in 1884, for instance, were J.A. Froude, J.R. Seeley and James Bryce, authors of works that all enunciated some connection between the

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[31] See Porter (2012: ch. 4, 69-104).
[32] Quoted in James (1997: 63).
[33] For instance, see Robbins (1994: 1-17). More generally, see More (1997: ch. 17, 142-9).
[34] See MacDonald (1994).
[35] Searle (2004: 252).
[36] See Hagerman (2013: ch. 1, 17-36).

Roman and the British empires.[37] Significantly, as evidenced by their activities within the League, this group was influential, since they successfully lobbied for the use of Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 to promote the federation of Britain's 'white' colonies.[38]

As the Indian viceroy Lord Dufferin suggested, being familiar with even the differences in ancient culture seemed to possess application within contemporary colonialism:

> [The ancients] were once people who didn't talk our tongue and who were very strong on sacrifice and ritual, particularly at meals, whose gods were different from ours and who had strict views on the disposal of the dead. […] [A]ll this is worth knowing if you ever have to govern India.[39]

Classical works on empire-building, such as *Agricola*, Tacitus' account of the settlement of Roman Britain, provided a set of useful guidelines on the administration of subject peoples for British imperial proponents. For instance, the imperial administrator Bartle Frere suggested that the Romans had 'found Britain in a condition of civilisation little if at all superior to that of the Zulus of our own day', but, by the end of their labours, 'so many of the aborigines had been civilised and educated as Romans, that men and women of British birth and Roman education were sufficiently numerous to be a recognisable element among the upper classes at Rome'.[40] In addition, the contemporary flowering of Roman studies that took place at the University of Oxford under Francis Pelham offered the scholarly authority to reinforce such reflections.[41] Thus, as will be explored in the next section, many among the 'upper ten-thousand' agreed with the former colonial secretary Lord

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[37] *Caesar: a sketch* (1879), *The expansion of England* (1883) and *Studies in history and jurisprudence* (1901), respectively.
[38] See Burgess (1995: 35-8).
[39] Kipling (1928: 91-2).
[40] Frere (1882: 319 and 321).
[41] Becoming Camden professor of ancient history there in 1889, Pelham nurtured the talents of a group of Romanists who defined the British study of Roman antiquity well into the twentieth century, including his successor, Francis Haverfield, along with William Warde Fowler and James Leigh Strachan-Davidson. See Murray (2000: 338-46 and 346-9).

Carnarvon, who declared in 1878 that Rome represented the only relevant colonial model for the British Empire to follow.[42]

While mid-to-late-Victorian society remained divided by class and eclectic in its tastes, a newfound devotion to classical Rome is found evidenced across contemporary culture. Perhaps, naturally for a parallel cultivated by England's social and intellectual elite, Rome was invoked in many official contexts, which provided it with authority as a comparative model. As the foremost cultural arbitrators of the time, contemporary newspapers and periodicals also referenced Rome in a variety of ways that betokened not only their editors' opinions, but also their readers' interest in the Roman world. In addition, the scholarly renewal of Latin studies and Roman historiography in England continued to support the perceived wider relevance of Roman antiquity. As a result, poetry and fiction of the time registered clear, though often unexpected, debts to Latin literature and Roman history. Yet, it was Rome's employment as a context for contemporary fiction and theatre that created the vision of the Roman world with which probably most Victorians became familiar. In short, ancient Rome seemed to percolate every stratum of late-Victorian society, though its appropriations ranged from scholarly and highly literary interpretations, down to far more crude and sensational ones.

While the eighteenth century had represented arguably the golden age of classical quotation in British parliamentary debate, Greek and Latin references remained indulged across the party spectrum until the close of the Victorian era.[43] While they were invoked for numerous specific reasons, classical quotations were employed primarily to demonstrate one's learning or to emphasise a political point.[44] In the light of its higher cultural and educational profile, Latin references tended to predominate – even if most seemed to be drawn from the first book of the *Aeneid* –, though the Roman-inspired rhetorical training in which parliamentarians had traditionally trained probably still played its part.[45] For example, comparing the Roman and Victorian governments, the Liberal MP Henry Richard once explained that the 'cares of the

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[42] See Carnarvon (1878: 759).

[43] On their eighteenth-century use, see Reid (2012: 219-25). On their Victorian application, see Stray (1998a: 65-8) and Meisel (2001: 54-70, 79-85 and 90-104).

[44] See Vince (1932) and Watson (1973: 117-20).

[45] See Stray (1998a: 66) and Reid (2012: ch. 6, 113-55, esp. 116-23).

governing body in the Roman Empire, with its compact continuity of ground, were light in comparison with the demands now made upon Parliament'.[46] With the rehabilitation of Rome that occurred during the mid-Victorian era, the frequency of references to Roman antiquity in Parliament increased, which emphasises its growing efficacy as a comparative model.[47]

In 1871, for instance, the chancellor of the exchequer Robert Lowe unsuccessfully proposed a tax on matches that would have imprinted every box sold with an official Latin pun, '*Ex luce lucellum*' – 'out of light, a little profit'.[48] The next year, Benjamin Disraeli announced plans for the legislation he eventually passed in 1875 as the Public Health Act, explaining that its watchword would be '*Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas*' – a phrase that conjured parallels not only to the Latin Vulgate, but also to the Romans' own skill in controlling public hygiene.[49] Yet, minor parliamentary figures also called upon Rome, such as the Irish Home Rule MP Purcell O'Gorman, who, in 1879, compared the Government's treatment of Afghans and Zulus to that of young nobles of ancient Rome, who insulted the poor only when the *aediles* were not present.[50] Similarly, in 1883, in a debate on the controversial Ilbert Bill, the Conservative MP Edward Stanhope suggested that there were two ways of ruling India: one to raise natives to the level of Europeans and the other to bring Europeans down to the level of the natives – but that the Roman Empire advised only the first course.[51] Outside of the Palace of Westminster, however, Roman culture also provided inspiration to alternative political groups, such as the Fabian Society, which was founded in 1884. Named after the Roman general Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus – known as *Cunctator*, or 'the delayer', owing to his vacillating tactics during the Punic Wars –, the society sought to effect social change through a similarly gradualist approach.[52] Hence, until the 'decay' of classical quotation noted in the 1890s, ancient Rome represented a significant weapon in the arsenal of the Victorian politician, whether Conservative, Liberal or other.[53]

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[46] Speech in the House of Commons, 19 March 1886; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 303, col. 1394.
[47] Statistics already noted in Introduction, 4-7.
[48] Speech in the House of Commons, 20 April 1871; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 205, col. 1416.
[49] Disraeli (1882: ii, 511).
[50] *The Times*, 3 May 1879, 8.
[51] Speech in the House of Commons, 22 August 1883; *Hansard*, third series, vol. 283, col. 1698.
[52] See Beard (2013: 73-4).
[53] On the decline of classical quotation by the end of the Victorian era, see Paul (1896).

Considering that the first paragraph of Cicero's famous speech against Catiline – '*O tempora, o mores…*' – had been used since the eighteenth century as a sample text for typesetting in the publishing industry, it is little surprise that newspapers often mentioned Rome.[54] Whether in the national broadsheets or in the provincial press, Rome became a common reference and subject in British newspapers during the mid-to-late-Victorian era. As the flagship national newspaper, *The Times* naturally invoked Rome countless times during this period for various purposes, including a debate about bankrupt peers and an editorial on the rise of Bismarck; reportage about the Madras famine, the Eastern Question and Brighton's new sewer system; the nature of British imperial administration and intimations of national decline; as well as discussions of popular education and contemporary engineering.[55] Capturing Rome's revival, *The Times* claimed in 1881 that '[a]ncient Rome is year by year putting off its grave-clothes', owing to archaeological discoveries being made in '[d]esolate heaths, blue lakes and rugged caverns', which 'supply gaps in the social, spiritual, and natural history of man.'[56] As a result, throughout this period *The Times* also published articles on ongoing excavations in Rome and their discoveries, such as that of the *Graecostasis*, as well as individual pieces discussing Roman coins, Roman painting and Roman architectural decoration.[57]

Other London newspapers and the provincial press also registered a similar interest in Roman antiquity, which was expressed in a similar variety of forms. For example, the throwaway nature of many of these pieces is exemplified by the *Glasgow Herald*'s article from 1880 marking 'the birthday of Rome' – meaning the 2533rd anniversary of its founding – or the piece from Dublin's *Freeman's Journal* in 1882 on 'Fish in ancient Rome'.[58] Slightly more seriously, in 1884, the *Daily News* divined parallels between a recent spate of poisonings and the use of poison in Roman society; while, in 1888, the *Glasgow Herald* produced an article on 'Schools and masters in ancient Rome', and the *Penny Illustrated Times* reported on the 'Roman games' that had been

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[54] See Beard (2013: 85).
[55] *The Times*, 13 February 1871, 9. Ibid., 2 January 1872, 7. Ibid., September 10 1877, 4. Ibid., January 3 1878, 10. Ibid., December 13 1881, 7. Ibid., 2 February 1882, 5. Ibid., 16 September 1884, 6. Ibid., 16 January 1893, 14. Ibid., 20 March 1893, 8.
[56] Ibid., 19 August 1881, 9.
[57] Ibid., 10 July 1876, 6. Ibid., 18 May 1883, 3. Ibid., 25 November 1874, 4. Ibid., 11 January 1883, 3. Ibid., 4 April 1885, 11.
[58] *Glasgow Herald*, 4 May 1880, 7. *Freeman's Journal*, 4 December 1882, 7.

performed at the Italian Exhibition in London.[59] While many of these were ephemeral pieces, some newspapers invoked Rome for more serious purposes, though these ranged from positive to negative comparisons. For instance, in 1886, the *Bristol Mercury* reported on the Colonial and Indian Exhibition by claiming that '[a]ncient Rome, perhaps, when at the summit of its pomp and world-wide dominion could have approached [the event's] spectacle in variety, but not in character'.[60] Contrastingly, in 1883, *Reynold's Newspaper* voiced concerns about imperial over-extension in an article on the annexation of New Guinea; writing how '[a]ncient Rome attempted universal domination, and every schoolboy knows what was the result. The empire got top-heavy and toppled over. So will it be with the British empire'.[61] Even the 'New Journalism' of William Thomas Stead and others occasionally sought to contextualise their tabloid 'scoops' through the respectability of Latin literature: as in the first instalment of Stead's infamous *exposé* 'The maiden tribute of modern Babylon' (1885), which he prefaced with an account of the legend of Theseus and a substantial verse from Ovid in its original Latin.[62]

The mid-to-late-Victorian period also represented the great era of periodical literature, owing to the large readerships enjoyed by leading journals, such as the *Athenaeum*, *Cornhill Magazine*, *Fortnightly Review*, *Strand Magazine* and *Westminster Review*. In these, numerous articles on Roman subjects were published by many of the leading contemporary intellectuals, such as James Anthony Froude.[63] Significantly, these articles often introduced contemporary debates into their discussions of the classical past, which served to reinforce the notion that the Victorians could learn from the ancients – and the Romans in particular. So, while an article such as Edward Caird's piece for the *North British Review*, 'The Roman element in civilisation' (1866), explored Rome's influence on Western civilisation in general, others were more specific. For instance, William Bodham Donne's review for the *Edinburgh Review*, 'Caesarian Rome' (1869), explained that '[t]here is a tendency […] at the present moment to regard the Roman Empire as a positive and unalloyed boon to its

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[59] *Daily News*, 7 June 1884, 4. *Glasgow Herald*, 2 August 1888, 9. *Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times*, 4 August 1888, 70.
[60] *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post*, 5 May 1886, 5.
[61] *Reynold's Newspaper*, 22 April 1883, 4.
[62] *Pall Mall Gazette*, 6 July 1885, 1. In his piece, Stead quoted from *Metamorphoses*, 8.156-60.
[63] See Brady (2013: 337, n. 42).

subjects'[64], though he uses his piece to question the benefits of imperialism as a political discourse. In an article in *Fraser's Magazine*, 'The moral character of Roman conquest' (1874), Francis William Newman (brother of John Henry Newman) similarly interrogated the allegedly harsh character of Roman imperialism in the context of its more positive recent reception.[65] Later, Eliza Lynn Linton, an opponent of female suffrage, published 'The Roman matron and the Roman lady' (1887) in the *Fortnightly Review*, in which she condemned greater socio-political freedom for women through reference to how Rome treated its female population.[66] In contrast, Marianne Dale's piece in the *Westminster Review*, 'The women of imperial Rome and English women of today' (1894), represented a pro-suffrage article that argued conversely how the lack of freedom accorded to Roman women assisted in Rome's decline.[67] Hence, though these outwardly explored Roman history, the authors of these periodical articles often used their discussions to shed light upon many controversial contemporary issues, such as imperialism and feminism.

While class necessarily divided classical reception in Victorian society, Rome percolated cultural productions consumed by all sectors of the public, from 'high' to 'low' culture.[68] Within the ranks of the well educated, Latin literature and Roman history were mediated through new editions and studies that ranged from the popular to the scholarly. For instance, Virgil's *Aeneid* enjoyed five new English translations between 1870 and 1900, while the works of Horace received two translations and a new Latin edition.[69] As arguably the most popular Latin author of the Victorian era, Cicero was also naturally accorded attention during this period, including assorted individual editions and translations, a four- and seven-volume edition of his correspondence, and incisive studies, such as James Leigh Strachan-Davidson's

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[64] Donne (1869: 68 and 101-2).
[65] Newman (1874).
[66] Linton (1887).
[67] Dale (1894).
[68] See Hall (2008).
[69] James Lonsdale's and Samuel Lee's *The works of Virgil rendered into English prose* (1871), Cedric Chivers' and William Morris' *The Aeneids of Virgil* (1876), Charles Bowen's *Virgil in English verse: Eclogues and Aeneid, I-VI* (1887), Arthur Elam Haigh's and Thomas Leslie Papilon's four-volume *Aeneid* (1890-1), and Thomas Ethelbert Page's two-volume *The Aeneid of Virgil* (1894/1900). James Lonsdale's and Samuel Lee's *The works of Horace rendered into English prose* (1881) and Theodore Martin's *The works of Horace* (1881), and *Q. Horatii Flacci opera* (1896), edited by Thomas Ethelbert Page, Arthur Palmer and Augustus Samuel Wilkins.

Cicero and the fall of the Roman Republic (1894).[70] Significantly, many Latin authors who had been neglected by English scholarship since the eighteenth century, such as Seneca and Suetonius, gained fresh translations of their works during the mid-to-late-Victorian period.[71] There were even attempts to revisit some of the projects that had been left unfinished from the period of early-Victorian eclipse, such as Thomas Arnold's *History of Rome* (1838-42), which his grandson William Thomas Arnold unsuccessfully attempted to complete from 1881 until his death in 1904.[72] Elsewhere, the work of amateur clergymen, such as Mandell Creighton's *History of Rome* (1875),William Ralph Inge's *Society in Rome under the Caesars* (1888) and Sabine Baring-Gould's *The tragedy of the Caesars* (1892), as well as general works by leading academics, such as Charles Merivale's *A general history of Rome* (1876) and Henry Pelham's *Outlines of Roman history* (1893), enjoyed similar appeal to the average reader. Biographies of famous Romans by popular contemporary authors, such as J.A. Froude's *Caesar: a sketch* (1879) and Anthony Trollope's *Life of Cicero* (1880), also testify to the widespread interest in Roman antiquity.[73] Rome's reach even extended to children's literature, where works such as Charlotte Yonge's *Aunt Charlotte's stories of Roman history for the little ones* (1877) and William Shepard's *Young people's history of the Roman Empire* (1885) taught a new generation about the Roman world.

Naturally, for a society so immersed in the culture of antiquity, Victorian literature bore numerous allusions to the classical world.[74] Yet, more and more throughout the mid-to-late-Victorian era, it was Roman references that appeared to pepper contemporary poetry and fiction. Certainly, Victorian poetry remained bound to a much lengthier tradition of classical allusion, but many of its references seemed to

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[70] For example, William Emerson Heitland's edition of *Pro Murena* (1874) and James Smith Reid's translation of *Academica* (1874). Evelyn Shirley Shuckburgh produced a four-volume edition of *The letters of Cicero* (1899), though this was exceeded at least in scale by Robert Yelverton Tyrell's and Louis Claude Purser's seven-volume *The correspondence of M. Tullius Cicero: arranged according to chronological order* (1871-1901).

[71] Aubrey Stewart's translation of Seneca's *On benefits* (1887) was the first new translation of Seneca since the eighteenth century, while Thomas Forester's revised version of Alexander Thompson's translation of *The lives of the Twelve Caesars* (1890) was the first of Suetonius.

[72] Some of this research was presented in his lifetime, but the majority was published posthumously as *Studies in Roman imperialism* (1906).

[73] On Froude's work, see Brady (2013: 337-46), and, on Trollope's, Glendinning (2011: 26-8).

[74] See Hurst (2010).

derive from Hellenic, rather than Roman, sources.[75] For example, the poet George Meredith has been said to have employed classical imagery in his *oeuvre* that was 'Greek rather than Roman'[76], while Algernon Charles Swinburne was also known especially for the Greek inspiration of his verse.[77] Yet, the work of Victorian Britain's most acclaimed and popular poet Alfred Lord Tennyson produced a number of works with explicitly Roman contexts and themes, which is one of the reasons why he was christened the 'English Virgil' in his own lifetime.[78] Although Tennyson employed numerous classical allusions in his works, 'Lucretius' (1868) and 'To Virgil' (1882) stand out as particular tributes to Latin literature, while he was often seen to evoke the spirit of Horace in his poetry.[79] In this same period, the subsequent poet laureate William Watson produced a cycle of poems on current events that he entitled *Ver Tenebrosum* [*The spring of darkness*], while his successor as laureate, Robert Bridges, also produced a two-part verse tragedy, *Nero* (1885/1894), on the life of the Roman emperor.[80] The poet and novelist Thomas Hardy also made ancient Rome central to his poetry cycle 'Poems of pilgrimage' (1887), which have been said to contain 'an implicit criticism of the imperial project through an extended comparison with Imperial Rome'.[81] Meanwhile, poets such as William Ernest Henley and Henry Newbolt rode the tide of 'new' imperialism to produce works that often alluded to Roman antiquity, such as Henley's 'Invictus' (1875) and Newbolt's 'Vitaï lampada' (1897), which derived their respective titles from the Latin for 'unconquered' and a line from Lucretius' *De rerum natura*.[82] So, while the Hellenic spirit still dominated mid-to-late-Victorian poetry in many respects, the Roman influence gained ground, especially in the significant context of official or patriotic works.[83]

Replacing the religious novels that had defined the early-to-mid-Victorian use of ancient Rome as a fictional setting, a trend for melodramatic 'swords and sandals'

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[75] On the classical tradition in Victorian poetry, see Jenkyns (2002).
[76] Chislett (1966: 92). See ibid., 92-111.
[77] See Fraser (2000: 121-2).
[78] For example, Rawnsley (1875) and Anon. (1901) both studied the parallels between Virgil and Tennyson. See also, Mustard (1904: 91-105).
[79] See Markley (2004: 140-8, 103-4 and 106-14).
[80] See Nelson (1966: 49-52) and Stanford (1978: 139-53).
[81] Whitehead (2004: 209). See Bownas (2012: 43-58).
[82] See Parker (1987: 138-40).
[83] See Chislett (1918: 44-7).

novels dominated the latter decades of the Victorian era.[84] Richard Jenkyns has explained how 'there [were] very few Victorian novels actually set in ancient Greece, and those [were] insignificant'[85]; suggesting that the Hellenic world was more idealised and impersonal to Victorians, while the Roman one appeared accessible because so much more was known about the lives of ordinary Romans.[86] Although many German works available in translation created cultured fictional interpretations of Roman antiquity, such as Georg Ebers' *The emperor: a romance* (1881) and Ernst Eckstein's *Quintus Claudius: a romance of imperial Rome* (1882), melodramatic foreign novels were far more popular – particularly Lew Wallace's *Ben-Hur* (1880) and Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo vadis?* (1895). This led to a glut of home-grown imitations of varying quality by male and female authors, such as John William Graham's *Naeara: a tale of ancient Rome* (1886) and Emily Sarah Holt's *The slave girl of Pompeii* (1886), as well as their juvenile counterparts in the form of works such as George Alfred Henty's *For the temple* (1888) and *Beric the Briton* (1893). While feeding the domestic demand for sentimental and sensationalist fiction set in the Roman world, these novels possessed fairly derivative characters and plots, with only Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) emerging from this period as an intelligent fictional treatment of ancient Rome.[87] So, overall, the majority of late-Victorian novels set in the Roman world emphasised the more colourful and spectacular aspects of antiquity, while largely ignoring its historical realities.[88]

Yet, popular novels of this period not set in antiquity also reflected the increased contemporary profile of ancient Rome, while expressing a debt to it in terms of a comparison with Britain's contemporary imperial project. In Rider Haggard's *She* (1887), for instance, the eponymous 'She' suggests that the British represent 'a great people' with 'an empire like that of Rome'.[89] Beyond such throwaway remarks, though, some authors interacted more deeply with comparisons to Rome, such as Thomas Hardy, who made frequent reference in his novels to Rome within the British

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[84] For an overview, see Goldhill (2011: pt 3, 153-264).
[85] Jenkyns (1980: 79).
[86] Inspired by Wilhelm Adolf Becker's *Charicles* (1840; English trans. 1854), Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Pausanias the Spartan* (1876) represents one of the only major Greek-set novels to emerge from the Victorian era, though it was left unfinished upon his death and only published posthumously. See Faries (1923: 7).
[87] On *Marius*, see Vance (1997: 213-21).
[88] For a list of nineteenth-century English novels set in Roman antiquity, see Faries (1923: 124-38).
[89] Haggard (1991: 224).

imperial context.[90] In The *Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), for instance, the eponymous town is said to have 'announced old Rome in every street, alley and precinct. It looked Roman, bespoke the art of Rome [and] concealed dead men of Rome'.[91] Similarly, George Gissing's *The unclassed* (1884) and *The emancipated* (1890) both contained significant allusions to Roman antiquity, while his historical novel *Veranilda* (1904) was actually set in sixth-century Rome.[92] Perhaps, the most well-known allusion to Rome in late-Victorian literature, however, is the lengthy rumination at the start of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), which compares ancient Britain to contemporary Africa, while also drawing a parallel between the Roman and the British imperial projects.[93]

Inspired by the 'swords-and-sandals' novel, the 'toga-play' came to the fore in the final decades of the Victorian era; a genre of theatre set in the Roman world that specialised in portraying a Rome shorn of much of its politico-military character to emphasise its more dramatic and exotic dimensions.[94] Although the first such works were fairly historically accurate and cultured affairs, such as *The cup* (1881) and *Claudian* (1883), the most popular became those based on bestselling novels, such as *The sign of the cross* (1895) and *Ben-Hur* (1899).[95] Many employed special effects, such as the simulated earthquake in *Claudian*, or the use of live horses in the famous chariot-race scene of *Ben Hur*, while their popularity is demonstrated by the fact that the London run of *The sign of the cross* during 1896-7 attracted audiences of over 70,000 per week and, by 1904, had been performed over 10,000 times.[96] These were joined by a range of even more spectacular Roman-set entertainments performed by touring companies, such as the Kiralfy Brothers' *Nero, or the destruction of Rome* (1888), which was part of P.T. Barnum's *Greatest Show on Earth*.[97] In the bombastic publicity that accompanied the show, Barnum emphasised his desire 'to exhibit Rome, as she appeared in the zenith of her architectural, imperial, warlike, colossal,

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[90] See Bownas (2012: 31-43).
[91] Hardy (1985: 140).
[92] See Korg (2001).
[93] Conrad (2007: 6-7). See Lucht (2012: ch. 4, 93-114).
[94] See Mayer (1985 and 1994: 1-20). See also, Richards (2009: chs 4-7, 99-222).
[95] Lawrence Alma-Tadema designed the costumes and set for *The Cup*, while also later working on productions of *Hypatia* (1893) and *Julius Caesar* (1898). Indeed, he can be said to have put the toga into 'toga play' through his design of a new theatrical toga that sought to replace previous versions with a more historically accurate one. See Barrow (2001: 165-9), and, for context, (2010).
[96] See Mayer (1994: 109).
[97] See Malamud (2010: 275-80).

civic and fatal splendours'.[98] Including mock versions of gladiatorial combats, a Roman orgy, the persecution of a group of Christians, and the murder of Nero, the production clearly focussed upon entertainment, rather than accuracy, but drew audiences in the hundreds of thousands during its run.[99] Although Victorians believed their society to be more civilised than the Romans', it is worth remembering that public executions were not banned in Britain until 1868, while contemporary popular culture always retained an appetite for crime and punishment, both fictional and real.[100] Consequently, these Roman-inspired entertainments found a ready audience among Victorians, although they were especially popular with the middle and lower classes, who possessed an appetite for sensation, yet no extensive classical education to spoil their enjoyment of the spectacle.

In 1894, the American historian Henry Pratt Judson claimed that '[w]e talk of our modern science, of our new thinking in philosophy and religion, of the achievements of our nineteenth century democracy', yet 'everywhere, in state and church and scholarly life, we are always under the shadow of Rome'.[101] Indeed, from the smallest to the largest cultural objects of the era, a Roman echo seemed to be present in Victorian society. For instance, the jeweller John Brogden, who was active from the 1840s to the 1880s, specialised in the production of classical revivalist jewellery, especially 'neo-Roman' cameos.[102] Similarly, the Albert Hall (1867-71), one of the grandest edifices of the Victorian age, was said to be not only 'the finest building in Europe since the Pantheon'[103], but also a structure based more upon the design of a Roman amphitheatre than any other construction.[104] Since two of the leading figures in contemporary music and painting were Edward Elgar and Lawrence Alma-Tadema, respectively, the late-Victorian audio-visual cultural environment also betrayed clear Roman overtones. With Victoria's Diamond Jubilee scored by his *Imperial March*, the brass-driven music of much of Elgar's *oeuvre*, such as his swaggering 'Triumphal March' from *Caractacus* (1898), seemed to hark back to Roman military occasions

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[98] Quoted in Malamud (2009: 175).
[99] See ibid., 174-5.
[100] For useful studies of the Victorians' interest in crime and violence, see Flanders (2011) and Crone (2012).
[101] Judson (1894: 104).
[102] See Flower (2002: 29-30).
[103] Quoted in Clark (1958: 61).
[104] See *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 March 1871, 5.

and religious ceremonies.[105] Similarly, the paintings of Lawrence Alma-Tadema and his fellow Olympians continued to give visual expression to the contemporary renaissance of Roman antiquity until the close of the Edwardian era through works that blended classicism, romanticism, historical accuracy and cryptic narrative.[106]

Representing the vanguard of Victorian modernity, even contemporary science and technology was at times incongruously related to antiquity in general, and Rome in particular. For instance, addressing the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1874, the physicist John Tyndall suggested a connection between the 'atomism' of Epicurus and Lucretius, and contemporary scientific theories.[107] Later, in 1877, George Garrett gave his invention of the first modern submarine the Latin title *Resurgam,* or 'I shall rise again'.[108] Even regarding the controversial issue of evolution, some suggested that Lucretius had discussed similar concepts in *De rerum natura*, and been 'as consciously a scientific man and a physicist as Darwin or Huxley'.[109] There also remained plenty of Roman cultural artefacts in Victorian society to remind them of a connection to Roman antiquity: whether it was the use of the term 'L.S.D.' for pounds, shillings and pence that remained from Britain's original Roman occupation; the use of 'mutes' at funerals that derived from the *lictors* who escorted the funerals of prominent Romans; or even contemporary milk-carts that often bore a striking resemblance to Roman chariots.[110] So, from the trivial to the consequential, wherever one looks in late-Victorian culture, one seems to discover some reference to Rome that emphasises the revival in its fortunes.

Hence, while Rome's reception may have remained an object of occasional contention, it was one whose omnipresence could not be disputed. Deployed alternatively to support or to negate certain views on society and empire, as well as function as a sensational setting for contemporary fiction and theatre, Rome presented

[105] Although brass instruments have existed since antiquity, the development of the valve trumpet and *cornet à pistons* in the later nineteenth century have been said to have 'made it easy for composers to score Roman military might'. (Vance (1997: 212).) On Roman music, see Landels (1999: ch. 8, 172-205), and, on Elgar's connection to British imperialism, Porter (2001).
[106] For an overview of Olympian art during the mid-to-late-Victorian and Edwardian eras, see Barrow (2007).
[107] See Dawson (2007: 82-4).
[108] See Sondhaus (2001: 155-6).
[109] Mallock (1901: vi). See Turner (1973).
[110] The Roman equivalent having been *librae*, *solidi* and *denarii*. On the Victorian 'mute', see Wagner (1894: 118), and, for an example of such a cart from *c*.1910, Reeve (1971: plate 59).

an adaptable and constructive cultural model to Victorian society. Moreover, the cultural dynamics that had secured Rome's rehabilitation in the first place were reinforced during the late-Victorian era, which developed and maintained its cultural authority. Bureaucratisation and militarisation remained a mainstay of English public life, while managing and protecting Victorian society in a model of efficiency that harked back to the civilian and military culture of Roman antiquity. Tourism to Italy also continued to boom throughout the late-Victorian era, while some of the key external motivators of Roman resurgence, such as the Roman Catholic Church, grew from strength to strength.[111] Meanwhile, English society's relationship with France and Germany continued to evolve, emphasising the cultural turn that it took around 1870 towards the former and away from the latter – alongside all that meant for the place of ancient Rome. Finally, the development of 'new' imperialism in the 1870s created a society infused with a patriotic fervour that venerated colonial expansion and military adventure, which bore increasing resemblance to that traditionally associated with Roman society.

Although classical reception differed considerably between the upper, middle and lower classes, they were united by the broad trajectory of Rome's disestablishment, eclipse and rehabilitation, as well as connected by the continued centrality of Latin at most social levels in English education. Considering the contrary developments experienced by late-Victorian society in possessing the largest global empire, yet facing a set of renewed socio-economic challenges, comparison to Rome had many advantages. When one explores the popularity of Rome during this period, one consequently begins to see it as offering far more than merely cultural gilding upon the imperial project, since Roman antiquity also provided contemporary society with a historical model of certainty in the midst of worrying change. Whether deployed in

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[111] During the late-Victorian era, the Roman Catholic Church rose not only to acceptance, but also to prominence. The statistics speak for themselves, since, in 1890, there were 1,335 Catholic churches in Britain, compared to 586 in 1850, in which masses were said by 2,478 priests compared to 826 forty years before. (Cited in Holmes (1978: 102).) This revival was assisted greatly by the passage of the University Test Act (1871) which opened the ancient universities to Nonconformists, while the Representation of the People Act (1884) doubled the Irish electorate and created the first major bloc of Catholic voters in the United Kingdom in history. In addition, Catholics gained prominent positions within British society and empire in this period, including Lord Ripon, Indian viceroy (1880-4), Lord Llandaff, home secretary (1886-92), and Lord Acton, who became the first Catholic Regius professor of modern history at the University of Cambridge in 1895. Finally, the construction of Westminster Cathedral (1895-1903) set the seal on this resurgence by providing a central site of Roman Catholic worship at the heart of the British capital.

political speeches or poetry, newspapers or periodicals, popular novels or plays, ancient Rome acted as a common reference point to negotiate contemporary life in late-Victorian England. So, in the light of Rome's cultural prevalence, it is not only Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1897 that can be properly termed a 'Roman moment', but also the final decades of her reign.

5.2. 'Remember always that you are a Roman': ancient Rome in late-Victorian imperial discourse

The British Empire never had an official motto, but, if one had been required, an argument could have been made for the relevance of this famous passage from Virgil's *Aeneid*:

> Remember, Roman, to rule with the rod of empire –
> These shall be your arts – to impose the way of peace,
> To spare the vanquished and cast down the proud.[112]

Considering the importance of British imperialism during the late-Victorian era, Richard Jenkyns has suggested that a *translatio imperii* lay in many English minds at the sight of these words; writing '[w]hen an Englishman of the last century read these central words of all Latin poetry, how could he fail to think of his own country?'[113] Enshrined within Virgil's words lay a sense of imperial mission that found a ready audience among all Englishmen who had enjoyed a classical education and supported the expansion of the British Empire – all of which encouraged them to consider themselves as heirs of Rome.[114] In 1877, for instance, the journalist Edward Dicey wrote that 'England, like Rome, is the corner-stone of an imperial fabric such as it has fallen to the lot of no other country to erect, or uphold when erected', in the light of the fact that the country had 'been given a mission like […] that of ancient Rome'.[115]

Since Jupiter had promised the Romans an empire unbounded by space and time, Englishmen could position themselves as the ultimate beneficiaries of the Romans'

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[112] *Aeneid*, 6.851-3. See Turner (1993b).
[113] Jenkyns (1980: 331).
[114] On Virgil's reception in British imperial discourse, see Vasunia (2009).
[115] Dicey (1877: 295 and 306).

ancient hegemony, while justifying the continued expansion of a Greater Britain.[116]

Just as the supremacy of Rome had secured a *pax Romana* over the ancient Mediterranean world, Britain's nineteenth-century international dominance appeared to have created a similar *pax Britannica*, which was celebrated in contemporary political speeches and poetry.[117] In Alfred Lord Tennyson's 'To Virgil' (1882), he noted the disappearance of the Roman world – 'Now thy Forum roars no longer, / Fallen every purple Caesar's dome' –, which makes 'the ocean-roll of rhythm' in Virgil's poetry the only active survivor of imperial Rome.[118] As such, the words of the *Aeneid* seemed to echo down the millennia with the same message conveyed to the legendary founder of the Roman people: Britain must assume an imperial mission to conquer, civilise and rule.

As shown, a rehabilitated Rome percolated numerous aspects of Victorian culture from the mid-Victorian era. At the time, however, the feature of contemporary affairs that stimulated the greatest interest in Roman comparativism was undoubtedly the British imperial project.[119] Having been an object of public indifference for decades, the British Empire entered arguably its most vigorous and vital phase in the late-Victorian era. Indeed, the statistics speak for themselves, since, during the period from 1870 to 1900, Britain acquired *c*.4.75 million square miles of fresh territory with *c*.88 million new subjects, while investing over £2 billion overseas.[120] Driven by increasing rivalry with other European powers, this rapid acquisition of colonies led to a geopolitical 'survival of the fittest' that was facilitated by technological advances encouraging mobility and progress. Much of this expansion also came as a result of a number of colonial *bella iusta*, or 'just wars', including the Ashanti Campaign (1874), the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1879), the First South African War (1880-1), and campaigns in Egypt and Sudan (1882, 1884-5/1896-8), which were justified in Roman terms in 1897 by the colonial secretary Joseph Chamberlain:

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[116] *Aeneid*, 1.278-9.
[117] For instance, George Bowen proclaimed in a speech in 1894 that Britain seemed set to transcend the 'immense majesty of the Roman peace'. (*The Times*, 9 January 1894, 6.) At least two poems entitled 'Pax Britannica' were also published in the 1890s: one by Frederick William Orde Ward and the other by the poet laureate, Alfred Austin. (See Orde Ward (1894: 371-2) and Austin (1898: 71-4).)
[118] Lines 29-31 in Tennyson (2007: 292).
[119] See Vasunia (2005).
[120] Cited in Cohen (1973: 23).

You cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot destroy

the practices of barbarism, of slavery, of superstition […] without the

use of force. In the wide dominions of the Queen, the doors of the

Temple of Janus are never closed […].[121]

New colonial companies were also chartered, such as the Royal Niger Company (1886), British East Africa Company (1888) and British South Africa Company (1889), which led to the establishment of protectorates over Bechuanaland (1885), Nyasaland (1891), Uganda (1894) and Kenya (1895). Unlike previous expansions of the British Empire, however, huge public awareness accompanied almost all events in the colonial sphere in this period, which constructed a set of imperial myths around certain individuals and episodes, such as the death of General Gordon in 1885.[122] Consequently, the employment of a Roman parallel to Britain's imperial activities enjoyed a large and receptive audience that could appreciate the Roman overtones of specific national events centred on the British monarchy, such as Victoria's investiture as 'Empress of India' in 1876, or the triumphal nature of her jubilees in 1887 and 1897.

While classical Rome remained an occasional subject of comparison with Britain's own burgeoning imperial project during the early-to-mid-Victorian era, it only reached a level of extensive application in the years either side of 1870. This was due in large part to discussion of its relevance in a number of popular works, which defined the more active phase of British imperialism that occurred in the 1870s and 80s. Firstly, as a travelogue that recorded a round-the-world trip to Britain's 'white' colonies, the MP Charles Wentworth Dilke's *Greater Britain* (1868) served to publicise for, perhaps, the first time the true extent of Britain's imperial territories.[123] Although he made little reference to the ancient world in it, implicit within his work was a conception of the British Empire as an agent of civilisation that distributed English language and culture throughout an empire 'four and a half times as large as

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[121] Chamberlain (1897: 3).

[122] While the presentation of Gordon's head to the German adventurer Rudolf Slatin called to mind a parallel to Pompey the Great's fate, others were compelled to invoke alternative Roman parallels, such as Lord Curzon, who wrote a panegyric about Gordon comparing him to the Roman emperor Germanicus. (See Gilmour (1995: 50).) On the mythology surrounding Gordon's demise, see Johnson (1982).

[123] See Jenkins (1958: 32-47).

the Roman Empire'.[124] In this, Dilke's book elevated Britain's imperial project from merely a commercial enterprise, backed by maritime and military dominance, to a means of achieving broader historical advance worthy of Rome. With the development of an imperial consciousness in Britain during the 1870s, Dilke's concept of 'Greater Britain' has been said to have 'enabled the conditions in which the detailed comparisons between Rome and Britain were able to emerge'.[125]

One of the most influential subsequent commentators to develop popular understandings of British imperialism in this context was the historian John Robert Seeley, whose *The expansion of England* (1883) represented 'a major factor in converting the middle classes to the New Imperialism'.[126] Perhaps, naturally for a former Latin professor and the author of a number of essays on Roman history, Seeley believed that the Roman Empire was 'the most interesting of all historical phenomena'.[127] As a result, Seeley referred to ancient Rome over forty times in his *Expansion of England*, which established Rome as his guiding comparative in the measurement of colonial success.[128] Indeed, Seeley's book has been said to have done more than any other contemporary work to advertise parallels between the Roman and British empires.[129] Although he remarked that '[o]ur colonies do not resemble the colonies which classical students meet with in Greek and Roman history'[130], Seeley's conceptualisation of Britain's imperial project was predicated predominantly upon comparison to classical Rome. Recognising the recent rehabilitation of the Roman Empire in the public consciousness, he noted that its autocratic nature had been recognised as being necessary to its civilising 'mission' at the same time as Britain began to see itself as heir to a similar undertaking.[131] Yet, he also distanced his use of the parallel from its more negative connotations by suggesting, for example, that the

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[124] Dilke (1868: ii, 406).
[125] Vasunia (2005: 48).
[126] Rutherford (1997: 17).
[127] Seeley (1883: 238). Seeley was professor of Latin at University College London (1863-9). He included three essays on Roman history in his first publication as Regius professor of modern history at Cambridge, *Roman imperialism: and other lectures and essays* (1871).
[128] See below, n. 219.
[129] Rutherford (1997: 17). For Seeley's influence on imperial discourse, see Burroughs (1973).
[130] Seeley (1883: 60).
[131] Ibid., 237-8.

British Empire might avoid the alleged corruption of contact with oriental culture, owing to the distance separating London from its colonial territories.[132]

Lastly, the historian James Anthony Froude's *Oceana* (1886) represented another colonial travelogue that introduced a number of references to the Roman world. Opening his work with a quotation from Ennius, he goes on to compare the Boers of South Africa to the peasant soldiers of the Roman Republic, while also observing that the straight road layouts of Australia reminded him of those of ancient Roman provinces.[133] Yet, it is in a key section relating to the contemporary agricultural decline overtaking Britain that Froude made most use of the Roman parallel; suggesting that Horace had witnessed in ancient Italy a similar scene of 'the fields deserted [and] the people crowding into cities'.[134] Cautioning English culture to draw a lesson from history, Froude proposed that it was such a process that led to a loss of vigour in Horace's society and, ultimately, the decline of Roman civilisation.[135] Despite such reservations, however, towards the end of his volume, he argued that the 'British nation is […] one of the most powerful [factors] in the development of the whole human race'; having 'impressed its stamp upon mankind with a print as marked as the Roman'.[136] So, taken together, these bestselling works of Dilke, Seeley and Froude had a potent effect in disseminating the notion that Victorian society had much in common with its Roman counterpart.

In the context of the prevalence of the Roman parallel in late-Victorian imperial discourse, it is little wonder that one finds its chief advocates in the contemporary British imperial project often indebted to it in personal and professional ways. Most of these were members of the country's social elite, or at least the upper echelons of the middle classes, who had received a classical education at a leading public school and Oxbridge college.[137] Even those who had not, however, usually realised the need to acquire classical knowledge in order to advance themselves in their political or colonial careers. A schoolboy writing in *The Harrovian* in 1870, for instance, claimed that classical education represented 'the best training' for personal and professional

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[132] Seeley (1883: 304).
[133] *Annals*, 156. Froude (1886: 37 and 104).
[134] Froude (1886: 8).
[135] Ibid., 8-9.
[136] Ibid., 338.
[137] See Hagerman (2013: ch. 1, 17-36).

achievement; without which it was 'impossible to become a perfect gentleman, fitted to shine in private life, or attain any measure of political success'.[138] Indeed, despite school and university reform during the mid-to-late-Victorian era, classical education remained a key means of cultivating the amateur 'all-rounders' expected to rule the empire:[139]

> The test of educational success is not solely or even chiefly in the amount of positively accurate and complete knowledge which has been acquired; but the extent to which the faculties of the boy have been developed, the quantity of impalpable but not the less real attainments he has achieved, and his general readiness of life, and for his action as a man.[140]

So, although the Edwardian era witnessed a shift from amateurism to professionalism, the key figures of the late-Victorian imperial project were all individuals who possessed little technical training beyond a classical education.[141]

While many of the products of this system failed to absorb much classical language or history, others found in the possession of such knowledge a vital means to negotiate their later activities in the British Empire. Some have even suggested that classics represented an essential part of the kit that imperial administrators carried with them to the farthest reaches of the empire; functioning as a facilitator of entertainment, learning, stress-relief and 'secret knowledge'.[142] In particular, a number of figures involved in colonial affairs seemed, through their personal lives and public careers, to embody some echo of Roman antiquity. For instance, Joseph Chamberlain, who, as colonial secretary (1895-1903) represented the apex of an aggressive imperial policy, was given the nickname *Josephus Africanus* in recognition of the colonial advances that he had achieved in Africa during his tenure, along with his haughty demeanour.[143] In 1895, Chamberlain had also suggested that 'the only dominion

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[138] Anon. (1870: 120).
[139] For an example of this educational model in action, see Dunae (1988), and, on its position in imperial culture, Rich (1988).
[140] Price (1879: 807).
[141] See Parchami (2009: 65-9).
[142] Hagerman (2013: 156).
[143] Quoted in Brendon (2007: 201).

which can in any way compare with the British dominion is, of course, the old empire of the Romans', while exhorting his countrymen to 'build railroads [in Africa] as the Romans built roads'.[144] Yet, it is three high-profile figures in particular who seem to have best embodied this mindset and, as a result, furthered the use of Rome as a central comparative model in the British imperial project: Lord Cromer, Cecil Rhodes and Lord Curzon.

Evelyn Baring, First Earl of Cromer (1841-1917), became one of the best-known imperial pro-consuls of the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras, owing to his position as British consul-general of Egypt (1883-1907).[145] In this role, he single-handedly ruled Egypt in almost as dictatorial a style as it had been administered during the Roman Empire, when it was the personal fiefdom of the emperor. Both at the time and since, his Roman airs have been noted. His former subordinate Lord D'Abernon, for instance, described him as an individual 'permeated by the heroic spirit of antiquity' and '[e]ssentially Roman in his conception of things'[146]; while the classicist John William Mackail praised him as 'one in whom the Greek lucidity of intelligence [was] combined with the Roman faculty of constructive administration'.[147] More recently, Jan Morris has captured his qualities in similar Roman terms:

> [H]e exerted [his power] with a Roman air, writing his reports in Ciceronian vein, treating the Khedive of Egypt *de haut en bas*, and moving about Cairo in tremendous state, preceded by barefoot runners with wands like the bearers of *fasces*.[148]

Unlike most members of the empire's administrative elite, however, Cromer did not enjoy a public school and Oxbridge education. Instead, born into the famous Baring banking family, he was schooled locally in Norfolk, attended the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, from fourteen, and was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Royal Artillery at seventeen. Yet, early on, he was determined to remedy his lack of classical learning by setting himself a strict course of self-education that left him not

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[144] *Daily Telegraph*, 24 August 1895, 3.
[145] See Owen (2005). On Cromer's relationship to classics, see Reid (1996).
[146] D'Abernon (1931: 14).
[147] Mackail (1925: 12).
[148] Morris (1982: 76).

only fluent in Greek and Latin, but also an amateur classicist of some note. Since '[c]lassical learning was a signpost' that distinguished him 'from inferior classes at home and "lesser breeds" overseas', such knowledge allowed him to achieve parity with his more traditionally educated peers and become '[a]s proud as any Roman that he could toss off a Greek epigram'.[149] Despite his position, though, Cromer never neglected his classics; producing *Paraphrases and translations from the Greek* (1903) during his term of office, and peppering *Modern Egypt* (1908) with a wealth of untranslated Greek and Latin quotations.[150] Following his retirement, he became president of the Classical Association and published *Ancient and modern imperialism* (1910), an extended reflection on comparisons between the British Empire and its ancient counterparts.[151] Unlike many other advocates of such a parallel, however, Cromer appeared to appreciate its limitations and understand its reality, which made him a more detached and dispassionate commentator than many of his contemporaries.[152] As demonstrated by others' descriptions of him, however, he remained someone whose personal and professional characteristics were shaped by a deep connection to the classical world.

A far more enthusiastic interaction with Roman antiquity was displayed by the mining magnate and politician Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902), whose favourite maxim was '[r]emember always that you are a Roman'.[153] Born into modest circumstances, Rhodes rose to become one of the wealthiest men of his time, as well as prime minister of the Cape Colony (1890-6), and one of the most aggressive advocates of British expansionism.[154] Numerous biographers have discussed Rhodes' character in Roman terms, such as W.T. Stead, who described him as 'an emperor of old Rome crossed with one of Cromwell's Ironsides'[155], or Emil Ludwig, who called him 'more Roman than any Englishman had ever been'.[156] Indeed, although he himself believed

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[149] Reid (1996: 7 and 8).

[150] Significantly, Cromer concluded *Modern Egypt* with a line from Rutilius Namatianus: '*Quod regnas minus est quam quod regnare mereris*' – 'That you should rule is less important than that you deserve to rule'. (Baring (1908: ii, 571, n. 2). *De reditu suo*, 1.91.)

[151] See Chamberlain (1972).

[152] While discussing the subject of racial assimilation at length (e.g. 17-18 and 72-3), for instance, Cromer conceded that 'no modern Imperialist nation has […] shown powers of assimilation at all comparable to those displayed by the Romans'. (Cromer (1910: 77).)

[153] Quoted in Lockhart and Woodhouse (1963: 31).

[154] See Rotberg (1988).

[155] Stead (1902: 83).

[156] Quoted in Rotberg (1988: 8).

that he resembled the Roman emperors Titus physically and Hadrian intellectually, one of the most repeated comparisons was to Julius Caesar.[157] As a self-made individual whose ruthless drive for personal and patriotic gain led to heights of worldly success, Rhodes even managed to achieve possession of a personal Caesarea in the form of Rhodesia.[158]

Like Cromer, Rhodes received an atypical education: first, privately at home and, latterly, at Bishops Stortford Grammar School, though, during the 1870s he studied in halting fashion for an undergraduate degree at Oriel College, Oxford. According to his closest circle, Rhodes discussed ancient Roman history, literature and philosophy constantly, even admitting that he preferred Gibbon's *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire* to the Bible.[159] Yet, Rhodes' favoured *vade mecum* was a personally annotated copy of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, which he called his 'guide in life' and his 'most precious possession'.[160] He also had his architect Herbert Baker visit Athens, Paestum and Agrigento in 1900 in search of inspiration from antiquity for the construction of official buildings in South Africa that would reflect the classical tradition.[161] Throughout his career as a businessman and a politician, he engaged aggressive policies that were recognised as being connected to Roman history, and which sought to satisfy both his own ambition and the expansion of the British Empire.[162]

Even in the midst of the disastrous Jameson Raid of 1895-6 that effectively ended his political career, it was Roman allusions that seemed to come chiefly to mind in considering Rhodes and his associates. For instance, Rudyard Kipling composed his famous poem 'If' (1896) as a tribute to Rhodes' chief co-conspirator in the enterprise, Leander Starr Jameson; an individual who Kipling believed embodied the Stoic ideal,

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[157] See Rotberg (1988: 387). During his lifetime, his former tutor Arthur Gray Butler compared him explicitly to Caesar in a sonnet, while Oswald Spengler later identified him as 'the first precursor of a Western type of Caesar'. (*Oxford Magazine*, 23 January 1895, 167. Spengler (1991: 28).)

[158] See MacDonald (1994: ch. 4, 112-43).

[159] Indeed, he paid a group of scholars to translate all of the original authorities of Gibbon's masterpiece, having them bound in two-hundred volumes, alongside supplementary biographies of the Roman emperors. (See Rotberg (1988: 386-7).)

[160] Ibid., 385. See ibid., 384-5.

[161] Keath (1992: 74).

[162] See Cecil (1921: ii, 313).

and whom he titled as a result 'the noblest Roman of them all'.[163] Even in death, Rhodes sought to couch his legacy in Latinate terms, claiming through a well-known Horatian tag that not all of him would perish owing to the establishment of his Rhodes Scholarships.[164] So, in contrast to Cromer's more pragmatic use of classical parallels, Rhodes seemed to employ Roman allusions in a personal manner that exceeded their use as a political parallel. In short, his attraction to what he called 'the big, simple and barbaric'[165] led him to identify in the Roman world a sympathetic culture upon which he projected similar characteristics – in effect, proving that all Rhodes truly did lead to Rome.

Another of the most fervent imperialists of the late-Victorian era, George Nathaniel Curzon, First Marquess of Kedleston (1859-1925), also looked to antiquity, though from a more traditional background.[166] As viceroy of India (1899-1905) and foreign secretary (1919-24), Curzon bound together a prestigious career as an imperial administrator and politician, which gave him a central position in the contemporary colonial edifice. Referred to by those who knew him as 'the noblest ruler since Augustus Caesar'[167], and someone who represented 'the highest Roman spirit of the Augustan age'[168], he has been said to have personified 'the old Roman quality of *gravitas*'.[169] Indeed, even in his personal habits, Lord D'Abernon claimed that he 'lisped in Gibbon' and gave orders 'in language that would not have disgraced Cicero addressing the Roman Senate'.[170] As one of the most proactive viceroys of the *raj*, Curzon also oversaw a number of major projects that seemed to be inspired by the achievements of the Roman Empire, such as the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, which sought to create an architectural pantheon for the heroes of British India. He was also the organiser of the 1903 Delhi Durbar that celebrated the coronation of Edward VII, and was so large-scale an event that he was compared to Nero over its alleged excesses.[171]

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[163] Kipling (2004: 384).
[164] '*Non omnis moriar*' (*Odes*, 3.30). See Rotberg (1988: 665-6).
[165] Baker (1954: 22).
[166] See Gilmour (1995).
[167] Quoted in ibid., 427.
[168] Marlowe (1978: 149).
[169] Nicolson (1934: 12).
[170] D'Abernon (1931: 25 and 28).
[171] See Gilmour (1995: 245).

Unlike Cromer or Rhodes, Curzon received an elite Victorian education that saw him follow a brilliant career at Eton with an equally dazzling one at Balliol College, Oxford – institutions where he claimed to have absorbed 'the pomp and majesty, the law and the living influence of the empire of Rome'.[172] Indeed, he claimed that he was first inspired to become viceroy at Eton, when the jurist James FitzJames Stephen addressed the school and described how the British Empire possessed in India 'an empire more populous, more amazing and more beneficent than that of Rome'.[173] When he fulfilled this dream and became viceroy, like the Roman emperor Hadrian, he toured India constantly, and was often aptly greeted with temporary triumphal arches.[174] When he was not on such excursions, he commanded the sub-continent from Government House in Calcutta or British India's summer capital Simla, which he termed 'Capua in the hills'.[175] Always possessed of Olympian levels of confidence, Curzon rose to the pinnacle of Britain's imperial elite, and expressed throughout his career a debt to the classical culture that he had absorbed at Eton and Balliol, though one that assumed a middle ground between Cromer's realism and Rhodes' enthusiasm.

If one of Rhodes' most common mottoes was a reminder to Englishmen that they were Romans, any examination of late-Victorian imperial discourse makes it clear that this was something that they were unlikely to forget. Throughout the period, whether in political speeches, newspaper articles or popular literature, the notion was transmitted to all sectors of Victorian society that Britain's imperial project represented an heir to classical Rome. Reaching a summit of territorial expansion, political dominance and public consciousness in the later decades of Victoria's reign, the British Empire seemed to inhabit a position that made comparisons to Rome not only advantageous in glorifying the stature that it had achieved, but also useful in understanding its dynamics and structure. Since Dilke's *Greater Britain*, Seeley's *Expansion of England* and Froude's *Oceana* all represented key texts in the development of an imperial consciousness in Britain, their references to Rome made them all the more influential in cultivating such a parallel.

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[172] Quoted in Faber (1966: 120).
[173] Curzon (1906: 4).
[174] Gilmour (1995: 219 and 212). Tours he later advised Edward VII to perform with specific reference to 'the enlightened Roman Emperor Hadrian'. (Curzon (1907: 164).)
[175] Curzon (1925: ii, 123).

In the context of the predominantly classical education enjoyed by the majority of Britain's imperial elite, it is unsurprising to find that many often referred to antiquity in the course of their statements on colonial matters. As demonstrated by the cases of Cromer, Rhodes and Curzon, the late-Victorian empire was commanded by an upper echelon of individuals whose activities and opinions, both personal and professional, often reflected a significant confluence of classics and colonialism that was usually centred upon Roman antiquity. As such, Rome functioned as a vital symbolic agency for mediating colonial matters that reflected these figures' personal interactions with classical knowledge, while also possessing application for numerous contemporary political situations arising within the imperial edifice. So, from the broadest levels of the British public to the key figures of the country's imperial elite, ancient Rome represented a vital component of late-Victorian colonial discourse; positioning the British Empire as a legitimate successor to the imperial mission assigned to Aeneas in Virgil's ancient epic.

5.3. Victorians in togas: why ancient Rome as a cultural model?

Having explored much of the terrain of the Victorian reception of Roman antiquity, it is crucial to return again to the question of why it was the Romans and not the Greeks who dominated English cultural discourse during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Having shown the manner in which Rome manifested itself in numerous ways across the contemporary cultural spheres, it is important to study the conceptual basis of its employment, which was predicated upon a number of related assumptions, preferences and tendencies. Firstly, Victorian society represented a culture bound greatly to the past – both its own and other nations' –, which gave it a historicist bent that coloured its cultural trends. Secondly, the centrality of classical learning in English education, as well as the relevance of classical knowledge to the country's social and intellectual elite, endorsed antiquity as the most authoritative historical period within the Victorians' veneration of the past. Finally, the concept of comparativism united these trends in its application by the 'upper ten-thousand' as a vital conceptual apparatus that emphasised the merit of evaluating contemporary achievement through reference to the benchmark of classical civilisation.

If antiquity recommended itself as the primary ground upon which this historicist mindset was predicated, however, it is necessary to understand why it was ancient

Rome rather than ancient Greece that was invoked increasingly over the Victorian era. Arguably, one of the fundamental factors behind a shift from Hellenic to Roman comparativism was the transition in English Hellenism from being a popular to an elitist intellectual discourse, which was buttressed by its appropriation by a number of minority sub-cultures, including feminism and homosexuality. Consequently, in contrast to the broad popularity of Rome, ancient Greece diminished as a comparative model, since, with its aesthetic and democratic tradition, it seemed to have less to offer a nation whose empire now ruled a quarter of the globe. So, in an effort to understand the more profound theoretical factors behind the rehabilitation of Rome in mid-to-late-Victorian culture, this section seeks to explain how and why classical Rome fitted into the Victorian mindset better than other historical models.

The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche once observed that the nineteenth century was an age unusually beholden to the past, and distinguished by its 'cultivation of history'[176]; yet Victorian society expressed an even greater 'historism' than many contemporary cultures.[177] This can be perceived from even the most cursory study of Victorian art, architecture, fashion or literature; many of which were defined by their imitation of certain styles of past historical periods – whether it be the Pre-Raphaelites' espousal of medieval European painting, or the diverse revivalist Gothic, Tudor and Baroque styles of Victorian architecture.[178] In a tradition dating back to Plutarch's *Lives*, Thomas Carlyle's *On heroes, hero worship, and the heroic in history* (1841) declared that 'the History of the world is but the Biography of great men'.[179] Yet, this was part of a much wider nineteenth-century understanding of history as the sum of past societies' achievements, which derived chiefly from the influential positivist philosophy of Auguste Comte.[180] As a result, to the Victorians, the past came to be defined as an illustrious and heroic conceptual space from which contemporary society could learn through contrast and comparison with its own age.

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[176] Nietzsche (1997: 62).
[177] See Jeffries (2006). On the Victorian understanding of history, see Burrow (1981) and Jann (1986), as well as the essays in Brand (1998), especially Brooks (1998).
[178] On this link in art and architecture, see Vaughan (1998), and, in literature, Gent (1972).
[179] Carlyle (1841: 34).
[180] See Wright (1986: 23-30).

Believing their society to be 'the vanguard of [a] future-oriented developmental trajectory'[181], Victorians perceived themselves as representing the end result of the gradual advance of civilisation throughout history. As a result of this largely positivist and reductionist view of the past, contemporary uses of history were often selective and simplistic, yet judicious and organised, in accordance with the Victorians' devotion to a systematic understanding of their world.[182] In this context, the contemporary reception of Rome presented a celebrated period of history that provided much in the way of political guidance through its republican and imperial incarnations. In addition, there was much in Roman discourse to recommend the uses of history to inform contemporary life, such as the endorsement of historical comparativism by the Roman historian Livy:

> History is the best medicine for a sick mind; for in history you have a
> record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all
> to see; and in that record you can find for yourself and your country both
> examples and warnings; find things to take as models, base things, rotten
> through and through, to avoid.[183]

So, with history nothing less than 'the common coin' of the era – 'the currency of its most characteristic art, the security of its most significant intellectual transactions'[184] –, the historical importance of ancient Rome made it a significant component of Victorian historicist theorising.

Frank M. Turner has explained how the Victorians made 'the antique past and its peoples uniquely their own' by maintaining its discourse as a 'means for achieving self-knowledge and cultural self-confidence within the emerging order of liberal democracy and secularism'.[185] Within this context, he explains how, for Victorian culture, the ancients represented 'distant contemporaries who had confronted and often mastered the difficulties presenting themselves anew to the nineteenth

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[181] Bell (2006: 738).
[182] See Goldhill (2011: 163-77).
[183] *History of Rome*, 1.1.
[184] Jann (1986: xi).
[185] Turner (1981: xii).

century'.[186] All of this helps to show how the Victorians bound the present closely to the past by using one to inform the other:

> Living in the past – devoting one's life to the study of the ancient world – was, in nineteenth-century Britain, very rarely undertaken in order to escape from the contemporary world: it rather became a way to participate all the more aggressively in it.[187]

By choosing a number of alleged 'golden' ages from ancient history, such as fifth-century Athens and Antonine Rome, the Victorians sought to create certain fixed points of historical certainty that they hoped would prove impervious to challenge. In this way, contemporary culture often tailored the historical facts to suit contemporary purposes, which meant that anything that 'might have challenged dominant Victorian intellectual or moral values [was] ignored, suppressed, or in some way domesticated'.[188] Shorn of difficult or uncomfortable components, this left a classical world that appeared constant and unchanging, while fitting with a contemporary interest in binding the Victorian age to another era of apparent assurance and stability. So, for many, as English culture was bureaucratised, militarised and imperialised during Victoria's reign, classical Rome appeared to offer an ideal model of historical certainty at a time of ambiguity and doubt on so many other fronts.

Alongside this quest for certainty, however, went a desire for escape that was motivated by many of the same vectors of modernity that were altering the bases of traditional society in England.[189] Since industrialisation had altered so much of the actual and cultural landscape, many sought escape to a pre-industrial past, which was expressed, for instance, in the Victorian vogue for medieval revivalism.[190] During a period of extensive manufacturing and mercantile activity, many also felt it necessary to contextualise contemporary achievement with reference to the past, which can be seen evidenced in the reconstructed historical 'courts' that stood alongside the

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[186] Turner (1981: xii).
[187] Richardson (2007: 29).
[188] Turner (1981: 449).
[189] On the Victorian escape into fantasy, see Prickett (2005).
[190] See Agrawal (1990: ch. 8, 235-53).

industrial exhibits at the Crystal Palace.[191] Indeed, on both an individual and a society-wide level, Victorians often sought escape through notions of 'theatricality', which transcended mere stage performance to become a much broader therapeutic cultural attitude.[192] Demonstrated by the fancy-dress balls favoured by contemporary high society, as well as by the numerous paintings and photographs that portray individuals attired in costume, it is clear that the Victorians enjoyed dressing up, particularly in historical garb.[193] This same cultural conceit also presents itself in Victorian architecture, whose styles often borrowed from other historical periods to create eclectic architectural confections, such as Roman-inspired railway stations.[194] Elsewhere, on a political level, Disraeli's Royal Titles Act of 1876 represented an elaborate *coup de théâtre* that attempted to array the British monarchy in the superb, if superficial, raiment of imperialism.[195] With many Victorians 'forced by the pressures of a materialist age to live out a world of fantasy in their daily lives'[196], they often sought escape into the more colourful certainties of the past, which, as shown, took a number of diverse forms.[197]

With classical antiquity representing one of the traditional keystones of Western history, it is clear that none of these historical models 'provided such a large, consistent, and satisfying refuge as the culture of Greece and Rome'.[198] Since classical knowledge 'constituted the central intellectual element in the education of Britain's imperial elites'[199], parallels to antiquity represented a natural comparative for this group. Significantly, the nation's aristocracy and gentry based their power primarily upon their historical position, which often induced them to 'take refuge in fantasy […] by hugging [the] rags and tatters of the past'.[200] Such a mindset was further bound to the related physical escape of the British imperial project, which offered an asylum for England's ruling elite from the encroachments of urban industry and increasing democratisation, while also binding the group closer together

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[191] See Anon. (1854: 42-153).
[192] See Newey (2012).
[193] On Victorian fancy dress, see Stevenson (1978), and, on its use in photography, Bajac (1999).
[194] For an overview, see Curl (2007: ch. 3, 68-96), and, on railway architecture inspired by Rome, DeLaine (1999).
[195] See Voskuil (2004: ch. 4, 140-81).
[196] Hudson (1972: 3).
[197] See Highet (1949: 437-9).
[198] Ibid., 438. See Green (1989: 42-3).
[199] Hagerman (2013: 1).
[200] Kiernan (1988: 60).

through their participation in its administration.[201] As a result, one can see how this elite's mindset was expressed in the superficial pomp, or 'ornamentalism', that became central to the self-definition of the late-Victorian imperial project:

> [T]he British Empire […] was about antiquity and anachronism, tradition and honour, order and subordination; about glory and chivalry, horses and elephants, knights and peers, processions and ceremony, plumed hats and ermine robes; about chiefs and emirs, sultans and nawabs, viceroys and pro-consuls; about thrones and crowns, dominion and hierarchy, ostentation and ornamentalism.[202]

In this context, classical Rome offered an ideal historical parallel, since it fitted the classical and imperial escapism that lay at the heart of the 'upper ten-thousand', while also disguising contemporary anxieties and shortcomings beneath the metaphorical Roman toga that they chose from the Victorians' extensive cultural dressing-up box.

Seeking to contextualise or evaluate the present through selective reference to specific individuals, events or periods in history, Victorian comparativism had a major influence on classical reception.[203] Chiming on the one hand with the Victorians' passion for '[s]ubdivision, classification, and elaboration'[204] and, on the other, with their largely "rigid"[205] understanding of their world, comparativism functioned as a useful lens through which to view their society; allowing them to organise the unpredictable nature of current affairs within the unchanging framework of historical precedent. As the archaeologist Edward Falkener explained in 1851, the Victorians venerated the past as one of the few sources of apparent truth:

> The study of futurity is speculative, the present is wrapped up in that which is to come and it is the past only which is complete. We are now

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[201] See Schumpeter (1951: 83-4, 128, 195-7 and 203).
[202] Cannadine (2001: 126).
[203] See Burrow *et al.* (1983: ch. 7, 207-46).
[204] Sala (1859: 218-19).
[205] See Houghton (1957: ch. 7, 161-80).

in a state of progression, the future is shrouded in uncertainty and we gain knowledge and experience only from the past.[206]

Employed as a key component in imperial administrative education and selection, the use of comparativism forged a crucial link between classical culture and British imperialism.[207] While this idea had existed in English culture during the eighteenth century, as John Stuart Mill noted in 1831, it was only in the nineteenth that it was elevated to a major cultural trend:

> The 'spirit of the age' is […] a novel expression. I do not believe that it is to be met with in any work exceeding fifty years in antiquity. The idea of comparing one's own age with former ages, or with […] those which are yet to come, […] never before was itself the dominant idea of any age.[208]

Writing in 1872, E.A. Freeman went further, claiming that 'the discovery of the Comparative Method […] marks a stage in the progress of the human mind at least as great and memorable as the revival of Greek and Latin learning'.[209] Even William Gladstone, one of the most judicious contemporary voices, believed that 'an insight into the facts of particular eras, and their relations one to another […] generates in the mind a conviction that the materials exist for forming a public opinion, and for directing it to a particular end'.[210] Thus, in short, comparativism appealed to the Victorian mind because it linked its passion for the past with its need for practicality in the present.

'[T]he endless differences between the ancients and ourselves' have been said to have created classics' chief claim to be 'so fine an instrument of education'.[211] Yet, it was

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[206] Quoted in Stray (1998a: 204).
[207] See Majeed (1999).
[208] Mill (1986: i, 228). Edward Wortley Montagu had produced *Reflections on the rise and fall of antient [sic] republics adapted to the present state of Great Britain* (1759), while Adam Smith began his famous chapter 'On colonies' in *Wealth of Nations* (1776) with a discussion of classical empires, and James Mill had adjudicated British successes on the sub-continent through comparisons to antiquity in his *History of British India* (1817).
[209] Freeman (1873a: 302).
[210] Gladstone (1981: 136).
[211] Bowra (1966: 245).

the alleged similarities between the classical past and the Victorian present that commentators usually sought to focus upon in their historicist comparativism.[212] Significantly, however, comparativism derived much of its context and methodology from the means of classical teaching at England's public schools and Oxbridge colleges. Traditionally, the linguistic, historical and philosophical training of these institutions was predicated upon comparison between texts, individuals or epochs, which made natural the extrapolation of such a method into real-world scenarios by the products of this type of elite education.[213] With classical knowledge at the centre of this approach, it took little imagination for this same group to apply ancient *exempla* to contemporary situations when they subsequently achieved positions in public office.[214]

John Stuart Mill once famously claimed that '[t]he battle of Marathon, even as an event in British history, is more important than the battle of Hastings'; since '[t]he true ancestors of the European nations are not those from whose blood they are sprung, but those from whom they derive the richest portion of their inheritance'[215] – meaning the ancients. This led to Victorians perceiving the ancients less as antecedents and more as distant peers – as portrayed in Thomas Arnold's claim that 'Aristotle and Plato, Thucydides and Cicero […] are most untruly called ancient writers: they are virtually our own countrymen and contemporaries'.[216] Moreover, Arnold suggested that classical history was 'not an idle enquiry about remote ages and forgotten institutions, but a living picture of things present, fitted not so much for the curiosity of the scholar, as for the instruction of the statesman and the citizen'.[217] Hence, owing to the centrality of the comparative method to Victorian classical education, and its pivotal relationship to contemporary cultural discourse, historical comparativism became an authoritative means of negotiating current affairs that kept classical discourse at its core.

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[212] On the Victorian comparison between ancient and modern, see Sheppard (1861: vii-viii).

[213] This educational approach was also given impetus by the mid-century rise of comparative anthropology and philology. See Vasunia (2013: 154-5).

[214] For instance, knowledge of Greek and Latin was deemed a key possession for joining the Indian Civil Service; on which, see Vasunia (2008).

[215] Mill (1867: ii, 283).

[216] Arnold (1834: 349).

[217] Ibid., 399.

With English Hellenism assuming a more elitist form from the mid-nineteenth century, ancient Rome appears to have occupied the primary position in such classical comparativism for the rest of the century. J.A. Froude, for instance, believed that the second-century Roman Empire represented a direct analogue for the Victorian era:

> [The Antonine era was] an age in so many ways the counterpart of our own […] when the intellect was trained to the highest point which it could reach, and on the great subjects of human interest […] men thought as we think, doubted where we doubt, argued as we argue, aspired and struggled after the same objects.[218]

With the rise of 'new' imperialism, however, the British Empire became the chief vehicle for historical comparativism, with Rome its chief analogue. Works such as E.A. Freeman's *Comparative politics* (1873), for instance, presented the Roman experience as analogous to the Victorian one, while, despite some doubts, J.R. Seeley also invoked Rome as his chief parallel in *The expansion of England* (1883).[219] In this way, 'as Livy, Varro, and Virgil had managed for Augustus and the Roman Empire', classically-educated imperial advocates 'created a necessary past for Victorian Britain' through the invocation of certain epochs and personalities from Roman antiquity.[220]

Yet, if the concept of comparativism itself was sophisticated, its application in the context of Roman/British parallels was often simplistic; presenting direct comparisons between superficially similar personalities, objects and events in the Roman and the British empires:

> [A Victorian] could look for Cicero's virtues in his legislators and see the faults of Spartacus in Feargus O'Connor. He could regard India as a province, the North-West Frontier as Hadrian's Wall and hope that the

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[218] Froude (1879: 6).

[219] Freeman makes over fifty separate references to Rome in his work, including a number of important passages. (See Freeman (1873a: 42-4, 77-80, 96-9, 146-50, 226-8, 306-7 and 323-30).) While Seeley qualifies his use of it (i.e. Seeley (1883: 51)), Rome is mentioned frequently in his study, particularly in reference to Britain's Indian empire. See ibid., 181, 186, 188, 207, 237-9, 245-8, 299 and 304-5.

[220] Goldhill (2011: 164).

subjugation of the Zulus would be followed by the civilising effort that justified the defeat of Boudicea.[221]

Highly presentist and excluding problematic aspects of the Roman past, it has been noted that there was 'often a confusion between the diachronic and synchronic axes of comparison in these works on the Roman and British empires'.[222] Indeed, the Victorians approached such comparisons in the knowledge of the eventual fate of classical civilisation, so it was impossible to achieve true parity between the two worldviews because of the temporal gulf separating them – as the writer William Hazlitt remarked earlier in the nineteenth century, '[w]e are always talking of the Greeks and Romans; – *they* never said anything of us'.[223] Thus, when the Victorians viewed themselves in a Roman looking-glass, they discovered a flattering image of themselves staring back, though one distorted by their largely superficial perspective.

In 1850, Richard Cobden remarked that he believed a single copy of *The Times* to contain more information than all of Thucydides; a comment that offers a portent of the wider transition occurring in English Hellenism during the mid-century period.[224] While it would be wrong to call this shift a decline, there was a definite modification in the reception of ancient Greece at this time, since it was transformed from a popular cultural discourse to an elite or minority one.[225] One of the clearest markers of this trend was a decrease in the number of Greek Revival buildings constructed in England and Wales during the 1830s and 40s, which removed the primary visual manifestation of the Hellenic spirit on British soil.[226] Similarly, the Church of England had represented one of the chief agents of English Hellenism – from its Hellenophone country parsons to its 'Greek-play bishops' –, but its traditional cultural bases had been undermined in the 1830s and 40s by the effects of the Tractarian controversy.[227] Another major mediator of ancient Greece in English culture had been the Romantic Movement, yet, it, too, declined in cultural influence

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[221] Bolgar (1979a: 338).
[222] Majeed (1999: 91).
[223] Hazlitt (1816: 75).
[224] Quoted in Morley (1908: 429).
[225] See Green (1989: ch. 2, 31-44).
[226] See Salmon (2000: 138-40). Gothic Revival remained popular in Scotland until the 1860s, however; on which, see Allen and Walker (1984).
[227] On knowledge of Greek among Anglican clergy, see Haynes (2003: 14-15), and, on 'Greek play' bishops, Burns and Stray (2011).

during the same period.[228] Indeed, with the increasingly strict morality of the Victorian era, some, such as the polemicist Charles Kingsley, identified Romantic Hellenism as a dangerous relativising force that had led to cultural 'Anythingarianism' [*sic*].[229] During the mid-to-late-Victorian era, however, it was arguably Hellenism's increasing association with elite intellectual discourse, backed by its appropriation by a number of minority groups, which did most to diminish ancient Greece as a popular cultural model.

As embodied in the compulsory Greek requirement to attend Oxbridge throughout the nineteenth century, Victorian Hellenism came to represent an exclusive marker of elite knowledge and status.[230] Founded primarily upon acquaintance with the Greek language, the focal-points of the Victorian reception of Greece were England's elite public schools and Oxbridge colleges.[231] In 1877, for instance, the classicist W.Y. Sellar wrote how '[t]he attraction of [Greek] has been greater from its novelty, its originality, its higher intrinsic excellence, [and] its profounder relation to the heart and mind of man'.[232] While understanding of Greek indicated one's privileged social status, in the case of England's 'upper ten-thousand' this sometimes developed into a more sophisticated interaction with the Greek past, based upon Platonic concepts of oligarchic 'guardianship'.[233] This was particularly true in the case of the University of Oxford, whose *Literae Humaniores* course maintained Plato's *Republic* at the heart of its curriculum, and whose students often proceeded on to careers in the civil or colonial service.[234] Another key influence was Matthew Arnold's *Culture and anarchy* (1869), in which he wrote that '[n]ow […] is a time to Hellenise, and to praise knowing; for we have Hebraised too much, and have over-valued doing'.[235] In this way, he idealised Hellenism as a cultural benchmark that could be used by England's intellectual elite to police and protect domestic culture.[236] In 1874, the classicist John Pentland Mahaffy observed that '[e]very thinking man who becomes

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[228] See Salmon (2013: 8-10), and, on the Victorian reception of Romanticism, the essays in Faflak and Wright (2004).
[229] Quoted in Faries (1923: 44).
[230] On compulsory Greek in Victorian education, see Stray (1998a: 224, 249 and 265-9).
[231] See Goldhill (2002: ch. 4, 178-245).
[232] Sellar (1877: 74).
[233] See Dowling (1994: 68-77) and Joyce (2013: 243-7).
[234] See Symonds (1986: 31-6).
[235] Arnold (1869: lviii-lix).
[236] See Anderson (1965) and DeLaura (1969).

acquainted with the masterpieces of Greek writing must see plainly that they stand to us in a far closer relation than the other remains of antiquity'[237]; yet, he qualifies this by explaining that '[i]f one of us were transported to Periclean Athens, provided he were a man of high culture, he would find life and manners strangely like our own'.[238] Consequently, this trend increasingly made Hellenism seem to be a select discourse that was 'no longer a great deep mine in which men could dig eagerly for unguessed riches', but 'a screen to hide behind, or at best the title of a sect'.[239]

Setting the seal on this decline in the popularity of English Hellenism was its growing employment by those who turned to the spirit of Greece as a reaction against the forces of convention, such as feminists and homosexuals. Reacting against the paternalism of Victorian society, many women turned to the culture and literature of ancient Greece as a response to their discrimination and marginalisation.[240] Although women in ancient Greek society did not enjoy any particular degree of independence, an unconventional figure such as Sappho offered a sophisticated model of female behaviour, who mediated Hellenic art and literature, while the study of the Greek language itself provided means of transcending some of Victorian society's cultural constraints.[241] Without a political outlet for their energies, Victorian feminists found in Greek culture a useful model for attitudes, behaviours and fashions that stood against contemporary paternalist culture, and therefore represented to traditional society a potentially destabilising discourse. Their agenda was backed by liberals like John Stuart Mill, who himself often looked to ancient Greece as a political model, and produced 'The subjection of women' (1869) in support of their rights.[242] Indeed, it was when feminism intersected with other apparent social threats in appropriations of Greek mores that it seemed to represent the greatest social hazard. When Oscar Wilde became editor of the ladies' periodical *Woman's World* in 1887, for instance, he sought to empower the late-Victorian 'New Woman' through articles on women's place in ancient Greek society, as well as a campaign to replace the corseted styles of contemporary female fashion with modern variations on the ancient *chiton* or

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[237] Mahaffy (1874: 1).
[238] Ibid., 2.
[239] Jenkyns (1980: 292-3).
[240] See Prins (1999a) and Fiske (2008).
[241] See Prins (1999b) and Fiske (2008: 7-10). On gender-based differences between the reception of Latin and Greek, see Lucht (2012: 13-16) and Haynes (2013: 431-4).
[242] See Biagini (1996b).

peplos.[243] Hence, what was derided as 'South Kensington Hellenism' – an urbane, feminist brand of English Hellenism favoured by liberal intellectuals – fostered negative links between Hellenism and non-traditional social groups.[244]

As a practice deemed immoral and illegal by Victorian society, homosexuality was regarded by most throughout the nineteenth century as an unspeakable vice.[245] Despite its proscription, however, a homosexual sub-culture flourished that frequently justified its existence with reference to ancient Greek culture.[246] This occurred owing to the fact that elite Greeks had engaged in a social practice of same-sex relations between adult and adolescent males, while Plato's *Lysis*, *Phaedrus* and *Symposium* featured some of the few explicit discussions of homosexuality in Western literature.[247] Crucially, one of the main euphemistic terms for homosexuality during the mid-to-late-nineteenth century was 'Greek love', which was employed to refer to homosexuality without uncomfortable reference either to the terms of its biblical prohibition, or to current medico-legal definitions.[248] Considering the importance that the Victorians attached to the taxonomy of words, the use of this term to refer to homosexual – or at least homosocial – sentiments and practices created a loaded relationship between Hellenism and homosexuality.[249] Walter Pater, for example, often employed the terms 'Hellenism' or 'Hellenic' as shorthand for a homosexual sensibility.[250] Works by prominent homosexuals, such as John Addington Symonds' *A problem in Greek ethics* (1883) and *A problem in modern ethics* (1891), also explored this link, though, importantly, some contemporary classicists also addressed it, such as J.P. Mahaffy in *Social life in ancient Greece* (1874).[251]

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[243] For example, an article by the pioneering classicist Jane Harrison, 'The pictures of Sappho' in *Women's World*, vol. 1 (1888), 274-8. See Hurst (2009).

[244] See Beard (2000: 44-5).

[245] Homosexuality was often referred to historically as '*peccatum illud horribile, inter Christianos non nominandum*', or 'the horrible vice not named among Christians'. (Quoted in Crompton (2003: 529).)

[246] Such practices were not unknown to Roman society, but chiefly associated with the Greeks. See Williams (1999: ch. 2, 67-102).

[247] See *Lysis* 203-7 and 221-3, *Phaedrus* 227-57 and *Symposium* 178-85, 189-93, 199-212 and 216-19. For an overview of male same-sex relations in ancient Greece, see Dover (1989).

[248] See Dowling (1994: 28).

[249] Although the term 'homosexuality' was coined in 1869 by Karl-Maria Kertbeny, it was not employed in English until the translation of Richard von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia sexualis* (1886) in 1892. Throughout the mid-to-late-Victorian era, homosexuals were instead titled 'Uranians', 'inverts' or persons of 'contrary sexual instinct'. See Hubbard (2003).

[250] Pater (1980: 193).

[251] Mahaffy (1874: 308).

Since 'Victorian Hellenism […] play[ed] a central role in the modern emergence of homosexuality as a social identity'[252], this created a difficulty for many traditional advocates of Hellenism, who perceived its cultural discourse becoming contaminated with a connection to the alleged deviance of 'the love that dare not speak its name'.[253] Yet, it was the particular invocation of a link between contemporary homosexuality and Hellenism by the so-called 'Uranian' group of artists and writers that popularised such an association most by binding ancient Greek culture to an apologetic vision of contemporary homosexuality.[254] When bound to the relativising philosophy at the heart of Aestheticism that maintained 'art for art's sake' as its motto, and idealised an epicurean lifestyle, this connection seemed to pervert the traditional nature of English Hellenism.[255] Indeed, the art critic Richard St John Tyrwhitt attacked exactly this allegedly corrupt representation of the 'Greek spirit' in an influential article in 1877.[256] Later, the Cleveland Street Scandal of 1889 and Oscar Wilde's trial for indecency in 1895 fixed in the public mind a negative association between homosexuality and Hellenism, especially in London society.[257] Since 'Victorian Hellenism could flourish only within the limits of conventional taste and polite morality'[258], the sordid carnal adjunct to romantic notions of 'Greek love' exposed by these scandals did much to portray Hellenism as an accessory to such transgressive behaviour.[259] With the late-Victorian era 'marked by extreme prudishness'[260] about sexuality, this made any association between English Hellenism and homosexuality a troubling indicator of potential corruption and decline in contemporary society.

Despite the general transition in English Hellenism, it is interesting to note that there were plenty of episodes that might have encouraged the rehabilitation of ancient Greece rather than Rome. For instance, major archaeological developments abroad revealed new information about the Greeks, especially the excavations of Heinrich

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[252] Dowling (1994: 4).

[253] A phrase deriving from the poem 'Two Loves' by Lord Alfred Douglas, and deployed famously by his lover Oscar Wilde in a Platonic-inspired defence during his trial in 1895. See Ellmann (1987: 435).

[254] See D'Arch Smith (1970) and Evangelista (2009).

[255] For a definition of Aestheticism, see Prettejohn (1999b: 3-6).

[256] St John Tyrwhitt (1877). See Dowling (1994: 90-2).

[257] On the Cleveland Street Scandal, see Montgomery Hyde (1976), and, on the Wilde trial, Holland (2003). On the Hellenic culture of the contemporary homosexual underworld, see Cook (2003: ch. 5, 122-42).

[258] Turner (1981: 32).

[259] See Dellamora (1990: ch. 10, 193-217).

[260] Searle (2004: 563).

Schliemann at Troy (1871-3), Ernst Curtius at Olympia (1877-81) and Carl Humann at Pergamon (1878-86), which encouraged the foundation of the British School at Athens in 1886.[261] At home, this period also witnessed the restoration and re-display of the Elgin Marbles in 1865, the foundation of the Hellenic Society in 1879, and the performance of the first Greek play at the University of Cambridge in 1880.[262] In other fields of English life during this period, some attempted to neologise fresh terms from ancient Greek, such as the creator of a new board-game entitled *Halma* ('leap'), or the inventor of lawn tennis, who originally called it *Sphairistike* ('skill at playing ball').[263] Notwithstanding these stimuli, by the 1870s English Hellenism had been largely reduced to an elite discourse that no longer held the public imagination, and appeared to take refuge in its study within the more cloistered environment of a few select schools and universities.[264] However it was employed, though, Hellenism seemed to be developing into a discourse of the few, rather than the many. Becoming 'less an active enquiry into the past and more a symbol for a certain type of aesthetic ideal'[265], Victorian Hellenism therefore represented an increasingly deficient source of cultural authority in comparison to the relative soundness of classical Rome as a model.[266]

So, overall, one can see how ancient Rome developed into a key cultural model for the Victorians because it fitted into the historicist mindset that made the past so much a part of their present. Since Rome also occupied a central place within English classical education, it was particularly influential on the country's ruling elite, who enjoyed the most influence on contemporary society and empire. Providing both an escapist fantasy and a guide to contemporary reality, the Roman world functioned as an ideal comparative model for a society that sought inspiration and guidance so much from the past. Since comparativism played such an essential part in the contemporary mindset, the Victorians' appeal to antiquity as the most authoritative and important period in history led to a search for correspondences with the Greek and Roman experience. Yet, while English Hellenism had been employed as the chief

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[261] See Marchand (1996: 116-24, 80-91 and 93-5).
[262] On the Elgin Marbles' re-display, see Péteri (2003: 130), on the Hellenic Society, Stray (1998a: 138-9), and, on the Cambridge Greek play, Easterling (1999).
[263] See Turner (1981: 159).
[264] See Stray (1998a: ch. 8, 202-32).
[265] Ibid., 274-5.
[266] On the Victorian idealisation of Hellenism, see, for example, Challis (2010).

analogue in such theorising during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, it had entered an organic decline by the opening of the Victorian era, which was made conclusive by the combined effects of its deployment in increasingly elite contexts, as well as its appropriation by feminist and homosexual sub-cultures.

With Hellenism brought under suspicion as a potential propagator of questionable morals, Greek *nous* was replaced by Roman *virtus*, as classical Rome was perceived to represent a more aptly martial and masculine cultural model:

> If Rome represented an overwhelmingly masculine culture, at least in its public aspect, so did Victorian Britain […] Proconsuls and victorious generals were always men. Sounding brass and processional splendour linked the Roman triumphs of Marcus Aurelius or Constantine with modern coronations or imperial celebrations such as Queen Victoria's Golden and Diamond Jubilees.'[267]

Seeking and finding their likeness everywhere in the past, the Victorians alleged through comparativism that history represented a great metaphorical mirror in which they could perceive their own reflection; emphasising the best characteristics of their own society, while imitating the ones that they venerated in previous civilisations through an act of cultural vanity offering strength, purpose and encouragement. Although condemned at the time and since, the simplistic and superficial comparisons made between Roman and Victorian society played a significant role in constructing English culture's self-image as a society and an empire during the latter decades of the nineteenth century. As will be shown in the next section, however, even the use of Rome as a cultural model was not without its negative issues.

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[267] Vance (1997: 270).

5.4. In the shadow of Gibbon: challenges and problems in the use of ancient Rome as a cultural model

Apart from the Diamond Jubilee, one of the most important public celebrations of Roman antiquity in English culture during the late-Victorian era came with the centenary of the death of Edward Gibbon in 1894.[268] As the pre-eminent English historian of Rome, Gibbon and his *magnum opus*, *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88), were deemed worthy of commemoration.[269] Thomas Carlyle had observed that 'Gibbon['s work] is a kind of bridge that connects the ancient with the modern ages'[270], so it is unsurprising to see that his history gained memorialisation in a culture that venerated so much a comparative connection to Rome. Accordingly, this anniversary was marked by festivities led by the Royal Historical Society that included a major exhibition at the British Museum and the publication of a number of works for the first time, including Gibbon's autobiography and correspondence, along with the first volumes of John Bagnell Bury's definitive edition of Gibbon's history (1896-1900).[271] Although the event was designed to celebrate the English contribution to Roman historiography, the very fact that Gibbon's masterpiece analysed imperial decline created an ambiguity at its heart. Indeed, Gibbon himself had been no imperialist, having claimed instead that '[t]he history of empires is that of the miseries of humankind'[272]; while suggesting elsewhere that '[t]here is nothing more adverse to nature and reason than to hold in obedience remote countries and foreign nations, in opposition to their inclination and interest'.[273]

As a consequence, the Gibbon centenary served to remind English society of the conditions that had led to Rome's alleged 'decline and fall', which it would have to circumvent if it sought to avoid a similar outcome for its own imperial project.[274] Yet, this increasingly urgent self-examination for signs of potential deterioration appears to have been part of a much broader trend from the 1880s that expressed potential misgivings about the health of the British Empire, which continued to expand at such a swift pace that it risked imperial overstretch. Despite its contemporary successes, a

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[268] See McKitterick and Quinault (1997b: 9-10).
[269] On Gibbon's work in the context of Victorian liberal historiography, see Adam (2011: 79-89).
[270] Carlyle (1886: 180).
[271] See Royal Historical Society (1895), Gibbon (1896a and 1896b), and Gibbon (1896-1900).
[272] Gibbon (1994a: 1).
[273] Gibbon (1994b: iii, 142).
[274] See Hingley (2000: 28-37) and Hagerman (2013: ch. 6, 108-28).

number of colonial emergencies seemed to cut at the heart of certainty, including the First South African War (1880-1) and the Sudan Crisis (1884-5). Indeed, throughout the 1880s and 90s some Roman historians were showing scepticism at the propagation of parallels between the Roman world and contemporary affairs. In Walter Wybergh How's and Henry Devinish Leigh's *A history of Rome to the death of Caesar* (1896), for instance, the authors were suspicious of any 'misleading' 'phrases and analogies'; writing that '[b]etween Rome and England there is all the difference that divides a city-state from a modern nation'.[275] Perhaps, more significantly, in 1896 the Gibbon editor J.B. Bury rejected all such parallels by claiming that 'all the decisive circumstances […] must of necessity be different'; dismissing all such comparativism in one pithy phrase: '[o]ne day tells not another day, and history declines to repeat herself'.[276] Thus, throughout the *fin-de-siècle*, an event like the Gibbon centenary – while intended to be an affirmation of England's cultural supremacy – seemed to expose and underline the issues, limitations and problems relating to the use of a Roman cultural model in Victorian society.[277]

In the context of the increasing challenges to Britain's socio-economic hegemony during the 1880s and 90s, many in English culture began to search their own society for symptoms of the same decline that Gibbon had outlined in his history. While novels such as Richard Jefferies' *After London* (1885) alarmed the public with their post-apocalyptic visions, non-fiction studies like Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (1892; English trans. 1895) explored the truth of potential decline in contemporary European society.[278] Specifically, a number of powerful analyses of English society, such as Andrew Mearns' *The bitter cry of outcast London* (1883) and William Booth's *In darkest England and the way out* (1890), depicted a culture that possessed profound economic inequalities and worrying social problems.[279] As individuals such as Lord Walsingham noted, within the further context of the agricultural depression that overtook Britain in the 1870s and 80s, the continued shift from rural to urban life

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[275] How and Leigh (1896: 324). The work, however, still indulged in the use of comparisons, such as the Sullan Senate being described as a 'Roman Rump Parliament' and Marcus Licinius Crassus being termed 'the Rothschild of Rome'. (Ibid., 439 and 492.)
[276] Bury (1896: 645).
[277] See Parchami (2009: 84-90).
[278] On Jefferies novel, see Page (2012: 137-41), and, on Nordau's study, Pick (1989: 23-6).
[279] See Briggs (1968: 313-14).

suggested a trajectory of national deterioration that accorded with elements of Roman decline:

> Take the people away from their natural breeding grounds, thereby sapping their health and strength in cities such as nature never intended to be the permanent home of men, and the decay of this country becomes only a matter of time. In this matter, as in many others, ancient Rome has a lesson to teach.[280]

Yet, it was not only in the country's urban slums that some detected these symptoms, but also at the very heights of English cultural life.

Gaining a disturbing notoriety through works such as Joris-Karl Huysmans' *À rebours* [*Against nature*] (1884), the Anglo-French Aesthetic and Decadent movements epitomised potential cultural decline at the heart of English intellectual culture, since they 'celebrate[d] art over nature, decay over progress, corruption over innocence, and sickness over health'.[281] This trend seemed to extend insidiously throughout the rest of society, however, while becoming associated with the alleged decline suffered by Roman society during late antiquity.[282] As a result, official measures to secure public morality were taken, such as the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1885), which targeted both female prostitution and male homosexuality.[283] Proponents of this legislation, such as James Maurice Wilson, headmaster of Clifton College, cited fears of Roman decadence as a reason to take action; suggesting that 'Rome fell; other nations are falling; and if England falls it will be [sexual immorality], and her unbelief in God, that will have been her ruin'.[284] Even the lofty imperial project was not immune to these associations, as a result of certain episodes from this period, such as when Arthur Gordon, the governor of Ceylon, sent his horse along – *à la* Caligula – to represent him at the inauguration of a new province.[285] These anecdotal indicators of declining moral standards led non-fiction studies, such as Charles Henry Pearson's *National life and character* (1893), to interrogate the English/British 'race' for signs

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[280] Quoted in Haggard (1889: 466).
[281] T. Wright (2008: 215-16).
[282] See Dowling (1986: 85-6) and Vance (1997: ch. 11, 247-68).
[283] See Cook (2008: 42-3).
[284] Wilson (1885: 7).
[285] Suetonius, *Life of Caligula*, IV.55. See Lewis (1926: 217-18).

of potential decadence.[286] Yet, it was vivid fictional treatments of this fear of decline that seemed to do most to propagate notions of national deterioration, such as Frederic William Farrar's novels *Darkness and dawn* (1891) and *Gathering clouds* (1895), which portrayed contemporary Britain in the guise of Rome during supposedly decadent periods of its history.[287]

One can gauge the level of cultural anxiety about national degeneration in the country's elite public schools, where contemporary school debates explored the issue repeatedly during this period. As far back as 1870, Winchester College held a school debate that wondered if 'England is in a state of decadence', which was significantly carried by a majority of one.[288] To take one institution alone, in the case of Shrewsbury School, one witnesses a definite preoccupation with this theme, though the result of debates there is revelatory of the contemporary mood. In 1881, for example, a debate discussed whether 'England, as a nation, is on the decline'; the motion being defeated 26 to seven.[289] This was reprised in 1888 when it was debated whether 'England is on the decline'; the proposition being defeated this time by twenty to nine.[290] This debate was revisited yet again in 1902, when young Salopians questioned in the wake of the South African War whether '[t]he national Spirit is deteriorating'; the motion being struck down 24 to twelve.[291] So, while it is clear from the Shrewsbury debates that the late-Victorian era registered a definite concern at the thought of national degeneration, the fact that such motions were all defeated indicates a broader confidence still able to surmount such fears.

Importantly, a number of political propagandists expressed these concerns by creating satirical, pseudo-Gibbonian narratives that projected dystopic visions of the future destruction of British society and empire. Written anonymously by Tory polemicists, three pamphlets entitled *The decline and fall of the British Empire* were published during the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras, in 1881, 1884 and 1905, but purported

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[286] See Butler (2012: 91-5).
[287] See Turner (1999: 183-6).
[288] *The Wykehamist*, no. 30 (April 1870), 3.
[289] *The Salopian*, no. 29 (November 1881), 25.
[290] Ibid., no. 72 (December 1888), 22-3.
[291] Ibid., no. 156 (December 1902), 22-5.

to have been respectively produced in 2881, 2884 and 2005.[292] Written to criticise the contemporary Liberal Party, these futuristic narratives pretended to portray the consequences of Liberal policies by depicting the gradual decay of British power they believed they would cause. Often paraphrasing actual lines from Gibbon's history, such as '[the] decline and fall [of England] is the grandest, perhaps the most awful, scene in the history of mankind'[293], they also pastiched some of his most famous passages:

> It was in gazing on the grey sky through the ruined dome of St Paul's that I first conceived the idea of this work – immortal in the grandeur and sadness of its topic. It was in contemplation over a broken arch of London Bridge that I finally determined to educe my design.[294]

Reading at times more like science fiction than political commentary, these works sought to subvert Gibbon for contemporary purposes and present an alternative reality where the British Empire, rather than its Roman counterpart, enters a terminal decline. Paralleling certain factors in Gibbon's account of Rome's decline with current events, as well as adding a few fantastic elements of their own, these pamphlets presented the late-Victorian era as a period of imminent crisis for England.

Significantly, even G.W. Steevens, the journalist who had depicted so vividly to the nation the Roman overtones of the Diamond Jubilee, became the author only two years later of 'From the New Gibbon' (1899).[295] Also published anonymously, this article examined the condition of the contemporary British Empire, while suggesting that it paralleled the Antonine Age from which Gibbon had begun his study of Roman imperial decline. Coming in the wake of other topical pieces, such as Thomas Hodgkin's 'The fall of the Roman Empire and its lessons for us' (1898), Steeven's article also prefigured some of the more anxious works to emerge in the Edwardian era.[296] By the close of Victoria's reign, the journalist James Louis Garvin was

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[292] While the author of the first work cannot be traced, the Tory commentator Charles J. Stone and the Conservative backbench MP Elliot E. Mills were respectively the authors of the other two. (See Halkett and Laing (1971: iii, p. 79) and Mackenzie (1986: 254, n. 6).)
[293] Anon. (1884: 31). See Gibbon (1994b: iii, 1024).
[294] Anon. (1884: 32). See Gibbon (1896a: 302).
[295] *Blackwood's Magazine* (February 1899); repub. in Steevens (1900: 21-36).
[296] Hodgkin (1898).

wondering seriously about the country's survival in his article, 'Will Britain last the century?' (1901), while Charles Masterman's *The heart of the empire* (1901) critiqued the stark gulf between imperial wealth and urban poverty in Britain.[297] So, despite the confidence that seemed to define late-Victorian culture outwardly, it remained affected by a growing anxiety at the possibility of national and imperial deterioration akin to that suffered by classical Rome.[298] While there had been previous millenarian warnings of potential national decline – such as the anonymously written pamphlet *Awake! Or Perish!* (1854) –, none had invoked Gibbon so deliberately or extensively as works from this period.[299] Thus, Gibbon's history functioned as a ready manual to potential contemporary decline throughout the late-Victorian era by providing a conceptual framework for voicing many of the latent fears and misgivings of the era.

While only a few historians of the British Empire have noted a connection between classical discourse and imperial decline, it is clear that increasing complication entered into the use of Rome in imperial discourse throughout the 1880s and 90s.[300] Although the British imperial project continued to grow superficially from strength to strength during this period, many, like J.R. Seeley, wondered how Britain might resolve the central Disraelian conundrum of binding *imperium* with *libertas*:

> How can the same nation pursue two lines of policy so radically different without bewilderment, be despotic in Asia and democratic in Australia, be in the East at once the greatest […] power in the world […] and at the same time in the West […] the foremost champion of free thought[?][301]

Certainly, the Roman Empire continued to remain the central imperial model to which English culture looked until the close of Victoria's reign, though only dishonest or naïve commentators could ignore the uncomfortable truths relating to self-comparison with the Roman Empire.[302] After all, the Romans had ruled an empire predicated upon military conquest and slavery, which was in contrast to the

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[297] Garvin (1901).
[298] See Vance (1997: ch. 11, 247-68).
[299] See Butler (2012: 127).
[300] For instance, see Armitage (2000: 125) and Cain (1999: 15).
[301] Seeley (1883: 177).
[302] See Vance (1997: ch. 10, 222-46).

largely civilian nature of the Victorian imperial project and its commitment to eliminating international human trafficking.[303]

Yet, by focussing upon positive aspects of the imperial experience shared by Rome and Britain, such as their civilising mission – paralleling, for example, the Roman destruction of the druids with that of the British suppression of *sati* in India – most advocates of empire could circumvent many anomalous issues of comparison.[304] Challenged to 'demonstrate that they were wiser and more humane than the Romans'[305], Victorians could invert a potential negative by concentrating upon the ways in which they had outdone the Roman Empire.[306] In relating this modelling to discussions of Roman Britain, however, these comparisons often met insuperable difficulties.[307] For instance, the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reception of the British warrior-queen Boudicea demonstrates one of the problematic issues faced by English culture in deploying a Roman model within imperial discourse.[308] On the one hand, Victorians wished to venerate her as a national heroine, yet, on the other, she represented an uncomfortable symbol of resistance against the imperial *status quo* of the kind that they had suppressed in the Indian Mutiny and other colonial insurgencies.[309] This is evidenced by the saga of Thomas Thornycroft's equestrian statue *Boudicea and her daughters*, which was sculpted between 1856 and 1885, but, owing to debate, not erected on the Thames Embankment until 1902.[310] So, as the British imperial project reached the apex of its power, those who sought to apply the lessons of Rome to their own empire were forced to take account of the challenges it embodied as a comparative model.

While the Romans themselves had been no strangers to many of the anxieties that marked British imperialism, some began to wonder if Rome represented a useful historical model at all. Virgil, for example, had spoken fictionally of an empire

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[303] In 1808, Parliament had passed the Slave Trade Act, which outlawed the slave trade in Britain, though slavery was not abolished throughout the British Empire until the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833. See Huzzey (2012).
[304] See Arnold (1906: 92-3).
[305] Vance (2011: 247).
[306] See Vance (2000b).
[307] On the difficulty of integrating Roman and Romano-British heroes within Victorian imperialist discourse, see Vance (2006c).
[308] See Hingley and Unwin (2005: ch. 6, 147-72) and Johnson (2012: 117-19).
[309] See Henderson (1903: 210), as well as Hingley and Unwin (2005: 156).
[310] See Hingley (2000: 77 and 80-1).

without limits – '*imperium sine fine*' –, but was forced to admit that potential sources of sorrow – '*lacrimae rerum*' – also lay at the heart of the Roman imperial mission.[311] Similarly, Tacitus disclosed doubts about the efficacy of Roman imperial policy in his suggestion that Rome was spreading civilisation through uncivilised means; remarking that '[t]o plunder, to slaughter, to steal, these things they misname empire; and where they make a wilderness they call it peace'.[312] While the Liberal politician Robert Lowe had warned against following the example of the Roman Empire too closely in 1878[313], it seems to have been only in the 1880s, under the influence of the popularity of the Roman cultural model, that other Liberals, such as John Morley, began to suggest that Roman comparativism might be 'as impracticable as it is puerile and retrograde'.[314] Most of this criticism, however, tended to be directed towards implying that Rome represented an inadequate analogue, owing to the alleged special nature of the British Empire, which portrayed it as impervious to the decline that Rome suffered.

One commentator suggested, for instance, that 'the analogy of Rome is not in point', since 'Rome had no colonies in the sense that England has now'[315], while Lord Rosebery similarly dismissed the relevance of past empires as guides for the British imperial project:

> People talk of the Roman colonies, of the Greek colonies, of military colonies, and of the American colonies. We have nothing to do with those colonies. They have interesting records, but they furnish no guidance now for the British Empire.[316]

For those of a more liberal persuasion, however, ancient Greece still appealed as a classical model more than Rome.[317] This viewpoint received its most fulsome interpretation in E.A. Freeman's *Greater Greece and Greater Britain* (1886), which argued that Britain's extensive, 'white'-settled territories represented a close analogue

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[311] *Aeneid*, 1.279 and 1.462.
[312] *Agricola*, 30.
[313] See Cain and Harrison (2001: 38-9).
[314] Morley (1884: 258).
[315] Greswell (1884: 161).
[316] Quoted in Bennett (1967: 282).
[317] On comparisons between both models, see Parchami (2009: 88-90).

to the Magna Graecia of Greek history.[318] In being appropriated for contemporary imperial ends, however, the Greek colonial model brought many practical issues of its own, since, adhering to Thucydides' interpretation, many Victorians believed that Athens had been corrupted and destroyed by its possession of an empire.[319] In the same way that Gibbon had done for Rome, J.B. Bury also demonstrated in his *History of Greece* (1900) the pitfalls of looking to Greece for guidance, showing how Athens' political and imperial system had been subject to a similar decline.[320] As such, classical models were shown to possess both benefits and limitations, which encouraged some to look elsewhere for guidance.[321]

Taking Edmund Burke's advice that '[y]ou can never plan the future by the past'[322], some entirely dismissed attempts to draw comparison between antiquity and the contemporary world.[323] Instead, they sought present-day political models, such as the federal political structure of the United States of America.[324] Believing that the Victorian era was a 'phase representing an altogether new idea in the history of nations'[325], influential commentators from this group, such as the Marquis of Lorne, imagined that 'no analogy in the condition of any nation in the past which can guide us in estimating the forces at work within our Empire'.[326] By suggesting that the British imperial project was incompatible with ancient precedent, and applying a contemporary paradigm instead, one could circumvent the difficult notion of decline and fall that created so much unease at the heart of comparisons with Rome.[327] Yet, so saturated with classical reference was late-Victorian political culture that even these arguments could rarely escape the influence of ancient Rome, as evidenced by the anonymous contributor who argued with the help of a Ciceronian phrase that '[h]istory affords no parallel to the position of the British Empire. Great Britain stands

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[318] See Freeman (1886: 1-61). On parallels to Magna Graecia, see ibid., 3-13 and 37-43. Frederick Young, an imperial federalist, also engaged a positive comparison to Greek imperialism, though such parallels were rare. (See Young (1883: 3-4).)
[319] For Thucydides' interpretation, see Bruell (1974). On Greece as a negative imperial model, see Bell (2007a: 222-4).
[320] See Bury (1900: ch. 11, 458-513).
[321] See Bell (2007a: ch. 8, 207-30).
[322] Burke (1803: vi, 68).
[323] On the transition between ancient and contemporary imperial models, see Bell (2006).
[324] See Bell (2007a: ch. 9, 231-59).
[325] Lorne (1885: 43).
[326] Ibid., 2.
[327] See Bell (2007a: 220-2).

facile princeps among nations'.[328] So, despite critical commentary that sought to question its relevance and influence, Roman allusions remained hard to avoid.

Richard Jenkyns has observed that '[i]t is a sign that an idea is pervasive when it is accepted on both sides of a dispute'[329], which makes it valuable to examine Rome's employment by various critics of empire.[330] Although the British Empire developed to arguably its highest phase during the late-Victorian era, this rise was not without its detractors and opponents, many of whom also drew upon the classical past to condemn British expansionism.[331] Since Rome primarily represented a constructive parallel, many sought to invert its popular application from positive to negative. Since there were numerous incongruities both in imperialism itself and in the use of ancient Rome as a parallel, it was relatively easy to find and focus upon the more problematic aspects of each to explore their logical inferences. In *Patriotism and empire* (1898), for instance, the Radical journalist John Mackinnon Robertson compared Roman and British imperialism in socio-economic terms, but suggested that each empire was founded upon the exploitation of others by their monied, metropolitan class:

> The imperial people was *ipso facto* a community diseased; and wherever they imposed their rule they infected with decay the subject states […] with the *imperator* comes in due time the decadence of empire, the humiliation and paralysis of spirit that had aspired to humiliate its kind.[332]

Yet, while he criticised 'the uncomprehending way in which the British imperialist scans the story of ancient Rome'[333], Robertson also predicated much of his argument on the essential exploitative similarity between all empires, ancient and modern – much of which derived its terms from the traditional Gibbonian reading of Roman decline having occurred as a result of alleged moral decay.[334] As a classicist of a similar political bent, Gilbert Murray spoke with the authority of a scholar when he

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[328] Anon. (1887: 484). Cicero, *On the orator*, 3.60.
[329] Jenkyns (1980: 333).
[330] On Rome's negative use in imperial discourse, see Vance (2011).
[331] For useful surveys of contemporary anti-imperialist discourse, see Porter (2008) and Claeys (2010).
[332] Robertson (1899: 155 and 157).
[333] Ibid., 151.
[334] On Gibbon's reading of the causes of Rome's decline, see Matthews (1997).

cast a critical eye on contemporary colonialism from the perspective of antiquity in 'The exploitation of inferior races in ancient and modern times' (1900). In his article, Murray explored how Greek and Roman colonialism shared with its contemporary European counterpart the use of exploitative human labour; asserting that slavery of some sort lay at the heart of all forms of imperialism, which ultimately possessed negative consequences for the domestic polity – again implicitly invoking a moral analysis derived from Gibbon.[335]

Perhaps the most cogent anti-imperialist work of this period, the economist John Atkinson Hobson's *Imperialism: a study* (1902), also makes considerable use of a comparison between the Roman and the British empires in its indictment of European colonialism.[336] Comparing the allegedly parasitic politico-economic natures of the two, Hobson contended that Britain acquired its national wealth 'by arts not differing essentially from those which supported in idleness and luxury imperial Rome'.[337] Like Robertson, however, Hobson also depended for much of his interpretation upon traditional Gibbonian notions of decline and fall that suggested a similar trajectory for the British Empire; focussing upon Britain's use of mercenaries in its military, and the influence of eastern 'corruption' on its metropolitan cultures.[338] For a work that attempted to mark a divergence from contemporary imperialist discourse, Hobson drew upon many of the same historical assumptions to construct his argument – something that demonstrates how grounded in traditional readings of Roman history late-Victorian society remained. Thus, despite the negative terms of its usage by Robertson, Murray and Hobson, it is indicative of the pervasiveness of the Roman cultural model during the late-Victorian era that it was employed by such individuals to make a political argument against British imperialism.

So, although designed to be a celebration of the contribution of England to understanding ancient Rome, the Gibbon centenary of 1894 also served as a reminder of the fact that Britain's empire could be subject to the same forces of decline that had destroyed Rome. Already, during the 1880s and 90s anxieties about impending national deterioration were being fuelled by Britain's latent socio-economic decline

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[335] See Murray (1900: 126-31).
[336] See Hobson (1902: 8, 261, 324 and 387-9). For an overview, see Porter (2008: ch. 7, 207-38).
[337] See Hobson (1902: 151).
[338] See ibid., 143-5 and ch. 5, 305-46.

and other apparent symptoms of cultural corruption, such as urban poverty and the influence of the Aesthetic and Decadent movements. Gibbon was also invoked in a number of key works that both interrogated and projected British decline, which suggests the powerful hold that his theorising about the causes of Rome's fall possessed in English culture. Owing to its 'combination of analytical ambiguity, narrative simplicity, and evocative employment'[339], the Gibbonian notion of decline and fall offered both a potent warning against complacency and a spur to further imperial development.

Describing late-Victorian society as 'half vulgar, half magnificent […] overblown and ripe almost to rottenness', Richard Jenkyns has claimed that *fin-de-siècle* English culture was infected by a 'menacing sense of decadence' in which 'the analogy with Rome acquired a new force', blending 'decadence and majesty'.[340] Although some still injected their works with patriotic, Roman-inspired sentiments, many commentators voiced increasing wariness at such easy allusions. Elsewhere, others began to propose alternative or revised political models involving a Roman parallel that took account of the changing times. In *A future Roman Empire* (1895), for example, the social commentator George Edward Tarner argued that Europe needed a new Roman Empire to rule a federated Continent in a type of proto-European Union.[341] Similarly, the historian John Adam Cramb extended the historical comparativism of his *Origins and reflections on the destiny of imperial Britain* (1900) to include not only Rome, but also other ancient empires, such as Athens, Macedon, and even the Islamic Empire.[342] When he does invoke the Roman parallel, he uses it to allow for potential deterioration in the British imperial edifice by focussing upon the historical legacy that departed empires can impart in their wake:

> [L]ike all great empires, Rome strove not for herself but for humanity,
> and dying, had yet strength, by her laws, her religion, her language, to

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[339] Bell (2007: 218).
[340] Jenkyns (1980: 334-5). For an overview of the British Empire at the turn of the century, see Field (1982).
[341] See Tarner (1895: 24-5).
[342] See Cramb (1900: 117-18 and 301-3).

impart her spirit and the secret of her peace to other races and to other times.[343]

Similarly, Cramb suggests that 'Britain is laying the foundations of States unborn, civilisations undreamed 'til now, as Rome in the days of Tacitus, was laying the foundations of States and civilisations unknown'.[344] Yet, he also declares that its imperial project was 'essentially British […] not Roman [and] not Hellenic'[345]; contending significantly that from 'thraldom to the past, to the ideal of Rome, Imperial Britain […] completely breaks'.[346]

Always 'fraught with difficulty'[347] in its application, the use of the Roman model to understand the British imperial project brought with it its own anxieties and complexities that were increasingly realised during the late-Victorian era. Even Oscar Wilde, one of the exemplars of alleged decadence in this period, seemed to register the growing inadequacy of ancient Rome within imperial discourse when he declared in an excised line from his play *A woman of no importance* (1893) that 'England lies like a leper in purple'.[348] A shift in the nature of Rome in imperial discourse can be perceived even from something as simple as contemporary cartoons. In 1882, for example, *Punch* had trumpeted Garnet Wolseley's victory in Egypt with a single Caesarian phrase – '*Vici*!!!' – beneath its John Tenniel drawing; yet, in a cartoon from 1900, Britain was depicted in a far more negative Roman light, as a giant centurion crushing a group of Boers under the title 'The New Gulliver'.[349] Thus, it is evident that ancient Rome, while remaining a central cultural model, became increasingly problematised during the last two decades of Victoria's reign owing to the harbingers of national decline that were perceived in contemporary society and empire.

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[343] Cramb (1900: 260).
[344] Ibid., 305.
[345] Ibid., 18.
[346] Ibid., 23.
[347] Adler (2008: 209).
[348] Quoted in Nelson (1989: 64).
[349] Bryant (2008: 128).

5.5. Conclusion

On 17 May 1900, after 217 days spent under siege by the Boers, the town of Mafeking was recouped by a British force.[350] This portion of the Second South African War had been one of the *causes célèbres* of the conflict, so the news of its relief was greeted with an outpouring of jubilation at home in Britain.[351] Taking to the streets of London's West End, jingoistic crowds spontaneously formed to cheer, sing patriotic songs and wave Union Jacks. Indeed, such was the level of celebration that 'to maffick' became a verb, meaning to rejoice enthusiastically in public.[352] Yet, beneath the brief exultation of what one commentator called a 'most wonderful and harmless saturnalia'[353] lay a series of deep anxieties about the contemporary condition of English society and empire, which had been stoked by the setbacks of Britain's difficult conflict with the Boers. Alternatively, W.T. Stead referred to the event as a 'vulgar and brutal saturnalia'[354] that represented a last expression of the aggressive and confident spirit of 'new' imperialism, to which parallels to ancient Rome had been so central. So, while Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations had embodied an official 'Roman moment', Mafeking Night was an instinctive public outpouring that more resembled the Roman festival of Saturnalia than the jubilee's carefully stage-managed 'triumph'.

Following the jubilee in 1897, the British imperial project faced a number of challenges – the Second South African War being the first and most serious – that only grew during the Edwardian era, as Britain faced a set of fresh crises and increased rivalries.[355] While some individuals continued to express jingoistic sentiments, there was a sense of anxiety among most imperial commentators that perceived contemporary discord in South Africa, India and elsewhere as being akin to '[b]arbarians thundering at the frontiers'.[356] Significantly, addressing the Colonial Conference at the close of the South African War in 1902, Joseph Chamberlain spoke of Britain as 'the weary Titan stagger[ing] under the too vast orb of its fate'[357];

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[350] For an account, see Yorke (2014).
[351] See Pakenham (2001).
[352] On its definition, see http://www.oed.com/view/Entry112119 [accessed 1 November 2014].
[353] Quoted in Price (1972: 135).
[354] Quoted in Robinson (2012: 238).
[355] See Darwin (2009: ch. 7, 255-301).
[356] Brendon (2007: 215). See ibid., ch. 8, 215-48.
[357] Quoted in Amery (1951: iv, 421).

making it possible to see how the final years of the Victorian era began to expose the flaws and limitations of Britain's imperial edifice.[358] Thus, as a period that bridged the confidence of the 1880s and the anxieties of the 1900s, the final decade of Victoria's reign represented a period of transition in which the aggressive acquisitiveness of 'new' imperialism seemed to reach a degree of overstretch.[359]

In this light, it is possible to perceive the period from the 1870s to the 1890s as a short-lived, yet highly-influential, interval of popularity for classical Rome as a guiding cultural model. Pervading almost every level of Victorian society in some way – whether in art, journalism, literature or theatre –, Roman discourse achieved its symbolic summit with the 'triumph' of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Coalescing with the height of the British Empire, Rome was elevated by a number of key texts to become one of the central analogues of contemporary imperial discourse. Moreover, it became a crucial means of conceptualising the British colonial mission for significant figures in the imperial project, such as Lord Cromer, Cecil Rhodes and Lord Curzon. These employments of Rome also fitted with the escapist historicism of the Victorian mindset, which venerated the certainty of a period like the Roman imperial era at a time of intense change and doubt in its own society.

According with the comparative method derived from classical learning, it became natural to parallel contemporary domestic and imperial activities with allegedly similar ones from Roman antiquity that allowed Victorians to evaluate their achievements as a society. While English Hellenism was already in decline from the mid-century period, it was its appropriation from the 1870s by dubious minority sub-cultures that set the seal on its disestablishment as a popular cultural model. Yet, as a result of the increasingly negative socio-economic climate of the 1880s and 90s, some also began to interrogate Roman history for guidance on how to avoid a similar decline to that suffered by its empire, while others began to expose some of the difficulties and shortcomings of employing such a model. Consequently, while Rome remained a crucial paradigm up to the close of Victoria's reign in 1901, it was already being modified by growing anxieties about national deterioration, which helped to

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[358] On this apparent decline, see Friedberg (1988).
[359] See Searle (2004: 250-1).

undermine grandiose appropriations from the Roman world, and create an even more complex and contested model in the Edwardian era.

The satirist Juvenal once cautioned Romans that '[i]t is the purple foreign and unknown to us [that] leads to wickedness and villainy'[360]; similarly, by 1901, many in English culture began to wonder if the purple of Rome did not possess more difficulties than advantages. Bridging the period of Rome's rehabilitation, the words of the French classicist Gaston Boissier from 1865 seemed to resonate with contemporary Roman reception when they were published in English for the first time in 1897:

> [Ancient Rome] had no solid faith any more than our own. […] The men of that time knew, just as we do, that discontent with the present and that uncertainty of the morrow, which do not allow us to enjoy tranquillity or repose. In them we see ourselves. […] We, like them, live in one of those transitional periods, the most mournful of history, in which the traditions of the past have disappeared and the future is not yet clearly defined […].[361]

As a 'custom […] [of seeking] arms for […] present struggles in the history of the past', Boissier argued that the use of Rome as a comparative model became popular because it provided 'a convenient and less dangerous battle-field where, under ancient costumes, present-day passions may struggle'.[362] Throughout the thirty-odd years of its rehabilitation in English culture, however, ancient Rome represented a contested entity itself; acting sometimes as a bombastic buttress to Victorian achievement, and, other times, as a powerful argument against the use of antiquity as a guide. In short, Rome functioned as a multivalent cultural object that was deployed within a multiplicity of contexts during the mid-to-late-Victorian era, which makes it a crucial object of study. Thus, whether one chose to wear the metaphorical purple of Rome or not, it still represented an indispensable and inescapable component of Victorian cultural discourse.

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[360] *Satires* 14.187-8.
[361] Boissier (1897: 390).
[362] Ibid., 21.

6. Conclusion

Persia and Egypt, Greece and Rome, / And vaster dynasties before, /
Now faded in Time's monochrome, / In what do we surpass their lore? //
Some things they knew that we know not; / Some things we know by
them unknown; / But the axles of their wheels were hot / With the same
frenzies as our own.[1]

Francis Burdett Money-Coutts, 'Empires', 1900.

6.1. Rome and another? Transitions in Edwardian culture

On the evening of 22 January 1901, at the age of eighty-one, Queen Victoria died at
Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. With her passing, the Victorian age came to an
end and, with it, much that had defined nineteenth-century Britain.[2] During almost
sixty-four years of a reign, she had witnessed a ten-fold expansion of her realm that
left her ruling a quarter of the globe and a third of the world's population.
Interestingly, for her funeral, London was decked out, not in the black crepe that one
might have expected of the so-called 'widow of Windsor', but in a series of purples,
'deep and light, bluish and crimson'.[3] This derived from Victoria's own orders, since,
despite her reputation, Victoria disliked the colour black and had arranged for purple
to be displayed instead.[4] So, having been transformed into the site of a veritable
Roman triumph for her Diamond Jubilee in 1897, London once again wore the
colours of imperial Rome, though for a more sombre occasion. After a funeral
procession through London and public obsequies at St Paul's Cathedral comparable to
those once given to Augustus, Victoria was buried in the royal mausoleum at
Frogmore beneath the Latin phrase that she had had inscribed on Prince Albert's
tomb: *Vale desideratissime* – 'farewell most beloved'.[5] As such, this motto provided
a suitably Roman epitaph for a monarch who had overseen both the eclipse and the
rehabilitation of ancient Rome during her reign.

No one could suggest that Queen Victoria's death itself provoked a wholesale cultural
transition in English society, but it did provide a potent symbol of the passing of one
era and the arrival of another. As the writer H.G. Wells suggested, 'Queen Victoria

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[1] Lines 13-16 in Quiller-Couch (1912: 747).
[2] See Packard (2000).
[3] *The Times*, 2 February 1901, 9. See Hibbert (2000: 495-502).
[4] See Longford (1964: 707-8).
[5] See *Life of Augustus*, II.100 and Hibbert (2000: 500).

was like a great paperweight that for half a century sat upon men's minds, and when she was removed their ideas began to blow about the place quite haphazardly'.[6] Certainly, the Edwardian era that followed possessed many elements in common with the one it succeeded, yet it also marked numerous departures – in terms of both personalities and preoccupation.[7] For a start, her replacement by the avuncular, yet extravagant, figure of Edward VII led to the monarchy assuming a more leisurely, though ostentatious, atmosphere than its predecessor.[8] Labelled an 'arch-vulgarian'[9] by Henry James and a 'corpulent voluptuary'[10] by Rudyard Kipling, the king's reputation as a *bon viveur* presented him as a convivial, if worryingly decadent, personality for an age concerned about national decline. In this, he bore a disquieting resemblance to his ancestor George IV, whose behaviour had called to mind the decadent emperors of ancient Rome.[11] Although no Elagabalus, Edward's alleged devotion to *voluptas*, or pleasure, symbolised for many the notion that English society and empire had passed their Antonine height, and entered a state of decline analogous to that experienced by Rome.[12]

With the difficult Second South African War (1899-1902) bridging the Victorian and Edwardian eras, the shadow of reverses like those of 'Black Week' in December 1899 seemed to confirm the sense of *fin-de-siècle* upheaval that accompanied the arrival of a new century.[13] Although it had ended in a Pyrrhic victory for Britain, the defeats suffered during the conflict had given some, such as Cecil Rhodes, an understanding of 'what the old Roman emperors must have felt when [...] their legions were scattered'.[14] So, if the Victorian age represented another 'period of history during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous'[15], the Edwardian era seemed to parallel the later Roman Empire, 'gorged with distant

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[6] Quoted in Webb (1983: ii, 3).
[7] See Thompson (1975), Havighurst (1979: chs 1-4, 1-112) and Darwin (2009: ch. 7, 255-301).
[8] See Ridley (2012: 347-62).
[9] James (1984: iv, 181).
[10] Quoted in Ridley (2012: 349).
[11] For instance, two satires had been published in 1820 entitled *Nero vanquished* and *Nero vindicated*, which presented the Prince Regent in the guise of the Roman emperor Nero. See Anon. (1820a and 1820b).
[12] See Prior (2013).
[13] See Pakenham (1979: 246-9).
[14] Quoted in Stead (1902: 180).
[15] Gibbon (1994b: i, 103).

conquests, provincial tributes, oriental luxury and alien corn'.[16] In short, while the peace and prosperity of Victoria's reign had conjured parallels to the Augustan or Antonine eras of classical Rome, the Edwardian age seemed akin to a more decadent period of Roman imperial rule.

While the period from 1870 to 1901 witnessed the Roman model employed in large part to aggrandise and justify the British imperial project, that of 1901 to 1914 saw it used increasingly to urge prudence and vigilance in colonial affairs. Despite increasing difficulties in its application, however, nothing suggests that it was disestablished with the arrival of the new century. Indeed, if anything, cultural discourse relating to Rome has been said to have become 'perhaps most explicit during the Edwardian era'.[17] All emerging from this period, Lord Cromer's *Ancient and modern imperialism* (1910), Charles Prestwood Lucas' *Greater Rome and Greater Britain* (1912) and James Bryce's *The ancient Roman Empire and the British Empire in India* (1914) have been said to represent '[t]he three most sustained and elaborate comparisons of Rome and Britain'[18] in the history of the British Empire.[19] Significantly, though, while all three engaged Roman parallels in their analysis of contemporary British colonialism, they did so primarily with the aim of highlighting failures and shortcomings in the Roman experience that Britain should avoid if it sought to arrest imperial decline.[20]

Some of the most popular authors of the Edwardian period also continued to cast ancient Rome in a leading role in their works. Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906), for instance, contains a series of stories set in Roman Britain, which have been suggested to have been 'more effective in moulding the thought of a generation' than anything else '[i]n the whole range of [his] work'.[21] Similarly, Arthur Conan Doyle published a series of Roman stories – collected in *The last galley* (1911) – that

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[16] Brendon (2007: 210).

[17] Bell (2006: 739, n. 17). On Edwardian appropriations of Rome, see Hynes (1991: 15-53).

[18] Vasunia (2005: 48).

[19] Richard Hingley has identified the periods of 1905-8 and 1910-14 as high-watermarks for the use of Roman comparativism in English culture. (See Hingley (2000: 25).)

[20] See Vasunia (2005: 48-53).

[21] Carrington (1970: 446). See Kipling (1906: 125-73). Indeed, Rome remained part of Kipling's *oeuvre* thereafter, whether in his poem 'The Roman centurion's song' (1911) or the short story 'Regulus' (1917). (Fletcher and Kipling (1911: 19-20). Kipling (1917: 241-74).) See Rivet (1978) and Stepanek (2000).

explored many contemporary political issues, such as the naval question in 'The last galley' (1910) and colonial withdrawal in 'The last of the legions' (1910).[22] The bestselling work of the Edwardian era, Robert Baden-Powell's *Scouting for boys* (1908), also included a number of prominent reflections on the lessons that Rome offered on 'the decline of good citizenship and the want of energetic patriotism'[23], which, because of his work's popularity, made him 'perhaps the most influential writer on the Roman theme'[24] of the whole period.

Within British colonialism, too, allusions to Rome remained active; whether in the addition of the term 'imperial' to official bodies, such as the Imperial General Staff from 1909, and the Imperial Conference from 1911, or the celebration of further 'Roman moments' of ornamental pomp with the Indian Durbars of 1903 and 1911.[25] This period also saw the establishment of the British School at Rome in 1901 and the Roman Society in London in 1910, each of which offered platforms for academic debate on Roman culture, history and literature.[26] Indeed, during the early 1910s, British audiences continued to enjoy epic spectacles depicting Roman antiquity through cinematic portrayals, such as the Italian films *Quo vadis?* (1912), *The last days of Pompeii* (1913) and *Cabiria* (1914).[27] Yet, with leading political figures such as Lord Curzon and Arthur Balfour using the Roman parallel increasingly in public speeches to urge caution and restraint in contemporary affairs, classical Rome assumed a more ambiguous identity as a parallel.[28] Thus, although Roman reception continued to remain a central component of contemporary discourse during the Edwardian era, it was one increasingly problematised by concerns about potential national and imperial decline.

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[22] Doyle (1911: 3-14 and 84-93).

[23] Baden-Powell (2004: 296).

[24] Hyam (2010: 2). See Baden-Powell (2004: 26-8, 184, 224, 277-8 and 295-7).

[25] See Philpott (2002: 80) and Cannadine (2001: 46-54).

[26] By its first A.G.M., the Roman Society possessed over 500 members, including Lawrence Alma-Tadema, J.B. Bury and Lord Cromer. ('List of members' in *Proceedings* (1911: i, 272-84.) See Wallace-Hadrill (2001) and Stray (2010).

[27] See Christie (2013).

[28] Addressing their respective *almae matres* of Oxford and Cambridge, Curzon's 'Frontiers' (1907) and Balfour's 'Decadence' (1908) employed the Roman parallel extensively in their discussion of the important contemporary issues of imperial defence and national deterioration. See Curzon (1907: 8, 21, 22, 23-5, 32, 38 and 54) and Balfour (1908: 14-31).

As 'the culmination of the nineteenth century'[29], the Great War (1914-18) represented a cultural terminus for much of what had defined the Victorian era – including a privileged position in English society for a Roman cultural model. Unlike the colonial 'little wars' of Victoria's reign, the Great War was a long, expansive conflict that altered English society in countless ways, as well as bringing to an end the *pax Britannica* that had existed since 1815. Certainly, the use of tanks, aircraft and chemical weapons presented new technological departures, but it was arguably unprecedented events, such as the Somme Offensive, that did most to suggest an irreparable break with the past.[30] In the context of the domestic reception of Rome, it became increasingly difficult to imagine Britain as an heir to Roman militarism when it was fighting the German Empire, to which the army represented a central national institution.[31] Although one scholar has claimed that 'trench warfare activated Roman analogies'[32] in English culture, it seems that most of those inclined toward classical parallels tended to imagine Britain in the guise of democratic Athens, standing against the oppression of Persia or Sparta in the form of Germany and its allies.[33]

While scholarly works, such as Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge's *Demosthenes and the last days of Greek freedom* (1914), created timely parallels between ancient Greece and the modern world, from 1915 advertising hoardings on London omnibuses displayed excerpts from Pericles' famous funeral oration.[34] The Trojan War of Homer's *Iliad* also seemed to offer another significant Hellenic parallel that was taken up by contemporary English culture, and reinforced by the Dardanelles Campaign's proximity to the alleged site of the original ancient conflict.[35] Moreover, '[b]ecause of its tradition of travel and geographical study', Greek studies 'proved at last to be a more useful subject than Roman history'[36] by providing knowledge of the region useful to the War Office – a point demonstrated by the fact that many noted

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[29] Thomson (1950: 220).

[30] The Somme competes with the battle of Cannae in 216 B.C. for the title of the bloodiest battle in history. While some estimates suggest that *c*.50,000 troops were killed at Cannae, the casualties for the first day of the Somme were *c*.57,000. (See Lazenby (1996: 47, n. 56).)

[31] For instance, before the war, the *Daily Mail* had claimed that there was 'something of the temper of ancient Rome about the German Empire', owing to its veneration for 'massiveness', which was suggestive of a pagan sensibility. (Misc. (1914: 61).) See Wyke (2012: 69-70).

[32] Vance (1997: 222).

[33] See, for instance, Murray (1918).

[34] See Pickard-Cambridge (1914: 489 and 493) and Turner (1981: 187).

[35] Near to the alleged site of Troy itself was the Hellespont, as well as the islands of Imbros, Lemnos and Samothrace. See Vance (2006) and Vandiver (2008 and 2010: ch. 4, 228-82).

[36] Murray (2000: 358).

Hellenists like George Beardoe Grundy were employed in official military capacities.[37] This trend was further reinforced by the deaths of a whole generation of upcoming Romanists in the war, such as George Leonard Cheesman, author of *The auxilia of the Roman imperial army* (1914) and proposed editor of *Roman inscriptions of Britain*, while Roman studies in Britain were beginning to mark a turn away from general imperial history, and towards the country's own Romano-British heritage.[38]

Perhaps, most symbolically of all, Wilfred Owen's poem '*Dulce et decorum est*' (1917) sought to silence one of the prime mantras of classical culture during the Victorian and Edwardian eras, the Horatian tag *dulce et decorum est et pro patria mori* – 'how sweet and proper it is to die for one's country'.[39] Alleging the falsehood of inculcating the young with 'the old Lie' of notions of classical heroism, Owen contrasted such ideals with the visceral horror of a modern gas attack experienced by those sacrificing themselves for their country:

> If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood / Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs, / Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud / Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues, – / My friend, you would not tell with such high zest / To children ardent for some desperate glory, / The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est* / *Pro patria mori*.[40]

This theme is also reflected in Owen's 'Arms and the boy' (1918), which draws its title from the first line of the *Aeneid* and portrays a young soldier, stripped of the classical mythology that the Victorians might have employed to describe him:

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[37] Grundy produced the *Handbook of Macedonia* for the Admiralty. See Murray (2000: 358-9).
[38] See Hingley (2000: 97) and Todd (2004a: xviii).
[39] Horace, *Odes*, III.2.13. This motto is evidenced in everything from schoolboy tributes in verse about Colonel Gordon to Henry Newbolt's popular poem 'Clifton Chapel' (1908). (*The Cheltonian* (April 1885), 14 and Newbolt (1908: 5-8).) During the Second South African War, Thomas William Hodgson Crosland wrote 'Slain', which also invoked the same Latin tag in an ironic fashion. (See Vandiver (2010: 399-400).) For a fuller discussion of the use of the phrase in Great War poetry, see ibid., 393-404.
[40] Lines 21-8 in Owen (1985: 118).

For his teeth seem for laughing round an apple. / There lurk no claws

behind his fingers supple; / And God will grow no talons at his heels, /

Nor antlers through the thickness of his curls.[41]

In these works, Owen captured the disillusion of many who had been inculcated at school and university with the comparative classical modelling of the Victorians, which was revealed to be hollow and irrelevant in the context of twentieth-century warfare.[42]

In short, the Great War appeared to mark a major break from the culture of the Victorian and Edwardian world, whose features 'seem so utterly remote from a later age that it is tempting to see them as part of a wholly vanished society, swept away by a sudden, extraneous, and unpredictable cataclysm, as utterly and irrevocably as Pompeii and Herculaneum'.[43] In this way, the Roman cultural model developed by the Victorians represented another casualty of the conflict, as its popularity declined owing to the specific circumstances of British participation in the war, as well as the general transition to other sources of cultural value, apart from antiquity.[44] Yet, this decline appears to have been part of a much wider reaction against Victorian culture and a privileged position for classical discourse in English society. Throughout the 1910s, works such as Compton Mackenzie's *Sinister Street* (1913-14), Alec Waugh's *The loom of youth* (1917) and Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* (1918) all sought to criticise and undermine the dominance of the Victorian era as a cultural force.[45] Since one of the most influential components of Victorian culture had been the primacy of classics in society, this proved to be a target in all three of these works and others.[46] Thus, during the upheaval of the Great War, Rome declined as a relevant cultural model owing to a number of more general shifts in English culture that disestablished it from its Victorian pre-eminence.

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[41] Lines 9-12 in Owen (1985: 131).

[42] See Parker (1987) and Vandiver (2010: ch. 1, 33-92).

[43] Harris (1993: 2). On the ways in which the Great War marked a cultural departure, see Hynes (1990).

[44] Only Macaulay's *Lays of ancient Rome* seems to have survived in popularity from the canon of Roman-themed works venerated by the Victorians. See Vandiver (2010: 97-104).

[45] See Gathorne-Hardy (1977: 309).

[46] *Sinister Street* depicts an Edwardian public-school and Oxford education in often critical terms; *The loom of youth* portrays a debate between the 'classics' and the 'moderns'; and Strachey used one his biographies in *Eminent Victorians* to censure a main architect of the Victorian emphasis on classics, Thomas Arnold. (See Mackenzie (1960: 116-611), Waugh (1917: 169-73) and Strachey (1918: 205-42).)

Yet, English classics had already been undergoing a transition from the turn of the century, when a number of socio-cultural forces began to challenge its dominance, especially increasing cultural and curricular pluralism.[47] A potential crisis for classics as a discipline had been recognised at the opening of the Edwardian era by the classicist John Percival Postgate in his influential article 'Are the classics to go?' (1902).[48] The following year, Postgate joined with Edward Adolf Sonnenschein to found the Classical Association, which was proposed as a means of 'orderly retreat'[49] for the subject.[50] However, English classics was facing, not so much decline as democratisation. For instance, translations of the Greek and Latin classics became increasingly available during this period, which transmitted the subject to more people than ever before, and ranged from the popular to the scholarly – as embodied respectively by the Everyman Library (founded 1906) and the Loeb Library (founded 1912).[51] As a result, while ancient history, Greek and Latin were still taught in English schools throughout the Great War, and Greco-Roman references often invoked, the character of classical discourse during the conflict registered a definite shift away from many of the Victorians' easy former appropriations and comparisons.[52] Hence, with the bases of classical knowledge widened during the first twenty years of the twentieth century, much of the exclusivity upon which Victorian classics had been founded was eroded – as exemplified by the removal of compulsory Greek at Oxford and Cambridge in 1919.[53]

So, as the confident certainty of the late Victorian era gave way to the anxious ambiguity of the Edwardian, a rehabilitated Rome became an increasingly complex cultural object to integrate into the contemporary worldview of English society and empire. A series of symbolic national failures, such as Robert Falcon Scott's doomed 1911-12 South Pole mission and the sinking of the Titanic in 1912, seemed to undermine national confidence, which was already under duress owing to Britain's escalating rivalry with Germany.[54] Certainly, Rome retained application, and even

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[47] See Stray (1998a: ch. 9, 235-70) and Turner (2014: 287-99).
[48] See Stray (2003b: 5-6).
[49] Stray (1998a: 248).
[50] See Stray (2003b).
[51] See Hammond (2006: 91-2) and Stray (1998a: 285-6).
[52] See Winkler (2009: 160-3).
[53] See Raphaely (1999).
[54] See Richards (2001: 394).

popularity in some circles, though increasingly as a negative historical model whose mistakes the Edwardians might seek to avoid if they wished to prevent social and imperial deterioration. Although some continued to argue that '[t]here is no nation burdened with empire that has so much to learn from Imperial Rome as we do'[55], more and more the Roman model appeared to be treated in a valedictory way.

Crucially, Francis Haverfield, 'the most powerful and prolific Roman scholar in Britain during this period'[56], suggested in 1907 that 'from the Romans […], we Britons have inherited practically nothing […] Racially, topographically, culturally, ancient Rome has nothing to do with modern Britain'.[57] Moreover, it is neatly symbolic that Herbert Asquith, the classically educated prime minister who oversaw Britain's entry into the Great War, as well as this transition in the reception of Roman antiquity, was nicknamed 'the last of the Romans'.[58] At the opening of the Edwardian era, William Watson's poem 'Rome and another' (1903) had narrated how ancient Rome had 'asked for all things and dominion such / As never man had known', yet fate ultimately '[o]'erthrew her seven-hilled throne'.[59] In this light, he advised Britain to '[r]estrain thy conquering feet, / Lest the same Fates that spun thy purple robe / Should weave thy winding-sheet'.[60] Hence, in order to avoid becoming the 'other' of Watson's poem, Edwardian culture invoked ancient Rome increasingly to circumvent its own potential decline, while the cataclysm of the Great War worked to induce a wholesale shift away from comparisons with the Roman world.

6.2. *Romanitas* lost: the eclipse of ancient Rome in English culture

While numerous recent scholars have studied Victorian classical reception in the context of art, education and literature, few have attempted an extensive, culture-wide survey of the entire period. Even those broader studies that have been published, however, tend to have treated ancient Greece and Rome as fixed and unchanging cultural quantities within Victorian society. In contrast, this thesis has been concerned to depict the varying shifts experienced by classical Rome in English culture from

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[55] Hope and Norwood (1909: 351).
[56] Hingley and Rogers (2010: 203).
[57] Haverfield and MacDonald (1924: 286).
[58] Olsen and Shadle (1996: i, 81). For a contemporary representation of Asquith in this guise, see http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30089120 [accessed 8 December 2014].
[59] Lines 1-2, 3-4 in Watson (1903: 32).
[60] Lines 5-8 in ibid.

1837 to 1901, as a result of the confluence of a diverse set of circumstances. Consequently, it is its diachronic focus that sets this study apart from other recent scholarship by presenting the changing face of Victorian receptions of Rome, while portraying its differing character across the variant sectors of contemporary society. Thus, this study has sought to provide a panoramic vision of the ways in which Roman antiquity was invoked and employed within Victorian culture that challenges many of the more rigid interpretations of classical reception in this period.

Since classical reception does not occur in a vacuum, being implicated with a diverse range of socio-political developments, this thesis has attempted to provide a panoptical, yet proportional, survey of Rome's place in Victorian society. Considering the density and richness of Victorian culture, such a survey clearly cannot capture all of the subtleties of contemporary receptions of the Roman world, but this thesis has been keen to provide an inclusive analysis that eschews impressionistic or reductionist interpretations. To this end, by examining a range of cultural productions from across the artistic and social spectra in an interdisciplinary methodology, it has sought to explore the trajectory of Rome's Victorian reception in as complete a manner as possible within the limitations of such a study.

Central to this conception has been the identification of a dynamic of decline and revival for the place of ancient Rome in English culture during the nineteenth century. Evidenced by the nature of contemporary commentary and cultural productions relating to Roman antiquity, the study of the chronology of this eclipse and rehabilitation for Rome has represented the chief crux of this thesis. Evaluating them by their forms and frequency, it has been possible to understand how these manifestations of Rome appealed at specific junctures to particular individuals, groups and institutions, according to their class, education and position. As such, this enquiry has focussed upon filling the existing *lacuna* in current scholarship by understanding the Victorian reception of Rome within a diachronic perspective that explains it as a culture-wide phenomenon shaped by contemporary trends and events.

The introduction of this thesis posed three central questions that it sought to answer over the course of its subsequent span:

1. Why did rehabilitation occur between 1850 and 1870?

2. What were the agents of this cultural shift?

3. What was its impact upon Victorian society, culture and empire?

Having explored the chronological and thematic trajectory of Victorian Roman reception, it is now possible to respond to each of these questions and provide possible solutions to their queries.

In response to the initial enquiry, this thesis has chronicled the changing perceptions of Rome in English society during the early-to-mid-Victorian era, while studying the eclipse and revival that it underwent. It began by situating Victorian receptions of Rome within the broader historical context of a much lengthier interaction with the Roman past through a domestic Latinate tradition. Since it had been the Roman Empire that had brought 'civilisation' to Britain in the first place, an indissoluble bond to Roman culture existed that did not vanish with the end of imperial rule in the British Isles. Instead, while it diminished in the immediate centuries, it re-emerged in a new form during the Middle Ages under the auspices of the Roman Church, while evolving into an essential linguistic and intellectual component of English culture. By the first decades of the eighteenth century, Roman antiquity had developed into a central element of national cultural discourse, especially in so-called 'Augustan' art, architecture and literature. So, when one examines the Victorian reception of Rome, one must situate it within a much longer tradition that authorised and informed it.

Despite its ubiquity during the first decades of the Georgian era, however, ancient Rome met rivalry as a classical model during the mid-to-late-eighteenth century from the rise of English Hellenism, which represented a new and vital departure in the English reception of antiquity. With the socio-political irruptions that occurred with the American Revolutionary War (1776-83) and the French Revolution (1789), as well as the influential effects of the Industrial Revolution at home, English culture was altered profoundly by the challenges of the revolutionary era. Since both the American and the French revolutionaries looked to Roman antiquity for a republican political model, it became associated increasingly in English culture with a destabilising political discourse that stood against conservatism and tradition. Moreover, this trend was reinforced comprehensively in 1799 by Napoleon

Bonaparte's assumption of power in France, since he modelled his power even more explicitly upon that of imperial Rome. So, as a result of the cataclysmic impact of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Rome declined as a popular classical model and was replaced by English Hellenism, which induced its eclipse until well into the nineteenth century.

Popularised by its centrality to Romantic literature and Greek Revival architecture, Hellenism remained the primary classical discourse in English culture throughout the early-to-mid-nineteenth century. Yet, ancient Rome had not been disestablished completely. Instead, it assumed a more latent profile that saw it remain an essential element of English education, owing to the extensive teaching of Latin and Roman history. Although an eclipsed vision of Rome made it a qualified and problematic cultural object, a number of alternative depictions of the Roman world in cultural productions from this era ensured continuity in its reception. With a focus away from non-traditional portrayals of Rome's republican and imperial incarnations, many artists, commentators and writers presented modified and unconventional visions of Rome that circumvented its current unpopularity. Consequently, such survivals served to maintain a place for Rome as a relatively dormant cultural model in English society until the conditions were suitable for its restoration.

6.3. *Romanitas* regained: the rehabilitation of ancient Rome in English culture

In responding to the second central question posed above, regarding the primary agents behind the resurgence of ancient Rome, one reaches the crux of this study, which has focussed upon the cultural dynamics behind its rehabilitation. Dividing its motivating factors into two sets of agents, internal and external, this study has traced how a series of largely unconnected trends and events reactivated Rome as a component of Victorian cultural discourse between 1850 and 1870. Assisted and occasioned by the coalescence of these diverse causes, Rome was renewed as a popular and relevant cultural model in mid-Victorian society. Nor was this shift exclusive to a select few areas of contemporary culture, since it is possible to perceive evidenced across a range of commentary and cultural productions an increasingly privileged place for Roman antiquity from the mid-century period onwards. As such, Roman rehabilitation represented a culture-wide phenomenon that has been shown to have possessed major appeal throughout the mid-to-late-Victorian era. This has made

it critical for this thesis to understand the forces that induced Rome's revival, and maintained it until the turn of the century.

Firstly, this rehabilitation took place within the broader context of two major internal developments in English society, which may be classed under the terms bureaucratisation and militarisation. Owing in large part to the respective influence of the Reform movement and the expansion of the British imperial project, these phenomena gained prominence in public discourse during the first half of the Victorian era. Both also aided the gradual return of comparisons to Rome through the administrative efficiency and formal militarism that they associated increasingly with the British state, which suggested a number of broad parallels to the political and military culture of classical Rome. In this way, while most Roman discourse remained latent until the mid-Victorian period, much of the domestic background for its return was laid in the first decade of Victoria's reign. Yet, it is during the 1850s and 60s that one discovers a watershed for the resurgence of Rome, judging by the increasing number of cultural productions created in this period that relate to Roman antiquity. While upper-, middle- and lower-class receptions of Rome differed in terms of education and knowledge, the increasing proliferation of Roman-themed works from across the social spectrum during these two decades emphasises its growing revival and its cross-class appeal. Although it is evident that Victorian society's 'upper ten-thousand' were the most influential social force in shaping contemporary classical reception, their elite interpretations of the Roman world were reinforced by a far more general revival among the other classes as the era continued. So, while the processes of bureaucratisation and militarisation set the scene for a potential restoration of Rome's fortunes in English culture, it was motivated from above by elite interpretations of its political relevance, and accepted increasingly by the middle and lower classes as a colourful setting for contemporary fiction and theatre.

Abroad, a similar set of variant factors conspired together to encourage the restoration of Rome as a relevant comparative model in mid-Victorian culture. Firstly, middle-class European tourism was effectively born in the first decade of the Victorian era, which allowed more English tourists than ever before to visit Italy and Rome. Alongside other developments, such as the archaeological rediscovery of Roman Britain at home, this assisted in the propagation of Roman culture by encouraging its

widespread discussion. Separately, the revival experienced by the English Roman Catholic Church following the Tractarian controversy during the 1830s and 40s left Rome, if in a different incarnation, as a reinforcing subject of active debate. At a time of dramatic and dynamic shifts in European affairs, English cultural relations with France and Germany also served to alter Victorian understandings of Roman antiquity positively, owing to their separate historical receptions of Rome. As a result of *détente* with its old enemy France, and increasing rivalry with its former ally Germany, an exponential dynamic developed that indirectly aided the growing revival of Rome in England. Finally, the Franco-Prussian War provided a crucial unifying event that encouraged the coalescence of many of these internal and external factors to re-establish classical Rome as a leading cultural model for mid-to-late-Victorian society.

Yet, arguably, it was the rise of the British imperial project to its highest and most active phase in the years surrounding 1870 that did most to trigger the resurgence of Rome as a significant component of mid-Victorian culture. Gaining a central place in imperialist discourse, the Roman Empire functioned as an authoritative and powerful comparative model for British colonialism, owing to its historical legitimacy as the classic imperial parallel. While the British Empire remained an object of little public interest or investment until the mid-Victorian period, the rise of 'new' imperialism in the 1870s transformed England into an imperial society. Divining parallels between the Roman Empire and the British imperial project, from the 1860s many colonial advocates alleged their empire to be an heir to Roman hegemony in a *translatio imperii* passed down from antiquity. Comparisons to Rome were also employed by critics of empire to counter such arguments, however; something which demonstrates, not only Rome's adaptability as a model, but also its pervasiveness in Victorian culture. Thus, it was the development of British colonialism into its most aggressive, dynamic and expansionist form that provided the most direct impetus for the Victorians to renew ancient Rome as a vital parallel for their society and empire.

6.4. London on the Tiber: understanding the Victorian reception of ancient Rome

Throughout the Western tradition, as the classicist J.W. Mackail pointed out, Roman antiquity has functioned as one of the most constant and potent repositories of cultural value:

> The place of Rome […] [in Western culture] is definite and assured. It represents all the constructive and conservative forces which make life into an organic structure. Law, order, reverence for authority, the whole framework of political and social establishment, are the creation of Latin will and intelligence.[61]

Secured by a lengthy Latinate tradition in domestic culture, and reinforced by its centrality to English education, classical Rome was inherited by the Victorians as an embodiment of established value in a changing world. In this light, it held great appeal as a cultural model at a time of contrary advance and uncertainty, progress and challenge, as the Victorians wrestled with reforming their society and managing an expanding international empire. While it has a modern reputation for efficiency and order, in reality, Victorian society was never 'a coherent "organism", […] a "corporation", a "system", or a "machine''; instead, representing 'a ramshackle and amorphous society, characterised by a myriad of contradictory trends and opinions'.[62]

Ancient Rome therefore offered an authoritative historical edifice upon to which to project a stable image of English society and empire at a time of unprecedented change. When bound to a concept of comparative modelling derived from classical education, the use of a Roman cultural model became a central means of negotiating current events through the pursuit of illuminating parallels in the Roman experience. This meant that Rome represented a vital component of Victorian cultural discourse that fitted into its penchant for historicism and its contemporary pre-eminence as a commercial, military and political power. Indeed, even the term 'Victorian' – deriving from the Latin for victory –, seemed to embody a self-congratulatory reference to the

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[61] Mackail (1904: 14).
[62] Harris (1993: 3).

grandeur of the Roman imperial enterprise.[63] So, to answer the final central query of this study regarding the impact of Roman rehabilitation on Victorian culture, society and empire, one must reconsider the influence of Rome on contemporary constructions of national and imperial identity.

As a period when Britain represented the first industrial nation of the world and possessed the largest empire in history, it must be emphasised what a unique age the Victorian era represents. With Britain's trade dominance and naval supremacy secured following Waterloo, Queen Victoria acceded to the throne of a country that enjoyed unparalleled commercial, industrial, military and political standing internationally. In this light, it seems incongruous that such an advanced and successful society should remain so beholden to antiquity, yet classical knowledge remained one of the keystones of Victorian intellectual life. While ancient Greece certainly played a part in Victorian culture, English Hellenism's diminishing popular status from the mid-nineteenth century meant that Rome increasingly represented the chief vehicle of contemporary classical reception. So, to explain its impact fully, it must be remembered why Rome appealed so much to the Victorian imagination.

Playing a significant role in Victorian culture, ancient Rome was perceived as one of the most influential civilisations in history; representing not only the one-time conqueror of Britain and one of the greatest empires of antiquity, but also the first Christian state in history and the progenitor of one of the most influential cultural legacies. This accorded it a unique status that transcended its historical era to bequeath a major cultural tradition to the West – of which Victorian society presumed itself the most recent heir. Secondly, since the study of the Roman world represented a central aspect of the Victorian educational curriculum at almost all levels of society through the study of its language and history, Rome enjoyed a pervasive position in contemporary culture. Consequently, this left Rome as an object of familiarity, on at least some level, to anyone who had been schooled within the Victorian educational

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[63] Employed as an adjective from 1839, but in popular use only from the 1870s, the term 'Victorian' derives obviously from the queen's first name, which she took from her own mother, the Duchess of Kent. Yet, the queen was called Alexandrina – or 'Drina' for short – for most of her childhood, being referred to as Victoria only when she took the throne in 1837. While her name finds its origins in Latin, it also bore an allusion to Horatio Nelson's famous flagship HMS *Victory* – an association which linked the queen with triumph from the start. See http://www.oed.com/view/Entry223221 [accessed 9 December 2014] and Longford (1964: 27-8).

system. As Victorian society's ruling elite had been subject to the most extensive and intensive form of classical education available, often members of the country's 'upper ten-thousand' believed themselves to possess most fully Rome's cultural and political inheritance. Thus, classical Rome possessed a unique position in Victorian culture, owing to its historical legitimacy, centrality to contemporary education and perceived relevance to the country's elite.

While it was not seized upon fully as a cultural model until the 1870s, classical Rome embodied a constant discourse in English culture throughout the Victorian age that played a more pivotal role in constructions of national identity from the mid-Victorian era. Invoked by members of England's social and intellectual elite for personal and political purposes, owing to their intimate relationship with Roman antiquity through their select classical educations, their application of Rome provided arguably its most influential reception. Yet, it was when their appropriation was bound to Britain's expanding imperial project that a Roman cultural model came to define national identity most clearly. Informed by eloquent and renowned sources, such as the writings of Caesar and Cicero, Roman history appealed to the 'upper ten-thousand' because they identified themselves with the senatorial and equestrian elites of Rome, while contemplating how their ancient achievements and failures could illuminate their own contemporary activities. Since the Roman Empire represented one of history's classic administrative and military models, the suggestion of a *translatio imperii* between the Roman and the British empires also possessed potent application within imperialist discourse. Encouraging Victorians to perceive Roman society as analogous to their own, parallels to ancient Rome were deployed to justify the position of England's ruling elite, as well as celebrate, contain and control the nation's imperial progress. As such, Roman antiquity supplied a key cultural cipher for constructions, discussions and interactions regarding Victorian society's elite leadership and its imperial project.

Central to both of these receptions was the employment of a comparative mindset that paralleled contemporary events with Roman analogies. This derived its terms from classical education and its impetus from the unprecedented socio-political position achieved by Victorian society. Always retaining a contested relationship to comparisons between classical Rome and their world, the Victorians were aware that

there were as many dissimilarities as likenesses between the two. Yet, fundamentally, both were practical, business-like societies in which superstition was balanced with sense, and the domestic development of the state maintained alongside an expansionist empire. While some scholars have emphasised that '[c]omparisons between the two empires were […] always rather forced', since 'there were more points of contrast than of likeness'[64], truthful parallels were never the chief object of such comparativism. Instead, the historical accuracy of such allusions merely informed contemporary opinions on the state of the nation, guiding present policies and entertaining speculative outcomes. In this way, the classical past was bound intimately to the political present, though in ways that said more about the Victorians' worldview than it did about the worth of any alleged parallel between the Roman and the British empires. Seeking through its use validation rather than illumination, the Victorians often found in Roman antiquity the answers they wished to find there; eschewing reality for fantasy and understanding for affirmation.

Yet, it was the unique events of the mid-to-late Victorian era that fully actuated the influence of a Roman cultural model, since this was a period that witnessed continued national advance, though also the beginnings of potential decline for British hegemony. While the 1870s witnessed the British Empire develop into its most fervent phase, the British economy upon which it was founded began to exhibit symptoms of stagnation. As the late Victorian era continued, the gulf between these trends continued to widen, which created a crucial incongruity at the heart of Victorian society and empire. In response, many seemed to turn increasingly to ancient Rome for a satisfactory cultural model that could bind these contrary forces of national expansion and contraction. Empowered by a lengthy Western tradition, a Roman model offered guidance on administrating an expansive imperial project, while also imparting crucial lessons on how to avoid the decline that Rome had suffered. Providing a historical model both to emulate and to avoid, Rome functioned as a way for Victorians to glorify their current achievements through positive self-comparison with the Romans, yet also seek solutions to the increasing contemporary challenges that they faced through examining the fate of the Roman Empire. As evidenced by the proliferation of references to it in imperialist discourse and popular

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[64] Brunt (1965: 267-8).

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culture of the period, however, Rome enjoyed an extensive reputation that transcended its positive or negative deployment. So, employed as a crucial buttress to national activity and identity at a time of increasing challenge at home and abroad, the use of Rome as a comparative model functioned as a prime means of negotiating the unprecedented developments of the mid-to-late-Victorian age.

In the opening of Henry James' novel *The golden bowl* (1904), the Italian nobleman Prince Amerigo reflects on the fact that London represents a closer contemporary analogue to the glory and power of Roman antiquity than the city of Rome itself; 'find[ing] by the Thames a more convincing image of the truth of the ancient state than any they have left by the Tiber'.[65] Indeed, he suggests that the place to experience a sense of ancient Rome's original *imperium* is now on London Bridge or Hyde Park Corner, where the colour, diversity and vitality of British society and empire is most fully on display. When one examines the impact that the rehabilitation of Rome had on contemporary culture, one realises the extent of its influence across Victorian society and begins to agree somewhat with the Prince's notion. For, from the time of its revival, a Roman comparative model operated in English culture as a key means of negotiating the unprecedented nature of contemporary events, and supporting positive constructions of national and imperial identity in the face of advance and challenge. Owing to its perceived affinity to their own era, Victorians engaged classical Rome as a central parallel, though, in truth, this only ever operated as an elaborate cultural conceit. Despite its artificial nature, however, administrators and politicians, journalists and historians, playwrights and novelists, poets and musicians, all turned to ancient Rome for various purposes throughout the mid-to-late-Victorian era. Thus, for more than a quarter of a century, when the Roman cultural model was active and popular, London could be said to have been situated as much on a metaphorical Tiber as the actual Thames.

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[65] James (1999: 3).

6.5. Conclusion

During the course of her long reign, Queen Victoria witnessed the gradual rehabilitation of ancient Rome in English culture from a position of relative unpopularity when she ascended the throne in 1837, to one of central importance by the time she vacated it in 1901. Throughout the interim, one observes both contrast and continuity in receptions of Rome that emphasises its constant, yet contested, position in Victorian culture. For instance, in a memorandum from the 1840s, William Gladstone imagined what might happen if Christianity disappeared from the British Isles, and posited a number of direct consequences that he believed would follow, including: '1. Gladiatorial shows. 2. Human sacrifices. 3. Polygamy. 4. Exposure for children. 5. Slavery. 6. Cannibalism'.[66] Considering his choices, it appears as if Gladstone was visualising England's transformation into a more barbarous version of classical Rome.

In contrast, in the afterword to his play *Androcles and the lion* (1912), George Bernard Shaw suggested that contemporary Britons were no less bloodthirsty than their Roman counterparts:

> [I]f anyone were to say that [the English] were as cruel as the [Romans] who let the lion loose on the man, you would be justly indignant. Now that we may no longer see a man hanged, we assemble outside the jail to see the black flag run up. That is our duller method of enjoying ourselves in the old Roman spirit. And if the Government decided to throw persons of unpopular or eccentric views to the lions in the Albert Hall or the Earl's Court stadium tomorrow, can you doubt that all the seats would be crammed, mostly by people who could not give you the most superficial account of the views in question. Much less unlikely things have happened.[67]

Here, like so many other commentators throughout the period separating their observations, Gladstone and Shaw present Roman-inflected visions of English society to serve some contemporary end. In the period between these statements, Victorians

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[66] Quoted in Heffer (2013: 137).
[67] Shaw (1930: xiv, 151-2).

had witnessed a profound shift in the reception of Roman antiquity in England; ranging from a period of unpopularity during the early-to-mid-nineteenth century to one of resurgence in its later decades. Since this revival played such an active part, not only in forming contemporary understandings of antiquity, but also in shaping mid-to-late-Victorian culture in numerous ways, it has been the aim of this study to elucidate it as fully as possible.

Over its span, this thesis has shown how a trajectory of eclipse and rehabilitation defined the Victorian reception of Rome; demonstrating through the synthesis of a wide variety of sources how it represented a key influence on Victorian culture. Charting a diachronic trajectory for Roman reception during the nineteenth century, it has shown how Rome was not a fixed cultural entity, but a changing and responsive one that was altered by contemporary trends and events. One must also recognise the lengthy and established dynamic that existed prior to the nineteenth century between Roman antiquity and English culture. This identifies its revival in the years between 1850 and 1870, not as a novel departure, but as a continuation and development of a previous cultural constant from English history. So, by applying an inclusive and interdisciplinary methodology drawing upon a wide range of materials, this thesis has placed into context the changing countenance of ancient Rome during the Victorian era.

While its panoramic perspective has precluded an interaction with some of the subtler individual receptions of Rome, this study has been constructed around the use of select, yet demonstrative, evidence that has attempted to exemplify the broad trends of the period. Though many other works have been devoted to understanding particular aspects of Victorian classical reception, few have presented an extended survey of the nuanced and fluctuating position of classical Rome as a cultural model. Additionally, far more scholarly attention had been accorded to the nineteenth-century reception of ancient Greece, which presented an opportunity to extend current understanding of Victorian interactions with antiquity in regard to its counterpart, Rome. Thus, it was in an effort to address these *lacunae* in contemporary scholarship that this thesis has focussed upon portraying the varying reputation of Rome in English culture during the Victorian era. In this way, this study has sought to make a unique contribution to the current scholarship of classical reception and nineteenth-century cultural history

through understanding the context, character, terms and influence of the Victorian rehabilitation of Rome.

In regenerating a Roman cultural model during the mid-to-late Victorian era, English society returned to a lengthy historical tradition, even as it sought to employ it to understand its current position of unprecedented pre-eminence. Since the Victorian age itself represented a watershed period that established many of the concepts and structures that have defined Britain since, the fact that the Roman past was so implicated in its present deserves explication. Despite its unparalleled industrial and technological prowess, it is surprising to discover how large a part antiquity played in shaping the nature of Victorian society's cultural self-definition and political agenda. By comparing themselves with the Romans, the Victorians accessed an authoritative and secure cultural model that appealed on a fundamental level, owing to its centrality within English education, though this was given direct impetus by the rise of the British imperial project to its highest level. Through differing incarnations and interpretations, the Victorian reception of Rome also transcended class at a time when culture was rigidly divided socially.

Through invoking ancient Rome, the Victorians invested the present with the power of the past, which created a sophisticated, if superficial, comparison between the two that possessed multiple applications. In this way, they cultivated a wholesale classical parallel that framed the contemporary national experience through a resumption of the cultural guise of Roman antiquity. Yet, after centuries of application as part of England's Latinate tradition, following the Great War, Rome was rarely again employed as a popular, culture-wide parallel for contemporary national or imperial activities. Consequently, this makes the mid-to-late Victorian period of its rehabilitation a unique episode in English classical reception and cultural history, whose study rewards one with a special understanding of the Victorian worldview. By dressing its endeavours in the metaphorical purple of ancient Rome, Victorian society found a cultural mantle that it believed not only fitted, but suited it as a culture; adopting a pretence that appealed to Victorians on numerous levels, and decisively shaped their conception of themselves and their world. Thus, as has been shown throughout this study, in assuming the purple, the Victorians assumed far more besides.

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[Unless otherwise indicated, the place of publication is London.]

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