Enchantment and Disenchantment in Wordsworth's 1820 Rhine Poems

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Travel has always been a source of inspiration for poets, especially challenging or difficult travel. From the last decades of the eighteenth century, increased disposable income allowed people to travel more widely for leisure. Improved technology also allowed them to travel faster than ever, even in the pre-railroad world. On the other hand, England's war with France and the Napoleonic Wars that followed (the period 1793–1815 in total) caused significant disruption in travel for trade and tourism, both in Europe and internationally. The Peace of Amiens (1802) allowed families and friends divided by the wars to reunite briefly. With the end of the wars following the Battle of Waterloo in June 1815, British travel to continental Europe once again exploded. The form of this travel began to resemble modern tourism. Travellers still followed the routes of the eighteenth-century 'grand tour' from the north coast of France to the shores of the Mediterranean. However, improved transportation routes (many developed during the war) allowed them to pack more destinations into an itinerary of a month or two. Furthermore, British tourists' interest in the continent now included not only the ancient antiquities of Europe, but also the 'modern antiquities' of the recent wars: visits to battlefields, monuments, and graves.

The British poet William Wordsworth was one of these travellers. He had been travelling in Europe his whole life, since his first extraordinary walking tour of the Swiss Alps as a recreant university student in 1790. He lived in France in 1791–2, in the months before the Revolution descended into the Terror, and in Lower Saxony in 1798–9. During the Peace of Amiens he crossed the channel to Calais, where he met his French daughter for the first time. By 1820, he had a large family of his own in England. For

the first time in his life, he also had sufficient disposable income to repeat his continental tour of 1790, but this time, not as a backpacker. Landing in Calais, his tour party purchased two *voitures:* 'two old strong carriages for 1,000 and 900 Francs' (De Selincourt ii. 10; Hayden, *Europe* i. 44). The tour party was large, and included his wife Mary and his sister Dorothy. They travelled in relative luxury, compared to Wordsworth's walking tour in 1790; they also travelled more rapidly. This paper touches on how some of these practical changes—economic and technological—affected the poetry Wordsworth wrote about the tour.

The paper presents findings from field research on Wordsworth's tour of continental Europe in 1820, focusing on his experiences along the Rhine. Thematically, the paper focuses on the idea of enchantment and disenchantment in the tour poems, as expressions of waxing and waning poetic power. The paper performs close-readings of a number of tour poems that describe Wordsworth's reaction to the Rhine's nature and antiquities—buildings, objects, and landscapes. The paper hypothesises that in sonnets about Aachen, Cologne, and the 'magical' landscapes of the Rhine, the texts express tensions of enchantment and disenchantment—tensions between 'fanciful' (fantastical or magical) representations of subjects, and the responses of the modern traveller: disappointed, confused, fearful, etc. The paper further hypothesises that in some cases these tensions stem from shifts in the economic and technological contexts mentioned above, and their effects on the velocity and vantage point of the traveller. Therefore, Wordsworth's tour sonnets may anticipate broader changes in observers' perspectives in the modern world, and the effects of these changes on art and literature.

The paper begins with some biographical and historical background about the 1820 tour. The paper then analyses six sonnets and one 'Hymn', written about landscapes beginning in Aachen and Cologne, and stretching south along the Rhine to the Schaffhausen Falls on the German/Swiss border. The paper concludes that the tensions of enchantment and disenchantment that run through the poems' fanciful imagery relate not only to changes in the traveller's velocity and perspective, but also to religious and political

conflict. The poems use fanciful and mythic imagery to express Protestant unease at praising Catholic antiquities; but at least one poem suggests the possibility of reconciliation between Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christianity, and Islam.

Background to the 1820 Tour

Wordsworth travelled frequently on the continent from 1790–1802. He made at least four journeys, two of which involved living for extended periods in France and Lower Saxony. After 1802, although Wordsworth travelled frequently in England and Scotland, his movements were restrained by a growing family and increased responsibilities—in his efforts to write and publish, but also in his work as Commissioner of Stamps, and his political activities. Even if travel to the continent had not been made nearly impossible due to the Napoleonic Wars, Wordsworth did not have the time or money to make a continental tour during this period. In 1814, Wordsworth made a second Scottish tour with Mary, Sara Hutchinson, his son John, and a Miss Alms (Hayden, *Scotland* 31–48). One purpose of the tour was to help Mary recover from the deaths of their children Catharine and Thomas in 1812.

By 1820, Wordsworth was finally beginning to achieve the security he had so long sought, both for his family and his poetic reputation. The 1820 continental tour took place from July to September 1820; the party consisted of William, his wife Mary, his sister Dorothy, and a party of newlyweds: Mary's cousin Thomas Monkhouse, the new Mrs. Monkhouse, her sister Miss Horrocks, and their maid Jane. Wordsworth's friend Henry Crabb Robinson—a fluent German speaker—joined them at Lucerne on 16 August. This was unfortunately too late to accompany them along the Rhine, and explain its antiquities and lore to them. Wordsworth also invited Robert Jones to join the tour; Jones had been Wordsworth's only travelling companion on his walking tour of 1790. Jones was unfortunately unable to return to the continent with Wordsworth. Mary's sister Sara Hutchinson

also wished to go, but yielded her place to Mary.[1] The tour party often divided along the route, usually because Mrs. Monkhouse was not a strong traveller and needed rest; Dorothy, who was also unwell for the first part of the tour, occasionally acted as her nurse.

In the context of Wordsworth's oeuvre, the 1820 tour represents a balance between the advantages of experience in Wordsworth's later years, and the energies of his earlier decades. This tour stands with the Scottish tours (1803, 1831, 1833) in that it resulted in true 'tour poetry': that is, poems written during or shortly after the tour, about the experiences or objects of the tour. In contrast, Wordsworth's compositions in Goslar were largely drawn from memories of England; while the important 1837 tour of Italy produced only a small number of poems, only one of which was composed during the tour itself.

On the other hand, the shift in Wordsworth's role from poet to tourist initially caused problems on the 1820 tour, since Wordsworth normally took direct responsibility for the organisation and management of his travels—as he had in Europe in 1798–9, 1802, and Scotland in 1803. As Mary writes in her 1820 tour journal: 'our affairs, owing to Wm's engagement with his work, have been ill managed—we must do better' (Hayden, *Europe* i. 46). After struggling with a single sonnet, Wordsworth gave up on writing during the tour, either voluntarily or due to the insistence of his family; he was, in Mary's words, 'written out' (Moorman ii. 386). Thus

> the tour deliberately partitioned itinerancy from itinerant verse, with Wordsworth only able to enjoy travelling when he kept his creative impulses in check.… Wordsworth the 'public' tourist is not always a travel writer. This is not simply because he needs to recollect his experience in tranquillity. On these late tours, other concerns were simply more pressing: health troubles, especially his eyes; his desire to

1) 'When the time draws near I cannot help wishing to be of the Party—altho I have no regrets at being left behind, as this could only have been to the exclusion of dear Mary—who certainly could have had no other opportunity of visiting the Continent' (Coburn 181).

> enjoy himself; the speed at which he travelled; and in 1814, his wife's mental well-being. (Simons, "Itinerant Wordsworth" 108–9)

Therefore, in the close readings below, tension between enchantment and disenchantment in the text may stem not only from changes in the pace of travel, but from the dichotomy between the expectations of enthusiastic responses to a landscapes, and the reality of a more matured, grounded response. However, a few sonnets upset this dichotomy, with enchantment or re-enchantment in the text resulting from more allusive responses to landscape and antiquity, drawing on literature and myth more than on close observation.

The 1820 tour was always intended as a retracing of Wordsworth's steps in 1790. In general the tour followed the 1790 route, but in the reverse direction: the party arrived at Calais, and crossed southeast through Belgium, then up the Meuse River in a straight line through Namur, Liège, and Aachen, to Cologne. They then followed the Rhine south and crossed into Switzerland; they proceeded south through Switzerland and crossed into Italy at Lake Maggiore and travelled as far south as Milan. They returned to Switzerland across the Simplon Pass in the opposite direction in which Wordsworth had crossed with Jones in 1790; they entered France from Geneva on 25 September and proceeded northwest to Paris via Dijon. Here Wordsworth revisited the Palais Royale for the first time since 1792–3, and also saw his French family members: Annette, Caroline, her husband Jean Baptiste Badouin, and their two daughters Louise Marie Caroline Dorothée and the infant Anne Léonide (1819–1825).[2] The company returned home from Boulogne rather than Calais, finally managing to find a place in a packet on 7 November, and arriving at Dover on the eighth. This paper will cover the tour poetry related to the area from Aachen and Cologne north of the Rhine, down to the Schaffhausen Falls on the Swiss border.

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2) In Paris the Wordsworths lodged at 45 rue Charlot, next door to Caroline at 47 rue Charlot (Legouis 100). Their guide in Paris was Caroline's brother-in-law, Eustache Badouin, the only member of the family fluent in English.

The 1820 tour furnishes scholars with a substantial prose context for the poetry; as Dorothy notes in her letter from Coblentz: 'Journals we shall have in number sufficient to fill a Lady's bookshelf,—for all, except my Brother, write a Journal' (De Selincourt and Moorman ii. 625) Mary later describes Dorothy as 'journalist general' and notes a division in their tasks according to writing style: Dorothy will describe important moments in detail, while Mary will record the route without commentary (M. Wordsworth "Aug 7th Berne"). Only the substantial work of Mary, Dorothy, and Crabb Robinson remains extant.[3] The lack of gender division in the tour writing (Robinson and Tom Monkhouse wrote prose journals) counterpoints Dorothy's use of the phrase 'Lady's bookshelf', which perhaps implies gender assumptions about travel writing and its readership in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Study of the 1820 poetry in the context of the prose journals thus allows scholars to make detailed comparisons of the travellers' interests, frames of reference, and writing styles. Wordsworth is writing poetry from almost first-hand experience, rather than 'recollected in tranquillity'. Nevertheless, he draws substantially on Mary and Dorothy's journals—sometimes, as in the case of the Aachen sonnet below, to write a poem describing antiquities that he did not see with his own eyes until 1828. In general, the tour poems show a Wordsworth who is 50 years old, but writing with renewed confidence. And, as before his travels with Dorothy in Lower Saxony in 1798, Wordsworth began the 1820 tour with the assurance that a new volume of his work had just come from the press—in this case, his first multi-volume collected work, and cornerstone of future collected editions: his four-volume *Miscellaneous Poems* (W. Wordsworth, *Poems 1820*).

In this biographical context, let us consider the half a dozen sonnets from the 1820 tour poems that relate to Germany and the Rhine.

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3) Burton provides Mary's reference to her cousin Tom Monkhouse's journal, and its presumed careful record of the tour expenses (Burton 81). Tom died of tuberculosis in 1825; his wife of typhus in 1834.

'Aix-la-Chapelle'

The sonnet 'Aix-la-Chapelle' describes the cathedral in that town (modern Aachen). Aachen 'became the capital of Charlemagne (?742–814) in 794' (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 421). Both this sonnet and the one that immediately follows it—'In the Cathedral at Cologne'—present misreadings of antiquities based on observations in the tour journals of Dorothy and Mary Wordsworth. The theme of disenchantment dominates 'Aix-la-Chapelle'; in the context of the tour journals, the poem suggests a deliberate misconstruction that allows a re-enchantment to occur in its final lines. This re-enchantment draws on geography, romance, and Wordsworth's nostalgia for his 1790 walking tour. Consciously or unconsciously, it also creates a textural and cultural opposition between Christianity and Islam in medieval Europe.

Wordsworth describes the cathedral at Aachen as a 'puny Church'. The octave reads:

> Was it to disenchant, and to undo,
> That we approached the Seat of Charlemaine?
> To sweep from many an old romantic strain
> That faith which no devotion may renew!
> Why does this puny Church present to view
> Its feeble columns? and that scanty Chair!
> This Sword that One of our weak times might wear;
> Objects of false pretence, or meanly true!
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 362, ll.1–8)

The text invokes the theme of disenchantment from the first line, asking a rhetorical question about the effect of an antiquity—the throne of Charlemagne—on the observer. The speaker describes how the reality of the experience disappoints him, permanently dispelling the magic of romance—the 'old romantic strain'. Medieval romance is placed in opposition to 'devotion': not religious faith, despite the poem's setting in a cathedral, but faith in romance literature and the power of the fancy. The treasures of

Charlemagne and his chapel—'feeble' columns, a 'scanty' throne, and a modern sword—either misrepresent the reality of medieval history, or, if historically accurate, dispel any desire for the truth.

Yet the whole sonnet is a misconstruction; the text confuses the description of two different religious buildings from Dorothy Wordsworth's tour journal. The first, a building that Wordsworth visited, is a rural chapel, reputed to have been built by Charlemagne:

> [William, Tom Monkhouse] and myself walked to the Chapel we had seen on the heights, said to be built by Charlemaine.… The Chapel here alluded to, was not larger in appearance than the tiny rocky edifice at Buttermere. (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 421)

As Dorothy describes, Wordsworth saw this small chapel during their walk to Aachen. However, he did not see the cathedral. The cathedral is an impressive structure with a Byzantine interior; it also boasts an interesting octagonal structure that, depending on its condition in 1820, might have fascinated Wordsworth, whose poetry frequently refers to his love for Euclidean geometry (see *Figures 1,2*). Dorothy visited the cathedral alone. She described it as

> a curious Building where are to be seen, the chair of Charlemagne, on which the Emperors were formerly crowned, some marble pillars much older than *his* time, and many pictures. (De Selincourt ii. 36)

The journal does not mention Charlemagne's sword, but the cathedral might well have presented an early modern sword as a relic. It seems surprising that Wordsworth, drawing on Dorothy's description for the sonnet, did not draw on further details of the cathedral as a 'curious Building' (which it certainly is, relative to other cathedrals seen on the tour). On the other hand, Wordsworth would understandably not write with confidence about its unique architecture without the benefit of first-hand observation.

Yet, since Wordsworth *did* decide to write a sonnet based on Dorothy's

Figure 1
Detail of angel decoration in the *Glashaus* or Gothic choir of Aachen Cathedral, August 2016.

Figure 2
View of the interior of the Carolingian Octagon (Palatine Chapel) in Aachen Cathedral, August 2016.

observations on the seat of Charlemagne in Aachen Cathedral, it seems unlikely that he would have forgotten that it was not the same edifice as the rural chapel he visited. If he accidentally conflated the two buildings when drafting the sonnet, Dorothy would have refreshed his memory when she read the manuscript of the tour poems. Therefore, the conflation is a deliberate misconstruction, created in order to enable a narrative of disenchantment and re-enchantment.

This re-enchantment occurs in the sonnet's sestet:

> If from a Traveller's fortune I might claim
> A palpable memorial of that day,
> Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach
> Which Roland clove with huge two-handed sway,
> And to the enormous labor left his name,
> Where unremitting frosts the rocky Crescent bleach.
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 362, ll.9–14)

The sonnet scorns the artifice and weak fancy of Aachen Cathedral, and Charlemagne's relics, and turns to nature to provide 'A palpable memorial of that day' (l.10). The image that the speaker chooses from his imaginary miscellany—the 'Traveller's fortune'—is the 'Pyrenean Breach' or 'Breach of Roland', a natural fissure in a rocky wall in the French and Spanish Alps, forming part of the border between the two countries. In what might seem like a typically 'Wordsworthian' gesture, the speaker finds solace in a natural landscape; yet the conjured landscape seems to belong more in romance than in geography.

The 'Pyranean Breach' is a real topographical feature of the French Alps; Wordsworth had not seen it, but he had read about it as early as 1790, when he and Robert Jones took a copy of Coxe's *Letters from Switzerland* (or possibly their French translation by Ramond de Carbonnières, in *Observations faites dans les Pyrénées*) along with them on their 1790 walking tour of the Swiss Alps (Coxe; Coe). From 1836 onwards, Wordsworth included a footnote to the phrase 'Pyrenean Breach' in printed editions of the poem. The footnote

quotes directly from '*Ramond's Pyrenees*':

> Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms—let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose, that in the very middle of the wall a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous Roland, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the 'BRECHE DE ROLAND.'
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 362)

As Jackson notes, 'Chapter VI of Ramond's work is entitled "La Breche de Roland, et ses Glaces"' (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 421).

Both the sonnet's sestet and the prose it draws on conflate geography and romance. When Ramond writes, 'let us suppose… a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous Roland', the text clearly does not suggest that the hero of the French geste *The Song of Roland* actually created the topography of the breach. The sonnet, however, translates the idea of the Breach closer to the realm of actual fancy; there is no 'suppose', but an image of a fissure in the Alps 'Which Roland clove with huge two-handed sway, | And to the enormous labor left his name'. The text has supplanted the antiquarian curiosity (seen by Dorothy, but not by Wordsworth) of an early modern rapier or broadsword playing the role of a medieval relic, with the image of a giant hero wielding a giant sword—a sword large enough, and with enough magical power, to cleave mountains. The re-enchantment is an overcompensation, and also a flight, for Wordsworth, into the biographical as well as literary past.

The supplanting of the historical Charlemagne with the fictional Roland (one of the 'Twelve Peers' in Charlemagne's service) has a more significant effect in a religious context. Important passages in Wordsworth's poetry describe the disappointment of observation, and the compensation of the imagination, such as the crossing of the Alps in Book 6 of *The Prelude*; the 'Immortality' *Ode*; and 'Yarrow Visited'. But this sonnet reproduces

this same process artificially, both since Wordsworth never saw Aachen Cathedral, and since Dorothy's description accurately represents it as 'curious' rather than as a 'puny church'. Therefore, it is worth asking why Wordsworth went to the trouble to imitate the process of imaginative compensation. Perhaps, in his later years, he was relying on a poetic formula that worked for him. But a more interesting answer suggests that Dorothy *did* describe the interior of Aachen Cathedral to Wordsworth in more detail than her journal records; her verbal description, and the resulting sonnet, play a role in Wordsworth's conception of European religious history, and his plans for writing the *Ecclesiastical Sketches* (1822).

'Aix-la-Chapelle' contains a fascinating tension between Wordsworth's aversion to Catholicism on the one hand, and colonial or Euro-centric attitudes to Islam on the other. The last imperfect line of the sonnet, an Alexandrine (a line of iambic hexameter), describes the location of the 'Breche de Roland' in the Pyrenean Alps as a place, 'Where unremitting frosts the rocky Crescent bleach'. Wordsworth has, consciously or unconsciously, formed a vivid image of centuries of conflict between Christianity and Islam in southern Europe, North Africa, and Anatolia. Wordsworth's note from *Ramond's Pyrenees* describes the Breach of Roland as situated in the middle of a crescent-shaped wall, 'with its convexity towards France'. The crescent, as the primary symbol of Islam, comes into play ambiguously here.

On the one hand, the shape describes a crescent-shaped arrowhead, with the Breach as its tang. Medieval European arrowheads included crescent-shaped heads with arms pointing either inward or outward. In this case, the 'Breche de Roland' is a symbol of an expansive, crusading Christianity, moving aggressively to counter the Muslim invasion from North Africa and the Maghreb into Spain during the Umayyad conquest of Hispania from 711 (Collins). This 'Reconquista', or Christian campaign to reclaim the Iberian peninsula, continued until 1492. On the other hand, Ramond describes the arms of the crescent pointing towards France, which might represent a symbol of Islamic aggression towards Christian Europe during the Carolingian age. The last line of the sonnet seems to bear out

this latter interpretation; the 'unremitting frosts' of the French Alps 'bleach' the crescent—an image of purification, and, through the association with 'bleached bone', an image of death. In this case, the 'Breche de Roland' represents defensive violence, a giant Christian sword smashing through the centre of the crescent of Islam.

An orthodox reading of this sonnet would lament it as an example of Wordsworth straying from his best poetry, and his best sonnets, by committing a number of faults including: writing based on prose journals and hearsay rather than observation; increasing religiosity; anti-Catholic sentiment (in his criticism of Charlemagne and one of the most beautiful cathedrals in Germany); sloppy poetics (the hexameter line); and artificial syntax (the last line of the sonnet archaically puts the verb at the end of the sentence, to rhyme 'bleach' with 'breach').

Yet, while this is far from Wordsworth's best sonnet, it exhibits productive ambiguities in the way it plays different religions against each other, as well as exploring concepts such as antiquity, fancy, and romance. The text criticises Charlemagne's relics as unworthy of imagination, yet the image of re-enchantment in the sestet celebrates a legendary Carolingian hero who dies defending the emperor's territory against Saracen armies.[4] The image of the heroic Roland contains an allusion that associates Islam with Satan; as Jackson notes, Roland's 'huge two-handed sway' is a direct allusion to Book 6 of *Paradise Lost*. During the war in heaven, Satan observes the archangel Michael fighting:

> …Satan, who that day
> Prodigious power had shewn, and met in Armes
> No equal, raunging through the dire attack
> Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
> Saw where the Sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
> Squadrons at once, *with huge two-handed sway*

4) The historical Roland may be the prefect of Brittany, reported slain on 15 August 778 by Basque marauders in a Pyrenean mountain pass (Uitti 65–6).

Brandisht aloft the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting…
(Greenblatt and Adams; *PL* vi. 246–53, my emphasis)

This association may seem straightforward—and typical of Christian hostility towards Islam—with the text associating a legendary Christian hero's sword with an archangel's. But the context of the allusion upsets this simple parallelism. Satan interposes his shield to protect his allies from the archangel:

…such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rockie Orb
Of tenfold Adamant, his ample Shield
A vast circumference… (*PL* vi. 253–5)

The continuation of the action complicates the relationship between Christianity and Islam, and nature and fancy, in the sonnet. Roland's sword is like Michael's sword, the sword of Christian justice; nevertheless, this makes the substance of the Alps symbolically equivalent first to the shield of Satan, and then to his corporeal body. Satan's shield, a 'rockie Orb | Of tenfold Adamant' resembles the landscape of the Alps. Milton's text continues:

…the sword
Of Michael from the Armorie of God
Was giv'n him temperd so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheere, nor staid,
But with swift wheele reverse, deep entring shar'd
All his right side; then Satan first knew pain,
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd… (*PL* vi. 320–8)

Thus the text may work against the speaker here, and Wordsworth's intention to re-enchant Carolingian legend through memory and imagination. The Alps so beloved by Wordsworth take on the symbolism of Satanic 'Adamant' and Satanic flesh that 'Cannot but by annihilating die' (*PL* vi. 347). The sublime fear evoked by the 'Breche de Roland' takes on both a supernatural moral dimension, and associates nature with the anti-heroic indestructibility of Satanic power.

This is not an isolated incident; in the context of enchantment and disenchantment, this confusion in the text between righteous and Satanic power, goety and necromancy (white and black magic), appears in two other sonnets in the sequence, 'In the Cathedral at Cologne' and 'The Jung-Frau—and the Rhine at Shauffhausen'. The *Memorials* also associate Christianity and Islam positively through nature, and using the same conventional symbols (cross and crescent) in 'Source of the Danube'. Analyses of these and other sonnets appears below.

'In the Cathedral at Cologne'

In the sonnet that immediately follows 'Aix-la-Chapelle', the process of disenchantment and re-enchantment recurs, but without the disappointment of the speaker's imagined visit to Aachen Cathedral. Here the disenchantment flows from the incompleteness of Cologne Cathedral in 1820. The edifice was begun in 1248, 'but was discontinued between 1510 and 1842' (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 422). The poem begins:

> O for the help of Angels to complete
> This Temple—Angels governed by a Plan
> How gloriously pursued by daring Man,
> Studious that He might not disdain the Seat
> Who dwells in Heaven! But that inspiring heat
> Hath failed… (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 363, ll.1–6)

To the sonnet's speaker, the unfinished cathedral does not have the inspirational qualities of an aesthetic fragment or a living ruin, as Dorothy

described Roslin Chapel in Scotland. Here, as Dorothy's journal reports, '*only* the *Quire* and side aisles are finished. The nave, at half its destined height, is covered with a ceiling of boards' (De Selincourt ii. 41). Viewing the interior of the structure in this condition would have given the impression of a sharp contrast between the artistry of the 'fluted Pillars' described in Mary's journal, and the mundaneness of the temporary construction materials.[5)]

A biographical reading of this sonnet links the speaker's disenchantment with the unfinished cathedral to Wordsworth's own ambitions for *The Recluse*, his unfinished philosophical epic. Readers of one part of this proposed epic, *The Excursion* (published in quarto in 1814), might remember the '*Prospectus*' of that poem as they read this sonnet. In it, the poet lays out his plan for the whole epic using the imagery of religious architecture. The verse of the Prospectus describes a 'prophetic Spirit' that 'dost possess | A metropolitan Temple in the hearts | Of mighty Poets' (W. Wordsworth, *Exc* 303, ll.85–7). The prose Preface that precedes the Prospectus describes Wordsworth's two completed epics, *The Excursion* and the unpublished *Prelude*, as having

> the same kind of relation to each other… as the Anti-chapel has to the body of a gothic Church. Continuing this allusion, he [the poet] may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public… will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little Cells, Oratories, and sepulchral Recesses, ordinarily included in those Edifices. (W. Wordsworth, *Exc* 299–300)

In this biographical context, the disenchantment of Cologne Cathedral includes reflections on incomplete poetry, the dwindling of inspiration with

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5) Goethe lamented the cathedral's incompleteness, and the ability of his imagination to 'complete' it; William Morris, on the other hand, preferred the unfinished work to the finished (Jacobs 202–3; Hayden, *Europe* i. 51).

age, self-criticism, and perhaps guilt.

The re-enchantment, or call for re-enchantment, that occurs after the sixth line of the sonnet develops the same religious and imaginative ambiguities as 'Aix-la-Chapelle'. Structurally, the sonnet does not consist of a neat octave and sestet; the argument more clearly breaks down into three sections. After the lines quoted above, the speaker makes a direct apostrophe to the angels that he describes in the first line. Lines six to line ten read:

> …and now, ye Powers! whose gorgeous wings
> And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
> But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet
> For you, on these unfinished Shafts to try
> The midnight virtues of your harmony:—
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 363, ll.6–10)

The first image draws an imaginative representation of angels ('Powers') from the cathedral's finished stained glass windows ('yon emblazonings') (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 422; De Selincourt ii. 41). The image argues that art poorly represents the 'reality' of spirits. This is a variation on the distinction between mimesis and imaginative representation in Romantic-period literature, explored in depth by New Critics such as M. H. Abrams (Abrams; Engell). Here the poetic imagination proves superior to visual representation, but in the service of representing fantasy (what Coleridge called the work of the 'fancy').

But from the tenth line, the text begins to suggest some confusion in the speaker's mind between different categories of spirits—specifically, angels and devils. The 'midnight virtues' that might complete the 'unfinished Shafts' of the cathedral might represent a midnight choir; they might also, benignly but more interestingly, represent magical work done in secret, while the human planners and builders sleep. In this case, the Christian angels resemble the fairies and sprites of English folklore, such as Shakespeare's 'lob of spirits', Robin Goodfellow in *A Midsummer Night's*

Dream (Shakespeare, *MND* 2.1.16). Wordsworth's poetry, like Shakespeare's fairy plays, often mingles and conflates Christianity, fairy lore, and classical lore. The angels in Cologne Cathedral thus resemble mischievous but benevolent domestic spirits on a grand scale: pucks, brownies or hobgoblins who find the human 'Plan'—architectural plans—lying about, and decide to complete them in exchange for a bowl of milk or some similar offering.

The last quatrain, however, takes a darker turn; like 'Aix-la-Chapelle', it alludes to Milton's *Paradise Lost*—in this case, the construction of the fortress Pandaemonium by the fallen angels in Book 1. The last quatrain reads:

> This vast Design might tempt you to repeat
> Charms that call forth upon empyreal ground
> Immortal Fabrics—rising to the sound
> Of penetrating harps and voices sweet!
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 363, ll.11–4)

This is a powerful re-enchantment. The skill and ambition of the cathedral's architects and artists act as a Christian prayer or goetic summoning spell. The summoned angels, like Shakespeare's Ariel or Marlowe's Mephastophilis, have their own magic: 'Charms' that cause 'Immortal Fabrics' like adamant to rise up and complete the cathedral. These angels' do not utter prayers or Christian invocations, but spells or 'Charms'. And like much of the magic in early modern drama, these charms depend on music for representation of their effects: the sound of 'penetrating harps and voices sweet'.

Ernest de Selincourt, notes the possible allusion to *Paradise Lost* in these lines:

> Anon out of the earth a *Fabrick* huge
> Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound
> Of Dulcet Symphonies *and voices sweet*. (*PL* i. 710–2, my emphasis)

Wordsworth likely knew these lines (and other long passages of *Paradise*

Lost) by heart. In this case, as Jackson notes, the comparison between the building of Cologne Cathedral and the building of Pandaemonium cast a shadow on 'WW's generous response to the unfinished monument of Catholic power' (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 422).

Yet on the theme of enchantment and disenchantment, and in the context of the analysis of 'Aix-la-Chapelle' above, we can detect more ambiguity in the sonnet than just a veiled criticism of, or anxiety towards, Catholic power in Europe. Book 1 of *Paradise Lost* represents Satan at his most heroic; the construction of Pandaemonium establishes his kingdom in hell and with it his independence in the face of defeat, epitomised by the line, 'Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heav'n' (Greenblatt and Abrams *PL* i. 263). Philosophically, Wordsworth stands on the side of Milton's God, but poetically, his work and career have imitated the spirit of the rebel angels. Like his friend and co-author Coleridge, Wordsworth could skilfully represent both the demonic and daemonic in his poetry, in the course of an argument towards solace and enlightenment in a benevolent (and later in life, firmly Christian) nature.[6)]

Therefore, the Satanic undertone of the angelic re-enchantment in this sonnet, like the possible folkloric references to 'midnight virtues' and 'Charms', suggest less a criticism of Catholicism than a diverse knowledge

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6) It is also just possible that by the time of the tour in 1820, or the publication of the tour poems in 1822, that Wordsworth had heard Blake's line from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, 'The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it' (Wu, *Romanticism* 208). Wordsworth's knowledge of Blake would have come through their mutual friend, Henry Crabb Robinson, who travelled with Wordsworth for part of the 1820 tour (Hayden, *Europe* i. 69ff). Robinson discussed Blake's poetry with Hazlitt on 10 March 1811 (Morley i. 25). On 24 May 1812, he read Wordsworth 'some of Blake's poems' during a walk to Hampstead; '[Wordsworth] was pleased with some of them, and considered Blake as having the elements of poetry a thousand times more than either Byron or Scott' (Morley i. 85). Robinson primarily mentions the poems in *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, but on 24 July 1811 he heard about *Jerusalem* from Southey while both were visiting Charles Lamb (Morley i. 40–1). He may therefore have seen or heard some of Blake's other prophetic verse, of which *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is an early, and accessible, example.

of the materials of the fancy, and a complex, ambivalent attitude towards it. Even as Wordsworth's devotion to the Church of England becomes increasingly passionate from around the time of this tour, his work—like so much other British literature from the Reformation onwards—appropriates the language, imagery, and rituals of Catholicism, incorporating them into fanciful poems that are both dogmatic and subversive.

Speed Demons and Pageantry: the Rhine sonnets

From Cologne, the tour party proceeded south to Coblentz and then down the Rhine, travelling by carriage along the low roads on the banks of the river. Out of all the magnificent natural scenery and antiquarian richness of this most picturesque part of Germany, Wordsworth produced only two sonnets. The first looks back on his voyage down the Rhine with Robert Jones in 1790, at the end of their walking tour; on that journey, Wordsworth travelled almost the whole length of the river, but in the opposite direction: heading downstream (north) from Basel to Cologne.[7] The second laments the speed at which the tour party passed along the Rhine between St. Goar and Bingen. The two sonnets are connected through their imagery of speed, and the ability or inability of their speakers to grasp or 'mark' the passing landscape. In turn, these sonnets relate to the others discussed in this paper through the themes of enchantment and disenchantment, fancy and illusion.

'Author's Voyage Down the Rhine (Thirty Years Ago)', like 'In the Cathedral at Cologne' varies the octave sestet structure of the Miltonic sonnet. The octave divides neatly into two ABBA quatrains. The poem begins:

> The confidence of Youth our only Art,
> And Hope gay Pilot of the bold design,

7) On 8 September 1790, WW and Jones visited the Schaffhausen Falls on the Rhine, then returned to Lucerne. For the final leg of the tour they walked northwest to Basel, then travelled almost the entire length of the Rhine by boat to Cologne. The two men returned home from Belgium, rather than France, via Aachen or Ostend, arriving at Dover around 11 October (Hayden, *1790* 98–9).

> We saw the living Landscapes of the Rhine,
> Reach after reach, salute us and depart;
> Slow sink the Spires,—and up again they start!
> But who shall count the Towers as they recline
> O'er the dark steeps, or on the horizon line
> Striding, with shattered crests, the eye athwart?
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 363, ll.1–8)

Here memory serves as the enchantment; the confidence of youth gives the poet and his companion 'Art', a phrase with connotations of magic from early modernism to Wordsworth's day.[8] From their vantage point on a boat in the middle of the river, Wordsworth and Jones watch the 'Spires' and 'Towers' of the Rhine castles fall and rise. Technology—in this case a riverboat—lends the observer speed, changing what and how he sees, and provoking a poetic response that examines these shifts in perspective.

Why does the text use the phrase 'living Landscapes'? The neat alliteration might merely suggest the natural landscape: the green vineyards and forested hills along the riverbanks. More likely, in the context of the poem, 'living Landscapes' suggests inhabited rural landscape, and the interplay between nature and society: the rocky 'steeps' and trees mingling with the structures of the inhabited and ruined Rhine castles, and the agriculture of the village fields and vineyards.

But the octave suggests a third possibility, more attuned to the fanciful imagery in this sonnet and those that surround it. The 'living Landscapes' of the Rhine are not only alive, but *animated*; the 'Art' of the poet-observer, coupled with the rapid movement of the riverboat, brings the Rhine castles to life. Here fancy and technology, antiquity and modernity, combine to produce the sonnet's poetic effect. The Rhine castles become personified: they 'salute us and depart'; they 'start' up as if waking or surprised; they

8) See, Miranda and Prospero's use of the word in *The Tempest*, for example, Miranda's 'If by your art, my dearest father, you have | Put the wild waters in this roar' and Prospero's apostrophe to his magician's robe: 'Lie there my art' (Shakespeare, *Arden Tempest* 1.2.1–2, 25).

'recline'; and they stride along the horizon. They resemble giant knights with 'shattered crests'; at the same time, they resemble a collective army, with no individuality. This is another, deleterious, effect of the observer's speed: 'who shall count the Towers as they recline'? We know that Wordsworth was a meticulous observer of landscape, even in his middle and late age, for example during his moonlight walk in Namur in 1828 (Grattan ii. 114–6; Hayden, *Europe* ii. 26). He was the sort of traveller who counted spires and towers, provided that he was not travelling too quickly.

Therefore, even if this sonnet is primarily one of enchantment through memory, without an initial experience of disappointment, it nevertheless contains an aspect of disenchantment that is intrinsic to the enchantment itself. We will see this paradox develop in the next Rhine sonnet; the more the observer's speed prevents close examination of the landscape, the more enchanted, and 'literary', the landscape becomes. In the meantime, the sestet of this sonnet argues against the fanciful, animating enchantment of the octave—or rather, suggests a 'more perfect' pleasure than the striding giants of the Rhine castles:

> More touching still, more perfect was the pleasure,
> When hurrying forward till the slack'ning stream
> Spread like a spacious Mere, we there could measure
> A smooth free course along the watery gleam,
> Think calmly on the past, and mark at leisure
> Features which else had vanished like a dream.
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 363–4, ll.9–14)

When the river widens, and the boat slows to 'A smooth free course', the speaker can leave the fantasy behind, and 'Think calmly on the past'. This is the Wordsworth of 1820 remembering the Wordsworth of 1790, remembering in turn his childhood and youth. In addition to the disenchantment of speed mentioned above, there is a further disenchantment here, desired by the speaker. The observed landscape shifts from fancy to reality; it becomes, to pun on a key word in the next sonnet, 'pedestrian'. In this calm state,

when the smooth 'measure' of the boat is reflected in the smooth measure of the verse, the speaker remembers that he could 'mark at leisure | Features which else had vanished like a dream'.

But there is a degree of self-deception in this pedestrian disenchantment. The speaker remembers that he could 'mark' the landscape of the Rhine when the speed of his perspective slowed; but the text gives no account of the individual antiquities of the Rhine castles, either remembered from 1790, or glimpsed again in 1820. The spires and towers have lost their animating magic, but they have not become any more *real* in the poetic record; they have, as if by the conjuration of the sonnet's final line, truly 'vanished like a dream'. The speaker's 'more perfect… pleasure' of the disenchantment caused by a shift to pedestrian velocity is like an inversion of the Bower of Bliss in Book 2 of *The Faerie Queene*; the speaker's celebration of temperance and a stately pace confounds his 'Art', and the more youthful, daemonic energy that animates the Rhine's striding, shattered towers (Greenblatt and Abrams 857–67). The octave ends powerfully and the sestet, sweetly; the speaker's older self, in 1820, disenchants the former in favour of the latter, and in doing so disenchants the poem. Neither the animating magic, nor the specifics of the Rhine's antiquities, survive it.

The second Rhine sonnet, 'In a Carriage, Upon the Banks of the Rhine', is one of the more complex in the series; it brings together the themes of disenchantment and re-enchantment in the three sonnets discussed above, with their literary context in classical and modern drama. This sonnet unites tragedy, romance, and landscape poetry. While its conclusion perhaps mistakenly celebrates the same disenchantment as in 'Author's Voyage Down the Rhine', the first ten lines of the poem are some of the finest verse in the series. They read:

> Amid this dance of objects sadness steals
> O'er the defrauded heart—while sweeping by,
> As in a fit of Thespian jollity,
> Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels:
> Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels

> The venerable pageantry of Time,
> Each beetling rampart—and each tower sublime,
> And what the Dell unwillingly reveals
> Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees espied
> Near the bright River's edge. (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 364, ll.1–10)

Seated in a rapidly moving carriage, the speaker's velocity saddens him; the nature and antiquities of the Rhine have been reduced to a 'dance of objects'. The 1838 edition of the sonnets adds a revealing endnote, adapted from Mary's journal:

> From St. Goar to Bingen—Castles commanding innumerable small fortified villages—nothing could exceed the delightful variety; but the postilions,who were intoxicated, whisked us far too fast through those beautiful scenes. (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 413)[9]

The 'Castles commanding innumerable small fortified villages' would include the most impressive architecture of the Rhine. From north to south, Wordsworth's carriage would have passed St. Goarshausen; Oberwesel with its medieval tower and red church; Kaub with its island customs house; Bacharach (Mary's 'Bashernach', where they changed horses) with its Burg Stahleck and gothic *Wernerkapelle*; Lorch; Neiderheimbach; Burg Sooneck (in 1820 a picturesque ruin occasionally occupied by robbers and bandits); Trechtinghausen; Burg Rheinstein; and Assmannshausen, among many others.

In the context of enchantment and disenchantment, the phrase 'dance of objects' suggests the 'living drollery' of animated objects in *The Tempest* 3.3. Ariel's magic offers an illusory banquet, and then makes it vanish. The 'defrauded heart[s]' in Shakespeare's late romance are also travellers,

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9) Jackson notes that Wordsworth's note makes two alterations to Mary's language, changing 'drunk' to 'intoxicated' and adding 'beautiful' before 'scenes' (M. Wordsworth "Monday 24th [July]"; W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 422–3).

shipwrecked on Prospero's island. Like Wordsworth on the Rhine, they marvel to see the materials of the fancy (known only from the fabulous tales of other travellers) come to life before their eyes:

SEBASTIAN

A living drollery! Now I will believe
That there are unicorns, that in Arabia
There is one tree, the phoenix' throne, one phoenix
At this hour reigning there.

ANTONIO

I'll believe both;
And what does else want credit, come to me
And I'll be sworn 'tis true. Travellers ne'er did lie,
Though fools at home condemn them.

(Shakespeare, *Arden Tempest* 3.3.21–7)

In contrast to the Wordsworth sonnet, magic 'defrauds' Shakespeare's travellers not by chance, but out of punishment—to expose their political crimes. The 'dance of objects' precedes not 'sadness', but madness.

Unlike Antonio and Sebastian in *The Tempest*, Wordsworth's speaker is aware of the theatricality of what he sees. The transformation of landscape from nature to art is the theme of the sonnet, but not through the mediation of the poet. The speed of the carriage turns the magical landscape of the Rhine into theatrical stage-dressing—mere 'pageantry', no matter how 'venerable'. As in the preceding sonnet, transportation technology offers new ways to see landscape; in both sonnets, the mode of transportation (boat and carriage) creates fanciful effects due to perspective and velocity. But in both cases, the speaker laments, rather than praises, these effects.

In the case of this sonnet, the carriage speeding along the riverbank produces an experience compared to 'a fit of Thespian jollity'. This is an unusual expression, again evoking *The Tempest* and other late Shakespearean romance and tragicomedy. As Ernest de Selincourt points out, 'Thespian'

refers to 'Thespis', 'supposed founder of Greek Tragedy, which he developed from the Choric Dance in honour of Dionysus' (W. Wordsworth, *PW* iii. 472). Wordsworth, hurtling along the banks of the Rhine in a carriage driven by drunk postilions, recalls not only the theatricality of the rapidly passing landscape, but the associations between tragic drama and this mode of transportation. De Selincourt quotes the lines from Horace, which Wordsworth could have known both in Latin, and in English translation in Anderson's *Poets*:

> Thespis, inventor of the tragic art,
> Carried his vagrant players on a cart;
> High o'er the crowd the mimic tribe appear'd,
> And play'd and sung, with lees of wine besmear'd. (Anderson iii)

The speaker thus imagines himself as both spectator and participant: a man sitting in a theatre watching a history play or masque (the 'venerable pageantry of time'), and a participant in a company of travelling players, riding in a cart, with associations of their drunkenness and their liminal social status.

De Selincourt similarly detects another Miltonic allusion in the second line of the sonnet, in which the world outside the carriage windows goes 'sweeping by' like a tragedy or Dionysian revel:

> Some time let Gorgeous Tragedy
> In Scepter'd Pall come *sweeping by*,
> Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
> Or the tale of Troy divine…
> (Greenblatt and Abrams 1803, ll.97–100, my emphasis)

This allusion further develops the sonnet's nuanced representation of the speaker's observations and feelings. The movement of the carriage through the landscape creates a historical pageant. The speaker's response to missing the full experience of this pageant's nature and antiquities is the 'sadness'

of the 'defrauded heart'. The last word of the first line, 'steals', uses the sense of the verb 'to steal over', but carries the association of theft. The sense of loss conjures a feeling of tragedy, but tragedy closely connected to its origins in Bacchanalia and revelry. The speaker projects these feelings onto the landscape itself, personifying Earth as drunken with wine, as a metaphor for speed: 'Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels'. This image conflates female and male, myth and observation; the mother Earth of Greek myth joins in the Dionysian revels with a 'vine-leaf crown', while the speaker observes this literally, as the vineyard landscapes on both sides of the Rhine 'reel' past the carriage windows.

The total effect, hinted at by the Miltonic allusion, is one of melancholy. As in Milton's descriptions in *Il Penseroso* of the pleasures of midnight study, summoning elemental daemons, watching Greek tragedy, and reading Chaucerian fantasy, the sonnet's melancholy is 'white melancholy', a productive mixture of pleasure and sadness. The emotional disenchantment of the sonnet's first ten lines occurs in the theatrical and magical contexts described above. In short, the text represents emotional *disenchantment* through poetic *enchantment* (deception, illusion, and magic). This is the same process that occurs in the preceding sonnet, 'Author's Voyage Down the Rhine'.

Similarly, the last four lines of this sonnet represent the speaker's emotional re-enchantment, through a disenchantment. The first ten lines make the argument that speed (and intoxication) detach the observer from the landscape, and that this ironically makes the landscape more 'literary' (in the sense of theatricality or mimetic imitation) and more magical. The last four lines then suggest that the speaker, despite his age, will have the opportunity to revisit this landscape and observe it more closely:

> Yet why repine?
> Pedestrian liberty shall yet be mine
> To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze:
> Freedom which youth with copious hand supplied,
> May in fit measure bless my later days.

(W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 364, ll.10–4)

Here the phrase 'Pedestrian liberty' carries the force of the disenchantment. The speaker will be liberated, or set free, as if from a magical vision or enchantment. The speaker uses the term 'Pedestrian' literally; he imagines himself free, in the future, to walk the banks of the Rhine, and see again what he only glimpsed from the carriage windows.

But there is also a circularity, perhaps ironic from a modern perspective, in these lines. The speaker's disenchantment with theatricality anticipates a mundane re-enchantment that may offer real power—or may only be an illusion from the past. The speaker anticipates his pedestrian freedoms will include the power 'To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze': actions more associated with physical slowness and contemplation, and so perhaps with old age. But as in the preceding sonnet, this freedom will not only be a pleasure of old age for the speaker, but a return to his youth. He will again experience the 'Freedom which youth with copious hand supplied'—the chance to move slowly, to gaze at objects for as long as he likes, and to muse on them.

This is a neat inversion of the association between youth and qualities like speed, impulsiveness, and a lack of contemplation. For Wordsworth, middle age, with its constant obligations to family and financial stability, represents the headlong passage of time symbolised by speeding through a beautiful landscape in a carriage driven by drunk postilions. The sonnet's speaker anticipates that old age will not bring the slowness of senility, but deeper investment in the landscape. The sonnet disenchants the experience of 'Thespian jollity' and the 'venerable pageantry' of antiquity, preferring 'Pedestrian liberty'; but this disenchantment aspires to one of the most traditional re-enchantments of fanciful literature: the fountain of youth.

'The whole wide Flood': the water-magic of the Danube and the Rhine

The symbolism of the magical fountain of youth may be a mere association in this sonnet, but it becomes a concrete image just a few

poems later. Understandably for a sequence of poems following the Rhine upstream, many of the poems exhibit water imagery. The next section of the paper argues that the water imagery of these poems expresses tensions between enchantment and disenchantment similar to the cathedral poems examined above. As in those sonnets, the tensions in the water poems not only convey ideas of enchantment and disenchantment in terms of poetic magic and fanciful literature, but they engage these more 'pagan' ideas in the context of religious feeling.

The poem that follows 'In a Carriage, Upon the Banks of the Rhine' is not a sonnet, but a hymn written in tetrameter metre: 'Hymn, for the Boatmen, as they Approach the Rapids, Under the Castle of Heidelberg'. This paper will not examine this poem in detail, but three points that bear on the poems that follow. Firstly, this is a water prayer, conveying a feeling of imminent danger, and the power of the river Neckar (branching from the Rhine at Heidelberg). The stately antiquities of Heidelberg Castle stand at a distance, compared to the mortal threat to the travellers. The poem ably conveys a sense of life-threatening danger; the prayer borders on hysterical imploring, and has none of the sense of steadiness and contemplation of the *Ecclesiastical Sketches*, which the religious antiquities of the 1820 tour would in part inspire.

Secondly, perhaps influenced by the antiquities of Heidelberg, the text expresses the hymn in strongly Catholic terms. As in 'In the Cathedral at Cologne' above, the staunchly anti-Catholic Wordsworth of 1820 writes a poem that uses imagery more reminiscent of medieval British poets like Gower and Langland:

> Lord and Saviour! who art seen
> Bleeding on that precious Rood;
> If, while through the meadows green
> Gently wound the peaceful flood,
> We forgot Thee, do not Thou
> Disregard thy Suppliants now!

Hither, like yon ancient Tower
Watching o'er the River's bed,
Fling the shadow of thy power,
Else we sleep among the Dead;
Traveller on the billowy Sea,
Shield us in our jeopardy! (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 365, ll.7–18)

The imagery of Christ 'Bleeding on that precious Rood' and the 'Suppliants' begging for protection have none of the Christian naturalism of Wordsworth's earlier work, or the abstract Puritan imagery of later Milton.

Thirdly, the second stanza quoted above expresses a fanciful antiquarianism similar to the preceding poems. Like the sonnet 'Author's Voyage Down the Rhine', these lines personify 'yon ancient Tower | Watching o'er the River's bed'. These lines not only personify the tower of Heidelberg Castle, but also personify it as an enchanter or magical guardian. The speaker of the hymn implores Christ to imitate the tower and 'Fling the shadow of thy power' across the rapids. The penultimate line of the stanza describes Christ as a 'Traveller on the billowy Sea', emphasising the peripatetic aspects of Christ's life and ministry in Galilee. Later revisions associate Heidelberg Castle's 'shadow of… power' specifically with Christ's miracles. Wordsworth revised the published 1822 text with the line, 'Thou, whose voice did calm the sea'. The 1827 edition did not incorporate this revision, but opted for the more dramatic miracle: 'Thou who trod'st the billowy Sea' (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 365n).

The text thus not only uses Catholic imagery, but associates it with antiquarian 'power' or protective magic. The tone of the prayer is heartfelt; like 'In the Cathedral at Cologne', any anti-Catholic sentiment enters the text only by allusion and metaphor. Nevertheless, the tension between Catholic imagery and pagan magic in this hymn recalls the Puritan associations between the two. This perhaps unconscious sentiment in Wordsworth's late religious verse springs from a literary inheritance steeped in anti-Catholic paranoia during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods (King James VI of Scotland, *News*; King James VI of Scotland, *Daemonologie*; Harsenet; Scot).

Figure 3
View of the Donauquelle (source of the Danube River) in the castle grounds at Donaueschingen, August 2016.

Wordsworth was familiar with this current of English literature, from a time when magic and fairy lore were 'viewed… as dabbling with devils, and allies of Catholic superstition and subversion' (Simons, "Foot-Loose"). He knew many passages of its poetry by heart, in the works of writers including Massinger, Spenser, Shakespeare, Middleton, Webster, and others.

Two later sonnets in the sequence return to the ideas discussed above: the river as a source of inspiration and eternal youth (hence a symbol of enchantment), and the river as a source of mortal, even Satanic, danger.

'The Source of the Danube' gives Wordsworth's response to visiting the Donauquelle in Donaueschingen, the (now disproved) source of the river Danube, just southeast of the town of Triberg in the Black Forest (see *Figure 3*).[10] This poem brings together the imagery of religious conflict in the sonnet 'Aix-la-Chapelle' with the language of water and re-enchantment,

10) Hayden summarises: "The Danube (Donau) assumes its name at Donaueschingen where two streams from the Black Forest join (the Breg and the Brigach). Near Donaueschingen a spring is honored (unofficially) as the source of the river' (Hayden, *Europe* i. 58). Jackson adds that the spring is in the grounds of the Fürstenberg castle (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 424). The spring is indeed part of the castle grounds but is not enclosed by its walls—and is, unlike the castle, open to the public. The pool stands (interestingly, for the Danube's Orphic associations) in the shadow of the towers of the town's Catholic church.

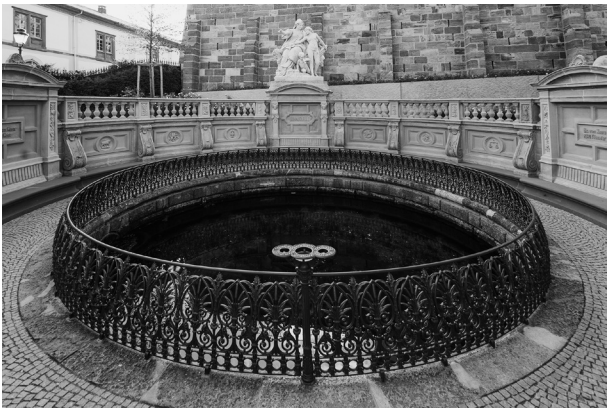

Figure 4
The Donauquelle pool, with its allegorical statues and circular frieze representing the signs of the zodiac, August 2016.

Figure 5
The Donauquelle pool, showing the reflection of the Catholic Church of St. John the Baptist (*Heilige Dreifaltigkeit*), Donaueschingen, August 2016.

resulting in a poem of religious harmony and resolution. Wordsworth's note to the sonnet reads:

> The Spring appears in a capacious stone Basin upon the front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under

> the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it,—and, entering the Garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a Stream much more considerable than itself. The *copiousness* of the Spring at *Doneschingen* must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube.
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 413–4)

The last sentence suggests that Wordsworth or other members of the tour party may have heard from locals in the Black Forest that the Donauquelle was not the true hydrological source of the Danube (see *Figures 4, 5*). Nevertheless, as so often in Wordsworth's antiquarian poetry, the text draws inspiration from myth or misrepresentation more than historical or scientific fact, even though Wordsworth assiduously sought factual and historical materials in preparing his compositions (Simons, "Superstition").

The enchantment in this poem springs from a combination of two different scales of perspective. The text superimposes the geographical and religio-political landscape of Europe over the local, topographical observation of the Donauquelle. The opening lines read:

> Not (like his great compeers) indignantly
> Doth Danube spring to life! The wandering stream
> (Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent's gleam
> Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee
> Slips from his prison walls… (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 366, ll.1–5)

The poem opens on the geographical and religio-political scale. The Danube wanders east from the former Electoral Palatinate, passing through modern Germany, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, and Romania before emptying into the Black Sea in modern Ukraine. The river often serves as a border between modern nations (Slovakia-Hungary, Croatia-Serbia, Romania-Bulgaria, Romania-Ukraine), just as it once formed the principal northern border of the Roman Empire.

The parentheses in the third and fourth lines of the poem reconcile the religious indignation or agitations of 'Aix-la-Chapelle' and 'In the Cathedral at Cologne'. The river 'loves the Cross', watering territories that were, until the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, part of the Holy Roman Empire, as well as Orthodox Wallachia and Moldavia. At the same time, the Danube 'to the Crescent's gleam | Unfolds a willing breast', since the largest parts of modern Romania (Wallachia and Moldavia) remained under Ottoman suzerainty from the mid-fifteenth century, with some areas normally under suzerainty until after the Russo-Turkish War (1806–1812), the Napoleonic Wars, and the Crimean War. Despite the brief success of Michael the Brave to united Wallachia and Moldovia in 1600, modern Romanian nationalism did not begin to make headway until the year after Wordsworth's tour, with the 1821 Wallachian uprising. Therefore, for most of Wordsworth's life, the northwest coast of the Black Sea represented a site of near-constant conflict between the Austro-Hungarians (who controlled Transylvania), the new Russian Empire (which annexed Bessarabia in 1812), and the Ottomans.

This sonnet clearly confirms the religious symbolism of the last line of 'Aix-la-Chapelle', 'Where unremitting frosts the rocky Crescent bleach'. Now the Danube serves as a symbol of reconciliation between Protestantism, Catholicism, Byzantine and Orthodox Christianity, and Islam. The phrase 'unfolds its breast' both personifies the river, and accurately describes the spreading arms of the Danube Delta. The image of a person unfolding their arms also symbolically mirrors the crescent of Islam. Compared to 'Aix-la-Chapelle', the symbolism is peaceful: the crescent arms of Islam now represent an embrace, rather than a pincer striking across the Pyrenees.

The fourth and fifth lines above demonstrate Wordsworth's powerful personal response to the stream at Donaueschingen. His public readers in 1822 could not recognise the self-referential language of these lines, since *The Prelude* would not be published until after his death in 1850. But to those family and friends who knew Wordsworth's autobiographical poem, the phrases 'infant glee' and 'Slips from his prison walls' echo the language of the *Prelude*'s 'glad preamble' and Book 1. In the former lines,

the speaker expresses a newfound freedom after a period of metaphorical imprisonment:

> A Captive greets thee, coming from a house
> Of bondage, from yon City's walls set free,
> A prison where he hath been long immured.
> Now I am free, enfrachis'd and at large,
> May fix my habitation where I will.
> What dwelling shall receive me? In what Vale
> Shall be my harbour? Underneath what grove
> Shall I take up my home, and what sweet stream
> Shall with its murmurs lull me to my rest?
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *1805 Prel* i. 6–14)

Here the feeling of liberation from the 'prison walls' of the city leads to the image of a 'sweet stream' associated with both freedom and recuperation.

In the latter lines, the speaker describes how his infant mind was shaped by the 'beauteous Stream' of another river, the Derwent at Cockermouth:

> Was it for this
> That one, the fairest of all Rivers, lov'd
> To blend his murmurs with my Nurse's song
> And from his alder shades and rocky falls,
> And from his fords and shallows sent a voice
> That flow'd along my dreams? (W. Wordsworth, *1805 Prel* i. 272–7)

The river exerts a gentle influence on Wordsworth's infant mind; he writes that the Derwent 'composed my thoughts | To more than infant softness' (W. Wordsworth, *1805 Prel* i. 282–3). But a few lines later he records his memories of feelings closer to 'infant glee' as he describes the Derwent as 'a Playmate whom we dearly lov'd' and with whom he plays, 'A naked Savage, in the thunder shower' (W. Wordsworth, *1805 Prel* i. 291, 305). In 1820, the glee of the infant sporting in the river becomes a personification

of the infant Danube itself.

On the theme of enchantment and disenchantment, this sonnet follows an optimistic pattern of enchantment, then disenchantment, and finally a greater re-enchantment, a leap from water to sky, and from nature to myth. Like other 1820 tour sonnets discussed above, this poem does not naturally fit the Miltonic octave-sestet structure. Its rhyme scheme is Miltonic but its argument more closely resembles the sonnets of Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare, approximately divisible into three quatrains, with an unrhymed closing couplet. The initial enchantment occurs in the second quatrain, halfway through the fifth line. The Danube 'Slips from his prison walls'

> and Fancy, free
> To follow in his track of silver light,
> Reaches, with one brief moment's rapid flight,
> The vast Encincture of that gloomy sea
> Whose rough winds Orpheus soothed…
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 366–7, ll.5–9)

This is the first poem in the Rhine sequence to use the word 'Fancy' explicitly, in its Coleridgean sense. The speaker describes his fancy (which is, in contrast to the unifying and creative imagination, 'no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space') following the course of the Danube along its 'track of silver light' to the shores of 'that gloomy sea'.[11] In this flight of fancy, five lines encapsulate almost 2,860km of waterway, and a cycle of enchantment and disenchantment: the Danube escapes his 'prison walls', only to be confined in the 'vast Encincture' of the

11) Coleridge's famous (and elusive) definition of the fancy from the *Biographia Literaria* reads: 'Fancy, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word CHOICE. But equally with the ordinary memory the Fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association' (Coleridge i. 202, ll.18–25).

Black Sea. 'Encincture' suggests the imprisoning enchantment of a magic circle, as much as 'silver light' associates the Danube with moonlight and magic.[12] Here, as in the sonnets discussed above, disenchantment can be a magical process, as much as enchantment or re-enchantment can represent mundane or 'pedestrian' forces.

Classical myth enters the poem with the allusion to Orpheus. The archetypal poet-magician 'soothes' the 'gloomy sea' with his lyre, either undoing the imprisoning enchantment of the Danube in the sea's 'Encincture', or making it bearable. Both magical or fanciful images—the speaker's 'rapid flight' along the whole course of the river, and the image of Orpheus among the Argonauts—suggest transportation at different speeds. In 'A Carriage Upon the Banks of the Rhine' the speaker expresses his future desire 'To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze'. But standing at the source of the Danube inspires the speaker to make a flight of fancy rather than close observation—exactly the sort of 'pageantry' that that carriage sonnet argues against. In contrast, the lyric counter-magic deployed by Orpheus to liberate the Danube from its second prison effectively calms the seas—an image of smoothness and steadiness. This recalls the 'smooth free course along the watery gleam' that Wordsworth remembers from his 1790 boat trip down the Rhine; it also recalls the distress of the Neckar rapids under Heidelberg Castle. In this sonnet, the pagan Orpheus has replaced the 'Jesu' of the 'Hymn, for the Boatmen' on the Neckar. The Christian miracle has given way to the pagan music-magic. What is the significance of this shift?

One answer may be that this sonnet strives to represent geographic, religious, and poetic harmony; the Danube does not, like the Rhine and

12) The *OED* definition for 'encincture, *n.*' cites Wordsworth's *Excursion*, Book 5, as one of only two examples of this form of the word. It gives the definition: 'The process of surrounding as with a girdle; the fact of being so surrounded: *concr.* an enclosure'. Interestingly, the *OED* cites, as the first use of the verb form, 'encincture, *v.*', Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* (1820): 'Encinctured by the dark and blooming forests' (Wu, *Romanticism* 2.3.25, p.1126). Shelley's drama was published in July-August 1820; there is no evidence that Wordsworth read it, but the word is unusual, and the timing of Shelley's publication neatly matches Wordsworth's period of writing for the *Memorials* and *Ecclesiastical Sketches*. Shelley in turn may have taken the verb form from Wordsworth's *Excursion*, which he read in 1814.

Neckar, begin 'indignantly', but with 'infant glee'. The 'rough winds' of the Black Sea seem to symbolise only the power of nature, rather than the aggression or defensiveness of a particular religion. Thus the text may use the image of Orpheus—the civilising poet descended from the warlike Thracians—to suggest a theme of personal development that parallels Wordsworth's most important philosophical poems ('Tintern Abbey', the *Ode*, and the *Prelude*). In this reading, the sonnet charts the speaker's development from 'infant glee' to adulthood's 'gloomy' imprisonment, to imaginative compensation, in this case exaltation among the stars.

In this context, the religio-political dimension of the speaker's spiritual development also supports a theme of reconciliation. Wordsworth likely associated the territory of classical Thrace, bordered by the Danube to the north and the Black Sea to the east, as a symbol for modern Christian territory under Ottoman control.[13] Furthermore, Wordsworth may have understood the classical progression from Dionysian ritual to Orphic as two stages of the progression towards Christian Platonism. Bertrand Russell summarises the passions and aspirations of Orphism, in language that parallels the conclusion of the sonnet:

> We are bound to a wheel which turns through endless cycles of birth and death; our true life is the stars, but we are tied to earth. Only by purification and renunciation and an ascetic life can we escape from the wheel and attain at last to the ecstasy of union with God.
>
> (Russell 39)

The stars of the Argo constellation thus have particular significance in Orphism. Russell emphasises the asceticism of the Orphic cults, in opposition to the revelries of the Dionysian cults. He makes a specific

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13) Wordsworth might also have imagined a mythic, as well as religious, reconciliation; he would have known that Tereus, the violator of Philomela, was a Thracian king (Thucydides ii. 29). Wordsworth may have read Orpheus' skills in the arts, and his journeys to spread his religion, in part as an overcoming, if not a penance for, the violence of his ancestry.

reference to alcohol:

> The Orphics were an ascetic sect; wine, to them, was only a symbol, as, later, in the Christian sacrament. The intoxication that they sought was that of 'enthusiasm,' of union with the god. They believed themselves, in this way, to acquire mystic knowledge not obtainable by ordinary means. (Russell 37)

These associations and oppositions between Dionysian and Orphic belief strongly link 'The Source of the Danube' to 'In a Carriage, Upon the Banks of the Rhine'. While composing the Danube sonnet, Wordsworth's mind may have returned to the 'Thespian jollity' of his wild ride from St. Goar to Bingen. In this context, his invocation of Orpheus and the Argonauts not only placates the Dionysian chaos at the heart of tragic drama, but symbolically soothes the intoxicated coachmen—perhaps distant relatives of the wild, 'horse-loving Thracians'.[14)]

The sonnet ends with a description of the constellation Argo Navis ('the Ship Argo'), representing the vessel of Jason and the Argonauts—sometimes described as the first Greek galley used in a voyage of exploration. The last lines read:

> Whose rough winds Orpheus soothed; whose waves did greet
> So skilfully that they forgot their jars—
> To waft the heroic progeny of Greece,
> When the first Ship sailed for the golden Fleece;
> Argo exalted by that daring feat
> To a conspicuous height among the stars!
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 367, ll.9–14)

14) This epithet comes from one of the few surviving fragments of Sophocles' lost play *Tereus*, which dramatizes the myth of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela. Martin West notes this epithet in his discussion of the relationship between horses and solar religion (West 206).

The speaker's flight of fancy, following the Danube from Donaueschingen to the shores of the Black Sea flies higher, into the stars; Orphic harmony dispels the 'gloomy' disenchantment or enchantment of its second prison or 'Encincture'. A change in subject occurs in the final 'couplet', as the speaker's attention, from a magical perspective above the river, shifts from looking downward at the earth to looking upward towards the stars. The poem ceases to be about the personified 'wandering stream', and becomes about the bard-magician who dispels, or calms, the stream's second imprisonment in the sea.

While we might read this sudden turn as a loss of concentration—a distraction by thoughts of 'heroic' poetic immortality—we might also read it as a final image of unification. The constellation Argo Navis—not visible from the Black Forest—had not even been an official constellation for 64 years when Wordsworth made his tour, although it is still referred to in popular astronomy (Stokley). Argo Navis was a large constellation—in astronomical opinion, too large; Nicolas Louis de Lacaille, who recorded more than 9,700 stars, divided it into three sections in 1756 (Ridpath 11, 109, 131; Glass; Bobrovnikoff 443). The three sections represented more manageable numbers of stars; Lacaille adhered to the image of the Argo but divided the vessel into Puppis, Carina, and Vela: the poop-deck, keel, and sail.

Wordsworth's sonnet thus unifies divided astronomical symbols as much as it unifies conflicting territories and religions through the image of the playful Danube. The ascetic, Orphic magic that stands in symbolic opposition to the 'Thespian jollity' of his race up the Rhine hints at the associations between Orpheus and Christ, in their power to calm stormy waters. Finally, the Orphic enchantment at the end of the sonnet culminates in a fantastical mode of transportation—fitting for a poetic sequence so focused on the effects of technology and speed on observation and poetry. The perspective and velocity of the observer in the poem shifts from standing at the source of the Danube; to flying above the river, following its course; to sailing with the Argonauts from Iolchos to Colchis in search of the Golden Fleece; to the ultimate form of transportation: sailing in a

ship among the stars.[15)]

The final sonnet in the Rhine sequence, 'The Jung-Frau—And the Rhine at Shaffhausen' brings the sequence full circle by returning to the elements of earth and water, and also to the Satanic dangers of enchantment in 'Aix-la-Chapelle' and 'In the Cathedral at Cologne'. After achieving the 'conspicuous height' of the Argo Navis constellation, the speaker returns to Earth, alighting on the German-Swiss border in view of the Jungfrau. The sonnet begins:

> The Virgin Mountain, wearing like a Queen
> A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,
> Sheds ruin from her sides; and men below
> Wonder that aught of aspect so serene
> Can link with desolation. (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 367, ll.1–5)

This poem, like 'The Source of the Danube', and Turner's paintings of the Rhine, employs the fancy to associate geographical features not connected in a strictly naturalistic frame. The sonnet begins with the Jungfrau and ends with the Schaffhausen Falls on the Rhine, although the mountain is nowhere near the river.[16)]

Like the preceding sonnet's flight along the Danube, this text has freed itself from the route of Wordsworth's tour. The tour party visited the Rhine Falls before proceeding south into Switzerland, to Zürich and Interlaken

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15) Even today, the Donauquelle seems to retain associations with astronomy and astrology. The 'capacious stone Basin upon the front of a Ducal palace' that Wordsworth saw in 1820 was replaced in 1875 with the present monument: a circular stone pool with a sunken walkway and balustrade. Allegorical statues of the Baar plateau (represented as a mother) and the Danube (as her daughter) were added in 1895. The inner wall of the circular walkway, made of white marble, includes a frieze depicting the twelve signs of the zodiac.

16) The Jungfrau is in Lauterbrunnen, south of Interlaken. The Rhine falls are almost 200km away (following current road routes), just over the German-Swiss border: on the southeast corner of the Black Forest and north of Zürich on the Swiss side.

(Hayden, *Europe* ii. 60–4).[17] The poem's speaker situates himself on the top of the Jungfrau, looking north 'at a little distance' to the 'Waters of the Rhine', which from this perspective seem 'Smooth', 'green', and 'slow'. Like Turner's painting of Heidelberg Castle—and in sharp contrast to the verisimilitude of poetic description such as Wordsworth's crossing of the Simplon Pass in Book 6 of the *Prelude* and his ascent of Snowdon in Book 13—this is a fanciful, fabricated panorama, one of the Thespian revels or venerable pageants that 'defraud' the speaker in 'In a Carriage Upon the Banks of the Rhine'.

On the theme of enchantment and disenchantment, the personification of the opening line creates an immediate association between the mountain, fairy lore, and the Elizabethan sonnet tradition. The 'Virgin Mountain' resembles a 'Queen' in a 'brilliant crown of everlasting snow'; the allusion to Elizabeth as the 'Virgin… Queen'—and by association Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Shakespeare's Titania, and Shakespeare and Milton's Queen Mab—seems inescapable. The associations between political and religious authority, and the destructive power of nature, further strengthen the association with Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* discord between fairy monarchs in that play causes desolation in nature (Shakespeare, *MND* 2.82–114). In a religious context, the Virgin Queen of the Jungfrau suggests the symbolism of Protestant stubbornness and independence, linking, as the later British Romantic writers did, Britain's resistance to Napoleon's continental domination to the Swiss cantons' struggle. These lines thus link the wars of the past two decades to the struggle of Tudor England against Catholic hegemony.[18]

The last half of the sonnet, still freed by the speaker's fancy from any

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17) Hayden includes a map of Wordsworth's route up the Rhine, from Cologne to Zurich, and another map of the party's winding route through Switzerland (Hayden, *Europe* i. 52, 62).

18) As further evidence for this interpretation, this sonnet was written for the *Ecclesiastical Sketches*; as Wordsworth writes in its note for the 1822 *Memorials* volume, 'This Sonnet belongs to another publication, but from its fitness for this place is inserted here also' (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 414).

physical vantage point or mode of transportation, zooms from the Jungfrau to the Rhine, and culminates in a close encounter with the Schaffhausen Falls. The text reads:

> The Waters of the Rhine; but on they go
> Fretting and whitening, keener and more keen
> Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood
> Turned to a fearful Thing, whose nostrils breathe
> Blasts of tempestuous smoke, with which he tries
> To hide himself, but only magnifies:
> And doth in more conspicuous torment writhe,
> Deafening the region in his 'ireful mood.'
>
> (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 367–8, ll.7–14)

In the sonnet's second personification, the falls have become the face of a giant, 'fearful Thing', whose nostrils breathe smoke. The scale of this fantastical figure, based on the metaphorical association of the spray-blasts with his nostrils, inevitably suggest Milton's Satan, as described in Book 1 of *Paradise Lost* (Greenblatt and Abrams *PL* i. 192–220, 283–96). The fanciful metamorphosis of water vapour to smoke strengthens the association.

Despite the lack of a clear vantage point for the sonnet's speaker (compared to the riverboat of 1790, and the speeding carriage of 1820, in the two Rhine sonnets above), these lines reflect close observation of the Rhine falls by William, Dorothy, and Mary. However, based on the sonnet, Wordsworth's experience of the falls differs substantially from Dorothy and Mary's. Dorothy writes:

> Never shall I forget the first view of the stream of the Rhine from the bank, and between the side openings of the bridge—rapid in motion, pure, brighter and green as liquid emeralds!—and wherever the water dashed against tree, stone, or pillar of the bridge, the sparkling and the whiteness of the foam, melting into, and blended with, the green, can hardly be imagined by anyone who has not seen the Rhine.

(De Selincourt ii. 88)

Mary described the falls in similar language to Dorothy's. She wrote to her sister Sara Hutchinson:

> Never beheld any Water of such a soft and brilliant green as the waters of the Rhine—well were we repaid for our hot walk when we reached the fall. (Burton 63)

Unlike many of the other 1820 tour poems, however, Wordsworth's Schaffhausen sonnet does not draw on the descriptions recorded in the journals of his sister and his wife. Dorothy and Mary's descriptions are similar, even though Dorothy saw the falls from the opposite side of the river to Wordsworth and Mary (Hayden, *Europe* i. 58).

The sonnet's representation of the falls strongly differs from Dorothy and Mary's prose versions. Instead of emphasising the beautiful and harmonious aspects of the falls, the poem emphasises their sublime, then demonic attributes. The water vapour rising from the cascade looks like 'tempestuous smoke'—an accurate image, given that Wordsworth saw the falls in the evening. The text's subsequent description of how the 'smoke' simultaneously hides and reveals the 'fearful Thing' matches Burke's definition of the sublime as dependent on obscurity; Wordsworth likely knew Burke's *Enquiry* by 1790, 'if not before' (Trott; Wu, *WR 1770-1799* 21).

Despite the fanciful image of the falls as a monstrous creature, the poem's description of the falls' water vapour emanating from this creature's 'nostrils' demonstrates Wordsworth's keen observation of the evening landscape. The Schaffhausen Falls are wide and low (150m across but only 23m high); the power of the cascade derives from the force of the water rather than the height from which it drops. Furthermore, several prominent outcrops or buttresses of natural rock partition the falls. The largest of these rises in almost the centre of the cascade; tour boats moor at its base and allow visitors to climb the outcrop. Looking south towards the *Rheinfallweg* (the line of the falls) from the north side of the river, the partitioning effect

of this large outcrop could easily make the falls resemble the nose of a huge monster, divided into two or more 'nostrils'. Wordsworth and Mary saw the falls from this perspective, and from the water, according to Mary's letter to Sara:

> After drinking—bathing face and hands in the river—spied T. M. and the ladies at a summer house on the opposite shore, perched above the fall: went across, (not without fear), in a shell of a flat-bottomed boat and joined them… (Burton 63)

The effect of the dim evening, the rising spray and vapour, and Wordsworth's own poor eyesight may have amplified the impression of the Schaffhausen Falls as the head of an enormous monster.

Dragon or demon, whatever the 'fearful Thing' might be that fancifully produces the spray and thunder of the Rhine Falls, the symbolic creature *suffers*, magnifying its 'conspicuous torment' in the eyes of the tourists and other observers who visit or pass by. This is the final statement in the Rhine sonnets on the theme of disenchantment and enchantment. The 'fearful Thing' is the Rhine itself; the Schaffhausen Falls both enchant the river here, embodying it as a monstrous form, and at the same time disenchant the river, imprisoning it and not allowing its monstrous form 'To hide himself'. The last seven lines of the sonnet simultaneously create a magical illusion and expose it as such. Pouring fancy on fancy, the imprisoned Rhine becomes not only a monster, but also a patient in a madhouse, suffering both from his own 'madness' and the 'torment' of his captivity.

The association of the 'fearful Thing' in this sonnet with Milton's Satan or another of the giant-sized fallen angels further connects this final poem in the Rhine sequence with 'Aix-la-Chapelle' and 'In the Cathedral at Cologne', through those poems' allusions to *Paradise Lost* as described above. Wordsworth's note to the sonnet includes an exclamation quoted from *Ramond's Pyrenees* (Ramond's translation of Coxe's letters on Switzerland): '*Voilà un enfer d'eau*' ('Behold an inferno of water'). Jackson suggests that the association of violent water with inferno or Hell may have been a literary

commonplace (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 425). Nevertheless, the image of a gigantic, smoke-breathing monster, writhing in 'conspicuous torment', inevitably recalls the suffering of Satan and the fallen angels in the first lines of *Paradise Lost*:

> Nine times the space that measures day and night
> To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
> Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf
> Confounded though immortal: but his doom
> Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
> Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
> Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
> That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
> Mixed with obdúrate pride and steadfast hate:
> At once as far as angels' ken he views
> The dismal situation waste and wild… (*PL* i. 50–60)

This allusion serves the sonnet as the ideal encapsulation of the tension between enchantment and disenchantment, Catholic power and Protestant suspicion, Christian inspiration and pagan magic, and freedom and imprisonment in the Rhine sonnets. The text's final position on the enchantment of the Rhine's natural landscape and antiquities is an unease with fanciful imagery and magic, irreconcilable with Protestant strictness and simplicity. The Rhine continually evokes fanciful impressions in the mind of the speaker, impressions which consciously or unconsciously raise the problem of whether the poetic inspiration they generate is Satanic. In a biographical context, Wordsworth is a strongly fanciful poet, steeped in classical and early modern literature; but he is too philosophical a poet—too concerned with the wider issues of perception and imagination—to be satisfied with the images that his fancy (his associative powers, and memory) provide. He can never be satisfied with enchantment, and by 1820 has become too staunch an advocate of the British church not to feel some unease with, and suspicion towards, his materials from the 1820 tour: both

at the Catholic landscapes and antiquities of Europe, and the fanciful images they inspire.

Conclusion: Death by Water

Like the 'liquid' corporeality of the angels and devils in *Paradise Lost* (which 'Cannot but by annihilating die'), the landscapes of Wordsworth's Rhine sonnets rise and fall, flowing past the eyes of the observer at different velocities which shape the speaker's interpretation of what he sees. The early cathedral poems give a strong sense of location and the vantage point of the observer. The sonnets on the scenic Rhine and its antiquities between St. Goar and Bingen show the disorienting effects of vehicular transportation. The sonnets on the source of the Danube and the Schaffhausen Falls liberate the sonnets speakers from particular vantage points, and revel in fanciful velocities, but grapple with a recurring sense of imprisonment or confinement. Throughout, the Rhine sonnets exhibit processes of disenchantment, enchantment, and re-enchantment, beginning with the first line of 'Aix-la-Chapelle'. Sometimes the text resists the enchantment of fanciful imagery; at other times, as in 'The Source of the Danube', the enchantment provides a sonnet with something like the compensation of the imagination in Wordsworth's greatest poems. Finally, the definitions of the terms 'enchantment' and 'disenchantment' can become confused at times, such as when the former relates to feelings of disappointment, and when the latter, as 'pedestrian' liberation, gives rise to a poetic feeling that itself resembles a re-enchantment.

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this paper has been to summarise the results of field research into the German section of Wordsworth's 1820 tour, focusing on the region between Aachen/Cologne and the Schaffhausen Falls, where the tour party diverted from the Rhine and headed for Zürich. Further research and analysis of the texts and contextual materials can reveal more detailed connections between the Wordsworths' route in 1820 and particular perspectives or vantage points within the poems. Comparing the language and imagery of these sonnets to the *Ecclesiastical Sketches*, composed during the same period, will

doubtless reveal more evidence of how particular religious ideas manifest in the tour texts. Also, the sonnets' abundant Miltonic allusions suggest the importance of reading them through Milton's philosophy of religion in the late seventeenth century.

Finally, exploring this poetic sequence in the context of water travel, water myth and lore, and the idea of death by water would reveal fruitful associations. In fact, the record of Wordsworth's lifelong travels as recorded in the poetry, letters, and journals should be read in the context of the difficulty and danger of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel, particularly by water. Wordsworth's thinking and writing was deeply affected by the death of his brother John in the shipwreck of the *Earl of Abergavenny* in 1805. The 1820 tour included a significant tragedy: the loss of Henry Crabb Robinson's 20-year-old travelling companion from Boston, Frederick Warren Goddard, around 19-20 August. Goddard drowned in Lake Zurich during a storm when his boat capsized.[19] The Wordsworth family also found themselves in danger on returning from the 1820 tour; chance could have resulted in the loss of Wordsworth, his wife, and his sister. Although the tour party sailed successfully on 7 November, they had attempted a Channel crossing on 2 November, as Mary's memoranda record:

> Thursday 2d Embarked in a small vessel—wind contrary—By the mercy of God escaped from great danger—the vessel struck upon a sand-bank—then was driven with violence upon a rocky road in the harbour.… Blessed be God for our preservation!
>
> (M. Wordsworth, 'Thursday 2d [November]')

The enchantments and disenchantments of the Aachen and Cologne

19) Mary's letter to Sarah Hutchinson of 22 September 1820 gives an account of the tragedy (Burton 67). Wordsworth elegized Goddard in 'Elegiac Stanzas' ('Lulled by the sound of pastoral bells') (W. Wordsworth, *SSIP* 392–4). The poem is notable for its focus on human, rather than Christian, solace in the face of tragedy. It uses the *Peter Bell* stanza for its form; its second stanza is strongly reminiscent of the 'Elegiac Stanzas' of 1805, one of Wordsworth's finest lyrics.

Cathedrals, and the 'defrauded' pleasures of watching the Rhine castles fly past carriage windows, dwindle in comparison to the hidden springs of the enchantments of the Rhine, the Danube, the Black Sea, and all the waters traversed by Wordsworth throughout his life: their power to take, as well as to sustain, life.

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Abstract

William Wordsworth (1770–1850) was an experienced traveller and tourist, whose poetry was strongly influenced by his travels. He travelled in Europe his whole life, from his first extraordinary walking tour of the Swiss Alps as a university student in 1790. He lived in France in 1791–2, in the months before the Revolution descended into the Terror, and in Lower Saxony in 1798–9. During the Peace of Amiens he crossed the channel to Calais, where he met his French daughter for the first time. By 1820, he had a large family of his own in England; for the first time in his life, he also had some disposable income. In this year he achieved his ambition to repeat his continental tour of 1790—but this time, not as a backpacker. He toured continental Europe with his wife Mary and sister Dorothy, and others. This paper presents preliminary findings from field research on Wordsworth's tour of continental Europe in 1820, focusing on his experiences along the Rhine River. Thematically, the paper focuses on the idea of enchantment and disenchantment in the tour poems written about the Rhine area, and published in *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent, 1820* (1822). The paper reads the themes of enchantment and disenchantment in several contexts, including poetic, technological, religious, and biographical (as expressions of waxing and waning poetic power). The paper hypothesises that in sonnets about Aachen, Cologne, and the 'magical' landscapes of the Rhine, the texts express tensions of enchantment and disenchantment. These tensions often stem from the difference between the poetic observer's 'fanciful' (fantastical or magical) representations of subjects, and the responses of the modern traveller: disappointed, confused, fearful, etc. The paper further hypothesises that in some cases these tensions stem from shifts in the economic and technological contexts of Wordsworth's travels, in terms of their effects on the velocity and vantage point of the poetic observer. The paper analyses six sonnets and one 'Hymn', written about landscapes beginning in Aachen and Cologne, and stretching south along the Rhine to the Schaffhausen Falls on the German/Swiss border. The paper concludes that the tensions of enchantment and disenchantment that run through

the poems' fanciful imagery relate not only to changes in the traveller's velocity and perspective, but also to the poems' engagement with religious and political conflict. The Rhine poems use fanciful and mythic imagery to express Protestant unease at praising Catholic antiquities; but at least one poem suggests the possibility of reconciliation between Christianity and Islam.