

Darwin would be especially timely. Proposals (250-500 words) will be considered by two members of the Board of Trustees, should incorporate a brief c.v. (no more than one side of A4) and should be submitted in a single email attachment to the Director by 23 March 2009.

For full details see the Conference website at: <http://www.wordsworthconferences.org.uk/WSC2009.htm>

FORTHCOMING LECTURES AND SEMINARS

North East Postgraduate Forum in the Long Eighteenth Century.

This forum is designed to enable graduate students based at universities in the North East to meet one another and academic staff to discuss their research interests in the literature and culture of the 'Long Eighteenth Century'. Students taking taught MA or research degrees and members of academic staff conducting research in the period c.1660-1830 are equally welcome no matter what their disciplinary background. Meetings are held five times a year, and are spread around the four institutions involved – Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria and Sunderland. The co-ordinators of the Forum are: Professor Pamela Clemit (Durham), Professor Allan Ingram (Northumbria), Dr Matthew Grenby (Newcastle) and Professor Richard Terry (Sunderland). Contact Professor Terry (richard.terry@sunderland.ac.uk) for details of the meetings of the forum, or with any inquiries about it.

The BARS Website also publishes details of seminars and lectures, and we welcome notices from organisers. Please send details to the Editor.

Reviews

Lynda Pratt, ed., *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. Pp. 267. £55. ISBN 9780754630463.

Because books of this kind reward browsing rather than reading through, they aren't a lot of fun to review. This one, though, finds a sturdy *raison-d'être* in the sheer logistical expediency of mustering fourteen hands to deal with so multifariously prolific an author. Central to his age yet still comparatively unsounded by critical scholarship, Southey was both long-lived and unremittingly industrious. Consider that his death in 1843 left unfinished three histories (monasticism, Portugal, English poetry), two works of biography (Telford the engineer, enough admirals to swamp several volumes), and two poems of potentially book length. The very range of these aborted projects is remarkable; yet it's only less so than the range of work Southey had seen through the press for four decades: the infamous *Wat Tyler*, the Byron-roasted *Vision of Judgment*, those infamous brash epics; but also a major edition of Malory, the *Life of Nelson*, a first Englishing of *The Cid*, ream upon ream of literary and cultural criticism – all this and 'Goldilocks' too.

Thus it makes good sense that anatomy of Southey's sprawling corpus should be distributed across a whole scholarly team. That not all team members pull their weight, or indeed pull together, is the curse of such volumes; but several individual performances call for admiring notice. The editor scores points at each of her three innings: an introduction (stimulating command of the texts, which she has lately edited *in extenso*), a concluding essay (likewise instructive) on the family-fumbled literary legacy, and a comprehensive

bibliography of primary and secondary materials (useful, albeit good only into 2003). A happily imagined chapter by David Fairer discusses, not just the proper literary history Southey composed or planned, but also the working sense of the past that informed much of the rest of what he wrote – a point reinforced in different but congruent terms by Mark Storey and David Craig in a pair of essays illuminating the co-presence of civic with historical impulses in this Poet Laureate's often excellent prose. In an agreeably quirky corollary investigation Paul Jarman assembles an argument about 'calendrical' poetry – one of several genres, be it said, in which Southey's originality has gone severely underestimated – where feast and holiday lyrics honour a ritual recurrence to which Southey clove despite its seeming incompatibility with the moralized progressivism that remained his mind's prime reflex. Tim Fulford tacks up strong theses about the 'moveable East' in Romantic orientalist ideology, though this elaborate framework leaves little time for convincing demonstration of how in practice the bankruptingly extravagant *Curse of Kehama* fits it or doesn't.

The two best (and mutually quite diverse) chapters in the volume do better justice to Southey's poems, even as the arguments they pursue bristle with more than merely Southeian interest. Nicola Trott's rich and inventive treatment of 'Poemets and Poemlings' connects the Laureate's little pieces to an issue that the Romantic attenuation of traditional genres made a big deal: namely, how the contest between majority and minority (which dogs Southey's reputation still) tended to apply at once to poems and to careers. The latter, Trott shows, keeps infiltrating the former with a mix of triviality and ponderousness clearly legible in the self-divided stylistic registry of poems on a goose or pig or gooseberry pie. Anybody rightly puzzled by the schism between, say, the verse narrative in *Thalaba* and the prose notes will find this chapter's quizzing of the lesser and nonce genres a fertile provocation.

Readers serious about *Madoc* can profit enormously from Nigel Leask's approach to that long strange trip of a poem, the one Southey himself most esteemed among his works and the

one hardest either to dismiss or to enjoy. Leask establishes persuasive coordinates for the poem in British colonial history and also literary history, on which with help from Pratt's recent editorial work he plots an account of the ideological swerves and reversals the poem underwent during many turbulent years of incubation. While I can't tell clearly to just what shore on the Gulf of Mexico Southey migrated his initially Peruvian action (Mississippi? Florida?), I greatly wish I had had the benefit of his exposition before writing on *Madoc* myself, and trust others will reap the benefits now on display here – with supplementary aid from adjacent chapters by Carol Bolton and Joselyn Almeida on linked themes.

As to the remaining contributions by others, if they do belong here they probably belong here only, to be duly found by specialists who have reasons of their own for exploring Southey's not especially interesting life or reckoning odd debits and credits within the far-flung economy of his literary influences. One suspects that the 'Contexts' rubric, here as in many another quaint and curious volume, has under cover of diplomatic generosity proven a false friend to the higher virtues of cohesion and point. Left to its own devices and without infusions of the close reading to which perhaps only Trott here can lay a firm claim, 'context' criticism defaults to binarism. It can compound historical or biographical circumstances with textual artefacts all day long but can seldom say, what remains unproven and indeed unargued at the end of this book, whether in Southey we have to do with an author who can arise from the compound into the complex. Deciding that would entail steady application of the one touchstone context most conspicuously absent here, the poetry of his brilliant contemporaries.

Herbert F. Tucker
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Carol Bolton, *Writing the Empire: Robert Southey and Romantic Colonialism*. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2007. Pp. 332. £60. ISBN 9781851968633.

Carol Bolton's *Writing the Empire* is a much-needed, timely and substantial monograph on Robert Southey which constitutes an invaluable addition to a cluster of very significant recent publications and research signalling the re-assessment of the poet's marginal standing in romantic-period literature and culture, including Lynda Pratt's, Tim Fulford's, and Sanjiv Roberts's *Poetical Works 1793-1810* (2004); Pratt's *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism* (2006); William Speck's new biography, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (2006); and, finally, Southey's *Collected Letters*, an ambitious collective project expected to be completed by 2014.

Building on the pioneering studies of Marilyn Butler, Tim Fulford, Nigel Leask, and Lynda Pratt, and through a creditably thorough analysis of Southey's literature and journalism, Bolton sets out to establish Southey as a leading figure of the nineteenth-century British intelligentsia by exploring his impact on 'the development of [contemporary] ideas on non-European cultures and societies'. Using a historicist and post-colonialist approach, Bolton begins with Southey's early radicalism in the 1790s and the literary manifestations of his egalitarian ideals and utopian, pantisocratic scheme, and continues by illustrating the metamorphosis of this into modern conservatism and his unique contribution to the expression of British imperial preoccupations.

Through an original and almost exhaustive analysis of Southey's Bristol-lectures and his anti-slavery poetry, the first chapter charts Southey's abolitionist, and anti-consumerist principles. Bolton excels in providing the contemporary socio-historical and political context by an illuminating analysis of Bristol as a cosmopolitan city whose foundation on the binary societal model of master *versus* slave influenced Southey's propaganda exposing colonial violence and the inhumanity of the

slave-trade. Additionally, she gives some interesting detail on Southey's relationship to Coleridge, their sharing of Jacobin egalitarian ideology and its promotion through their close working practices and literary collaborations. Bolton then charts Southey's late 1790s and early 1800s political swing, primarily through a detailed analysis of his contributions to the *Critical* and *Annual Reviews*. His articles now propagated a passive acceptance of the slave-trade and the empire's further expansion, reflecting the early stages of his subsequently strident conservatism.

The next two chapters deal respectively with Southey's envisioning of America in *Madoc*, and the South Seas as pastoral havens unspoilt by modern civilization which would fulfil his pantisocratic ideal and 'desire for political and personal freedom'. As the book progresses, however, we see that Southey's imperial anxieties soon relegated both these 'Eden's happy vales' to potential Christianized British colonies, and their 'noble savages' to promiscuous, barbaric tribes.

In chapter four, Bolton focuses on what she defines as Southey's 'method of othering', that is the exposure of foreign cultures as a means towards the exultation of the British Christian moral codes. She interprets *Thalaba the Destroyer's* moralizing tone against Islamic, Catholic-like superstition as evidence of Southey's burgeoning Tory nationalism. The Middle East becomes 'a corrupt and degenerate political and religious "other" that would benefit from the reforming influence of a rational, and morally upright western faith and polity'.

Bolton extends this argument in her final chapter, which portrays *The Curse of Kehama* as a projection of Southey's imperial anxieties and ambitions through his demonization of Hinduism, showing the need for India's evangelization. She posits that the epic is torn between an ideological attachment to both Sir William Jones's romantic view of the orient and James Mill's utilitarian orientalist paradigm. It primarily underscores Southey's didactic and moralizing project and his attempt to become a spokesman for the burgeoning British middle-class and its Protestant, imperialist vision. Bolton backs her argument with a thorough

historical context including useful references to Southey's defence of the Missionary Societies in his contributions to the *Quarterly* and *Annual Reviews*; the increasing anxiety about Napoleon and the consequent solidification of British nationalism.

Perhaps Bolton could have made more of Southey's undoubted fascination with Hinduism and Mohammedanism. It could be argued that his evident conservatism is counterbalanced by a residual radicalism which manifests itself by the fact that during a period of religious revival, he daringly turned his sight towards the exotic 'other', and used a 'pagan' and a supposedly morally degenerate, religion as subject matters and, indeed, as sources of poetic inspiration.

Bolton, however, ingeniously transforms a Southeyan commonplace, initiated by Geoffrey Carnall in his 1960 biography, his political bipolarity, into a dynamic agent for understanding the paradoxes of his colonialist policy. This scrupulously contextualized critical study re-examines Southey's impact on British late-enlightenment politics and culture, and establishes his literary authority by re-visiting his influence on Lord Byron and P.B. Shelley, and, also, by considering his under-researched impact on writers such as P.M. James, Mary Russell Mitford, and James Montgomery. Bolton is also original in providing in her discussions of *Kehama* and *Thalaba*, a relatively detailed and extensive analysis of a crucial, though largely neglected, aspect of his epics, their voluminous annotations. Throughout, Bolton's style is erudite yet accessible and focused, with regular succinct summaries of her main arguments. *Writing the Empire* certainly succeeds in establishing Southey as a pivotal nineteenth-century man of letters, and a leading poetic constructor of British imperial patriotism. This is a well-written and scrupulously researched scholarly monograph which will become essential reading for both academics and students in the field.

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Basil Cottle, *Joseph Cottle and the Romantics: The Life of a Bristol Publisher*. Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 2008. Pp. 356. £35. ISBN 9781904537809.

The late Basil Cottle was unrelated to his namesake, Joseph Cottle, but in *Joseph Cottle and the Romantics* he performs an act of piety worthy of a direct descendant, and one that Joseph Cottle himself would thoroughly have approved. Cottle won his place in literary history as the publisher in 1798 of *Lyrical Ballads*, though typically whether and in what sense Cottle can properly claim to have published the volume has been hotly contested. He published the book that did most damage to his reputation, his *Early Recollections* of 1837, as a means of recalling the literary world to a proper sense of his own importance. ‘Many,’ he wrote ‘might think it no small honour (without the slightest tincture of vanity) to have been the friend, in early life, of such men as *Southey, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Lamb*: to have encouraged them in their first productions, and to have published, as it respects *each* of them, his *first* Volume of Poems.’ In fact, Cottle, as all four of his protégés, even Southey, who, as Basil Cottle shows, was much the most generous of them, was remarkable for a vanity the more striking because so innocent. He was in addition, as Basil Cottle also shows, remarkable for the looseness of his grasp on facts. It is entirely characteristic that of the four poets he names it is only Lamb whose first volume was in fact published by Cottle.

Basil Cottle’s tastes are unashamedly old-fashioned. When Hannah More asked Wordsworth to read ‘Goody Blake and Harry Gill’ to her twice over it seems to him ‘no great tribute to her taste’, and when Joseph entered a competition for a poem on ‘Dartmoor’ and was defeated by Felicia Hemans the preference seems to Basil ‘disgrace enough’. Given this it is unsurprising that he makes few claims for Cottle’s own poems. ‘Malvern Hills’ is probably his strongest effort, although Lamb, when quoting from it in a letter, felt the need to insist

that he was not making it up but quoting ‘*totidem literis*’:

How steep! how painful the ascent!
It needs the evidence of close deduction
To know that ever I shall gain the top.

But it was his epic, *Alfred*, in which Cottle himself took most pride, using as his seal a king’s head bearing the legend ‘ÆLFRED’, and his poet friends vied with each other in the depth of the scorn that they expressed for it. The poem, according to Coleridge, ‘bore a lie on the title page, for he called it *Alfred*, and it was never *halfread* by any human being.’ Cottle’s verse, it is true, is pedestrian. It is verse, as Coleridge put it in his poem to Cottle, on which the eye may ‘gaze undazzled,’ but it is not without its own mild virtues.

Basil Cottle claims that the poems do not show the ‘violent political feelings’ evident in some of Coleridge’s and Southey’s verse, but his *Poems* of 1795 are inspired by a hostility to Britain’s war with France as fierce as theirs. Its most important poem, ‘War; a fragment’, was written, he writes in the Preface, because he was not content to feel ‘indignant at the enormities of war, without labouring to inspire the same abhorrence in the breast of others.’ The only war the poem is prepared to countenance is a defensive war fought to repel an invading army or to overthrow a tyrannical ruler:

Yet; if invaded rights the task demand,
If men behold oppress’d their native land,
By foreign despots, wand’ring far for prey,
Who locust-like, with ruin mark their way;
Or, see their Prince direct the Nation’s helm,
In ruin’s surge, his people to o’erwhelm:
Reward for foulest deeds a venal tribe,
Nor shun to blacken whom he cannot bribe

.....
’Twill then be right to grasp the blazing spear.

This does more than justify the defensive war being fought by revolutionary France against the invading Allied armies, it comes close to proclaiming the justice of a civil war designed to overthrow the British state. Basil Cottle claims that in his early career as a publisher Cottle had ‘done wonders unwittingly’, but there is evidence in his own poems that, whatever his own limitations, he was responsive to much that was new and fresh in the work of the young men that he published, and he certainly seems to have chosen to patronise young poets who shared his own radical anti-militarism.

Southey encouraged Cottle to write ‘a book about Bristol,’ and this is the project that Basil Cottle responds to most enthusiastically, because, it seems clear, it was an ambition that he shared. In his *Early Recollections*, Cottle came close to answering Southey’s request. It was a book prompted, Cottle claims, by Coleridge’s decision in *Biographia Literaria* to avoid ‘all distinct reference to Bristol, the cradle of his literature, and for many years his favourite abode.’ He was concerned not just to record his memories of Coleridge, but to memorialise his city at a time when ‘so many men of genius were there congregated, as to justify the designation, “The Augustan Age of Bristol.”’ Cottle was above all a Bristol patriot, a notion delightfully confirmed when on his only extended visit to London he describes himself as pursuing his research not in the British but in the Bristol Museum. In the brief period in which he was a publisher (his business failed in 1799), he seems to have been inspired by an ambition to demonstrate that his native Bristol might, just as well as London, be a centre from which an ambitious young writer might launch a literary career. His flagship volume was Southey’s *Joan of Arc*, a quarto volume which was, as Southey himself agreed, ‘the handsomest book that Bristol had ever yet sent forth’. It was no coincidence that he chose as the hero of his epic a King not just of England but of his own West Country.

This biography reveals that Basil Cottle was as warm a Bristol patriot as his namesake. In writing Joseph Cottle’s biography he has filled an important gap in our knowledge of the Romantic period, and he has in addition given a

fine portrait of the ‘Augustan Age’ of his and Joseph Cottle’s city. The book is a fitting memorial both of its subject and its author. I felt the want only of a rather fuller account of the various sects that made up Bristol’s Dissenting community (Joseph Cottle was a Baptist who became an Independent, but seems to have been consistently anti-Socinian), but this is a lack that recent work by Timothy Whelan has in large measure supplied, and I felt, too, the want of an index.

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Jonathan Cutmore, ed., *Conservatism and the ‘Quarterly Review’*. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2007. Pp. 280. £60. ISBN 9781851969517.

Jonathan Cutmore, *Contributors to the ‘Quarterly Review’*. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2008. Pp. 260. £60. ISBN 9781851969524.

Regular visitors to the *Romantic Circles* website will already be familiar with Jonathan Cutmore’s work as editor of the online ‘*Quarterly Review* Archive.’ With the publication of these two companion volumes in Pickering and Chatto’s ‘History of the Book’ series, he has built on that achievement and cemented an outstanding contribution to the study of Romantic print culture. I shall return later to the relationship between the print and online resources, after providing what is inevitably a brief and inadequate assessment of two very substantial books.

Together, these books offer the fullest account to date of one of the nineteenth century’s most important periodicals; based on extensive and painstaking archival research, notably in the John Murray Archive now housed at the National Library of Scotland, they illuminate the *Quarterly*’s place within British society and culture and its interactions with the material conditions of the contemporary publishing environment in all kinds of fascinating ways.

Cutmore himself claims that the sheer quantity of relevant manuscript and print material available has deterred investigators until now: 'there was too much information, unpublished and otherwise, to be tackled by any researcher with an eye on the health of his or her academic career.' Is this, one cannot help wondering, why Cutmore, who appears to be nowhere near retirement age, is described only as a 'former' professor at the University of Toronto? Be that as it may, there can be no doubting his formidable energy and commitment as the *primum mobile* of this project: he it is who has located and digested 'hundreds, indeed thousands, of unpublished letters scattered across dozens of repositories around the world,' familiarised himself with 'yards of *Quarterly Review* volumes,' applied a fresh and scrupulous scholarly eye to identifying the authors of nearly eight hundred anonymous articles, and composed his own history of the journal under its first two editors, before, finally, sharing these materials with others and soliciting a range of critical opinions on the newly floodlit terrain of the *Quarterly* in its early years. An undertaking that might have preoccupied a team of scholars and attracted a substantial research council grant has been tackled by Cutmore, it seems, single-handedly, and present and future critics of Romantic literature are in his debt.

In *Contributors to the Quarterly Review*, Cutmore presents a finely-grained account of the origins of the *Quarterly*, its early vicissitudes and eventual commercial and intellectual success, and the complicated manoeuvrings involved in finding a successor to its first editor, William Gifford. That the journal happened at all was, it seems, the result of a happy 'confluence of events and personalities,' and Cutmore carefully delineates the roles of Walter Scott (a leading figure in the literary landscape and a magnet for other contributors), George Canning (who supplied the all-important political sponsorship), and John Murray (who provided 'a bank roll and guaranteed distribution in London'). The political drivers behind the *Quarterly's* emergence as a counter-voice to the *Edinburgh Review* are made clearer than ever before; there was a consensus that it should avoid overt political propaganda, and much is

made of Murray's suggestion that literary articles should function as a screen whereby 'honnied [sic] drops of party sentiment may be delicately insinuated into the unsuspecting ear.' Getting copy in punctually was a problem from the start, and Gifford, Murray, and Scott lost no time in briefing against each other and blaming each other for what they saw as a less than impressive launch. Interestingly, Cutmore claims that the *Quarterly's* eventual success was largely owing to Gifford's editorial skills, despite the negative press he has received: Gifford (Canning's nominee) it was who held the journal together while Scott (who never wanted to be hands-on) prepared for a quick withdrawal and Murray complained and meddled. Murray could not resist interfering in editorial matters, and personally controlled an important triumvirate of reviewers in John Wilson Croker, John Barrow, and Robert Southey; by 1825, after John Taylor Coleridge's short and indifferent stint as editor and with John Lockhart installed against the wishes of his informal board of advisors, Murray had 'grown accustomed to treating the journal as his personal property.'

Cutmore makes us acutely aware of the fine line the *Quarterly* trod, over its first decade and a half, to maintain its political independence: on the one hand, its connections with the world of government were second to none and readers valued its air of authority and inside knowledge; on the other, it received no money direct from government, preferred to address matters of political or constitutional principle rather than current affairs, and 'stood not for a party... but for a structure of society threatened by the principles of the French Revolution.' The delicacies of the situation are perfectly illustrated by the fact that Gifford complained that the government did not take more advantage of the *Quarterly*, yet knocked back attempts by Spencer Perceval and Lord Liverpool to insert material in the journal.

A substantial part of *Contributors* is taken up by the issue-by-issue list of articles for numbers 1-65, identification of their authors (with indication where appropriate that this is only 'probable' or 'possible'), and presentation of evidence of authorship in a concise and

abbreviated form. This material, along with additional appendices containing publication data (print runs, sales, expenses, and so on) and lists of potential contributors included in Murray's planning notes, is an immensely valuable service to scholarship.

In *Conservatism and the 'Quarterly Review'* Cutmore has assembled a fine collection of essays mostly addressing particular subject matters in the journal or important individual contributors. Kim Wheatley focuses on the planning process and shows how worried all the progenitors were about the *Edinburgh* and how deeply they agonised over how to combat it (while at the same time learning the lessons of its success). Among the interesting points in Boyd Hilton's essay is the contention that the *Quarterly* perpetuated a war against the *Edinburgh* based on the politics of the 1790s, in a period when the issues were no longer so clear-cut, and on economic matters had difficulty getting its own contributors to toe a line distinct from that of its rival. Cutmore's own essay punctures the myth of the *Quarterly*'s monologic politics by identifying five conservative groupings represented in its pages in addition to the Canningite liberal conservatives with which it was most closely associated. Christopher Stray surveys the journal's treatment of classics, one of Gifford's personal interests and an area where the *Quarterly* could define itself sharply against the *Edinburgh*. Sharon Ragaz provides a particularly fine overview of Scott's involvement with the journal, while J. M. R. Cameron illuminates the massive contribution of John Barrow, who supplied more than two hundred articles between 1809 and 1841 on geographical themes, using this platform to spread his vision of a greater British empire based on sea power and control of strategic locations worldwide. Southey's involvement with the *Quarterly* (ninety articles in all) was the most long-lasting and remunerative of his associations with periodicals, and two essays explore his idiosyncratic contribution, Lynda Pratt concentrating on his literary articles and W. A. Speck examining his political writings.

Impressive as all these essays are, *en masse* there is little sense of a lively contest of voices,

and there is even a sense of repetition between some of the essays and between the material in this volume and Cutmore's long narrative in *Contributors*. Perhaps inevitably, given Cutmore's impresario-like role (the contributors are all responding to the archival material that he has 'made available' to them), there is something of a corporate feel to the whole two-volume project – rather like the *Quarterly* itself, perhaps. Scholars will also want to make up their minds about how far these two books supersede and replace the online '*Quarterly Review Archive*' mentioned above. As regards the identification of writers, Cutmore states that *Contributors* presents a revised version of the results first published on the website, which is good to know. However, except in the minority of cases where authorship has been re-attributed, researchers may well find the more expansive discussion of the evidence on *Romantic Circles* more user-friendly than the abbreviated notes in *Contributors*. It is regrettable that the names of no fewer than nineteen individuals who still feature as authors or collaborators are missing from the index of authorship attributions: Allen, Charles Blomfield, John Brinkley, Thomas Casey, Edward Daniel Clarke, Henry Drummond, Robley Dunglisson, Charles Grant, John Loudon, Hudson Lowe, John MacCulloch, Thomas Manners-Sutton, William Nichol, Thomas Stamford Raffles, Samuel Rogers, Henry Salt, Thomas Turton, Horace Twiss, and Arthur Wellesley. It should also be pointed out that there is additional material online which remains useful, and that in one important area the online resources are far superior: *Conservatism* offers transcriptions of fourteen letters relating to the early history of the *Quarterly*, whereas forty-five letters appear in the 'correspondence archive' on *Romantic Circles*.

In conclusion, despite the minor grumbles I have expressed, one can only be grateful for the publication of two books that constitute such a long and fruitful labour of love; they are welcome additions to my bookshelf and will be of lasting value to Romanticists.

Robin Jarvis
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Susan Manly, *Language, Custom and Nation in the 1790s: Locke, Tooke, Wordsworth, Edgeworth*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. Pp. 212. £50.00. ISBN 9780754658320.

This invaluable addition to 1790s studies provides a detailed and informative account of the development of a late eighteenth-century radical tradition of thought regarding politics, people and language. Manly investigates considerations of language, custom and law in Tooke, Edgeworth and Wordsworth, and describes the Lockean tradition that informs them. Locke's philosophy and writings on government combine 'the arguments for popular sovereignty with arguments for the value of common creativity, public discussion and common language', and present common speech and language use, as understood, analysed and developed by these writers, as valid, clear and truthful in comparison to the language of political oppression and aristocratic rule.

In the introduction Manly writes that the book 'aims to establish the long eighteenth-century tradition of enquiry linking language and political rights', discussing both the anti-authoritarian Lockean and Romantic tradition, which sought to pursue politically progressive goals through investigation into language. This aim is easily and informatively met. The two strongest chapters in the book, in terms of important new scholarship and re-evaluation of the writers' works, are the first and last, on Tooke and Edgeworth respectively. With frequent citations from her primary sources, Manly excels in careful analysis of her chosen writers' discourses, and produces extremely clear and cogent interpretations of them, as precise and meticulous in her own writing as the writers here discussed are shown to be. The first chapter, 'John Horne Tooke and Linguistic Equality' traces the development of Tooke's political thought relating to language and equality, informed by his own study of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and *Two Treatises of Government*, and which culminated in the publication of Tooke's significant work, *Epea Pteroenta, or, The*

Diversions of Purley. Tooke attempts to dismantle the language of power, returning language to the 'vulgar' and thus approach egalitarian politics. He regards communication as the main purpose of language, to overcome the obscure verbiage of the 'grimgibber' (legal jargon) that entraps people, most seriously in the 1790s' liberty debates, into seeming treason by (mis)interpretation of their words. Tooke, one of the notorious 'acquitted felons' of the 1794 Treason Trials, is here recovered by Manly as a linguist and etymologist, whose commitment to 'the language of common sense' facilitated and enriched much of 1790s debate. In the following chapter, 'Custom and Common Language: The Debate in the 1790s and its Sources', Manly interweaves her analysis of the influence of Lockean thought upon radicals with a wider examination of the use and customs of language, the ownership of language, and equality before the law; throughout the first two chapters, the linguistic theories of writers as varied as Burke, Bentham, Thelwall, James Harris and Lord Monboddo are discussed, in relation to the debate about 'common law and common language'.

The third chapter, 'Wordsworth and Common Cultivation: Language, Property, and Nature' continues this discussion about custom, habit and use, using the poetry and theory of language developed by Wordsworth from 1798-1802, primarily in *Lyrical Ballads*, as its main focus but also providing a wide span of opinion and debate, from Hutcheson and Blair to Thelwall, Coleridge and Godwin. Manly deals carefully and painstakingly with Wordsworth's often paradoxical attitude to common language, with his proposal for a "*lingua communis*" as the model for poetic diction' shown to be a 'purified "common language" invented for literary purposes' and one which, perhaps inadvertently, replaces the very language it seeks to recover from public dismissal and charges of vulgarity. Manly works through this paradox with great attention, and reaches a persuasive conclusion that in spite of his emphasis upon 'the shared nature of all men', Wordsworth cannot truly represent their voice as his efforts to create a new language for all men as well as poets nullify the common language he extols.

The final chapter, ‘Maria Edgeworth and the “Genius of the People”’, addresses two important works by Edgeworth, *Practical Education* and *Irish Bulls*, which attempt to reposition the English language as spoken in Ireland, as well as the language spoken by children, within the discourse of common law and common language from the 1790s debate. Edgeworth is shown to be another disciple of Lockean philosophy, ‘valuing the common and the sensible above the abstruse’, but also an adherent to Tooke’s principles, which newly radicalises her position as an educator and writer. Unlike Wordsworth, Edgeworth does not refine the language of the common people. By her analysis of examples of common Irish speech, ‘taken from real life, and given without alteration or embellishment’, Edgeworth successfully argues for the validity and equality of common language. This thorough and illuminating account makes an important contribution to 1790s scholarship, and should remind scholars of how rewarding it is to pay close attention to language.

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Christopher C. Nagle, *Sexuality and the Culture of Sensibility in the British Romantic Era*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Pp. 227. £42.50. ISBN 1403984352.

Christopher C. Nagle’s new study risks the bold claim that ‘Sensibility provides... the discursive infrastructure of Romanticism itself,’ a claim that proves as persuasive in his hands as it is provocative. Locating discursive continuities between Romanticism and the eighteenth century in a way that recalls the best work of Marilyn Butler, Nagle recovers an aesthetic of pleasure within Romanticism and its aftermath. Developing a capacious literary history, Nagle identifies signal literary uses of pleasure inherited from Sappho, Shakespeare and Milton, traces the emergence of Sensibility proper in the work of Laurence Sterne, follows that discourse

of Sensibility into high Romanticism via Charlotte Smith and Mary Robinson, discusses its reformulation in novels by Mary Shelley and Jane Austen, and then reexamines it once it emerges, transformed by this long journey and the by the ideological demands of these encounters, as the sentimental poetry of Landon and Tennyson in the early Victorian period. High Romanticism thus becomes ‘the residue of this encounter’ with Sensibility, innovative only for the heteronormative uses it concocts for previously queer Sternean pleasures. Nagle’s analysis of an untitled poem of Landon’s in the coda is itself worth the price of this book, amounting to a full-on deconstruction of Victorian gift-book idealism through the refraction of Romantic ideology.

Nagle often seems to be accounting for an anxiety of influence upon British Romantic writers— he suggests, for instance, that ‘having drawn on Shakespeare, Gray and Coleridge in turn... Wordsworth must also draw away from them to be his own man.’ But he favors the term ‘incorporation’ to describe the process, most directly seen when Wordsworth carefully reworks the sonnets of Charlotte Smith, Mary Robinson, and Helen Maria Williams as he develops his own poetic voice. Whatever my reservations about the continued relevance of anxiety-of-influence approaches to literary history, this narrative proves fascinating because even Wordsworth’s most familiar works seem here transformed by the context of their all-too-close encounter with the unruly sexualities of Sensibility. Nagle offers a very original tracing of homophobia through the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, which shows how a return to ‘the real language of men’ manages to discipline pleasure for heteronormative ends. By attending to such subtle expressions of sexuality at the heart of British Romanticism, Nagle finds a compelling way to extend recent queer theory into Romantic studies.

The revelations of this book come through close readings which consistently show, with stunning precision, how Romanticism came to incorporate Sensibility. Nagle proves courageously willing to theorize the importance of this encounter, opening new avenues for understanding sexuality, and particularly

pleasure, within British Romanticism. Laurence Sterne becomes a pivotal figure in this regard, and might be said to be the patron saint of this study: the first chapter, in its account of perverse sexualities in *A Sentimental Journey*, establishes the basis for Nagle's plumbing Sternean echoes to rich effect throughout. Prizing the discourse of Sensibility for its 'ambient queer sexuality'—multiform, perverse, homoerotic, intrinsically promiscuous—Nagle makes a spirited and theoretically sophisticated defence of Sterne's disorganization of pleasure and reminds us of Sterne's omnipresence throughout the canonical texts of high Romanticism, including *Lyrical Ballads*, *Persuasion*, and Shelley's "On Life." Pleasure, as formulated in Sterne's work and in Nagle's, can be valuably held in opposition to the more familiar psychoanalytic category of desire. And yet, for all of its devotion to the uses of pleasure and its genealogy of broad cultural shifts, Nagle's study manages to transcend its Foucauldian impulses, instead joining a theoretical conversation informed by, among others, Eve Sedgwick and Leo Bersani. In his reading of the two endings of *Persuasion*, for instance, Nagle offers a thoughtful account of tactility, locating in the late Austen the emergence of a new heteronormative domesticity that can only appear by proceeding, as if dialectically, through the raw materials provided by Sterne.

Nagle's study deserves to generate the kind of excitement that followed Michael Gamer's *Romanticism and the Gothic* in 2000: while it was not exactly news, before Gamer's study appeared, that Romanticism was built upon gothic foundations, still the whole field has benefited from the diligence with which Gamer demonstrated and theorized the overlap of these discourses. Nagle's argument is analogous, and deserves to effect a similar sea-change in the field: his work should give us the capacity to think differently about the source materials, and therefore the ideological and aesthetic investments, of British Romanticism. Nagle is not the first to identify the significance of Sensibility for Romanticism—his study builds upon work by Janet Todd, John Mullan, and Jerome McGann in particular. But Nagle's study of pleasure, ever encountering the misogyny and

homophobia that got negotiated in queer ways throughout the period, and consistently earning its insights through ingenious close readings, will afford its readers significant insight into the ideological factors that became conglomerate as Romanticism.

David Sigler
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James Allard, *Romanticism, Medicine, and the Poet's Body*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. Pp. 166. £50. ISBN 0780754658917.

James Allard's study of *Romanticism, Medicine, and the Poet's Body* builds on recent research that has helped to 'thicken' our historical knowledge about the field of medicine in the Romantic period. As Hermione de Almeida points out in her *Romantic Medicine and John Keats* (1991), this is the period that runs from the last hurrah of mechanism in the medical establishment of the late eighteenth century to the chronicle of modern medicine starting with cell theory, roughly the 1790s through the 1830s. This has always been a murky period in the history of science, where suspicions about vitalism's links to obscurantism persist. Even within the more specialized field of Romantic Studies, the tendency, inherited from several decades ago, has been to consider *Naturphilosophie* as a thing apart, an imaginative venture on the part of the German Romantics.

In the past fifteen years or so, however, much good work has been done to fill in the picture of what the culture of Romantic-era medicine, influencing aesthetic theory and practice, might have looked like. Alan Richardson's *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind* (2001), Paul Youngquist's *Monstrosities: Bodies and British Romanticism* (2003), and Martin Wallens's *City of Health, Fields of Disease: Revolutions in the Poetry, Medicine, and Philosophy of Romanticism* (2004) are just three examples from diverse perspectives in this arena. To these, we might add efforts to make available original medical writing from the time,

as in the first and fifth volumes of Tim Fulford's anthology *Romanticism and Science* (2002).

Allard's study of Wordsworth, Baillie, and more particularly, John Thelwall (*The Peripatetic*), John Keats (the Hyperion poems), and Thomas Lovell Beddoes (*Death Jest-Book*) profits from this field of research and offers a similar argument to Youngquist's, namely that 'that medicine, at the historical moment of its emergence as a distinct institutional and professional practice, produces and enforces a cultural norm of human embodiment.' While Allard delves into different texts from the period, he is modest in his effort to advance this argument, perhaps too modest.

I do not wish to sound harsh. It is possible that I need to be hit on the head more than most readers with respect to the argumentative relevance of what I'm reading. I feel that since I—we—all read so much, each new book published needs to stand up, so to speak, and announce its own name. Allard, in his introduction, situates the chapters of his study within a trajectory of cultural critique traceable to Roy Porter and Michel Foucault. 'Following Porter,' he writes, 'I attend to the terms and gestures in competing discourses about bodies, to explore the medical institutions that were responsible for developing and disseminating those discourses, and to read the writings produced in and around those institutions that sought to construct and disseminate independent "master narratives"'. I'll admit that rhetorical commonplaces such as 'attend to' and 'competing discourses' tend to throw me off the track of the argument before it emerges, but the two master narratives to which Allard refers are the body-as-a-discursive-fiction and the self-as-nothing-but-material-embodiment. These two antithetical and mutually exclusive categories are versions of radical idealism and materialism. Two sentences later, he builds Foucault into the foundation of his study: 'Foucault, who is more concerned with how those anxieties are manifested and mobilized, illustrates how medicine deploys them in an effort to discipline the body and establish it as a distinctly medical subject... For the general public, then, medical professionals occupy and [*sic*] increasingly powerful position in society at large and within

individual lives; more to the point, one's "own" body seems to become less one's own with each medical-scientific advance and medical-judicial proceeding'. This is true, but haven't we in fact learned it from Foucault?

Allard says he would like, more specifically, to 'attend to the persistent sense of what I call the pervasive "body consciousness" of the texts I consider' in order 'to explore "bodiliness" in Romantic texts.' 'At the same time,' he adds, 'I also want to explore the manifold treatments of such bodiliness; that is, not only do I want to trace knowledge *of* bodies, I also want to account for how they have developed that knowledge *as* bodies'. This is quite interesting, and I do wish that by the end of the book I understood it better. Instead, I feel somewhat left adrift in a vague discourse about 'the body' that has been with us since the late eighties and early nineties. To be sure, I agree that current advances in medical science, from stem-cell technology to pharmaceuticals, are extensions of the age-old, human fascination with embodiment. There are certainly hair-raising issues stemming from the conjunction of commodification and medicine—food for the thought in the area of 'Body Studies.' What will constitute further food for thought in Romantic Studies, however, is the precise nature of that cultural conjunction, the 'and' in *Romanticism, Medicine, and the Poet's Body*.

Denise Gigante
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Alice Jenkins, *Space and the 'March of Mind': Literature and the Physical Sciences in Britain, 1815–1850*. Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. 268. £56. ISBN 9780199209927.

Space and the 'March of Mind' is a fascinating book, which reveals the extent to which metaphors of space are used in descriptions of thought, intellectual endeavour, disciplinary divisions, and ways of knowing. Focusing on a few decades after the end of the Napoleonic wars, Jenkins traces new thinking in electricity, field theory, chaos and ether through scientific

and literary incarnations. The range of material covered is impressive and persuasive.

Space is trendy at the moment, but Jenkins is looking less at urban or political spaces (first brought to our attention by Foucault and Lefebvre), and instead she considers immaterial spaces: the metaphorical space used to declare and measure intellectual achievement. Often figured as a 'march of mind', this period perceived progress in many disciplines, and subsequently there were disputes over territory, discipline boundaries, ground covered, and bodies of knowledge. In Jenkins' words: 'This book proposes that because many ways of managing and organizing systems (including systems of information) depend on spatial thinking, a focus on early nineteenth-century orderings of information demands attention to the contemporary spatial imagining'.

At the start of the period covered by this book, there was a sense of common knowledge, and periodicals considered both literary and scientific topics. It was still possible to read and understand much of the new discoveries in the physical sciences, before words were replaced by mathematical equations. There was also a new reading public, larger than any before, who were given access to literary and scientific knowledge. An autodidact like Michael Faraday, who is quite a presence in this book, was able to acquire knowledge on his own, and with fellow artisan readers. The end of this period marks the moment when the general reader was no longer able to follow experiments and discoveries as they were made and communicated.

The first part of the book looks at the metaphors used to describe ways of knowing, and the second part examines how space itself was thought about. In chapter one the landscape is revealed as an important metaphor because it involves notions of colonisation, conquest, man's triumph over nature, the sublime and the picturesque, order, regulation and access. Enlightenment ideas of gardens as harmonious, structured, and balanced appear again in the metaphors used to define and shape human knowledge. Jenkins makes use of the work done on landscape and literature, recognising landscape as a form 'already strongly mediated through other cultural manifestations' before she

exploits it for her own purpose: 'Although the landscape writing I examine here refers to geographical features and even to rural activities, it is nonetheless much more of a product of literary and artistic traditions rather than of observation of the countryside'. Instead, the landscape is used to describe knowledge as a prospect upon which there is only one figure (the pupil), or maybe two (teacher and pupil), as a kind of expanse of land which might be protected (as a kind of Eden), with established borders, or which to survey from a particular vantage point. The common and much quoted notion of the 'royal road' to knowledge was only one incarnation of this kind of metaphor, which was often extended over many pages.

Much interesting work has been done by Jenkins on Faraday's writings on knowledge, using unpublished sources such as juvenile essays written between 1818 and 1819 when he belonged to a group of autodidacts who wrote and commented upon each others' essays in an attempt to improve themselves. The landscape appears again in his tropes of knowledge, but here Faraday figures himself as a solitary tourist, travelling without a guide in unknown territory. He particularly borrows from the picturesque in his writings: the imagination once cultivated, for example, can lead a man to 'penetrate into the recesses of a wood, bathe in the waters, explore the ruins of old castles, or disappear behind some heath clad hill'.

Jenkins' book is perhaps particularly to be welcomed for its emphasis on the physical rather than the biological sciences; there is still much work to be done in the relationships between these and nineteenth-century literature. When dealing with very abstract concepts, this book can be difficult, and it is best when showing the influence of the physical sciences on books that are well known. *Middlemarch*, Wordsworth's *Guide through the Lakes*, and *Biographia Literaria* are each considered in the second chapter for their difference in imagining knowledge visually, from alternative perspectives. Chapter three looks at the metaphors employed in the move from universal and all-encompassing common knowledge to strongly demarcated disciplinary boundaries, with accompanying sense of narrow

specialisation and professionalism in the sciences. Chapters five and six look at writing and thinking about space itself; these chapters cover a good deal of ground quite briefly, which can be a little dizzying at times, but the research is hugely suggestive and will, I'm sure, lead outwards in concentric circles of influence to encourage others' writings.

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**Heather Glen and Paul Hamilton, eds,
Repossessing the Romantic Past.
Cambridge University Press, 2006.
Pp. 254. £50.00. ISBN 0521858666.**

For editors Heather Glen and Paul Hamilton, Marilyn Butler's achievement is her cultivation of a critical distance derived from 'an unusual sensitivity to the specific literary choices open to writers at a particular moment' and 'a historically learned realization of . . . [the Romantics'] creative departure from other contemporary possibilities'. In honour of Butler, the essays in *Repossessing the Romantic Past* explore ways to write about Romanticism historically that avoid locking it inside 'history'. The collection seeks to complicate tidy scholarly narratives by demonstrating how traditionalists and radicals in the period often 'belong to different sides in different contexts'. One of the unifying themes of the book, consequently, is Romantic *conversation*, with all of the political and intellectual dynamics the term implies.

Jon Mee asks whether conversation in Barbauld is 'part of a continuum with contention, dispute, and controversy' or whether it is the opposite. A 'feminized notion of polite conversation' restrained women as much as it offered them opportunities for 'cultural participation'. Believing that noisy Dissenters succumbed to 'vulgar enthusiasm', Barbauld looked to taste to provide balance. Talk may have given Barbauld entry to political and religious discussion, but she gradually found the bluestocking Montagu circle's 'regulated version of conversation' stultifying. She left for the religious Dissenters of the Johnson circle,

where she enjoyed 'bold exchanges' among people like Williams, Hays and Wollstonecraft. Barbauld's seemingly 'anti-feminist' exit from the Montagu circle was, Mee concludes, enacted in the conviction that argumentative Dissent offered women better prospects for intellectual expression than all-women groups.

Kevin Gilmartin continues to pit garrulousness against polite conversation in 'Hazlitt's visionary London'. The journalist throws himself into London's contradictions—its cheek-by-jowl filth and grandeur—and develops a radical 'consistency of resistance, and . . . fierce animosity that Hazlitt himself identified as "the pleasure of hating"'. This idea of verbal contest is contrasted nicely by Michael Rossington's Shelley, for whom all of history is in dialogue with a present it forever shows is limitless in possibility. Likewise, Anne Janowitz claims that for Lucy Aikin and her associates the freedom that Hazlitt and others locate in real conversation migrates to the act of writing and Literature's shift 'from being the vehicle of principles to being the principle of liberality itself'. While Rossington and Janowitz trace the softening of radicalism when confronted by an increasingly inhospitable political environment, Pamela Clemit's essay on Godwin argues that the 'polite' form of the letter gave a man reputed to be the chilliest of intellectuals a chance to pioneer the expression of male vulnerability and tenderness.

A short section on Maria Edgeworth opens with James Chandler on faces in the fiction of Edgeworth and Scott. Inspired by Deleuze's *A Thousand Plateaus* (an often 'in your face' text, he puns), Chandler suggests that Edgeworth and Scott used 'close-ups' to abstract faces from context and thereby trigger a slew of sentimental responses that provided 'a workable emotional basis for Union'.

The final section — 'Different directions' — contains writers who maintain the spirit of Butler in new methodologies. Hamilton constructs the afterlife of the artwork—in literary and critical interpretations—as a 'self-destroying perpetuation [that] is a way of knowing'. Rather than a search for the last philosophical word, aesthetic thinking is an endless unfolding that is physical and affective.

Two excellent essays follow: Nigel Leask on Elizabeth Hamilton and Janet Todd's 'Jane Austen and the professional wife'.

But the final essay is the outstanding piece—another of Jerome McGann's brilliantly ebullient readings of Byron. McGann states that critics have forgotten Blake's view of the sublime as the warped perception of the fallen. For Blake, it is through the beautiful—and not the sublime—that the truly divine and, of course, human is revealed. In a brief look at some poems from *Lyrical Ballads*, McGann argues that Wordsworth, like Blake, frequently demonstrates that 'when beauty comes to us now, it comes disguised, veiled, or disfigured'. The Wordsworthian sublime is a grim affair, characterised by "self-destroyings", "visionary dreariness", and a regular discipline of fear'. The legacy of the *Biographia* has been the suppression of Wordsworth's pessimism, but Byron understands Wordsworth more honestly. Despite learning from Wordsworth, however, Byron rejects his conclusions: 'Beauty... is always being revealed, but revealed divested of its illusions'. Byron does not mourn the absence of beauty and asserts that the poet can transfigure the world. Instead, he refuses tranquilizing illusions. Without transforming ugliness into an unearthly and, ultimately, nihilist sublime, he punctures false appearances to uncover the often beautiful real once more. McGann's offers a Modernist Byron who makes us see what is in front of our eyes.

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Harriet Guest, *Empire, Barbarism, and Civilisation: Captain Cook, William Hodges and the Return to the Pacific*. Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. 249. £55. ISBN 9780521881944.

Exploration and 'discovery' are traditionally a rich source of inspiration for authors and academics but in recent years there has been a move away from the traditional 'straight-line' storytelling to a closer look at issues surrounding cultural contact, or encounters.

Anne Salmond's *Trial of the Cannibal Dog* and Nick Thomas's *Discoveries* (both 2003) are two such works dealing specifically with the voyages of Captain James Cook and this latest publication from Guest follows in a similar vein.

The book comprises 6 chapters dealing with topics ranging from tattoos to the terms of trade in Tonga and Vanuatu. The context is drawn largely from Cook's second voyage into the Pacific (1772-5), one of the greatest journeys of exploration and discovery ever made. Guest uses the voyage accounts from Cook, his 'gentlemen philosophers' and crew – and the landscapes and portraits of voyage artist, William Hodges – to provide the backbone of her analysis into the impact of cultural contact for the European visitors and the islanders of the Pacific.

Building on the work of Bernard Smith and his 'need to understand European encounters with the people and landscapes of the South Pacific as more or less shaped by the cultural baggage they carried with them', she argues that she is 'primarily concerned with the voyagers' more or less explicit attempts to theorise cultural differences, with historical moments which expose fundamental and significant tensions, fractures, in the way they conceive of the islanders' cultures and their own.'

Much of the material has appeared previously in a different format, whether in Guest's books, other academic works or as lectures. While this does not in any way undermine this book's cohesion or value, it does lead one to question the publisher's use of the terms 'fresh', and 'lively and original' in the marketing blurb. Coming to this text as a geographer and historian, I would also question whether this was a "new take" on colonial history' as the line of Guest's argument is now fairly typical.

All that, however, is not to pour scorn on the work itself which represents some fascinating research into the metropolitan ideas of civilisation that were informing – and informed by – the cultural encounters of Cook and his contemporaries. Guest deftly brings together the often rapidly-changing political background of the late eighteenth century with developments in art, literature and philosophy, exploring their complex interplay.

What emerges is the struggle and genuine confusion of Europe's – and particularly Britain's – grasp of the new world order: how do you explain or *rank* the different societies of the South Pacific when they are so similar in some ways ('primitive', 'un-civilised', full of Noble Savages) yet so distinct (in particular, Guest explores the reaction to Tongans versus Tahitians)? What's more, what do these societies reveal about the state of British society? In the dog-days of the Enlightenment, hidebound by ideas about race and progress, these were troubling, testing questions that defied simple answers.

And it is the lack of simple answers that makes Guest's approach of value. For me, the book's strength lies in the use of diverse but related source materials from letters, diaries, journals and other written documents to drawings, paintings, contemporary cartoons and ephemera. The snippets of background information add greatly to an understanding of Hodges as an artist and a man – and his world. The reproduction of so many portraits and landscapes by Hodge and his contemporaries (both in colour and black and white) makes the book a visual delight and while some images were the usual suspects, others were surprising and elucidating.

The main criticism of *Empire, Barbarism, and Civilisation* is not in the thesis but in the writing itself which varies from a clear and well-paced argument to almost impenetrable obfuscation. With phrases like 'This historicised and textualised context structures the chart of relative assessments of island cultures...' this is certainly not a book for the Plain English Society or the faint-hearted.. The tragedy is that the frequently dense and extremely academic style will deter readers who would have otherwise enjoyed it; even most academics would be well advised to keep the OED at their side to deal with the plethora of rare or obsolete words employed.

The end result is frustration: there is much here that is fascinating and of real value but in the first half of the book in particular, the language clouds the message. However, the second half of the book is a much smoother – and hence more enjoyable – read, building to a

sure-footed and eloquent finale in the Epilogue which shows Guest at her finest. In all, for readers with patience – and a good dictionary – their efforts ultimately will be rewarded.

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Julia M. Wright, *Ireland, India and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. 268. £50. ISBN 9780521868228.

Ireland's ambiguous position within the British empire (following the 1800 Act of Union which brought Ireland under Westminster) has been the focus of several recent literary and historical studies which have sought to disturb the familiarly polarized outlines of British imperialist histories written from a postcolonial standpoint. If, at the start of the nineteenth century, Ireland as a nation could see opportunities in the newly emerging colonies in the East at a time when Britain had lost America, it was also uniquely positioned within that empire on account of its historical experience of being England's first colony. Ireland could thus paradoxically sympathise with the plight of colonized nations even while joining in the process of colonisation led by Britain overseas. Julia Wright's carefully researched book *Ireland, India and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Literature* works on this premise, situating Irish literary production during the nineteenth century within a discursive framework dictated by universalist notions of sensibility (theorized most notably by Adam Smith) which could connect the colonisers and colonized by virtue of human sympathy. Wright is alive to the complexities involved in the deployment of sensibility during this period; while it could be the basis for sympathy with an exotic other, all too often it could be used to critique the savage for his alleged lack of feeling. Increasingly over the century sensibility came to be pathologized, and colonized peoples

could be feminized or infantilised on the basis of such characterisations, providing British colonialism a justification for the subjugation of nations.

A contentious question besetting such a study might be: did Ireland selflessly throw in her lot with Britain's colonized subjects (hoorah for the Irish nationalists!), or did it self-interestedly follow England's lead in seeking economic advantage from colonialism in India (shame on the temporizing Irish!)? Wisely shunning a dichotomised view of colonialism, Wright directs our attention to the complexities and ambiguities of Irish nationalism during the period. From the early efforts of the United Irishmen to forge a non-sectarian form of national identity to the Home Rule movement of the latter part of the century (paralleled in India by the formation of the Indian National Congress), Irish nationalism was variously understood and inflected over the course of the nineteenth century. In line with these historical imaginings, Wright's book traces a roughly chronological path beginning with Celtic antiquarianism and orientalism of the late eighteenth century as manifested in Charlotte Brooke and Lady Morgan, and ending with fin-de-siècle gothicism and decadence self-consciously referencing the East as in selected novels of Oscar Wilde and Bram Stoker. In the course of this trajectory we encounter discussions of education, travel, religious conversion, commerce and history writing in relation to a wide range of literary materials – from novels and poetry, to history and educational writings. The conclusion performs a brief reading of Kipling's *Kim* in the light of the preceding pages 'on terms that necessarily complicate his alignment with imperial hegemony'.

There are of course problems inherent in trying to encompass such a wide sweep of literary history. The narrative seems to develop as a series of textual readings linked by chronology and theme rather than as an evolving argument. At various points in the argument we are reminded of John Barrell's useful complication - in the context of his study of Thomas De Quincey - of Said's binary thesis in *Orientalism*. Rather than opting for a notional

dichotomy between a (western) Self and an (oriental) Other as Said has it, Barrell introduces a third term into the equation – a movable 'that' which intervenes between 'this' and the 'Other'. Hence instead of Self and Other we have 'this/that/ and the Other.' As Wright explains, 'this paradigm is readily adapted to situate Ireland, as a colonial space in Europe, between the imperial metropole and the Orient'. Though serviceable, this might seem a slight and flexible underpinning for a study of such scope. The title of this book, *Ireland, India and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Literature*, might lead one to imagine that the crucial terms 'India' and 'Ireland' are given similar kinds of, if not necessarily equally elaborate degrees of, analysis. Yet Indian nationalism and its prototypes – which in the nineteenth century often looked to Ireland for example and inspiration – are not considered here, and the argument is largely concerned with Irish constructions of nationalism, with 'India' often serving somewhat tenuously as an imagined space rather than as a geo-political entity in material terms. The discussion of Rammohun Roy is interesting for its depiction of the 'Rajah's' significance with regard to religious divisions between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, though Rammohun Roy's English texts - which include fierce arguments with Christian missionaries as well as the Brahminical establishment over priestcraft of various kinds (both Hindu and Christian) - are not cited in relation to such representations. It would be unfair however to demand another book than the one that has been written; this one is a welcome addition to the study of nineteenth-century Irish writing on India.

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Leith Davis, *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: the Construction of National Identity*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006. Pp. 323. £20. ISBN 9780268025786.

Alongside Charles O'Connor, Joseph Cooper Walker also thanks in his preface to *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786) — a key text in the consolidation of a sense of bardic musical tradition in Ireland — Charles Vallancey, founder-member of the Royal Irish Academy, and the English musical historian Charles Burney. Burney, however, confessed to Edmond Malone that Walker had been a nuisance for twenty years; accordingly, he penned for the *Monthly Review* of December 1787 a vigorous attack on Walker's book, declaring its author's 'knowledge of music to be small and his credulity in Hibernian antiquities to be great'. Walker's credulity is an instance of what Burney saw as 'the present rage for antiquities in Ireland'. Burney's infantilization of Walker was probably deserved in part; he was, Vallancey-like, a mite credulous in his enquiries into ancient Irish culture; but the force of the review owes much to a colonial imperative: the disavowal of Ireland's claim to have a distinct musical culture, or indeed any culture *per se*, of its own.

Leith Davis' book deals intriguingly in an area which is in recent years, and in a specifically Irish context, beginning to produce excellent work. In particular her book both contests and augments the work of Harry White. It is, ambitiously, 'concerned with how the discourse of music became increasingly gendered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as gender was utilized variously in the representation of both nationalist and colonialist formations'. At its outset, then, this book reads as though it is trying to do too much at once: music, postcolonialism, and gender? But then, this is not a book about three separate categories; it is convincingly a book about all three considered in terms of a revealing interconnectedness.

In her study, Davis settles almost immediately on Giraldus Cambrensis' *Topography of Ireland*,

a text which holds musical ability up as a positive trait of the otherwise degenerate Irish; going further than this usual suspect it tricks out the idea of music's 'questionable effect on masculinity.' Enmeshing postcolonial and gender studies, Davis examines a wealth of materials which feed into the consolidation of Ireland's identity as a musical nation, at once trying to define itself as culturally independent, while at the same time anxious about the feminization of that independent quality. This is the ambivalence which the book dexterously navigates. Davis theorizes a colonial dynamic in which the periphery tries to explain and boast of its cultural and musical singularity to the metropolitan centre in order to gain respect, but in this very imperative consigns itself to a secondary, colonial status.

Davis traces these knotted lines of resistance and hegemony through eight cogent and convincing essays, each one studying a particular moment in Irish musical discourse. The first of these moments is the publication of the Neals' *Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes* in 1724 and the last is the New York performance of Dion Boucicault's *The Shaughraun* in November of 1874. In this structure, therefore, her book is appropriately fugue-like. The first chapter adduces the example of the Neals' collection in order to study the packaging of Irish music for an English audience in the first half of the eighteenth century, and considers how this moment feeds into the increased national consciousness of the later century. Taking JC Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* as a problematic, and problematizing response to near contemporary metropolitan histories of music, Davis compellingly theorizes the status of Ireland as 'a nation simultaneously both unknowable and familiar to a British audience'.

From Walker, Davis moves to an examination of Charlotte Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789), and in particular her original poem 'Mäon: An Irish Tale', which revises her father Henry Brooke's deployment of woman as national symbol in such a way as to afford more voice and agency to the female. The three editions of Edward Bunting's surveys of ancient Irish music are then proposed as further

examples of that Fanonian double bind in which Irish musicological discourse finds itself: an aspect of cultural nationalism which mirrors the forms of the cultural imperialism from which it seeks to secede. Sydney Owenson's work also reflects this bind, in that Glorvina, the heroine of the *Wild Irish Girl* (1806), performs a new national consciousness meant primarily for consumption by English readers. Chapters 6 and 7 tease out both the subversion and the compromise informing and stemming from the phenomenon of Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies*, while the final chapter offers Dion Boucicault as an intriguing example of the ways in which cultural texts can move beyond colonial and gender binaries. All of these chapters, indeed, study the *performance* of Irishness for non-Irish audiences, British and American.

As predictably as it began by invoking Cambrensis, the book's afterword ruminates on Riverdance, but suggests that subscribers to the jargon of authenticity who so castigate the show's creators might more fully appreciate the always-already mediated, always-already gendered and always-already hybridized quality of Irish music and culture in colonial, post-colonial, and neo-colonial contexts. The dialectical approach, which Davis proposes and successfully implements here, is produced out of an impressive theoretical sophistication, applied here with interdisciplinary agility and scholarly thoroughness.

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Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh*. Princeton University Press, 2007. Pp. 387. £23.95. ISBN 978069104383.

Matthew Wickman, *The Ruins of Experience: Scotland's 'Romantick' Highlands and the Birth of the Modern Witness*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007. Pp. 252. £39.00. ISBN 9780812239713.

For Ian Duncan and Matthew Wickman, the standard maps of Scottish literary culture too often lay out a landscape of misreading. Duncan argues for the generative potential of Walter Scott's work in his own moment. Frequently Scott is depicted as the limit point of Scotland's authorship, but in the years 1802-1832 Scott stimulated a rich discourse precisely because he was taken by fellow writers as Scotland's irreducible author and indefinable other. Wickman reassesses the topography of the 'Romantick' Highlands. Although geography may be used to locate developmental stages north and south and imply the retrogressions of Scotland as 'romance,' such mapping concurrently produces the Highlands as the site of uncontainable and inexpressible realities. From the perspective of this other/inner space, the outline of lands both historical and theoretical shifts under our gaze. 'Romantick' Scotlands stand central to current philosophies.

By its title, *Scott's Shadow* invokes theories of literary descent and ideas of Scott's baleful influence. Duncan raises such conventions only to set them aside. His book acknowledges Scott's gravitational pull within Edinburgh's publishing industry, but situates the author within a literary culture already bubbling with oral discourse (as in Hogg's poetic inheritance), or straining with rivalries (between parties and their journals). Certainly, through the period of Scott's writing life, Scottish authors arranged themselves around him. Their relation to Scott, however, was not delimited by imitation; rather, it was often critical, oppositional, and therefore

creative—in ways Scott in turn sometimes adopted himself.

Duncan tracks threads of cultural concern and literary practice backwards and forwards from Scott. An Edinburgh aspiring to be ‘the Athens of the North,’ not just visibly but conceptually, required a particular type of authorship. Duncan sketches a context of eighteenth-century philosophy and nineteenth-century rivalry that recasts Scottishness as literary genre through the person of Walter Scott. Scott, notably, is implicated in a discourse guided by J. G. Lockhart. In *Peter’s Letters to His Kinsfolk* (in shameless imitation and appropriation of Scott’s *Paul’s Letters*), Lockhart casts Scotland as in productive contention with England and therefore a nation. The energy of national difference drives the Imperial Britain in which they both participate. Scott’s novels here stand forth as early manifestations of the as-yet-to-be-named ‘Caledonian Antisyzygy’—caught within the determinations of Blackwood’s politics.

Scott may be implicated, but he is not fully appropriated. Duncan adds to his incisive reading of Lockhart an equally complex reading of competing literary contexts. In 1808, Elizabeth Hamilton had posed the problem of the nation as other and excess in a discourse of dirt—well expressed as ‘the clartier the cosier.’ Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* (1800) shows how the materiality and unpredictability of ‘other’ spaces (like Ireland) both require and disturb the cleaning up that imperial plotting exercises through generic coherence. Even Jane Austen puts in an appearance for the ‘nothing’ of her landscapes that elucidates and elides a landscape full of ordinary lives and acts, thus centring an English gaze yet showing what it misses that supposedly lies in the elsewhere of regional literature. Scott writes within these contestations, not just within the determinations of Blackwoodian Edinburgh. Consequently, those who feel his pull respond as much to his conversation with Edgeworth or Hamilton as they subject themselves to Lockhart’s imperial/national desire.

In subsequent chapters, Duncan dwells in the looping byways of influence between Scott, James Hogg, and John Galt. He accomplishes astute readings of each and an illuminating

vision of all together. Hogg is caught within and exploits a contest at once literary, historical, and biographical with his neighbour Walter Scott; Galt is a ‘theoretical historian’ in opposition to Scott’s supposed romance and Hogg’s tradition. Scott’s *Redgauntlet* (1824) offers a reconsideration of his *Old Mortality* (1816) mediated through Galt’s *Ringan Gilhaize* (1823)—and comes out in the same moment as Hogg’s *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. True to the complexities of his vision, however, Duncan also explicates less known but equally suggestive relationships—such as that with Christian Isobel Johnstone—and more known if less intricate relationships—such as that which Thomas Carlyle posited between himself and the Author of Waverley. Indeed, Duncan even accomplishes a sensitive study of J. G. Lockhart, who emerges through this approach as a perplexed figure made of education, anxiety, geography, ambition, desire, and respect for his author/father-in-law. Lockhart plays a part, alongside Scott, Hogg, Galt and Johnstone, in an Edinburgh that is a community of influence.

Nonetheless, insofar as Scott constitutes the excess against which Lockhart and his fellows defined themselves, Duncan’s book lines up interestingly with Matthew Wickman’s *The Ruins of Experience*. For Wickman, critical emphasis on periphery and core, past and present, north and south yields the ‘Romantick’ highlands as excess to explanation. Working forward from the Enlightenment, Wickman tracks how the period’s concern for ‘experience’ (we might think ‘data,’ or ‘information’) struggles with ‘knowledge’—which presumes its own irreducibility, but takes the form of discourse. Knowledge trumps experience. But because Scotland, with its rebellions and trials, provided the test case for experience — evidenced through witnesses, but necessarily relayed through courts standing as systems of knowledge—the highlands can be seen as central to a philosophical problem—a bug-bear of post-structuralist theory — what is / what about the ‘real’?

For Scottish and Romantic studies, Wickman locates Scotland’s literature in a new landscape. The Appin Murder becomes a case around

which not simply politics but philosophies swing, and in which they reveal their presumptions. Certain things happened; but 'experience' becomes 'evidence.' Events do not speak for themselves, and those who experience them stand at a remove from event and its meaning as composed by a court. Legal 'knowledge' depends on objective distance. 'Experience,' here in the form of Highland witness, may thus seem 'ruined,' and Scotland othered. But Wickman suggests that in such a dynamic, the now 'Romantick' highlands haunt 'knowledge' and the law as the real that cannot be expressed or contained. Scotland, then, by its romanticised marginality, is actually a fulcrum for modern philosophy. Furthermore, careful attention to the construction of knowledge in eighteenth-century Scotland undoes a conundrum of current theory. Reading Wickman we may actually begin to wonder whether experience operates in the Derridean trace.

Even as Wickman accomplishes what might be a major intervention for Scottish studies in the discourses of philosophy and theory—thus reversing the usual traffic—he offers numerous helpful reconsiderations of figures, moments and texts in the construction of Scotland and Romance. Adam Smith's sympathy teeters between experiencing and objectifying the realities of another: Smith 'replaces convictions of testimony with those of probability such that unmediated experience acquires the properties of a return of the repressed'. Samuel Johnson, a determined opponent to Macpherson's romancing, testifies to the problematics of the Highlands as a repository for the real when he trails Boswell around on an eager search for the 'romantick'—in the form of second sight. And in a book as much theoretical as it is critical, Wickman interestingly runs together authors as diverse in type and time as Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Alan Warner, and the up-to-the-minute Sophie Cooke.

In Wickman's book, the ruin that is really excess—Scotland as past, periphery, savagery, whatever—in fact makes the oppositions that have appeared to subordinate it. Moreover, Scotland as 'experience' haunts and destabilizes the systems it allows into the present moment.

And through Wickman, it may bring them into reconsideration.

What may prevent such an outcome, however, also lies in Wickman's book, indeed it holds back Duncan's important intervention in Scotland's supposed literary history, too. These books are fully informed by philosophy and theory (in Wickman's case) and criticism and history (in Duncan's case). This has two effects. For Duncan, occasionally we have the feeling that he has run ahead of himself. In situating *Scott's Shadow*, he makes sweeping statements that were certainly true when he began this necessarily lengthy project. But it is (I hope) no longer the case that he must fight against 'the consensus that views the Waverley novels as the instrument of an imperial ideology of official nationalism'. For Wickman, the intense logic and expansive time-scale of his book occasionally folds in anachronistic ideas—Helen MacGregor 'wastes' the revenue officer, and a ballad conveys 'a message about karma' (52, 95). Once, the argument surges over an inviting but incorrect title—Swift made a 'Modest' proposal, not a 'Modern' one. But these are minor concerns, and one is inclined to blame the copy editor.

More seriously, both books, each with a major potential impact on a range of fields, and each capable of reorienting a discourse of criticism or theory, may have trouble reaching the audience they deserve. *Scott's Shadow* is heavy going through the opening chapters, because their dense argument at times makes it difficult to see how they are a set-up what follows. *The Ruins of Experience*, with its two attempts to situate the argument within theory (preface and introduction), delays the reader's leap into the more accessible critical arguments that follow and that themselves make the theoretical points very well. The problem may be exacerbated for student readers by the fact that chapter headings in either book seldom cite authors or texts.

Of course, this lack of easy readerly guidelines points to the fact that these are, in an important sense, idea books. They require an effort from us, for they shift the topography of our historical, critical, and theoretical brains. And I have to conclude by saying that though I read each cover to cover, then had to go back to

consolidate my understanding, they each repay such commitment many times over.

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Douglas S. Mack, ed., James Hogg, *The Queen's Wake*. Stirling/South Carolina Edition. Edinburgh University Press, 2005. Pp. 470. £11.99. ISBN 0748620885.

P. D. Garside, ed., James Hogg, *A Queer Book*. Stirling/South Carolina Edition. Edinburgh University Press, 2007. Pp. 278. £9.99. ISBN 9780748632916.

Valentina Bold, *James Hogg: A Bard of Nature's Making*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2007. Pp. 376. £43. ISBN 9783039108978.

James Hogg, or the Ettrick Shepherd, was a man familiar with the multiple and sometimes alternate constructions of identity. One of the most fascinating elements of his poetry and fiction is this ability to portray a wide range of characters and their distinctive voices. *The Queen's Wake* and *A Queer Book*, now published in paperback, offer to readers the splendid opportunity of discovering more of Hogg's work besides the familiar *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*.

Hogg began his working life, aged 7, as an insignificant boy herding cows. By his death in 1835 he had achieved the remarkable feat of being acclaimed as a poet and author of genius. He had grown up as the son of a bankrupt among farm labourers of the Scottish Borders and then succeeded in forcing his way into the midst of the professional literary classes based in Edinburgh. His origins were a source of pride for Hogg but did expose him to mockery and resentment from those who delighted in making

endlessly insulting jokes about boars and pigs. Petty jealousies might seem a staple of literary life anywhere but by the 1820s, Hogg's career as a writer had attracted ferocious and brutal criticism from some of the gentlemen of *Blackwood's Magazine*, namely John Wilson and J. G. Lockhart. However, despite feeling anger and bewilderment, he had continued to brave their sporadic personal attacks and was still able to count on appreciative support from other Edinburgh publications. His last collection, *The Tales of the Wars of Montrose*, 1835, drew this remarkable eulogy from the *Edinburgh Evening Post*:

He has written some of the best, and a few perhaps of the coarsest fictions in the language – fictions so like reality that we are apt to think them matters of plain fact. But this is genius, and Hogg is a genius of a high order.

Hogg's work drew praise but brought him little financial success. His most recent biographer, Gillian Hughes, suggests that Hogg's contemporaries found his work fascinating and frustrating at the same time. This difficulty was also pointed out by Walter Scott. After reading Hogg's tale of 'The Hunt of Eildon', 1818, he criticised the work as 'the most ridiculous of any modern story I ever read. What a pity it is that you are not master of your own capabilities for that tale might have been made a good one.' Scott was patron, friend and supporter of Hogg and these comments suggest something of the nature of the challenges that Hogg faced.

In spite of persistent difficulties, Hogg's literary career had blossomed spectacularly with publication of *The Queen's Wake: a Legendary Poem* in 1813. The title refers to the contest between rival Scottish bards to welcome home Mary, Queen of Scots to Edinburgh and Hogg's collection of short ballads displayed his gift for simple, powerful 'metrical tales'. Public appetite for verse narratives had been whetted by the wildly popular narrative poetry of Scott and Byron with the appearance of *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810 and the first cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* in 1812. Hogg was particularly well placed to take successful

advantage of this craze and in his 1821 'Memoir of the Author's Life' he gleefully records the response of an enthusiastic reader. William Dunlop, spirit merchant, first scolds Hogg for 'pestering us wi' fourpenny papers an' daft shilly-shally sangs' then announces that he has now read *The Queen's Wake* 'and it has lickit me out o' a night's sleep. Ye hae hit the right nail on the head now.'

Hogg's relationship with his publishers was often stormy. He was criticised for vulgarity and indelicacy, and after his death, his work was published in heavily bowdlerised texts and consigned to general neglect. However, recent recognition of him as one of the most important Scottish Romantics has been enabled by the authoritative Stirling/South Carolina edition, of which these two volumes, *The Queen's Wake* and *A Queer Book*, are superb examples. Both books are very competitively priced without any compromise in quality. *The Queen's Wake* is particularly interesting because it contains the first and the fifth version of Hogg's poem along with detailed notes about each version. The fifth edition was published by subscription in 1819 and contained three illustrations: Mary, Queen of Scots; the Witch of Fife and Queen Mary's Harp. These illustrations are published again in this edition and there is an informative essay by Meiko O'Halloran to accompany them.

Each book has an extensive introduction by the editor with bibliography and detailed notes to accompany the text. Included is also a chronology of Hogg's life by Gillian Hughes. These additions combine to provide readers with a detailed picture of Hogg's world and, in the case of *A Queer Book*, first published in 1832, some editorial comment on the curious title. 'Queer' in eighteenth-century English usage meant 'strange' or 'odd' while Scots understood the word to mean 'comical' or 'funny'. Would-be readers discovered a collection of comic ballads, sentimental pieces and some intriguing examples of Hogg's supernatural tales in poetic form. Hogg's playfulness with the possibilities of language had resulted in his development of a particular 'ancient stile' of spelling, much to the chagrin of his hard-headed publisher, Blackwood, who feared it would harm sales. This edition is the first to publish Hogg's poems

such as 'The Wyffe of Ezdel-more' in his 'ancient stile' along with the full version of 'Jocke Taittis Expeditione till Hell'.

Valentina Bold's critical monograph, *James Hogg: A Bard of Nature's Making*, discusses the emergence of a group of Scottish 'peasant poets' such as Burns, Janet Little, Allan Cunningham, Alexander Anderson, Janet Hamilton and James Young Geddes as well as Hogg. This is the first volume in a series of the 'Studies in the History and Culture of Scotland' intended to trace the ways in which Scots, and non-Scots, come to terms with the changing nature of identity after devolution. It will also examine the 'relative value of Gaelic-based, Scots and Anglicised culture' within the boundaries of the United Kingdom.

Bold's work is divided into three parts. She begins by examining the development of the idea of the peasant poet, or autodidact, from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. There were advantages and disadvantages to being labelled as self-taught, and in Scotland, she traces the origin of those expectations associated with autodidacts. By the late eighteenth-century onwards, their discovery, as a new species of literary human, appeared to confirm those ideas of the natural man, and the noble savage, that were derived from Rousseau and that would subsequently influence Henry Mackenzie, Thomas Reid and Lord Monboddo. The Scottish Highlands was considered to be a perfect opportunity to study 'primitive' society and Hogg in particular made several lengthy journeys to these remote regions. Highlanders appear frequently in Hogg's writing and he would eventually compile two volumes of Jacobite songs. Hogg's interest, however, was not confined to the Highlands, and he enjoyed his visits to Edinburgh and London.

The second part of Bold's study is devoted to Hogg as 'Mountain Bard and Forest Minstrel' and the ways in which Hogg, and others, sought to present themselves as poets of 'natural' genius and little formal education. Unfortunately, the value of this section is limited because the author has been unable to take advantage of the most recent research in a field that has culminated in the exemplary Stirling/South Carolina edition of Hogg. There

is no obvious mention of Hogg's collected letters, for example, now available in three volumes, and offering direct insight into Hogg's own thoughts about poetry and poets, whether autodidacts or not.

However, the strength of this book lies in its third part where Bold traces the growth of the 'peasant-poet' model as it developed after Hogg. This is fascinating especially as it includes a range of writers from lower classes of society and several women. Isobel Pagan, Janet Little, Mary Pyper, Maria Bell, Isabella Craig-Knox, Elizabeth Hartley, Janet Hamilton, Marion Bernstein, Jessie Russell and Ellen Johnson are all featured. Their work often reflected the constraints experienced in their lives, whether imposed by poverty or the fear of social disapproval, while managing nonetheless to criticise such barriers and defy convention. Bold quotes one example of tremendous eloquence from 'A Plea for the Doric' by Janet Hamilton, (1795-1873)

A hunner funnels blessin', reekin',
Coal an' ironstone, charrin', smee kin' ...
Boatmen, banksmen, rough and rattlin',
'Bout the wecht wi' colliers battlin',
Sweatin', swearin', fechtin', drinkin',
Change-house bells and gill-stoups clinkin'.

Hamilton's imagery depicts the physical sounds and smells of the shipyards and coalmines of Glasgow and South Ayrshire. The workers are aggressive and belligerent, stoked up like the industrial chimneys that surround them and refuelled, for another day's work, by the Change-house and the 'gill-stoups.' It is a vibrant picture of the realities of the industrial revolution.

Bold argues strongly that the autodidacts were responsible for some of the best Scottish poetry of the nineteenth-century and that Hogg, in his adoption of the persona of the Ettrick Shepherd, appeared to subscribe to ideas of the self-taught natural genius while resenting the constrictions it imposed on his work and his reputation. 'Peasant poets,' once categorised as such, risked intolerance and neglect if they sought to move beyond ballads or lyrical poetry. Piety and

patriotic works were expected: experimental or critical work was frowned upon.

Hogg, however, was inventive in devising ways and means of evading literary typecasting. Writing to Constable, in 1813, he suggested publishing his tales under the alias 'J. H. Craig of Douglas Esq.' because as he pointed out 'I think the Ettrick Shepherd is rather become a hackneyed name.' In this, and in his invention of his 'ancient stile', it seems clear that Hogg was an adept at constructing his image and resisting, where possible, the imposition of literary labels. Readers are now free to make their own judgement following the publication of his work, newly edited, in volumes such as *The Queen's Wake* and *A Queer Book*.

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John Goodridge, gen. ed., *Nineteenth-Century English Labouring-Class Poets 1800-1900*. 3 Vols: Vol. I, 1800-1830, ed. by Scott McEathron. Vol. II, 1830-1860, ed. by Kaye Kossick. Vol. III, 1860-1900, ed. by John Goodridge. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2005. Pp. 1,424. £275. ISBN 9781851967636.

Thanks to John Goodridge and his formidable team of editors and scholars, labouring-class poetry is now a definitive feature on the literary map of Romanticism. Taken together with the three-volume series *Eighteenth-Century English Labouring-Class Poets 1730-1800* (2003), Pickering's six-volume series is an indispensable starting point for any scholar who wants to extend the study of labouring-class beyond familiar figures such as Duck, Collier, Yearsley, Burns, Hogg, Bloomfield and Clare. The canon-widening function of the series is formally acknowledged in the editorial decision to omit the texts of most of these poets (but retain an editorial introduction to their work) and to focus on more obscure writers (a fuller list of poets is available on Nottingham Trent University's impressive online Labouring Class

Poets Project). This is a defensible policy, though in relation to Volume 1 of *Nineteenth-Century English Labouring-Class Poets* (edited by Scott McEathron), which I want to focus on in this review as it covers the years 1800-1830, I doubt that Ebenezer Elliott the ‘Corn-Law Rhymer’ is as accessible as the editor proposes, and the inclusion of a few representative poems would not have gone amiss. Nevertheless, McEathron has assembled an interesting collection of twenty labouring-class poets from a range of backgrounds, regions and occupations. The inclusion of three women is particularly welcome, and the lead poet Ann[e] Candler could be a real prize for feminist criticism, as she uses her poetry to complain candidly about an unhappy marriage. McEathron’s well-researched introductory biographical summaries show that many of these poets led interesting and varied lives with degrees of occupational, geographical and social mobility, and this is an important corrective to eighteenth-century and Romantic cultural constructions of labouring-class writing as a form of natural genius rooted in one particular locale, community or form of (usually rural) labour. The primitivist stereotype of natural genius was well established by the time Bloomfield’s *Farmer’s Boy* appeared in 1800, but the Wordsworthian elevation of rustic expression gave it an added boost. Bloomfield was therefore celebrated for a combination of realism and nostalgia, the ‘artless’ ‘simple’ and ‘sweet’ voice of the English countryside, rather than being regarded as a complex and troubled metropolitan poet who had to negotiate a powerful system of patronage and market forces. The perils of labouring-class patronage were mercilessly exposed by Byron in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, but for the labouring-class poet patrician puffing went hand-in-hand with patrician conformity.

Hence, as Goodridge argues in his General Introduction, one aim of this series is to counter the ‘orthodox nineteenth-century view of labouring-class poets as deserving charitable rather than literary support’ by challenging the idea that the only acceptable literary behaviour for these poets was ‘as models of self-improvement’. The sheer variety of poetic genres gathered together in the volumes garners

impressive evidence to support this claim. In addition to a large number of poems about rural and industrial labour inspired by the triumvirate of ‘canonical’ plebeian poets (Burns, Bloomfield and Clare), there are some genuine surprises in this volume. In addition to Candler’s candid autobiographical complaints about marital problems there are poems about grave-robbing (William Smith), and a large number of comic and satirical poems, many of which burlesque the often pious and sentimental persona of plebeian poetry.

The example of Clare’s contemporary James Chambers is a spectacular case in point, as his self-posturing playfulness with destitute circumstances provides an antic or carnivalesque shadow to Clare’s struggle to reconcile poetry with poverty. Chambers was a Suffolk vagrant and itinerant pedlar, a cross between Wordsworthian outcast and proto-Beckettian tramp-philosopher. As McEathron notes, it is possible that Chambers represented the *ne plus ultra* of the dark side of labouring-class poetic identity in which ‘personal disaster was helpful’. The description of Chambers in the preface to his 1820 volume of poems (the same year that Clare burst onto the literary scene) struggles to wrest an identity (‘visage’) from the hyperbolic social distress: ‘a more wretched appearance and combination of rags and filth, words are not capable of describing – his visage nearly excluded from the public eye, by the uncouth manner of wearing a tattered hat, his feet exposed to the rough greetings of stones, gravel, and wet’. The conspicuous tension here is between polite repulsion and sympathy for the ‘uncouth’ poet who aspires to the ‘public eye’ of print culture, but Chambers self-consciously debunks georgic tropes of distress: ‘In a large open shed I reclin’d day and night,/The muse to invoke, to rhyme verses, and write’. It is hard to know whether this is reportage or pastiche (or both). Chambers is also withering about the pacifying politics of patronage: ‘Impart some relief to compose my sad mind’. A less acerbic and less self-loathing debunking of the ‘deserving’ poor can be found in miller-turned-bookseller James Bird’s *Poetical Memoir* (1823), which uses Byronic whimsicality rather than earnest realism as a badge of poetic merit

and a signifier of social mobility and cultural confidence.

Though there are a variety of poetic personas on display in this volume, very few poets break out into what we might regard as full-blown Romantic lyricism. If this is something of a disappointment for Romantic scholars, so too is the absence of outspokenly political verse. One explanation for lack of direct political engagement is of course that the ideological compromises required by both patrons and the free market were formidable; hence McEathron notes that the 'political allegiances' of his selected poets are 'far from simple', and he suggests that pressure to conform often led to poetical strategies of deceptive ingratiation and intentional ambiguity. In fact a number of poets protest vigorously about single issues such as war, enclosure, poverty and patronage. The attacks on enclosure, which will be particularly useful for Clare scholars, include William Holloway's *The Peasant's Fate* (1802) and Nathaniel Bloomfield's lament at the 'new mounds and fences' erected around his beloved village Honington Green: 'What a bare narrow track is left free/To the foot of the unportion'd poor'. The coinage 'unportion'd' is particularly memorable, as it compresses a complex process of historical, ideological and literary formation (and is there a further pun on the metrical 'foot'?).

The workhouse is another predictable target, though there is an added poignancy in Anne Candler's 'House of Industry' poems as, unlike other Romantic poets who attacked this institution, she actually spent many years subjected to its 'ponderous weight'. Despite these examples, it does seem that many lower-class poets were perhaps more interested in what Maidment calls 'Parnassian' rather than subversive aesthetics. If it is the case, therefore, that self-improvement is actually a more accurate cultural model of the impressive output of labouring-class poetry than radical politics, this is only to recognize that self-improvement was itself a highly contested hegemonic concept.

For many poets in this collection, intellectual advancement was almost certainly synonymous with social and economic reform. Even if the political argument remained implicit, it is

undeniable that each new plebeian poet chipped away at the central 'orthodox' obstacle to reform, the idea that the lower classes were too morally and intellectually immature to be granted the right to vote (even John Stuart Mill, we may remind ourselves, argued that suffrage should be based on an intellectual rather than a property qualification). The most impressive poetical rejoinder to this view in this volume is Nathaniel Bloomfield's complex poem *An Essay on War* (1803) which, as McEathron notes, 'carried with it the implicit claim that the labouring-class poet had a right to real and substantive ideas'. The subsequent two volumes in this series are further testimony to this assertion of intellectual rights, and it is to be hoped that *English Labouring-Class Poets* will help to liberate plebeian poetry from the damaging assumption that its value lies primarily in either primitivism ('an intelligible voice from the hitherto Mute and Irrational' in Carlyle's words) or emulation (at its worst, minstrelsy). As Robert Millhouse the Nottingham weaver puts it in his rebarbative 'the Lot of Genius', poets are 'Born to no heritage but that of mind'.

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Catalin Ghita, *Revealer of the Fourfold Secret: William Blake's Theory and Practice of Vision*. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cartii de Stiinta, 2008. Pp. 302. £10. ISBN 9789731332338.

In *Revealer of the Fourfold Secret*, Catalin Ghita aims to provide an 'introductory analysis of Blake's visionariness' which identifies the unitary system of vision which, he claims, pervades all of Blake's works. Ghita's methodology is diverse, drawing on 'theory of literature, aesthetics, hermeneutics, metaphysics, and philosophy of religion'. His role models are the 'three brilliant Blake exegetes, Damon, Frye, and Erdman, [who] prove conclusively the existence of a variety of Blakean systems'. That

trinity stand on the other side of Leopold Damrosch Jr.'s 1980 *Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth*, a work which represents a kind of boundary between the earlier twentieth century search for a unified system in Blake and those later 'postmodern currents [that] frown upon any systematic attempts at explaining Blake, and [which] subvert unitary paradigms'. Despite his approach, Ghita is not interested in declaring war on those 'postmodernists', and indeed many of them turn up to assist the argument in this critically-informed book. Instead he gets on with the task of elucidating the system that he considers to be at the heart of Blake's work.

Ghita's understanding of Blake is reflected in the structure as well as the content of his book: this is a systematic work, and the 'Fourfold Secret' is elucidated through, appropriately enough, four chapters. The first three chapters develop the theory, the fourth chapter applies it via a four-tiered categorization of Blake's books which correlate to his four levels of vision: 1) 'The Social Level: *America, Europe, The Song of Los*'; 2) 'The Metaphysical Level: *The Four Zoas*'; 3) 'The Aesthetic Level: *Milton*'; and 4) 'The Religious Level: *Jerusalem*'. The system Ghita discloses is 'unsystematic', but nonetheless he argues that Blake's works all 'display a thoroughly coherent visionary message, and may therefore be unified under the auspices of a convergent interpretative enterprise, which should be viewed neither as reductive nor as absolute'.

Ghita goes for the big questions: what is the creative self?, what's the relationship between self and ego?, was Blake 'mad'?, what is the Imagination?, and so on. His methodology—the 'convergent interpretative enterprise' mentioned above—seems to consist of giving fast-paced and eclectic histories of the topics in hand, concluded (within each section) by Ghita's own attempts to synthesize the wisdom of his predecessors. Take the example of the subsection 'Inspiration'. Ghita briefly reviews concepts from Plato, Socrates, Schleiermacher, Tillich, M. H. Abrams, Carl Ferhman, Rosamund Harding, and Timothy Clark. He then writes, 'After analysing all these theories related to the term ['inspiration'], I am now able to offer my own. [...] According to my definition, at the

empirical level, as opposed to imagination, inspiration represents *the subject's outer ability to experience a vision induced by an exterior agent, be it definite or indefinite*'.

Ghita stands apart from the current historicist hegemony in his attempt to collate and synthesize ideas. *Revealer of the Fourfold Secret*, a revision of Ghita's second doctoral thesis (2007), offers an international perspective on Blake, which seems to be equally at home with French, Latin, German, Greek, Japanese, and Romanian, but which happens to be written in English. It opens with a foreword by David Worrall, and concludes with an appendix on 'Blake's Orientalism', which thinks of that loaded phrase in terms of Zen Buddhism. Ghita's bold enterprise provokes both explicit and implicit questions about Blake studies: explicitly, it rehabilitates the big, easily-forgotten questions about Blake (what is his work really about? what is fourfold vision?); implicitly, its unique perspective asks something equally difficult: who owns Blake? what does he look like from the perspective of difficult cultures?, and has the current Anglo-American historicist paradigm—whatever its many merits—now become a scholarly enclave?

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Steve Vine, *William Blake*. Tavistock: Northcote House and British Council, 2007. Pp. 110. £12.99. ISBN 9780746309803.

In *William Blake: The Poems*, Nicholas Marsh offers an introduction to Blake focused on *Songs of Innocence and Experience* placing the poems in their social context and offering a wealth of biographical information. Steve Vine's *William Blake* in the Northcote series *Writers and their Works* covers similar ground, but in addition explores a wide range of Blake's works and illuminated books. Vine offers a reading of Blake which goes beyond the early poems and manages in a few pages to represent the full range of Blake's work, to describe in a fluid

manner his complex mythology, and to place the poet within a rich historical context.

The first chapter 'Labouring Upwards Into Futurity' examines Blake's desire to act as a guide to his times, 'a spiritual interpreter of the meaning of the turbulent social and political history around him.' After the introductory chapter on Blake and his ambitious work ethic, Vine turns to the early tracts, 'There is No Natural Religion' and 'All Religions are One'. In a succinct couple of paragraphs, Vine establishes Blake's views on religion, and his development of the topic of the 'Poetic Genius, a generalised figure for the universality and totality of human imaginative and historical vision'. This figure is further explored in several poems from *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, such as 'The Lamb', and 'The Divine Image'. For Vine, Blake presents 'innocence and experience [as] social and psychological states of seeing and being'. He is especially helpful on poems such as 'London' and 'The Chimney Sweeper' which offer both 'social observation and social criticism'. Blake's critique of society is extended to sexual experience in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and *The Book of Thel*. Drawing on the works of Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft, Vine understands these poems in terms of the debate concerning the status of sexual desire that emerges in the conduct book literature of the period.

Vine then turns to the 'Revolutionary Prophecies', *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, *America, a Prophecy*, and *Europe, a Prophecy*, the works which most forcefully express Blake's political and historical interests. Blake's developing and complex mythology is one of the aspects of his work that students find most disconcerting. By showing the link between the familiar relationships between Blake's characters and their thematic significance – Orc, Los, Enitharmon, and the other figures who make up Blake's pantheon – Vine offers a clear introduction which nevertheless manages to avoid over-simplification.

In the next section, rather than reading the *Song of Los* with the other two continental prophecies, *America* and *Europe*, Vine reads it alongside the 'Bible of Hell', the books of *Urizen* and *Ahania*. This allows for a strong

representation of the Urizen/Los dichotomy, and also allows Vine to draw attention to works too often overlooked in introductory accounts of Blake. It is in the fourth and fifth chapters, which focus on *The Four Zoas* and *Milton* that the benefit of this careful attention to the earlier prophecies becomes fully apparent: 'In effect, Satan has traced the path from radical to reactionary mapped by Blake in the stories of Furzon-turned-god in *The Book of Ahania*, and Orc turned-serpent in "Vala", or "The Four Zoas".'

The sixth chapter is devoted entirely to *Jerusalem*, Blake's final major text. It is Blake's most complex work, yet Vine still manages to untangle many of its overlapping narratives and aims, and uncovers a poem which accomplishes one of Blake's central poetical goals, 'the mapping of British history on to biblical topology and typology.' As Vine traces the relationship of Albion and Jerusalem and their corresponding symbolic representations, he never loses track of the poem's social contexts. Blake's trial in 1803-4 and Robert Hunt's scathing review of his exhibition in 1809 labelling Blake as 'an unfortunate lunatic, whose personal inoffensiveness secures him from confinement' are seen as traumatic events that leave their traces all through the plates of *Jerusalem*. So, *Jerusalem* deals with the devastation of Albion and its psychological, sexual, and political recuperation, and it also registers Blake's growing disillusionment with his audience.

This is not a book for the absolute beginner. Vine assumes that his reader already possesses a strong cultural understanding of the period. This makes it a demanding book for the student encountering Blake for the first time. Even so, Vine manages to condense the work of scholars such as David Erdman, Jon Mee, and E. P. Thompson to present a historical and political reading of Blake's work over several decades. For readers wishing to develop their knowledge of Blake this will prove an invaluable book.

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Robert Rix, *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. Pp. 192. £55. ISBN 0754656004.

Robert Rix's book seeks to trace the links between William Blake's ideas and what Rix calls 'radical Christianity', and in particular the Swedenborgianism that formed a distinctive element in the religious culture of late eighteenth-century England. Rix's wide reading has resulted in a book that Blake scholars must consult despite some unsatisfactory aspects.

The book contains eight chapters flanked by an introduction and a conclusion. Already, in the 'Introduction' one realises that Rix is caught up in an outdated model of religious dissent. Having established the useful term 'Theosophical Christianity', he then abandons it and writes variously of 'particular cultures of dissenting or radical Christianity'. Eighteenth-century readers of Boehme, or Swedenborg, or William Law were mostly Anglicans. For such readers, an emphasis on inner spirituality tends to convert all external matters (particularly the questions of church structure and administration that excited dissenters) into mere *adiaphora*. Rix writes, 'In terms of historical analysis, to call Blake Behmenist, Swedenborgian or any other name is little use'. It is equally misleading to call Blake a dissenter.

Rix's first chapter: 'Religious Themes and Early Contexts' gives this reader the impression of being a late addition to the book, a hastily tacked-on account of the Moravians. He refers to the discovery of the Moravian links of Blake's mother and her first husband in the following words: 'Recently, new documentation has turned up, however'. Turned up! What an extraordinarily dismissive way to refer to Marsha Keith Schuchard's epochal finding. Rix does, however, devote some attention to the Moravian minister Francis Okeley, who published translations of Jacob Bohme and other Protestant visionaries, and thus acted as a vector for the influence of Continental mysticism in England.

The second chapter, 'Libertines, Liberators and Legislators' concerns itself with Blake's so-called antinomianism. The association of Blake

with antinomianism—never properly defined and always confused with anti-legalism—can be found in Swinburne before it was taken up by A. L. Morton and E. P. Thompson. Of Morton, who sought to find parallels between Blake's ideas and the Ranters, Rix manages to doubt 'whether the parallels have much historical value'. How much better this book would have been if Rix had ditched the unnecessary lip service paid to discredited writers like Morton and Thompson.

Chapters 3 and 4 ('Swedenborgianism' and 'From Swedenborg to Radical Politics') deal with the impact of Emanuel Swedenborg's ideas in England, from the establishment of Robert Hindmarsh's Theosophical Society in 1783 to the Great Eastcheap General Conference of 1789 that signalled the lapse of part of the Swedenborgian movement into sectarianism with the formation of the New Jerusalem Church. As Rix hints, William and Catherine Blake's attendance at the Great Eastcheap Meeting should be seen not as representing the start of Blake's involvement with Swedenborgianism, but the high-water mark, the culmination, of his pre-existing interest in Swedenborg—being followed by the anti-Swedenborgian satire of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

At this point Rix brings in Joseph Priestley, claiming that 'Priestley's proselytizing helped to feed the public prejudice against Swedenborgians as radical dissenters with political motives'. The problem here is that Rix does not ask basic questions about circulation or influence. For example, he cites George Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, as publishing attacks on the Methodists and the Moravians in which he made detailed accusations of sexual misconduct by both groups. What Rix fails to note, is that as a result Lavington himself became known as 'the bawdy bishop'. Similarly, members of the provincial clergy may have written pamphlets accusing the Swedenborgians of antinomianism or political subversion. But who paid any attention? As Rix himself admits, 'commentators read Swedenborg's attack on the old churches, expecting to find evidence of subversive politics, but in vain'.

Chapter 5: 'International Swedenborgians in London' brings to the fore the exotic figure of

Count Cagliostro, an occultist who had created his own masonic Egyptian Rite with symbols and ceremonies based on a mixture of Swedenborgian and Cabalistic lore. In this chapter, Rix brings together material from a wide range of recondite sources with fascinating results. Though here, as elsewhere in the book, Schuchard's pioneering role in exploring this territory of alchemists, freemasons, cabbalists, and illuminists should have been more generously acknowledged.

The next two chapters, 'The Divine Image' and 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell as Satire' focus more closely on Blake, finding Swedenborgian influence in the *Songs* as well as the more obvious *Marriage*. Rix gives special attention to 'The Divine Image' and 'The Little Black Boy' from the *Songs*. Elsewhere, Rix has commented on Blake's 'A Song of Liberty' that concludes the *Marriage*. I should have wished more of this analysis could have been included.

Rix's last chapter, 'The Visionary Marketplace', concerns itself with Animal Magnetism, how magnetic cures could controversially combine to bring about the New Jerusalem. We learn how the mystical and spiritual writings of Emanuel Swedenborg became a platform for heterodox practice in healing the spirit among his followers in England. Indeed, Swedenborg was on occasion referred to as 'the chief of the somnambulists'.

Often I found myself almost agreeing with Rix, only to find myself put off by his mode of expression. For example, in his 'Conclusion', Rix notes: 'We have seen how Blake has picked up on ideas from the long tradition of mystical writing and religious subcultures. In Swedenborg, he and a number of contemporary Londoners found much which synchronized with older mainstays of radical dissent'. How does one 'synchronize' 'mainstays'?

Rix has focused on Swedenborgianism as a concrete and identifiable micro-culture from which a number of essential themes in Blake's works can be reassessed. It is a pity that Rix, a gifted scholar, has not developed the fuller implications of his discoveries and not produced the more challenging book he could have written. Nevertheless, *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity* should be of

interest to all students of that 'motley crew', in Schuchard's words, 'of Moravians, Swedenborgians, Kabbalists, alchemists, and millenarians who populated the clandestine world of illuminist freemasonry in London'. Rix's book, despite my strictures, is valuable and thought-provoking.

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Gavin Hopps and Jane Stabler, eds,
Romanticism and Religion from William
Cowper to Wallace Stevens. Aldershot:
Ashgate, 2006. Pp. 262. £50.
ISBN 0754655709.

The essays in this collection take the religious discourse permeating Romantic literature as significant in its own right rather than as a displacement of something else, continuing a persistent minority trend that has accompanied a complex critical history. Critics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries argued about whether poets such as Percy Shelley were really religious or not, until M.H. Abrams' argument about Romanticism as secularized Protestantism took center stage. Heirs of existential phenomenology and post-Freudian psychoanalysis, including Derrida, de Man, Bloom, and Hartman, simultaneously invited 'the dissolution and the return of the religious', replacing Abrams' linear history with fragmentary structures that could lead nowhere or to the divine. (One strand of interpretive history missing from this and most such histories is the non-deconstructive and very consciously theological development of existential phenomenology in writers such as Paul Ricoeur and Hans Gadamer, a development that has never entered the mainstream of Romantic studies despite such writers' deep roots in European Romanticism.) A definitive secularism returned with McGann's *Romantic Ideology* leading the charge to place all of the above under the banner of an ideology whose historical conditions needed to be exposed. A few critics, including Stephen Prickett and the late J. Robert Barth, have consciously stepped

outside this history, seeing theology and religious history as viable lenses for interpreting Romantic literature despite their entanglements in postmodern debates.

The introduction to *Romanticism and Religion* calls for an attentiveness to the possibilities opened up by postmodern theology, according to which aporias are not just aporias, but potential messengers to and from that which is beyond being, specifically in opposition to the recent secular turn in Romantic studies. However, a diversity of approaches prevents this collection from being a manifesto, and in fact the attention to historical detail in many of the essays shows the salutary influence of the return to historicism.

The fourteen essays follow the chronology of their subjects, beginning with Jonathan Shears' familiar argument that the failure of Miltonic vision produces an internalized alternative (ignoring the many studies of Milton's influence on Romanticism, from Leslie Brisman to Ian Balfour). Vincent Newey partially recovers Cowper for environmentalism, usefully describing a human-natural connection tempered by an effort to preserve a hierarchical culture formation. With the exception of Corrina Russell's essay Hopkins' use of the notion of gratuitous excess to reconcile the tension between aesthetics and theology, and Michael O'Neill's comparison of Wallace Stevens and the Romantics on the problem of evil, the remainder of the volume is about traditional Romantic texts, with a heavy emphasis on Byron. (The volume is dedicated to Byron scholar Bernard Beatty, who figures prominently in several essays.)

Peter Cochran enlists Byron to support the illogic of Christian vicarious atonement, and Christine Kenyon Jones compares Byron with his Scottish contemporary Thomas Chalmers, exploring both men's objections to natural theology in the pluralistic context of Scottish and English Protestantism. Alan Rawes travels the familiar road of *Childe Harold* as a confessional pilgrimage, usefully recovering the Augustinian context of the potential movement from sin to faith. Richard Cronin's essay, 'Words and the Word: the Diction of *Don Juan*,' is thinly connected to the volume's theme via

the Lake Poets' consciously incarnational theory of poetic diction, but it is one of the best essays in the volume, arguing that Wordsworth's attempt at a universal philosophical language 'really used by men' is an authoritative systematization of diction, in contrast to Byron's non-systematic embrace of a diversity of necessarily disciplinary linguistic performances. Tony Howe sees Byron's *Cain* not as a statement of skepticism or belief, but as torn between visionary experience and the simplifying completeness of inadequate language. In a related argument about betweenness, Edward Burns explores the ghostly in Byron's work as a pilgrimage both away from and toward the gothic dwelling of Byron's youth.

The non-Byronic essays present further explorations of a multivalent Romantic theology: Gavin Hopps translates Wordsworth's 'seeming' into a vehicle for both material skepticism and religious faith, while Arthur Bradley recuperates Shelley's *Adonais* for postmodern theology. The threat of Rome informs both Timothy Webb's argument that Catholicism focused Coleridge's and Southey's anxieties about French and Irish contagion of England, and Jane Stabler's discussion of how Romantic travelers to Italy reconciled the threat of Catholic doctrine with the beauty of pre-Reformation art.

Occasionally the reader may feel as if, despite many caveats, Romantic writers are being simply appropriated to the critics' interests in theological recuperation, but it is refreshing to see theological and literary nuances examined in the light of the multifaceted religious thought that informs both Romanticism and postmodernity, rather than elided in the name of an obligatory materialism.

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Tom Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity: Industrial Culture and the Hermeneutic of Intimacy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Pp. 227. £45. ISBN 1403999937.

Tom Mole's monograph appears in Palgrave's series *Studies in the Enlightenment, Romanticism and Cultures of Print*, which promises to combine an emphasis on the power of print and the intersection of literature with the visual arts with a 'large-scale rethinking of the origins of modernity'. Presumably in line with the last of these aims, Mole claims to elaborate 'a theory and a history of celebrity' applicable to cases other than Byron's literary career. For me, this first chapter was the least convincing aspect of the book, as theories of contemporary American electronic media retrospectively applied to Regency poetry feel like looking the wrong way down a telescope. Though undoubtedly more printed matter was becoming available at the beginning of the nineteenth century, words such as 'industrial', 'massive', 'mass-circulation' and 'deluged' sound inappropriate to the hand-pressed quartos Byron's first readers had elegantly bound for their libraries, many years before steam-powered presses revolutionised book production.

The second chapter, where Mole gets out his microscope to examine the gestation and first publication of 'An Ode to the Framers of the Frame Bill', which was not known to be Byron's until 1880, is quite a different matter. The tired stereotype of Byron as a self-promoting poseur gives way under Mole's impressively detailed research into parliamentary procedure. After his House of Lords speech on 27 February 1812 against making Luddism a capital offence, Byron had this satirical poem anonymously published in the *Morning Chronicle* on Monday 2 March just eight days before *Childe Harold* came out. Contrary to the assumptions of all other previous commentators, this was not a pointless gesture after the political event but calculated to influence the committee stage the next day. Indeed, as an amendment was passed, distinguishing between an attempted and a successful frame-breaking, the poem may even

have had some political agency. That it was reprinted in the *Nottingham Review* is further evidence that it was effective. Mole nicely points the irony that Byron's protest at the human cost of industrialization itself benefited from technological advances in paper-making and newspaper production. It would not be long before steam presses would be causing redundancies at *The Times*.

It is his careful scrutiny of detail that is Mole's greatest strength, too, in his tracing of the 'hermeneutic of intimacy' which Byron evolved incrementally in the process of drafting, revising and adding to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. He is good at teasing out the false starts and new beginnings that resulted from the poet first envisaging a private coterie as his audience, then evoking a wider public on second thoughts, and finally incorporating his special appeal to women in the shape of 'To Ianthe', added as late as 1814.

Predictably, the series of Oriental tales is presented as an example of a branded product balancing repetition with minimal novelty; while it is suggested that Byron's attempt at changing direction to write with 'a new moral and theological seriousness' in *Hebrew Melodies* was stymied by the 'celebrated product identity' he had created with his publisher John Murray. Unsurprising too is the concentration on Byron's visual appeal: his focus on the manufacturing of mystery, through the gaze and then display and readings of the (often male) body. This leads into a well-researched and nicely-illustrated chapter, building on the work of Annette Peach and others, on the way Byron's image proliferated in silhouettes, portraits, engravings and textual illustrations.

After this inevitable concentration on the 'years of fame', the book concludes with two excellent and thought-provoking chapters on the poetry written in the wake of the separation crisis: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Canto 3 and *Don Juan*. Mole wittily argues that Lady Byron's legal adviser, Lushington, turned the poet's own strategy in the hermeneutic of intimacy against him, by hinting at concealed crimes without divulging specific details. In his third canto, Byron responded by reformulating his relationship with the reader. Writing a poem

is now depicted as a private event and the creator validated over the reading public. Mole is persuasive in his reading of the imagery of lightning and sword in stanza 97 as a writer's fantasy of overpowering the passive reader with a symbolic rape, but also in recognising how the apostrophe to Ada functioned to imagine an alternative: an ideal female reader with an unassailable claim to intimacy with Byron.

The final chapter is a nuanced and intelligent consideration of the way Byron swam against the stream: writing about subjectivity not in terms of developmental moral growth and depth, but presenting inconsistent characters and multiple identities. I am persuaded by Mole's argument that Byron turned away from his earlier enthusiasm for Rousseau and the confessional mode which helped generate his own celebrity, towards a judicious scepticism influenced by his admiration for Montaigne's *Essays*. An 'Envoi' on Byron's celebrity in the later nineteenth century makes a graceful conclusion to a well-written, lively study. I could find few errors (Moore is accredited with the dubious honour of writing *Jacqueline*): the book has been carefully copy-edited and is provided with a full bibliography. This monograph succeeds admirably in combining sensitive textual analysis, careful bibliographical research and awareness of the broader material aspects of the history of print culture.

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Angela Wright, *Gothic Fiction: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007. Pp. 256. £14.99. ISBN 9781403936677.

Clive Bloom, *Gothic Horror: A Guide for Students and Readers*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007. Pp. 272. £17.99. ISBN 9780230001787.

Boyd Alexander, ed., *The Journal of William Beckford in Portugal and Spain, 1787-1788*. Stroud: Nonsuch Publishing, 2006. Pp. 250. £18. ISBN 9781845880101.

Wright's *Gothic Fiction: A Reader's Guide* begins with the question: 'What is the Gothic?' Anyone who has introduced a module in Gothic fiction to undergraduates will appreciate the generic, historical and theoretical challenges posed by this question. In terms of its thematic organisation, lucid critical commentaries and logical taxonomy of primary and secondary sources, this volume rises admirably to these challenges. The work is characterised throughout by a rigorous intellectual, political and economic contextualisation of early Gothicism, beginning with the much-debated origin of the genre in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and the diverse critical and literary responses to that text over the next forty years: affirmatory, condemnatory, satirical, and so on. Chapter two addresses the categories of Gothic 'Terror' and 'Horror' with an illuminating and highly nuanced collection of sources (Steven Bruhm on Radcliffean 'Terror', David B. Morris on the Gothic and the Sublime, Robert Miles on 'female Gothic', for example) that facilitates an instructive coverage of the wider cultural and political contexts within which Gothic 'Terrors' and 'Horrors' took shape. The debates, anxieties and conflicts identified here as central to the development of the late-eighteenth-century Gothic romance are presented with an efficient logic that brings into focus the gendered opposition between 'high' and 'low' culture, the political, sexual and religious anxieties

pertaining to 'terrorist', 'libidinous' Gothic, and the Gothic's appropriations of Romantic economies of pain and pleasure most notably through the discourse of the Sublime.

Chapter three is a solid treatment of the Gothic and Revolution, though it perhaps adds little to existing source books and critical commentaries in this field. Chapter four, on the other hand, represents a most timely intervention into Gothic pedagogy and research in its collection and robust analyses of primary and secondary sources pertaining to the Gothic's often fraught and contradictory implication in contemporary discourses of Protestantism, cultural patriotism and an emerging national and nationalist literary tradition (Walpole's second preface is very usefully extracted here alongside E.J. Clery's 'The Genesis of Gothic Fiction'). Whilst some further engagement with eighteenth-century juridical mythologisations of 'Gothic' national origins would have been useful here, this chapter's elegant synthesis of primary and secondary sources will serve as an excellent guide to the Gothic's uneasy relation to 'the idea of British' in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Chapter five shifts emphasis somewhat to consider recent critical accounts of the Gothic through theories of psychoanalysis. To provide a comprehensive overview of these theoretical developments in Gothic Studies can hardly be straightforward, but Wright provides a well-organised representative sample of key works in the field, from Freud and the Surrealist analysis of Breton, to Robert Miles's Lacanian reading of Radcliffe and Anne Williams's use of Kristeva's 'narrative poetics' in her analysis of the Gothic's origins and influences. This chapter would prove particularly effective, I think, in moving students away from reductive Freudian readings of first-wave Gothic fiction. In my experience, students who have encountered Freud in pre-university study are only too ready to apply a rather naïve Freudianism uncritically to the Gothic; indeed, it seems difficult to persuade them that psychoanalytic criticism requires anything more than this. Chapter five of *Gothic Fiction: A Reader's Guide* should be compulsory reading in this regard.

Chapter six is also aptly pitched in its consideration of the relevance to Gothic Studies of theories of gender and sexuality. The chapter begins with two quite unusual, but illuminating, sources that immediately foreground the problematics of female authorship in the period. Sarah Green's preface to the 1810 *Romance Readers and Romance Writers: A Satirical Novel* shows a wry appreciation of the misogynistic anxieties of contemporary literary mores, whilst the extract from Thomas Talfourd's *Life and Writings of Mrs. Radcliffe* reveals the growing commodity value of Gothic romance – a phenomenon that only served to exacerbate the hostility towards female-authored Gothic fictions. Nevertheless, as Wright observes, the popularity of these romances and their generic similarities helped create the conditions under which it became possible to identify 'female Gothic' as a distinct literary category. Wright cites Ellen Moers's *Literary Women* as a key critical source here, and goes on to bring together some of the most valuable recent reflections on the usefulness and limits of 'female Gothic' as a stable generic signifier. It is useful indeed to find the work of E. J. Clery, Kate Ferguson Ellis, Harriet Guest, Robert Miles, Diane Long Hoeveler and others extracted under one roof, as it were. This chapter exemplifies the strengths of this collection as a whole: the selection and organisation of an impressively wide and relevant range of sources (particularly given the space constraints of the format) and the critical commentaries that accompany them mark this out as an invaluable aid to researching and teaching the Gothic.

Clive Bloom's *Gothic Horror: A Guide for Students and Readers* first appeared a decade ago to mark the centenary of the publication of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Gothic scholars will welcome this second edition which extends the volume's historical and thematic reach. The anthology is divided into five chapters of approximately equal length organised in historical order and comprising literary and critical materials from Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* onwards. The chapter divisions are lucidly conceived to enable this volume to convey a very definite sense of generic development whilst also acknowledging

historical differences and specificity. The first chapter details the emergence of the literary Gothic from Walpole to the important prefaces of Maturin to *Melmoth the Wanderer* and, of course, of Percy and Mary Shelley to the 1818 and 1831 editions of *Frankenstein*. Whilst there is room to query the exclusion from this chapter of, for example, the works of John and Anna Laetitia Aikin and Nathan Drake, the materials here are very well positioned to reveal the origin of Horror in early literary Gothicism. Chapter two is similarly thorough and indeed innovative in its coverage. The inclusion of Poe's 'The Philosophy of Composition' and Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'Preface to the House of the Seven Gables' will help students appreciate the aesthetic and intellectual shift from eighteenth-century Gothic to Nineteenth-century Horror, and scholars will benefit from the inclusion here of two highly important yet little-known pieces: Lafcadio Hearn's 'Extract from 'Nightmare Touch'' and Edith Wharton's 'An Autobiographical Postscript'.

The diversity of the volume is evident once more in chapters four and five as Bloom includes well-known essays by Freud, H.P Lovecraft and Kingsley Amis alongside Bela Lugosi's 'I Like playing Dracula' and the rare pamphlet published in 1962 by the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society, 'Symposium on H.P Lovecraft'. The inclusion of this compelling discussion between five of the foremost practitioners of sci-fi and sci-fi criticism in the 1950s and 60s (Fritz Leiber, Robert Bloch, Sam Russell, Arthur Cox, Leland Sapiro) is quite a coup and is exemplary of this volume's breadth of scholarship.

Chapter five extracts key contemporary critical studies of Horror fiction and film and will serve as an effective resource particularly as regards manifestations and diverse critical interpretations of mutation and monstrosity in Horror fiction and film. One gap in the coverage here, though, relates to developments in the genre outside of the West – in Japan, especially. An engagement with Japanese Horror (or J-Horror as it is often popularly known), with the films of Hideo Nakata for example, would be a welcome addition to any future edition of what

is already deservedly a seminal work of Gothic scholarship.

The Journal of William Beckford in Portugal and Spain, 1787-1788 is a fascinating hybrid of Romantic genres. An evocative travel narrative, it is rich in local detail particularly with regard to a landscape that Beckford finds at points inspiring, enervating, sublime, tedious. It is also a confessional autobiography that posits its subject as a mixture of cynicism and hypersensitivity, self-contempt and self-aggrandisement – not unlike the protagonist of Rousseau's *Confessions*. It is also a lively satire, darkly and scathingly comic, but also often cool, detached, ironic.

Beckford positions himself as the critical observer of a culture that in spite of its similarities to upper-class English society is at times disconcertingly 'other' to him. The lush gardens, opulent interiors and carnivalesque local entertainments that Beckford describes (when he isn't mocking his hosts' taste) in vivid, almost awe-struck detail evoke the surreal, exotic, tempting spectacles of *Vathek* published in 1786-7. These narratives bring to mind ambivalent later Gothic engagements with southern European Catholicism. Beckford expresses contempt for what he regards as the superstitious bigotry of popular Catholicism whilst also revealing his enthralled fascination with the rituals of the church, and it is his fraught relationship to Catholicism and the political hierarchy it supports that ultimately, and in spite of his mockery, provides the compelling emotional focus of this narrative.

Beckford writes constantly of his efforts to gain admittance to the Portuguese royal court. His attempts are opposed vigorously by Robert Walpole, the British Minister in Lisbon at the time, on the grounds of Beckford's scandalous past. Rumours of Beckford's 'misconduct' with the seventeen year old William Courtenay forced him into retirement in Switzerland, shortly after which his wife Margaret died. Beckford was duly blamed in the press for her death. The journal circles around this recent tragedy, expressing grief over Margaret's death and bitterness towards the 'contemptible coward', Courtenay. The journal reveals Beckford's status as an outsider, marginalized to

varying degrees from both English and Portuguese society. He refers to himself as 'the Wandering Jew'; there is nowhere that he can call home and the journal does convey the sense that Beckford's mockery of Portuguese high society acts to some extent as a defence against an almost intolerable sense of isolation.

Beckford's desire to secure an audience at the court also accounts for his performance of an excessive Catholic piety which so impresses the locals that some of them begin to revere him almost as a saint. He becomes something of a celebrity and regards this highly effective subterfuge with a mixture of bleakly cynical humour and self-hating despair. The gap between his public persona and his private 'self' becomes apparently abyssal and deeply troubling: 'How tired I am of keeping a mask on my countenance,' he comments, 'How tight it sticks – it makes me sore.' Immediately, though, there is a lightening of tone as the journal reverts to a cool, self-knowing irony: forestalling a straightforward reading of the 'tragedy' of his situation Beckford exclaims, 'Now there's a metaphor for you.' This journal reveals the construction of this private 'self' through the conventions of Romantic confessional writing central to which is a certain conceptualisation of identity in terms of an opposition between public performance and private subjectivity. Beckford here figures his public persona as a 'mask' behind which lies the authentic Romantic 'self' that must disclose its pain. *What* a metaphor, the diarist wryly observes. Beckford's journal appears to taunt its subject with its own tasteless inauthenticity and thus it undermines the aesthetic conditions of production of this traumatised Romantic 'self'. It is a fascinating Romantic document that complicates, manipulates and consolidates emerging Romantic conceptualisations of the formation and narration of subjectivity.

The new edition republishes the journals originally edited by Boyd Alexander in 1954 and includes that editor's original introduction, appendices and valuable, extensive footnotes. This edition will be welcomed by Beckford scholars, certainly, but it deserves wider circulation. It provides a novel insight into the development of certain aspects of Romantic

textualities and subjectivities. It offers fascinating glimpses into the contemporary machinations of various political cliques in Portuguese and English high society. I must say that it is also, from the very past page, an utterly compelling read.

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E. J. Clery, *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century England: Literature, Commerce and Luxury*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Pp. 234. £20.99. ISBN 0333777328.

Adriana Craciun, *British Women Writers and the French Revolution: Citizens of the World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Pp. 225. ISBN 1403902356. £52.00.

In his monograph *A Polite and Commercial People* (1989) Paul Langford suggests that a 'history of luxury... would come very close to being a history of the eighteenth century'. A scholar examining the two books under consideration today might be tempted to make the same observation regarding the rhetoric of gender. Alongside work by Laura L. Runge, Anne Mellor and Marlon B. Ross, both studies add to the growing body of criticism dealing with the representation of gender in the period. Possibly as a result, they share some similarity of approach; however, in terms of content, their wide separation indicates the diversity of the field.

Critics of the late eighteenth century and Romantic period can hardly fail to be aware of the difficult position in which women found themselves in relation to consumption. E. J. Clery's work seeks to trace the emergence of this complicated relationship between luxury, modernity and the feminine. Focussing on the gendered debate around social progress that took place in the first half of the eighteenth century, Clery highlights the specificity of the English

discussion, distinct from both the salon culture of Paris and, later, the work of the Scottish philosophers. In England, she suggests, the masculinist discourse of civic humanism was reshaped by proponents of feminization who suggested the rise of commerce might be socially beneficial rather than merely emasculating. Here the study is attentive to eighteenth-century categories of gender, arguing that while 'effeminacy' is frequently connected with luxury and excessive interest in women, there is an alternate discourse, that of feminization, which promotes those social behaviours often associated with the feminine. Clery also provides a nuanced account of women writers' reactions to (and interventions in) this debate, from that of Elizabeth Singer Rowe, who was able to capitalize on it, to the suspicions felt by Elizabeth Carter in her dealings with the arch-feminizer Samuel Richardson. As such, Clery remains clear-sighted about the limitations of this discourse in relation to the interests of women, even though her focus (and, one suspects, the focus of the original discussion) is 'not on what the debate about progress could do for women, but on what "woman" could do for the feminization argument'.

Clery begins by examining the gender politics of the coffee house, challenging the Habermasian model by suggesting that, in order to avoid the association with unmanliness, this space of sociality drew from the first upon the discourse of heterosexuality. In this process, Clery highlights as key both the actual presence of the female barkeeper and the metaphoric presence of feminine influence – evident, for example, in John Dunton's *The Athenian Mercury*. Yet this study makes it evident that such strategies were problematic: the barkeeper might inspire polite exchange but equally might become the focus of disruptive sexual desire; Elizabeth Singer Rowe might have maintained her reputation but the struggle would be far more difficult for later Augustan women writers increasingly associated with the commercialism of Grub Street. Emphasising the connection between such increased rhetorical hostility and economic fluctuation, Clery next explores how the collapse of the South Sea Bubble led to the

abandonment of a gendered rhetoric of social improvement. The result, she argues, was a reversion to an older one-sex model of sexual difference, the exploration of which forms an extremely useful addition both to discussions of Defoe's economic women and to thinking on misogyny in Augustan poetry. Providing a sense of how such positions were contested, the figure of Elizabeth Carter here forms an important link between the hostile post-bubble climate of the 1730s and the later revival of the feminization argument by Richardson.

Whatever doubts Richardson's female associates may have had about his project, this study is at its most compelling in its discussion of his works. Referring to Richardson's suggestion, made in an appendix to *Charles Grandison*, that he saw his novels as 'scenes of life' stretching from around 1710 to the present day, Clery posits that his major works give a narrative of the developing contemporary relationship between the economy and the feminine. For her, Richardson's works can therefore be classified as 'historical novels', a generic label that might seem puzzling to anyone who takes Sir Walter Scott's works as paradigmatic of the form, but which might seem more probable once the expansion of types of history writing in mid-eighteenth century Britain is taken into account. In this reading, Richardson's heroines are not the domestic women imagined by Nancy Armstrong. Rather, their virtues and spiritual production increasingly work to underpin, even to insure, the otherwise less salubrious world of commerce.

If for Clery the discourse of feminization served to dilute the masculinist tendency of civic humanism, for Adriana Craciun, considering the end of the century, cosmopolitanism fulfilled a similar function. However, rather than concentrating on economic modernisation, Craciun's *British Women Writers and the French Revolution* investigates the radical cosmopolitanism of a group of women writers operating in the increasingly conservative decade of the 1790s. This study convincingly shows how this radical cosmopolitanism was linked to Francophilia at a time when both property rights and sexual rights were under

debate across the channel. Thus, while historians like Linda Colley have suggested that the war with France encouraged the rise of English nationalism, Craciun seeks to moderate the picture. Significantly, in the process, she manages to preserve a sense of the distinctness of the individual woman writers – Mary Robinson, Helen Maria Williams and Charlotte Smith – whom she positions as ‘citizens of the world’.

In line with this emphasis on distinctness, the introduction uses the prose writings of Anna Lætitia Barbauld to highlight the presence of anti-nationalistic discourse during the war with France. Barbauld’s position is brought into greater relief by placing her in relation to loyalists such as West and More, a strategy of comparison Craciun continues in the next chapter, where she carefully examines the rhetorical motifs – of Satanic Jacobin, unsex’d female and philosopher whore – used to attack women radicals. All these tropes, she persuasively argues, are structured to pejoritize not only radicalism but also internationalism. Her approach is equally vigorous when she considers Mary Robinson. Departing from the critical tendency to interpret Robinson in relation to a discourse of self-fashioning, the discussion meticulously draws on a range of Robinson’s work – her occasional verse, her relatively neglected novels, her journalism (more problematic given difficulties with identification) and her letter to Robert Dundas (a forceful political intervention that will already be familiar to readers of *Fatal Women of Romanticism*) – to argue for Robinson’s increased radicalisation during the 1790s.

Citizens of the World also supplements Craciun’s earlier exploration of women writers’ representations of violent revolutionary women: here Helen Maria Williams’s and Mary Robinson’s reactions to Robespierre make evident the complex Romantic use of gender in relation to male power. Particularly informative is the account of Williams’s competition with the figure of Robespierre for the right to interpret the Revolution. What is clear both in this chapter and in the previous material on Robinson is the extent of women writers’ direct radical involvement in the arena of political

culture – a valuable widening of focus given the frequent critical concentration on Wollstonecraft as representative female voice. And Craciun’s account also has the merit of providing a thorough overview. Having considered both calls for reform at home and portraits of the revolution abroad, for example, she turns to an often-neglected area, the British reception of the émigrés. At this point the inclusion of varied counterrevolutionary responses alongside the more nuanced approach of Charlotte Smith enables a sense of the fierceness of contemporary dispute to emerge. While other commentators have recently concentrated upon the over-whelming strength of the anti-Jacobin opposition (who nonetheless are depicted tiresomely recycling a series of lifeless tropes), Craciun gives a far more interesting impression of lively and robust debate.

Read together, these challenging books expose the limits of our current system of literary periodization: the connections between the two studies seem at once elusive and potentially significant. How does the feminization associated (however problematically) with the Bluestockings really relate to the feminism of Wollstonecraft? How, precisely, does the elite and luxurious cosmopolitanism of the first half of the eighteenth century transform into the more radical cosmopolitanism seen at the end? More heartening, however, is what these books share: a vivid sense of the impact of history on literature of the sort inherited from Marilyn Butler; an ability to position women’s writing as absolutely essential for understanding any cultural milieu; and a sense of the dynamism and variety of intellectual debate past and present. As such, they form an invigorating contribution to contemporary scholarship.

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Marion A. Wells, *The Secret Wound: Love-Melancholy and Early Modern Romance*. Stanford University Press, 2007. Pp. 368. \$65. ISBN 9780804750462.

In *Three Books on Life*, Marsilio Ficino describes vividly the psychopathology of love-melancholy:

the body dries out and grows squalid, and hence lovers become melancholics. For from dry, thick, and black blood is produced melancholy, that is, black bile, which fills the head with its vapours, dries out the brain, and ceaselessly troubles the soul day and night with hideous and horrible images.

Fragrant wine may be taken to assuage the excessively dry character of melancholic humour while ‘conversing with dearest friends’ and reading poetry may harmonise the body and soul. Marion A. Wells’s *The Secret Wound: Love-Melancholy and Early Modern Romance* contributes to the current trend in early modern studies to read medicine and literature side by side, and argues persuasively that they were inseparable. Not only did the authors of romance demonstrate an intimate knowledge of the disease, but conversely physicians often drew on literary descriptions of melancholic lovers. François Valleriola’s work of medical science *Observationum Medicinalium libri VI* (1588), for example, moves seamlessly between a case-study of a love-sick merchant from Arles and an account of the erotic madness of Virgil’s Dido. Love-melancholy was therefore both a medical condition and a generally recognised cultural phenomenon, and Wells offers a meticulous study of the ways in which this ‘medico-poetic intertextuality’ manifested itself in English and Italian romance.

The early modern view of love as a dangerous emotion which threatened the faculty of reason derives largely from Ficino. Uniquely capable of destabilising mental equilibrium, love-melancholy also reminded sufferers of the mind’s vulnerability to the unpredictable

influence of the body. But love has perhaps always been linked with grief, anxiety and fear. Plato’s contemplation of beauty through intellect informed later descriptions of melancholic lovers by Avicenna and others who described how *furor divinus* could slip into the *insania* of obsession. The most sophisticated exploration of love-melancholy was surely Petrarch’s whose ‘delightful sorrow’ in the *Canzoniere* hovers between spiritual *tristia* and erotic compulsion.

Melancholia has often been associated with intense creativity and Wells offers a cogent account, largely through Petrarch, of the link between desire and poetic inspiration. The lover who creates in his mind an ever-present, unattainable ‘phantasmic object’ embraces error and self-alienation in much the same way as poets do. Renaissance love-melancholy overlaps in interesting ways with modern psychoanalytical accounts of the self for, in both cases, erotic desire is the organising principle for the subject. Lacan’s theory of the *objet a* (where the object desired always stands for something beyond itself) sheds light in Wells’s study on the melancholic register of early modern romance and its recurring stories of loss and yearning.

Wells argues suggestively that romance is itself a melancholy genre whose very fabric reveals something new about melancholia. Rather than concentrating on romance’s ‘errant’ or labyrinthine structure, an approach familiar from the work of Patricia Parker, Wells turns instead to ‘the *psychological* content of this form.’ Her approach to genre aims therefore not only to reveal thematic or stylistic features but also to uncover the ways in which writers negotiated relationships with themselves and each other. Wells’s chapter on Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* focuses on Orlando’s dream of Angelica which plunges him into madness. Here Ariosto offers a sophisticated critique of Petrarchism, and this episode marks his departure from melancholic romance in favour of the more elegiac mode of Virgilian epic. But if Ariosto found himself able to ‘cure’ romance with epic, Torquato Tasso could not imagine any such resolution. Wells reads his autobiographical work *Il Messaggiere* (1583) alongside *Gerusalemme Liberata*, suggesting plausibly that Tasso’s writing was informed by

his personal experience of melancholia. Tasso's own life story therefore overlaps with the story of Tancredi whose obsessional desire for Clorinda, whom he pursues after her death in a phantasmic vision, is inseparable from the search for poetic voice.

Two chapters are devoted to Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and here Wells offers a version of romance perhaps more usually associated with Shakespeare's late plays. Exploring the role of sleep in the psychopathology of melancholia and its medieval precursor (*acedia*, or sloth), Wells concentrates on Red Crosse's dream of false Una, which leads him into the cave of Despair, and Arthur's dream of the faerie queene. Spenser applies a consolatory theology to the symptoms of melancholy and replaces bitterness and longing with 'elegiac stoicism'. A final chapter on Britomart's love-sickness in Book III of *The Faerie Queene* explores female love-melancholy or 'uterine fury', sometimes linked by contemporary physicians to the afflictions associated with chastity. No longer an embarrassing, hysterical condition, Britomart's love-sickness emerges here as the catalyst for noble endeavour.

Wells is well read not only in English and Italian literature but also in classical medical and philosophical thought. Her book is impeccably researched, admirably well written, and presents a clear and sophisticated thesis. *The Secret Wound* will be essential reading for scholars of both early modern romance and the history of medicine.

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Dennis Low, *The Literary Protégées of the Lake Poets*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. Pp. 210. £50. ISBN 0754655954.

The title of Dennis Low's *The Literary Protégées of the Lake Poets* may seem slightly deceptive to some readers because the Lake Poets figure less prominently in the book than one might expect. Low does focus his attention on William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor

Coleridge, and especially Robert Southey as mentors to women writers, but the book is not primarily about the mentor/protégée relationships. Indeed, Low's avowed purpose is 'to further people the literary landscape of the 1820s and 30s with four more women writers, namely: Caroline Bowles, Maria Gowen Brooks, Sara Coleridge, and Maria Jane Jewsbury'. With that caveat in mind, readers will find Low's book to be an informative, interesting, and well written introduction to these four women writers.

After a concise introduction that clearly establishes his argument for the recovery of these women writers, Low turns his attention in the first chapter to the context that most affected the way the four women produced their work—the literary market. Low reminds readers that at this point in literary history, much women's writing had acquired the label of womanly 'accomplishment' that was not considered serious literary endeavour. Low challenges the perception that authors like the Lake Poets discouraged only women from writing when, in fact, they discouraged writers of *both* sexes. In their view, the literary market was saturated with poor-quality, derivative poetry, and the competition—even for established poets like themselves—was so fierce that no one should take literature as one's only occupation and source of income. However, when they encountered truly promising writers like Bowles, Brooks, Coleridge, and Jewsbury, they offered publishing advice, agreed to review manuscripts, introduced the writers to publishers, and otherwise facilitated the writers' attempts to publish their material. The goal of the Lake Poets' mentoring was to help these women writers move beyond mere womanly 'accomplishment' so that they could produce serious artistic work.

In the remaining four chapters, Low addresses, in turn, Bowles, Brooks, Coleridge, and Jewsbury, providing a literary biography of each and a critique for each writer's major works. The chapter on Bowles is the strongest and probably should have come last in the book because it so effectively illustrates Bowles's ongoing literary relationship with Southey that readers may expect the subsequent chapters to

discuss similarly productive relationships. In fact, the mentor/protégée relationships are less important to the remaining writers to the extent that one might wonder whether the protégées might have succeeded without their mentors. The chapter on the American author Brooks, for example, indicates that Brooks was well known already in America for versifying biblical apocrypha by the time she sought Southey's assistance in securing an Anglo-European reputation. Low devotes much of this chapter to discussion of *Judith, Esther and Other Poems* and *Zóphiël* rather than to the relationship Brooks had with Southey. The next chapter emphasises Coleridge's translating and editing work and points out that although Southey discouraged Coleridge from entering an unprofitable literary market, he tried to help by favourably reviewing one of her translations. Her husband Henry assisted by arranging the publication of her children's verse, and it seems that the greatest benefit she received from her famous father—one hesitates to call it *mentoring*—came after his death when she began editing his poetry. Finally, the chapter on Jewsbury examines the author's correspondence with Wordsworth to show how he, like Southey, discouraged writing for the literary market but still attempted to secure a book contract so that Jewsbury could create more serious literary work. In fact, Jewsbury renounced 'accomplishment' poetry in favour of the prose she thought she could write more effectively. Instead of becoming a Lake Poet, she decided to become a 'Lake Prose'.

In Low's own words, *The Literary Protégées of the Lake Poets* ends 'on a note of disappointment' because despite their efforts, the four protégées (along with novelist Anna Eliza Bray, appended seemingly as an afterthought in the conclusion) achieved relatively little enduring notoriety. Indeed, even referring to these writers as protégées subordinates their accomplishments to their various relationships with the Lake Poets. The book itself, however, is a fine contribution to the field of Romantic studies. Low avoids overly complex academic jargon to produce informative, smoothly flowing text that is easy to read. He might have included less plot

summary, especially of Brooks's work and of Coleridge's *Phantasmion*, for example, but one can excuse extra summary of material with which many readers may not be familiar. The book is well researched and argued; it draws on a variety of manuscript sources and offers original critiques on a large number of literary texts from the four writers. It will be especially useful for readers interested in women's writing and in the influence of the Lake Poets on other writers. Hopefully, this book will inspire further research on four talented women writers.

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**Andrew Bennett, *Wordsworth Writing*.
Cambridge University Press, 2007.
Pp. 249. £50. ISBN 9780521874199.**

The most striking aspect of *Wordsworth Writing* is its repeated and protracted reference to the poet's utter antipathy toward the practise of inscription. Andrew Bennett's new book takes as its primary point of departure not the semantic content of Wordsworth's verse, its prosodic qualities, the poet's biography or verse techniques, but the actual act of writing, of using a pen or pencil to write poetry. Wordsworth's revulsion at writing was intense and Bennett shrewdly concedes to this intensity, quoting in full the poet's many anti-writing statements. We hear in a letter from 1803 that 'I do not know from what cause it is, but during the last three [y]ears I have never had a pen in my hand for five minutes, [b]efore my whole frame becomes one bundle of uneasiness, [a] perspiration starts out all over me, and my chest is [o]ppressed in a manner which I can not describe.'

Wordsworth suffered, in his own words, an 'aversion from writing little less than madness' and Bennett is especially good at starting with Wordsworth's misery at inscription and reading out from it in order to shape original and stimulating suggestions about the verse. In a chapter entitled 'The Writing Cure' Bennett interrogates the assumption that Wordsworth

used the composition of verse as a kind of therapy:

While I do not wish to exaggerate the opposition of inscription to invention – indeed, part of the point of the present book is to try to establish the inextricable linkage of the two – it is clear that once we recognize the traumatic nature of inscription, of inscribing, of writing itself, the therapeutic narrative of Wordsworth’s life becomes less tenable.

Wordsworth’s inscriptive trauma, argues Bennett, repudiates any casual relation of writing to ‘the representation of an originary subjectivity or experience’. In other words, writing is by no guarantee an uncomplicated aid to self-expression. As it is contrary to the subject’s strongest predilections and a trammelled and miserable process, it is anything but an uncomplicated manifestation of the poetic impulse. Bennett questions whether it ‘might in fact be better to think of Wordsworth’s poetic career as a continual oscillation of composition and decomposition, of writing and interdiction’, and much of *Wordsworth Writing* is concerned with this kind of contradictory predication. For Bennett, Wordsworth’s poetry emanates primarily from a profitable, and deeply uncomfortable, intersection between the physical and mental prohibition of writing and the creative imperative.

In an impressive final chapter entitled ‘The History of William Wordsworth’, Bennett explains how Wordsworth’s acts of inscription vivify his capacity for making something tangible and valuable out of something indefinite: something the mind feels it has lost. Bennett sees a fluctuation between knowing that one has had an experience and knowing that one has somehow lost this experience most explicitly presented in the ‘Intimations Ode’ ‘with its opening sense of mourning for a time of lost time that seemed to be a time of enlightenment.’ All through the chapter, Bennett circles around the idea of knowing that something cannot be known, or recalling something that cannot be recalled, and it is here that Bennett’s style seems most accomplished. The redounding syntax and

lexical repetition in the sentences of this chapter seem designed to evoke the sense of entanglement being described: ‘The complex trope of remembering forgetting, of experiencing the forgetting, indeed of a certain forgetting or obscurity – the “incapacity to stop seeing what is not there to be seen”’. In his descriptions of the sense of between-ness that fuels Wordsworth’s greatest poetry, Bennett’s criticism seems to almost recreate, in the way that much great writing on writing does, the atmospheres of the text to which it refers. Bennett seems to describe his own almost incantatory recreation of Wordsworth’s verse when he states in an earlier chapter that ‘there is much that can be said for thinking about these strangely repetitive, strangely convoluted lines.’

The most impressive chapter, entitled ‘Wordsworth Unhinged’ deftly articulates a sense of Wordsworthian ‘interdiction’ that seems Bennett’s greatest fascination. In it, inscription comes to stand for a state between being and not being: one significant of Wordsworth’s position somewhere between poet and philosopher. Despite entirely ignoring the seminal work of Simon Jarvis on poetry and philosophy or thinking (his essay ‘Prosody as Cognition’ and his book, also in this series, *Wordsworth’s Philosophic Song* are two notable omissions), this chapter uses Wordsworth’s inscription to recover for interrogation the ideas of ‘thinking’ in his verse. The following quotation is something like an emblem for the book as a whole, capturing ideas of indeterminacy in a dense style:

...the Wordsworthian thinking of writing, of poetry or of poetic thought may be conceived in terms of the interdict, in terms of speech acts that come between and prohibit or suspend a certain conception of language, language as the bearer of knowledge, science, reason, fact, truth – of thought...

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James M. Garrett, *Wordsworth and the Writing of the Nation*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. Pp. 224. £50. ISBN 9780754657835.

In this volume, James M. Garrett deftly argues that Wordsworth's poetry and prose can be ultimately understood as public acts of self-representation and self-definition, intended to 'control his public identity as a poet' in order to better 'position himself as the national poet'. Garrett notes a similarity between this strategy and that of the aim of the national census of 1800, which sought to crystallise and 'consolidate available representations' of the nation. He concedes, however, that such a comparison should not suggest that Wordsworth was in any way influenced by the census, but rather that 'the census and Wordsworth utilized the methodologies of counting... and... classifying... to represent abstractly the body or the self; methodologies that had proven successful in other disciplines'. For the census, 'counting the people served as a mechanism of control, and for Wordsworth counting became a discipline that exemplified both the power to control the material and... the power to control the representation of the material'. Garrett summarises this concept accordingly:

[F]or Wordsworth the imagination is responsible for the breaking down and remaking of the material world, a remaking that is based on numerability and accountability. Imagination is domination, a power derived from the ability to control how the material is inscribed, how the body is written; but as with the government's desire to count the people in 1800, that power is represented not as an attempt at documentation and control but as a sign of concern and consideration.

Garrett traces the historical development of the 1800 census, rehearsing the arguments for and against its introduction as expressed in contemporaneous parliamentary debates for the Bill proposing its precursor in 1753. Opponents of the Bill feared that it was a pretext for

introducing more taxation, controlling the movement of the population and a move towards state control. The Bill was not passed, however, for various parliamentary procedural reasons rather than the objections voiced. By the time a census was proposed again in 1800, the population of Britain had increased to the extent that concerns about overpopulation, food shortages and the threat of war with France made the idea of a national census more appealing.

In relation to Wordsworth's poem, 'We are Seven' Garrett notes that one aspect of it concerns 'determining where things belong or rather to whom they belong'. This, Garrett sees as associated with ideas of possession, whereby the 'attribution of characteristics to people or poems marks their inclusion in sets,... to belong to a set is to be marked for ownership', and to own 'is the implied privilege of the nation over its people and the implied privilege of the poet over his materials'. From this position, he develops this idea with reference to Frances Ferguson's observation that (as quoted by him) 'another form this privilege often takes is that of a figurative depopulation'. Through an assessment of the connection between the population debate and certain features of Romantic ideology, Ferguson associates 'the pressure of an increasing number of physical bodies to an anxiety over an increasing number of consciousnesses'. In this way, she sees that 'the cultivation of solitude is in essence a symbolic depopulation of this landscape, which occurs in response to the increased demands of other consciousnesses'. She sees something of this operating in 'Tintern Abbey' where Wordsworth 'depopulates' the landscape so that he is the 'only one who views the scene in this particular way'. Dorothy Wordsworth's presence towards the poem's conclusion is seen as 'a function of the territorial imperialism of Wordsworth's ego, which incorporates people and things as it pleases'.

Including a meticulous analysis of Wordsworth's less celebrated poems, Garrett's research may also be of particular interest to those Wordsworthians interested in that aspect of his craft which draws upon insights derived from seventeenth-century British empiricism, as

Garrett's foregrounding of Wordsworth's classification *modus operandi* sheds additional light on his fascination with phenomena as appropriate content for his poetry.

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Frederick Burwick and James C. McKusick, eds, *Faustus: From the German of Goethe, Translated by Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. 360. £85. ISBN 9780199229680.

Part I of Goethe's *Faust* (1808), the masterpiece of German Romanticism, was considered both ingenious and blasphemous. A book collating early English translations is overdue. While this volume does so, its chief concern is the attribution of an anonymous translation of *Faust*, published by Thomas Boosey in 1821, to Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The translation is partial, interpolated by prose synopses, and accompanies illustrations by Henry Moses in imitation of Moritz Retzsch's celebrated engravings. There is no surviving manuscript by Coleridge. Following his translations of Schiller's *Die Piccolomini* and *Wallenstein's Tod* (1800), Coleridge vowed never to undertake translation again. In 1833 Coleridge insisted that 'I never put pen to paper as translator of Faust'. Frederick Burwick and James C. McKusick argue otherwise using circumstantial evidence, parallels with Coleridge's works, and stylometric analysis.

The editors' account of Coleridge's authorship of *Faustus* is highly speculative and factually erroneous. In 1814 Coleridge corresponded with publisher John Murray concerning a potential translation, but informed Murray that he offered inadequate remuneration. The editors assume that an agreement between the two was finalised in August 1814, claiming that 'Coleridge went to work with good will, leaving London for the countryside where he could work undisturbed in order to complete the translation.' In fact Coleridge had not been in London since

December 1813, when his suicidal inclinations moved Josiah Wade to place him under medical care in Bristol (see Richard Holmes, *Coleridge: Darker Reflections*, pp. 354ff). By September 1814 Coleridge was convalescent at Ashley. *Faust* was neither the occasion for Coleridge's travel nor his need for seclusion, and his letter to *The Courier's* Daniel Stuart of 12 September, offering 'two Essays a week—and one political Essay', does not suggest preoccupation with another project.

The editors claim that Coleridge abandoned translating *Faust* in 1814 and resumed in 1820 for Boosey, but there is little evidence. Coleridge wrote to Murray that most of *Faust* 'cannot be rendered in blank verse', but Boosey's translation is nearly all blank verse. German bookseller Johann Heinrich Bohte informed Goethe of having 'learned to my pleasure that the local poet Coleridge is working on a complete translation', but Bohte's source is unknown and Boosey's text is incomplete. The editors make further suggestive claims that are unsupported. *The European Magazine* is said to have 'hinted that Coleridge was the translator' in 1821, but actually it repeats a mere 'rumour' that Coleridge 'tried at it and resigned it'. The editors allude to 'gossip of his friends' indicating Coleridge's authorship, but nothing of the sort is presented. Goethe, citing an English correspondent, reports that 'Coleridge translates the work', but his source is unknown. In a period when rumours spread with notorious inaccuracy between England and the Continent, including those of Shelley's alleged League of Incest, Goethe's comment would only be significant if a credible source was named. Additionally, as Walter Scott and Lord Byron failed to protect the anonymity of their works, it seems unlikely that not only Coleridge's friends but his enemies would never mention a translation of *Faust* by him even privately.

As a bridge between Boosey's *Faustus* and Coleridge's works, the editors provide an appendix of 'verbal echoes and parallels', claiming that 'the cumulative frequency and abundance of these features can be matched in the works of no other poet than STC.' However, the words and phrases selected – including 'forms', 'mist', 'magic', 'darkling', 'stout',

‘moonshine’, and ‘in the air’ – are so ubiquitous in Romantic poetry that even in combination it is unconvincing to identify them as Coleridge’s. Boosey’s *Faustus* shares the phrase ‘great spirit’ with Coleridge’s *Remorse* for example, but searching Literature Online yields over 70 occurrences of ‘great spirit’ in poems by other authors published during Coleridge’s lifetime. Stylistic traits of *Faustus* are also presented as Coleridge’s, but likewise are commonplace. The phrase ‘dark and narrow streets’ in *Faustus* is annotated, ‘STC had a persistent predilection for pairing ‘dark’ with a second modifier,’ but Charlotte Smith uses this technique thrice in ‘Beachy Head’ alone, and Joseph Cottle on five occasions in *The Fall of Cambria*. Similarly the claim that ‘my soul’s wild warfare’ employs a distinctly Coleridgean use of ‘wild’ is untrue; it is a favourite formulation of Anna Laetitia Barbauld among others. The editors suggest thematic parallels between Boosey’s *Faustus* and Coleridge’s works, but illogically: a theme occurring in Goethe’s text appears in translation regardless of the translator. Ultimately, I contest the editors’ claim that ‘In *Faustus* there are passages that should prompt the reader to shout “Coleridge!”’: the text is typical Romantic verse, but not specifically Coleridgean.

The developers of the *Signature* stylometric analysis programme, used to analyse Boosey’s *Faustus*, posit that an author’s distribution of certain ‘function words’ and word-lengths occurs at a unique frequency. The editors use this information to assess the ‘stylistic correlation’ of Boosey’s *Faustus* and Coleridge’s dramas. They also compare the other, contemporary translations of *Faust* to *Remorse*. It is not clear why this analysis emphasises *Remorse: Zapolya* (1817) was the most recent of Coleridge’s dramas to Boosey’s *Faustus*, and Coleridge’s translations from Schiller seem pertinent choices. The worth of stylometric analysis here is questionable. According to *Signature*, Boosey’s *Faustus* resembles *Remorse* more than the volume’s other translations of *Faust* do in vocabulary and word-length distribution. However, Boileau’s and de Staël’s translations are in prose, Anster’s and Soane’s in varying forms, and Leveson-Gower’s in heroic couplets. The formal

constraints of blank verse affect word-distribution patterns and variations of word length; it is unsurprising that Boosey’s *Faustus* resembles *Remorse* more than the non-blank verse translations do. Further, the editors do not consider the possibility of imitation: *Remorse*, an immense theatrical success, was an obvious model for a dramatist.

This is a disappointing book. It is unclear why Shelley’s passages are omitted from the parallel translations of *Faust*. Index citations do not match page numbers (Wordsworth is not mentioned on pp. xxxi, xxxviii, or xlv as listed). Errors weaken the editors’ credibility: ‘silent thought’ is not Wordsworth’s coinage, as suggested, but Shakespeare’s (Sonnet 30); ‘Alhedra’ is not the spelling of a character’s name in *Remorse*; it is not true of ‘The Three Graves’ that Coleridge had ‘begun with Wordsworth in 1797 and completed in 1809’ (it was commenced by Wordsworth, continued by Coleridge and published incomplete). Most crucially, evidence is contorted to fit a hypothesis of Coleridge’s authorship of *Faustus* rather than built into an argument for it. Lacking strong evidence, the claim is unconvincing.

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Luisa Calè, *Fuseli’s Milton Gallery: ‘Turning Readers into Spectators’*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006. Pp. 259. £55. ISBN 0199267383.

In June 1788 the painter Henry Fuseli wrote: ‘The excellence of pictures of language consists in raising clear, complete, and circumstantial images, and turning readers into spectators.’ Fuseli was just one of many artists who had taken up or contested that most arduous and tendentious of hendiades – word and image. Three years later, the Swiss painter would disseminate his theories in the prospectus of the Milton Gallery. This venture, borne of the marriage of commerce and art typical of the period, connected two burgeoning spheres of romantic sociability and consumer culture:

exhibition culture, and serial publication culture. Metaphorically speaking, we could say that Fuseli and his patron, the dissenting banker William Roscoe, first dreamt of a gallery, then they woke up to find it a reality most conveniently located in Pall Mall at ‘the heart of the exhibition scene’. Fuseli’s paintings of *Paradise Lost* went on display in 1799, and although the exhibition was no financial success, his savvy jugglings in the competing fields of art and finance were sufficient to land him an appointment to the Royal Academy.

Fuseli’s Milton Gallery provides a provoking crucible to the romantic scholar. It envisions an ideal reader who must be conversant with Renaissance theological debates and Romantic aesthetics, the 1790s political situation and Miltonian imagery, ekphrastic practices and Enlightenment epistemology. With so many palates to please, it may come as no surprise that not all of them could be satisfied. However, Calè’s enquiry is a commendable effort and an important addition to the area of visual and verbal studies of the Revolutionary period.

The dense introduction and first chapter establish Calè’s challenging critical drive. In a provocative reinterpretation of Lessing’s definition of painting and poetry as respectively the arts of space and time, she introduces Fuseli’s kinetic reading of *Paradise Lost* as a visual practice akin to the montage viewing of the poem conceived by Sergei Eisenstein, who anatomised some episodes of Milton’s poem into series of arrested motions (re-segmented tableaux). Calè then juxtaposes the aristocratic sphere of the Royal Academy to the profit-driven arena of the exhibitions, a more democratic ‘public domain explicitly configured through commercial interest’. She claims that the literary gallery invented a new interface between literature, art and commerce which gave birth to a lucrative Grand Style tradition of British painting. Calè looks into the dissemination of literature by means of the commercial literary galleries—multidimensional proto-installation spaces for the transmitting of culture—which turned spectators into readers. Similarly, the gallery catalogues were captioned with excerpts, which contributed to a process of abridgement through

adaptation. This innovative social and artistic configuration transformed readers into spectators, and literary texts into cultural capital. Thereafter Calè turns her attention to the education of the reader’s eye, here contextualised in the contemporary economy of dynamic visual entertainments—the Eidophusikon, the panoramas and the other forms of urban spectacles which implied collaborative spectators.

The last two chapters of the book analyse two crucial *loci* of Fuseli’s Miltonian gallery, carefully positioned within their discursive networks. The first painting Calè takes on, ‘SATAN *encount’ring* DEATH,’ is used to connect the visual indecipherability of Fuseli’s representation of the numinous with the fraught negotiations he entertained with the various religious denominations of his circle. There follows an analysis of the so-called ‘plot of Adam and Eve,’ which leads Calè to contemporary gender and aesthetic theories. Burke’s categories of masculine sublime and feminine beautiful as challenged by Mary Wollstonecraft are applied to a visual reading of the figures of our first parents before and after the Fall, when they finally assume an erect, defiantly sublime posture.

Despite Calè’s bold, yet justifiable choice to single out Fuseli’s impressive Milton Gallery as a self-standing exemplification of the interactions between visual and verbal in the 1790s, the overall impression of *Fuseli’s Milton Gallery* is of a very promising, yet at times vexatiously uneven work. While there are some truly accomplished pages, other sections, such as the disappointing Conclusion, might have been pruned to achieve a sharper argument. What this carefully crafted book misses is evident: whilst the archival research is formidable, a sense of coherence is lacking. We feel as if we were confronted with two discrete sections (and a *coda*)—the former on Romantic exhibition sociability and the latter on Fuseli’s remediation of Milton—that we are supposed to interconnect actively, in some way duplicating the collaborative efforts expected of Fuseli’s ideal reader/spectator.

The presence of fourteen blank pages at the end of the book remains an unsolved mystery.

This little conundrum might unwittingly offer a visual reciprocation of the current state of the literary-print-visual culture studies nexus in the Romantic period. Although much important work has been done in the area, Calè's study suggests that the field is still open to invigorating interdisciplinary enquiry. Despite falling somewhat short of its author's ambitions, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery* offers many interesting suggestions, several new insights, and a few significant contributions to the analysis of romantic transmodality. Calè's enquiry encourages us to look further at an area of investigation, which, hopefully, may soon 'restore' to the visible much more than critical citizenship, as she claims is her aim, but rather the cultural and sociable pre-eminence that they originally, and without much doubt, must have enjoyed.

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Michael O'Neill, *The All-Sustaining Air: Romantic Legacies and Renewals in British, American, and Irish Poetry Since 1900*. Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. 224. £47. ISBN 978019929928.

Damian Walford Davies and Richard Marggraf Turley, eds, *The Monstrous Debt: Modalities of Romantic Influence in Twentieth-Century Literature*. Pp. 247. \$54.95. Wayne State University Press, 2006. ISBN 0814330584.

These two books offer a range of engagements with the influence of Romantic poetry (for the most part) upon twentieth century poets. Chapters on the modernist and Thirties poets, through to contemporary Irish writers, Geoffrey Hill and Roy Fisher, form the substance of Michael O'Neill's book; essays on everyone, including Felicia Hemans, Virginia Woolf, Dylan Thomas, through to Adrienne Rich, Bob

Dylan and Seamus Heaney appear in Walford Davies' and Marggraf Turley's collection. O'Neill's readings across a great range of poets and poems are wonderfully intricate and sophisticated, inward with the poetry discussed, alert to hidden allusion and predictably subtle about formal choice and nuance. John Beer, Lisa M. Steinmann, Hugh Haughton, and John Whale, particularly, provide in *The Monstrous Debt* telling exegesis of the orbit of influence behind their chosen topics, as well as suggesting fruitful historical and echoic contexts against which the poems might be set.

Following earlier work in the area of influence from the Romantics, including that from the Yale School, both books presume that echo, intertextuality, and allusiveness are not only inherent in the work of poets writing in the wake of the original poets, but also something which the Romantics themselves worked to foreground. There is something especially resonant about setting a Romantic poem in dialogue with a contemporary work. As such, both books, aside from the illumination which they provide in measuring twentieth-century poems against possible Romantic precursors, raise several important questions about the nature and direction of current Romantic studies. In her concisely elegant Foreword to *The Monstrous Debt*, Lucy Newlyn outlines the three critical paradigms which have underwritten discussion of Romanticism, and of 'Romantic influence', for the past 35 years. Harold Bloom's maps of misreading and concept of *influenza*, the taint or anxiety of influence, gave way, Newlyn claims, to Jerome McGann's quest 'to locate texts in their material circumstances', a methodology 'the exact opposite of Bloom's'. Yet subsequent scholars extended the reach of McGann's recovery of 'the worlds "behind" poems', and gave this recovery a more 'complex' edge by investigating the 'connections [poems] make with each other'. Meanwhile, the rare quality of the attention paid by Christopher Ricks to verbal acoustics had sustained a subtle intelligence when delineating the allusiveness which underwrites all major poems.

I rehearse Newlyn's own rehearsal of the genealogy, as she sees it, of recent Romantic

criticism, because the end-point of her argument is clear: 'as literary theory appears to be undergoing a decline, alternative avenues of intertextual studies are opening... we are now ready for an integrative model of influence that brings together the various preoccupations of the past thirty years.' Tonally, these phrases are representative of much that we hear in these two books; where once 'struggle' and 'conflict' reigned as a way of productively misreading poems, or as a way of relishing and weighing the competing claims of rebarbatively opposed theories of critical practice, now 'integration' is to be aspired to. Criticism here is re-cast as the restoration of a happy order, a kind of mannerly agreement, as it feels in some discussions here, between poems across the generations. A rare mirroring is to be perceived, in that complexity in a later poem displays the 'complexities central to Romantic poetry' as Michael O'Neill puts it in a phrase capturing the ambition of his book.

It is striking that the figure of Harold Bloom continues to bulk large, as the arch-troubler of such refined negotiations. The number of times the contributors to *The Monstrous Debt* feel that they have somehow bested Bloom is remarkable (and so the book hardly lives up to its schlock-horror title). The editors remark that their book 'on the whole explores influence not as victimization and disease but as assistance and health'. But they are followed in their Welfare State view of the poetic nation by Hugh Haughton (Heaney's view of the poet is 'deeply at odds...with Harold Bloom's Oedipal account'); by John Whale (Harrison's 'A Kumquat for John Keats' is 'relatively free from... agonised anxiety'); by Lisa M. Steinman ('to think in terms of poetic resonance is to acknowledge conversations between poetic generations that are ongoing'); by the editors again in their essays ('dark revisionary ratios... melodramatic', 'Bob Dylan's songs are untroubled by Bloomian anxiety'); and, implicitly, by all of the other contributors. Michael O'Neill (whose whole approach to these matters is more generous than that of some of the essayists in the other volume) acknowledges his own debts to Bloom, in his introduction, but describes his approach as

'post-Bloomian... involving an interplay between indebtedness and individuation... anxiety... but... also... acknowledgement and admiration'.

O'Neill's 'interplay', and Davies' and Turley's refusal to set 'another totalizing system' in place of Bloom's 'grand narrative', offer many local gains. But it is difficult not to be alert to the watered-down, anecdotal, nature of the version of the ever-persistent Bloom offered here. This is Bloom the clichéd promulgator of 'strong poets', more often than Bloom, the determined defender of poetry and exegetist of poets' development, the deconstructive theorist who retains throughout a complicating sense, as O'Neill acknowledges using Bloom's own words, that the 'meaning of a poem can only be another poem'.

Bloom's notion of belated poems struggling against, and *failing to accommodate*, earlier ones, surely offers a more immediately pertinent understanding of Romantic poetry and its afterlife, than the 'integrative' conversational model these books largely proclaim. Davies' and Turley's refusal of 'totalizing system' is laudable as a resistant liberal politics, but misplaced as a response to a *poetics*, and particularly as a critical response to a Romantic poetics which everywhere celebrates the 'totalizing', and seeks to take on a 'system'. Romanticism is surely not 'healthy' and supportive in its appropriation of the objects of perception to its own visionary power, or in its hierarchies of value; its lamenting rejection of the mind-forged manacles within which the majority of the population were considered to labour, on behalf of individual imaginative freedoms. There is something of the Victorian optimism of John Stuart Mill behind these contemporary proclamations of the virtues of Romanticism within later writing.

It is particularly alarming also that the writers in both books seem to have forgotten that Bloom's masculinist theory had been challenged before, in Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic*. I use the word 'alarming', since Gilbert and Gubar's criticism of Bloom in many ways looks forward to the non-combative 'integrations' so heralded now, but they present them as an active feminist

rejection of the presumptions and silencing impositions of the male canon. In this light, it is unnerving to note that only one woman poet receives part of a chapter amongst the panoply of O'Neill's discussions of male poetries. The ratio is slightly higher in *The Monstrous Debt*, but polemical edge or understanding is absent from discussions of women's writing under this aegis, except implicitly in the informed essay on Mary Wollstonecraft's importance for Virginia Woolf by Harriet Devine Jump.

A further question overlooked by these critics is that of why it *is* that Romanticism, or Romanticisms, as O'Neill prefers it, continue to provide the 'all-sustaining air' across twentieth-century writing down to the present. O'Neill himself is wily in following such as Frank Kermode and C.K. Stead by appropriating T.S. Eliot to the Romantic canon: '*The Waste Land*... gives a new start to English Romanticism by reminding the reader of the persistent obduracy of the longings and desires it dramatizes and analyses.' Eliot's idiom is un-Romantic, but his insistence on 'verbal revolution' sets him in line with Wordsworth's *Preface*, O'Neill somewhat tendentiously avers. And it is true that Romantic paradigms of course formed particular possibilities for modernist and post-modernist poets. The 'all-sustaining air' retains a pungent blast of politics in its first breathings in the work of the Thirties poets, but perhaps a stronger one in that of the modern Irish poets discussed by O'Neill and in Haughton's expansive essay on Heaney. The mixture of pastoralism and politics, filtered via Robert Frost (a surprising absence from both these books) certainly inspired the emergent generation of writers from the North of Ireland in the 1960s.

But elsewhere it is difficult not to see that continued drawing – by Irish poets and others – of sustenance from a weakened, often depoliticized version of Romantic tradition as a deeply conservative manoeuvre, resistant to the unreconciled and irreconcilable upheavals of early twentieth-century poetries. Damian Walford Davies, for instance, proves beyond doubt to my mind, that Dylan Thomas in the first sonnet of 'Altarwise by Owl-Light' knew his Blake, and even obscure parts of Blake. But to what end is this proof? To display a

continuity between symbols for the two poets, maybe, but not to engage a politics, or a theology, in this reading, or in the other readings in this collection. All in all, it is difficult not to hear the heckling, derisory voice of Geoffrey Hill (OK, one of Bloom's 'strong poets') in his 'Elegiac Stanzas', when reading either of these books (but especially *The Monstrous Debt*). These are books which, in the absence of a real methodological debate or advocacy, are ruled by what seems a timorousness of critical position with regard to the actual excesses of Romantic and post-Romantic poetries. As Hill's multiply-nuanced poem concludes, 'O Lakes! Lakes!/O Sentiment upon the rocks!'

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John Lauritsen writes:

Christopher Goulding's review of my book *The Man Who Wrote Frankenstein (TMWWF)* is a mishmash of innuendoes, misrepresentation, faulty quotation, and *malus animus* (*BARS Bulletin & Review*, 33 [July 2008], 44-5). His goal is obviously to shoot down *TMWWF* by all means, fair or foul. Goulding begins by dismissing me as a believer in 'conspiracy theories', and ends by dismissing me for allegedly contending that 'AIDS is caused by consuming amyl nitrite 'poppers' rather than by the HIV virus.' Though poppers (the alkyl or volatile nitrites) are utterly irrelevant to my arguments in *TMWWF*, those interested can visit:

paganpressbooks.com/jpl/POPPERS.HTM

Rather than my arguments, Goulding attacks my style:

'The way in which Lauritsen applies and presents his ideas is altogether too strident, quarrelsome, opinionated, single-minded, and contemptuously dismissive of all that has come before it to be taken seriously as a scholarly work.'

Either I have failed as a writer, or Goulding, as a reader. By now I have received much feedback

from reviewers and readers. None have evaluated my style in such terms. In the past year I've given three talks on *TMWWF* to large and receptive audiences, who did not find me 'strident', 'quarrelsome', or 'abrasive'. For a better description of *TMWWF*, and to see what other reviewers have said, visit: <paganpressbooks.com/BOOKLIST.HTM>

Goulding accuses me of practising *ad hominem* criticism: 'waspy references to a respected American academic, whom he sarcastically dubs the 'Dean of Romantic studies'.' However, my statement was not sarcasm. I sincerely admire Donald H. Reiman's scholarship, but regret that he opposes my questioning the authorship of *Frankenstein*. If *TMWWF* contains any *ad hominem* attacks, then I apologise. But Goulding makes many such attacks on me, and his own tone is less than mellifluous. Since Goulding fails to describe my book, it behoves me to do so myself. *TMWWF* has three theses: 1) *Frankenstein* is a great work, which has consistently been underrated and misinterpreted; 2) the real author is Percy Bysshe Shelley (hereafter simply 'Shelley'), not his second wife, Mary; 3) male love, as romantic friendship, is a central theme of *Frankenstein*.

The second thesis has provoked the Furies. Bloggers have called me a homosexual, a misogynist, a fascist, a bully, a geek, and a schlub. These responses indicate that Mary Shelley's authorship of *Frankenstein* is sacred dogma, hazardous to question. Although I thoroughly examine the extra-textual evidence, which has tendentiously been used to argue for Mary Shelley's authorship, I concentrate on the text itself: ideas, images, vocabulary, structure, rhythms, and sounds. On every page, *Frankenstein* reflects Shelley's ideas and imagination, his phrases, his intensity, his mastery of English prose. This is the positive case.

I make the negative case by examining works that Mary Shelley wrote entirely on her own – without help from Shelley, her father William Godwin, or anyone else. This forces me to conclude: 'She possessed neither a sense of rhythm nor a sense of humour. Her style is flaccid, sentimental, verbose, affected, awkward,

and sometimes ungrammatical... She could never have written *Frankenstein*.'

An entire chapter, 'The Frankenstein Notebooks', debunks the 'handwriting-authorship' fallacy – the assumption that passages in Mary Shelley's handwriting were necessarily composed by her – a fallacy which is by no means dead.

The main chapter, 'Male Love in Frankenstein', takes the reader through *Frankenstein*, following the thread of male love (sex, friendship and love), though without excluding other aspects. Many of my analyses are original – for example, the striking correspondence I find between Shelley's 'Essay on Love' and a Walton letter. I am the first critic to contend that the confrontation between the monster and the blind old man, De Lacy, is the climactic moment of *Frankenstein*, and that De Lacy represents Shelley's mentor, Dr Lind. Since Goulding has written on Dr Lind, it is odd that he didn't mention my interpretation of this episode.

I have been a well known gay scholar for over a third of a century. When I discuss sexual legislation – or the practices of gay men – or such words as 'gay', 'friend/*Freund*', '*sunetoi*', or '*Vernuenftige*' – I do so knowledgeably. Can Goulding say the same? I urge reading my book before judging it. Unfortunately, Pagan Press has no UK distributor. If interested, write me via john_lauritsen@post.harvard.edu, mention BARS, and I'll see that you get a copy quite reasonably.

Chris Goulding writes:

I stand by my original review. Reading John Lauritsen's response has not changed my opinion.