World Ecology in Martineau's and Gaskell's Colonial Pastorals

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ABSTRACT

The pastoral tends to offer a retreat from modern life, but Harriet Martineau and Elizabeth Gaskell reverse this pattern. They both turn to the colonies to reconcile the pastoral mode with capitalism, and, in their pastoral depictions of colonial life, we witness that mode's peculiar capacity to narrate what the environmental historian Jason W. Moore calls 'the capitalist world ecology' – the globally systemic way of putting nature to work in the service of capitalism. Set in natural environments marked by human influence, the pastoral is a mode that can register economic relations with their ecological dimensions. In Martineau's *Homes Abroad* and *Cinnamon and Pearls* – tales in *Illustrations of Political Economy* – and Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, the pastoral aestheticizes the role that natural environments play in the development of capitalism. *Homes Abroad* presents peaceful agrarian life in Van Diemen's Land as a lucrative enterprise in accord with modernization. Turning to Ceylon, *Cinnamon and Pearls* imagines an organic capitalism in which the celebration of plant life goes hand in hand with emergent property borders. In *Mary Barton*, the final pastoral setting in Canada is home to peace and progress. The felled trees in that setting signal the appropriation of nature for profit in the timber trade. These works of fiction capture the accumulation of capital in rural and suburban areas, which was historically key to the emergence of capitalism. The pastoral's ability to depict the capitalist world ecology reflects a preoccupation with historical forces that is already present in the mode's roots in antiquity.

KEYWORDS: Harriet Martineau, *Homes Abroad*, *Cinnamon and Pearls*, *Illustrations of Political Economy*, Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton*, pastoral, Jason Moore, ecology, historical nature, capitalism, empire, Ceylon, Van Diemen's Land, Canada

Homes Abroad, one of the tales in Harriet Martineau's *Illustrations of Political Economy* (1832–1834) that advocates settler colonialism, presents Van Diemen's Land as a pastoral setting. Human influence does not diminish the aesthetic appeal of the landscape:

The country between Hobart Town and Launceston consists of green hills and fertile plains, among which towns and villages and solitary dwellings are interspersed. Rivers wind between their wooded banks, and streams flow down from the high grounds. Excellent macadamized roads run through the whole district, and branch off to the growing settlements on either hand of the main track.¹

The macadamized roads signal modern progress, and at the same time harmonize with the 'green hills' and the 'fertile plains'. Paralleling the rivers and streams, the roads befit the rural

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¹ Harriet Martineau, *Homes Abroad: A Tale, Illustrations of Political Economy*, vol. 4 (London: Charles Fox, 1832), pp. 1–128 (p. 51). Subsequent references are to this edition and appear parenthetically by page number.

aesthetic and are integrated into the pastoral, a mode known for 'celebrat[ing] the ethos of nature/rurality over against the ethos of the town or city'.²

The context of macadamized roads is key to understanding why this passage embraces modern development while also upholding the appeal of the countryside. To macadamize is to 'make or repair (a road) according to McAdam's method' (*OED*), with the earliest uses of the term recorded in the *OED* occurring in the 1820s. John Loudon McAdam's books on roadmaking appeared in the decade before that: *Remarks on the Present System of Roadmaking* (1816) and *A Practical Essay on the Scientific Repair and Preservation of Roads* (1819). Boasting that his system was 'new and effectual', McAdam sought to change the 'present very defective state of the Turnpike Roads and Highways in the United Kingdom'. The roads should be in 'the best and fittest state for the accommodation of the agriculture and commerce of the country'.³ Macadamized roads thus go hand in hand with economic profits, and Martineau's reference to them suggests the success of settler colonialism. In *Homes Abroad*, progress marks the idyllic description of the settler colony.

While the pastoral mode typically expresses a longing for a bygone past, Martineau's depiction of the Tasmanian countryside welcomes the agricultural and commercial development that capitalism historically introduced. A tendency to reconcile the pastoral with capitalism also marks Martineau's *Cinnamon and Pearls* – another colonial tale in the *Illustrations* – and Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), which of course belongs to that genre heavily influenced by Martineau's work, the social problem novel.⁴ This generic link is not the only connection between Martineau and Gaskell: the latter openly acknowledged how much she owed to the former, and, as Valerie Sanders explains, Martineau 'repeatedly crossed paths with [the Gaskells' inner circle of friends]', the two authors having 'many contacts in common' in part because of their 'Unitarian background'.⁵ A specific usage of the pastoral in which the mode is reconciled with the modern is also common to both authors. Even though the pastoral is associated with the pre-capitalist past in the opening paragraph of *Mary Barton*, when the mode resurfaces at the end of that novel in 'the little Canadian epilogue',⁶ the setting is thoroughly capitalist. Life in suburban Toronto is lucrative for the protagonists, and the deforestation that the narrator recounts likewise suggests capitalist development.

Martineau and Gaskell both turn to the colonies to find natural settings that retain the promise of the pastoral while embedded in market relations.⁷ In these works, the colonies lend themselves to pastoralism not despite, but because of, the supposedly natural capitalist relations of exchange and production that thrive within them. This dynamic is peculiar in light of Renato Poggioli's claim that the pastoral shepherd is 'the opposite of homo economicus', his life being antithetical to the pursuit of economic self-interest: 'the testimony he [the shepherd] bears is simply that it is easier to reach moral truth and peace of mind . . . by abandoning

² Lawrence Buell, 'American Pastoral Ideology Reappraised', *American Literary History*, 1 (1989), 1–29 (p. 23).

³ John Loudon McAdam, *Remarks on the Present System of Roadmaking with Observations Deduced from Practice and Experience* (Bristol: J. M. Gutch, 1816), pp. 3, 5, 14.

⁴ For an overview of scholarship exploring Martineau's influence on social problem novels including those of Gaskell, see Deborah Anna Logan, *The Hour and the Woman: Harriet Martineau's 'Somewhat Remarkable' Life* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2002), p. 18.

⁵ Valerie Sanders, 'Harriet Martineau and Elizabeth Gaskell', *Gaskell Society Journal*, 16 (2002), 64–75 (p. 64).

⁶ Rosemarie Bodenheimer, 'Private Grief and Public Acts in *Mary Barton*', *Dickens Studies Annual*, 9 (1981), 195–216; rpt. in *Mary Barton*, ed. Thomas Recchio (New York, NY, and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2008), pp. 510–28 (p. 510).

⁷ See Ayşe Çelikkol, *Romances of Free Trade: British Literature, Laissez-Faire, and the Global Nineteenth Century* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), which explores the reconciliation of nature with capitalism through a reading of *Dawn Island*.

the strife of civil and social living . . . for a solitary existence, in communion with nature.⁸ Deviating from this tradition, Martineau and Gaskell find a literary mode that can take into account the accumulation of capital outside the city and present the natural environment as a major actor in that process. While recent literary criticism has addressed the role that realism plays in constructing a 'geopolitical aesthetic' that 'illuminat[es] . . . globalization's "landscapes and forces";⁹ my essay calls for a need to recognize the role that the pastoral plays in expressing the global reach of capital.

The pastoral revolves not around wilderness, but natural environments influenced by humans. Precisely because the pastoral depicts a 'middle landscape' that is between 'the animal and the rational, natural and civilized',¹⁰ it can register economic relations with their ecological dimensions. By reading *Homes Abroad* and *Cinnamon and Pearls* alongside *Mary Barton*, I examine when and how the pastoral represents, however fleetingly, what the environmental historian Jason W. Moore calls 'the capitalist world ecology', 'a civilization that joins the accumulation of capital, the pursuit of power, and the production of nature'.¹¹ As this term indicates, capitalism does not only *impact* the environment. 'How capitalism has worked through, rather than upon, nature makes all the difference', Moore reminds us. 'The history of capitalism', he writes, is 'one of successive historical natures', which are both 'producers and products of capitalist development'.¹² Just as capitalism itself is not limited to a single locale but unfolds through flows of people and commodities across the world, the ecologies whose exploitation gives rise to capitalism are far-reaching, constituting a world-system. The colonial pastoral aestheticizes the ways in which capitalism puts living beings (including humans) and their natural environments to work on a global scale.¹³ To trace this process, this paper explores the 'historical natures' that emerge in the colonial pastoral and links them to Moore's notion of the 'capitalist world ecology'.

1. ENTERPRISE AND THE IDYLIC SETTING IN *HOMES ABROAD*

In its opening paragraph, *Homes Abroad* portrays an imagined pastoral economy of fecundity and contrasts it to actually existing scarcity:

The fair and fertile county of Kent has long suffered peculiarly from the poverty of its laboring population. To the traveler who merely passes through it, it looks like a fruitful garden, capable of affording support to as many inhabitants as can gather around its neat towns, or settle on the borders of its orchards, hop-grounds, or corn-fields; yet it is certain that nowhere,—not in the alleys of Manchester or the cellars of London,—is more abject, hopeless poverty to be found.¹⁴

⁸ Renato Poggioli, *The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 2, 4.

⁹ Lauren M. E. Goodlad, *The Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic: Realism, Sovereignty, and Transnational Experience* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 10.

¹⁰ Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 102–3.

¹¹ Jason W. Moore, 'The Rise of Cheap Nature', *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, ed. Moore (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2016), p. 97.

¹² Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (New York, NY: Verso, 2015), pp. 30, 19.

¹³ I am basing this point on Moore's argument that human and 'extra-human natures' are 'bundled' in the workings of capitalism (*Capitalism in the Web*, pp. 17, 35).

¹⁴ Martineau, *Homes Abroad*, p. 1.

The garden, the quintessential trope of the pastoral, signals nature's bounty, but it is illusory. The size of the population upsets the natural balance in the county of Kent. The uninformed traveller imagines that the location presents a fertile garden, but the realist narrator knows better.

While the opening paragraph of *Homes Abroad* sets realism and the pastoral at odds, the rest of the tale employs the two simultaneously, precisely because the setting shifts to the sparsely populated Van Diemen's Land. In the body of the tale, the narrative posture is one of reporting the experience of ordinary emigrants. Doing so while depicting an idyllic world becomes possible because Martineau turns from the metropole to the colony, where everyday life supposedly reflects the pastoral ideal of harmony and peace. Aspects of economic life in Van Diemen's Land are idealized in the tale; at the same time, settlers in that colony did indeed witness tremendous growth. Like other Anglo settler colonies, Tasmania experienced booms and busts, and the first bust did not come until 1842.¹⁵ To an extent, the economy that the settlers experienced there until the bust would have lent itself to an uplifting portrayal.

The depiction of farming in Van Diemen's Land is at times idyllic, but the narrator also makes it explicit that the emigrants work for wages. Frank, who along with his family escapes impoverishment in Kent, is indentured to a land-owning farmer, and his father is indentured as a shepherd, both working to pay off the debt they incurred to cross the ocean. The economy in which he and his family find themselves immersed is agrarian capitalist; subsistence farming seems non-existent and profit-seeking farms employ wage-labourers. Frank internalizes the capitalist drive implicit in this mode of farming. In the country, he feels 'his spirit of enterprise . . . revive' as he imagines 'a snug and well-managed farmstead': 'He saw in fancy the day when a little hamlet of weather-boarded cottages would be sending up their blue smoke among those trees; when cattle-shed and sheep-pens would stretch out behind the dwellings' (p. 59). In the foreseeable future, Van Diemen's Land will come to embody the idyllic characteristics that the realist narrator fails to locate in Kent. Frank aestheticizes the economy of cattle- and sheep-farming, whose expansionist character his daydream subtly signals through its emphasis on growth. Agrarian capitalism in the colonial space becomes the condition under which the pastoral idealization of the countryside emerges as a possibility.

Martineau uses pastoral figures to show how abstract principles inform individual lives.¹⁶ Take, for instance, Frank's father Castle, whose career in Van Diemen's Land evokes a simple kind of pastoralism amidst explicit references to the financial terms of his employment: 'the pastures were excellent, the springs plentiful, and the sheep as fine as the world can produce' (p. 50). The identification of the sheep as the world's finest is both a superlative reminiscent of fairy tales and a reminder of how organic life in Van Diemen's Land is integrated into the world economy. Indeed, communities larger than the Castle family are at stake in the description of that family's experience. As Paul Alpers argues, in the pastoral tradition, the herdsman is 'representative . . . both of the poet and all humans'; 'pastoral poetry represents . . . plights and . . . pleasures as shared'.¹⁷ Frank the farm-worker, his sister the dairy-woman,

¹⁵ According to Belich, the boom in Tasmania started in 1828 (p. 89). For an account of that boom, see James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 267–82.

¹⁶ Claudia C. Klaver, 'Imperial Economics: Harriet Martineau's *Illustrations of Political Economy* and the Narration of Empire', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 35 (2007), 21–40 (p. 23); Eleanor Courtemanche, 'Naked Truth is the Best Eloquence: Martineau, Dickens, and the Moral Science of Realism', *ELH*, 73 (2006), 383–407 (p. 384).

¹⁷ Paul Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 138, 93,

and their father the shepherd represent neither the metropolitan author nor all humanity, but through them Martineau points toward the common lot of colonists. As figures whose lives supposedly reflect the emigrant condition, they evince political economic principles about reversing the 'redundancy of population over capital' (p. 127). The implication is that when capital is distributed across a sparse population, masses will benefit from plentiful resources such as excellent pastures. The shepherd's life is supposed to be representative of colonists' circumstances at large, evoking a world-ecology in which settler colonies around the world prosper through their employment of nature. These emigrants are not so much 'rootless cosmopolitans' as bearers of an Anglo-Saxon identity that can be transported to multiple settler colonies around the world.¹⁸

The tale repeatedly intertwines elements of pastoral beauty with descriptions of what 'nature does for capitalism.'¹⁹ A comparison of the old world with the newly established colony of Van Diemen's Land attests to the appropriation of nature around the world. Martineau seems implicitly aware of a 'world ecology' as she writes of fisheries in Ireland and Van Diemen's Land:

Ireland and Van Diemen's Land are islands about the same size. They are each favored by nature in an unusual degree, having all the requisites of fertility, variety, and beauty which can fit them to be the abodes of a thriving and happy population. The arable lands and pastures are both excellent. The one has fisheries of salmon, herring, and cod; but the other of whales, and seals for export, and of a large variety of fish for home consumption. Both have fine natural harbours, ridges of protecting mountains, stores of mineral treasure, inland lakes, and fresh springs wherever man may incline to fix his abode.²⁰

This depiction seamlessly integrates references to commercial enterprises with the stock vocabulary of the pastoral. The status of salmon, herring, cod, whales, and seals as both commodities and life forms allows the passage to remain in the pastoral mode while addressing commerce. The integration of references to commercial fishing into a passage on 'fertility', 'beauty', the 'protecting mountains', and 'fresh springs' seems especially noteworthy when we consider that historically whaling constituted a large industry: there were 41 'shore whaling stations' in 1840 in Van Diemen's Land, and 3000 whales were killed between 1828 and 1838.²¹

Martineau's treatment of Ireland and Van Diemen's Land highlights their status as 'commodity frontiers', zones of appropriation in which capitalism works through natural environments.²² Historically, commodity frontiers included 'the great forests of North American and Atlantic Brazil, whaling grounds and fisheries, cash-crop agricultures such as . . . sugar and cotton.'²³ As Moore underlines, capitalism 'creates an ecology that expands over the planet through its frontiers, driven by forces of endless accumulation.'²⁴ The pastoral tendency

¹⁸ Goodlad, *Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic*, p. 80.

¹⁹ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 27.

²⁰ Martineau, *Homes Abroad*, p. 75.

²¹ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, p. 266.

²² Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 144.

²³ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 147.

²⁴ Raj Patel and Jason Moore, *A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), p. 38.

to occupy the middle landscape partly explains the salience of commodity frontiers in Martineau's and Gaskell's fiction. Offering pristine nature had never been the goal of the pastoral, which by definition focuses on the intersection of nature and art. Shepherds in pastorals traditionally offer in mutated form the point of view of the urban poet, and thus the middle landscape is inscribed into the speech of the shepherd who is aligned with the natural world but represents the metropolitan author.²⁵ The pastoral, which is located at the intersection of nature and art in this formal manner, captures the commodity frontier's dual dependence on the natural and the human-made.

Martineau's incorporation of commodity frontiers into the pastoral ideal effaces the ways in which human and extra-human natures resist appropriation. The descriptions of the 'thriving and happy population[s]' of Ireland and Van Diemen's Land are products of an imagined nature that almost welcomes and facilitates plunder, with geographies that protect the colonizers and 'treasures' that are offered to them as gifts.

While depicting some elements of the natural environment as welcoming, *Homes Abroad* portrays the indigenous population as hostile. The tale reduces them to 'wild beasts', though Martineau at the same time suggests that British convicts invade their communities and destroy their social fabric (p. 72).²⁶ The tale turns the aborigines into the threat from which the colonial life must seek refuge. Ultimately, though, the threat to the colonists is brushed off as one that is under control, and a happy ending becomes possible. The colonial pastoral of agrarian capitalism must first refer to and then efface the aboriginal people, thereby reminding us of histories of genocide and displacement. Traces of those histories are buried amidst blithe references to hopping kangaroos and perpetual sunshine.

The themes and settings of *Homes Abroad* differ vastly from those presented by a metropolitan, industrial narrative such as *A Manchester Strike*, one of the best-known tales in the *Illustrations*. Yet the two tales depict, and justify, complementary processes of capital accumulation. '[M]any agricultural producers', writes Ellen Meiksins Wood, 'were market-dependent, not just in the sense that they were obliged to sell produce on the market but in the more fundamental sense that access to land itself, to the means of production, was mediated by the market.'²⁷ Agrarian capitalism accompanied – or even made possible – the emergence of the bourgeois in manufacturing towns. Moore similarly highlights how central rural spaces have been to the development of capitalism, and to industrialism specifically. 'The distinctly modern form of industrialization', he writes, 'begins not in cities but in the countrysides',²⁸ since the appropriation of nature's unpaid work is crucial to capital accumulation. The role that the countryside plays in the process of accumulation reveals why the pastoral elements we find in the semi-realist *Homes Abroad* can depict capitalist expansion, just like *A Manchester Strike*.

The version of the pastoral that Martineau offers in *Homes Abroad* is distinguished by the way its colonial setting combines the primitive with the modern, as evinced by the macadamized roads running in tandem with springs, and shepherds working as wage-labourers. The modern was thoroughly desirable for Martineau, for whom the legitimacy of the imperial project resided in its ability to modernize. As Deborah A. Logan shows, for Martineau,

²⁵ William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral* (New York, NY: New Directions, 1974), pp. 3–26.

²⁶ In 1803, there were 3000 to 7000 indigenous Tasmanians, who fiercely resisted the colonists in the following decades (Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, p. 275).

²⁷ Ellen Meiksins Wood, 'The Agrarian Origins of Capitalism', *Monthly Review*, 50 (1998), 14–31 (p. 20).

²⁸ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 144.

'fundamental to the concept of the Civilizing Mission' was 'the realization of Britain's moral obligation to prepare its colonies for independence and autonomy in the modern world'.²⁹ At the same time, the primitive state constitutes a kind of Golden Age, offering a playing field where 'natural' laws manifest themselves in their pure form. In an astute analysis of Martineau's narration of empire, Claudia C. Klaver suggests that the natural and the modern converge for the author in that both present valid gateways into the achievement of agency. '[T]he common identity of human agents', writes Klaver, 'can only be realized at the two opposite end of its developmental telos—in the "infancy" of all human societies and in their advancement to the "civilized" state of contemporary British capitalism'.³⁰ In her creative adoption of the pastoral, Martineau finds a means to combine such 'infancy' with 'civilization', effecting a unity that underlies her support for settler colonialism.

2. CINNAMON AND PEARLS AND ORGANIC CAPITALISM

If Martineau is at best marginally alert to the plight of the indigenous population in *Homes Abroad*, she is more attuned to it in *Cinnamon and Pearls*, a tale set in present-day Sri Lanka. Martineau describes a colony where the indigenous people's lives are ruined by the monopoly of the East India Company: the products of their labour belong to the monopolists who sell them for profit. In this precursor to the social problem novel, Rayo and Marana, a Sinhalese couple, try desperately to make a living, with Rayo diving for pearls before the couple moves to the region where the cinnamon fields are located. In both cases, the couple is doomed because the Company owns everything that should be theirs to sell or keep. The narrator, who takes up 'the cause of the Cingalese',³¹ is adamant that the couple have the right to sell cinnamon and pearls.

The tale illustrates the role that the natural environment plays in the development of capitalism. Indeed, the double exploitation of the Sinhalese and the environments they inhabit recalls Moore's discussion of 'the messily bundled, interpenetrating, and interdependent relations of human and extra-human natures'. As he points out, 'human and extra-human natures in the web of life' together produce capitalism.³² Martineau's tale shows this pattern at work: in Ceylon, human labour is bundled with extra-human natures to create exchange value. Roughly the first half of the tale concerns the appropriation of sea life and its by-products (conches and pearls), and the second half turns to the cultivation and exchange of a plant (cinnamon). Indigenous divers serve English monopolists who put the conches and the pearls on a global market, while the indigenous agriculturalists who provide the cinnamon ultimately enrich the East India Company. The Sinhalese are part and parcel of the natural world that serves the colonists.

For as long as the East India Company holds a monopoly, only the Europeans on the island can experience a pastoral life:

Whether the laurel-like cinnamon wore its early foliage of red or its later of green, or its white blossom that made the landscape dazzling with beauty and voluptuous with fragrance; whether the talipot upreared its noble crest of straw-coloured blossoms above

²⁹ Deborah A. Logan, *Harriet Martineau, Victorian Imperialism, and the Civilizing Mission* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010), p. 11.

³⁰ Klaver, 'Imperial Economics', p. 35.

³¹ Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, 3 vols (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1877), I, 247.

³² Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, pp. 35, 14.

its green canopy, or presented its clustering fruit; whether the cocoa-nut tree bowed before the gusts of autumn, or stood in dark, majestic clumps above the verdure of a less lofty growth, the groves and gardens were a paradise to the eye of the Europeans.³³

The Edenic world here operates outside linear time, standing free from the progress of history. The flow of time is confined entirely to the circular motion of the seasons. Deprived of its historical/economic function, plant life appears solely aesthetic. Despite the change of seasons and the transformations in plant life that accompany it, the groves and gardens are continually like paradise, though only from the European perspective. Consider, in contrast, a passage in which history steps in and interrupts the account of fecundity:

The enclosed plots (where any cottage could boast such an acquisition) were as little like the gardens of a civilized country. No rows of cabbages and peas, no beds of potatoes and onions—no supply of vegetables on which a family may depend as some security against starvation. The Cingalese, though blest with a soil and climate in which every thing (sic) will grow, are destitute of any such provision as a tenth of the toil of an English labourer would secure. (p. 56)

The narrator, lamenting the effects of the monopoly, notes the contrast between the plots of land claimed by the Sinhalese and that central trope of the pastoral, the garden. Plant life is no longer aesthetic but utilitarian, serving (or failing to serve) as 'supply' or 'provision'. In this instance, when economic relations enter the scene, the pastoral comes to an end. It is the conclusion to the tale that will offer the capitalist version of the colonial pastoral, which reconciles the progress of history with the idyllic world, as do the macadamized roads of *Homes Abroad*.

The 'relaxation' of the cinnamon monopoly, which divests the East India Company of its rights (p. 116), introduces the tale's closure. This turning point reflects actual historical developments that took place in the early 1830s, primarily the Colebrook-Cameron reforms that signalled the victory of *laissez-faire* over mercantilism: 'Every man may now plant cinnamon in his garden, and sell it to whomsoever he pleases', announces the narrator of *Cinnamon and Pearls* (p. 115). Only now permitted to grow cinnamon in their own lots and sell it, the indigenous population still lacks 'some similarly precious permission' in the pearl trade, but the rest of the tale focuses on cinnamon (p. 116). Pastoral experience is no longer limited to the Europeans. Marana is worried about her husband who now has elephantiasis, but she notices the collective joy that follows the relaxation of the monopoly:

All the way as she [Marana] came, sights and sounds of pleasure had been presented to her, and she had endeavored to share the satisfaction of the priest and of her father at seeing the bustle of the country people in clearing their ground for the growth of the long-forbidden shrub; and the joyous parties returning from the thickets with the young plants which, when improved by cultivation, were to form the foundation of their wealth; and the dancing girls spreading the news through the land. (p. 117–18).

³³ Harriet Martineau, *Cinnamon and Pearls: A Tale, Illustrations of Political Economy*, vol. 7 (London: Charles Fox, 1834), pp. 1–125 (p. 41). Subsequent references are to this edition and appear parenthetically by page number.

As the 'foundation of wealth', the 'young plants' turn into the objects of celebration. The pastoral version of the commodity fetish owes to the status of the plant as a living being – the commodity bears the spark of life, which underlies its capacity to change history. In this instance, the young plant, as an embodiment of historical nature, is the centre around which the pastoral ideal revolves.

Even Rayo is to benefit from the economic change, as his health will remain stable with good nutrition. The shrub, close to the beginning of its life cycle, indicates a new page in Rayo's life and in the island's history: 'Mr. Serle was digging a hole in the newly prepared soil, while Rayo stood by, holding the young cinnamon shrub which was about to be planted. Mrs. Serle was busy, at some distance, training the pepper-vine against the garden fence' (p. 119). The vine that covers the fence and the cinnamon that belongs to Rayo together fuse private ownership with the life force. The pepper vine will not of its own accord obey property borders, but tamed under human influence, it affirms them.

If the idyllic scene depends on the cinnamon plant becoming 'improved by cultivation', this is where progress most directly enters the pastoral mode that dominates at the end of the tale. As Wood notes, it was during the rise of agrarian capitalism that 'landlords and tenants alike became preoccupied with what they called "improvement", the enhancement of the land's productivity for profit'. Wood reminds us that in early usage, to improve was to 'do something for monetary profit'.³⁴ In the English context, the term signalled changes to property relations and the 'extinguish[ing] of customary rights' in land use:

Improvement meant something more than new methods and techniques of farming. It meant, even more fundamentally, new forms and conceptions of property. 'Improved' farming, for the enterprising landlord and his prosperous capitalist tenant, ideally required enlarged and concentrated landholdings. It also—and perhaps even more—demanded the elimination of old customs and practices that interfered with the most productive use of land.³⁵

In this tale of modernization, land becomes property, and the demand for productivity shapes its fate. The act of 'training the pepper-vine against the garden fence' hints at new property relations that replace pre-colonial as well as mercantilist ones. New borders must be drawn and asserted by humans as private property relations come into existence – and the non-human natural world, metonymically represented by the trained vine in this description, must replicate those borders.

The pastoral mode persists in the tale, with the tropical light shining softly and the fig trees providing a retreat for the family:

As they were quitting the enclosure, and looked back to see how the slanting sunbeams lit up the eyes of the care-worn family, the two priests of a religion of promise assured one another that the time was at hand when here every man should sit under his vine and his fig-tree, and none should make him afraid. (p. 123)

The biblical moment is brought to bear on a novel economic system. The enclosure now secure, the 'priests' celebrate the treatment of men as equals under the new *laissez-faire* order.

³⁴ Wood, 'Agrarian Origins', p. 21.

³⁵ Wood, 'Agrarian Origins', p. 22.

Constituting private property, the vine and the fig tree ensure a sense of security, situating the enclosure as a retreat. In this depiction, extra-human nature secures the liberal order by marking one's property and promising equal rights. Here we see at work the 'modern aims' of liberal imperialism, which, as Lauren Goodlad argues, were largely replaced by the dictates of its 'quasi-feudal' counterpart later in the century.³⁶

Evoking the spread of modernization and capitalism, Martineau's references to improvement and enclosure fit in with the actual historical developments that were taking place in Ceylon in the early 1830s. Colebrook's reforms, representing the triumph of 'free enterprise', 'set the basis for private property rights in the land'.³⁷ As a result of these reforms, the island was integrated into the world economy. It was unusual but not impossible for the Sinhalese to hold private property,³⁸ but large private plantations owned by the colonists dominated in agriculture. As Asoka Bandarage argues, 'the superimposition of the profit-maximizing foreign-owned land- and labor intensive coffee plantations upon the largely self-sufficient village economy brought forth a veritable social revolution on the island'.³⁹ The system that was in place on the island before the British introduced private property rights was heterogeneous. On paddy fields, tenants were 'de facto serfs' but 'there was a more communal sense of village right to the category of land known as high land'.⁴⁰ While Martineau was right that the Colebrook reforms signalled modernization, the fate of the cinnamon trade was not what she thought it would be. The monopoly was repealed, but such high duties on cinnamon exports were introduced in the early 1830s that cinnamon from Ceylon was no longer competitive on the global market.⁴¹ Coffee plantations replaced cinnamon fields in historical Ceylon. Martineau, however, composed the tale early enough to assume that the cinnamon trade would flourish.

The human hand 'training the pepper-vine against the garden fence': the imagery is provocative because it positions the natural world as a realm that can be made to assist the emergence of capitalism. Martineau's tale provides imagery for how capitalism develops through what Moore calls the 'web of life'. Moore, who emphasizes the roles that extra-human natures play in the accumulation of capital, laments that the nature/society binary still governs ecological thought. His best example for the persistence of that binary is the popularity of the metaphor of the carbon footprint, as if capitalism simply left a mark on ecology, as opposed to being shaped by it. What we need instead, argues Moore, is an account of 'the life activity of the human species in the web of life', without isolating society from nature.⁴² The pastoral is well poised to provide this mode of thought, precisely because it revolves around the 'middle landscape', focusing on natural environments that are marked by human influence. In *Cinnamon and Pearls*, the pepper-vine around the fence and the cinnamon shrub draw attention to the ways in which 'new life activity is continually brought into the orbit of capital'.⁴³

³⁶ Goodlad, *Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic*, p. 97.

³⁷ Asoka Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka: The Political Economy of the Kandyan Highlands, 1833–1886* (Berlin and New York, NY: Mouton, 1983), p. 63.

³⁸ Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka*, p. 66. See also Kumari Jayawardena, who argues that a Sri Lankan bourgeoisie 'acquired wealth from the expanding commercial opportunities' 'from the early decades of the 19th century' (p. xvii): 'As in many colonies, the Sri Lankan bourgeoisie was the product of a specific colonial form of capitalist production' (*Nobodies to Somebodies: The Rise of the Colonial Bourgeoisie in Sri Lanka* (New York, NY: Zed Books, 2002), p. xviii).

³⁹ Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka*, p. 13.

⁴⁰ Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka*, pp. 24, 29.

⁴¹ Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka*, p. 67.

⁴² Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 20.

⁴³ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 13.

The tale showcases how plant life and human activity go into the making of capitalism. The next section shows that the pastoral engages the capitalist world ecology in Gaskell's writing, too. If the opening paragraph of *Mary Barton* sets up an opposition between the pastoral and capitalist activity, the Canadian epilogue undoes it.

3. PASTORAL TIMBER IN MARY BARTON

The first chapter of Gaskell's *Mary Barton* delimits an idealized rural world by referring to the town life that surrounds it:

there is a charm about them [the fields] which strikes even the inhabitant of a mountainous district, who sees and feels the effect of contrast in these common-place but thoroughly rural fields, with the busy, bustling manufacturing town he left but half-an-hour ago. Here and there an old black and white farm-house, with its rambling out-buildings, speaks of other times and other occupations than those which now absorb the population of the neighbourhood.⁴⁴

The people of the region are now employed in what we infer must be manufacturing, so the rural scene signals a retreat from the present, a foray into bygone times. 'The artisan, deafened with the noise of tongues and engines' listens to the 'delicious sounds of rural life' in this area, 'Green Heys Fields' (p. 7). The charming countryside offers an economic order in contrast with that of the manufacturing town.

Yet the novel as a whole does not glorify a golden age or dismiss urban life as unpleasant. According to Coral Lansbury, by describing the comforts of the Barton household prior to the economic crisis and by subtly hinting at the difficulty of Alice's early experiences in the country, *Mary Barton* stages a 'rejection of arcadianism'.⁴⁵ The Canadian epilogue, too, challenges the rural/urban binary. Idyllic and welcoming, suburban Toronto appears as an element of the capitalist world-ecology. Twenty-first-century readings of the novel have emphasized the extent to which the capitalism that the novel depicts is a global one,⁴⁶ and the Canadian epilogue shows that the protagonists never leave that order behind. The end of the novel, as Diana C. Archibald maintains, constitutes a 'pastoral fantasy',⁴⁷ but it is an unusual one in that it is enabled by capitalist expansion.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton*, ed. Thomas Recchio (New York, NY, and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2008), p. 7. Subsequent references are to this edition and appear parenthetically by page number.

⁴⁵ Coral Lansbury, *Elizabeth Gaskell* (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1984), p. 15.

⁴⁶ Liam Corley argues that 'Gaskell represents [the] reliance of British mercantile interests on foreign markets amenable to monopoly and control' through the opium addiction of John Barton, given that this commodity played an important role in trade relations among Britain, China, and India, and the Opium Wars centred on it ('The Imperial Addiction of *Mary Barton*', *Gaskell Society Journal*, 17 (2003), 1–11 (p. 2)). Elaine Freedgood's focus is on the blue and white cotton curtains, which evoke the histories of 'laborers who no longer make them in South Asia' and the Atlantic slave trade (*Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel* (Chicago, IL, and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 57).

⁴⁷ Diana C. Archibald, *Domesticity, Imperialism, and Emigration in the Victorian Novel* (Columbia, MI and London: University of Missouri Press, 2002), p. 33.

⁴⁸ The novel's ability to invent a capitalist pastoral follows from other kinds of reconciliation that have already been achieved by the end: Gaskell 'argue[s] that morality and economics (moral agency and economic agency) far from being mutually opposed, must be reconciled' (Josephine M. Guy, *The Victorian Social Problem Novel: The Market, The Individual and Communal Life* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 160). She imagines a fair capitalism in which, for example, prices are not inflated, seeking the solution within that economic system, not in alternatives to it.

While there is no explicit mention of commercial activity in the epilogue, the reference to felled trees implicitly raises the topic:

I see a long, low, wooden house, with room enough and to spare. The old primeval trees are felled and gone for many a mile around; one alone remains to overshadow the gable-end of the cottage. There is a garden around the dwelling, and far beyond that stretches an orchard. The glory of an Indian summer is over all, making the heart leap at the sight of its gorgeous beauty. (p. 339)

These are not primeval times, but their aftermath: the height of the colonial timber trade. The felled trees call for what Elaine Freedgood calls a 'strong metonymic' reading, which uncovers 'the knowledge stockpiled in . . . things'. According to Freedgood, a 'weak metonymic' reading of objects in a text 'reinforce[s] something we already know about the subjects who use them'. By contrast, a strong metonymic reading may explore histories of things that go beyond reaffirming characterization.⁴⁹ In *Mary Barton*, a 'strong metonymic' reading of the felled trees raises the history of the timber trade, whereas a weak one would perhaps consider the emigrants' ability to shape their surroundings. The Canadian epilogue indicates the role that the natural environment plays in turning profits in the capitalist order. Historically, for the settlers, a seemingly 'endless supply of land and raw materials' produced 'endless booms'.⁵⁰ The trees that are harvested in the epilogue do not just have the function of clearing the stage for a garden. They are signifiers of economic growth and reminders of the appropriation of nature in the service of capital accumulation.

The felled trees would evoke the colonial timber trade to Gaskell's contemporaries. By 1823, 74% of all timber imported to Britain came from British North America.⁵¹ Books, pamphlets, and articles on the topic were abundant at the time, in part because in the decades preceding the publication of *Mary Barton*, changes were proposed that would diminish the protection of colonial timber. As Henry Bliss proposes in *On the Timber Trade*, that trade was 'the most important branch in the trade of a great commercial and maritime empire'.⁵² Its development owed to the fecundity of nature: 'the first object of industry presenting itself to the planters of a new country like Canada is the dense, lofty, and interminable forest which covers the face of every hill and valley from mountain tops to the water's verge'.⁵³ The natural product seemingly effortlessly translates into capital: 'the Timber Trade alone supplied that which the Colonies have been most in want—the investment of Capital'.⁵⁴ Bliss reminds his audience that the timber guarantees that Canadians participate in the world economy. In Bliss's Canada as in Martineau's Tasmania, the simplicity and charm of the rural world exists within circuits of capitalist exchange: 'The Canadian is enabled to bring home to his cottage the comfort and conveniences of life from almost every climate and country under heaven'.⁵⁵ For Bliss, the cottage life is connected to the world outside, however pre-capitalist its architecture may be.

⁴⁹ Freedgood, *Ideas in Things*, pp. 12, 6, 2.

⁵⁰ David E. Nye, *America as Second Creation: Technology and Narratives of New Beginnings* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p. 29, Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, p. 204.

⁵¹ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, p. 109.

⁵² Henry Bliss, *On the Timber Trade* (London: J. Ridgway, 1831), p. 28.

⁵³ Bliss, *On the Timber Trade*, p. 31.

⁵⁴ Bliss, *On the Timber Trade*, p. 34.

⁵⁵ Bliss, *On the Timber Trade*, p. 32.

Gaskell's felled trees resonate with Moore's description of those capitalist processes that involve appropriation. Moore writes, 'capitalism depends on a repertoire of strategies for appropriating the unpaid work/energy of humans and the rest of nature outside the commodity system.'⁵⁶ Wage labourers have to be recompensed, even if at exploitative levels, yet the environment does not. Such appropriation of nature was crucial from the beginning of the early modern period for capitalism to flourish. '[E]very market, every price, every movement and accumulation of money was bundled with extra-human nature', notes Moore.⁵⁷ Humans and the natural environments they inhabit were thus jointly put in the service of capitalism. Forests in particular played an important role in the rise and reign of that economic system. Suburban Toronto is in this sense linked to the myriad other locales in which deforestation has taken place:

Feudal Europe had taken centuries to deforest large expanses of western and central Europe. After 1450, however, comparable deforestation occurred in decades, not centuries. . . . [I]n northeastern Brazil at the height of the sugar boom in the 1650s, twelve thousand hectares of forest would be cleared in a single year.⁵⁸

The work of nature was not incidental to modern development: 'the whole of nature had to be put to work . . . for capitalism to survive.'⁵⁹ If capitalism revolves around unpaid or underpaid labour, this is as much the case when forests are being appropriated as it is in Manchester, where labourers do not receive proper compensation. Gaskell does not explicitly compare the appropriation of natural environments to the exploitation of wage labourers, but the novel situates the emigrants within transnational capitalist networks, offering a version of what Goodlad calls the geopolitical aesthetic.

The novel's juxtaposition of an industrial setting with that of a commodity frontier presents a narrative frame that spans what Moore calls the 'double movement to exploitation and appropriation' under capitalism: 'every act of exploitation (of commodified labor power) depends on an even greater act of appropriation (of unpaid work/energy)'.⁶⁰ The unpaid work, in this formulation, can be delivered by women, slaves, forests, or the soil. A novel that included only the Manchester setting would have focused on the problems brought about by the focus on 'productivity', but the Canadian episode points to what we may in retrospect recognize as 'plunder', though the text itself does not lament deforestation.⁶¹ The perspective of Gaskell's novel records the double movement of capitalism, bearing witness to a capitalist world-ecology that shaped industrial centres along with commodity frontiers.

It is not only the felled trees that locate the pastoral Canadian setting within contemporary relations of production and exchange. Employed in a foundry with others working under him before the move, Mary Barton's husband Jem secures a position in Toronto that operates within capitalism. Having engineered a lucrative invention, and thriving in industrial Manchester before the murder for which he is blamed, Jem becomes 'an instrument maker to the Agricultural College' in Toronto (p. 324). The position grants them a house and some land

⁵⁶ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 54.

⁵⁷ Moore, 'The Rise', p. 85.

⁵⁸ Moore, 'The Rise', p. 96.

⁵⁹ Moore, 'The Rise', p. 102.

⁶⁰ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 54.

⁶¹ Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 137.

as well as a 'per-centage on the instruments made' (p. 324). The middle landscape thus becomes a site of capital accumulation. Jem's new position, like Martineau's macadamized roads, exemplifies how technological progress can shape the pastoral world. Just as the Canadian epilogue depicts a 'middle landscape' with the garden and orchard that replace the wild forest, Jem's new job, uniting the land and its produce with technology, shows that humans participate in 'environment-making'.⁶² Depicting the ubiquity of smoke and the presence of exposed sewage, the body of the novel centres on the dystopian environment of Manchester,⁶³ with the epilogue depicting Canada as the next episode in human acts of environment-making. Manchester could not be more different from idyllic, suburban Toronto, but both attest to the human tendency to shape environments that in turn make capitalism possible.

If, in *Mary Barton*, technologically advanced tools, representing the profit-seeking drive to measure and improve, make their way into and harmonize with a pastoral setting, Gaskell re-uses the same trope in *Cousin Phillis* (1864), where the residents of Hope Farm boast of 'sweet smells [that are] a balm in themselves' and invite their company to 'loiter away his time in the hay-field'.⁶⁴ The farmer-minister and his daughter read Virgil's *Georgics* rather than *Eclogues*, but their life is decidedly pastoral in its rural simplicity and idyllic charm. When visitors to the farm who are deeply embedded in capitalist enterprises such as railroad-building propose improvements and introduce their measurement techniques to farm labour, the farmer-minister listens attentively and learns the new techniques. Such scenes envision a capitalist ecology that seamlessly integrates the capitalist world represented by the visitors with the pastoral life practiced by the farmer-minister.

Writing about the ending of *Mary Barton*, Raymond Williams notes, 'Mary Barton, Jem Wilson, Mrs. Wilson, Margaret, Will, Job Legh . . . end the book far removed from the situation which [Gaskell] had set out to examine'. According to Williams, these individuals have made their way to the 'uncompromised New World'.⁶⁵ Insofar as the cast of characters do not suffer in the New World, there is indeed a break from painful Manchester life. Yet the New World is ecologically complicit in the capitalist order. Gaskell, like Martineau, finds in the colonies the possibility of experiencing capitalism without pain, and appropriates the pastoral to express that fantasy. The result is a literary mode that exposes the capitalist condition as a world ecology.

4. THE NARRATION OF CAPITALISM IN THE PASTORAL MODE

Why does the pastoral mode have the capacity to narrate capitalist development, despite the commonplace insight that it pulls us outside history? The pastoral's ability to depict agrarian capitalism, colonial expansion, and commodity frontiers reflects a preoccupation with historical forces that is already present in the mode's roots in antiquity. The Virgilian pastoral was attuned to issues such as landownership, dispossession, and tenancy. Residual from a time preceding the modern effort to create seemingly ahistorical spaces in isolated Arcadias, the ability to address historical forces within the pastoral mode attests to the mode's capacious history.

⁶² Moore, *Capitalism in the Web*, p. 45.

⁶³ Gaskell's 'industrial fiction homes in on anthropogenic pollution engendered by factories, overcrowding, and poor sanitation', thus displaying an 'eco-consciousness' (Margaret S. Kennedy, 'A Breath of Fresh Air: Eco-Consciousness in *Mary Barton* and *Jane Eyre*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 45 (2017), 509–26 (p. 512)).

⁶⁴ Gaskell, *Cranford / Cousin Phillis* (London: Penguin, 1986), p. 256.

⁶⁵ Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780–1950* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 91.

Dispossession looms large in Virgil's first eclogue, which refers to the 'harsh reality of land confiscations'.⁶⁶ Meliboeus, who is being evicted, 'felicitates Tityrus on his great and good fortune'.⁶⁷ Along with the theme of dispossession, the infertility of the land constitutes an economic consideration that frames the meditation on 'the familiar streams', 'the cooling shade', and the 'woodman's song'. Loss and eviction in the *Eclogues* refer to historical processes through which 'large tracts of land were confiscated throughout Italy and granted as a reward for service to the soldiers' of the Battle of Philippi.⁶⁸ Paul Alpers writes that Virgil 'extended the pastoral to engage social and political realities that were excluded by Theocritus'. According to him, the 'pastoral representation of this situation [the expropriations of land] is not surprising', because 'shepherds . . . represent those whose actions are determined by the actions of powerful men'. Alpers goes so far as to argue that 'the shepherds of pastoral are figures devised', among other reasons, 'to locate poets and readers in cultural and political history'.⁶⁹ If Virgilian 'herdsmen [are] examples of a more general plight',⁷⁰ so are Martineau's and Gaskell's colonists' situations responses to larger historical forces beyond their control.

'[T]he social and political realities' that inform Virgil's *Eclogues* are absent in some early modern English versions of the pastoral, as Raymond Williams argues: 'the Renaissance adaptation of just these classical modes is that, step by step, . . . living tensions are excised'.⁷¹ For Annabel Patterson, it was René Rapin and Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle who later 'isolate[d] the pastoral as an idea from major social and political issues'. Not that the pastoral transcended ideology when it did not portray such issues explicitly. As Patterson puts it, 'the pastoral continue[d] to evolve in response to historical circumstances, even when the objective is most resolutely to deny its historical connections'.⁷² The very effort to ignore historical forces had the effect of naturalizing the politics of land ownership. Williams suggests that the sympathies of the pastoral in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are with the landed gentry, as the mode works to 'ideal[ize] . . . actual English country life and its social and economic relations'.⁷³ Those sympathies are transferred from feudalism to capitalism in the examples that I have examined, which glorify, or present through a sympathetic light, wage-labour in the agrarian-capitalist order or the promise of bourgeois proprietorship.

While Williams and Patterson emphasize the ways historical connections were excluded from the pastoral, Leo Marx's analysis points to an alternative trend. In the newly established United States, the pastoral ideal encompassed 'factories and machines' that were 'blend[ed] . . . into the rural scene'.⁷⁴ Thus, in the decades that Martineau and Gaskell were writing, the presence of the political/economic within the pastoral ideal was not unprecedented. Marx argues that Americans 'had little difficulty in reconciling their passion for machine power with the immensely popular Jeffersonian ideal of rural peace, simplicity, and contentment' and that 'machine technology (and all that it represents) . . . can be made to belong in the middle landscape'. Almost concurrently with Martineau and Gaskell, Ralph Waldo Emerson

⁶⁶ Wendell Clausen, commentary for *Eclogue 1* in Virgil, *Eclogues*, intro. Clausen (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pp. 29–60 (p. 29).

⁶⁷ Clausen, commentary, p. 32.

⁶⁸ Clausen, commentary, p. 30.

⁶⁹ Alpers, *What is Pastoral?*, pp. 161, 162, 174.

⁷⁰ Alpers, *What is Pastoral?*, p. 162.

⁷¹ Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 18.

⁷² Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 267, 268.

⁷³ Williams, *The Country*, p. 26.

⁷⁴ Marx, *The Machine*, p. 160.

'join[ed] enthusiasm for technological progress with a 'romantic' love of nature and contempt for cities.'⁷⁵ My point here is not to deny the creativity of Martineau's and Gaskell's adaptations of the pastoral, but to insist that in certain instances the pastoral ideal was reshaped in the image of technological or commercial development.

The inclusion of historical forces within the pastoral ideal is why the pastoral harmonizes so well with Martineau and Gaskell's partly realist fictions. When the pastoral evokes agrarian capitalism or commodity frontiers, it harmonizes with the realist attention to money and class, as evident in the thematic unities of *A Manchester Strike* with *Homes Abroad*, or of *Mary Barton*'s Manchester chapters with its Canadian epilogue. The pastoral elements in *Homes Abroad*, *Cinnamon and Pearls*, and *Mary Barton* repeatedly set modern development as the condition of idyllic or harmonious existence. Those macadamized roads between Hobart Town and Launceston, for example, bring commercial uses to mind while at the same time doubling with idyllic rivers winding in picturesque fashion. In Gaskell's portrayal of life in Canada, the single tree providing shade, which carries traces of the Atlantic timber trade by pointing toward felled trees, also suggests a harmony between the human and non-human components of the natural world. The pastoral rendition of what Moore calls the 'web of life' is akin to realism's famous portrayal of social webs in its ability to combine particulars into a totality. If what is famously 'woven and interwoven'⁷⁶ in the latter case are interpersonal relations that constitute a social conglomerate, in the former, human and nonhuman elements together portray historical natures.

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⁷⁵ Marx, *The Machine*, p. 208, 220, 232.

⁷⁶ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, ed. David Carroll (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 132.