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HENRY HALLAM REVISITED

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ABSTRACT. *Although Henry Hallam (1777–1859) is best known for his* Constitutional History of England *(1827) and as a founder of 'whig' history, to situate him primarily as a mere critic of David Hume or as an apprentice to Thomas Babington Macaulay does him a disservice. He wrote four substantial books of which the first,* his View of the state of Europe during the middle ages *(1818), deserves to be seen as the most important; and his correspondence shows him to have been integrated into the contemporary intelligentsia in ways that imply more than the Whig acolyte customarily portrayed by commentators. This article re-situates Hallam by thinking across both time and space and depicts a significant historian whose filiations reached to Europe and North America. It proposes that Hallam did not originate the whig interpretation of history but rather that he created a sense of the past resting on law and science which would be reasserted in the age of Darwin.*

Students of British constitutional or cultural history in the first half of the nineteenth century may rise to the name of Henry Hallam (1777–1859). Best known for his *Constitutional history of England*,[1] and an appreciative review of it by the twenty-eight-year-old Macaulay which became more famous than the work itself,[2] Hallam has occupied an inconspicuous but respectable place in the pantheon of English historical writing during its remarked 'transition' from an Enlightenment to a Whig persuasion.[3] Behind him stand David Hume, William Robertson, and Edward Gibbon and after him arise new generations in Macaulay himself, John Mitchell Kemble, Edward Augustus Freeman, and William Stubbs. Hallam accepts a torch from the first group and hands it on, amended, to the second. Difficulties arise only when one begins to wonder exactly which flame he is supposed to have received and to whom he is meant to have passed it. They deepen if Hallam's other books – he wrote four – come into play, suggesting that he may have had access to more than one torch. They become uncomfortable when an inspection of his background, contacts, and

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[1] Henry Hallam, *The constitutional history of England from the accession of Henry VII to the death of George II* (2 vols., London, 1827).

[2] T. B. Macaulay, 'Hallam's constitutional history', reprinted in T. B. Macaulay, *Critical and historical essays* (3 vols., London, 1854), I, pp. 113–216.

[3] Thomas P. Peardon, *The transition in English historical writing, 1760–1830* (Columbia, NY, 1933).

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affiliations suggests more complication than seems predictable from his current status as a minor link in English historiography's Great Chain of Being. And if one detaches Hallam from his chain altogether and reattaches him to a different series of continental European personalities and developments, then he begins to appear curious and unfamiliar. Just as historians used to look beneath the blandnesses of Herbert Butterfield to detect *das Butterfieldproblem* lurking beneath,[4] so it may be that *ein Hallamproblem* awaits excavation if one can find the right places to dig. If so, then this problem will not take the form of inconsistencies in the author so much as complicities in his critics. For, to an astonishing degree, Hallam has become a critical construction, a man and mind constructed by his reviewers. He comes down to modernity in one of the silhouettes so fashionable in his society: obliterated in matt black, yet etched in perpetuity. In order to confront this construction, it helps to see that some critics thought Hallam stood at the beginning of a process while others wanted to position him at the end of another. We can begin by identifying difficulties with each of these procedures.[5]

What Hallam is supposed to have initiated is, first, constitutional history itself since he appears to have been the first writer to deploy the term,[6] and, more significantly, that style of constitutional history which Butterfield embalmed as 'the whig interpretation'.[7] By beginning with the Tudors and drawing the story forward through the depredations of James I and Charles I, side-kicking Archbishop Laud and the earl of Strafford en route, towards redemption in 1689 and the confirmation of liberties hard won in 1215, Hallam set the scene for Macaulay's five volumes.[8] Nor is the suggestion fanciful: it is clear that Macaulay did indeed make use of Hallam in his history and rested no small part of his first chapter on Hallam's narrative.[9] But this line of argument set out to identify these facets of Hallam's history with his politics by pointing to simple and undeniable propositions. He kept Whig society. He had wanted originally

[4] For *das Butterfieldproblem*, see Keith Sewell, 'The "Herbert Butterfield problem" and its resolution', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 64 (2003), pp. 599–618, and Michael Bentley, *The life and thought of Herbert Butterfield: history, science and God* (Cambridge, 2011).

[5] In making this revaluation an important starting-point was a bicentenary symposium 'In celebration of Arthur Hallam' held at the University of Sheffield in Feb. 2011. The author wishes to thank the organizers of that symposium, and especially Dr Matthew Campbell, for their invitation to contribute. He should also record his gratitude to the Leverhulme Foundation for their support of a project in comparative historiography whose perspectives will become apparent in what follows.

[6] James Campbell trusts the opinion of Maitland on the matter and there is no reason to think Maitland wrong. See James Campbell, 'Stubbs, Maitland and constitutional history', in Benedikt Stuchkey and Peter Wende, eds., *British and German historiography, 1750–1950: traditions, perceptions and transfers* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 99–122, at p. 100.

[7] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig interpretation of history* (London, 1931).

[8] Thomas Babington Macaulay, *History of England from the accession of James II* (5 vols., London, 1858–61).

[9] See J. W. Burrow, *A Liberal descent: Victorian historians and the English past* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 33.

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to become a Whig politician. His favourite social location was Holland House and its Whig sparkle. He thought Whig thoughts over the denial of civil rights to Nonconformists and Catholics. True, he 'astonished his friends'[10] by speaking an entirely different language about extending the franchise but this was merely deemed an abberation. This Whiggery, the intellectual style that Boyd Hilton labels 'philosophic whiggism',[11] drove the history in this view and made Hallam see the light earlier than Macaulay, if only as one playing John the Baptist to Macaulay's Messiah. Hallam thus became a forerunner of and an apprentice to the tradition that would follow. When Macaulay reviewed the *Constitutional History* and found it, famously, 'the most impartial book we have ever read', he was responding to the partiality that Whigs find translucent, seeing in Hallam some of the model he would later choose for himself. When Robert Southey dismissed Hallam's book in his Tory *Quarterly Review*, he made the same point in negative by seeing in him nothing beyond '[t]he spirit of party and the prejudices of party'[12]. Hallam's point had been a Whig point.

His role as Whig progenitor has since fastened itself on Hallam with great persistence ever since, possibly because many commentators have interests in the history of political thought, perhaps also because many approach Hallam from a transatlantic perspective in which ideology supplies a powerful lens. So Thomas Preston Peardon, in his Columbia dissertation in 1933, identified '[t]he three most considerable *party* histories marking the renewed attack on the Tories' in those written by 'Brodie, Godwin and Hallam.'[13] Timothy Lang and Peter Clark likewise prosecute the party thesis with some consistency.[14] David Fahey at least confesses confusion in one whom he describes as 'a Conservative as Whig Historian'.[15] The most penetrating English commentator on whig genealogy, John Burrow, places Hallam at the head of the family tree in mapping the Liberal descent of historiography between the 1820s and the 1890s.[16] Burrow heard 'a justified sense of shared privilege' in Hallam's histories, with 'no fundamental cleavage, at the theoretical level, between

[10] Lloyd Sanders, *The Holland House circle* (London, 1908), p. 225 (emphasis added).

[11] Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad and dangerous people? England, 1783–1846* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 346–53. A young medievalist had thought it appropriate during the Second World War to describe Hallam as 'the patriarch of Whig history, the Founding Father of a great and noble tradition.' R. A. L. Smith, 'Hallam's history', in Smith, *Collected papers* (London 1947), pp. 117–28, at p. 117.

[12] Robert Southey, 'Hallam's *Constitutional history of England*', *Quarterly Review*, 37 (1928), pp. 194–260, at p. 240.

[13] Peardon, *Transition*, p. 198. He was referring to George Brodie, *A constitutional history of the British empire from the accession of Charles I to the Restoration* (London, 1823), and William Godwin, *History of the Commonwealth of England* (4 vols., London, 1824–8).

[14] Timothy Lang, *The Victorians and the Stuart heritage: interpretations of a discordant past* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 23–52; Peter Clark, 'Henry Hallam reconsidered', *Quarterly Review*, 305 (1967), pp. 410–19. Current difficulties at the British Library prevented me from seeing Professor Clark's *Henry Hallam* (Boston, MA, 1982).

[15] David M. Fahey, 'Henry Hallam: a Conservative as Whig historian', *Historian*, 28 (1966), pp. 625–47.

[16] Burrow, *A Liberal descent*, pp. 30–2.

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Macaulay and Hallam'.[17] Difference amounted only to style: 'where Hallam was dry Macaulay was vivid, dramatic, eloquent and exhilarating'.[18] The present writer, meanwhile, is in no position to throw stones, having treated 'Hallam and Macaulay' conjointly as founders of whig history and seeing, in a moment of signal myopia, a 'gentle Anglicanism' in Hallam's more obvious anti-clericalism.[19]

Some contrasting positions about Hallam's intellectual location had a longer history. Unmoved by Herbert Fisher and Herbert Butterfield's turn towards 'whig' historians,[20] Harry Elmer Barnes, writing from a transatlantic viewpoint in 1937, found no ambiguity in Hallam. Barnes placed him firmly in the environment created by Enlightenment thought. Doubtless, Hallam 'formally' believed in Providence, 'and was of Protestant affiliations', but he 'really belonged in the tradition of Gibbon and the Rationalists'. He had 'the same philosophic attitude to the past'; he 'shared the Rationalist depreciation of the culture of the Middle Ages'; he 'resembled Robertson and Gibbon in his scholarly attributes.'[21] A second impetus, from an entirely different direction but tending to the same result, made itself felt after the Second World War. In 1950, Cambridge University's Prince Consort prize essay competition produced an entry of some brilliance which the University Press published in 1952 under the title *The Liberal Anglican idea of history*. Duncan Forbes, then a young Fellow of a Cambridge college,[22] had produced a striking argument about the origins of modern historical method in England which he found in the 1820s. He did not find it in Hallam. Intrigued by the influence of continental histories, and especially the thought of Giambattista Vico and Barthold Georg Niebuhr,[23] Forbes looked to a group of writers who shared that enthusiasm, one marked by Coleridgean sympathies: Thomas Arnold, Connop Thirlwall, J. C. Hare, and especially Henry Hart Milman whose vast history of Western Christendom

[17] Ibid., pp. 33, 50.

[18] John Burrow, *A history of histories: epics, chronicles, romances and inquiries from Herodotus and Thucydides to the twentieth century* (London, 2007), p. 368.

[19] Michael Bentley, 'Approaches to modernity', in Bentley, ed., *Companion to historiography* (London, 1997), pp. 395–506, at p. 440; Bentley, *Modernizing England's past: English historiography in the age of modernism, 1870–1970* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 23; Bentley, 'Victorian historians and the larger hope', in Bentley (ed.), *Public and private doctrine: essays in British history presented to Maurice Cowling* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 127–48, at p. 135.

[20] H. A. L. Fisher, 'The Whig historians', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 14 (1928), pp. 297–339; Butterfield, *The Whig interpretation of history*. I have separated Whig politics from whig history by using upper case for the former and lower case for the latter.

[21] Harry Elmer Barnes, *A history of historical writing* (New York, NY, 1937), p. 162.

[22] Duncan Forbes became a distinguished commentator on and editor of David Hume and Adam Ferguson. See Forbes, *Hume's philosophical politics* (Cambridge, 1975), and *Adam Ferguson and the idea of community* (Paisley, 1979).

[23] G. B. Vico (1688–1744) and B. G. Niebuhr (1776–1831). The former's *Scienza Nuova* (1725), translated by Jules Michelet, and the latter's *Roman history* (1827–32), translated by Connop Thirlwall and J. C. Hare, played a significant part in early nineteenth-century intellectual and cultural history.

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Forbes took as his model for the transplanted *Scienza Nuova*.[24] Centred on Arnold rather than Hallam, this group of thinkers saw the past in its own terms, according to Forbes, and transcended anything that Hallam had achieved. The latter had failed to transcend the 'rationalism of the elder Mill, Grote, Macaulay and Sir Walter Scott': a curious quartet. He was 'almost wholly confined ... within the Rationalist framework' and 'never arrived at the conception of a science of history which Arnold reached by way of Niebuhr and Vico'. Like Macaulay and Grote, Hallam drew his vaunted 'impartiality' from 'the spirit of party'.[25] If his mind had a future, then it belonged to the positivism of Comte; if it had a past, then it took its colour from the French and Scottish Enlightenments.

Both depictions of Hallam – as either the Whig progenitor or a Voltairean hangover – run into difficulty when once challenged. Hallam had Whig friends but also Tory ones; and, in later life, he might be found dining as readily with the Tory Lord Stanhope or with Robert Peel at Drayton Manor as at the great Whig houses at Bowood or Dropmore. The 1820s, moreover, were years when it became harder, and not easier, to identify 'the spirit of party' in the circles within which Hallam moved. In the constituencies, certainly, party retained and increased its heat. In London society, where Hallam spent most of his mature life, it acquired a certain plasticity as minor factions slid from one part of the spectrum to another. These were years in which the Tory party had apparently forgotten how to be *le parti conservateur* in emancipating Catholics, and years when the Whigs had become a hybrid group in Earl Grey's impure administration after 1830. Commentators note, but do not listen to, Hallam's unwillingness to take his *Constitutional history* beyond 1760 precisely in order to avoid the allegation of party, whereas they hear every word of Southey's denunciation of him for serving it. They also help Hallam to merge into Macaulay by failing to see that the greater man's encomium on impartiality was no encomium. Hallam could advance no further than the court-room and once there sat at the wrong end: on the bench, Macaulay complained in a superb *aperçu*, and not at the bar where the true historian must stand and argue his case as advocate.[26] History could certainly be written from a Whig point of view in the 1820s as Lord John Russell showed in a shallow manifesto that bears no comparison at all with Hallam's histories.[27] Those histories do bear comparison, on the other hand, and *pace* Forbes, with what the Liberal Anglicans sought to do. Forbes had to move Hallam's mind backwards in order to promote Milman's. But it is simply not the case that Hallam depreciated the middle ages

[24] H. H. Milman, *History of Latin Christianity* (4th edn, 9 vols., London, 1867).

[25] Duncan Forbes, *The Liberal Anglican idea of history* (Cambridge, 1952), pp. vii–viii, 15, 124.

[26] Macaulay, 'Hallam's constitutional history', p. 116.

[27] Lord John Russell, *An essay on the English government and constitution from the reign of Henry VII to the present time* (London, 1823), saw English history in four stages of development and, though he quoted Hallam (pp. 11, 31), Russell wanted to make the Glorious Revolution 'the mighty stock from which all other revolutions have sprung' (p. xv).

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or that he made 'no attempt to understand the medieval mind'[28] or that he thought stadially in the way that Russell did. Meanwhile, Milman became an embarrassment for Forbes in writing a sympathetic and admiring memoir of Hallam of whom he had become a close friend.[29] Within all these perceptions, one begins to suspect difference compressed into sameness by some critics, and difference enhanced into false distinction by others.

I

The Hallams were Lincolnshire gentry, not from the rolling Wolds in the north of the country, but from the south-east around Boston; and, though the family moved away to Windsor and later Bristol, their 'properties' remained. In 1790, for example, John Hallam, Henry's father, set off to visit them as landlord,[30] but it should be stressed that Henry Hallam not only retained many of the tenancies but also expanded them: his accounts reveal receipts for around £2,000 per annum in 1820 and show him still engaged in purchases.[31] He had a stake in unreformed England; he had property to lose. His father's dogged *embourgeoisement* (Eton, King's College, Cambridge, canon of Windsor) lent his son a leafy beginning, but in 1781 his father climbed further up the pole to become dean of Bristol and so the family moved to that very different urban environment, just as a young Robert Southey was thankfully being whisked away to Bath.[32] How much political radicalism and ecclesiastical dissent Henry saw as he grew up in the deanery defies reconstruction though he can hardly have failed to see that Bristol was not Windsor. In any case, his father dispatched him to Eton when he was thirteen and, from there, he proceeded, not to King's, but to Christ Church in Oxford. 'If his academic career was undistinguished', Milman's memoir ran, 'it was because in his time the University offered hardly any opportunities of distinction.'[33] It was not for want of trying and Henry Hallam's self-imposed programme of study lacked nothing in strenuousness, with mathematics, geometry, and astronomy complementing the classical languages, plus daily doses of rebarbative German (a language he never fully acquired), intended to extend his facility in French and Italian. But Christ Church mattered less for its

[28] Forbes, *Liberal Anglican idea of history*, p. 142. Milman, Forbes's contrast case, had no choice but to make that attempt because he was writing the ecclesiastical history of the middle ages whereas Hallam's conspectus had its centre elsewhere; but the different focus does not equate to incomprehension.

[29] Milman saw him as a 'calm, conscientious Whig of the old school' who produced work that was 'sober, solid, veracious'. Memoir, included in H. S. Maine and F. Lushington, eds., *Remains in verse and prose of Arthur Henry Hallam* (London, 1863), pp. xviii, xx.

[30] John Hallam to his wife, 21 June 1790, Hallam MSS, Library of Christ Church, Oxford. This collection, hereafter 'Hallam MSS', extends to 16 volumes of letter-books but it comments on Henry Hallam's environment more than his views since most of the correspondence is incoming.

[31] The accounts may be consulted in the Hallam MSS in volume 14.

[32] Robert Southey had been born in Bristol but the half-sister of his aunt took him away to live with her in Bath.

[33] Milman, memoir, p. xv.

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lessons than for its friendships, two of which made a difference to Hallam's trajectory both before he left Oxford in 1798 and over the next two decades. Originally, the friendships pointed in opposite directions. Lord Webb Seymour, eldest son of the tenth duke of Somerset of the same name, enclosed Hallam in the aristocratic whiggery with which his name remains connected. Peter Elmsley, one of the greatest classicists of his day, retained more Catholic connections that extended to Tory society and indeed to Southey himself.[34]

Seymour's presence in Hallam's youth deserves emphasis but so does an inversion within it. At Oxford, Hallam played the metaphysician and Seymour the man of sound sense, mistrusting abstraction.[35] Beyond Oxford, when Seymour took himself off to Edinburgh to study with the mathematician John Playfair, Hallam became the one who retreated towards 'matters of fact' when Seymour sought abstraction.[36] This tension became creative once Hallam had given up the law (his first occupation) in 1806 and, supported by a sinecure in the Stamp Office, turned his mind to writing history. As we shall see, it played a significant part in making Hallam's first book a different one from the constitutional history he had originally envisaged and, in Seymour's eyes at least, a more important one. Meanwhile Peter Elmsley offered Hallam a more relaxed outlook and one far less animated by Whig enthusiasms. Both men – Seymour and Elmsley – died young but it seems likely that, had they lived, then Elmsley, rather than Seymour, would have become the more permanent companion.

Reversion succeeded inversion in Hallam's return to Bristol society, punctuated by his unhappy approach to the Inns of Court. Few towns could teach mercantilism so thoroughly as Bristol or the dangers to social stability when the merchant classes learned frustration. Yet that was not the importance of Hallam's future wife, Julia Maria, since far greater significance appeared in her Elton lineage. For although her father had lain claims to respectable churchmanship and although the most conservative observer could hardly call the Rev. Abraham Elton, Kt. of Clevedon Court, Somerset, a parvenu, the Presbyterian background of so many Eltons brooked no denial. A Scottish streak – they were related to the Dundases – doubtless coloured this history but Sir Abraham's wayward and poetic son, Charles, later the sixth baronet, embodied it. In marrying Julia Maria Elton in 1807, Hallam acquired membership of a family that was always eccentric and about to become notorious.

[34] 'You were the oldest and most intimate of his friends; I also held a place in his esteem.' Dedication to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn in Southey, *Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae: letters to Charles Butler, esq., comprising essays on the Romish religion and vindicating the book of the church* (London, 1826), pp. v–vi.

[35] 'His want of attention to physics', Seymour wrote of Hallam in 1800, 'has led him to think more on points of the highest abstraction, than on such intellectual phenomena as fall under daily experience'. Diary, 16 Oct. 1800, in Lady Gwendolyn Ramsden, ed., *Correspondence of two brothers: Edward Adolphus, 11th duke of Somerset and Lord Webb Seymour, 1800–1819* (London, 1906), p. 56.

[36] Hallam to Seymour, 27 May 1802, ibid., p. 59. He had 'changed his mind much' in the past four years.

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Charles kept his spiritual striving away from the public eye, and a fortiori from his father's, but it seems a reasonable supposition that he shared them with his sister, to whom he was close, and his new brother-in-law. His journey towards perdition became plain only in 1818 when he announced his newfound Unitarianism in a printed manifesto.[37] Charles had turned himself into a Unitarian theologian and polemicist; his father, still recovering from his son's elopement with the daughter of a Bristol merchant, closed the doors of Clevedon Court to him. Why this arresting episode reaches the commentaries on Hallam as no more than a harmless aside defies easy explanation, the more so when Hallam's future anti-clericalism becomes the subject of so much remark. Denying Christ's participation in a triune God was an outrage in regency England, whatever its status in liberated America, and whispered conversations at Clevedon Court and in his marital home over the previous decade may have urged Hallam towards the more sceptical churchmanship and aggression towards the Roman See that marks his first two books. Clevedon would become as much his home as Wimpole Street or Wilton Crescent and was where he and all his family are buried.[38] As for Charles, he would later have his own second thoughts,[39] creating waves by returning to Anglicanism just as Arthur Henry Hallam, Henry's more famous son, entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1827.

Arthur's birth in 1811 marked the onset of a period in which Henry Hallam began to think seriously about his historical writing, freed from the trammels of legal work and, after his father's death in 1812, lubricated by a substantial private income. Two possible projects preoccupied him: a book about English constitutional history, one that he thought he could write in three years, and a more major study of European development through the middle ages that might well take six years or longer.[40] Which to do first? Hallam's original idea tended towards dispatching the constitutional history to clear a path for the major work. His plan conflicted, however, with Webb Seymour's Edinburgh perspective on what counted as serious history and provoked from him the

[37] Charles Abraham Elton, *An appeal to scripture and tradition in defence of the Unitarian faith* (London, 1818).

[38] The church at Clevedon contains their memorials, artfully arranged around the centrepiece of Arthur Henry Hallam.

[39] Charles A. Elton, *Deuterai Phrontides: second thoughts on the person of Christ, on human sin and on the atonement* (London, 1827). Joseph Hunter, who had known him 'in his Unitarian days', felt the betrayal quite as sharply as Elton's former minister at Lewins Mead, Lant Carpenter. Hunter found the new manifesto written 'in too spiteful a spirit, full of uncalled for taunting: ill befitting a person who had written in the same style on the other side'. Hunter, 'Charles Elton', Hunter MSS, British Library (BL), Add. MSS 36527, fo. 147. On the Anglican side, a jubilant Southey rejoiced in 'the second case of the kind at Bristol. Dr. Stock's was the first.' Robert Southey to Dr H. H. Southey, 26 Apr. 1827, in John Wood Warter, ed., *Selections from the letters of Robert Southey* (4 vols., London, 1856), IV, p. 58.

[40] Webb Seymour to Hallam, 5 Apr. 1812, reporting Hallam's views, Hallam MSS 7, fo. 28.

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argument that constitutional history would not allow for a 'philosophical' treatment.

> Were you now to give up three years exclusively to this subject, I fear there would be a risk that you would never resume the greater task, after having so long laid it aside, & indeed I should be sorry for this, especially after all you have done already.[41] That a just philosophical history of the English constitution might be of more immediate benefit to the world by its influence on our country men, & might also bring a more immediate reward of reputation to its author, cannot be disputed; but in my opinion the other work is of a higher character, & allows a wider scope for the exercise of a philosophical understanding.[42]

In fact, Seymour no longer had his finger on the pulse of a friend from whom he was now distanced in more than space. He saw Hallam as he had seen him a decade earlier, as an aspirant Whig politician who expressed more interest in politics than seemed decent in post-Enlightenment man. In disliking '[y]our taste for the study of politics, as a branch of science',[43] Seymour had, however, identified a crucial trope that had in no sense diminished, but rather advanced, in its urgency. He saw that Hallam had brought a deep commitment to the idea of science to his sense of the historical enterprise. Along with the idea of law as an expression of social reality, this would form the basis of all his writings after 1818. Seymour also saw that the constitutional history, for Hallam as much as for he himself, represented the minor project under consideration.

Hallam had, in fact, eased away from his early Whig commitments. They had brought him a sinecure; but no further benefits seemed likely to accrue once Lord Liverpool established himself as an inevitable Tory prime minister; and Hallam no longer cherished any wish to become a politician. He kept some Whig society because that was where he had an *entrée*; and his election, rather late, to a fashionable circle, the so-called the King of Clubs, in 1820 suggested that a predominantly Whig group still thought him acceptable.[44] But if ordered liberty expressed his political philosophy, then order, in the anxious post-war years leading to Peterloo and Cato Street, trumped liberty. He no longer wrote for the *Edinburgh Review* and had turned into a Whig 'more by association than profession'.[45] His four years as a barrister certainly informed his politics quite as much as his history, as he formed the view that a society's laws spoke of its morality and state of civilization. Enthusiasm, on the other hand, now belonged to his scientific studies and association with the men who prosecuted them.

[41] He had asked 'How goes the History' two years earlier: Seymour to Hallam, 16 Feb. 1810, ibid. 7, fo. 26.

[42] Seymour to Hallam, 5 Apr. 1812, ibid. 7, fo. 27.

[43] Seymour to Hallam, 9 May 1802, ibid. 7, fo. 17.

[44] For the King of Clubs, see Lady Seymour, ed., *The 'pope' of Holland House: selections from the correspondence of John Whishaw and his friends, 1813–1840* (London, 1906), pp. 333–9. The club, which had a maximum membership of thirty, held its last dinner on 7 June 1823 with Hallam present.

[45] Martin Blocksidge, *'A life lived quickly': Tennyson's friend Arthur Hallam and his legend* (Brighton, 2011), p. 13. He wrote again for the *Edinburgh Review* briefly after 1830.

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Hallam's Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Society are well known. Less remarked is his Fellowship of the Geological Society and probably some association with the new Royal Astronomical Society founded in 1820.[46] The former brought him into the company of researchers capturing the intellectual moment in their discoveries, none more so than Roderick Murchison of whom Hallam became a close friend.[47] Young Arthur was encouraged to share his passion for astronomy and cosmology. In the famous memorial published with the *Remains* compiled by Hallam after Arthur's premature death in 1833, a text often regarded as paternal piety rather than the catalogue of concealed criticism and regret to which it frequently approximates, its author lamented 'the vague and mystical speculation which he [Arthur]was too fond of indulging', an affliction that might have been cured by '[a] little more practice in the strict logic of geometry, a little more familiarity with the physical laws of the universe, and the phenomena to which they relate'.[48] Having failed to induct Arthur into either mathematics or the universe, he made him take up Law following his graduation, a blessing he likewise conferred on his other son, Henry Fitzmaurice Hallam.

Laws were facts and facts could be scientifically investigated, arranged, and explained. By 1812, Hallam had the twin mechanisms needed to reduce the chaos of the past to ordered liberty: ordered by his mind, liberated by its essence as an ascent towards freedom under law. The English case was a compelling one and it would have its day. But (Webb Seymour had been right) the primary demand must be to produce a more 'philosophical' project that would treat the past as if it were a cosmic trajectory in which he, Hallam, would become the new Copernicus, establishing regularity, geometry, and gravitational attraction between events. He had read every credible author, whether historian or chronicler, in English, French, and Italian. It must be possible to subject his findings to systematic analysis, not as an overall narrative but in a new way, treating Europe as a series of overlapping case-studies and working outwards from their legal codes. He was fast advancing to his fortieth year. The war was over. A new society needed to be taught about itself in ways that caught the spirit of science and demonstrated the immutability of law.

II

Posterity reads some historians forwards from *magnum opus* to minor works in a mood of diminuendo and others backwards in a search among juvenilia for the roots of later achievement. Hallam attracts those who wish to begin in the centre of his narrative. Once grant the *Constitutional history* of 1827 its usual place as

[46] But see footnote 108 below.

[47] A small and unrevealing correspondence between Hallam and Murchison is housed at the Geological Society in Burlington House, London.

[48] Preface (1834) to *Remains in verse and prose of Arthur Henry Hallam*, ed. S. Maine and F. Lushington (London, 1863), p. xx.

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Hallam's master-text, then his *View of the state of Europe during the middle ages* (1818) becomes an apprentice's guide to what will follow, while his later *Introduction to the literature of Europe* becomes a sort of retirement project and his *Supplemental notes* to the *View* a mark of eccentricity or just a refusal to stop arguing with his critics. That this is a cock-eyed view of Hallam's books has not deterred their readers from adopting it. Moreover, that it bears little relation to what Hallam himself thought about what mattered in his books has proved no stronger deterrent. He spent the period between 1818 and 1827 thinking about his constitutional history in a period of creative writing that ran in total from about 1806 until Julia Maria's death in 1840. Its two volumes comprise one fifth of the ten that he would one day produce, unless one counts the second volume of the *View* as an essay on that subject. His largest book, the *Introduction to the literature of Europe*, is not about constitutional history. His *Supplemental notes*, on which he spent many years' reading and annotating, do not supplement the *Constitutional history* but rather his first book on Europe in the Middle Ages. Read forwards, rather than backwards or sideways, *A view of the state of Europe during the middle ages* looks like a mature work of scholarship of which the *Constitutional history* of 1827 appears as an extension or confirmation. Medieval Europe does not function as a prolegomenon to liberty, on this reading, but instead as its source.

Sydney Smith had heard enough of Hallam's proposed volume to feel irritated about its ambition, which he ascribed to congenital conceit. 'Of Hallam's labour and accuracy I have no doubt', he wrote to John Whishaw from his vicarage at Foston, north of York, in the year of the *View*'s publication, 'but he has less modesty than any man I ever saw, and with talents of no very high description is very apt to attempt things very much above his strength'.[49] Admittedly, Hallam's prefatory remarks have a certain *brio*. The book will 'exhibit, in a series of historical dissertations, a comprehensive survey of the chief circumstances that can interest a philosophical inquirer'; its structure will strike the reader as 'probably different from that of any former historical retrospect'.[50] On the other hand, Hallam genuinely broke new ground in his first volume by forsaking continuous narrative to produce a pattern of independent chapters organized by country. France came first, followed by a discussion of the feudal system mostly focused on France, then Italy, Spain, the German lands, and a severe assessment of the Greeks and the Saracens ('this depraved people').[51] The second volume began with an assault on ecclesiastical, and particularly papal, power in Europe generally before turning to a long

[49] Sydney Smith to Whishaw, 13 Apr. 1818, in Lady Seymour, ed., *The 'pope' of Holland House*, p. 316. This jaundiced remark should be placed alongside the recollections of Jane Brookfield who saw in her uncle one who resisted Macaulay's need to harangue an audience and who often lapsed into periods of benevolent silence. See Charles and Frances Brookfield, *Mrs. Brookfield and her circle* (2 vols., London, 1905), II, p. 377.

[50] *View of the state of Europe during the middle ages* (hereafter *View*) (2 vols., London, 1818), I, pp. v, vii.

[51] *View*, I, p. 511.

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disquisition on the origins of the English constitution as a solvent of Roman and royal despotism, and only later moving towards the ground Webb Seymour had recommended as his theme in an uncomfortable chapter on 'Commerce, manners and literature'.

Feudalism gave Hallam the most trouble and it is significant that this subject prompted the most radical of his revisions and additions in the *Supplemental notes* twenty years later.[52] Part of the problem stemmed from his reliance on law-codes and his confidence that law, once established, provided the key to understanding political structures.[53] He conceived of France as a jig-saw of sovereignties until their consolidation in the fifteenth century, held together by forms of feudalism that acted as a glue binding the French people to their monarchy.[54] In that sense, feudalism need not carry the taint of despotism: in its interchange of rights and duties, for both of the parties bound in a feudal relationship, it could even resemble 'a scheme of civil freedom'.[55] Hallam required an early civil freedom in order to give his story an overall shape that one could arrange schematically as freedom-in-embryo, followed by freedom-in-achievement, followed by freedom-under-threat, followed by freedom-constitutionally-conferred. This pattern is best observed in the English case because, unlike France, England became a territorial unity in the Anglo-Saxon period. True, the operation of feudal laws 'broke in very much upon our ancient Saxon liberties', though Hallam never believed that the Witenagemot was a representative body.[56] This feudal eruption allowed the Anglo-Norman kingdom an unwholesome degree of royal power with which to suppress freedom further. Yet the very arbitrariness and injustice of that power's deployment brought about its inevitable crisis in 1215 when English liberties made their triumphant journey from popular instinct or noble memory to – a favourite phrase – 'the law of the land'.[57] That is why Magna Carta stands for Hallam at the very apex of English achievement with the Glorious Revolution its necessary, but in an important sense subordinate, confirmation. It is 'beyond comparison the most important event in our history, except that Revolution without which its benefits would rapidly have been annihilated ... [I]f every subsequent law were to be swept away, there would still remain the bold features that distinguish a free from a despotic monarchy.'[58] Backsliding there would be, not least under the cloud of Henry VIII, but the deed had been done. In 1215, England had become 'a monarchy greatly limited by law'.[59]

[52] He thought in retrospect that the feudal system had 'peculiarly drawn the attention of Continental writers' in the thirty years after he had written. See his *Supplemental notes to the view of the state of Europe during the middle ages* (4 vols., London, 1848), p. x.

[53] So feudal tenures 'determined the political character of every European monarchy where they prevailed', *View*, I, p. 123. He celebrates finding *feum* and *fevum* 'in several charters about 960', ibid., I, p. 117n.

[54] Ibid., I, p. 98.

[55] Ibid., I, pp. 226–7.

[56] Ibid., I, p. 225, II, p. 137.

[57] In this case reprimanding Hume who lacked even 'a moderate acquaintance' with it: ibid., II, p. 365.

[58] Ibid., II, p. 177.

[59] Ibid., II, p. 361.

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The *View* did not set out to provide an answer to Hume's *History of England* and it did not provide one. Certainly, Hume came under criticism, though Hallam found his prejudices understandable, granted the 'glaring prejudice by which some whig writers had been actuated', and he proved no less ready to attack John Millar or Robert Brady.[60] Blurredness over Hume arises only when the *Constitutional history* is elevated to *Ur*-text and the *View* made its precursor. It is worth remembering that although many commentators drew attention to the section on English constitutionalism as the best in the book, Hallam himself preferred his chapter on ecclesiastical power.[61] There, he could rage against 'spiritual tyranny', lambast the false decretals of Isidore, enjoy Gibbonian moments with the corruption of the tenth century ('Six popes were deposed, two murdered, one mutilated'), compare mendicant friars to proto-Methodists and celebrate the collapse of the 'dilapidated citadel' of Rome, reduced by the Reformation to 'sallies of decrepitude, the impotent dart of Priam amidst the crackling ruins of Troy'.[62] These judgements ask to be referred to Enlightenment certainties though they may equally draw some of their character from Bristolian or Bostonian Unitarianism. Either way, they imply that the *View* intended to concern itself principally with European civilization and not simply with English governance. An immediate translation into French also argued against depictions of the *View* as an English chronicle.[63] On the English side, when William Gladstone, still a stern and unbending Tory, spent countless hours between 22 October and 2 December 1833 taking thirty-one pages of tiny, handwritten notes, colour-coded and containing three sketch-maps of Europe, the text of Hallam's on his desk was not the *Constitutional history* but the *View of the state of Europe during the middle ages*.[64] The *Times* obituary, raking back across all Hallam's books in 1859, did not temporize in finding the first of his works also the greatest.[65]

Dedicating the *Constitutional history* to the marquis of Lansdowne had more to do with personal attachment – Lansdowne was Arthur's godfather – than Whig politics; but it resonated with a more determined attack on Hume's prejudice, carelessness, and 'want of acquaintance with the law' to make the new book sound like a Whig manifesto.[66] Yet if it continued the themes of his three chapters in the *View*, it also repeated its thesis which took its message from the

[60] Ibid., II, p. 364, for Hume. Brady erred in thinking the Normans had deprived the English of all their lands (ibid., II, p. 162). Millar got frankpledge wrong by following 'one of those general principles to which he always loves to recur' (ibid., II, pp. 146–7).

[61] Hallam to Seymour, 23 Dec. 1818: 'the best judges (among whom I reckon myself) prefer [the chapter] on ecclesiastical power'. Ramsden, ed., *Correspondence of two brothers*, p. 252.

[62] *View*, II, pp. 19, 28, 36, 67, 124–5. Hallam wrote, of course, for a readership familiar with the *Iliad*. Priam was the unfortunate king of Troy who failed to defend his city during the Trojan wars.

[63] Alphonse Borghers to Hallam, 6 Aug. 1820, Hallam MSS 1, fos. 1–2. The French publishers wanted some rearrangement of chapters. Hallam did not demur.

[64] The notes are bound in the Gladstone MSS, BL Add. MSS 44722, fos. 257–72.

[65] *Times*, 24 Jan. 1859.

[66] *The constitutional history of England*, I, p. 283.

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thirteenth, rather than the seventeenth, century. The Glorious Revolution formed not a beginning, but a terminus:

> the termination of that contest which the house of Stuart had obstinately maintained against the liberties, and of late against the religion, of England; or rather of that far more ancient controversy between the crown and the people which had never been wholly at rest since the reign of John.[67]

As in his earlier chapter on ecclesiastical power, Hallam also deemed it necessary to warn the reader at the outset that he would include the church and its enemies (internal as much as external after the Reformation) in the story of the struggle for liberty.[68] The *Constitutional history* thus celebrated the gaining of liberty from the churches as much as it welcomed a deliverance from the clutches of kings. Ironically, the critic who saw the point most clearly was Hallam's greatest enemy. Robert Southey's notorious review in the *Quarterly*, 'the abominable article … [and] … disgraceful performance … characteristic of the ill-temper, conceit, and arrogance of the critic',[69] played the usual Tory card in making Hallam a tendentious Whig 'carrying into the history of the past … the spirit and the feeling of the party to which he has attached himself'.[70] But he would have expected that in any case and would have said so regardless of what Hallam had written.

What produced the incandescence, which Southey's private letters reveal to have been genuine and extreme, was Hallam's lack of feeling for the reformed church, his treatment of those responsible for leading it, and a fortiori his dismissal of Southey for having 'vindicated' it. The poet's own *Book of the church* (1824) had enjoyed a turbulent reception among its critics and drawn from its author just twelve months before the appearance of Hallam's history, his *Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae*.[71] Yet here was Hallam with his 'desire of disparaging the reformation and its founders'; one who brought to the sacraments 'a jargon of bad metaphysical theology' and one 'supersaturated … with malevolence towards the Anglican church'.[72] Privately, Southey admitted the violence:

> I have treated Hallam's book with more severity than I often allow myself to exercise but it is written in the very worst spirit of faction. He has a good fortune, derived, I believe, wholly from the church; and the Church has not a more malevolent enemy. He calls Sheldon the Lambeth Moloch, speaks of his Suffragan Imps, says that Laud would not have been a good man even in private life, asserts that in the whole of his correspondence with Strafford you may seek in vain for any indication of a sense of

[67] Ibid., II, p. 100.
[68] Ibid., I, p. v.
[69] John Whishaw to Hallam, ?28 Feb. 1828, Hallam MSS 8, fo. 91.
[70] Southey, 'Hallam's *Constitutional history of England*', p. 260.
[71] *The book of the church* (London, 1824); Southey, *Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae*.
[72] Southey, 'Hallam's *Constitutional history of England*', pp. 204, 217, 219.

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duty towards God or man, and vindicates the murder of Strafford upon the true Catholic principle that the end justifies the means.[73]

To his future wife, Caroline Bowles, the relaxation at last collapsed into simple truth. 'I am acquainted with the author, and should therefore have abstained from this act of justice upon him, if he had not called it forth by some remarks in his notes upon the *Book of the church*, which takes from him all right of complaint.'[74] Southey's absurd review amounted to pique dressed as piety.

Nevertheless, it merited a Whig reply. Hallam contented himself with sad remarks about the decline of the *Quarterly* at Southey's hands but his friends, John Whishaw in particular, bent their minds to commissioning a combative contribution to the *Edinburgh Review*.[75] Macaulay was not the first choice: indeed his name did not enter Whishaw's mind. He thought the radical commentator James Mackintosh 'out of the question' through political distance and that John Allen, who had liked Hallam's book, would prove too busy. He had begun to wonder about others when he learned that Francis Jeffrey, the *Edinburgh Review*'s editor, had approached Macaulay, 'an arrangement which seems to me injudicious but probably too far gone to be altered'.[76] An inspired choice at one level, it remained injudicious at another. Macaulay would save Hallam from Southey's accusation of partisanship, or at least make of party little more than irony,[77] but he would do it from a Whig position that was itself blatantly partisan. He would not save Hallam from coolness towards the church because Macaulay shared the coolness He would do nothing to relate the Hallam of the seventeenth century to the Hallam of the thirteenth because the seventeenth was Macaulay's *point d'appui*. Worst of all, Macaulay would, through sheer talent, become Hallam's voice, so that forever afterwards commentators would filter Hallam through his most luminous redactor.[78] By immersing him in the Whig environment of his day, Macaulay also concealed the depth of Hallam's historical calibration. By making him the impartial judge of England's

[73] Southey to Herbert Hill, 4 Nov. 1927, in Kenneth Curry, ed., *New letters of Robert Southey* (2 vols., New York, NY, 1965), II, p. 320. He likewise confessed to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, 16 Nov. 1827, that '[n]o book has ever displeased me more by its disagreeable temper, its want of charity, its spirit of detraction, and its bitter injustice', in Warter, ed., *Selections from the letters of Robert Southey*, IV, p. 71. His displeasure may also have been artificially fanned, as William Speck has suggested, by his wish for the government to appoint him historiographer; see W. A. Speck, *Robert Southey: entire man of letters* (New Haven, CT, 2006), p. 205.

[74] Southey to Caroline Bowles, n.d. [Oct. 1827], in Edward Dowden (ed.), *The correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles* (Dublin and London, 1881), pp. 128–9.

[75] Hallam to Whishaw, 28 Apr. 1828, in Lady Seymour, ed., *The 'pope' of Holland House*, p. 320; Whishaw to Hallam, ?20 Feb. 1828, Hallam MSS 8, fo. 92.

[76] Whishaw to Hallam, ibid.

[77] Cf. John Burrow's detection in Macaulay of an irony 'exercised at the symbols of party'. John Burrow, *Whigs and Liberals: continuity and change in English political thought. The Carlyle lectures, 1985* (Oxford, 1988), p. 68.

[78] Maurice Cowling, for example, though he offers acute thoughts on differences between Macaulay and Hallam, makes the review his major source: *Religion and public doctrine in modern England* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1980–2000), III, pp. 157–8.

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historical experience, he contributed to the assumption that Hallam was an English commentator who only England knew.

III

John Burrow rightly described Hallam as legalist and constitutionalist. But he also, unaccountably, thought him 'insular'.[79] Even the folk-memory of Hallam's two sons – one dead on a couch in Vienna and the other expiring in Tuscany – might give one pause. Nor were the Hallam family's expeditions to Europe minor excursions: they would pass through France and Switzerland to Italy and could be away for months or, in one protracted case after Henry had finished the *Constitutional history*, the best part of a year: Genoa, Florence, Rome, and Naples (where Southey's review caught up with him), before returning through Austria and Germany to an ignominious period in Ramsgate until the tenants of Wimpole Street finally left.[80] Or think of Hallam's friend, W. S. Rose, whose vast travelogue of letters sent to Hallam appeared in two volumes in 1819.[81] Like most serious historians, Hallam read Sismondi's histories of Italy and France.[82] Unlike most, he visited Sismondi in Geneva in order to discuss history.[83] European visitors naturally came in the opposite direction to England, the more so when Napoleon's armies arrived in their own countries; and Hallam had the reputation of acting generously with his considerable income and knowledge of London to help refugees. A letter from Francis Horner in Edinburgh recommended one of them in 1814:

> A gentleman from Hamburgh [sic] has brought me some strong letters of recommendation from several of my friends at Edinburgh, where he passed last winter; and his case I am persuaded you will think so interesting, that I wish to state it to you ... His name is Lappenberg.[84]

In the same way, Ugo Foscolo, the Italian revolutionary poet, exiled in London from 1816 and overshadowed by the debtor's prison, wrote to Hallam begging for help.[85] These are not the wanderings and filiations of an insular existence.

[79] Burrow, *A Liberal descent*, p. 30.

[80] The tour is well described in Blocksidge, *A life lived quickly*, pp. 56–79.

[81] W. S. Rose, *Letters from the north of Italy addressed to Henry Hallam, Esq.* (2 vols., London, 1819).

[82] *Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen âge* (16 vols., Paris, 1809–19); *Histoire des français* (31 vols., Paris, 1821–44).

[83] On a trip to the Alps in May–Sept. 1822. The Hallams visited Sismondi twice. Blocksidge, *A life lived quickly*, p. 18.

[84] Horner to Hallam, 12 May 1814, Hallam MSS 15, fos. 27–8. It is not clear whether Hallam received Lappenberg and the former does not figure among English historians acknowledged in J. M. Lappenberg, *Geschichte von England* (10 vols. with continuations by Pauli and Brosch, Hamburg, 1834–98). The best study of his context is R. Postel, *Johann Martin Lappenberg: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Geschichtswissenschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Lübeck and Hamburg, 1972).

[85] Foscolo to Hallam, n.d. and first page missing, Hallam MSS 15, fos. 52–4.

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Northern Europe raised some barriers because Hallam knew no Dutch and his German remained frail. One correspondent in Amsterdam noted, nonetheless, 'quelle impression fait en Europe votre tableau du moyen âge' and reported German and Dutch translations already in train a year after the *View*'s publication.[86] Hallam could not enter into correspondence with the greatest historian of his mature years, Leopold von Ranke, but the latter's *English history* contains references to Hallam and cites one of his corrections with approval.[87] The *Supplemental notes* suggest a sufficient working knowledge of German by the 1840s to enable an assimilation of Heinrich von Luden's *History of the German people* and Jacob Grimm's studies in legal history.[88] None of those connections matched in importance, however, Hallam's sympathy with France and his deep friendship with François Guizot. One consolation when the *Constitutional history* had been traduced by Southey lay in Hallam's having heard that Guizot, whom he did not know, intended to translate and annotate the work for a French audience.[89] Encouraged by the interest, Hallam sent Guizot an early part of his *Introduction to the literature of Europe* after a relationship had developed through the 1830s ('j'y attache un prix infini').[90] An invitation to dine at Auteuil followed when Hallam was in Paris in 1842, and again in 1847, with pressure to bring 'toute votre famille'.[91] A decade later, the elderly Hallam, grieving for his second son, made his way to Val Richer to spend three weeks with Guizot.[92] By then, Guizot's life and historical work had suffered its major *bouleversement* in the events of 1848. He became another temporary refugee in London where he did not need Hallam's money but was desperate for his books: the first two volumes of Sismondi's *Histoire des Français*, Thierry's *L'histoire des Gaulois* and 'l'ouvrage de Lehuërou sur les institutions des Mérovingiens et des Carlovingiens que j'ai vu sur votre table'.[93] They formed a working relationship that promised a meeting of minds and not merely an exchange of books, the more so as Guizot's mind turned towards British history. He knew that he would find a sympathetic echo for his disgust at Macaulay' radicalism:

J'ai vu avec chagrin Mr. Macaulay de prononcer à Edimbourg pour le *ballot* ... [P]renez bien garde que la transformation n'aille pas jusqu'à faire entrer les

[86] J. D. Meyer to Hallam, 10 Feb. 1819, Hallam MSS 15, fo. 42.

[87] 'nach dem, was Hallam (III) [sic] darüber gesagt hat, nicht mehr wiederholt werden' ('after what Hallam said in volume III can no longer be sustained'), Leopold von Ranke, *Englische Geschichte vornehmlich im sechzenhten und siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (7 vols., Berlin, 1859–68), v, p. 233n. Other references occur in II, pp. 76 and 491, III, p. 29.

[88] Heinrich von Luden, *Geschichte des teutschen Volkes* (12 vols., Gotha, 1825–37), cited in Hallam, *Supplemental notes*, I, p. 702, and Jacob Grimm, *Deutsche Rechts-Alterthümer* (Göttingen, 1828)), cited at I, p. 71, and elsewhere.

[89] Hallam to Whishaw, 28 Apr. 1828, in Lady Seymour, ed., *The 'pope' of Holland House*, p. 320. Guizot did not in the event do so.

[90] Guizot to Hallam, 14 Mar. 1838, Hallam, MSS 2 fo. 254: 'I attach an infinite value to it.'

[91] Guizot to Hallam, 1 June 1842 and 28 Oct. 1847, Hallam MSS 2, fos. 256, 260.

[92] Guizot to Hallam, 11 Nov. 1852, Hallam MSS 2, fo. 288.

[93] Guizot to Hallam, 27 Mar. 1848, Hallam MSS 2, fo. 262.

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principes révolutionaires dans les institutions libres. Ce serait inoculer la peste à un corps sain.[94]

Guizot's biography of the dead Robert Peel would show his regret at losing that '[r]are exemple de la politique éclairée et honnête',[95] a sentiment certainly shared by Hallam.

At home, Hallam's sympathies had indeed widened. Only Arthur kept his father's eyes on the familiar Whig hymn-sheet by his showing signs of departing from it. At Eton he had, despite becoming 'the object of [Gladstone's] warmest attachment',[96] echoed Henry's supposed politics; but at Cambridge, once over the breakdown in his first year, he became disturbingly Liberal Tory and, what was worse, Coleridgean in taste and expression.[97] Following the tragedy of Arthur's premature death in 1833, Hallam buried the Whigs with him. 'Walked home with Hallam', Macaulay recorded in 1839. 'He talked of the downfall of the Whigs. They will never, he said, hold up their heads again. They are dead men – buried – etc. I listened and disbelieved him.'[98] But then Macaulay had disbelieved many of Hallam's circumventions when he heard them at all. Peel's rise and Guizot's celebration of him brought invitations, as we have seen, from Tory houses, which included some from Lord Mahon.[99] That Mahon, later Earl Stanhope, should have been ignored by Hallam's commentators may safely be lain at the feet of political innocence. Mahon was a Tory and the son of a Tory Ultra so, the assumption goes, he could not form part of a Whig historian's purview. In fact, Mahon himself made the crucial point about Whigs and Tories when introducing his own *History of England*:

it is very remarkable that, in Queen Anne's reign, the relative meaning of these terms was not only different, but opposite to that which they bore at the accession of

[94] Guizot to Hallam, 11 Nov. 1852, Hallam MSS 2, fo. 289. 'I have viewed with some sadness the pronouncement of Mr. Macaulay at Edinburgh in favour of the [secret] *ballot*. Take care that this transformation does not merely introduce revolutionary principles into liberal institutions. It would inoculate a healthy body with plague.'

[95] Guizot to Hallam, 22 Feb. 1857, Hallam MSS 2, fo. 294 ('a rare example of an enlightened and honest politician'). Guizot's *Sir Robert Peel: étude d'histoire contemporaine* had been published in Paris in the previous year. Three years later Jules Michelet confessed to writing a portion of his *Angleterre* 'sur Hallam et Macaulay'. Journal, 12 Mar. 1860, in Paul Viallaneix, ed., *Journal de Jules Michelet* (4 vols., Paris, 1959–76), II, p. 513.

[96] Gladstone to Hallam (draft), n.d. [1833], Gladstone MSS 44353, fo. 267. He deleted the phrase.

[97] I owe this point to a stimulating paper by Dr Seamus Perry in the symposium on Arthur Hallam. See n. 5.

[98] Journal, 7 May 1839, in William Thomas, ed., *The Journals of Thomas Babington Macaulay* (5 vols., London, 2008), I, pp. 182–3.

[99] Philip Henry Stanhope (1805–75). He was styled Lord Mahon from 1816 to his father's death in 1865 when he succeeded as 5th Earl Stanhope. See *The history of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles, 1713–1783* (7 vols., London, 1836–53); *Life of William Pitt* (4 vols., London, 1861–2).

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William IV ... The same person who would have been a Whig in 1712 would have been a Tory in 1830.[100]

Hallam found no difficulty in establishing a warm relationship with this most courteous and civilized of aristocratic historians and their names merit linkage, rather than dissociation. The same may be said of Henry Hart Milman who also formed part of the same circle in these years, once declining an invitation from Mahon because he had a prior engagement visiting Hallam in the country.[101] Beyond English country houses and Paris, moreover, Hallam's location demands an entry from New England. Guizot introduced him to 'Mr. Ticknor de Boston ... homme tout à fait distingué'[102] who in turn moved in the circle of the future historian of America, George Bancroft,[103] when he was President James Polk's minister in London in the late 1840s. Both met Hallam and held him in esteem even if they did not say, as did William Hickling Prescott, that Hallam had taught him everything he knew about writing history.[104]

Rescuing Hallam from insularity involves speculation about the degree to which he was an English historian at all. Were his ghost to apply for a post in the History Department of a modern university, he might well choose to describe himself as an early modern Europeanist. Between the publication of the *Constitutional history* in 1827 and the appearance of his *Supplemental notes to the view of the state of Europe during the middle ages* in 1848, Hallam's concerns rested on the history of European civilization. The four volumes of his *Introduction to the literature of Europe* had nothing to do with fiction; their author never did. He described 'literature' as 'the knowledge imparted through books',[105] and that took him across the entire gamut of writing over three centuries, filching material for both the *Introduction* and the *Supplementary notes* from the *Biographie universelle* and Chalmers's *General biographical dictionary*,[106] indeed any biographical collection so long as it were not Coleridge's

[100] Lord Mahon, *The history of England*, I, pp. 6–7.

[101] Milman to Lord Mahon, 11 Aug. 1835, Stanhope MSS C401/1, Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone. The organization of this archive remains that originated by Stanhope himself and requires a total re-classification and cataloguing to meet the needs of professional researchers. No correspondence from Hallam appears in Stanhope's large file on 'historical subjects', but letters may be submerged in other files.

[102] 'An extremely distinguished man.' George Ticknor (1791–1871), *History of Spanish literature* (3 vols., London, 1849), and *Life of William Hickling Prescott* (London, 1864). He spent two periods in England, 1815–19 and 1835–8.

[103] George Bancroft (1800–1891), minister in England 1846–9, who found in Hallam 'a mind richly stored with all kinds of learning'. Bancroft to John Appleton, 3 Feb. 1847, in M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *The life and letters of George Bancroft* (2 vols., London, 1908), II, p. 11.

[104] Prescott claimed Hallam as 'my teacher in the science of history, beyond any living writer': W. H. Prescott to Hallam, 3 Nov. 1839, Hallam MSS 4, fo. 273.

[105] *Introduction to the literature of Europe, in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (4 vols., London, 1837–9), I, p. x.

[106] *Biographie universelle* (42 vols., Paris, 1842–65); Alexander Chalmers et al., *The general biographical dictionary* (32 vols., London, 1812–17).

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Biographia literaria[107] which Arthur Henry Hallam had unwisely pored over before going to Cambridge. His method in the *Introduction* involved chopping time into slices and surveying, in each period, classical literature, theology, philosophy, taste, and science with only an occasional glance at history, except in volume IV (1600–50) where he preferenced mathematical and physical sciences. It would be pleasant to think that his title page with its mysterious 'Henry Hallam FRAS' involved a claim to competence in discussing the cosmos; it almost certainly did not.[108] But he at least hoped to avoid, unlike his predecessor Juan Andrés, all 'vagueness unpleasant to those who seek precise notions'.[109] Precision also dominated the *Supplemental notes* where he raked through the work of European scholars – 'Where, alas! are the English historians?', Milman had wondered[110] – to try to correct his earlier work, though his combativeness emerged on every page, hanging on to the constraining of German kings since 'the authority he possessed by law was for the king far from unlimited' and lashing at Meyer and Thierry, though with respectful asides on Lappenberg and Ranke.[111] Science and law remained inviolate values.

IV

In 1863, four years after Hallam's death, the future distinguished historian of America and France, Henry Adams, found himself trapped indoors by a howling gale in St Leonards on Sea. 'I have nothing to do but to read Hallam.'[112] His author had become furniture in Darwinian England, known but not known, acknowledged but uninvestigated. He had been rendered by his detractors a left-over from the Enlightenment or a minor apologist for Romanticism. Revisiting him perhaps suggests a different significance. If he were not an Enlightenment relic, he brought to history a sense of science and a quasi-Unitarian coolness of vision. If he did not found Whig history, he may have helped establish post-Napoleonic English nationalism as a form of

[107] S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia literaria; or, biographical sketches of my literary life and opinions* (2 vols., London, 1817). I am grateful to Dr Seamus Perry for this information.

[108] Neither the Royal Astronomical Society nor the Royal Asiatic Society holds evidence to suggest that Hallam was a Fellow. The latter Society in any case tended to prefer 'Member' to 'Fellow' in the nineteenth century and so encouraged MRAS rather than FRAS. The Society of Antiquaries, of which Hallam was vice-president from 1824 to 1851, had a royal charter but rarely used the designation; its Fellows are still styled FSA. But in Hallam's day FRAS may have been an uncommon but thinkable acronym for the Antiquaries and that remains the best bet. I am enormously grateful to Peter Hingley, Adrian James, and Kathy Lazenblatt for their help over this puzzle.

[109] Hallam, *Supplemental notes*, Introduction, p. vi. Cf. Juan Andrés, *Origine, Progresso e stato d'ogni literatura* (5 vols., Parma, 1782–99).

[110] H. H. Milman, *History of Latin Christianity* (3rd edn, 9 vols., London, 1864), I, p. vi.

[111] Hallam, *Supplemental notes*, pp. 103, 110–11, 125, 194, 226. He did not see irony in his accusing John Allen of having invented anachronistic legal fictions, pp. 375–6.

[112] Henry Adams to Charles Francis Adams Jr, 27 Nov. 1863, in J. C. Levenson et al., eds., *The letters of Henry Adams* (6 vols., Cambridge, MA, 1982–8), I, p. 411.

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defensive *arrière-pensée* that rendered Jules Michelet's rants against England 'ridiculous' and Bancroft's gibes about the English reprehensible as much for their 'tone' as their substance.[113] His compulsions about law – mathematical, civic, cosmic – took him beyond stale and stadial images of the past into a world of forensic enquiry with its ultimate goal of judgement with all passion spent. He could never have become a great historian because the passion cannot be left out without anaemia. Yet what he said had to be said for historical scholarship to move forwards. In helping move it forwards, he took with him some of the serious minds of his age and contracted obligations from Paris to Boston, Rome to Geneva. For the age that followed he became one entry on a list of Whig historians and his 'influence' ceased once Macaulay had absorbed it. A later age may allow him more space and time. He made English historians think about Europe and captured European ideas for an English audience. Equally, he made the society of his day resist the temptation to locate freedom only in modernity.[114] And his English arrow of legacy, if ever he loosed one, travelled further than he knew. It veered around Thomas Babington Macaulay, glanced off the scientific imagination of Henry Thomas Buckle,[115] and lodged itself, invisible and unremarked, in the legal fundamentalism of Bishop Stubbs.

[113] Bancroft received a severe ticking-off. 'You write as an historian, but you must expect that we shall read as Englishmen.' Hallam to Bancroft, n.d. [1852], in Howe, *Life and letters of George Bancroft*, II, p. 106. For Michelet see Hallam, *Supplementary notes*, p. xii.

[114] In succumbing to the temptation, 'we turn away from the records that attest the real, though imperfect, freedom of our ancestors' and miss 'the plastic influence of civil rights, transmitted as a prescriptive inheritance through a long course of generations'. *View*, II, pp. 367–8.

[115] Buckle quoted all four of Hallam's books in his *History of civilization in England* (2 vols., London, 1857–61). He also organized the second volume along national lines – France and Spain, then Scotland – in ways redolent of the *View of the state of Europe during the middle ages*. I am grateful to Dr Helen Small of Pembroke College, Oxford, for this insight.

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