

**JoEllen DeLucia and Juliet Shields, eds., *Migration and Modernities: The State of Being Stateless, 1750-1850*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019. Pp. 224. £75. ISBN 9781474440349.**

This volume aims to map the literary history of migration between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century, a period of rapidly increasing mobility, industrialisation, emigration, and settler colonisation. Closing historical distance, the editors are keen to establish continuities with migration in the present, including the plight of refugees. Migration is not just ‘a constant feature in the news’ but ‘a constant of human experience’ (1) they tell us in their pithy and thoughtful introduction. To underscore this point they vividly dramatise the on-going historical reality of migration: refugee families fleeing their war-torn countries only to end up in makeshift camps no cleaner or safer than the slums of Victorian Manchester, or piling into boats so overcrowded that they resemble the slave ships of the middle passage.

Migrant experience, in particular, troubles the categories usually employed to organise literary study, such as historical period or the nation state. One principle of organisation chosen by the editors is to eschew stories of loss or triumph, especially those occurring at points of departure or arrival. Instead, the focus is on the messy middle states of migration.

Betsy Bolton opens with an essay which adroitly addresses the mutually constitutive relationship between geographic mobility and the advent of modernity signaled by the volume’s title. In her lively reading of Byron’s *Don Juan* as an epic of ‘vagabond capitalism’, a term coined by Cindy Katz, capitalism is captured as an ‘unsettled, dissolute, irresponsible stalker of the world’ (20). Capitalism creates a world in which humans are ‘disabled as moral and political agents, displaced from the stable certainties ostensibly provided by religious and moral codes’ (17). Bolton initially argues that Byron’s detestation of all forms of government stems from his belief that poverty is the only politics: ‘riches are power, and poverty is slavery all over the earth’ (19). But by the essay’s end, via numerous deft close readings unpicking Byron’s satirical handling of travel literature’s ‘vicarious investment in conspicuous consumption’ (26), Bolton cannot sidestep the poet’s ‘comic moral shiftiness’.

Kenneth McNeil revisits Mary Prince’s slave narrative (1831) by examining its white-authorizing editor, Thomas Pringle, as a product of the Scottish diaspora. By detailing Pringle’s years as a Scottish settler in South Africa, McNeil foregrounds the affinities and parallels between Pringle’s own circumstances and those of Prince; at the same time he shows their diasporas as distinctly different. The essay ends with James MacQueen’s attacks on both, in which Prince comes off far worse than Pringle. Melissa Adams-Campbell also examines the white-authorised voice of the *Life of Black Hawk*, comparing it with Margaret Fuller’s *Summer on the Lakes, in 1843*. Using a cultural rhetorics approach to understand different types of belonging, she shows how Black Hawk, leader of the Sauk American Indian tribe, constellates his people’s connection to the Midwest through shared knowledge, story, and embodied experience. Fuller on the other hand collates personal and print knowledge in her own quest for connection. In the end the mobility that inspires Fuller’s book is part and parcel of Native dispossession.

Patricia Cove aligns Fanny Burney’s *The Wanderer* (1814) with her earlier 1793 pamphlet *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy*, which argued for Britain’s acceptance of political exiles as ‘brethren’ rather than as aliens of ‘a different race of beings’ (129). Despite this plea, old-regime British institutions are seen to share the same violent tactics as the French revolutionary state, particularly in their exclusion of whole groups of people, especially women. The next chapter by Dragana Grbić tracks the long-term impact of the Great Migrations of the Serbs in 1690 through the traveller, writer and philosopher, Dimitrije Dositej Obradović (c. 1740-1811). Obradović believed that travel embodied an Enlightenment ideal.

Like the Grand Tour, it was a way of learning through encounters with foreign cultures and languages.

The final chapter focuses on Ishmael Bashaw's *The Turkish Refugee* (1797), a narrative which underscores the impossibility of a Muslim Turk integrating into English society. This is in part due to the text's 'white envelope', shifting between the anonymous publisher of the text and the author who relates Bashaw's story. The permanent instability of the Turkish refugee is also mirrored in the text's generic instability, hovering as it does between refugee narratives, the picaresque novel, vagrant narratives and slave narratives. In the end the essay's author Claire Gallien sees Bashaw's story as closest to the slave narrative; that said, she is keen to avoid any measuring of the relative sufferings of Blacks, Turks and Muslims.

Like Bashaw's story, this volume ends abruptly. The omission of a conclusion is unfortunate given the new ground opened up by some of the essays and the editors' overall ambition, so well captured in their introduction. To end without an ending means that, like the unsettled refugee Bashaw, we must return to the beginning. But for him this simply meant 'to travel back to places he formerly visited in order to seek help from the people he once knew' (202).

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