10. Heidi Scott sums up the problem with such a vision of natural balance: "ecological science has critiqued the balance paradigm as a misleading, quasi-mystical construct that forces economic and mechanical models on the obscure dynamics of ecological interconnection" (Scott, *Chaos and Cosmos*, 2).
11. As is now widely known, earth systems scientists have introduced the term "Anthropocene" to describe a new geological epoch marked by irreversible human impacts. Some critics prefer "Capitalocene" to convey that it was capitalism, not humanity per se, that brought the Holocene to an end; others have proposed "Plantationocene" for its attention to agricultural, forests, and human labor. On Anthropocene, see Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor, "Introduction," in *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*, ed. Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017), 1–24. On Capitalocene, see Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming* (London: Verso, 2016); Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015). On Plantationocene, see Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 206.
12. Devin Griffiths, "The Ecology of Form," lecture at Wheeler Hall, University of California, Berkeley, November 13, 2017.

Education

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AT the beginning of the nineteenth century, education in England was provided by a motley assortment of institutions, some under the aegis of the Church, none under the direct control of the state, each aimed at a particular segment of the population—the working poor (Ragged and Sunday Schools); middle- and upper-middle-class boys (grammar and public schools) and, less consistently, girls (proprietary schools); a tiny male elite (universities). By the end of the century, elementary education was compulsory and state-supported; women

were studying at universities across Britain; and extension schools aimed at working-class communities were flourishing. Education also functioned increasingly as a vehicle for exporting English ideology into colonial territories such as India. These changes, concentrated in the second half of the century, simultaneously expanded access to education and cemented its place in the edifice of class stratification. The wave of reform was borne on a flood of text: government reports; essays and manifestos; and representations of educational institutions in the era's characteristic literary genre, the bildungsroman.

The government expanded its oversight of education through a series of councils and commissions recorded in copious reports. The Indian Council of Education's investigation produced H. Babington Macaulay's notorious 1835 "Minute [Memorandum] on Education," arguing for the cultural superiority of English over native education. The Taunton Commission (1864–67), which investigated middle-class education, produced recommendations for the division of schools into three types, distinguished by leaving age (fourteen, sixteen, or eighteen) and emphasis on classical or "modern" curriculum. Matthew Arnold's documentary study *A French Eton: Middle-Class Education and the State,* written for the commission, lauds state control of education as a means of achieving civic harmony; he perceives no tension between the goal of social cohesion and a system committed to social stratification. At the same time, however, he views existing efforts at institutional reform as expressing the spirit of a merely bureaucratic, rather than civically directed, state: "An English law for [education] is ruled by no clear idea of the citizen's claim and the State's duty, but has, in compensation, a mass of minute technical detail about the number of members on a school-committee, and how many shall be a quorum, and how they shall be summoned, and how often they shall meet."[1]

Arnold's ambivalence about English educational institutions was more than shared by many novelists, who often lacked his intimate experience of them. An elite education was not required for a literary career, and much Victorian literature reflects the experience of authors for whom educational institutions, as observed or experienced, are at best irrelevant to growth and at worst abusive of their charges. Charles Dickens represents the exploitation of boys unprotected by privilege in the workhouse education in *Oliver Twist* and, at the more elevated social scale of the proprietary boarding school, in two nests of bullies, Dotheboys Hall in *Nicholas Nickleby* and Salem House in *David Copperfield*. Charlotte Brontë does the same for impoverished girls in

Jane Eyre, where physical suffering and religious bullying are the formative features of the young Jane's educational experience at Lowood School. That she learns enough to become a governess "qualified to teach the usual branches of a good English education, together with French, Drawing, and Music"[2] is due largely to her individual relationship with the saintly teacher Miss Temple. At the end of the century, in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, educational institutions continue to present obstacles rather than opportunities for socially obscure intellectual aspirants. Sue Bridehead is expelled for perceived immorality from her teacher-training college, represented sardonically by Hardy as "a species of nunnery . . . which included the daughters of mechanics, curates, surgeons, shopkeepers, farmers, dairy-men, soldiers, sailors, and villagers," and a university don advises the ambitious Jude that "you will have a much better chance in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your trade than by adopting any other course"[3]—advice that does not avert his doom.

George Eliot approaches characters who view education as a form of social advancement with more satire than sympathy. In *Middlemarch*, Rosamond Vincy is "a sylph caught young and educated at Mrs. Lemon's" where "the teaching included all that was demanded in the accomplished female—even to extras, such as the getting in and out of a carriage."[4] In *The Mill on the Floss,* the provincial Tom Tulliver's classical education is ill-suited to his practical talents: "What was understood to be his education, was simply the practice of reading, writing, and spelling, carried on by an elaborate appliance of unintelligible ideas, and by much failure in the effort to learn by rote."[5] Eliot is similarly dismissive of university pretensions: "To think that this is a country where a man's education may cost hundreds and hundreds, and it turns you out this!" snarls Caleb Garth in *Middlemarch*, contemplating the handwriting of Oxford dropout Fred Vincy.[6]

Anthony Trollope, while he does not appear to rate the intellectual impact of an Oxbridge education much higher than Eliot (and did not have one himself), is more respectful of its social impact. In *Framley Parsonage*, Mark Robarts's university experience is summarized in a single sentence: "He lived with the best set—he incurred no debts—he was fond of society, but able to avoid low society—liked his glass of wine, but was never known to be drunk; and, above all things, was one of the most popular men in the university."[7] There is a connection between Trollope's urbane acceptance of the university as a locus of social rather than intellectual attainment and his novels' emphasis on social compliance rather

than individual assertion. It is not such middling virtuous protagonists as Mark Robarts, however, who become central to the Victorian literary canon but the more agonistic, isolated protagonist (Pip or Maggie or Jude), for whom educational institutions are largely ranged with the forces of social oppression.

English educational institutions remained vectors of stratification well into the twentieth century. The divisions embodied in the Taunton Commission received a new life in 1944 with the creation of the eleven-plus examination, which funneled students into grammar (elite), secondary modern, or technical schools, determining their educational fates before they reached their teens. More recently, the long chronological and spatial reach of Victorian educational hegemony has appeared as a convention of the postcolonial coming-of-age novel, where schoolroom scenes recur in which protagonists are compelled to memorize nineteenth-century English poetry—often William Wordsworth's "I wandered lonely as a cloud"—that embodies aesthetic and national values connected to the protagonist's homeland only by the forces of Victorian empire.

Notes

1. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. Jane Garnett (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 153.
2. Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre,* ed. Margaret Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 87.
3. Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, ed. Patricia Ingham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 134, 110.
4. George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, ed. David Carroll (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 150, 89
5. George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, ed. Gordon S. Haight (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 160.
6. Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 532.
7. Anthony Trollope, *Framley Parsonage*, ed. Katherine Mullin and Francis O'Gorman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5.