

Reviews

Gary Kelly (ed.), *Varieties of Female Gothic*. Volume 1: Enlightenment Gothic and Terror Gothic. General Introduction; Volume Introduction; Clara Reeve, *The Champion of Virtue* (1777); Mary Butt (later Sherwood), *The Traditions* (1795). Volume 2: Street Gothic – Female Gothic Chapbooks. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *Sir Bertrand's Adventures in a Ruinous Castle*; Sophia Lee, *The Recess*; *The Midnight Assassin* [Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*]; *The Southern Tower* [Ann Radcliffe's *A Sicilian Romance*]; Sarah Wilkinson, *The White Cottage of the Valley*; or, *The Mysterious Husband: An Original, Interesting Romance*; *The Mysteries of the Castle Del Carmo, Including the Memoirs of Laura Woodland, the Interesting Penitent*; *The Spectres of Lord Oswald and Lady Rosa, Including an Account of the Marchioness of Civetti*; *The Wife of Two Husbands*; or, *Fritz, the Outlaw*; *The White Pilgrim*; or, *Castle of Olival*; *The Castle Spectre*; or, *Family Horrors: A Gothic Story*. Volume 3: Erotic Gothic. Charlotte Dacre, *The Libertine* (1807). Volumes 4 and 5: Historical Gothic. Jane Porter, *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810). Volume 6: Orientalist Gothic. Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan, *The Missionary* (1811). London: Pickering and Chatto, 2002. 6 Volume Set. £495. Pp. 2056. ISBN 1851967176.

Gary Kelly's multi-volume anthology of female Gothic writing is a revolutionary project. The category of the 'female Gothic' was largely invented by Ellen Moers, who simply defined it as Gothic writing produced and consumed by women. Moers had in mind the historically novel fact that the Gothic genre was the first form of popular writing dominated by women. Subsequent discussion of the category has thus tended to see the female Gothic as a genre encrypting resistance to patriarchal power. As intruders into the masculine profession of 'writer', women deferred to patriarchal ideologies in order to slip their revolutionary texts past censorious critics, but beneath the bland surface of domestic propriety female Goths concealed counter narratives and fantasies of feminine power and transgression. According to this model, women communicated with each other through a form of unconscious *écriture*, invisible, perhaps, to the unsuspecting male critic, but easily decoded by the female reader schooled by experience or informed by psychoanalysis. Kate Ferguson Ellis, in *The Contested Castle* (1989), and Jacqueline Howard, in *Reading Gothic Fiction* (1994), started a turn of the wheel by arguing that female Gothic texts were self-conscious ideological interventions. According to Ellis and Howard, the female Gothicist did not abjure the public sphere in order to strike back with a private fantasy; on the contrary, they entered the public sphere directly (Howard) or turned domesticity into a public battleground (Ellis). Gary Kelly has completed the revolution. Gone are any suggestions of the female Gothic serving as a secret history of the psychic damage wrought by patriarchy; instead it is now, in Kelly's version, a site of vigorous political resistance and achievement.

Each of Kelly's six volumes is supplied with a hefty preface of around fifty pages; collectively, they constitute what would be a substantial monograph. In his choices Kelly balances pragmatism with principle. Any collection of the female Gothic would have to

include Clara Reeve's *The Champion of Virtue*, the first work in the emerging Gothic genre written by a woman, and now, unfortunately, out of print. Sophia Lee's *The Recess* (1783-85) broke new ground in the area of the historical novel by fictionalising the life of Mary Queen of Scots (or rather, the lives of her mythological daughters). But *The Recess* has rarely been out of print since Arno reproduced it in 1980; there is currently a scholarly edition from the University Press of Kentucky. Kelly's elegant solution is to include it as a chapbook. It is a similar story with Ann Radcliffe. Her romances are now ubiquitous, so the only example included of the most influential of all female Gothiccists is a chapbook version of *The Italian. Zofloya, or the Moor* would have been the obvious Charlotte Dacre, but as it, too, is now readily available, we get the more tangentially Gothic (and also less 'erotic') *The Libertine*. Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* used to be a popular classic and went through numerous editions and revisions in Porter's own day; Kelly's scholarly republication of the first edition of 1810 is thus especially welcome. Susan Morgan's *The Missionary* and Mary Butt's *The Traditions* round out the anthology together with the volume on chapbooks.

Despite the practical considerations that have modified his choices, Kelly's selection is, finally, representative. The burden of each of his prefaces is to explain how each work typifies a different strand of the female Gothic. As Kelly's project is deeply historicist, biographical and contextual material naturally comes into it. He presents a rich, varied and detailed picture through which he up-ends the standard account of the Romantic-era novel. The standard account (assuming one can speak of such a thing) focuses on Austen and Scott as the twin bridges spanning the modern novel (say, Dickens, Melville, Hawthorne, Eliot and James) and its eighteenth century antecedents (Defoe, Richardson and Fielding). In this view Romanticism was an interregnum for the novel in which a lot of bad writing proliferated, much of it by women, and which was salvageable, if at all, only through the lens of the Gothic, which at least imparted glamour to its otiose sentimentalism. For Kelly, the female Gothic is not marginal, but absolutely central to the novel during one of the most crucial phases of its history. In Kelly's reading of it, the novel was a key aesthetic instrument in the construction of the ideology of the 'sovereign subject' on which the representative democracy of the modern liberal state rests. As readers familiar with Kelly's work will know, it is a view informed by Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and Habermas's on the bourgeois public sphere. Kelly further locates the ideology of the sovereign subject within the main currents of eighteenth-century Whiggery. One secures a feel for the Whiggishness of Kelly's 'sovereign subject' by contrasting it with Burke's Tory 'proud submission', the phrase with which he urged deference to one's 'lovely' country or sovereign. As a set of narrative conventions the Gothic was not a detour into the *outré*, for commercial purposes, but a direct route to the political concerns that were closest to the progressive middle classes who produced and consumed the Gothic in startlingly large numbers during the early years of the Romantic era. Whereas previous approaches to the female Gothic tended to see the genre's deeper meanings as a result of the feminist criticism brought to bear upon it, Kelly sees feminism as itself a Gothic product. The rise of gender to the top of the political agenda was a natural consequence of the historical ascendancy of the ideology of the sovereign subject, which the Gothic itself narrates.

Given Kelly's perspective, one might wonder why he persists with the category. After all, if the novels under consideration are part of a large Whiggish project to institute bourgeois individualism, why focus on women writers in isolation from their male soldiers-in-arms? His main answer is that it is a historically material fact that women writers seized control of

the new genre invented by a British Prime Minister's dilettante son. They did so because the literary was the key to the political public sphere; and because the Gothic genre best encompassed the concerns and anxieties closest to women writers. The progressive middle class were in a struggle with a hegemonic, aristocratic culture above them, and a customary, plebeian one, below (with the self-aggrandising lusts of the one and the obfuscating superstitions of the other). The standard Gothic plot featured a foundling, usurpation and eventual restoration. Many critics have read the genre conservatively because of its tendency to end with the heroine restored to the aristocratic fold (criticism of Radcliffe being a prime example). But the picture changes once we see subjective autonomy as the heroine's defining characteristic, something she protects as zealously as her honour against the depredations of the unprincipled aristocratic villain. For Kelly, the female Gothic promotes 'subjective integrity and domestic security, embodied in female protagonists', who in turn are pitted against 'Gothic prejudice, superstition and intemperate passions, embodied in a male villain' (vol. I, p. xl).

Kelly's female Gothic is not simply formulaic. It contains many strands, often in messy dispute with each other. His anthology strives at once to tell the story of the female Gothic's development, while providing examples of its variety. Reeve and Lee are seminal moments in its history: elsewhere we encounter variety. The volume of chapbooks contains cheap, severely cropped, versions of Gothic best sellers. Lacking an 'investment mentality', and therefore uninterested in the cultural capital represented by the free floating sovereign subject, the plebeian audience went straight for the thrills and spills, for the lottery mentality that was actually closest to the 'folk' material the new style of chapbook supplanted. Owenson's *The Missionary* is presented as an example of Oriental Gothic; Dacre's *The Libertine* features the figure of the reformed libertine; Butt's *The Traditions* is a new form of children's literature; Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* is an historical romance whose progressive example was subsequently occluded by Scott's revisionist, Tory capture of the genre. The introductions contain detailed investigations of the authors' backgrounds, which allows Kelly to press forward with his thesis, as time and again his writers prove, in their lives, to have been part of, or connected with, one of the many progressive networks that typified late Enlightenment Britain: Butt with Birmingham's lunar society; Reeve with the Norwich dissenters; Porter with Edinburgh; Radcliffe with London 'democrats'; Owenson with progressive aristocrats from the Celtic fringe; Dacre with the unrespectable Della Crusans. The texts are all carefully edited, apart from the Chapbooks, which are facsimile. The notes, though sparing, are expertly judged. The books themselves are beautifully produced. Overall, this is an indispensable box set for any library needing to service courses in the field, not just because Kelly's introductions give new life to what had become a tired category, but because in few other places is the development of the Romantic-era novel traced with such historical expertise.

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Avril Horner (ed.) *European Gothic: A Spirited Exchange 1760-1960*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002. Pp. 260. £14.99. ISBN 0719060648.

European Gothic: A Spirited Exchange 1760-1960 is a welcome addition to the growing discourse on Gothic fiction. This collection of essays aims to explore a new trajectory in the realm of Gothic studies by challenging the 'tyranny of Anglo-American narratives of the Gothic' and demonstrating 'the importance of translation and European writing in the development of the Gothic novel' – a process that is described by the editor as 'a vampire-like phenomenon that thrives on the blood of others' (p. 1). The idea for this collection evolved from the 1999 conference, 'Beyond Boundaries II: New Europe ... Pan Europe? Trajectories and Destinations', where debates on the Gothic often focused on the need 'for a book such as this' (p. xii). The editor defines four main objectives in compiling this collection of essays: '[1] to situate works by British ... and American writers within a European context ... [2] to offer readings of less-known works by Gothic authors ... [3] to prompt a reconsideration of the part played by the Gothic strain within the works of certain European "realist" writers; and [4] ... to introduce the reader to a range of neglected, albeit influential, European Gothic texts which originated in Russian, Spanish, French and German' (p. 3). The collection achieves most of these objectives, though on a smaller scope than is suggested by the title. Several European texts are examined, but many essays focus on English novels, particularly those written by Charles Maturin (Maturin makes an appearance in nine of the twelve essays). And while the dates of the sub-title (1760-1960) suggest that the collection covers various movements of Gothic literature over two centuries, all but four of the essays focus on some aspect of the long eighteenth century. Regardless, this collection offers an interesting and engaging array of essays, and never suggests that it is in any way exhaustive. Rather, the essays in *European Gothic* describe a new way of thinking about the Gothic and encourage us to examine this discourse in a broader context; in so doing, the essays challenge earlier studies that tend to focus on 'psychoanalytic theory as a methodology for analysis' (p. 2). Most of the essays in this collection centre their discussions on various cultural and historical aspects that allow for a reassessment of accepted interpretations of well-known novels in the genre, like those by Walpole, Radcliffe, Lewis and Maturin. When psychoanalytic or other twentieth-century theoretical frameworks are used, it is with a historical sensitivity that reinforces their relevance.

While space considerations limit any detailed discussion of individual essays, some highlights include the opening essay by Terry Hale, which provides a fascinating discussion of the issue of translation and the manner in which this shaped the development of the Gothic genre. This is followed with insightful essays by Angela Wright, Victor Sage and Catherine Lanone that explore how the French and English influenced each other.

Kristeva's theories on abjection prove to be a useful lens for Robert Miles's perceptive examination of the ways in which Gothic novels (in this case, those by Walpole and Maturin) explore the issues related to forging a national identity. Jerrold Hogle also engages with Kristeva's theories in conjunction with a host of cultural, historical and literary references – ranging from novels and medical treatises to political cartoons – to read Gaston Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. This framework serves as a solid foundation that supports some interesting conclusions.

The far-reaching attempt of this collection is made apparent by the variety of writers covered in the following four essays. Less-familiar works by Romantic writers Mary Shelley and Samuel Taylor Coleridge are examined in essays by John Williams and Peter Mortensen respectively. Neil Cornwell outlines various European influences in Russian literature and the ways in which Russian writers similarly inspired Gothic authors,

particularly in England and France. And Ahlam Alaki persuasively links the Oriental tradition with the Gothic.

In a brilliant essay about the development (or lack of development) of the Gothic genre in Spain, Joan Curbet focuses on the representations of ritual violence in English interpretations of Spain, and in Spanish renditions of this theme in literature and the visual arts. One way she supports her argument is through intriguing and astute analyses of three of Goya's paintings (photographs included in the essay). Avril Horner closes this collection with a reading of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* – one of the few twentieth-century novels to be examined in detail.

By the end of the book, the reader's understanding of the Gothic tradition is greatly expanded, but she is also left with the sense that there is still a significant amount of work to be done. This is in no way a fault, but more like an invitation waiting to be answered.

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Tristanne J. Connolly, *William Blake and the Body*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2002. Pp. 249. £45. ISBN 0333968484.

The title may indeed evoke a groan from your own, and, as might be expected, Tristanne Connolly begins *William Blake and the Body* on the defensive, intent on justifying its existence. 'One would think there would be nothing more to say about the body in general, or the body in Blake' (p. vii), she writes, but, to be honest, I find the sentence's syntax more puzzling than its sentiment. Authorial anxiety is one thing; trying to hide it behind a perplexing generalisation is quite another. Arguably all discourse is a body language: an opinion Connolly herself apparently shares, and throughout I wondered if this sentence was not really intended to indicate an alternative means by which the implicit phallogocentricity of the mind-body dichotomy entitling the book was to be overturned. I remain unconvinced, although the book's battle against itself is decidedly enthralling.

Throughout its seven chapters, which take us all the way from the event of reading Blake to the absorption of the feminine in his heaven, I found *William Blake and the Body* a curiously androgynous read. Albeit in emanative form, the feminist fascination with the poet's misogyny certainly continues here with all the usual suspects in tow – Thel, Oothoon, Anne Mellor, etc – and yet the book's methodology is strikingly patriarchal. Not so much attempting to weave itself into the fabric of Blake studies as synthesise many of its fractious elements, *William Blake and the Body* could arguably claim to be *the* definitive text on its subject, were it not for the needless consensual politics accompanying the move. Drawing together the work of such disparate scholars as Nelson Hilton, John Mee, Joseph Viscomi and David Worrall, Connolly presents a scholarly reading that to my mind fits just a little too snugly into the present academic mosaic. Serious attempts are made throughout to engage with the composite art of the illuminated books, for example, beginning with a Hilton-inspired reading of the text as body, and, although convincing in its execution, the analysis lacks the sort of freshness that characterises the work of all those mentioned above. Furthermore, to judge solely by her abundant use of citation, Connolly doesn't disagree with very much. Either that or she's afraid of upsetting daddy (her acknowledgements read

rather like a current who's who of Blake studies), and perhaps consequentially I frequently struggled to hear her voice amidst the racket of all the exemplary quotation.

This gambit with individuality is hardly helped by the fact that historicism is clearly the approach that Connolly feels most at ease with. Not only does she give an insightful account of the state of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century anatomy and its dissection practices (pp. 25-72), but she also provides new evidence pertaining to Catherine Blake's hypothesised miscarriage (pp. 106-124). Both are undoubted highlights of the book and in themselves are worthy of praise and attention, but when coupled with the insatiable need to seek support from established scholars, objectivity does on more than one occasion threaten to give way to a regrettable anonymity. There are, however, two noteworthy exceptions, instances when I felt surer of authorial presence. Firstly, the decision to devote a chapter to the character of Rueben, Blake's only male Emanation, is inspired (pp. 95-124). This not only goes some way towards balancing the book by allowing her textual analysis to breathe beyond her historicism, but should also ensure that the text is of lasting interest to those working in similar fields. The second and arguably more impressive instance comes in the penultimate chapter, where she convincingly argues that Los himself can be read as a Spectre (p. 167). It's an intriguing claim with profound implications for anyone interested in Blake's middle to late poetry, and more than enough evidence to suggest that Connolly does have provocative and challenging comments to make. On the other hand, I found her use of theory and Julia Kristeva in particular less convincing. Underplayed from the start and allowed to fall into the background after the opening chapter, Kristeva's influence is limited by the book's move towards historicism in the second chapter, reflecting, I think, the continuing fear of anachronism that now haunts any Blake scholar should s/he dare think beyond 1827.

For all its solid scholarship and intriguing moments, then, there remains a niggling feeling that Connolly doesn't quite cut deeply enough in *William Blake and the Body*. Observing that 'the need to learn the associations of Blake's cryptic, invented mythology can make Blakeans seem like a cult of magi holding secret knowledge unknown (and quite possibly undesired) by the uninitiated' (pp. 12-13), she fails to realise that this is exactly the sort of dogmatic dialectic that Blake studies has peddled for years. Her complicity is confirmed a page later when we are told that 'few are called to read *Jerusalem* and fewer still are chosen, by the challenging text itself, to be illuminated through it' (p. 14). If proof is necessary that the various methodologies espoused by the predominantly male establishment can work successfully in tandem, then *William Blake and the Body* is excellent evidence. No doubt the chosen ones will feel vindicated.

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Alexander S. Gourlay (ed.), *Prophetic Character: Essays on William Blake in Honor of John E. Grant*. West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill Press, 2002. Locust Hill Literary Studies, No. 33. Pp. 396. \$60. ISBN 0933951965.

In this *festschrift's* foreword – a testimony to their close friendship as tutor and student – Alexander Gourlay provides an intimate portrait of Jack Grant, one of the foremost post-war Blake scholars. The collection gives special attention to the approach that Grant helped

to develop in advocating the combined study of Blake's visual imagery and text. Grant's *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic* (1970), co-edited with David Erdman, has proved invaluable to generations of students, and Grant's Iowa Videodisk Project can be seen as a groundbreaking forerunner of the digital Blake database, known as the Blake Archive.

Several of the essays reflect Grant's particular interest in Blake's illustrations to Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*. J. M. Q. Davies, for example, contends that Blake identified a Young-Milton connection, and that his responses manifest themselves in Blake's ambiguous treatment of the temptation scene and the Adam figure. In "As portentous as the written wall": Blake's Illustrations to *Night Thoughts*', Jon Mee contextualises Blake's designs by comparing them with two other illustrated editions which were published at the same time. At issue are the body-soul relationships and, in particular, the responses of Blake's contemporaries. Another interesting take on this is proposed by Peter Otto who, in 'From the Religious to the Psychological Sublime: The Fate of Young's *Night Thoughts* in Blake's *The Four Zoas*', argues for the interconnectedness of the two works.

Analysis of visual imagery predominates in Stephen C. Behrendt's discussion of Blake's *Pestilence*. He traces the composition of this 1805 watercolour through its five preliminary drawings, illustrating how Blake transforms rather than adapts the traditional representations of the plague subject. Because of the ever-increasing precision of the 'semantic indicators' (p. 24), Blake's variations testify to the perfection of his visual language.

Behrendt's ideas link neatly with the keystone of this collection: editor Gourlay's own extensively illustrated "Idolatry or Politics": Blake's Chaucer, the Gods of Priam, and the Powers of 1809'. His essay, although it is indebted to M. E. Reisner's 'Effigies of Power: Pitt and Fox as Canterbury Pilgrims' (1979), documents the fascinating changes from Blake's tempera of Chaucer's pilgrims to the engraved version. While we might think that Blake's figures tend to merge into old bearded men and youths with curly red hair, Gourlay demonstrates convincingly that Blake conceived Monk, Host and Friar as allegories of George III, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Clarence. He argues that Chaucer's pilgrims are represented in accordance with the caricaturing practices of popular print culture.

Michael Ferber's 'In Defence of Clods' is a formalist close reading – rare in Blake studies – of 'The Clod & the Pebble'. Because the Clod's speech is no ironic commentary, Ferber contends that the self-annihilation motif is to be taken literally. The ambition of Everett C. Frost's essay is to come to terms with the heterogeneous narrative of Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. He argues that it is an 'autographic Bildungsroman' (p. 72). To anyone familiar with Joseph Viscomi's thorough analyses of the copperplates, Frost's conclusion that plates 24-27, *The Bible of Hell*, are the 'prophet's "dissertation"' (p. 92) is rather curious. Another intense if seldom revelatory read is Sheila A. Spector's 'A Numerological Analysis of *Jerusalem*'. Teasing out numerological patterns in plate-arrangements, chapters as well as character-relationship, objects and places, she conjectures/conjures various interesting clusters of meaning.

Catherine L. McClenahan's essay gives a historical dimension to one of Blake's minor characters, arguing that by introducing Erin to *Jerusalem*, Blake intertwines two stories of oppression: the rape of Dinah and the defeat of the Irish rebellion. G. A. Rosso's intertextual analysis, 'The Religion of Empire: Blake's Rahab in its Biblical Contexts', brings to light the political dimension embodied in this complex and fascinating figure, which allowed Blake to fuse the Whore of Babylon with the Red Dragon of Revelation. In

'Blake's Feet: Toward a Poetics of Incarnation', Jennifer Davis Michael establishes the symbolic, literal, sexual and metaphoric contexts of feet and explains them as poetic embodiment and figurative personification of Blake's notion of the poet at work. Inexplicably, although she is clearly treading in his footsteps, the author fails to refer to Erdman's key essay of 1973.

Morton D. Paley's 'William Blake and Dr. Thornton's "Tory Translation" of the Lord's Prayer' is a case study of the last book known to be annotated by Blake. It combines information about Blake's final year with insightful digressions on his attitude to Bible translations and contemporary taxation politics. Richard J. Squibbs discusses star imagery in Blake's illuminated book *Europe* and suggests that it is part of his response to the apocalyptic changes of the French revolution. Squibbs makes a parallel case to Patrick Curry's analysis of popular astrology since the Civil War. His argument about Blake and astrology is compelling since Curry's research did not really consider early Blake in *Confusion of Prophets* (1992). However, Squibbs does not get into such potentially interesting dimensions as popular culture, or the connectedness of alternative spiritualities.

This festschrift gives a taste of the current strength and diversity of Blake studies. It shows that they are in a very healthy state, and that Jack Grant's lifelong work has made a powerful contribution to their well-being.

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Alan Richardson, *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. 243. £37.50. ISBN 0521781914.

This is truly a groundbreaking work that every scholar of the Romantic period should look into, own and teach. It complicates and enriches in two directions at once, as does all the best kinds of historicist work. First it sheds new light on familiar works of literature. Secondly, it points out new directions in historical, literary and philosophical studies of materialism, consciousness, language and medicine. Moreover, it is a novel addition to ecocriticism. Alan Richardson writes with admirable clarity and perception, displaying a devotion to his subject and a sense of its broad implications.

On reflection, it seems unsurprising that Romantic-period scientists and artists should have been so exercised over the grey jelly inside our skulls. After all, their moment encapsulated what Barbara Maria Stafford called the 'voyage into substance', the penetration of geological, temporal and geographical realms, sometimes closer than normative aesthetics, ethics and science had previously allowed. The aesthetics of the cross-section, for example, surveyed the alien landscapes of mountain ranges, crystals and lobes of the cerebellum. All the more surprising, then, that so little work has been done directly on the brain in the Romantic period until now. More locally, within Romantic studies, issues pertaining to mind are often left in the hands of criticism inspired by or even in the lineage of idealist philosophy – which does not have much time for jelly. It would perhaps have been good and strategic to have included a little more in this volume on idealism and skepticism (Hume and Berkeley for instance).

Richardson begins his study with Coleridge's attack on Hartley. It turns out that Hartley was a straw target. Coleridge had ignored the newer work of Spurzheim, Gall and even

Darwin, whose work on after-images had influenced Wordsworth's writing about skating in *The Prelude* (p. 13). To raise questions about the materiality of mind was to put at stake 'no less than the existence of the soul, the necessity of God, and the integrity of the self' (p. 12). Research into the properties of psychoactive substances such as alcohol and opium had fermented various material theories of mind (pp. 22-3). The debate over phrenology reactivated for the second generation of Romantics the heat generated over such scientists as Priestley in the first (pp. 24-5). The Shelleys' doctor William Lawrence, with his material view that life depends upon organisation and not some external vital force, met with politicised hostility (pp. 25-9).

The second chapter is a very original study of 'Kubla Khan' in the light of research on psychoactive substances such as opium and laughing gas (the latter was the object of experiments in Bristol involving Coleridge and Humphry Davy). By taking seriously Coleridge's assertion that it was written under the influence of an 'anodyne' (opium), Richardson is able to demonstrate how the later Coleridge anxiously warded off the threat of a radical material view of the mind by placing various *cordons sanitaires* around the poem, and also simply by ignoring it. What is particularly intelligent about Richardson's argument is that it holds true *especially if* Coleridge's assertion about opium is only an assertion (p. 54). What could have possessed Coleridge so assiduously to simulate evidence of an unconscious and psychosomatic mental process?

Chapter three takes on the central term of Wordsworth's poetics – the 'organic'. It makes imaginative use of Herder and other theorists of 'natural' language. Such work puts the body back in ecocriticism –and back in Wordsworth, who, as Richardson notes, was famous for not having a sense of smell. The chapter on Austen tackles another notoriously bodiless writer, exploring the figuration of heightened mental disturbance in *Persuasion*. These chapters argue by implication that if even Wordsworth and Austen make use of embodied minds then surely others must do too, as some scholars such as Jerome McGann have pointed out with respect to the poetry of sensibility. The chapter on Keats is a tour de force. Keats's intricate brain imagery – the 'wreathed trellis' in the ode 'To Psyche' – could have come from contemporary brain anatomy, of which Keats was strongly aware (pp. 124, 127-8). This chapter also historicises Christopher Ricks's work on blushing, another phenomenon that deconstructs the dualism of mind and body. The final chapter brilliantly politicises Richardson's theme by considering the poetics and science of 'idiots' in the Romantic period, focusing on what the author skilfully calls 'embodied universalism'. This complicates our understanding of what the Romantic period did to the Enlightenment, making legible a continuity of thinking about universal human values (p. 177). In a wide view such thinking serves to neutralise racist notions based on biological determinism, notions that are traceable to the Romantic period.

Throughout the book, Richardson points out wider connections and possibilities for future research (see pp. 37-8, for example). The most intriguing direction is perhaps the ways in which this form of close research on materialism could yield benefits to ecological literary criticism (for instance, pp. 68-9). Richardson takes the notion of the 'biology of mind' (Karl Kroeber's phrase) more seriously and literally than any previous study of which I am aware, pointing out frequently such phenomena as notions of the shaping of the mind by environmental factors, and materialist concepts of the openness of the body-mind to the perceptual realm. Dualism is Richardson's main target. Such work surely helps to change the key of ecocriticism, which has so far relied upon phenomenology, if anything, to provide a sense of the interconnectedness of mind, body and world. Richardson has

unearthed concrete and progressive views that must affect our understanding of broad areas of studies in Romanticism, from race and gender to the embodied poetics of sensibility. The book is handsomely furnished throughout with illustrations of Romantic 'wetware'. *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind* will provide invaluable reading material in both graduate and undergraduate classes.

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Kelvin Everest, *John Keats*. Tavistock: Northcote House, 2002. Pp. 123. £9.99. ISBN 0746308078.

Within the parameters dictated by the *Writers and their Work* series, Kelvin Everest has written an admirably lucid and straightforward account of Keats's life and poetry. There is a good account of Keats's persistent struggle with literary and personal influences, especially his progressive disentanglement from the constraining but instructive mentoring of Leigh Hunt. There are also a few critical surprises for the informed reader along the way, such as Everest's persuasive case that 'Isabella; or, the Pot of Basil' represents a massive leap forward in Keats's development. This is a case founded upon the fact that the poem avoids the simple binary oppositions of theme and style which earlier critics have used to characterise this and other writing by Keats. Rather, Everest argues, Keats is ever sensitive to the dangerous allure of qualities presented by other experiential impulses, as when, for example, 'the brothers' exploitative merchant-capitalist mentality is given at times with a sensuous relish that properly belongs to the other side of the contrastive scheme' (p. 59). As such, for Everest, 'Isabella' represents an important moment in which Keats's style, although still influenced by Hunt, looks towards the poised ironies and undecidabilities of 'the great Odes' for which it, like all else, serves in this book as apprentice work.

Given that this is the trajectory of Everest's narrative, the general reader might begin to feel here that the book displays a curious imbalance. Governed as it is by the rhythms of Keats's brief life, we are a long time in getting to this perceived poetic high point, and then receive only eleven pages in total on the Odes themselves. What we do get is dominated by a consideration of the inspired variations Keats is able to play in these poems upon a set of standard formal patterns, a discussion that might leave the average general reader (whoever she or he might be) behind. However, there is enough on the Odes to figure them as central to the perhaps dismaying, and certainly contentious, core of Everest's take on Keats. For he has taken his neutral *Writers and their Work* brief and converted it to surprisingly polemical ends.

From the outset of the book, Keats's very literariness, in Everest's view, makes him a peculiarly self-involved poet. When dealing with the early Spenserian imitations, we are alerted to 'the peculiarly Keatsian theme of consciously having no theme to fill out a poetic form' (p. 24). By the time of the Odes, Everest feels, these complications have broadened in scope, if not necessarily in their nature. The returns upon the self effected by Everest's own style consciously mimic those of his subject: 'the Odes, for all their ostensible yearning for escape from the ordinary conditions of human existence into the timeless and pain-free realm of art, are themselves concerned, fundamentally, with history. The form taken in the Odes by this deep concern with history embodies a decision to refuse history as

the dominant ground for meaning' (p. 91). This 'manifestly mediated' decision on Keats's behalf, one which recognises the transience of those dominating absolutes in human experience such as pain, love, beauty and truth, then becomes the ground for Everest's own assault on recent ideological and theoretical readings of Keats.

This book launches a steady and bullish assault on those ideas in the academy, such as historicism and feminism, which have accorded Keats a founding place in their broader contestation of hierarchical discourse. 'The sophisticated and deliberated judgements' of the poems themselves regarding the relation between the individual and time, history and the imagination, *ultimately* for Everest sets them beyond the reach of such ideas, ideas which are variously dismissed as 'obscuring', 'distorting', even 'patronising' towards, 'Keats's qualities as a poet'. Everest is too subtle to fall into the caricatured New Critical version of this poetry as manifesting an 'apolitical autonomy' – a caricature tellingly if dubiously dismissed by him as 'American' (p. 48). But, surprising for those who have followed his writing from *Coleridge's Secret Ministry* (1979) to *English Romantic Poetry* (1990) is the repeated impatience with contextual and historical readings of Keats. As chapter 1 resoundingly concludes, Keats is particular in his 'unflinching dedication' to interrogate the 'final claims of art in relation to life. The story of his own life is then for us, as it was for him, inseparable from his achievement as a poet' (p. 14). At such moments Everest comes curiously close to the drift of his own opening caricature of 'the common view' of Keats (i.e. the one that his book might be seeking to challenge and to sophisticate), a view of him 'as the very incarnation of the conventionally "poetic"'.

Whatever our own impatience with Everest's impatience about these matters, it is notable that this book lacks much feel for the grounds of Keats's definitive 'judgement', his sophisticated attentiveness to the resonance of the language and its texture. Unlike his concerted anatomising of Keats's form and syntax, Everest's comments on the minutiae of linguistic and rhythmic choice are muted. As the self-catching-up opening of the final stanza of 'Ode to a Nightingale' demonstrates, Keats is one of the most remarkable self-hearers in poetry regarding the ways in which the common language can leave the poet paradoxically (not ironically) abandoned to 'my sole self'. Everest's contentious reading of his work would have been strengthened by more attention to this kind of attentiveness in his subject.

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Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite (eds), *Romantic Sociability: Social Networks and Literary Culture in Britain 1770-1840*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. 2002. Pp. 267. £40. ISBN 0521770688.

This rich collection of essays uses the perspectives of literary and cultural studies to examine the significance of a complex network of sociable and societal relationships in the Romantic period, which paradoxically formed the background to the Romantic solitary self. The social schema described extends the public sphere to sites of public discourse such as law courts, theatre, proletarian taverns, public lectures and shops. The private discourses of family and educational networks, conversation, diaries and letters, are also shown enhancing and buttressing public sociability. The binary of the public and private spheres is

thus opened, and gender and class relationships and attainments are more subtly nuanced than in the Habermassian model.

Several of the contributors examine the politics of association, and reactionary government censorship. James Epstein considers the gendered public space of the law courts, through the indictment, on charges of sedition in 1792, of the radical lawyer and Painite, John Frost. Various models of public discourse such as the coffee house and the dinner party, proletarian alehouses, radical associations and the display of the royal court, are presented as dependent upon a balance between power and delinquency, and influential in the creation of a plebeian counter-public sphere. Gillian Russell describes the expansion in public lecturing in the early nineteenth century as a political-cultural response to the destabilisation of public sociabilities associated with 'The Two Acts' of 1795. The Acts had restricted the size of public meetings and banned lectures on law, constitution and government, thus effectively banning the right to sociable association.

Jon Mee explores similar radical themes through the poetry and career of the radical Della Cruscan, Robert Merry, and his social involvement with members of the Society for Constitutional Information, such radical Dissenters as Joseph Priestley, Thomas Holcroft and John Horne Tooke. He shows Merry's resolve, in the late 1780s and early 1790s, to extend the public sphere beyond polite sociability to the plebeian. Margaret Jacob interestingly contrasts the international nature of late eighteenth-century radical discourse and its goals, with its vocabulary of liberal Protestant morality, to the growth in the 1790s, in Europe at least, of an Establishment narrative castigating homosocial associations and clubs as homoerotic, deviant and related to the personal intensity of Romanticism.

The sociability of sexual relationships is explored elsewhere in *Romantic Sociability*. Judith Barbour introduces the political into her investigation of sociability, sexual attachment and textuality in the private correspondence and journals of William Godwin. She comments upon the active participation of women writers in the radical literary public sphere in general, and Mary Wollstonecraft's relationship with Godwin in particular, in its societal and private manifestations. Godwin's quasi-sexual relations with Mary Hays, Elizabeth Inchbald and Amelia Alderson are also discussed. Clara Tuite addresses performative sociability across social and literary systems by examining the mimicry of Byron's literary and theatrical public persona, or 'Byronism', by Halifax heiress Anne Lister. This is a socially mobile performance that crosses private and public spheres, and class and gender boundaries, in a private diary narrative of Lister's flamboyant public pursuit of women, and her lesbian love affairs. Tuite shows Lister appropriating a Rousseauvian display of private confessions, and interpreting simplicity as a female decorative artifice, enhanced by her style and, always black, dress.

Also examining performative sociability, Deidre Shauna Lynch challenges a Habermassian presentation of commercialisation as 'a sad, feminised sequel to public sphere conversation' (p. 214). Part of her intriguing argument focuses upon *The Wittlings*, Fanny Burney's satirical play about the bluestockings set in the women's space and news-room of a milliners' shop. Lynch reads this as a Romantic theorising of the public sphere, that equates shopping to other debating forums. Julie A. Carlson dissects the performative sociability of the theatre, examining the defence of theatre's moral efficacy by Thomas Holcroft and Joanna Baillie. She compares this to the celebration by Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt, and especially William Hazlitt, of theatre's cultural formation of a people with a shared benevolent humanity.

Through the career of Anna Barbauld, the particularity of Dissenting sociability is also examined. Anne Janowitz maps sociability across the familial, geographic and intellectual sites of the 'amiable', the educationally pioneering Dissenting Warrington Academy and Palgrave School and the circle of politically radical Dissenters associated with them and with the London publisher Joseph Johnson. In so doing she illustrates Anna Barbauld's intellectual development from an early mediation of domestic sociability to her more vigorous political interventions in the 1790s. Dierdre Coleman considers Anna Barbauld's awareness that knowledge was a gendered issue. She tracks Barbauld's career from her early work grounded in the 'feminine' virtues of affection and sociability, through her later engagement with Dissenting reasoned discourse following that watershed in Dissenting sociability, the Birmingham riots of 1792, which led up to the isolation and later migration of Joseph and Mary Priestley.

These insightful essays throw light on two related aspects of the period: the expansion of the polite public sphere into a wider and intensely political area, influencing and influenced by the exigencies of revolution and war; and the influence of cultural capital in this shifting of power. *Romantic Sociability* shows that the extension of the public sphere, and the flourishing of literary culture, opened up opportunities for women, and men from the lower ranks, to gain access to previously restricted civic arenas.

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Timothy Morton and Nigel Smith (eds), *Radicalism in British Literary Culture, 1650-1830: from Revolution to Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. 284. £40. ISBN 0521642159.

Michael Scrivener, *Seditious Allegories; John Thelwall and Jacobin Writing*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001. Pp. 305. \$55. ISBN 0271021098.

There have been three revolutionary periods in modern British history: the English Revolution, the 'Bloodless Revolution' of 1688 and the period from 1789-1821. As Morton and Smith point out in their introduction to *Radicalism in British Literary Culture*: the 'period in English history between 1640 and 1832 was marked by some common conditions and characteristics' (p. 1). The first two revolutions of course saw the overthrow of a king, and while the final period produced no actual change in the constitution of the country it did see a level of agitation that seemed to suggest a revolution was imminent. Similarly, there was also an attempt to replace the unpopular king – although on this occasion it was with his wife Queen Caroline. Connections between these three periods were frequently made between 1789 and 1832. William Hone, the pamphleteer, evoked the rhetoric of John Lilburne in his three trials for seditious blasphemy in 1817 – from which he emerged victorious by instituting the interesting defence that his parodies of the scriptures tended to attack the state rather than the word of God. Shelley began his unfinished 'Charles the First', Mary Shelley has Victor Frankenstein visit Hampden's tomb, and the model for radical writers became that great defender of regicide, John Milton.

This final revolutionary period also resembled the earlier revolutionary episodes in that there was a rapid expansion in the dissemination of radical print culture. This was both the creation and creator of a large and disparate public sphere that would attempt to intervene in political events. But however closely linked these conflicts are, there have been few attempts by cultural historians to relate the aims and cultures of the Diggers, Levellers and Ranters with their deist descendants the Jacobins and the Radicals. Many readers will still turn first to Christopher Hill for information on the former group and E. P. Thompson for details of the latter. *Radicalism in British Literary Culture* is a collection that attempts to trace the transmission of radicalism across these revolutionary periods. The editors do not try to link revolutionary British history in a linear fashion; instead each of the book's eleven contributors examine a variety of connections between historical moments by concentrating on tropes which can act as conduits to transmit and transform radicalism across the centuries.

The collection opens with a definition of what 'radicalism' is. This is not a stupid question today and neither was it two hundred years ago. In a letter written in 1819, Byron asks John Cam Hobhouse for help in defining what can be a rather woolly term: 'radical is a new word since my time – it was not in the political vocabulary in 1816 – when I left England – and I don't know what it means – is it uprooting?'

In the first part of the book, 'From Revolution', the transmission of radicalism from one revolutionary era to another is explored. Justin Champion compares how radicalism in Britain and France, which were ostensibly different in terms of the ideas espoused, shared a common willingness to confront the state. In his essay, 'The Plantation of Wrath', Timothy Morton argues that 'Vegetarianism rewrote Civil War radicalism' (p. 65). Morton sees a rise in vegetarianism as being symptomatic of the post-interregnum retreat from the bloodshed of the Revolution, fostering an interest in the pastoral leading to the romantic obsession with nature and landscape. Donald John's essay looks at seventeenth-century theological debates on evil and the way that these debates led to an interiorising of God. This had the empowering effect of allowing man to be the creator of change, which is one way that radical discourse found its way to the post 1789 period. Jane Shaw's fascinating study of 'fasting women' examines the cultural, religious and political implications of the claims of Anne Moore, Anna Trapnel and Martha Taylor that they could survive without sustenance. This is of course a powerful image for the survival of radicalism across periods of calm, but more interesting is the significance of these fasts: women's exclusion from the body politic, and the scientific and religious reactions to their claims.

The second half of the book, 'To Revolution', deals with the post-1789 development of radicalism by paying attention to readings of earlier radical texts. Michael Scrivener lucidly examines John Thelwall's synthesis of English Revolutionary polemics and the Jacobin texts that arose from the shock of the French Revolution. The expansion of the public sphere in the 1790s is well documented, but the private reading of women is often ignored. Charlotte Sussman addresses this exclusion by looking at women's reading from the 1640s until 1838. In this Sussman persuasively argues that the private reading sphere which women occupied could be energising, and rather than exacerbating women's exclusion from the public sphere it actually provided a rallying point from which women could combine and assert themselves. In the final essay in this collection, Peter Kitson compares the popularity of depictions of Cromwell and Napoleon in the early nineteenth century, and how these two enemies of kings would come to be interpreted by the likes of Blake and Godwin. Paul Hamilton has the book's Afterword, and he uses this to sum up the aims of

this collection of essays by examining ‘connections in English radical culture’. By doing so he exceeds the parameters set by the collection’s editors through emphasising Machiavelli’s importance in eighteenth century radical discourse.

In *Seditious Allegories: John Thelwall and Jacobin Writing*, Michael Scrivener similarly attempts to link two periods: the English Jacobins of the 1790s and the Radicals of the post-Waterloo period. Hazlitt’s condemnation of Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge’s shift from being ‘apostles’ to becoming ‘apostates’ as they turned from their youthful views of the French Revolution often leaves the impression that hardly any of the Jacobins from the 1790s either survived or maintained their ideals until the post-Waterloo period of conflict; we rarely hear of any relationship between Jacobins and Radicals. Scrivener redresses this with his focus on the life of John Thelwall, a sadly neglected figure who was in his time: a member of the London Corresponding Society, poet, pamphleteer, novelist, playwright, speech therapist (a measure of his success in this field was his accumulation of enough money to send his sons to Oxford and to buy John Scott’s *The Champion* newspaper), journalist and editor of several magazines and newspapers. This clear and engaging study of Thelwall’s life and work begins with a welcome definition of Jacobinism, a term which was less understood in its day than one would think. Even a leading Jacobin like Daniel Isaac Eaton devoted an article in his *Politics for the People, or, Salmagundi for Swine* to instructing his readers on the differences between the Jacobites and the Jacobins. Scrivener then explores the roles of Burke and Paine in expanding the public sphere, before moving on to examine Thelwall’s little known replies to the great right-wing polemicist’s work: *Sober Reflections* and *The Rights of Nature*. Thelwall’s dry wit and ability to invert the purpose of Burke’s polemics – ‘Begin with Burke’s *Reflections*, for I declare to you, that it was not Tom Paine but Edmund Burke that made me so zealous a reformer’ – are brilliantly illuminated by Scrivener. This is a book about literary and political connections, which, when added to Scrivener’s other publications, *Radical Shelley* and *Poetry and Reform*, establishes his status as a major scholar of the period. *Seditious Allegories* is also essential reading as a companion to the likes of Marilyn Butler’s *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries* and Iain McCalman’s influential *Radical Underworld* in its expansion of our understanding of complex literary alliances and conflicts.

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Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, *Revisionary Gleam: De Quincey, Coleridge and the High Romantic Argument*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000. Pp. 311. Hb. £34.00, ISBN 0853237948. Pb. £16.99, ISBN 0853238049.

One of the challenges faced by readers of Thomas De Quincey has been to assess his highly diverse and eccentric writings, which span the Romantic and Victorian periods, and which, in the absence of a reliable edition, make up a notoriously unstable body of work. The new collected edition, edited by Grevel Lindop, will provide some definition to De Quincey’s oeuvre, and it will be interesting to watch the ways in which this will reshape the field of De Quincey studies, as it undoubtedly will. *Revisionary Gleam*, by Daniel Sanjiv Roberts (one of the contributing editors to the Lindop edition), predates the new edition, and it too

is interested in recovering some of the more marginal work, especially the 1803 diary and the political journalism of the 1830s, and reprints some previously unpublished and unavailable texts in helpful appendices. The burden of this study, however, is less to explore De Quincey's range of work, than to uncover its intellectual and political contexts – a project that, Roberts points out, may run against the grain of the new edition and its distillation of a canon of writing outside the varied and uneven contexts of writing and publication. Through meticulous and informed scholarship, Roberts provides rich new conjunctions in which to locate De Quincey. Many of these are highly illuminating. The chapter on De Quincey's 'discovery' of the *Lyrical Ballads* (an essay which readers may know from its earlier publication in *Studies in Romanticism*) is a model of literary detective work. It conclusively wrests De Quincey from the grip of estimations based on the claim of Horace Eaton, the first editor of 1803 diary, that De Quincey lived in 'a world of thought and feeling almost entirely' when he encountered the *Lyrical Ballads*. Instead Roberts reveals the highly politicised context in which De Quincey was introduced to the work, citing De Quincey's links with Liverpool Whig intelligentsia, Currie and Roscoe, and his early reading of Jeffreys' review as events that framed his reception of the work. The consequences of Roberts' revisions of this initial scene of reading are of particular interest when one recalls De Quincey's importance in the dissemination of Wordsworth's work in later nineteenth-century literary culture. Chapters on De Quincey's work on language and on German philosophy are similarly sensitive to cultural context, the latter making a compelling case for understanding the puzzling writings on Kant from the 1830s in the light of Catholic Emancipation, mediated through Coleridge's *On Constitution of Church and State*.

Roberts' study is particularly persuasive in its core argument, which concerns the importance of Coleridge as an influence on De Quincey. As Roberts points out, the emphasis on De Quincey's discipleship of Wordsworth has been at the expense of sustained consideration of the links with Coleridge – a fact that is highly surprising given De Quincey's frequently expressed, if vexed, identification with the latter. Drawing on McGann's notion of the 'Romantic Ideology', Roberts argues that the 'repression' of the Coleridgean frame for De Quincey has contributed to the dissemination of a version of Romanticism as an aesthetic of feeling, evacuated of historical and materialist content.

In his reassessment of the Coleridge/De Quincey relationship, Roberts is highly convincing, and there is much to admire in this substantial, often subtle and speculative study. Where his findings lead, however, I think is more open to debate than Roberts allow. As Roberts himself suggests, literary periodisation, paradoxically shaped by the rendering of De Quincey as Wordsworth's disciple, distorts our understanding of the politics of literary culture. But by maintaining his focus on the earlier generation of Romantics – albeit now expanded to include Coleridge – Roberts further embeds De Quincey as a 'high Romantic' and puts a strain on the historical coherence of the argument. In this respect it is important to note that Roberts concentrates on the earlier works largely to the exclusion of essays produced post-1840 on foreign trade and Corn Law Agitation, in which De Quincey assumes his notoriously imperialist mantle that has prompted others to locate his aesthetic in the troubling contexts of conservative ideology and political reaction of mid-century British politics. Roberts aims to correct such readings by recalling De Quincey's early brushes with radical republican traditions, but while that in itself is highly interesting, it surely does not discharge the rebarbative content of later statements. Indeed, Roberts dismisses the 'intemperately imperialistic and racist' views of De Quincey's later works as

mere reflections of the times – as he puts it, statements that are ‘not surprising for his time’ (p. 26). But, in the context of an avowedly historicist venture such as his, such a defence seems lame. Roberts’ stated intention to understand the ‘complexity’ of De Quincey’s thought is pursued with commitment and much sensitivity; but often one has a sense that for him ‘complexity’ is to be equated with Coleridgean ‘balance’, without real engagement with the political implications of that. One regrets that Roberts underplays the question of the force and potency of De Quincey’s aesthetic and philosophical ideas in the context of the 1840s and 1850s political situation, since in the end De Quincey emerges again as the belated and anachronistic Romantic.

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Sally Bushell, *Re-reading The Excursion*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002. Pp. 282. £45. ISBN 0754605760.

‘Impertinent babbling’, Hazlitt notoriously remarked in his review of *The Excursion*: ‘The recluse, the pastor, and the pedlar, are three persons in one poet’. Various labels – undramatic, too philosophical and not philosophical enough, the status of *The Excursion* has gradually declined, with the twentieth century seeing only two full-length studies. Explaining the poem’s critical neglect through a detailed, shrewd examination of its nineteenth-century reception, Sally Bushell makes a persuasive case for re-reading. Like Lucy Newlyn in *Reading, Writing and Romanticism*, Bushell produces a nuanced account of Romantic expectations of audience, arguing that, despite Wordsworth’s often negative reaction to contemporary criticism, his writing shapes a more positive, ‘active’ reader. Emphasising the importance to the poem of the philosophical dialogue and of the conversation, Bushell considers the ways in which it is constructed to encourage the reader to moderate – or re-read – each of its multiple tales in the light of other narratives.

In creating this case for re-reading, Bushell’s concern with Wordsworth criticism, both past and present, is scholarly, but occasionally excessive: the study’s account of Coleridge’s remarks on *The Excursion*, inseparable from the story of their relationship, inevitably contains much that is familiar. Yet this well-trodden ground yields the rewarding suggestion that Wordsworth’s distance from Coleridge encouraged him to return to a more dramatic approach. According to Bushell, the loss of critical dialogue between the two writers led Wordsworth to question the roles of poet and reader. His anxieties shape *The Excursion*, allowing it to be read as a dramatic experiment instead of as what Alison Hickey calls ‘monolithic, monologic bombast’.

Traditionally the dramatic elements of *The Excursion* have needed considerable defence, which this reassessment goes some way to providing. Exploring Romantic doubts about dramatic performance, the study concludes that for Wordsworth a dramatic reading experience became preferable since it ‘contains stages of analysis and a multiplicity of potential responses’ (p. 49). Bushell constructs the argument by close critical use of manuscript material, exploring at what stage and to what extent Wordsworth conceived of the poem as dramatic. Making a compelling case for this kind of intricate manuscript scholarship, her examination suggests the importance given by Wordsworth not just to each character’s voice but also to the narrative each delivers. The reader observes wanderer,

poet, pastor and solitary from shifting perspectives, sometimes sympathising, sometimes alienated. The result, Bushell argues, is to produce in the audience the combination of rational and emotional response that Wordsworth favoured by 1815.

This leads to the thorny issue of *The Excursion* as philosophical poem. Bushell argues that, rather than presenting a series of abstract principles, the poem suggests philosophy arises out of the study of social interaction. *The Excursion* calls for a heightened degree of understanding and judgement as a way of knowing the richness of community. This degree of sympathy is, however, hard to achieve, a fact used here to allow for some of the difficulties with the poem's use of 'exempla'. Reconsidering the tales which have often led to the neglect of books v-vii, Bushell argues that two types of exempla are referred to: the closed, with moral provided, which the wanderer tries to impose, and the open, favoured by the pastor. Unlike the written epitaphs of the church interior, these open oral narratives contain interpretative tensions that allow reader interaction: as Bushell puts it, the pastor 'unites the tales of the dead into one communal whole, and unites the minds of the living in response to this' (p. 208).

In this study, the argument that Wordsworth is exploring difficulties of communication operates almost as an uneasy excuse for *The Excursion*'s weaknesses. Inevitably, it seems, uncertainties surrounding human interaction in the poem generate inconsistency in the narrative voice. In contrast to *The Prelude*, *The Excursion* problematises the role of the poet who translates others' tales. Threatening to deprive the reader of independence, the poet is necessarily outside the pastor's oral community; he thrives on a heightened sensation that challenges the subtly interweaving narratives of ongoing life. In his anxiety to transmit sentiment, he is in fact in danger of becoming like those authors of 'frantic' Gothic novels criticised in the 1802 preface to *The Lyrical Ballads*. His sympathetic portraits may degenerate into didacticism or uncertainty.

Whatever the poem's flaws, *Re-reading The Excursion* indicates the fruitfulness of siting this major work more precisely in relation to the eighteenth-century debate on sympathy. As John Mullan has established, from the first the much-maligned novel of sentiment dealt as much with the limitations of sympathy as with its power. The difficulty can be traced back to Shaftesbury. In suggesting that the 'The MIND, which is Spectator or Auditor of *other Minds*, cannot be without *Eye* and *Ear*; so as to discern Proportion, distinguish Sound, and scan each Sentiment or Thought', he was disingenuous: actions can be directly observed, but internal motivation cannot. Although Bushell does not set out to provide the wider social and political context, this study suggests that *The Excursion* struggles with the same issues of communication and translation. Allowing insight into the process of composition, her work also touches upon what is a tricky area for modern literary critics, the poet's intention. Given that the difficulty of gauging the motives of authors and readers is exactly what is at stake in *The Excursion*, her approach is particularly appropriate.

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Michael John Kooy, *Coleridge, Schiller, and Aesthetic Education*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002. Pp. 255. £47.50. ISBN 0333749367.

At the heart of Michael John Kooy's erudite and incisive study is the view that Coleridge resembled Schiller (more notably than other German Romantics) in arguing that the 'ideality of art consists not in abstraction alone, but in the combination of abstraction with

specificity, the coincidence of the universal and the particular'. This view, he argues, is particularly close 'to Schiller's objective definition of beauty as "living form" (*lebende Gestalt*): form or abstract principle brought to life as it were through experience, the senses' (p. 113). This shared aesthetic theory, Kooy suggests, is closely connected with the educative ideals of both thinkers, since Schiller's dialectic of 'sense, nature and necessity on the one hand and intelligibility, reason and freedom on the other' was the basis for 'a programme of "aesthetic education" administered ... by people of taste, who would reconcile the one with the other' – a pattern which is paralleled by the later Coleridge's dialectic 'between the forms of "permanence" and "progression", that would be mediated by the educative work of the "clerisy"' (pp. 170-1). Perhaps still more striking than these resemblances, however, is the parallel between the metaphysical theories which underlie both Schiller's and Coleridge's aesthetic ideals. As Kooy summarises Schiller's argument, being creatures both of 'sense' and of 'reason', we have a choice between 'giv[ing] ourselves over to the reality around us and liv[ing] as creatures of sense', or, on the other hand, 'subordinat[ing] that outer reality, the world of experience and of nature, to our own ideas of moral self-determination, affirming our own freedom ... in the face of a hostile reality' (p. 108). This could scarcely be closer to Coleridge's vision of humanity's fundamental dilemma, albeit the latter's moralistic and hierarchical vision of humanity's choice between 'ascent' to the higher levels of vision and insight and 'descent' to an 'idolatrous' immersion in the world of sense seems less apparent in Schiller's conception. As Kooy notes, it 'might seem that, given the Platonic tendency in his thought, Schiller would come out in favour' of the transcendent assertion of freedom so often championed by Coleridge; yet this 'is not the case', since Schiller's ideal is to reconcile these two conflicting aspects of humanity through the '*Spieltrieb* or "play drive"' which 'aims at setting us free from the constraints of both the physical world and the moral world', thus giving rise to 'beauty' or "living form" – that is ... an abstract principle given concrete reality' (pp. 108-9). The central point of difference between Coleridge and Schiller thus seems to be that while Coleridge's metaphysics are emphatically idealist, seeking primarily to subordinate sense to reason, Schiller's metaphysics resemble his aesthetics in seeking to mediate between these two extremes. Though imagination in Coleridge certainly enables us to represent the universal in the particular, that is, it does so primarily in order to highlight the ultimately spiritual nature of the world of sense and thus assist our transcendence of it – a position differing notably from Schiller's more consistent search for unity and reconciliation. As Kooy himself points out, other German Romantics such as Schelling have more often been cited as sources for Coleridge's metaphysical and aesthetic theories, partly because of the greater documentary evidence of his use of them (pp. 3, 125). Coleridge's ambition to achieve 'a transcendental deduction of the imagination', Kooy further notes, 'was just like that of other post-Kantians, like Schiller, Schelling, and Fichte, though of these only Schelling realized that ambition' (p. 124). What makes Schiller a more central influence, he argues, is the fact that, following the well-known 'failure of the transcendental deduction' in *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge adopted a 'less rigorous, more flexible' idealist aesthetic than that of Schelling, additionally echoing Schiller's emphasis on 'the potential of art indirectly to affect moral life' (p. 126). What its moral advantages are is more fully explained in the discussion of Coleridge's theory of the value of 'culture' or 'cultivation' – though here, again, the hierarchical vision of intellectual and spiritual 'ascent' above material things evoked in Coleridge's reference to 'the 3 principles, by which Human Nature is distinguished from the Brute', and to man's 'Progressive

Improvement as a ... Creature destined for a State after Death' seems to distinguish Coleridge's view significantly from Schiller's ideal of the unification of 'matter' and 'form' (pp. 159, 129). As Kooy points out, despite Coleridge's view 'that in the liberal market economy the arts rarely thrive' (p. 141), his ideal of 'aesthetic education', like that of Schiller, at times 'risks lapsing into political quietism or, even worse, reinforcing the very bourgeois hegemony it had set out to criticize' (p. 162); yet these very paradoxes of Coleridge's late rhetoric are perhaps no less a product of his persistent emphasis on transcending the mundane and the particular in favour of a unifying organic ideal of 'spirit'. Perhaps the greatest achievement of this impressive study, however, is its indication, through many subtly-investigated details of German and English Romanticism, that despite the lack of direct evidence as to Coleridge's debts to Schiller, the latter played an important part in the development of the Romantic idealism from which Coleridge borrowed more directly, and anticipates his later theories of culture and education. In addition, the earlier chapters include the fullest investigation hitherto of Coleridge's early interest in Schiller's poetry, as well as examining the wider diffusion of Schiller's works among British readers of the period.

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William Roberts (ed.), *Thomas Gray's Journal of his Visit to the Lake District in October 1769*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001. Pp. 160. £11.95. ISBN 0853236674.

Thomas Gray's journal of his visit to the Lakes is frequently cited as an early document in the history of picturesque tourism, but, as the blurb to William Roberts' edition states, has never been published as a separate work. The reason for this perhaps becomes clearer when one notes that the text of Gray's journal occupies no more than twenty of the one hundred and sixty pages that make up this inexpensive and attractively produced paperback. It would seem that a considerable burden is carried by the various editorial features and apparatus that Roberts has supplied, including an introduction on Gray's life and personality, extensive commentary on each day of the tour, a concluding essay on the eighteenth-century discovery of the Lake District, and contemporary engravings, paintings and maps. While this is undoubtedly true, the real significance of the book's structural peculiarities lies elsewhere: rather than an 'edition' pure and simple, this is much more a work in the popular 'footsteps' genre of travel literature, in which the author retraces the itinerary of a famous literary tourist, comparing the latter's observations and experiences with present-day realities (think of Carol Kyros Walker's homages to Dorothy Wordsworth and Keats, or Alan Hankinson's recreation of Coleridge's Lakeland fell-walk). Provided that this is what one wants, there should be little cause for complaint at the job done by Roberts, who is an amiable and knowledgeable companion to a writer he admires.

As far as the editing of Gray's text is concerned, the originality of Roberts' contribution is that he presents what is said to be the original manuscript version of the journal, based on notebooks in the possession of John Murray, in preference to the version contained in four letters to Thomas Wharton, which were published in William Mason's edition of the *Poems* in 1775, as an appendix to Thomas West's *Guide to the Lakes* in 1780 and in subsequent

editions of the letters and collected works. However, Roberts informs us that 'a considerable portion' of the notebook text is missing, so for the opening five and a half days of the journal – which unfortunately include its single most important passage of description – he has been forced to rely on the letters. Even where he has done so, he has apparently omitted an unspecified amount of 'non-journal material'. What we have, then, is an eclectic text, fashioned to give a continuously 'authentic' journal feel. Although the transparency of this process is unlikely to be sufficient for scholarly purposes, it is not a major problem for a book of this kind, but it would have been helpful if Roberts had devoted some space to a discussion of the key differences between the two versions of the journal, to help justify his methodology. It may be that these are pretty insubstantial: a comparison of the two versions of the description of Grasmere, for example, indicates that the differences are only in accidentals, together with one preposition that Roberts has interpolated in his own text. Perhaps this is because the notebooks – 'almost too neat to have been written up day by day', Roberts concedes – represent a more advanced stage of composition, somewhat diminishing their 'authenticity' vis-à-vis the experience of travel?

Reading Gray's journal again, one cannot help but be struck by how unexceptionally flat and prosaic much of it is, and how much its enduring interest for literary scholars rests on a small number of exquisite descriptive passages – notably the aforementioned view of Grasmere from Dunmail Raise, which resonates in Wordsworth's *Home at Grasmere*, and the Borrowdale expedition that occupies the fourth day of the tour. The latter captures perfectly in its three and a half pages a proto-Romantic feeling for the beauty and sublimity of native landscape in the infancy of the touristic discovery of Britain. As Roberts says, it is too easy to mock Gray for sticking to the valley bottom, or for his refusal to go beyond Grange when confronted with the 'jaws of Borrowdale' and the 'turbulent chaos of mountain behind mountain roll'd in confusion'. He is right to point to the changes in physical geography that have made the area so unchallengingly accessible today, and he does well to try to recapture the contemporary meaning of words like 'horror', 'dreadful' and 'formidable', which have been drained of force and meaning. The sublime is subject to a kind of aesthetic inflation, and a different scale or intensity of experience may now be required to induce it, so to accuse Gray of exaggeration or sentimentality may well be to succumb to the condescension of posterity.

As this implies, Roberts is invariably at pains to defend Gray's perspective. In his commentary on the Borrowdale section this is a strength, but when taken to extremes it highlights the limitations of the editorial input in this volume. The introduction, for instance, is far too partial to its subject: one cannot excuse Gray's indolence as Professor of Modern History at Cambridge by noting that 'he undoubtedly began by planning to give lectures' (would this wash with the teaching quality assessors?). Similarly, the essay on Lake District tourism is scholarly but fails to substantiate the claims it makes for Gray's influence. Roberts puts too much pressure on Gray and his predecessor, John Brown (author of another well-known account of the scenery around Keswick), as cultural movers and shakers. 'This is not to say that without these two writers Romanticism would not have occurred', he says startlingly at one point. Just as well. Riding the boundary between academia and the general reader is a difficult thing to do, with the danger of failing to please either constituency. But if an audience for a book like this exists, Roberts has done enough to keep it happy, and his labours should play a small part in the ongoing renaissance of early travel literature.

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Nicholas A. Joukovsky (ed.), *The Letters of Thomas Love Peacock*, 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001. Vol 1: Pp. 352. £65. ISBN 0198126581. Vol 2: Pp. 351. £65. ISBN 0198186339.

The extent of Nicholas A. Joukovsky's achievement in this edition can be gauged by the number of libraries he has visited in the course of his attempts to retrieve apparently lost letters and to discover Peacock's correspondents. The resulting two volumes dispel at least one myth concerning Peacock: he has been portrayed as a man who did not write many letters and who did not enjoy writing letters. Joukovsky has succeeded in bringing to light important new correspondence, which reveals a great deal about Peacock and will be of immense value to those interested in Peacock, the Shelleys' circle, or Romanticism generally.

Joukovsky does, however, warn against those readers hoping to find 'startling revelations' concerning Shelley. Peacock's reticence was legendary when speaking of his literary acquaintances when their memories became increasingly traded upon, but these letters do reveal something of Peacock's own thoughts about literature. One major achievement of this edition is the increased knowledge we have of Peacock's private life, his friends, romances and family, although he does tend to be reticent on familial and financial matters.

One particular area of interest, which has been under-explored in the past, is Peacock's career in the India House. Joukovsky has found many letters preserved 'among the records of the East India Company and the Board of Control' (p. x). Many of these letters were classed as 'secret home correspondence' (p. xxiv). Peacock's long life meant that he corresponded not only with Romantic literary and political figures but also with many eminent Victorians. He was succeeded in his final post as the Examiner by John Stuart Mill. The political importance of Peacock's work has perhaps not been fully appreciated and the letters included in this edition also reveal the extent of Peacock's personal and business interest in steam navigation. This interest led him to promote 'the Euphrates River as a route for the Indian mails' (p. lxxxvi).

Those looking for new letters from Percy or Mary Shelley, or other canonical Romantic writers, will be disappointed but the letters bring to light other interesting figures from this time. Joukovsky writes that the letters from the young Peacock to his friends 'reveal Peacock as a young man who clearly relished his correspondence with a circle of friends that must have been considerably larger than has generally been realised' (p. xlvi). One of these friends, Thomas Forster, I had come across myself while looking into Percy Shelley's interest in science and medicine, but had been unable to find out much about his life or circle. I was particularly pleased, therefore, to find a cache of eighteen letters from Peacock to his old school friend, substantially supplementing the single reference to him in Marilyn Butler's *Peacock Displayed*. It was quite a coup to discover these at all, since Forster left England for the Continent and died in Bruges. In many ways Forster is quintessentially Romantic; like Shelley he pursued a number of scientific interests from ballooning to botany, to colour theory and atmospheric pollution. He published prolifically on a dazzling variety of topics: phrenology, the vitality debate between surgeons John Abernethy and

William Lawrence and madness. He has the potential to be a suggestively important figure in the circle in which Peacock and Shelley moved, in and around London in the 1810s, and shared many of their interests: he believed in vegetarianism, constitutional health and the particular benefits of abstaining from alcohol and animal rights, as well as being proficient in an impressive number of languages. Joukovsky speculates that it is Forster's enthusiasm for the theories of Gall and Spurzheim that is depicted in *Headlong Hall's* Mr Cranium.

Despite Peacock's distaste for what Joukovsky calls the 'increasing violation of privacy in the 1820s' the collection of letters does offer us some insight into what it was like to survive longer than most members of the Shelleys' circle (p. xxxvii). There are letters to Lady Shelley, Thomas Jefferson Hogg and others in his role as Shelley's executor and friend. Indeed the role he played during Shelley's life, patronised by the poet, as his 'literary advisor' and 'business agent' meant that he wrote a number of letters on his friend's behalf, though, again, not many of these have survived (p. lx).

Joukovsky catalogues in the substantial introduction to this edition the number of letters destroyed or lost, calculating the gaps in collections and speculating on the reason for their disappearance. The motivations behind destroying letters to and from Peacock reveal more of his character; Joukovsky argues that letters to Edward Hookham were disposed of because of the depressed nature of Peacock's writings and his suicide threats, while other letters, destroyed by Peacock himself, would have detailed more about his annuity from Shelley and his imprisonment for debt in Liverpool in 1815 (pp. lii, lx).

This is the first separate edition of Peacock's letters. It contains some 338 letters, 324 of which are written by Peacock himself. This is an invaluable resource for Romanticists, which not only adds to but changes the way we have perceived Peacock, his life and his times.

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Philip Shaw (ed.), *Romantic Wars: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1793-1822 (The Nineteenth Century Series)*. Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2000. Pp. 256. £45. ISBN 1840142669.

It is clear from the start that *Romantic Wars* is driven by a corrective impulse, and it is of course somewhat fitting that the collection starts combatively, drawing up its territory as the first work to look in detail at the ways in which Romantic texts deal with the effects of ongoing conflict on a huge and devastating scale, and positing the idea that, at a fundamental level, 'Romanticism is facilitated and conditioned by a culture of hostility'. As Philip Shaw states in his Introduction, the collection aims to build on the critical commonplace of anchoring the literature of the Romantic period in the context of revolution, and thus expand the historicist project so as to ensure that the material effects of war are just as keenly felt in the poetry written in the war years we call 'the Romantic age'. He puts a convincing case and, indeed, our sympathy towards the thesis is encouraged by the cohesiveness of Shaw's fine opening piece. The different essays are tightly and subtly bound together, and the editor demonstrates an admirable commitment to the basic but necessary work of *introducing* each piece, convincingly underwriting the argument that will emerge in the pages to follow.

In a meticulously written opening essay surveying the writings of women poets during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, Stephen C. Behrendt interweaves statistical evidence – Elizabeth Moody’s bitterly evoked ‘few harmless numbers’ from which he takes his title – with literary analysis, in such a way as to add weight to the book’s claims of a dual audience of historians and literary specialists. His analysis of suffering figures as vehicles for anti-war polemics is more thorough than striking, but he provides a persuasive account of the relation between the discourse of sentiment and the horrors of war, and charts ground which is further developed in the following essay. Here, Jacqueline M. Labbe identifies in Smith’s ‘The Emigrants’ an aggregation of different, perhaps even theatricalised, voices, a complex authorial performance balancing the conflicting demands of patriotic and revolutionary impulses. The work benefits substantially from opening with two nuanced treatments of the blurred boundaries between the domestic space of the ‘home-land’ and the war-zone, contributing a breadth to our reading of war that ensures the masculine space of the battlefield is not placed squarely at the centre of the text.

The collection complements this approach through its engagement with, to use an example provided by David Collings’s trenchant contribution, the Thelwalls, Coleridges and Wordsworths of the Romantic age as equals, submerging issues of canonicity into its wider thesis. Generally, this proves fruitful, underlining the collection’s claims to critical importance with a necessary feeling of contemporaneity and simultaneously encouraging new and interesting dialogues between the authors concerned and the critics’ positions. Occasionally, though, it also contributes to a lack of focus, something particularly felt in Geoff Quilley’s account of the representation of the British sailor, where the overtly interdisciplinary approach seems somewhat at odds with the work’s prevailing concerns. This said, however, *Romantic Wars* overcomes its slight loss of momentum to finish with a triumvirate of particularly engaging and overlapping pieces, restoring an overall sense of cohesion. Simon Bainbridge’s essay on Byron’s blood-soaked siege poetry offers a rich and vigorous reading of what Bainbridge sees as ‘one of the fullest and most powerful explorations of war in the period’ (p. 164), looking in detail at the ambiguities in Byron’s concept of martial heroism and its role in his poetry. Moreover, it benefits from being read in close conjunction with Philip Shaw’s contribution on Leigh Hunt’s post-war liberal politics and Eric C. Walker’s ‘antithalimic’ readings of Wordsworth and Austen. Shaw is himself interested in the differing public attempts of Hunt, Byron and Wordsworth to assimilate the conflict into ideological and literary modes, and he creates a satisfyingly vivid account of the confusion, both political and linguistic, with which these writers attempted to deal with Waterloo. Walker’s exploration of how the wars had destabilised traditional narrative structures is perhaps the most interesting take on the rubric in the book and, though it is compromised slightly by the necessary compression into essay form, is a particularly strong close to the volume. Taken collectively, these essays offer a satisfyingly open-ended view of the internalised and textualised battles which superseded the literal battlefield of Waterloo, and all complicate productively the reader’s impression of the writers and their politics.

What emerges from the volume as a whole is a real sense that the difficulties that faced the writers of the Romantic age in dealing with the total war that engulfed Europe were generative, that they forced upon these public figures public problems which could not be ignored, or perhaps even assimilated. Because the wars were, to reiterate both Shaw and Mark Rawlinson’s quotation from Mary Favret, ‘outside the visual experience’ of most writers (p. 2 and p. 112), it is understandable that the effects of them have remained outside

our consciousness as twenty-first century critics. This book should go some way towards correcting this blindness. Inter-linking texts as distinct as *Don Juan* and 'Dion', 'The Emigrants' and *Emma*, and generally succeeding in suppressing the conflicts enflamed by its approaches, *Romantic Wars* offers a comprehensive introduction to a new and invigorating area of Romantic study, and is a collection deserving of the influence which it seeks.

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Murray G. H. Pittock (ed.), James Hogg, *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland [First Series]. The Stirling/South Carolina Research Edition of the Collected Works of James Hogg, Volume 10.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002. Pp. 527. £60. ISBN 074861592X.

The volume under review is the latest addition to an impressive series of scholarly editions of Hogg's work, a series that shows a range and variety of work probably unsuspected by those of us who have been familiar only with *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. Here we have a facsimile reprint of the first edition of the *Jacobite Relics* of 1819 (there was a second one published in 1821), which, in addition to the songs themselves, includes Hogg's introduction and his extensive notes on the individual songs. To this Murray Pittock adds his own introduction, notes, bibliography and a glossary. Hogg's collection was the result of a commission (the formality of which is still uncertain) from the Highland Society of London, who wanted songs from both the Jacobite and Whig parties. In the event, the bulk of the collection is Jacobite songs, ninety of them with the music given, and a further thirty-six without music (though for some there is an indication of the tune) in an appendix. The appendix also contains forty-one Whig songs, several of which are set to 'Lillibulero', the chief Whig air, whose continuing cultural presence Pittock, with meticulous scholarship, traces in his notes.

Hogg explains in his introduction that he would like to have included more Whig songs, in order 'to contrast them with the others' (p. *xiii*), but they are simply not there to be collected. As it is, the Jacobite songs do, as Hogg hoped, give an 'animated picture' (p. *vii*) of a particularly eventful period in Scottish history. Despite the presence of a few songs of erotic complexion, the overwhelming impression is of aggressive, militant outpourings. As Hogg notes, the songs are quite different in character from the traditional ballads of heroism and romance; their 'general character is that of rude energetic humour'; they are the 'unmasked effusions of a bold and primitive race' (p. *viii*). Murray Pittock, in *his* introduction himself unmasks Hogg's Romantic pretensions, pointing out that the bulk of the songs 'are emphatically the products of Anglophone Scottish and London party hacks' (p. *xiii*). Nevertheless, he pays Hogg due credit for having established the Jacobite song canon, the basis of all later collections.

Authenticity is clearly a key issue. Hogg's editorial policy was simple: 'I have in no instance puzzled myself in deciding what reading of each song is the most genuine and original, but have constantly taken the one that I thought the best' (p. *xv*). A modern editor must needs be more scrupulous. Confronted by a text where the editorial integrity has traditionally been doubted (as Pittock tells us in his notes, Hogg unashamedly admits to the

composition of Song LX, 'Donald Macgillavry'), the modern editor faces a formidable task in ascertaining the provenance of these songs. In rising to the challenge, Pittock arrives at a ten-fold classification, which not only records, as far as is possible, the source, but tackles the complex question of Hogg's relationship to the Jacobite record. As Pittock declares at the outset, this scholarly edition is not intended as a contribution to the understanding of Hogg as a great Romantic, but as a contribution to the understanding of Jacobite culture itself. The introduction plays a key part in this endeavour, providing important background information about the Jacobite tradition and about Hogg's relationship to it.

To give a flavour of the songs and to illustrate the way all this scholarly apparatus can enrich one's understanding, I shall take the example of Song III, 'Lesley's March to Scotland', which is particularly striking for the vigour of its language, the epitome of that 'rude energetic humour' that so impresses Hogg ('whoring', for instance, rhymes with 'snoring'; Lesley's soldiers are 'dunghills of blessedness'). Here, the usual practice, we have the first verse set to the air. We also get a second version, less vigorous, more anodyne: 'Lesley's March to Longmaston Moor'. Hogg's notes tell the story of David Lesley, a commander in the Whig army at the battle of Marston, whose division of zealots aroused feelings of such derision. He also speculates on the provenance of the two versions and concludes that the first one is not, as he had suspected, a modern parody, but is indeed an 'ancient' song, set to what – a nice satirical touch – was Lesley's own favourite marching tune. Pittock's notes in this instance add nothing to the historical context, but elaborate on the song's origins. Hogg had suspected that the first version might be one of Burns's 'wild effusions'; Pittock tells us that the *Edinburgh Monthly Review* implies Scott's authorship, but confirms Hogg's conclusion. He also adds information about sources for the second version. For Song III, the English reader will probably need the help of the glossary, which in this case fails to supply a meaning of 'cleary', though its meaning is clear enough in context.

The word 'relic' carries with it overtones of things that have passed away, of worship, of remembrance; it does not immediately suggest a dynamic relationship with the present. Unlike the other Romantic poets, who collected the folk songs of the place and the time that they themselves inhabited, Hogg collected songs that belonged to the preceding century. It is a major achievement on the part of Pittock to show the dynamism and the complexity of Hogg's interaction with this material of the past.

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Penny Gay, *Jane Austen and the Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. 222. £37.50. ISBN 0521652138.

Jane Austen loved the theatre. Until 1789 her own family put on a play almost every year during the Christmas holidays. On her visits to London she seems to have attended as often as she could, and if, as was often the case, the play did not much please, then hers was the common lot, for even the most devoted theatre-goer's most frequent experience will be one of disappointment. Austen found, for example, that Eliza O'Neill's performance in *Isabella* did not require her to make use of the two handkerchiefs that she had taken the precaution of bringing with her to the theatre, but still she did not regret her evening because O'Neill

was ‘an elegant creature & hugs Mr Younge delightfully’. In her first chapter Penny Gay offers a concise but full account of Austen’s theatrical experience before turning in the six chapters that follow to investigate the imprint of that experience on Austen’s six completed novels.

Gay incorporates previous suggestions – the parallels between *Emma* and Dibdin’s *The Birth-day* first noted by Margaret Kirkham, and between *Emma* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* pointed out by Jocelyn Harris, the morality play elements detectable in *Mansfield Park* that Gay had called attention to herself – and she adds a good deal of new material. I was particularly struck by the suggestion that the relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy might owe something to that between Roxalana and the title character of Isaac Bickerstaff’s *The Sultan*. Darcy is, as Elizabeth points out, rather sultan-like – ‘You were disgusted with the women who were always speaking and looking, and thinking for *your* approbation alone’ – and the Austen family had performed the play at Steventon in 1789. Also persuasive is the suggestion that the final confrontation between Elizabeth and Lady Catherine owes something to Charlotte’s spirited response to Lady Rusport’s bullying in Cumberland’s *The West Indian*. Almost all critics of *Mansfield Park* have commented on *Lovers’ Vows*, but Gay’s focus on the scene between Amelia and Anhalt that Edmund is so eager to rehearse with Mary Crawford allows her to show how Austen is responding here to a talent (Inchbald’s as much as Kotzebue’s) at least commensurate with her own.

But rather more often Gay concedes the limitations of her enterprise. *Sense and Sensibility* arrives at ‘a kind of female interior drama that the stage of the early nineteenth century had no place for’. *Northanger Abbey* is a ‘more complex imaginative adventure’ than anything offered in the Gothic plays of the period. It is a virtue of the book that it refuses to make extravagant claims for the importance of the topic that it addresses: ‘what the theatre of 1800 could not supply is the ironic vision which Austen brings to the project of representing the lives of “3 or 4 families in a country village”’. The lack of a monograph solely focused on Jane Austen’s relationship with the theatre was a striking lacuna in Austen studies – so striking indeed that Gay’s study was followed within months by a book by Paula Byrne with precisely the same title. In Gay’s capable hands it proves a less rich topic than one might have hoped, but the relative paucity of her material at least allows her to extend the range of her study to embrace Austen’s sense of the ‘theatricality of everyday life’. In fact, her book is never more suggestive than when exploring the theatrical metaphors that Austen’s characters so consistently employ: Darcy’s confidence that he and Elizabeth are alike in that they neither of them ‘perform to strangers’, and the letter in which he explains the ‘part which [he] acted’ in alienating Bingley’s affections from Jane; Jane Fairfax’s shamefaced confession that she ‘had always a part to act’; or Captain Wentworth’s recollection of ‘the scenes on the Cobb, and at Captain Harville’s’ that had persuaded him of Anne’s superiority. Jane Austen, who so stoutly resisted the fashion for advancing the status of the novel by eliding the distinction between the novel and poetry, was perhaps more aware than any of her contemporaries of what made novels peculiar – unlike poems and unlike plays. It may well be that her most important debts to the theatre that she so much enjoyed are to be found not in the traces left on the novels by particular plays but in her sharp recognition that the habit of theatre-going and of play-watching provides her characters with one of the ways in which they understand and reflect upon their own experience.

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