

The BARS Review

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Reviews

John Bugg, *Five Long Winters: The Trials of British Romanticism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014. Pp. 264. \$60. ISBN 9780804785105.

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Writing to his younger brother in late May, 1794, Richard Wordsworth broke off from the usual subject of money to issue a specific warning: 'I hope you will be cautious in writing or expressing your political opinions. By the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Acts the Ministers have great powers'. Richard Wordsworth's concerns were well-founded. Habeas Corpus had been suspended earlier in the month and the Government had already swooped: Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwall were in the Tower, charged with high treason – still a quartering offence – for advocating reform and the extension of the franchise. In Britain, political dissent had never been more dangerous.

William Wordsworth, as is so often the case, did not respond personally to his brother's urging caution, but rather left that task to his sister, Dorothy:

I think I can answer for William's caution about expressing his political opinions. He is very cautious and seems well aware of the dangers of a contrary conduct. He intends staying at Keswick till he gets some employment which may make it necessary for him to go elsewhere.

In fact, Wordsworth was anything but cautious, and the 'employment' he was seeking was work as a radical journalist. On the same day Richard was writing to urge caution, Wordsworth, in a letter to a friend, was avowing his commitment to the cause, and explicitly condemning the Government's repressive response:

I solemnly affirm that in no writings of mine will I ever admit of any sentiment which can have the least tendency to induce my readers to suppose that the doctrines which are now enforced by banishment, imprisonment, &c, &c, are other than pregnant with every species of misery [...] I am of that odious class of men called democrats, and of that class I shall for ever continue.

But from this unabashed assertion of democratic politics, Wordsworth would, over the course of the decade, steadily retreat, along with a number of writers, actors, philosophers, and artists; their political energies either dissipated or redirected into their art – raised voices falling into uneasy silence.

Wordsworth's trajectory here is common to the period as a whole. Many of the writers we call Romantic trace a similar course, what E. P. Thompson called 'Jacobin affirmation and recoil', and, pejoratively, 'the Bishop of Llandaff's slide' – falling from spirited resistance to quietist despair, or, in some cases, outright apostasy. And this apparent reactionary turn in those

writers and writings called Romantic provoked a number of new historicist critics (namely Jerome McGann, Marjorie Levinson, and Alan Liu) to claim ‘Llandaff’s slide’ as constitutive of Romanticism as a whole, a silence masking a fundamental complicity. But did Wordsworth and others fall, or were they pushed? And, if they were pushed, how then should we read the literature of this peculiarly febrile period? How are we to read their silence?

The first two books considered here, Jonathan Bugg’s *Five Long Winters*, and Kenneth Johnston’s *Unusual Suspects*, address these questions directly. ‘At stake’, Bugg explains,

is a reinvestigation of a model of the period’s literary history that might be called the excitement-to-apostasy arc [...] In this narrative, those hardy souls who continued to support the cause went underground, while many familiar writers turned to aesthetic escapism or reactionary conservatism (1).

Bugg’s problem with this model is that it ‘presupposes a climate in which writers felt able to write (and find publishers for) anything they pleased’, and that ‘within this Habermasian dream [...] previously progressive writers suddenly chose to abandon their political ideals’ (1). Such a model simply does not take into account the vigorous efforts of the government to stifle domestic dissent, ‘an interlocking system’, says Johnston, ‘of spies, informers, packed juries, compliant magistrates, “hegemonic” vigilante forces which reform activists then and some historians today refer to as Pitt’s “Reign of Terror”’ (xvi). As Johnston reminds us, in furious italics, ‘*there were more trials for sedition and treason in the 1790s in Great Britain than ever before or after in its history*’ (xiv). To correct this oversight, Bugg and Johnston present a markedly different reading of Romantic silence, and, therefore, Romanticism itself. And they do so in distinct but oddly complimentary ways.

Johnston’s approach is to produce a series of short biographical chapters on a number of ‘unusual suspects’ caught up in William Pitt’s ‘Reign of Alarm’. That is, ‘the large number of persons who were *not* tried for treason or sedition’ but were nonetheless ‘penalised anyway for their liberal, reformist views’ (xv). These penalties ranged from being expelled from one’s position, like William Frend, stripped of his fellowship at Jesus College, Cambridge, or having one’s house and laboratory burnt down by a semi-sanctioned mob, like dissenting scientist Joseph Priestley, who promptly left for America. Stories like these, argues Johnston, ‘form the outline of a group biography of crisis, like a flock of birds, each one of which is beating along strenuously on its own flight path, but creating a larger pattern which seems to have a life of its own’ (xvii).

The chapter on Romantic women is a case in point. Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, Charlotte Smith, and almost every other woman in print with even the slightest democratic sympathy were drawn together, in 1798, for special ridicule and censure in the Revd. Richard Polwhele’s ‘pornographic Spenserian pastiche’ (113), *The Unsex’d Females*. Polwhele was one of a number of state-sanctioned critics and authors who saw attacking writing women as the chance to hit two birds with one stone, mobilising anxiety about radical politics and gender simultaneously. As Johnston notes, ‘women got it worse just for being women’ (113). This had, and still has, serious consequences for women writers of the period. That the later years of the 1790s showed a ‘marked contraction of what had been expanding opportunities for (liberal) writing women is another cost of the reign of Alarm’ (113). And this is a cost still being counted. Johnston’s chapter on Helen Maria Williams is particularly insightful in the way it reveals the continuing marginal status of Romantic women. We are still much more likely to reach for Wordsworth on the French Revolution than we are for Williams, even though Williams was on the ground in France for its entirety. The dead hand of reactionary criticism is here shown to be reaching into the present.

The great strength of Johnston's approach is its breadth and accessibility. To provide such a rich tableau of the 1790s and its writers and thinkers, both known and unknown, in only four hundred or so pages is a remarkable achievement. *Unusual Suspects* is a profoundly useful book for every student of the period, at whatever level of accomplishment; if it does not fundamentally change the way we view and teach the period, it should. And yet, finishing the book, my first thought was that I wanted to know more; to see Johnston's conclusions of the chilling effect of Pitt's ministry reflected in the works of the period, rather than just their circumstances of composition. Considering the breadth of *Unusual Suspects*, the depth of the book is remarkable, and yet, by necessity, Johnston cannot always delve as deeply into his authors' works as he might want to.

Fortunately, a formal and theoretical engagement with the poetics of silence is precisely the purpose of Jonathan Bugg's book. Following the work of critics like Susan Wolfson, Bugg works to beat back a New Historicist criticism that has tended to view form, and, indeed, poetry itself, as a kind of escape – a wriggling out of one's historical moment through the apparently false consciousness and consolations of nature and lyric. On the contrary, Bugg argues, 'the most important political change that British writing went through in the 1790s was in its form' (2). And this, according to Bugg, goes some way to explaining 'the presence in early Romantic writing of as much silence as there is speech, as much fragmentation as there is transcendence' (3). Pursuing such silence, fragmentation, and stuttering through the work of figures as known, unknown, famous, and infamous as Benjamin Flowers, John Augustus Bonney, John Thelwall, William Godwin, and, of course, Wordsworth, Bugg asserts that

the five long winters at the century's end are marked by an aesthetic of suppressed communication, one registered in both metaphoric and iterative modes, as writers invented various ways to depict politically enforced 'silence' (5).

With only silence to fall back on, authors like Wordsworth turned their attention to the formal and stylistic challenges of deploying silence effectively, an effort that was 'dramatically contingent, socially implicated, and deeply purposeful' (6).

What follows is a series of close and perceptive readings of works by Romantic authors, with a new attention to what is left out, closed down, or linguistically smudged. In this sense, Bugg's method is almost identical to the methods on show in, say, Alan Liu's *Wordsworth: The Sense of History*, but moments of apparent historical suppression, what Liu calls 'over-determined and precise absence[s]' are read not as culpable 'agonic denial', but rather presented as the poetic equivalent of the chalk outlines used by police to record the position of murder victims. They are windows rather than absences.

One of Bugg's most ambitious findings on this score identifies 'shades of the prison house' dappling the otherwise solar-powered Romantic lyric:

Following this movement from the Tower and Newgate to the poetic retreats of the West Country, I track the migration of the prison poem from the solitary cell to practices of what M. H. Abrams called the 'greater Romantic lyric' to show how the shape of the prison poem endures in the Romantic lyric, registering political history in poetic form (18).

Bugg is here on the trail of John Thelwall, 'acquitted felon' and public enemy number one of the 1790s, who never found the rural felicity advertised so seductively by his friend Coleridge. Bugg's reading of Coleridge's 'This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison' places Thelwall and other 'prison poets' centre stage, asking us: 'how might Coleridge's trope of the prison appear if we were to read it against the contemporary incarcerations of his friends and fellow writers?' (75).

Bugg answers this fascinating and far-reaching question uncertainly, in one the rare weak moments of the book, providing, it seems to me, an overly sympathetic and slightly tentative reading: ‘Coleridge suggests [...] that the solitary poet, crafting a greater Romantic lyric in post-Gagging Acts Britain, must never abandon his song’ (78). Admitting, in this instance, that Coleridge’s poem might be wincingly insensitive in no way blunts the force of the original question, or weakens Bugg’s overall thesis.

I register this moment of sympathy not as a complaint, but rather as an example of a dilemma that affects all readers of silence, Romantic or otherwise. Namely, that as silence often offers only the vaguest of clues for its rereading and reconstruction into speech, critical sympathy must always play a part in its construal. There are times in both Bugg’s and Johnston’s books where the authors seem anxious for their subjects to ‘win’; that is, to be cleared of charges of apostasy or quietism. This does not necessarily undermine their work – such sympathies are often a source of critical insight – but it does, from time to time, lead to pulled punches. William Godwin’s *Considerations on Lord Grenville’s and Mr Pitt’s Bills* (1795) is, Bugg admits, ‘normally taken to signal both Godwin’s break with reform politics and an epochal shift in British political discourse’ for its open criticism of Thelwall (42). Bugg stresses instead Godwin’s masterful switching of linguistic tactics:

If there is a change in Godwin’s writing at this point, I would suggest that it is less in political commitment than rhetorical strategy [...] in the close grain of *Considerations* we see Godwin forging a complex persona amidst the pressures of suppression and surveillance (42).

For Thelwall, desperate for unequivocal support, knowing he had been stabbed in the back with a ‘rhetorical strategy’ wielded by a ‘complex persona’ would have been cold comfort indeed. Even if Godwin’s intentions were benevolent (they usually were), the Government chalked *Considerations* up as a win. My point here is not to berate Bugg for an overly rosy account of a classic Godwinian own goal, but to show how too close an engagement with the intentions, or perceived intentions, of an author can blind us to the outcome, and its real historical consequences. Silence, if taken seriously as a rhetorical strategy, must also be allowed to misfire.

The real dilemma here is evidence. While Bugg and Johnston both provide convincing and informed readings of all their unusual suspects, they often use the same sources of information as their New Historicist adversaries – indeed, this is the very ground contested. Bugg is the first to acknowledge that the severity of Pitt’s crackdown is still only partially understood, and may be less or more severe than either side imagines: ‘Unless a box of wildly uncircumspect letters is pulled from the floorboards of 10 Downing Street, we cannot know for certain’ (12). Likewise, though Johnston can retell the ‘Spy-Nozy’ affair, when a Government spy was dispatched to shadow Wordsworth and Coleridge while they composed the *Lyrical Ballads*, he and we are still in the dark as to why Wordsworth’s name was ‘known’ to the Home Secretary. But the real achievement of both writers, Bugg and Johnston, is to reopen the question so thoroughly and so compellingly. With the field now open, new research must surely follow.

The shape of this novel research and evidence is presaged interestingly in Murray Pittock’s dauntingly erudite book on Jacobite counter-culture, *Material Culture and Sedition, 1688–1760*. This is a multidisciplinary work that pursues an even deeper silence: the material objects and secret places of Jacobite ritual and cultural commemoration. Like Bugg and Johnston, Pittock takes issue with what he sees as a falsely utopian view of the public sphere in the

eighteenth century, and asks why scepticism about Habermassian formulations seems to restrict itself to the early years of Romanticism:

Why has what is termed the public sphere been so often seen as open during a time of repressive legislation in the first half of the eighteenth century and the early Enlightenment but not in the 1790s? (xi).

Pittock attempts, over the course of the book, to banish this apparent complacency in the face of what was, essentially, an ongoing civil war, fought both openly and covertly, between Jacobites and Hanoverians.

While Johnston's book considers unusual suspects, Pittock's task seems even more difficult: he must consider unusual evidence. Jacobitism, driven further and further underground, developed increasingly complex and opaque rituals that were often unwritten and even non-verbal. The challenge this represents to the modern scholar of Jacobitism is immense, and requires new and often difficult theoretical methods, as well as a keen eye for possible evidence. As Pittock puts it, '[c]an we model cultural memory and celebration in the same way in circumstances where it was illegal to communicate shared frameworks of memory?' The answer, according to this book, is no, and the alternative is a new attention and approach to physical sources. Pittock argues persuasively that an overvaluing of written sources often means that the physical object or artefact is interpreted by the words on it or about it, and this requires every reader of the past to ask how far "we overestimate language and documents as historical sources when utterance or publication were so dangerous?" (xi).

This question is particularly urgent when dealing with Jacobite artefacts. As Pittock explains, '[i]f Jacobite material culture is an object which sometimes wears a carapace of language, that language is a protective code or quotation, not a manifestation of transparency' (16). What follows is a fascinating collection of material evidence, from trick goblets to plantations of certain kinds of trees; from the architectural layout of manor houses to reconstructed accounts of rituals, codes, and cant words. Pittock has a brilliant eye for detail, as is necessary when dealing with a subject that can reveal itself even in the way one drinks a glass of wine. The challenge is to reveal that which,

in its own speechlessness makes its most profound articulations, and which in its oblique reference to more public political sympathies occults itself in privacy and silence, as did the Manchester Jacobite Beppy Byrom's tartan garters with their explicitly Jacobite legend, hidden to all but intimacy or assault (16).

As far as evidence goes, this is about as intimate and obscure as it gets.

The only real drawback of this approach, and the book itself, is the need for images to make one's point, and carry the reader along with one's argument. Despite being fairly image rich, the book relies heavily on the reader's visual imagination, particularly in those sections dealing with Jacobite architecture. Pittock apologises for not including more images, and helpfully provides a number of sources to consult, as well as an excellent index of terms, but this is still a book to be read with an internet browser open nearby. But considering the feats of research on show in *Material Culture and Sedition, 1688–1760*, this seems a small price to pay for admission to such a rich and varied trove of evidence.

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David Simpson, *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013. Pp. 271. £22.50. ISBN 9780226922355.

Jane Stabler, *The Artistry of Exile: Romantic and Victorian Writers in Italy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 272. £50. ISBN 9780199590247.

The era that Romanticism opened up is *still* with us. This is owed in part to many of the period's writings that responded to the volatility and vagaries of an emerging modern culture. For the first time in literary history, alienation and fragmentation became common sentiments of reaction to the unstable years of pervasive warfare, expanding imperial boundaries, and a burgeoning global market. In their readings of Friedrich Schlegel, Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre have identified this 'modern' onslaught as the exile of the human soul from its hearth and home. Mary Favret has also described the era's involvement with 'modern wartime' as a 'dislocated experience': a 'time and times unmoored, of feeling intensified but also adrift' (9). To be sure, this widespread 'dislocating' mood took on many forms, one of which involved the period's obsession with representations of alterity and marginalization. Strangers, foreigners, exiles, hermits, vagrants, and several other figures positioned on the fringes of the dominant culture seized the literary imagination. Yet, at the same time, writers themselves expressed solidarity with the predominant disenfranchising spirit, describing personal feelings of desolation within a world, as John Keats describes in 'La Belle Dame sans Merci,' that is cold, barren, and lonely.

Despite their focus on common period themes, the two present monographs return to these Romantic issues once again, providing compelling evidence that these discourses still require significantly more attention. While Simpson's text concentrates on the stranger and strangeness in Romantic literature, Stabler's analyzes a specific mode of exile in Italy that affected the 'artistry' of two generations of nineteenth-century British writers.

Simpson situates his book among efforts by Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva and Tzvetan Todorov to 'give historical, philosophical, and sometimes polemical contexts to questions about the alien, the stranger, and the foreigner,' describing how critics have typically regarded these matters as 'modernist' concerns (3). Instead, he argues that this discourse is 'significantly romantic' because the era partook of what he calls the 'stranger syndrome' (5): a prevalent and 'coherent pattern of address to the antinomic figure of the stranger and to the reciprocally ambivalent representation of guest-host and friend-enemy relations' (14). For these reasons, Simpson believes that reckoning with the 'question of the stranger' constitutes a 'very long Romanticism' that does not in any way provide a 'pure fountain on the right thinking on the treatment of strangers' necessarily (16, 247). While Simpson in his first chapter dates this 'long Romanticism' to the 'long history of the stranger apparent in the Bible and the classics,' he finds contemporary resonances in our post 9/11 world where anxiety of 'terror' and alterity has once again risen to the fore (10). He connects this broad cultural angst with otherness to the war on and reign of 'Terror' waged during the French Revolution.

This introduction sets the stage for his wide-ranging analyses of the 'stranger syndrome' in such instances as the 'fluttering stranger' from Coleridge's 'Frost at Midnight' (1798) and the 'itinerant Malay' from Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* that he probes in Chapter 2. As Simpson tracks the 'strange' complexities of other people throughout these texts, he also investigates the 'strangeness' of imperial commodities like 'tea, muslin, opium, and sugar' (10). In the subsequent chapter, Simpson considers Walter Scott's 'open-mindedness' to religious strangers in *Ivanhoe* (1820) and *The Talisman* (1825) as a function of 'Scott's refusal to represent a national project of converting strangers into familiars' (13). For Simpson, Scott's 'crusader' novels oppose otherwise 'impermeable boundaries' and

‘exclusionary policies’ in the British homeland (13). Simpson then turns to less conventional representations of ‘strangeness’ by focusing on Romantic paratexts (endnotes, footnotes, and marginalia) and translations in the next two chapters. In both cases, he analyzes language as a repository for ‘forms of knowledge and figures from afar’ as strange signals whose ‘capacity for arousing desire or detestation cannot be known in advance’ (143). In the final two chapters, Simpson explores two of Romanticism’s most prominent Others: women and slaves. While reflecting on the slave trade as a ‘betrayal of hospitality,’ he interrogates the ‘dynamic of desire and abjection’ in the ‘portrayal of strange women’ (14). All in all, these varied enigmatic figures and phenomena offer an array of exempla that present the intensity of Romantic ‘strangeness’ across various social and literary domains. His diverse analysis is no doubt one of the book’s greatest achievements.

Stabler’s book turns the theme of strangeness back onto the writer, as it examines British authors who, in feeling ‘forced to leave England and [choosing] to live in Italy’ (vii), consider ‘the intellectual gains of exile as opposed to its emotional damage,’ while remaining simultaneously ‘unsettled’ and ‘in flux’ (5). In repudiating ‘English society as much as [receiving] an ostracizing pressure from without’ (5), the Romantic and Victorian writers of her analysis, Stabler argues, form a specific exilic identity that comprises ‘part of the texture of their writing’ (9). As she states, ‘classical and biblical expressions of desolation feed an artistry in the Romantic period that is fascinated by depictions of abandonment, persecution, rupture, and loss ... the metaphorical ruins of paradise’ (4). In her take of this common Romantic trope, Stabler sets out to connect the ‘metaphorical and the literal,’ contending ‘exile accentuates the linguistic peculiarities of [these writers] ... geographic estrangement from the country of birth [to foster] a new style and [alert] readers to a disconcerting blend of hybrid elements’ (10). Since ‘exile has always been a dialogical condition, fostering connection on the difference between here and there, then and now, presence and absence,’ these authors possess a ‘double vision’ that is embedded specifically throughout their diverse writings (ix).

As a wonderful formal complement to its content, the book’s sequence of chapters (along with mystifying titles) seems to have little to no organizing logic – an arrangement that indeed suggests the disorderly and defamiliarizing nature of exilic life and artistry. Chapter 1 grounds the book’s argument in historical cases of banishment before focusing on the metaphorical condition of exile throughout time. It introduces the major players of Stabler’s analysis – Byron, the Shelleys, and the Brownings – as she considers the ‘isolated, interior experience of banishment’ and the ‘unfamiliar texture of the new locale’ (x). The following chapter investigates what Stabler calls the ‘twinning of literary and historical figures to shape voluntary and involuntary kinships within exile,’ while Chapter 3 delves into the links between Catholic worship in Italy with sympathetic and creative art. The fourth chapter looks at Boccaccio’s influence on these writers, reflecting on the role of narrative, cosmopolitanism, and sexuality in the work of the Pisan circle. Grounded in the writings of Plutarch, Chapter 5 also examines the influence of former writers as well as the role that history plays in the writing of and in exile. The subsequent chapter proposes how an exilic framework relates to ‘paranoia about the judgments of a distant readership’ as well as ‘concerns about retributive justice ... informed by direct experience of protracted legal wrangles’ (194). Finally, the last chapter explores ‘the book’s intermittent discussion of a distinctive poetics of exile in a conversation between English poets (living and dead) and the unfamiliar, but gradually internalized music of their Italian surroundings’ (xi).

Throughout the study, Stabler offers some refreshing qualifiers about the ‘exile’ of these writers. In an attempt to demystify it as a complex ‘category,’ she helpfully states that ‘a systematic desynonymization of the categories of the exile, refugee, and émigré is impossible to sustain except in the most general terms, as their imaginative conditions overlap and run into each other’ (4-5). She then proceeds to acknowledge that, for these authors, the ‘condition of

being in exile often intersects with the business of being on tour, and it is not always possible to separate the pleasures and pains of the two situations' (5). However, Stabler astutely asserts that, while writers like Byron and Shelley were privileged, such a status 'does not mean that their writing cannot speak to people who are less fortunate or less articulate' (16). Setting out to expand common analyses beyond the 'handful of men [writing] about exclusively imaginary, volitional loneliness' (241), Stabler succeeds at presenting the nuances of nineteenth-century exile in Italy and how the experience greatly affected these writers' multiple aesthetic endeavors.

As both books consider alterity from two distinct vantage points, they also overlap in remarkable ways. They each describe how these positions of strangeness and exile continue to speak to us today. Simpson provocatively suggests that 'the challenge of the other comes from many places and in many forms ... this is a romanticism that we still inhabit' (15). By the end of his book, he reiterates the point: 'As a "question", the stranger figures in to modes of cultural and linguistic difference in an ongoing cycle since there is 'no way to foreclose or prefigure the nature and challenge of the stranger who is always yet to come' (247). As he claims, we must continue to wrap our heads around the 'inexhaustible dialectic of desire and abjection that we have still not come to understand' (247). At the same time, Stabler notes that 'nineteenth-century efforts to deal with a crisis of identity and purpose in an unfamiliar place shape an artistry as urgent, troubling, and inspiring today as the voices of contemporary dissidents in exile' (16). Both texts underscore a long and complex Romantic era through experiences of estrangement that are found all around: indeed as much within as without.

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Peter J. Kitson, *Forging Romantic China: Sino-British Cultural Exchange 1760-1840*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 312. £60. ISBN 9781107045613.

David Vallins, Kaz Oishi and Seamus Perry, eds., *Coleridge, Romanticism and the Orient: Cultural Negotiations*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013. Pp. 227. £60. ISBN 9781441149879.

Two new books show us the latest developments in the study of 'Romantic Orientalism': Peter Kitson's *Forging Romantic China: Sino-British Cultural Exchange 1760-1840* and David Vallins, Kaz Oishi and Seamus Perry's edited collection *Coleridge, Romanticism and the Orient: Cultural Negotiations*. Kitson analyses the Chinese connection in Romantic period culture with an emphasis on the actors on the ground, such as the 'Serampore School' of Joshua Marshman, the 'Malacca school' of Robert Morrison and the 'Canton school' of George Thomas Staunton, William Milne and John Francis Davis. He examines the expedition of Lord George Macartney to the Qing Emperor Qianlong in 1792-4 and the proliferation of chinoiserie in landscape gardening, ceramics and, perhaps most unexpectedly, British popular theatre. *Coleridge, Romanticism and the Orient* began as a series of papers from a conference held at Kobe, Japan, in 2011. The book is divided into three parts, Coleridge, Romanticism and Oriental Cultures; Coleridge, Philosophy and the Orient; and 'Kubla Khan' and Romantic Orientalism, with some overlap between them. In his introduction, Vallins identifies the differentiation between historicist and 'literary and philosophical' (6) approaches to Coleridge taken by the contributors, the ramifications of which will be discussed below.

Kitson's challenge is that, by his own admission, China appears so infrequently in Romantic writing despite an evident enthusiasm for the cultures of other Eastern countries, notably India and Arabia. Yet the Macartney expedition and the outbreak of the First Opium War in 1839, which concluded with the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, were historical watersheds and, moreover, Britain derived a growing proportion of its trade from China (although Kitson reminds us that in 1820 China's gross domestic product was 20% of the world total). Global trade patterns provide Kitson's theoretical model for understanding how Chinese texts were circulated and re-circulated, showing how initial appreciation could often curl back as prejudice or indifference. For example, the inadequacy of Thomas Percy's 1761 translation of the Chinese story *Haoqiu zhuan* as *Hau Kiou Choann; or, the Pleasing History* (possibly the first published direct translation of a Chinese text into English) prompted the Canton-based Davis to create a more accurate translation in situ, published as *The Fortunate Union* in 1829. Marshman's plodding 1809 translation of Confucius, denounced by John Barrow in the *Quarterly Review* (1814) as a 'dull passive morality' (70), encouraged those such as Charles Lamb who considered the 'azure-tinctured grotesques' (171) on his porcelain teacups as proof of Chinese cultural stasis.

The roots of this indifference, Kitson suggests, lay in the primal scene of Macartney's humiliation by the Emperor, who demanded that the British delegation kow-tow to him (the evidence suggests they eventually reached a compromise) and dismissed the scientific instruments presented to him as idle playthings. Incidentally, I do not agree with Kitson that in the Gillray print of the expedition the Emperor is holding out his hand for a bribe; with his hand on his hip and smoke puffing from his mouth, he is surely intended to resemble a malevolent Chinese teapot. The national trauma this engendered led to a series of evasions and suppressions such as Robert Southey's apparent refusal to complete a Chinese epic, despite reading widely on the subject, which Kitson describes as 'an evasion that is symptomatic of Romantic writing' (166). Hence also Lamb's inability to engage with the reality of China 'is a simple anxiety about how to deal with a subject whose presence is everywhere' (181). Wordsworth's grief for his brother John, who drowned en route to Bengal and China in the shipwreck of the *Earl of Abergavenny* in 1805, resurfaced in the Chinese antiparadise of Book 8 of *The Prelude*, with its 'Palaces and Domes / Of Pleasure spangled over, shady Dells / For Eastern Monasteries, sunny Mounds / With Temples Crested, Bridges, Gondolas, Rocks, Dens, and Groves of foliage taught to melt / Into each other their obsequious hues'. Wordsworth had been reading Barrow's *Travels in China* (1804) and this had seemingly stimulated his memory.

What Kitson dubs 'Romantic Sinology' (2) is full of might-have-beens, missed opportunities and roads not taken. The overwhelming mood of the book is subjunctive. Perhaps the most interesting imaginative response to Macartney's offended dignity was the Romantic trope of refusal to bow down before tyrannical authority, which Kitson sees at work in the scene in Arimanes' court in Byron's *Manfred*, in Don Juan's refusal to kiss the Sultana's foot and Fanny Price's growing determination in *Mansfield Park* not to submit to arbitrary treatment. The book uncovers a great deal of new material and is bound to become a standard reference point for the increasing amount of literary scholarship on China. It is a pity that the Cambridge editors did not pick up on some moments of repetition; for example, the translation of Chinese names for palaces and the details of Wordsworth's trauma at the death of his brother (which leads to a duplicated reference in the endnotes).

Coleridge, Romanticism and the Orient opens with Kitson's chapter on the Macartney embassy and George Colman the younger's popular play *The Laws of Java* (1822). The first section of the collection is much given to source-hunting in the spirit of John Livingston Lowes' *The Road to Xanadu* (1927) and expends a good deal of energy trying to locate the 'real' Kubla Khan (as the paradigmatic Romantic Orientalist poem, it naturally features prominently here). The various contenders for this honour include the Tartary of Sir William

Jones (Kitson), the British India of William Hodges (Deirdre Coleman) and the Chinese landscape gardens of Staunton and William Chambers (Kuri Katsuyama). The most intriguing use of source material comes in Dometa Wiegand Brothers' chapter, which traces the influence of Euclidian geometry and Newtonian calculus on the poem's modulation from static, geometric forms ('so twice five miles of fertile ground / With walls and towers were girdled round') to dynamic, fluid ones ('and mid these dancing rocks at once and ever / It flung up momentarily the sacred river. Five miles meandering with a mazy motion / Through wood and dale the sacred river ran'). The thorny question of 'Kubla Khan's' composition date is also much discussed with reference to which Eastern texts Coleridge was reading at which time.

A second group of chapters looks at the reception of Coleridge in nineteenth and twentieth-century Japan (Oishi), Empson's 'Buddhist' reading of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* based on his spell in Tokyo between 1931-4 (Perry) and the resemblances between Coleridge, Schopenhauer and Esoteric Buddhism (Setsuko Wake-Naota). Most intellectually stimulating are those contributors (Tim Fulford, Seamus Perry, Andrew Warren, Vallins, Heidi Thomson and Brothers) who argue that, for Coleridge, the East acted as a free-floating imaginative laboratory in which abstract ideas could be explored precisely because the setting was not locospecific. Fulford's excellent chapter, which offers parallel scenarios for the composition of 'Kubla Khan' and Southey's Arabian epic *Thalaba*, rightly describes Coleridge's Orient as 'a zone of dream, spells, magic and enchantment, where strange relationships of mind and world could be played out' (59). Warren's chapter explains Coleridge's proto-Hegelian take on Eastern philosophy as a system that was incapable of achieving a separation between nature and human will and thus of seeking a reconciliation between them, a key aspiration of Coleridge's aesthetic and moral philosophy. Harries' valuable chapter sees a shift in Coleridge's thinking about the East over his lifetime as he became progressively more hostile towards the meditative disposition which he had earlier regarded as conducive to 'splendid speculation' but which he eventually dismissed as 'a garish mist'. Thomson's chapter on the 1816 preface offers a complex reading of 'Kubla Khan' grounded in Coleridge's circular myth of the 'the snake with it's Tail in it's Mouth' [*sic*].

But, as Vallins warns in his introduction, examining Coleridge's work as an Orientalist (in the sense of a scholar of Eastern culture) risks reigniting the charge of him as an Orientalist in Edward Said's sense. It poses a dilemma: do scholars interpret Coleridge on his own terms (the work of a lifetime) as if postcolonialism never really happened, or risk getting so bogged down in the immediate context that they cannot see the wood of Coleridge's thought for the historical and geopolitical trees? The answer must lie in an analytical fusion of the two approaches and the best chapters here lead in that direction.

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**Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies*.
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013. Pp. 206. £19.99. ISBN
9780748641987.**

Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies, along with six other works, was published by Edinburgh University Press in 2013 as part of its Postcolonial Literary Studies series edited by David Johnson and Ania Loomba. Bohls' work is a significant publication that offers a general overview of the literature which reflects and deals with issues related to the development of the British Empire during the Romantic period.

Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies demonstrates the close relationship between British Romantic literature and the growth of empire as the author makes it clear that the influence of the empire upon the development of Romantic literature was no less significant than the impact of the French Revolution, a theme well researched since the 1950s. '[A]lthough the late 1980s and early 1990s produced much important historicist work', as Bohls argues, 'not until the very end of the twentieth century did a critical mass of scholars of Romantic literature come to see colonialism and empire as crucial parts of that matrix' (1). In other words, the empire and its relations with other worlds were clearly among the major themes of British Romantic literature – a fact that we cannot now ignore.

Bohls is an expert on travel writing who co-edited Oxford University Press' *Travel Writing 1700-1830: An Anthology* (2005) with Ian Duncan. Her five chapters thus deal with a wide range of literary genres, including novels, poems and, in particular, travel narratives. She begins Chapter 1 ('Romantic Geographies') of this book by applying her specific expertise to research the literature of the Romantic period in the context of the empire. This methodology works effectively since travellers, including both British travellers and those who came as visitors to the UK, were key witnesses to encounters between the metropole and colonies, the empire and the rest of the world in a series of contact zones. Their travel writings, both fictional and non-fictional, represent and reflect the situation of such encounters: to use Bohls' words, this 'individual experience' has 'corporate significance' (20).

In Chapter 2 ('Slavery and the Romantic Imagination'), Bohls elucidates that while Romantic Britain economically profited from slavery, the country was also greatly troubled by what was increasingly seen as exploitation. The writers selected for study in this chapter come from diverse racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds; and the texts the author has chosen to analyze include some of the best known Romantic poems, novels and narratives, including William Blake's 'The Little Black Boy' (1789), William Earle's *Obi, or, The History of Three-Fingered Jack* (1800) and Robert Wedderburn's *The Horrors of Slavery* (1824).

In Chapter 3 ('Scottish Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies'), Bohls focuses her attention on the so-called 'internal colonial' relations between England and Scotland. This issue was first discussed in Michael Hechter's seminal work, *Internal Colonialism* (1975). The discussion was importantly continued in Silke Stroh's *Uneasy Subjects: Postcolonialism and Scottish Gaelic Poetry* (2011) and Coinneach Maclean's doctoral thesis "The 'Tourist Gaze' on Gaelic Scotland" (University of Glasgow, 2014), but the subject has yet to be widely discussed in academia. In this chapter, Bohls introduces the issue to her readers by offering convincing analyses of major Romantic writing by James Macpherson, Robert Burns, Walter Scott, James Hogg and Thomas Pringle. Although inevitably introductory in its nature, the author's inclusion of Scottish Romantic literature within the postcolonial debate greatly enriches our understanding of Scotland's status during the development of the empire.

Chapter 4 ('Romantic Orientalism') is primarily about the relationship between the East and the West as illustrated in British Romantic literature. For Romantic Britain, the Orient was not only a rich colonial site but also an indispensable stimulation to its artistic endeavours. Robert Southey's *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), Sydney Owenson's *The Missionary* (1811) and several poems by Shelley and Byron are examined by Bohls in order to demonstrate the significant contribution of this oriental element to the creation of British Romantic literature. During this era, British attitudes towards the East became less sanguine, but, as Bohls rightly points out, the above-mentioned works often 'call Western cultural superiority into question' (141). They interrogate, rather than simply endorse the deeds of the empire.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is the main focus of the Coda, 'Romantic Readers and Writers, Selves and Others'. Here, Bohls conducts a postcolonial reading of *Frankenstein*, and demonstrates the way in which *Frankenstein* reflects the condition of slavery and other racial issues prevalent during the novelist's lifetime.

Bohls' *Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies* offers highly useful material for students embarking on the study of both Romantic and postcolonial literatures. This work, I firmly believe, is also an indispensable part of the library of scholars with a serious intent on understanding the complexities of the empire from which much Romantic literature sprang.

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Daniel E. White, *From Little London to Little Bengal: Religion, Print and Modernity in Early British India, 1793-1835*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. Pp. 261. £32. ISBN 9781421411644.

Britain's increasing imperial dominance over India during the Romantic period witnessed parallel developments in metropolitan cultures both east and west. In India, this was most obviously located in the imperial city of Calcutta, with its impressive Georgian architecture, press, and entertainments, 'a little London in Bengal', as James Atkinson described it in his poem, 'The City of Palaces'; while in Britain, areas of London (Marlebone and Mayfair in particular) which attracted retired Anglo-Indians of the East India Company came to be known as 'little Bengal', on account of the exotic, oriental culture imported into Britain by the tawny, hookah-smoking inhabitants of these areas. These globally-connected metropolitan developments in Britain and India, generating an extensive network of printed texts and visual imagery, people and objects that circulated within the empire, are the subject of Daniel S. White's fascinating and intricately argued new study, *From Little London to Little Bengal: Religion, Print and Modernity in Early British India, 1793-1835*.

While earlier studies have tended to view such relations through the lens of a binary perspective involving a centrally configured imperial metropolis and its exoticized and distant other, White's work, drawing on the 'new imperial history' and on a range of spatial, affective, and postcolonialist theories, insists on the 'stubborn fact that Britons and Indians inhabited the same globe, a material and imagined terrain where unequal relations of power and representation were contested through alliances and conflicts, communication and mistranslation, sympathies and failures of feeling and understanding' (2). The resultant study of cultural connections between 'little London' and 'little Bengal' indicates that both sides were engaged in a far more intricate exchange of texts, religious ideas, and material artefacts than has generally been acknowledged, drawing them into an affiliation that went well beyond the earlier paradigms of imitation, mimicry, or straightforward resistance that characterised such relations.

Chapter 1, 'Little London', discusses the fashioning of public opinion in the Calcutta press, and concomitantly examines two kinds of urban spectacle: the panoramas of British scenes (imported from England, but serving a different function in colonial Calcutta), and the newly evolving festivities of the annual Durga Puja to which East India Company officials were often invited by the Bengali elites (*bhadralok*) of Calcutta, and which some of them criticised as idolatrous. As White argues, these developments bespeak the transformation of public and private spaces in Calcutta, producing sympathetic or antipathetic responses in the press, forging new relationships of power between Britons and Indians, and negotiating the faultlines between the spiritual and the secular realms that would characterise the modern colonial state.

While early East India Company policy in British India had been largely tolerant and non-interfering with regard to native religious beliefs and practices, the growth of

evangelicalism opened up a rift in early nineteenth-century British public opinion with regard to the intervention of missionaries. White's second chapter correspondingly examines Robert Southey's epic, *The Curse of Kehama*, based on a wealth of Indological materials, in the light of such debates. Focusing his reading on the heroine Kailyal's devotion to the idol of her goddess, Marriataly, White argues that what Thomas De Quincey described as Southey's 'intensely *objective*' aesthetic explains his evidently sympathetic portrayal of Hindu idolatry, though his ultimate aim was to replace such beliefs with the 'Light' of Christianity. Chapter 3 looks at Indian engagements with Christianity and Romantic religious poetry through the polemical and compelling works of the Hindu Unitarian Rammohun Roy who achieved celebrity status visiting England in the early 1830s, and the neglected writings of the talented Eurasian poet Henry Derozio of Calcutta who died young in 1831. The fourth and final chapter before the epilogue returns to the 'little Bengal' of London where returned Anglo-Indians affiliated to the Royal Asiatic Society and the Oriental Club recreated in microcosm their oriental habits and habitat, and retained their connections with the empire. It was here that Rammohun Roy first settled on arrival in England, and White excavates in considerable detail his lionisation in London and absorption into the dissenting Unitarian culture of the period, thus bringing the work full circle from its beginnings in 'Little London' to its apotheosis in Rammohun Roy's visit to 'little Bengal'.

White's sophisticated and engaging work profits from a wealth of recent scholarship and theory. Drawing on Partha Chatterjee's influential view that 'modernity was not a modular import from the West to the East' (19), White follows in the path of a growing number of new imperial historians and postcolonial critics who have been gradually transforming our view of colonial relations between Britain and India. Informed by original archival scholarship as well as by recent textual editions of writers such as Robert Southey and Henry Derozio, White reads the material, visual, and print cultures of the Romantic period in fluid juxtaposition, producing a complex view of global cosmopolitanism imbued with imperialist and protonationalist imaginings.

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Cynthia Scholar Williams, *Hospitality and the Transatlantic Imagination, 1815-1835*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Pp. 235. \$90. ISBN 9781137340047.

Imperialism, cosmopolitanism, transatlanticism, globalization: each of these historico-theoretical themes has received a good deal of scholarly attention from Romanticists in recent decades, with the latter three arguably gaining ground on the first (and still most widely deployed) term. Now, Cynthia Scholar Williams makes a strong case for adding 'hospitality' to this list. *Hospitality and the Transatlantic Imagination, 1815-1835* is not the first scholarly study to focus on hospitality in the Romantic era, but by gathering what may seem at first glance to be an unusual variety of topics and authors, Williams makes an original contribution to this growing sub-field.

In her formidable introduction, the author makes clear that she intends to deploy both historical and theoretical concepts of hospitality – a move that pays dividends throughout the book even as it makes her opening chapter unusually dense and extended. Williams' reasoning, however, is convincing: 'Hospitable encounters connect the ancient with the modern, the mythic with the historical, because they address a problem every culture and every household

has had to solve, namely, what to do when interrupted by a knock at the door' (2). Accordingly, she pays about equal attention to theoretical conceptualizations of hospitality – most notably, Derrida's late-career investigations of hospitality as 'threshold encounters' – and to how the specific historico-political contexts of the Napoleonic Wars and their aftermath informed representations of hospitable encounters. If hospitality is a specifically English virtue, as many authors claimed at the time, then what happens when it travels overseas – especially if, as William Cobbett bitterly proclaimed, the Americans were now more hospitable than the English?

Given the centrality of the knock on the door to her original invocation of hospitality, it might seem surprising that Coleridge's 'person on business from Porlock' (from his introduction to 'Kubla Khan') makes no appearance in Williams' study. Instead, her paradigmatic example of Romantic-era scenes of hospitality is Walter Scott's invocations of various threshold encounters in *Waverley*. This move has the clear advantage of establishing a direct line of influence to two of the fiction writers she focuses on in later chapters, James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving, even if the implied homology between Scott's multi-layered representations of Highland-Lowland-English relations and the transatlantic, Anglo-American ones of Cooper and Irving is somewhat less than perfect.

After her introduction, Williams embarks on an ambitious chapter on Mary Shelley's fiction. She begins, as we might expect, with a reading of the Creature's encounter with the De Lacey family in *Frankenstein*, but the bulk of the chapter is devoted to a close reading of hospitality in one of Shelley's lesser-known novels, *Lodore*, which Williams smartly connects to Shelley's best-known work via the theme of 'alienated intimacy' (74). With its large cast of characters and transatlantic plot, *Lodore* provides the perfect ground for exploring what Williams calls 'trenchant questions about the possibilities of belonging, about how the threshold might be constructed, about how to enter into welcome and what barriers prevent it' (73).

The fictions by Fenimore Cooper and Irving that occupy the book's middle chapters are treated to equally sensitive, probing readings. Again, William's main choice of Cooper novel, *The Pilot*, is unconventional, but again she makes it worth our time, not only by providing enough plot details for those unfamiliar with *The Pilot* to follow her reading, but also by drawing out fruitful comparisons between this watery novel and some of its even less well-known successors in Cooper's oeuvre. Williams also pushes Cooper's novel to reveal how it both invokes and subverts the subgenre of 'the sea novel' recently delineated by Margaret Cohen (in her *The Novel and the Sea*) among others. Irving's lighter fictions, meanwhile, prove just as substantial in Williams' subtle interpretations of their various representations of hospitality, now expanded to include the 'liberality of opinion' that Irving hoped would become part of America's modern national character (143).

The book concludes with an excellent chapter on Felicia Hemans, whose reputation during her life as a 'domestic poetess' is belied by Williams' fine readings of her poetic corpus as unexpectedly ambivalent on national matters. Noting that Hemans rarely writes about English subjects and that even her best-known 'domestic' poems, like 'The Homes of England', tend to focus on absence and loss, Williams develops a very productive working comparison of Hemans' poetry to a geo-aesthetic centrifuge: 'English subjects remain almost entirely absent . . . foreign subjects are introduced only to be flung back out to the farthest Anglophone reaches, and no native English qualities are identified beyond an abstracted freedom' (152). In a brief coda, the author notes that 'rather ironically, the texts I have been focusing on are not, for the most part, "hospitable"' (175), but by this point the astute reader will have already understood this, as well as that her scare quotes are now unnecessary. Hospitality may have been as problematic and finally impossible for the Romantics to realize as it continues to be for us today; better, then, to end with Williams' underdeveloped but suggestive late insight that

realizing ‘an ethics of vulnerability’ (176) is probably the more pressing Romantic legacy for us to assume.

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David Sergeant and Fiona Stafford, eds., *Burns and Other Poets*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012. Pp. 230. £70. ISBN 9780748643578.

As the title clearly expresses, *Burns and Other Poets* situates itself in the context of Robert Burns scholarship, which in recent years has received a considerable boost in terms of both quantity and quality. This scholarship is cross-referenced throughout by the authors of this collection of essays, thus creating a highly informative framework for the reader, as well as providing a clear sense of the vibrancy and flourishing of the topic. The book in question offers the reader a detailed analysis of Robert Burns as a man and poet in connection with the cultural, social, and literary climate, both of his time and today. The conjunction of the title encompasses complex notions of ‘in his interaction with’, ‘inspired by’, ‘as perceived by’, ‘as an inspiration for’, ‘in the literary framework of’ and the ‘other poets’, particularly Scottish, English, and Irish.

The selection of essays gives a wide spectrum of different perspectives on Burns and his poetry: from the general to the particular; from the better-known names and works to the ones less targeted by academic examination. Mina Gorji gives a critical appraisal of Milton’s and Gray’s inspirations throughout ‘To a Mountain-Daisy’: she takes up McGuirk’s idea that the poem has ‘failed to charm modern critics and readers’ (69) in spite of being a much-appreciated poem when it first appeared, embedded in an articulate framework of contemporaneous authors. Single-poem analyses can be found also in Freya Johnston’s chapter which focuses on the poem ‘To a Mouse’ – both from the point of view of the influences we can find in it of poets such as Alexander Pope and John Ray, and from that of the significance of individual words within the text (such as the function of the term ‘plantations’). David Sergeant’s introductory contribution also focuses on ‘To a Mouse’ – it is a poem which admittedly appears in many – if not most – chapters, to illustrate different concepts, and it serves the purpose in Sergeant’s chapter to explore the performative side of poetry.

Individual words and concepts are closely examined and show different narratives, as is the case for Claire Lamont’s analysis of the notions (and presence in Burns’s texts) of ‘house’ and ‘home’, and Douglas Dunn’s considerations about Burns and loyalty towards nation and class. The specificity of nuance, and detail of meaning of Burns’s word-choice for his poems is explained by Murray Pittock. By examining individual words in ‘To a Louse’ and ‘Halloween’, Pittock focuses on the parallels and discrepancies between Burns’s and Wordsworth’s attitude towards language. Wordsworth and Burns are further analysed in Stephen Gill’s chapter, where he outlines the presence and influence of the Bard throughout Wordsworth’s life and poetry.

Burns’s Scottish literary predecessors, particularly Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson, are explored in great detail by Rhona Brown, in the light of their influence on and parallels with Burns, but also of his ‘geographical’ uniqueness (31). But part of Burns’s uniqueness also lies in how he fashioned his persona and his literary context: Gerard Carruthers explains how it may be argued that ‘it is his fictional projection, to some extent, that creates a later reality’ (39). Burns’s appeal as the ‘heaven-taught ploughman’, as Meiko O’Halloran points out, was carefully analysed and reproduced by Hogg to fashion his ‘Shepherd’ poetic guise. In the light of the similarities between the ‘unethical’ (168) characters of Burns and

Byron, Brean Hammond invites the readers to view the latter as ‘Scottish’, and to consider the consequences of reading both characters ‘ethically’.

But Burns’s impact also extended to Ireland. Patrick Crotty draws unexpected parallels between ‘Tam o’ Shanter’ and the Irish Gaelic poem *Cúirt an Mheán Oíche*, and Michael Griffin notes the similarities and links between the figures of Burns and Thomas Dermody. Bernard O’Donoghue brings us into the twentieth century, as he explains how it came to be that Burns became so popular in Ireland as to be considered a National Bard. Fiona Stafford analyses Seamus Heaney’s relation to Burns through his essays, and their interpretations, and Robert Crawford’s invitation to modern Burns Clubs to consider a ‘re-engagement between contemporary poetry and Burns Suppers’ (193) gives us an insight into the complex world of Hugh MacDiarmid and his position towards Burns and Burnsians.

The sheer variety and depth of the topics treated shows how much work there is still to be undertaken about Robert Burns, and how studies about him are very much relevant to the twenty-first-century scholar. The range of essays in *Burns and Other Poets* show how the unexhausted topic of the Bard’s literary persona provides ever fresh scope for consideration and new interpretations.

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Evan Gottlieb, *Walter Scott and Contemporary Theory*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013. Pp. 187. £21.99. ISBN 9781441120229.

Walter Scott and Contemporary Theory is the latest contribution to a growing and impressive body of monographs that, over the last two decades, have shaped our appreciation of the critical versatility of Walter Scott’s oeuvre. It is, moreover, the first book-length study to do so by examining Scott’s fiction in juxtaposition to multiple schools of contemporary continental and Anglo-American philosophical thought. In each of the five chapters, Gottlieb examines two Scott novels in light of at least one major contemporary theoretical concept, illuminating and interrogating both in the process. Key recurring themes in Scott’s fiction are convincingly (re)articulated in the idiom of contemporary theory (as modern subjectivity, hybridity, performativity, historicity, governmentality, hospitality and community); interesting points of confluence are evoked between Scott novels not routinely paired for discussion; and critical dialogue is created between thinkers who in some cases have publicly desecrated the theoretical position of the other, but whom Gottlieb identifies positively as sharing an ‘explicit political commitment’ (9). This affords fresh insights into Scott’s novels and uncovers stimulating continuities between a diverse array of critical concepts and thinkers.

Gottlieb begins his study by examining notions of modern subjectivity as articulated in two of Scott’s best-known novels, *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*, in conjunction with the work of the Slovenian social theorist, Slavoj Žižek. Gottlieb employs Žižek’s Marxist-inflected, psychoanalytical theories of subjectivity to suggest that, even as the central protagonists of these novels both ultimately appear to be ‘firmly enmeshed in their respective symbolic orders’ (30), the unsatisfactory ending of each novel problematises such a construct. This aptly illustrates the capacity of Scott’s work to challenge contemporary theoretical thought.

Constructions of modernity are inevitably intertwined with Scott’s preoccupations with historical and sociopolitical processes, and these thematic concerns inform chapters 2 and 4. Chapter 2 examines *The Antiquary* via the work of German historian, Reinhart Koselleck, on historicity, and *Redgauntlet* is read in conjunction with the Mexican-American contemporary philosopher Manuel DeLanda’s realist ontology of historical change. Chapter 4 discusses *The*

Heart of Mid-Lothian in relation to Michel Foucault's ideas on governmentality and 'biopolitics' (definable as 'a politics that attempts to exercise direct control over the lives and deaths of its subjects', 85); and then undertakes a fascinating analysis of sovereign power in *Quentin Durward* in light of Giorgio Agamben's paradigm of biopolitics.

Chapter 5 picks up on the fourth chapter's concluding assertion that Foucault and Agamben identify pessimistically with the processes of modernity. In this fifth chapter, Gottlieb deploys the ideas of a host of critics on hospitality and community: Alain Badiou, Theodor Adorno, Jean Baudrillard, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Jacques Rancière are just some of the key thinkers invoked, but extended treatment is reserved for Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida. Gottlieb traces abuses of hospitality and challenges to the fabric (the very concept, even) of community in *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *Chronicles of the Canongate*. He then makes fascinating application of these theories to his analysis of the narrative framework that binds the superficially disparate tales in *Chronicles* together, arguing convincingly that Scott's novel both identifies and exemplifies a democratised, literary hybridity made possible by sociopolitical changes ushered in during the nineteenth century.

Literary hybridity is explored more fully in the book's third chapter, which couples the ideas of Judith Butler and Homi Bhabha on hybridity and performativity. Gottlieb traces cultural, sexual and textual hybridity in his considerations of *Rob Roy* and *The Talisman*, and demonstrates how Scott frequently invokes borders and oppositions only to dissolve and deconstruct them.

Gottlieb's conclusion is deliberately open-ended, and his parting consideration of Scott in relation to posthumanism opens up intriguing new avenues for contemplation and for classroom discussion. As with those chapters that precede it, this chapter boldly widens the parameters of the discussion by introducing acutely contemporary topics such as biotechnology, cybernetics, genetic decoding and globalization, and serves as reminder of the startling relevance of Scott's fiction to the topical issues and concerns of our own day.

The various pairings in this study yield thought-provoking and rewarding readings both of Scott and of the selected works of contemporary theorists and critics. The interconnectivity of theories and novels (theories explored in one chapter could be readily applied to novels considered in other chapters, and unrepresented Scott novels substituted for those included), further suggests afterlives for Gottlieb's study through the multiplicity of applications that could be developed from this critical starting point. At the outset, Gottlieb states that his aim is to provide readers with a 'greater understanding of the complexities and pleasures of *both* the *Waverley Novels* and contemporary theory' (10). Thanks to the persuasive arguments presented in this study, and the sheer energy and enthusiasm that Gottlieb brings to his subject matter, this goal must be easily realised. Not only does Gottlieb have something genuinely new to offer both Scott scholars and contemporary theorists, his palpable enthusiasm for his subject makes this study a joy to engage with.

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James Noggle, *The Temporality of Taste in Eighteenth-Century British Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. 248. £68. ISBN 9780199642434.

Ashley Chantler, Michael Davies and Philip Shaw, eds., *Literature and Authenticity, 1780-1900*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011. Pp. 238. £68. ISBN 9780754665991.

Proust's narrator, bitching about the musical soirées of the insufferably bourgeois Mme Verdurin, falls upon a problem that lies at the heart of modern aesthetics: 'All that the public knows of the charm, the grace, the forms of nature, it has absorbed from the clichés of an art slowly assimilated, and yet an original artist begins by rejecting these clichés' (my trans.). Originality, as the authentic expression of the individual artist, is the highest criterion of post-Romantic aesthetic excellence and yet it naturally plays havoc with the act of judgement. For if there are no assimilated clichés to reassure about the thing before us, what have we to rely on besides the vagaries of either obscure critical instinct or socially cultivated taste? That last word is freighted with ideological baggage, as Eagleton, De Man and Bourdieu were keen to insist over a quarter of a century ago, but alongside the political there is another fundamental issue at stake in its operation. Taste must surely be in some sense developed over time, but there is a persistent and lurking inclination in many post-Enlightenment writers that to be authentic it should be unforced, intense and immediate.

Indeed, the very relationship between taste and judgement is rather vexed. This problem is most acute in the aftermath of the Romantic period. Coleridge uses the word 'aesthetic' periodically in his unpublished writings but the *OED* dates it as an English word only from 1832, two years before his death. The reason for this is fairly obvious – the term is a borrowing from Kant, whose work is itself slowly assimilated – but the chief repercussion of its emergence is that Romantic aesthetic judgement, to which Proust surely appeals, marks a substantial break from earlier accounts of taste by appearing to come at the matter from a different angle. Apart from circumstance and habit, a sense built up over time, post-Romantic judgement purports to be universal exactly because it is not a social sense like taste, 'inseparable from the concrete moment in which the object appears [before us]' (Gadamer), but is instead innate and private; a product of a particular way of looking at that object.

In *The Temporality of Taste in Eighteenth-Century British Writing*, James Noggle discovers much of interest in muddying the division between the two periods to demonstrate that eighteenth-century writers were much more productively confused about the workings of taste than many commentators have noticed. In particular, he argues that the practical matter that gives rise to the tension between immediacy and cultivation finds its origin at the outset of the tradition of British aesthetics, and that it is worked out in the writings of that century amid a rhetoric which is itself rich in class markers that inform debates about national, social and gendered identities. Noggle wrote a distinguished book with OUP about the sublime in eighteenth-century thought, *The Skeptical Sublime*, and his new one is an equally fine contribution to our understanding of eighteenth-century aesthetic theory *tout court*. One implication of it is that Romantic aesthetic judgement does not mark quite so substantial a break with the eighteenth-century discourse about taste as has been widely accepted.

Many expected figures are present here – Pope, Hume, Gilpin, Walpole, Smith, More, Reynolds and Beckford – but the contexts are unusual, rich and learned. There is, for example, a fascinating discussion of writings about the gardens of Stowe, which demonstrates the centrality of landscape design to the larger matter of thinking about nation building amid an emerging discourse of patriotism. Noggle's two final chapters are, respectively, on fashion, in

which he incorporates an analysis of Adam Smith alongside a reassessment of Reynolds's *Discourses*, and on the art of collection, in which the focus is Beckford and his idiosyncrasies. These alone ensure that the book is required reading for anyone with an interest in the wider development of the arts in the period. The opening chapter on Pope is a subtle and characteristically intelligent reading of the *Epistle to Burlington*, which presents the poet's self-conscious playing with aesthetic failure as a poised political act.

A highly suggestive introduction describes the tension outlined above by paying attention to the mistakes of earlier commentators such as Bourdieu, who denies the social awareness of eighteenth-century writers on taste, while the conclusion draws Noggle towards New Formalism. Key to that introduction is the idea that there is a division within thinking about taste in the period between philosophers, who see it as a sudden formation, and historians, who find taste to be a product of gradual social development. This intriguing distinction is put to work throughout the study in a very persuasive art of analysis in which Noggle himself – in a nod towards New Formalism – employs a subtle manner of close reading that itself mediates between a sense of the immediacy that follows from the glow of literary language and a knowledge that proceeds from deep literary historical understanding. In this regard, he waltzes just as well as he foxtrots.

A rather different but related set of aesthetic tensions emerges in *Literature and Authenticity, 1780-1900*, an edited collection of essays written to honour Vincent Newey. This engages with a central idea in the aesthetics of Romanticism, one that should be of interest to any reader concerned with the relationship between philosophical and literary thinking over the long nineteenth century. Romantic writers were interested in what we can describe retrospectively as the idea of authenticity for two separate but related reasons. First, the term works to cover a widespread obsession in the writing and thought of the period with recording the reality of what actually happened to individuals within specific contexts. That is to say with the recovery of that which is 'real' in the sense of being original, honest, unaffected and of a specific time, place, and set of circumstances, especially as such phenomena ground themselves in a sense of rooted history. A second quality of authenticity emerges as a hallmark of much of the thought of the period in an innovation of post-Enlightenment and, in particular, post-Kantian thought. This is best described as a commitment to an authenticity of the self – a truth of the real nature of the individual and a suspicion of inauthentic emotion.

The latter idea is the one most at play in this collection, and yet the concept of reality, and 'the real' more generally, is never far from view. Romantic ideas of reality are fundamental to our own modern account of them and they help us to understand why the tricky concept of 'the real' is often so bound up with its rival, 'the ideal'. Ideas about reality are often apparent to Wordsworth or Shelley, for example, as the most real things about experience. Indeed, it may be said that this tension (partly a Kantian inheritance) lies at the heart of the bequest of Romantic thought to future generations, and is why it remains of such interest to students of the period, as is clear from this collection's suggestive and intelligent introduction. Michael O'Neill brilliantly draws out the connection between Wordsworth and Shelley (and also Goethe and Rousseau) in his own rich contribution, while Nicholas Roe's fascinating, self-conscious essay on Keats plays with the idea that there are so many ambiguities about the life of that poet that he cannot be caught definitively by the biographer as a single, authentic essence.

There are two very stimulating contributions at the start of the collection. Linda Pratt uncovers the literary relationship between Anna Seward and Robert Southey to demonstrate the influence of the former on the younger poet and suggests that this helps us better to envisage the scope of Southey's career. Ashley Chantler, meanwhile, engages with Lionel Trilling's wonderful essay *Sincerity and Authenticity* to investigate William Cowper's peculiar religious turmoil. The first half of the book will be of especial interest to scholars of Romanticism and it is rounded off with two delightful essays on Byron, who certainly merits a considerable place

in any reflection on authenticity. Bernard Beatty writes with a moving sensitivity upon Byron's relationship with Pope, while Philip W. Martin illuminates the poet's foxing sense of 'truth' in the fluid art of self-revelation in an essay that is consistently alive to his trickery. These are masterly essays but they are matched by the quality of the whole. Later contributions on post-Romantics are ignored unwisely. I took a great deal from Keith Handley and Philip Davis on Ruskin and Arnold respectively, but all are very good. Geoff Ward's contribution on Thoreau and Creeley, for example, with its revisiting of Cavell and its attention to that most obviously insistent presence in the idea of the authentic, 'the thing', is – to borrow a little cheekily from Byron – the thing. The book ends with a valuable summary of Newey's remarkable career.

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Nancy Yousef, *Romantic Intimacy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013, Pp. 182. \$55. ISBN 9780804786096.

Nancy Yousef's *Romantic Intimacy* is a sophisticated, multifaceted study of several enlightenment and early Romantic accounts of the moral sentiments, especially as they are supposed to animate and qualify, for good or ill, a variety of interpersonal relationships. The work is principally multifaceted in its aims and subject matter, offering a critical exposition of its target texts for primarily historical and literary purposes. But it also has a philosophical aim – to remind us of the limitations in our relations with others when we try to align our relationships according to the demands of such moral sentiments as sympathy and even respect. Yousef argues, in opposition to the eighteenth-century moralists from Shaftesbury and Hume to Rousseau and Kant, that the foundational role the moral sentiments or attitudes play in moral theory might better be filled by the condition she calls 'intimacy', since this may better fit all the morally significant varieties of interpersonal relationships. This is the crucial insight, she argues, that can be gleaned from the poems of encounter, and solitary meditation of Wordsworth, some of the meditative poems of Coleridge, but also in novels such as Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

The first few chapters are primarily taken up with a critical exposition of the accounts of moral sentiments in Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume and Kant. Her aim here is to expose the limitations, tensions and impassés these theories inevitably face in application to certain key cases of interpersonal relationship. The common problem with these accounts, for Yousef, is that they are committed to a strict kind of motivational basis for the morality of action – e.g. sympathy or even respect for persons – that must remain imperfect so long as it is not reciprocated between equals who know one another deeply. In Kant, for example, only in the rare and unstable relationships between intimate friends can the moral sentiments of benevolence and even respect be fulfilled completely. In more removed cases, the commands and consequent sentiments of duty and justice can at best orient one towards one's fellows only as mere other instances of humanity. What is missed, in each of the accounts covered is an orientation to humanity from which one can properly or fittingly attend to the individual. This is what Yousef argues that intimacy makes possible, a condition in which one, in proximity with another, shares something with the other in a way that is private to them.

Most of Yousef's attention is focused in Chapters 3 and 5 on Wordsworth's poems of encounter with disadvantaged others. In 'The Cumberland Beggar', for instance, Wordsworth portrays his narrator contemplating the abiding condition and habits of an old beggar, who has lived within the narrator's community throughout at least the narrator's recollection, but has barely entered into society with others, except as a dearly acknowledged recipient of their small

acts of charity. Even the beggar, however, does a morally significant service to all who encounter him as a person. While his indigence is regrettable, his place in the community and their free and open charity, requiring no eventual repayment from him, are, perhaps, as they should be allowed to be. The attitude of sympathy ill fits this situation, for from such an attitude, this asymmetric relationship is an imperfect one, and so in need of remedy. But even so, the most apt treatment of the old man as an individual remains possible from an orientation of intimacy. The works of Wordsworth may be fruitfully read as commenting critically on eighteenth-century moral sentimentalism, Yousef argues, precisely because they embody this last insight about the better prospects of intimacy as a moral orientation to others as individuals.

Here, we may agree with Yousef regarding Wordsworth's exposure of the limitations of any moral theory that must portray generosity in conflict with the requirements of justice. But even so, the fault for any such theory might not lie in taking such attitudes as sympathy, or respect, as the primary basis for morality. Perhaps, the source of the apparent conflict is in the conception of what is just or due in terms of a commensurable exchange of goods or benefits. The latter may be a species of justice but not its whole. Justice cannot compel as a strict rule any specific act of charity, but it must allow it according to individual discernment in particular circumstances. But while Kant, for example, may write in many places – e.g. on friendship, marriage and punishment – as if just respect and benevolence must conflict, in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, in particular, he conceives of the duty of benevolence as just such a discretionary categorical duty. Other similar points may be made in defence of Shaftesbury and Hume against Yousef's criticisms.

Yousef's work should be of interest to literary scholars already familiar with the recent work on the connexions between early Romantic literature and the works of eighteenth-century moralists. It is written in way that makes it primarily accessible to such scholars and it makes most of its more novel and promising contributions in this area.

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Monika Class, *Coleridge and Kantian Ideas in England, 1796-1817: Coleridge's Responses to German Philosophy*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012. Pp. 245. £19 (pb). ISBN 9781472532398.

In this engaging and thoroughly researched study, Monika Class effectively and compellingly rephrases the once highly controversial debate about Samuel Taylor Coleridge's intellectually intimate and complex relationship with the thought of Immanuel Kant. The major scholarly contribution is Class's approach, which expands upon previous studies by considering 'Coleridge's reception of Kant from a position of English culture' (5). It is argued that Coleridge 'was a member of the radical and dissenting networks in which Kantian ideas had been circulating roughly since 1793' and that 'Coleridge's relation to Kant did not exist in a vacuum' (1). Alongside this rejection of individuality, Class declares that 'the investigation of Coleridge's relation to Kant should no longer involve 'originality' as a criterion for intellectual merit' as it is 'counterproductive': we should instead concentrate on 'the act of transmission as a form of intellectual interaction and part of sociability' (4). Class also succeeds in the thorough rehabilitation of an important figure that has been largely forgotten: Friedrich August Nitsch, who published his lectures on critical philosophy, *A General and Introductory View of Professor Kant concerning Man, the World and the Deity*, in 1796. Concentrating on intellectual intermediaries requires a very subtle approach to 'Kantian ideas': Class explores

the instability produced by various interpretations and applications, and monopolises on the fact that this was something that Coleridge was guilty of, claiming that chapters are motivated by ‘the desire to recapture the progressive dimension of Coleridge’s engagement with Kant’ (7). That engagement is contextualized by the shifting responses to Kantianism generally, by turns appreciative (because intellectually expedient) and adversarial (because foreign and unwelcome), and it is argued (in contrast to the ‘widespread assumptions’ of previous studies) that religion, politics and philosophy were intertwined to the point of being inseparable, rather than competitive to the point of requiring isolated consideration (7).

The book is effectively in two halves. The first four chapters explore Coleridge’s preliminary interactions with Kantian ideas. The discussion opens with a chapter that discusses the first article in the English press (1787) and Karl Leonhard Reinhold’s (1757-1823) role in disseminating the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). Coleridge’s moral-political engagement in Bristol in the mid 1790s is the subject of Chapter 2, which argues that Coleridge ‘harboured strong doubts concerning the necessitarian doctrine’ twenty years before he denounced it in the *Biographia Literaria* and that these doubts ‘made him particularly responsive to the way that Nitsch marketed critical philosophy’ (49). The third chapter concerns the Categorical Imperative, and proposes that Nitsch adapted the Kantian concept of the highest good to make it ‘compatible with the then dominant necessitarian thought in the freethinking milieu of 1790s England’ (89), and that the results can be seen in Coleridge’s political lectures. Keeping with the political dimensions of Coleridge’s Kantian reception, the next chapter contains a highly suggestive comparative reading of Coleridge’s ‘France: An Ode’ and Kant’s 1796 pamphlet *Perpetual Peace*, through which Class considers how Kant’s concept of nature justified Coleridge’s sympathy for the French Revolution (until 1802).

The second half of the book concentrates on Coleridge’s more thorough incorporation of Kantian positions. The fifth chapter begins by teasing out the nuances of a letter from Coleridge to his benefactor Josiah Wedgwood explaining how much money has been spent on books, ‘chiefly metaphysics’, which Coleridge hoped to ‘dedicate’ the ‘the prime of his life to’ in ‘silence’ (121); Class focuses on that final detail, considering ‘the drastic changes in the public attitude towards Kantianism before, during and after Coleridge’s trip to Germany’ (121), especially the threats that Kantian thought was deemed to hold, and the consequent difficulties Coleridge faced in trying to publicly advocate critical philosophy. This is both enhanced and contrasted by Chapter 6, which discusses Coleridge’s self-exposure as a Kantian in the *Biographia Literaria* with the now famous confession that ‘the writings of the illustrious sage of Königsberg [...] took possession of me as with a giant’s hand’ (142). (This was Coleridge’s only public advertisement of Kantianism.) Of particular interest to this reader was Class’s discussion of how, in that moment, Coleridge concealed his gradual introduction to Kantian thought and converted it into an apocryphal epiphany in an attempt to fashion himself as a philosopher of genius: an anointed one capable of deciphering complex truths (142). The final revelatory chapter explores the role of Nitsch’s distortive interpretation of Kant (interestingly, he used the translation ‘intuition’ for ‘Anschauungen’ before Coleridge) and how this assisted and informed Coleridge’s development of the all-important metaphysical distinction between the Reason and the Understanding, which Coleridge incorporated into his religious and political thought from 1806 onwards. This complex and sophisticated book exposes the malleable nature of Kant’s positions as they were gradually imported into the country, and provides a subtle and lucid assessment of Coleridge’s role in that process.

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Lisa Feurzeig, *Schubert's Lieder and the Philosophy of Early German Romanticism*. Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. Pp. xiii + 198. £60. ISBN 9781409447887.

An overture of sorts opens this study, presenting the Schlegels and Novalis, Friedrich Schleiermacher's hermeneutics and other aesthetic models circulating in the German realm around 1800, before the curtain rises on the author's thesis proper: Franz Schubert's songs setting the poetry of Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis reflect his awareness of contemporary philosophical thought. Feurzeig's speculations and in-depth analyses are stimulating and she warmly invites readers to extend the inquiry. For her English readership she distills valuable insight from German-language scholarship too, mostly in a chapter addressing the puzzling eroticism in Novalis's religious poetry. The bulk of the monograph is given to Schubert's Schlegel settings, those from the poetic cycle *Abendröte* (rosy-shimmer-of-dusk) and, for a final chapter, 'Im Walde,' a recondite poem that Feurzeig argues 'was literally incomprehensible to the composer' yet 'he responded to it fully and richly.' (167) A malleable theory of the composer's creative process, introduced in her case study of 'Die Berge' (Chapter 2), erases this paradox.

On and off between ca.1819-1823 Schubert set to music eleven of the twenty-two poems of *Abendröte*. Schlegel's work unfolds in two parts, each with its own prologue and a closing sonnet in the voice of 'the poet.' At the outset an unspecified voice observes that when the sun has sunk below the horizon everything in nature becomes 'redend,' seems to speak. Schubert evidently set the introductory poem some time after tackling the next one, 'Die Berge,' told from the vantage point of sentient mountains. Feurzeig wonders why this poem feels 'strangely awkward.' (Its strophes, I suspect, are modeled on the elevated Spanish verse form *Silva*.) Mountains observe what transpires in the mind of the man who scales their heights with his eyes. At first he believes he can just propel himself past the clouds into the heavenly peaks. With growing astonishment he realizes 'how firmly grounded we are upon ourselves.' Finally, desiring to play at the precipice 'where bold cliffs hang mockingly over the abyss,' he pledges to build his own thoughts up from the ground like secure rock formations. High courage swells his heart.

Allegory for a creative mind's ambition: this is how Richard Kramer construed 'Die Berge' in *Distant Cycles: Schubert and the Conceiving of Song* (Chicago, 1995; 203ff), noting that Schubert's striking turn to the subdominant at 'zu den Himmlischen oben,' colored by horn fifths and a pedal tone on G, resembles a spellbinding moment in 'Wo die Berge so blau,' the second song in Beethoven's only song cycle. Schubert sketches Schlegel's 'redend' vista with a drawn-out alphorn call in piano octaves and an echo. We see mountains too in the jagged contours of the triadic theme. Feurzeig acknowledges such aural and visual props but she wants to peer behind the scenes. She believes that Schubert created a 'template,' a mental blueprint to guide his composition. This she calls 'diagraming' a poem and infers the mediation of a Kantian 'transcendental schema' (47) in other *Abendröte* settings (all poems assuming non-human consciousness: 'The River', 'The Stars', 'The Bushes'). The composer abstracts from each poem its unique mode of expression: In the *ghasal* 'Die Gebüsch' one sound (*au*: a woeful cry) is woven into each couplet; accumulative meaning is the guiding principle in Schubert's structure too. How is this manifested in 'Die Berge'? Three poetic strophes align with the (triangular) ABA shape of the song, somewhat surprisingly, since the psychological growth witnessed by Schlegel's mountains implies no literal return. Each musical section ends with a giddy ritornello and overly solid cadences, magnified on repetition. Between the G major outer pillars is a sketch-like music, half-spoken and unharmonized except for a plagal ('amen') cadence in E-flat, following which a rising sequence of blustery arpeggios leads to the ritornello

shaded in dark B minor. Feurzeig discerns traces of a schema in the novel rationale controlling these quixotic changes. Schubert's music divides the octave into equal segments, each key a major third apart: 'What is special about the B section is that by traversing a strange path through a set of distantly related keys, and without ever backtracking, the music nevertheless arrives once more at the tonic' (44). The contrasting A section 'lives in the fifth-based world' (of earlier composers).

Feurzeig wisely stops short of maintaining that Schlegel's poetry and the concepts underlying it inspired the young composer to create his bold harmonic palette, nor does she insist that Schubert's encounter with Romantic philosophical thought laid the groundwork for such late marvels as the E-flat piano trio where exactly this architectural plan (octave segmented into major thirds) is displayed on the thematic surface. Her more modest aim, expressed in the book's final sentence, is '[to open] our minds to the idea that Schubert was truly a thinker, and that he expressed his thoughts through music' (186).

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Stephanie Kuduk Weiner, *Clare's Lyric: John Clare and Three Modern Poets*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 224. £55. ISBN 9780199688029.

Clare's standing as a poet has probably never been higher. Yet the esteem in which he is held by his academic devotees is not always matched by the judgements of a non-specialist audience. It is never a surprise to find Clare omitted from prominent collections on and of Romantic or Victorian poetry. Readers and critics at large appear in agreement with Keats: 'Scenery is fine, but human nature is finer'.

Clare looks to have dedicated his energies to a lesser order of achievement, as Keats himself suggested as early as 1820 in commenting on the poem 'Solitude': 'the Description too much prevail[s] over the Sentiment'. That remains a charge with which any advocate of Clare's poems has to come to terms. Broadly speaking, there are three defences. The first is to press the ethical or ecological credentials of a commitment to 'Description' over 'Sentiment' (an approach that convinces more in theory than in the actual practice of reading). The second is to point to the hundreds of Clare poems which *are* carried on a current of 'Sentiment', and which thrill on account of the whirling energy of their attempts to express it – 'Loading the heart with joys it cannot bear / That warms & chills & burns & bursts at last / O'er broken hopes & troubles never past' as Clare himself phrased it in 'The Moorehens Nest' (is there any other poet who makes such captivating poetry out of the blurred expression of mixed feelings?). The third response is to show how, in Clare, 'Description' and 'Sentiment' mingle. This is the toughest course. You can say, with Jonathan Bate, that 'for Clare, description is sentiment', but it might well remain the case that, for the reader, 'description is description'. So not least among the virtues of Stephanie Kuduk Weiner's *Clare's Lyric* is the deftness with which it fleshes out its case that Clare's observational art is an affair of human feeling: 'the lyric subject is made vivid and immediate as he perceives, feels, and thinks about the world – acts which in turn invest that world with vividness and immediacy' (3).

The book claims to be 'about mimesis and the medium of poetry' (1). Really, it is something more attractive than that: a book about poets and poems. Its first section offers an account of 'Clare's Lyric Technique'. Three chapters make felt the humane concern guiding Clare's orchestration of his poetry's acoustic world, his sonnets' teasing challenge to the claims of artistic unity, and the resourcefulness of the asylum poems as they strive for an idiom that gets a grasp on absence. At its best, the writing's attentiveness to the minutiae of individual

poems gathers towards memorable broad-brush vignettes of the poetry's verbal texture: Clare's voice 'hover(s) between the urgency and immediacy of speech and the formality and polish of print; his language is at once deliberate and provisional' (25); 'His poems scan beautifully, but they often parse difficultly, a tension testifying to the combination of linguistic facility and rebelliousness that comes through in all his mature works' (33).

If the book's title captures the dilemma of an achievement that also feels like a limitation (it is hard to imagine the need for a similar study setting out the case for, say, *Wordsworth's Lyric*), its sub-title intimates the delayed and sporadic nature of Clare's impact upon subsequent poets. Clare sounded like a charmingly rustic version of Keats when he announced his ambition 'to win a niche among the minor bards in the memory of my country'; the second half of *Clare's Lyric*, addressing three twentieth-century poets who adopted and adapted Clare's mimetic techniques, shows Clare's 'memory' to have a habit of cropping up in unexpectedly exotic places. The effect is to emphasise the quirkiness of Clare's imagination, but also what John Ashbery, ostensibly the most alien of the three poets, called 'his seeming modernity'. Arthur Symonds was, as Kuduk Weiner acknowledges, 'a prominent practitioner and the foremost theorist of the cosmopolitan, urban, impressionistic aestheticism of the *fin de siècle*' (125), so he and Clare might seem strange bedfellows; but Symonds' 1908 edition of Clare's poems was crucial in repackaging Clare for the new century, and his Introduction to that volume (also printed in *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry*), is full of sensitive and sympathetic insight. Kuduk Weiner demonstrates the surprising kinship between the two writers, and one emerges with a renewed sense of the many-sidedness of their achievements. The chapter on Edmund Blunden shows Blunden's most compelling poems to work in a Clarean sort of way towards a self-effacement which is also a paradoxical form of individuality. A final chapter weaves through Ashbery's creative and critical responses to what he called Clare's 'nakedness of vision' with a precision and agility that epitomizes the whole book.

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Gavin Hopps, ed., *Byron's Ghosts: The Spectral, the Spiritual and the Supernatural*. Liverpool English Texts and Studies, 62. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013. Pp. 224. £70. ISBN 9781846319709.

Grim reader! did you ever see a ghost?

No; but you have heard—I understand—be dumb! (*DJ XV*, 95)

Given that Byron's most famous ghost is unveiled as the all-too fleshly Duchess Fitz-Fulke, previous commentators might be forgiven for overlooking the poet's concern with the spectral. *Byron's Ghosts* seeks to challenge this 'programmatically incurious about the immaterial' (10) in a wide-ranging examination of the role of the spectral, spiritual, and supernatural in Byron's poetry. The subject of this long-awaited collection is a rich one, and has haunted a handful of other recent publications, perhaps the best known being Susan Wolfson's excellent essay on 'Byron's Ghosting Authority' (*ELH* 76, 2009). Gavin Hopps's edited collection offers ten further perspectives on the topic of Byron's ghosts. He opens with a pithy yet studiously theorized explanation as to why there has been a postmodern revival in an interest in ghosts, and, pertinently, 'why this surprising renewal of interest is of significance for Romantic studies in general, and readers of Byron in particular' (1). In so doing, Hopps situates this edited collection in what he terms a 're-enchantment' (5) of the world currently experienced by a

postmodern readership, arguing persuasively that, contrary to prevailing assumption, ‘it is *scepticism* that dilates the parameters of the possible and underwrites the contemporary hospitality towards the spectral’ (8).

The contributors offer a compelling selection of work that moves well beyond the numerous ghostly apparitions in Byron’s verse, or the poet’s love of a good ghost story – be that in the Black Friar episode of *Don Juan*, or on a dismal evening in Villa Diodati. From theology (Mary Hurst) to flirtation (Corin Throsby), from rhetoric (Dale Townshend) to sublimity (Philip Shaw), from the Gothic novel (Alison Milbank) to biography (Peter Allender), the contents page alone evidences the diverse critical possibilities of reading Byron through a spectral lens. Great care has been taken by the editor in drawing together such a range of perspectives. I hope to do justice to such diversity by considering the two contributions which bookend the chapter content of the volume more carefully – Bernard Beatty’s cartography of the spectral in Byron’s work, and Corin Throsby’s chapter on the spectral nature of flirtation.

In ‘Determining Unknown Modes of Being’, Beatty offers the reader ‘a basic map or chart’ (30) of the ghosts and spirits we encounter in Byron’s corpus. He indicates an undeniable spectral presence in Byron’s poems: ‘50 per cent of them contain some kind of significant mention of ghosts or spirits’ and of the eight dramas, ‘50 per cent depend upon spirits as major characters’ (33). With characteristic attentiveness Beatty examines the play between ‘unknown modes of being’ (Wordsworth, *The Prelude* I, 419-20): from *The Siege of Corinth*, whose heroine, Francesca, materializes as ‘Byron’s most realised ghost’ (34), to the Black Friar Cantos of *Don Juan* which counterpose ghosts of fiction and ghosts of fact (45). The essay offers a particularly compelling assessment of the largely neglected *Siege of Corinth*. Beatty deftly traces the poem’s shifting gaze from the dogs feasting upon human remains in the shadow of Corinth’s walls, to Alp reclining at the base of a ruined pillar, to the spectral visitation of Francesca – Byron taking us from the physical verisimilitude of death and ruination to the appearance of a ghostly apparition. Beatty thereby exposes Byron’s peculiar brand of dualism, where, rather than adhering to a more conventional antithesis of matter and spirit, the poet is also seen to be ‘intrigued by the idea that an absolute concentration on materiality flips into something else’ (37).

Throsby’s contribution extends the traditional definition of the ghostly to read a kind of spectrality in Byron’s public and poetic practice of flirtation. The early citation of Adam Phillips’s definition of flirtation as a ‘calculated production of uncertainty’ (202) underpins readings of poems such as *The Giaour*, which in its calculatedly uncertain form is argued by Throsby to be Byron’s most flirtatious piece. Two features of flirting are attended to with especial care – veils and intertextuality. Byron’s references to the former, which offer ‘half-concealment and partial-revelation’ (204), are read alongside the poet’s use of narrative absence, which flirtatiously hints, veil-like, at the ‘spectral presence’ of the poet (206). Throsby also discerns such poetic hauntings in Byron’s intertextual self-reference, specifically in the Harem Cantos of *Don Juan*, where Katinka fears ‘the worst dreams that can be, / Of Guevres, Giaours, and Ginns, and Ghouls in hosts’ (*DJ* VI, 48). A consummate flirt, this partial conjuring of his own spectre leaves the reader in a state of perpetual expectation – and ‘wanting more’ (212).

As a final note, whilst the value of the collection for students and scholars of Byron is without doubt, it is a slim collection for the price, being over 100 pages shorter than, for instance, another very good collection by Liverpool University Press: *Liberty and Poetic Licence: New Essays on Byron* (2008). As such, I suspect the volume’s final resting place will be the library shelf, rather than the private collection.

Anna Camilleri

Mark Sandy, *Romanticism, Memory, and Mourning*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 188. £55. ISBN 9781409405931.

At once informed by and departing from the recent spate of studies on Romantic and Victorian elegiac literatures, Mark Sandy's book takes a refreshingly direct, meticulous, and accessible look at the 'self-questioning' (11) nature of Romantic mourning procedures. Readers familiar with the works of Esther Schor, Andrew Bennett, and Samantha Matthews will doubtless find echoes in this latest addition to the body of criticisms devoted to 'death, grief, memory, and posterity' (12). However, despite its ostensible connection to these 'cultural materialist discourses of history' (13), Sandy opts for a formalist approach in 'a bid to resist those readings that lock Romanticism too rigidly within its own historical moment' (10). To his credit, the study is unencumbered with theoretical speculations and psychoanalytic reductionisms, even though Nietzsche's meditations on memory and forgetting underpin his central argument that the Romantic discourse of grief 'reveals and conceals the realities of its own point of origin' (8). The affiliated processes of consolation and disconsolation – posthumous life and nothingness – in Romantic elegiac poetry are undeniably tragic in the Nietzschean frame, but, as Sandy's survey intimates at every turn, they also evince a highly symptomatic case of Romantic irony (even 'bad faith').

Comprised of nine chapters, the book is comprehensive in its array of authors and works. The first chapter reflects on the cosmic sense of bereavement which accompanies humanity's fall from innocence to experience in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *The Song of Los*, and *The First Book of Urizen*. Pertinently, Sandy concludes that, for Blake, neither imagination, nor reason, nor abundance of emotions can adequately restore humanity's lost spiritual innocence. But how this conclusion translates into the actual form and procedure, success and failure, of Blake's mourning praxis remains frustratingly obscure. The second chapter charts the embedded disruptions and contingencies in Wordsworth's 'consolatory vision of a circulation of grief' (34). Sandy's astute analysis of the lyrical ballads and *The Ruined Cottage* uncovers a profound disconnection between 'the spheres of natural and human activity' (41) and a lurking anxiety about the viability of 'a shared compensatory vision' built on 'the successful communication of suffering' (46). The third chapter explores how Coleridge negotiates his grief through an imagined, self-enclosed communion with the outside world in his conversation poems; disquietingly, it also exposes the poet's spiritual involutions as 'a carefully staged series of figural substitutions' which only ends in 'an increased realisation of isolation, absence, and death' (60). This movement from overstated consolation to tacit disconsolation appears to be the structural programme for much of the book, effectively replicating the very 'linguistic predicament' of Romantic irony.

Considered together, Chapters 4 and 6 are perhaps the most provocative and resonant sections of the study. Sandy's discussion of seascape in Charlotte Smith's and Felicia Hemans's poetry and his intertextual probing of the evocative 'frail bark' in Shelley's 'To Wordsworth', *Alastor*, and *Adonais* attest to the enduring presence of maritime imagination in the poetics of grief. Indeed, the book proves most rewarding whenever he performs such focused, almost surgical, treatment of elegiac figures (sea, bark, birds, snow, etc.). In the fourth chapter, Sandy rightly asserts that the poetics of Smith and Hemans 'both transcend questions of gender' and are preoccupied, no less than the poetics of their male counterparts, with 'artistic bequest, cultural legacy, and posthumous reputation' (77). Still, one cannot help but wonder if they are the exceptions or the rule among Romantic women writers.

The fifth chapter on Byron's poetic ruins in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* offers by far the most pensive – and Nietzschean – engagement with chronicle and biography, record and fiction, historical authority and poetic license. According to Sandy, Byron 'fantasises about surviving a-historically beyond those recorded figures and events [...] monumentalised as public history' (86), but his desire to forget 'paradoxically produces an imaginative capacity to remember' (82). Ironically, poetic forgetting, however wilful and creative, becomes another 'act of remembering' (90). In Chapter 8, this pervasive sense of Romantic irony seems to darken even Clare's supposedly stalwart faith in the 'endurance of the natural order' (148), as his vernal 'landscapes of love' descend nightmarishly into wintry 'landscapes of mourning' (132). In the end, only Keats's 'To Autumn' emerges somewhat unscathed by the angst-ridden and doubt-laden duplicities associated with Romantic irony. Sandy claims, in Chapter 7, that Keats's 'To Autumn' is 'perfectly poised between states of living and dying' because his 'negatively capable self' (130) simultaneously embraces the light of Apollonian dream and the darkness of Dionysian reality, no doubt a hard-won equipoise between consolation and disconsolation.

Although Sandy's book, for all its range of poets and coverage of forms, is limited by a visible underrepresentation of women writers (only Smith and Hemans) and a palpable silence on the fraught junctions between poetic forms and poetics of grief, it is nevertheless a valuable companion to general-purpose elegy study and a useful index to the continuities between Romantic and Victorian works of mourning.

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Daniel Cook, *Thomas Chatterton and Neglected Genius, 1760-1830*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. xv + 259. £55. ISBN 9781137332486.

Thomas Chatterton was a protean poet and a mercurial figure. Before his untimely death he produced poetry and prose (as well as illustrations, genealogies, and artfully aged manuscripts) in a bewildering range of styles and genres. His ensuing posthumous canonization was a complex affair. In the immediate years after his death his legacy was dominated by issues of authenticity: were the works he purported to have discovered really the literary remains of Thomas Rowley, a hitherto unknown fifteenth-century Bristolian monk, and his circle; or were they audacious and eminently plausible forgeries concocted by a teenager educated at a provincial charity school and apprenticed as a legal scrivener?

In this elegantly scrupulous study, Daniel Cook presents the spectrum of self-fashioning and range of posthumous reinventions experienced by the respective figures of Rowley and Chatterton, explaining how they were inflected by the intellectual and cultural fashions of the period: genius theory, antiquarianism, connoisseurship, the cult of sensibility, and emergent Romanticism. In particular, Cook studies 'the figuration and occlusion of Chatterton as an author within the production and reception of his works' (7) and his eventual recuperation, after being marginalized in his own afterlife by the monk Thomas Rowley, as the exemplary neglected genius of Romanticism. Cook's contribution to eighteenth-century and Romantic studies is to show how Chatterton's problematic status as an author figure is in fact a striking reflection of rapidly changing and competing attitudes towards literature, criticism, the English past, the vernacular canon, and, crucially, the construction of unified authorship.

The account begins with a pithy history of the eighteenth-century concept of genius; Joseph Addison's Whiggish definition tied, via Richard Hurd, to medieval Gothicism. Contemporaries clamoured to describe Chatterton as a genius – properly a Shakespearean genius for his rejection of artistic rules and conventions – but at the same time these developing models disputed juvenile genius. Genius required maturity: like Whig history it embodied the progress of character. Thus Thomas Rowley, the sagacious and prolific monk, was, by this definition, more clearly the literary genius and so eclipsed Chatterton as an author figure. But focusing on Rowley introduced antiquarian attitudes that bedevilled the reception of the work in the first dozen years after Chatterton's death. Moreover, Cook is careful to indicate that there were no simple binaries between antiquarianism and history, and notes that literary antiquarians such as Edmond Malone did not hesitate to introduce questions of taste to the textual and, especially in his case, legal arguments surrounding authenticity.

What emerged was an unstable hybrid, with Chatterton appearing to embody, in the term used at the time, a 'new-old' aesthetic (33). This unresolved ambivalence informs Cook's excellent chapter on Thomas Tyrwhitt's edition of the *Rowley Poems* (1777). Cook argues that 'not only does Tyrwhitt's intervention dictate the terms of how Chatterton could be judged but also that it plays out broader disciplinary tensions inherent in contemporary literary editing' (37). Cook corrects the myth perpetrated in an off-hand and inaccurate remark made by John Nichols that Tyrwhitt performed a *volte-face* on issue of authenticity during the first printing of the edition by examining a cancellandum that demonstrates that Tyrwhitt deliberately cultivated a strategy of scholarly disinterestedness on the question of authenticity – which in any case had really already been resolved. Tyrwhitt's edition is also noteworthy for his revisions and interventions. Tyrwhitt's earlier Chaucerian scholarship had led him to propose that terminal 'e's were voiced in Middle English, so consequently he tended to remove any unnecessary or problematic letters; he also confined his edition to poetry and included none of Rowley's voluminous, contextualizing prose.

In contrast, John Broughton's follow-up volume of Chattertoniana, *Miscellanies in Verse and Prose* (1778), responded to Tyrwhitt's categorization of Rowley as a literary curiosity by presenting Chatterton as commanding a wide range of styles – making him, as he put it, 'the literary phenomenon of the times' (71). Cook, while rightly judging this to be a 'scrapbook approach' (71) that risked turning Chatterton into a hack, does discern a structure to *Miscellanies* that attempted to unify Chatterton's authorship and to showcase his varied outputs, most notably in technically proficient Patriot poetry, Churchillian satire, and primitivism. Interest in the author figure Thomas Rowley was already in decline, and *Miscellanies* gave momentum to an increasingly biographical treatment of the other Thomas: Chatterton. To connoisseurs such as Horace Walpole, already embroiled in the controversy, it appeared that 'Chatterton was becoming a legitimate author by the logic of a contemporary marketplace that favoured anomalous talents as a means by which to solidify a normative English canon' (90). After *Miscellanies*, Chatterton could no longer be dismissed as a mere forger.

For Cook, then, authenticity was a side-effect of the institutional discourses that governed the public domain, and he succeeds in shifting attention from the bewildering issues of 'fakelit' by charting the ebbs and flows of the authorial figures Rowley/Chatterton within later sentimental and Romantic constructions of authorship. Central here is John Keats's description of Chatterton's language as 'the purest english', which Cook usefully glosses as essentially 'counterfactual' (194). The posterity of his verse ensured that 'his texts became reliquaries' (201).

Daniel Cook has diligently examined the periodical press of the later eighteenth century and spins a sophisticated narrative out of its tangled web of opinions. This confident and eloquent book will be welcomed by those researching authorship, the history of editing, and

the Romantic reception of earlier writers, while remaining at its heart a signal contribution to the study of Thomas Chatterton.

Nick Groom
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Jane Darcy, *Melancholy and Literary Biography, 1640-1816*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 255. £50. ISBN 9781137271082.

Jane Darcy's *Melancholy and Literary Biography, 1640-1816* offers a history of the genre of literary biography in Britain throughout the long eighteenth century, focusing on the posthumous reputation of authors as sculpted by the selective depictions of their biographers. Beginning with Dryden's *Life of Plutarch*, Darcy takes her readers on a journey through the contextual pathways that lead to some key biographies of literary figures in the period, from Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* and Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, to Godwin's *Memoirs of Wollstonecraft* and Currie's *Life of Burns*, and concluding with Hayley's *Life of Cowper*. In addition to examinations of the biographies themselves, Darcy highlights different trends and sub-genres of biography, from the 'Life and Letters' approach to 'Philosophical Biography' in which a figure is depicted primarily through a political, moral or philosophical stance.

Running parallel to this history of biography, and in chapters of their own, Darcy describes evolving understandings of melancholy, tracing its history through the works of William Harvey, Thomas Willis, Robert Whytt, William Cullen and George Cheyne. These sections of Darcy's book give a general overview of medical definitions of melancholy at the time, aligning it with a posturing of sensibility that she sees in some of the biographical depictions of literary figures. The book provides a contextual introduction to the medical history of melancholy, even if it does not venture much further than equating it with the culture of sensibility and nerves to show how Boswell, for example, depicts Johnson's melancholy as evidence that he is a literary man of feeling.

In the first half of the book, as Darcy provides the contextual background for the two themes of melancholy and biography, she deals with each of them separately within their own exclusive chapters and sections. Because of this, *Melancholy and Literary Biography* can, at times, feel like a book with two separate topics. As the title indicates, this is not a book about melancholy *in* literary biography, but rather, melancholy *and* literary biography. Darcy herself states in her conclusion: 'My quest in this book has been to chart these two paths – the development of literary biography and the cultural status of melancholy – and to show how closely the two run in parallel' (205).

However, when they do intersect in later sections of the book, primarily to demonstrate how melancholy was used to show a literary figure to advantage, Darcy's argument comes into its own. She charts a history of biography and a history of melancholy in order to argue that one can see the evolving definitions of melancholy through the ways in which literary persons are depicted in their biographies. The sections on Boswell's depictions of Johnson's melancholy and Wollstonecraft's own aesthetic descriptions of her emotions in her *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* – which Darcy argues is undone by Godwin when he publishes her letters to Imlay in his *Memoirs* – skillfully demonstrate that the way in which a writer's melancholy suffering was depicted could have a significant impact upon their posthumous reputation. The final two chapters, on Currie's *Life of Burns* and Hayley's *Life of Cowper*, are particularly valuable as Darcy brings the two themes together for a sustained examination on how biographers dealt with and depicted the intense melancholy suffered by Burns and Cowper by playing down their supposed suicidal despair

and madness and turning it into a more socially acceptable aesthetic or poetic melancholy. Ironically though, according to Darcy, it was only to have Romantics like Hunt and Blake become more interested in their despair and madness.

One of the highlights of the book is the originality of its examination of religious melancholy in the period and how biographers negotiated the politics of this potentially explosive issue. It is refreshing to see work on melancholy give such scope to this important contemporary issue. As Darcy says, ‘for Puritans and evangelicals alike, religious melancholy lies at the heart of the conversion experience: without profound spiritual distress there would be no drive towards religious conversion’ (85). Although her argument that religious melancholy comes into fashion with Burton and out of fashion by the mid-eighteenth century may not quite capture the powerfully divisive Nonconformist-Anglican politics that, from the Early Modern straight through to the Romantic period, made this popular for some and intensely unpopular for others, she is certainly right to highlight the ways in which biographers had to be wary of how they depicted a writer’s religious melancholy when writing for a general, non-Puritan audience. Darcy’s book shows just how precarious a previously sound reputation, such as Cowper’s or Wollstonecraft’s, could be when an author’s private letters and journals are first revealed and left in the hands of a biographer to select, interpret and sculpt according to their will.

Melancholy and Literary Biography, 1640-1816 provides a valuable examination of the ways in which eighteenth-century biographers depict literary figures and demonstrates how significant the impact could be when they veered away from the poetic melancholy of sensibility. As such, Darcy’s book is a welcome contribution to recent scholarship on the genre of literary biography and the posthumous publication of literary letters.

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Michael Phillips, ed., *William Blake. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2011. Pp. 173. 52 plates. £50 (hb). ISBN 9781851243419. £14.99 (pb). ISBN 9781851243662.

How did Blake compose his works in illuminated printing? When did he complete *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*? And what is the critical relevance of these questions, particularly about the overall coherence of the work, the relation of its narrative voices, and the political contexts to which it is addressed? These are the central issues discussed by Michael Phillips in this new book.

The centrepiece of the book is its facsimile of the Bodleian copy of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, so-called copy B. This is plainly printed, with only very occasional water-colour washes, which has the advantage that elements of the engraved plate covered by colour in other copies are here visible. It is beautifully reproduced, with a transcription of the text, an introduction discussing the work’s date and contexts and Blake’s methods of composition and printing, and a fresh account of the development of his view of Swedenborg. The facsimile includes supplementary illustrations – versions of plate 14 from each of the eight extant copies to show the variety of Blake’s printings and colouration of the same image; and plates 12-15 from copy G (c.1818), in which these plates were re-ordered (15, 14, 12, 13), probably (as Phillips argues) to open up new ways of reading. A detailed plate-by-plate commentary summarises and contextualises the argument, reports and discusses readings from a range of scholarly and critical work, reproduces for discussion the most minute details of designs, and

records allusions (to the Bible, Swedenborg, Dante, Spenser, Milton) and design analogues elsewhere in Blake's work (in illuminated books, drawings, colour prints). A checklist gives details of the extant copies.

Almost uniquely among Blake's works of this period *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is undated, and Blake did not put his name on the title page. Both facts are open to interpretation. Phillips relates the second to the first: the work appeared in a context of prosecution of radicals – in 1793. This dating has become controversial. The long-accepted dating was indeed 1790-1793 (Keynes, Bentley), with a supposition that the work was not finished until at least late 1792 (Erdman), that is, in the context of British reactionary response to the most bloody phase of the French Revolution. More recently it has been argued (David Bindman, Robert Essick, Joseph Viscomi) that the work was completed quickly in 1790, the dawn of radical exuberance in which it was bliss to be alive. This view of the work's date is often associated with ideas about its composition: that Blake composed directly onto the copper plates, not transcribing from fair copies; that he produced multiple copies of colour-printed works in short printing sessions, with all that implies about his intended readership; and specifically with *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, that it is not a coherent counterpointing of multiple voices but a work of 'fractured discontinuities'. Phillips argues against all three views.

The main peculiarity of *Marriage* copy B is a 'frontispiece', an intaglio etching, 'Our End is come'. This is dated: 5 June 1793. Whether it was bound with copy B by Blake, or by a later owner, there is no way of telling. It is my own view that Phillips is correct about Blake's compositional methods, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell's* (evidently highly various) fundamental unity, and the completion date of 1793. I find it difficult to agree only that 'Our End is come' helps establish this. Phillips has (for the first time) identified the source of this title phrase in *Lamentations* (4.18). However, his apparent identification of the fear as Blake's ('He must have felt himself a hunted man', 26) seems to me at odds with the image. Blake later (probably after 1805) reworked the plate, and retitled it 'The Accusers of Theft Adultery Murder', adding the inscription 'A Scene in the Last Judgement | Satans holy Trinity The Accuser The Judge & The Executioner'. Certainly Blake was likely to re-interpret his own images when he returned to them in a new context, but even in the first state of the etching found with *Marriage* copy B, the figure to the right is military (in armour), and the central figure – the figure most obviously signifying terror at his approaching end – is identified by his crown as a king. The end prophesied is not that of radicals but of tyrants and the military and judicial apparatus that supports them. And I am puzzled to know, if Blake did not put his name and the date on *Marriage* in 1793 because he feared prosecution, how he so clearly put his name and the date on this prophecy of doom for the opponents of radicalism. It suggests to me that, if Phillips is right about *Marriage* – as I think broadly he is – the unique association of this plate with copy B came about later. If so, what here appears as a 'frontispiece' is properly a separate plate, and a side issue. The facsimile makes available, in the form in which Blake intended, a new copy of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, of which the introduction and commentary make this an important scholarly edition.

David Fuller
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Martin Blocksidge, *The Banker Poet: The Rise and Fall of Samuel Rogers*. Brighton, Chicago and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2013. Pp. 344. £25. ISBN 9781845195809.

Martin Blocksidge's biography of the poet Samuel Rogers is not only a much needed work in the field of recovery studies, but also highlights both the poetic and political networks that are foundational in our understanding of Romantic sociability. Rogers was born in 1763 and died in 1855; he started publishing in the 1780s and continued until the 1830s. His poetic fame and popularity transformed his poetic works into commercial items, and it is indeed through bestselling authors such as Rogers that we can understand the nature of the bookselling market and the book-buying public of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

Although the popularity of Rogers's works speaks for their public attraction, the character of Rogers is far more difficult to discern, with many speculative rumours about his personal life neatly investigated by Blocksidge. Rogers's relationship with women (and often young girls) cannot be ignored, as highlighted by Jeffrey W. Vail in 2011. Blocksidge proposes that allegations were made against Rogers, which he then quashed through social and financial influence, and rigorously explores the position that young girls occupied in both Rogers's life and his poetry.

Despite this, Rogers remained a constant companion of many prolific political and literary figures. Blocksidge's subtitle of 'The Rise and Fall of Samuel Rogers' aptly describes Rogers's relationships with writers: these often began promisingly but rapidly deteriorated. For example, in 1813 Lord Byron placed Rogers alongside Walter Scott on the poetic hierarchy of the 'Mount of Parnassus' and even published *Lara* alongside Rogers's *Jacqueline* in 1814 (albeit anonymously), as well as dedicating *The Corsair* to him. However, Byron eventually claimed that Rogers was a 'back-biter', and in a posthumously published poem which he originally only intended for the eyes of his publisher John Murray, called him a 'vampire, ghost or ghoul'. Coleridge, on the other hand, had never particularly cared for Rogers, and was dismissive of Rogers's 1792 poem *The Pleasures of Memory*. Meanwhile Wordsworth, pragmatic about the business of publishing and selling poetry, corresponded with Rogers for insights into publishers.

As intriguing and crucial as this contextual and biographical information is, Blocksidge does not neglect to discuss the style and appeal of Rogers's writing. He rightly points out that Rogers was not just a poet, but also a travel writer. Rogers was immensely well travelled and traversed the United Kingdom from Edinburgh to Tunbridge Wells, as well as travelling internationally to Switzerland and Italy, the country that was to bring about one of his most extensive travel journals and also his collaboration with J.M.W. Turner.

Both Turner and Stothard illustrated Rogers's 1834 *Complete Poetic Works*, with Turner providing the illustrations of the picturesque, attesting to Rogers's knowledge that the public were buying volumes of poetry as aesthetic commodities. Although Blocksidge's title *The Banker Poet* juxtaposes Rogers the capitalist and Rogers the artist, these two facets of Rogers's character were not necessarily as opposed as they appear. An undying passion throughout Rogers's life was his love of art, into which he invested a lot of capital. Not only was it a motivation behind his multiple trips to France throughout his life, but his residence at 22 St James's Place contained his renowned art collection, in front of which he hosted legendary literary breakfasts, as demonstrated in the engraving by Chris Mottram (c.1823) held at The Tate. His collection included Reynolds, Holbein, Rubens, Rembrandt and Titian (among many others). The literary and the artistic worlds met in front of these paintings purchased by a poet-banker.

Blocksidge's exploration of the life of Rogers details his many meetings with some of the canonical as well as the still unrecovered figures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Blocksidge discusses the friendship between Rogers and arch-Tories such as Southey, whilst also acknowledging the position of Rogers as 'The Oracle of (the Whig) Holland House'. Rogers embodies Romantic sociability as an individual who participates in disparate networks, proving how necessarily well-connected individuals of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century were.

Although Blocksidge has clearly consulted a wide range of invaluable resources and archives, *The Banker Poet* highlights how Rogers's literary and social standing was framed by these acquaintances. The more recovery research that is undertaken into his fellow poets and politicians (both canonical and non-canonical), the more we will consequently know about Rogers. It is, therefore, a welcome addition to studies of Rogers but also reveals that there is still a great deal of work to be done.

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Rachel Schulkins, *Keats, Modesty, and Masturbation*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014. Pp. 190. \$109.95. ISBN 9781472418791.

In *Keats, Modesty, and Masturbation*, Rachel Schulkins attempts to connect Keats's poetry to discussions about sexuality in the Romantic period. Lord Byron's well-known sneer, that Keats was "f-gg-g his imagination" (quoted 1) comes immediately to mind, and Schulkins takes Byron seriously. For Schulkins, Keats's work counters conservative ideals of sexual restraint and feminine virtue: 'The inclusion of the solitary pleasure into the poetry... counters the image of the asexual female advocated by a wider group of conservative readers and critics around this time' (3). Keats's attitude toward female masturbation is part of his political project, what she calls at one point his 'radical eroticism' (43). She outlines the indignation with which writers of the period lambasted masturbation, and points out that 'anti-masturbatory literature continuously emphasized the close connection between masturbation and the private pleasures of the imagination' (61). For Schulkins, Keats endorses female masturbation as a refuge but castigates male masturbation for its solipsism; Keats criticizes his male protagonists for the 'masculinist, masturbatory, and selfish perception of the female' (60).

In subsequent chapters, Schulkins offers corrective readings of well-known poems with the context of Keats's attitudes toward masturbation as a focus. While the cultural context delineated in the introduction and first chapters is competent, if not particularly new, it is in the readings of Keats's major works that Schulkins really surprises – in weird and inconsistent ways. (Why would Keats have such different views of male and female masturbation, when both were condemned at the time? And how exactly can we intuit any idea of his view of masturbation at all?)

Schulkins censors *Isabella* – she calls it 'a masturbatory romance' (73) – and offers a disturbing and peculiarly moralistic reading that finds everyone in the poem guilty of masturbation, as if we were on the worst kind of witch hunt: 'both the lovers and *Isabella*'s brothers are trapped in the engulfing and blinding force of excessive desire, distorted to masturbatory and antisocial behavior that eventually leads to their downfall ... The characters of the poem appear to be in a sort of masturbatory trance' (73). The loving couple gets judged and found wanting: *Isabella* for her moaning over the dead *Lorenzo*, which exhibits 'her tendency to invoke *Lorenzo*'s figure for the mere purpose of self-gratification' (82); while *Lorenzo* fares no better: 'he is a mere greedy ghost ... an incubus that derives his strength from

Isabella's expiring life and her masturbatory imagination' (83). That Schulkins should feel the need to be a policewoman of the senses, to sit in judgment of the sexual practices of characters in poems, even as we are unlearning most of these judgments in our own time, is certainly eccentric. Most importantly, the whole subject of love – Isabella's for Lorenzo and vice-versa – is completely elided, as Schulkins has little sympathy for the bereft Isabella and her 'masturbatory' imagination.

Though Schulkins clearly disapproves of sexuality as it is represented in *Isabella*, she condones it in *The Eve of St Agnes*. I am not sure anyone would disagree that 'St. Agnes comes to negotiate, through the characters of Porphyro and Madeline, between erotic dreams and their realization' (90). But Schulkins is determined to moralize this complexity. The Eve's charming custom (or 'superstition', as Schulkins labels it) becomes 'no more than a romantic dream, a solipsistic world of love and sex for the sake of...private pleasure' (93). Porphyro's presence in her bedroom interrupts the 'masturbatory dreamer' that Madeline is about to become; he initiates her into sexuality because he wishes to 'integrate her innocence and sexuality into one' (105). His affection for her is not addressed: here Porphyro acts as a sex therapist, not a lover. Nevertheless, because the relationship is consummated and 'natural', 'a social act' (107), Schulkins gives it her approval. One wonders what her criteria are for 'natural' sexuality.

The last two chapters use her anti-masturbatory model to construct unconvincing and certainly unexpected readings of 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' and *Lamia*. In Schulkins's eyes, the male protagonists of the poems cause their own dilemmas. 'La Belle Dame', she writes, 'deals with the excessiveness of romantic idealisation and desire, distorted to a masturbatory love' (112). The Belle Dame 'resists' the knight's romanticisation; being left on the cold hill side is all his fault. This surprising reading overlooks the Belle Dame's own actions (singing, bending, and lulling). Part of what makes the poem so powerful is Keats's ambivalence about the femme fatale: the poem does not fully confirm that the Belle Dame is evil or monstrous. But Schulkins flattens that intricacy into a search for blame. Even the famous 'kisses four' get explained as part of the Knight's 'erratic and insane behaviour' (120).

Similarly, in her reading of *Lamia*, Schulkins oversimplifies the workings of the title character. Keats certainly intends the reader to feel some sympathy with Lamia even as she deceives. I would not disagree with the author here: 'Keats endeavours to reclaim Lamia's humanity through her complex character' (129). But Schulkins elides this complexity even as she praises it; the narrative results merely from Lycius's 'failure': 'he fails to see her [Lamia] as she truly is' (130). *Lamia*, then, is 'about...men's failure to accept women as sexual beings', though Lamia's sexuality is part of what attracts Lycius in the first place.

The contradictory nature of Schulkins's claims should be apparent. In the end, the book as a whole is unfortunately hampered by its brand of moralism: one that combines anti-masturbatory ideologies and popular feminism.

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Barbara K. Seeber, *Jane Austen and Animals*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 150. £55. ISBN 9781409456049.

In the preface to *Jane Austen and Animals*, Barbara K. Seeber describes an early reaction to her project from a colleague: 'he remarked "but there are no animals in Jane Austen"' (x). The strength of this book lies not only in its refutation of this claim, but also in its attachment to it. Seeber admits that she is focussing on a comparatively minor theme while also demonstrating its centrality to many of the most discussed aspects of Austen's writing. What might

traditionally have been seen as incidental details of environment or setting in Austen's works are brought into the foreground and carefully studied on their own terms and with an impressively sensitive eye to fresh dimensions of even critically well-trodden texts.

Jane Austen and Animals is arranged thematically rather than chronologically or by work. This structure is flexible and allows for unusual connections to develop across Austen's oeuvre both temporally and generically. Seeber works with the novels of course, but also Austen's correspondence, juvenilia, short fiction and poetry. The book also touches on more than its title suggests. Its chapters include discussion of women, hunting, masculinity, diet, landscape and environment. These themes further broaden out into larger issues: one is the question of Austen and nature; another places discussions about gender politics in the context of contemporary debates about the status of animals. The first chapter, for example, considers Catherine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft in order to show that 'what came to be termed the Woman Question was connected to the Animal Question' (25). The second and third chapter demonstrate Austen's participation in the controversy over rural sport in the period's literature, but also extend its relevance into a proto-feminist domain (38): John Thorpe and Henry Tilney's contrasting attitudes to animals in *Northanger Abbey* are also apparent in their differing treatment of women (40-42); Willoughby's pursuit of Marianne in *Sense and Sensibility* is repeatedly figured as 'sport' (44-45); and Henry Crawford in *Mansfield Park* 'synchronizes his dalliance [with Fanny Price] with his hunting' (46).

Seeber's chapter on food also pays attention to seemingly small details in the novel. It enacts the book's broader argument in microcosm by critiquing Maggie Lane's *Jane Austen and Food*, which argues that 'the mundane' plays more of a role in early and informal writings than it does in the work that Austen intended for publication (93). In contrast, Seeber argues that the nonhuman mundane is essential to Austen's work throughout her career. In this respect, her work resonates with recent thinking in the humanities concerned with the nonhuman, materiality, and objects and things as agents. This is not a connection that Seeber explores explicitly, however, and this is a slight weakness. The book might have benefitted from more detailed engagement with philosophic writing on nature, the problem of animality, and relations between humans and animals both in Austen's period and our own. This is not to ask for a dogmatic 'application' of theory onto Austen's writing. Rather – and especially when handled by a reader as sensitive to similarity and difference as Seeber – a broader consideration of intellectual traditions shaping Austen's and our own literary-critical viewpoints might have permitted greater conceptual sophistication.

An exception to this general rule is the beginning of the fourth chapter, which openly discusses postcolonial approaches (73-5). This chapter is particularly impressive for its combination of close reading and broader theoretical awareness: for example, its exploration of the inconsistency of pronouns used for Lady Bertram's 'pug' (80) or its analysis of the verb 'creep' in *Mansfield Park* (84). The book's unsurprising emphasis on the social significance of the nonhuman is also refreshingly left behind in the book's final excellent chapter on 'Sanditon', which argues that nature is 'not only acted upon' as 'a passive backdrop' but is a 'character' that 'acts' (115). This is linked to the evasion of the marriage plot in Austen's final work through close rhetorical analysis and careful attention to broader structures in the novel (120).

Increasingly, the intersection of animal and literary studies induces a return to the usual suspects of authors with an obvious interest in animals. Seeber's book is an exemplar of how to read literature that appears not to be explicitly concerned with the nonhuman. Seeber is resolute in her refusal to overread the role of animals in Austen's oeuvre, while delicately drawing out their significance. In this respect, this book is not only of interest to scholars of Jane Austen and early nineteenth-century prose. It is also a model on how to work with less immediately promising authors within 'the nonhuman turn'.

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Mary Brunton, *Self-Control*, ed. Anthony Mandal. Chawton House Library Series. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013. Pp. 405. £60. ISBN 9781848934023.

Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, *In Search of Jane Austen: The Language of the Letters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 304. £41.99. ISBN 9780199945115.

Mary Brunton's *Self-Control* is probably best known today because of Jane Austen's caustic comment on the work. In a letter to her sister, Cassandra Austen, of 11 October, 1813, Austen commented that *Self-Control* was an 'excellently-meant, elegantly-written Work, without anything of Nature or Probability in it. I declare I do not know whether Laura's passage down the American River, is not the most natural, possible, every-day thing she ever does'. But, as Anthony Mandal points out in the introduction to the edition under review, Austen must in fact have read *Self-Control* at least three times, and that she learned something from it is unquestionable. It, rather than Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, was 'the sensation of the year' (xiii) when they both appeared in 1811, and it is, of course, one of the ironies of history that Austen's astonishing success has meant that most readers first come across the name of Brunton as a footnote in editions of Austen's letters.

Pickering and Chatto's Chawton House Library series is doing important and necessary work in helping to re-introduce reader to the forgotten novels of the long eighteenth century, written by women such as Brunton. Mandal's edition of *Self-Control* is a valuable addition to the series. It benefits from an admirably clear introduction, which sets the novel within the contexts of Brunton's life and the evangelical novel movement. The introduction also covers the novel's textual history and reception, and interestingly discusses the relationships between doubleness and discourse throughout the novel. Mandal embeds all of this within a broader discussion of the literary marketplace of the early nineteenth century, which helpfully summarises some of the key factors which led to Brunton's contemporary popularity. Among these are, of course, the transformation of the novel into a form perceived as capable of providing moral improvement, widespread interest in the possibility of representing women's lived experience in new ways, and a growing appetite for 'psychological portraiture' (xxxix). Mandal argues correctly that although the flowering of the evangelical novel was short, it had profound effects on the development of the novel form.

The edition has been carefully prepared. Mandal chooses the first edition for his copy-text, clearly explaining the rationale for this choice in the introductory Note on the Text. Collation against the four editions published during Brunton's lifetime, the 1832 edition published by Bentley for the Standard Novels series, and the pirated Boston and Philadelphia editions of 1811 has also been carefully and scrupulously done. Textual variants are noted unobtrusively but exactly, and silent corrections are all noted and listed.

This edition also profits from a select (and well-chosen) bibliography, and a brief chronology of Mary Brunton's life. Brunton's dedicatory letter to Joanna Baillie, and her Advertisement to the second edition are also reproduced in this edition, providing further useful context. The endnotes are judiciously managed to provide sufficient information without overwhelming the reader.

Self-Control is, Mandal points out, a ‘messy, rich and rewarding text’ (xxxix). Despite Jane Austen’s criticisms about its verisimilitude, it is true that *Self-Control* is worth reading. The novel has its faults, but Laura’s trials, tribulations and misadventures form an exciting narrative, and the work’s focus on the importance of self-denial and self-control in the face of almost unbearable sorrow is generally well managed. We are lucky to have a new scholarly edition which so admirably points its readers to the rewards of the text.

‘The tranquil current of domestic happiness affords no materials for narrative’, writes Brunton at the end of *Self-Control* (356). For Jane Austen, of course, the opposite was to be true, and Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade’s *In Search of Jane Austen: The Language of the Letters* reminds us of precisely how important the domestic sphere was to Austen. Tieken-Boon van Ostade takes a corpus linguistics approach to Jane Austen’s writing, but unusually her focus is on Austen’s letters, rather than the language of the novels. The aim of this work is to ‘throw light on Jane Austen’s linguistic identity in as far as it can be reconstructed from her letters’ (5), and the author argues that Austen’s letters provide a valuable opportunity for sociolinguistic analysis, because they are as close as possible to ‘the spoken language of the period’ (6). The sociolinguistic method is carefully and meticulously explained in the Introduction, and the strengths and limitations of this approach in relation to Austen criticism have obviously been considered by the author, although greater immersion in the existing scholarship on Austen would have been beneficial to this monograph. For example, the author asserts in the Introduction that ‘studies of Jane Austen’s *language* are few and far between’ (1; original italics). While it may be true that full-length studies limited only to Austen’s language are rare, in fact it is almost impossible to read a work of criticism on Austen that does *not* engage with her style and language. A number of key works of Austen scholarship which deal with language in relation to other subjects are missing from the bibliography. In my view, Mary Poovey’s *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer*, Claudia Johnson’s *Jane Austen: Women, Politics and the Novel*, and Marilyn Butler’s *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* would have been particularly helpful to the author in formulating her argument about Austen’s ‘linguistic identity’.

While the focus of the monograph remains firmly on the linguistic features of Austen’s writing in the letters, it does also cover other ground, such as the historical context and conventions governing letter-writing in Austen’s period, and Austen’s epistolary network. The more strictly linguistic analysis is divided among five chapters, and covers, among other subjects, spelling, grammar, neologisms and innovations, and Austen’s use of self-corrections, short forms, punctuation, ‘vulgar’ or cant words, and conventional or polite phrasing. Extensive discussion of these subjects allows Tieken-Boon van Ostade to draw a number of conclusions about Austen’s linguistic identity, and about Austen’s singularity – perhaps the most interesting of which is that Jane Austen is frequently misrepresented in the *OED*, and there may be a number of her first uses which do not appear in that dictionary. Nonetheless, Tieken-Boon van Ostade argues that Austen was not in the vanguard of linguistic change: ‘Her language is at times conservative, while at other times it appears to have set its own pace of change, irrespective of larger developments going on around her’ (230), and that ‘in several linguistic features Jane Austen’s usage goes against the trend of the times’ (229).

Overall, *In Search of Jane Austen* contains few conclusions that will surprise Austen scholars, although it does offer strong evidence for a slightly altered dating of *The Watsons* (1805-1806), rather than the one based solely on family tradition (1803-1805). The volume also thoroughly and painstakingly provides the linguistic evidence for a number of assertions which might previously have been based on intuition or common sense, such as that Austen’s changing forms of address (‘My Dear X’, ‘My Dearest X’) in the letters reflect the degree of closeness to the recipient, or that increasing intimacy with a correspondent was marked by a change in tone and style in the letters. It demonstrates exemplary caution and modesty in

making its claims, pointing out where this kind of analysis cannot give definitive answers, and it is clearly an excellent example of the sociolinguistic approach to written text. Its many tables and graphs, and the Appendices, are helpful in presenting and summarising the argument, and these are likely to prove very useful to scholars in the future.

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John Wiltshire, *The Hidden Jane Austen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xii + 195. £17.99 (pb). ISBN 9781107643642.

In his elegant new study, John Wiltshire offers a sophisticated account of the subtleties of Jane Austen's art that is as much an examination of as a tribute to it. Austen fans will be disappointed and scholars relieved to find that *The Hidden Jane Austen* does not aim to provide yet another spurious account of the novelist's private life or a biographical interpretation of her novels. Rather, Wiltshire, like John Mullan in his recent *What Matters in Jane Austen?* (2012), demonstrates that the complexity and power of Austen's art lies in crucial details that escape the first-time reader, underscoring the importance of re-reading Austen, as well as the pleasure that derives from it. With its focus on the hidden, 'the silences in the novels' (4), Wiltshire uncovers 'the secrets of Austen's plotting' (5); he explores the interconnection between the novels' dramatization of attention and memory, central concerns for Austen, and their manipulation of the reader's own attention. The unconscious failings of memory are as important to this study as remembering. In these Wiltshire locates the 'unromantic intelligence' of Austen's work. As in *Jane Austen and the Body* (1992), Wiltshire develops this central idea not as a co-opting argument that unevenly binds her work but treats each novel as a stand-alone work with a distinct 'hidden' agenda.

One of the most illuminating points of this book is the examination of Austen's careful use of syntax, which carries meanings often hidden from the characters. Wiltshire invites the reader to 'pay attention to the rhythms and cadences of her prose as if it were poetry' (6). Emotions in Austen are often lodged in the novels' 'discursive gaps' (9), in dramatised silences, understatements, and what the narratives conceal by controlling the reader's attention. The modern psychological and psychiatric understandings of memory Wiltshire uses to support his reading of the novel seem here unnecessary as he convincingly demonstrates the inner logic and structure of the narratives.

An 'open text' (10), *Northanger Abbey* has little room for the hidden, but its treatment of memory and attention anticipates Austen's interest in these issues. Wiltshire identifies in *Sense and Sensibility* a novel that is interested in 'the processes of concealment' (30): secrets are found both in the plot and in the narrative. With this novel Austen introduces the technique of lodging her characters' emotions within the rhythms of their speech and of intimating silences that invite the reader to imagine the character's emotions.

Opening with Elizabeth's response to Darcy's smile in his portrait at Pemberley, the discussion of *Pride and Prejudice* focuses on how the novel manipulates the readers' 'reading memory' (52): readers are invited to recall a past that has in fact been tampered with by the characters' misremembering. The novel 'treats the memories of its characters' while 'the narrative manipulates the memory of its reader' (61) simultaneously. Memory also appears as an ethical question.

Wiltshire dedicates two separate chapters to *Mansfield Park*. The most striking element of his discussion is not its subtle analysis of the novel's treatment of self-examination and self-knowledge in the context of Enlightenment and Protestant thought but its radical and

surprisingly moving rereading of Mrs Norris, possibly Austen's most unpleasant character. Wiltshire finds behind Mrs Norris's cruelty and love of money a woman governed by an unacknowledged yet far-reaching pain, that she is not a mother and is unloved. Focusing next on the figure of Fanny Price, Wiltshire considers *Mansfield Park* as the first 'narrative of displacement' (94). The novel explores the psychological impact of being removed from one environment to another, Fanny's hidden wound, buried in 'the rhythms and dexterities of Austen's prose' (112), where silences perform much of the novel's 'emotional work' (100). Her passivity, which so often puzzles and frustrates readers, is a coping strategy that allows her to deal with unwanted feelings of resentment and rebellion that jeopardise the assimilation to Mansfield she so desperately wants.

Underlining the intensely aural nature of Austen's narratives, the chapters on *Emma* and *Persuasion* focus on the issue of overhearing and Austen's radical reworking of this common theatrical device. This narrative tactic allows Austen to give the reader the illusion of having access to two inner lives simultaneously, that of the characters overheard and the consciousness of the heroine overhearing. This 'technical ligature' (146) also manipulates the reader's attention. The heroine's capacity to attend takes on 'a high ethical value' (146). Where *Emma*'s focus on the future interferes with this ability, an overwhelming past affects Anne's attention.

Wiltshire offers sophisticated, convincing, and enjoyable close readings of Austen's novels, outside of the current dominant historicist considerations; a welcome approach that reminds readers of Austen's great technical prowess and the endless pleasure of rereading.

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Angela Escott, *The Celebrated Hannah Cowley: Experiments in Dramatic Genre, 1776-1794. Gender and Genre 7*. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012. Pp. xiii + 299. £60. ISBN 9781848930803.

In the late eighteenth-century resurgence of women playwrights, Hannah Cowley was celebrated for her witty comedies, a reputation that Angela Escott's *The Celebrated Hannah Cowley: Experiments in Dramatic Genre, 1776-1794* seeks to enlarge. In this first full-length, scholarly assessment of Cowley's dramatic oeuvre, Escott argues that, together with the comedies, Cowley's experiments with tragedy, farce, interlude, pantomime, and 'mixed drama' or melodrama, long tagged as conservative and reactionary, criticize political and social inequities. A refreshing reconsideration of Cowley's contributions to Romantic drama, the book examines three of Cowley's works existing only in manuscript, including a newly identified pantomime scene, alongside newly-discovered letters. By collating manuscripts with printed versions of the plays and locating the works in their historical context, Escott shows that the 'most successful female comic dramatist of the 1770s and 1780s' (212) was also a radical in her gender politics, even as she sought to perform within the bounds of eighteenth-century norms for femininity.

Arranged primarily by literary mode and partly by chronology, the book is framed by chapters on Cowley's comedies: the first discusses Cowley's innovative borrowing from male and female playwrights of the Restoration for her early plays, and the last examines *The Town Before You* as the culmination of Cowley's artistic self-fashioning prior to her retirement from the theatre. Throughout, Escott asserts that Cowley uses comic conventions 'to articulate issues of women's role in marriage and in society,' and, by giving her female characters 'a central

position in the structures of the plays', mocks *bon ton* society and the political system (66). Against complaints of jingoism, Escott contends that Cowley feminizes conventional patriotism by linking love between her characters to love of country (62).

The second and third chapters treat the tragedies, *Albina* and *The Fate of Sparta*. Escott associates *Albina*, titled a tragedy and written in 1777, with the nascent Gothic drama influenced by theories of the sublime and the quest for identity in a British national myth. In contrast to Hannah More's *Percy* and Frances Burney's *Edwy and Elgiva*, *Albina* 'advocates a benevolent form of patriarchy' while exploring themes of civic virtue and transgressive passions (72-3). Given the play's short run in the offseason of 1779, Escott perhaps overstates the play's influence on the Gothic novel of the 1790s. Civic virtue represented in the heroine Chelonice is at the heart of Cowley's second tragedy, *The Fate of Sparta*, which criticizes 'despotic abuse of power in royal courts, law courts and churches' (124) and advocates the importance of feminine qualities such as sensibility to the body politic.

Focusing critical attention on Cowley's farce, interlude, and pantomime in Chapter 4, Escott contributes significantly to our understanding of the cultural importance of these ephemeral forms. The biting satire that they permitted enabled Cowley to expose more stridently (than in her full-length plays) such themes as inequities in women's education, the abuse of language, and the excesses of the elite.

Escott reads Cowley's most elaborate experiment, the mixed drama or melodrama *A Day in Turkey; or, the Russian Slaves* (first performed in 1791), as an engagement with the imperial project that both veils political satire through comedy and 'disturbs simple binaries through the use of parody, distancing . . . and the juxtaposition of sentimental and comic' (179). Her brief treatment of the play's use of racial stereotypes reveals the need for more debate on this topic (152). In contrast to Escott's defense of *Turkey* as a revolutionary work, Cowley retreated from this position in the milder version published in the 1813 *Works*.

Although Escott argues Cowley was a 'workman-like dramatist' (28) with no trajectory to her career, the arrangement of chapters nevertheless suggests that Cowley's preference for wit over gesture and spectacle began and ended her dramatic writing (208). Having found her voice through experimentation with a variety of dramatic modes, Cowley also discovered it to be out of fashion by 1794-5. Although not the focus of her book, Escott's acceptance of Cowley's explanation that she left the theatre when taste declined after the enlargement of the theatres and the consequent broadening of the play-going public contradicts the argument sustaining the rest of the book. Nevertheless, the final chapter shows persuasively that Cowley's self-identification as a serious artist, like the female sculptor of her final play, propelled her into writing poetry – an aspect of Cowley's career deserving further attention.

The inconsistent use of Frances Burney's and Dorothea Celesia's names and murky reproductions of some of the illustrations mar an otherwise fine book. A noteworthy and compelling contribution to Pickering and Chatto's series on gender and genre, this book will appeal to scholars of the literary history of drama and writing by women of the late eighteenth century.

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Allan I. Macinnes and Douglas J. Hamilton, eds., *Jacobitism, Enlightenment and Empire, 1680-1820*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014. £60. ISBN 9781848924665.

Jacobitism provides the principal common thread to this volume of essays, although in truth it features marginally in several of them, and barely, if at all, in others. The underlying theme that the editors propose is an important one: namely, that the role of Jacobitism in the integration of Scotland and Scots within Britain's burgeoning empire, and to the history of that empire, can be characterized by positive adaptation, great reserves of ingenuity and fixity of purpose; and that, looking at the relationship in reverse, empire, and the prospects for advancement and prosperity with which it was associated, played a crucial part in denuding the Stuart cause of support from the Scottish landed classes.

Probably the first of these propositions will be a bit less familiar than the latter. It is useful, nevertheless, to have the arguments developed strongly in a number of the chapters, especially those by one of the editors, Allan Macinnes and George K. McGilvary. An interesting tension to emerge between Macinnes's chapter and one by Stuart Nisbet, on the rise of Captain William McDowall of Garthland and James Milliken as Caribbean plantation owners, bears on another of this volume's recurrent themes, the nature of Scottish patriotism. For McDowall and Milliken, their Scottishness played an apparently very limited role in their activities or indeed modes of operation; and that they ended up as Scottish landowners in the 1720s was partly accidental, although it also reflected the growing power of Glasgow in the Atlantic trades. Partly this was a function of chronology – they were operating before Scottish networks had become entrenched in the Caribbean – but it also bears on how we think about Scottish global adventuring in this period, and the degree to which Scottish activities in this context were distinctive. Esther Mijers looks at Scottish-Dutch connections, tracing and exploring not just their huge significance to Scottish society both before and after the Union, but also the degree to which they contributed to an essentially cosmopolitan habit and disposition especially amongst Scottish merchants. This undoubtedly aided them powerfully in building networks that, before 1707, helped them circumvent the impact of the Navigation and Alien Acts, but also provided a springboard to success in the imperial trades and adventuring post-1707. Sarah Barber writes about the growing opportunities that existed for Scots and Irish on the Caribbean islands as Church of England clergy.

Several of the chapters, including those by Daniel Szechi and Nicola Cowmeadow, concern Jacobitism as it has been more conventionally examined – as a subversive political force and important element in Scottish society. In what is a typically robust contribution, Szechi reconsiders the military reputation of James VIII and III, usually cursorily dismissed by historians relying on essentially Whiggish accounts of the final stages of the 1715 rebellion. Szechi makes a strong case for a rather different appraisal of James as a competent, even courageous and rather strategically astute military commander. Cowmeadow offers a shrewd and thoughtful account of the role of Margaret, Lady Nairn in supporting the interests of her husband and family before and after the '15 rising, raising a series of broader questions about the role of noblewomen in Scottish politics and society in this period, and neatly aligning Scotland with similar kinds of studies for noblewomen elsewhere in the British Isles. In perhaps the most original and compelling of the chapters, Jeffrey Stephen provides a detailed and rich reading of the famous Greenshields case of 1711.

The final three chapters are, like so much else in this volume, of considerable interest, but varied in focus. Liam McIlvanney's is the one that sits most oddly, exploring the 'global horizons' of Burns's verse and his reception in New Zealand, including his influence on Scottish diasporic writers in that country. Jean-Francois Dunyach uses the career of William

Playfair, brother of the much better known John, to probe the nature of enlightenment below the level of ‘charmed circle’, as Lord Dacre once referred to the Moderate literati of Edinburgh. Douglas Hamilton concludes the volume with a suggestive account of those Scots who campaigned against abolitionism, a topic that within the wider British context has begun to receive much closer attention. Hamilton argues, very plausibly, that Jacobitism had a submerged role to play in this, in that returned Jacobite gentry and plantation owners retained powerful memories of an earlier loss of property rights that conditioned their responses to the new threat posed by Thomas Clarkson and his abolitionist movement.

Uniformly scholarly and based on some careful and often intriguing research, viewed as a whole the essays in this volume will serve to draw wider attention to a very important project being led by Professor Macinnes on Jacobite adventuring and networks in the first British empire. Collections like this frequently suffer, however, from problems of overall coherence and uneasy editorial compromises; and I’m afraid this is true of this one. Some of the essays, nevertheless, undoubtedly deserve a wide readership.

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Mark Philp, *Reforming Ideas in Britain: Politics and Language in the Shadow of the French Revolution 1789-1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 309. £65. ISBN 9781107027282.

This volume is a compilation of Mark Philp’s essays written over the past twenty years on the English political debates that arose in response to the French Revolution. There are a few new additions, Chapters 5, 10 and 11, but the remaining eight essays in the volume have been published elsewhere and will be familiar to scholars in the field. Nevertheless, these were and remain seminal works that make an important contribution to historiography and this compilation in one volume is welcome.

In the Introduction Philp identifies himself with a broad selection of other well-known scholars in the field (including Dickinson, Colley, Eastwood, Smith, Claeys, O’Gorman, McCalman, Mee, Barrell and many more) who have contributed to an intellectual culture of discussion and debate that has influenced his own work (2–4). He pulls the essays together with the statement that ‘collectively, they attempt to understand what was going on’ at the time (1), and later: ‘to understand better how people negotiated [the] shifting sands’ of ideology and commitment at a time of great change (10). The essays overall provide a broad coverage that, as well as those on more mainstream topics, include chapters on Paine’s scientific experiments; Paine and Jefferson and the influence of the American Revolution on Britain and France; and Nelson and popular song, that illustrate the extent of Philp’s research in the area. Appropriately, ‘The fragmented ideology of reform’, Chapter 1, kicks off the volume, and many roads then lead from there. I will not here discuss the previously published chapters but focus on the new ones.

Chapter 5, ‘Failing the republic’ considers the fate of Classical republican virtue in the eighteenth century. The classical virtue envisaged an individual’s duty to their *patrie* as going beyond rules and laws and sacrificing all in a higher form of morality. This ‘scale morality’ underlies such republican thinking. But Philp makes the point that British political thought in the eighteenth century disrupted and displaced this classical republican inheritance and the instrumental factors here were ‘the acknowledgement of self-interest; the recognition of legitimate opposition; the depoliticisation of virtue; and the revaluation of the nature of

punishment in law' (137). Such shifts were due to the increasing fragmentation of the republican tradition as it vied with a range of newer incompatible developments within politics and society. This is an interesting and thought-provoking chapter but perhaps it warrants further exploration within a broader context than that of this volume.

Chapter 10 considers how far the conceptual components of a doctrine of collective self-determination can be identified in the later eighteenth century. Philp identifies this as a period of change in both the internal character of states and external inter-state relations. A shift towards recognition of the sovereignty of the people and the concept of representation were central to this change and a number of contemporary thinkers, particularly in France, adopted such ideas and came close, in part, to formulating an idea of collective self-determination. Yet ultimately, Philp concludes that the idea as then conceived is too unstable, deeply flawed and incoherent to form a history of the concept. Chapter 11 continues on a similar theme to consider the tendency of scholars of political thought or intellectual history to view the 'march of ideas in ways that ascribe an order and coherence to people's thinking and acting' that does not reflect how they actually 'experienced the world' (288). He argues that there needs to be a greater focus on contextualising such conceptual change more broadly and to consider the 'relationships between words and ideas, practices and commitment' in Britain in the 1790s (288). He also makes the point that scholars have been rather too ready to assume that radicals believed their hopes and aspirations for reform were about to be realised. In fact they were celebrating merely that the world was open to remodelling, to being 'rethought' as he puts it (289). There were many different ways in which those involved in the debates envisaged the challenge to the status quo. This is not in itself new but Philp explores the idea with interesting examples and a fresh look at the discussions within the London Corresponding Society.

Overall, this volume pursues and extends Philp's major theme – that popular politics in Britain during the French Revolution was more diverse, fragmented, inconsistent and innovative than perhaps historians have hitherto identified. This is a valuable thesis that may, by now, be a familiar one, but to which Philp brings new insights that invite a fresh reading of the volume as a whole.

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Marisa Linton, *Choosing Terror: Virtue, Friendship and Authenticity in the French Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 323. £67. ISBN 9780199576302.

The list of witnesses at Camille Desmoulins' wedding to Lucile Duplessis in December 1790 reads like a *Who's Who* of Parisian radicalism in the early Revolution. The groom's fellow journalists, Brissot and Mercier, were there along with Paris's future mayor, Pétion, and Desmoulins' old schoolmate, Maximilien Robespierre. By August 1794, there were all, bar Mercier, dead. Mercier was lucky. He survived, but then, as Madame Roland noted, he was 'a zero in the Convention'.

Being a politician was a dangerous business in Revolutionary France and Marisa Linton's *Choosing Terror* aims to explain why so many political careers ended in death at the hands of one-time allies and former friends in 1793-94. Tens of thousands of ordinary men and women died violent deaths that year, but this is not the Terror that interests Linton. Instead, her focus is fixed firmly, rather too firmly at times, on 'the politicians' terror' (2), the purges, show

trials and *coups* that dispatched one faction after another, Girondins, Hébertistes, Dantonistes and Robespierristes, to the guillotine in 1793-94. The numbers involved are small, an appendix lists sixty-odd victims of this terror (291-2), but Linton argues that these men's deaths were especially significant because of their prominence and because 'this terror was at the heart of the revolutionary project' (12). Unlike most of the Terror's other victims, these men also left an obligingly enormous trail of published sources and Linton has mined these extensively to construct her narrative of the high politics of Terror. This narrative, like the book's steadily dwindling *dramatis personae*, is a familiar one, but Linton brings new arguments to bear on this well-rehearsed story and while these do not always convince they will generate debate.

The first of these, and the most persuasive, involves the importance Linton attaches to individual agency and choice. In place of contemporaries' self-serving demonization of Robespierre as the sole architect of Terror, Linton stresses instead the calculated, often crudely tactical, choices Revolutionaries made over time, both individually and collectively, that led to the Terror. Historians will doubtless debate the details here but the claim that Terror evolved gradually, as 'a collective choice', (188) still carries weight. As Carrier, the *conventionnel* who oversaw the notorious *noyades* at Nantes but a figure curiously absent here, later protested, the entire Convention was responsible for the Terror, right 'down to the president's bell', and Linton's analysis seems to support this classic Montagnard defence. This emphasis on agency is a commonsense corrective to the social or ideological determinism of so many Revolutionary histories but if Linton's politicians chose Terror over time, they also chose it for diverse reasons. Chief among these was their shared 'commitment to the ideology of political virtue' (7), their concern with being seen to be men of virtue and the tensions this obsession with authenticity gave rise to. Virtue was undoubtedly important for many Revolutionaries, but it is made to bear a very heavy explanatory burden here as every important debate, every critical decision, is ultimately explained as, even reduced to, an expression of the politics of virtue. Paradoxically perhaps, given her insistence on individual agency, Linton's politicians appear increasingly imprisoned by this ideal, incapable of acting independently of 'the relentless logic of political virtue' (289).

The final strand of Linton's argument involves the personal ties and emotional factors that influenced decision-making in the Convention. Fear, unsurprisingly, looms large here but so do affection, ambition and animosity, and Linton has carefully reconstructed the complex web of personal relationships and social networks that shaped many deputies' everyday experiences. This is useful, but the neo-Namierite reading of Revolutionary politics sometimes risks reducing the substance of serious political debates to the stuff of individuals' antipathies and anxieties about their own authenticity. In this sense, Linton's politicians are not just insiders but appear implausibly inward-looking too. The world they wrote about and worked in was, she claims, 'relatively enclosed – a small group of people who knew one another, who liked or disliked one another, trusted or distrusted one another and who chose sides accordingly', but this seems questionable at best (130). Certainly, Robespierre gradually withdrew into this kind of world but his colleagues did not. On the contrary, they corresponded with their constituents constantly and went *en mission* to the provinces in their hundreds, an experience scarcely even considered here. Crucially, they lived and worked under the relentless gaze of the Parisians who packed the Convention's galleries, who petitioned and harangued them daily and sometimes arrived armed and *en masse* to tell them, in unmistakably threatening terms, what to do. Those Parisians were an ever-present element of these politicians' experiences but, like the provinces and the war and the counter-revolution, they are little more than noises off here. This is a pity because Linton's account has much to say about some of the men who made the choices that led to Terror but, ultimately, tells us too little about the wider context in which those choices were made.

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Julia Swindells and David Francis Taylor, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Georgian Theatre, 1737-1832*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 758. £110. ISBN 9780199600304.

‘What is no longer in question is the cultural centrality of theatre in Georgian Britain’ (3), writes David Francis Taylor in the introduction to this *Oxford Handbook of the Georgian Theatre*, encapsulating both the core message of this volume and the cumulative effect of the recent developments in theatre history scholarship upon which it builds. The last quarter-century has witnessed a turn from studying drama as literature to drama as performance; from a focus on the playwright alone to an understanding of theatre as a fundamentally collaborative endeavour, involving the audience, as much as those on and behind the stage, in the generation of meaning; and from text as the exclusive object of analysis to an exploration of the host of other arts that made up the increasingly spectacular theatrical product. The new style of theatre history has also been firmly committed to situating dramatic performance within its cultural and historical context, and has thereby demonstrated the theatre of this era to be a vital crucible for the formation and contestation, not merely the reflection, of attitudes towards gender, race, class, nation and empire. Moreover, this research has exposed the manifold legacies left by the Georgian theatre to contemporary culture, through for instance the emerging celebrity culture that surrounded its actors (as discussed by Helen McPherson in Chapter 11), or innovations such as melodrama, which, as Matthew S. Buckley writes, ‘informs in fundamental ways both the history of modern narrative and that of modern culture and consciousness’ (459). To summarise, advocate and expand this new scholarly agenda has been the task of this *Handbook*, one in which it succeeds abundantly.

The volume is broken down into eight parts, each comprised of several chapters, which explore these themes in depth. Part I outlines the new theoretical approaches to Georgian theatre history, arguing in particular for an increased emphasis on the audience, on theatre as performance and on adopting research methodologies sensitive to the collaborative nature of theatrical production. Part II offers useful summaries of the developing relationship between the theatre and the state, and the effect of changing regulatory regimes upon dramatic writing, publication and performance.

Part III examines the various forces shaping performance styles in this era, including different theories of acting, theatre design, celebrity culture, commercialisation, and the political and stylistic implications of the concept of ‘legitimate’ and ‘illegitimate’ drama. The growing contribution of the other arts – painting, music, dance – to theatre is the subject of Part IV, a development which, as Shearer West argues, stimulated intense debates about whether theatre was becoming too visually ‘spectacular’ at the expense of aural attention to text (Chapter 16).

Alongside fresh perspectives on standard theatrical genres such as comedy, tragedy and opera, Part V also offers a series of excellent introductions to Georgian generic innovations, such as pantomime, gothic drama and melodrama, which further underline the innovative dynamism of Georgian theatre and its important legacies for later theatre and culture. Part VI builds on recent research challenging the idea of Romantic anti-theatricality, through a series of essays exposing the serious engagement with the theatre that underpinned the work of writers like Byron, Shelley, Godwin and Austen.

The work of women in the theatre, as actresses, but also as theatre managers and playwrights, is the subject of Part VII, reflecting the fact that recent scholarship has increasingly rendered visible women's vital contribution to theatrical culture. Far from being antithetical to women's writing, the Georgian theatre was a space in which, as Paula R. Backscheider observes (Chapter 34), women such as Elizabeth Inchbald could achieve equal, if not greater success as playwrights to their male contemporaries. Finally, the work of the theatre in the formation of attitudes towards race and empire is made abundantly clear in Part VIII. Prithi Kanakamedala describes, for instance, how plays frequently took inspiration from reports of slave rebellions in the colonies, but depicted them in a way that ensured 'the perpetuation of racial fantasies, the alleviation of white anxieties, and the erasure of the potential agency of the enslaved' (687).

The volume is not completely comprehensive; there is no chapter on masculinity, for instance, while the question of class remains relatively underdeveloped, despite the evident importance of both of these topics for the Georgian theatre. Nevertheless, the breadth of material covered in this 'disciplinary map' (1) remains impressive. Furthermore, many of these essays are exceptionally clear in their presentation of concepts and every chapter includes a short list of further reading, making them an indispensable teaching resource, as well as an excellent starting point for researchers looking for an introduction to these topics. Showcasing the very latest research in this field in an accessible and detailed manner, and capturing all of the vibrancy and dynamism of the Georgian theatre, this *Handbook* will remain a vital resource for those teaching and researching Georgian culture for many years to come.

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Patrick Spedding and Paul Watt, General eds.; Ed Cray, David Gregory and Derek B. Scott, Volume eds., *Bawdy Songbooks of the Romantic Period*. 4 vols. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2011. Pp. 1952. £350. ISBN 9781848930292.

These four volumes contain over 1,100 song texts, transcribed from songbooks published in the 1830s and '40s. These 'songsters' captured songs performed and circulated across many decades before that – hence the application of the word 'Romantic' to this edition. The use of the period label to describe these saucy songs is partly a poke in the ribs of Romanticism's high poetic seriousness. But also, if a foundational movement of Romanticism across Europe is a self-conscious and democratically inclusive attempt to revalue oral folk cultures, then the collecting of these songs in the 1830s and '40s has to be a constituent of that broader effort. That such songs made it into print shows how powerful was that Romantic impulse to collect and capture otherwise evanescent and momentary cultural forms.

The editors' introductions and supporting apparatus are excellent. All puns, slang, euphemisms, double-entendres, innuendoes, and historical and literary references are explained in precise and necessary detail, making the endnotes an entertaining read in their own right. The overall quality of the presentation and scholarship is exemplary. Pickering and Chatto must also be praised for supporting editors in their pursuit of under-appreciated corners of the Romantic period, yet again. Given the price, university libraries are the only likely audience for these once 'popular songs'. A paperback follow-up would be an ideal next step.

The texts are not always bawdy: they range from the lewd, to the parodic through to the sentimental. Still, the lewd predominates. Not a single hole or protuberance, flap, fold, excrescence or seepage of the Georgian human body is left unridiculed by these mostly

anonymously-authored songs. A few choice song titles will illustrate the kinds of content on offer: ‘Johnny’s Lump’, ‘Moll Slobbercock’, ‘Kiss My Duff’, ‘Cock-eyed Sukey!’, ‘Mary’s Hairy Pouch’, ‘The Ball Cock’, ‘The Lady’s Wound’, ‘The Buttered Carrot’, ‘The Gape Hole’, ‘Mutton Fresh’, ‘Mike Hunt’, ‘The Slap-up Cracksman’, and ‘The Middle Leg’. Such songs are a testament to the sheer fleshiness and eye-winking knowingness of the Georgian age, and to its raw joy in accent, dialect, slang, pun and put-down. Yet to label these texts with the plain word ‘song’ is to do a disservice to them; the sub-titles the collectors coin for their wares on their gloriously-composited title pages (emulated lovingly here) reveal the sheer linguistic glee they took in presenting their gaudy wares. These songs are variously introduced as ‘Queer Songs’, ‘Amatory Songs’, ‘Spreeish Songs’, ‘Bacchanalian and Double Entendre Songs’, ‘Laughable Songs’, ‘Sensitive Songs’, ‘Sporting Songs’, or ‘Randy, Roaring, Rousing, Tear-Up, Flare-Up Songs’; we are also to enjoy ‘Rum Chaunts’, ‘Dainty Ditties’, ‘Mouth-Watering Parodies’, ‘Rummy Toasts’, ‘Ticklish Staves’, ‘lecherous, slap-up tit bits’ and finally – my personal favourite – ‘Funny Fakements’. There is raucous variety here, even if the primary intention to entertain often makes the songs direct and simple in the delivery. Here’s an example of a take on a pastoral setting:

Mounting a Maid

A slap-up parody on ‘*Mountain Maid*’.

The mountain maid from her bower had hied.
To wash her q—m at the river side,
Where the radiant moon shone clear and bright,
On her latter-end so lilly white;
On a mossy bank lay a sheppard swain,
Who woke his pipe to a tuneful strain,
And so blithely and gay, were the notes he play’d,
That he quickly mounted the mounting maid.

She lay with pleasure quite oppressed,
While he lay close to her panting breast,
’Till he was out of breath they say,
And could, alas! no longer lay;
She took his pipe then in her hand,
Another tune to make him stand,
And so blithely and gay, where the tune he play’d
When he mounted again the mounting maid. (2, 395)

If quite typical of the collection overall, this song is more coy than most. It relies on a central replacement of ‘mountain’ by ‘mounting’ – and it takes this poetic slip as far as it can. It is full of the language of serious, stylised poetic feeling, and the only determinedly ‘bawdy’ elements are few and far between. But of course, the playing on the ‘pipe’, and its ‘standing’ – are obvious innuendoes – while the ‘q[ui]m’ and ‘latter end’ of the woman are laid bare: the singer dispenses with metaphorical cover for her, while being relatively delicate about the male parts. But once our drunken tittering has faded, such songs are in some ways empty vessels.

One of the central delights these volumes afford, is in presenting sexual terms which are still current nearly two centuries years later. The puns, the obsession with hair and legs, bottoms, breasts and – a dominant focus of course – the erect penis and the welcoming vagina – all carry on today in salacious brutal comedy just as they did in the late-night male supper rooms of the late Romantic period. Of course, for all the ‘ass’, ‘muffs’, ‘dildoes’, ‘bollocks’,

‘boning’, ‘pricks’, and ‘cocks’, there are many figurations of genitalia and sexual toys which are not at all current now. The volumes constitute a language-historian’s treasure trove: Derek B. Scott might have located the earliest occurrence of the word ‘randy’ (in its common modern sense, 4, xxxi), which seems an apt as a headline for the many other discoveries to be made here.

The alignment of radical and pornographic publications in this period means that the circulation of these songs might have had a political import, in collecting around reform (through the work of William Benbow, for example, who is one among many names the editors provide). Some political expressions were more taboo than pornography; both were often published by the same brave pioneers, who circulated piratical editions of big sellers too (Benbow being a prime example again). But as the bawdy songs are presented here, any politicized purpose is hard to discern. The songs’ primary objective is clearly to titillate and entertain rather than to bring the state to its knees. There is always rebellion of a kind in the carnivalesque reversals of comedy, of course. But together these songs do not even mount an attack on normative sexual mores. The songs’ genital focus can seem grotesquely restrictive in its hetero-normativity. Any suggestions of homosexuality, for example, are fleeting at best. As Derek B. Scott points out, Mike Hunt’s name is, in the end, a pun, and he is not the male lover of Job Halls, as is implied in their eponymous song (4, xxv–xxvi; 115–116). Even the most politically explicit of the songs, as David Gregory writes, only ‘...reveal a mild oppositional spirit and a certain cynicism or scepticism with regard to the dignity, probity and competence of the governing elite’ (3, xxii). The boldness to collect bawdy songs, might only indicate a stale commercial alertness to a salacious male market.

The songs are replete with the scars of the times, though the deliberate and desensitised comedic sensationalism of the songs, means we have to be cautious about how we approach songs such as ‘The Sailor’s Yard’ (2, 138–40), which tells of a sailor who gets much of his penis blown off while ‘engaged with the French’. The hapless Jack Junk takes Morrison’s pills to restore himself to lusty vigour, only to suffer an effect akin to that which surprises the Jack of ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’. The excess growth of Jack Junk’s penis eventually kills him and ‘shook the whole country for fifty miles around’. More concretely, the songs offer rich pickings for historians in search of details of life in London – specific streets, parks, pubs, and singing and drinking venues are named – alongside occasional appearances of technologies like electricity, steam and macadamized roads – while famous figures of the musical stage are constantly nodded to.

Reading so many songs in search of the same goal, means the laughs inevitably stop, but so might scholarly curiosity. Women are being picked apart here, the meat of their flesh hacked into – and it is indicative that there are a good number of songs set in butcher’s shops, with mutton, beef and pork put to constant euphemistical work. Even in the songs in which men are ridiculed and women momentarily empowered, it is always apparent that we are being sung to by men, and as an assumed audience of privileged supper-club men, a characteristic the editors point out. This all-male culture means that the exposed female body is the central spectacle we are enjoined to leer at and laugh about; there is also a lot of sniggering at working-class culture, at rustic accents, at the desperation of the poor and uneducated, the naïve and morally corruptible.

Such material tells us something in the extreme, in the chiaroscuro light of male arousal, in the garish excess of display, in the lusty, beer- and gin-fuelled urban song culture that even its participants couldn’t recall much of the following morning. To try to dig through the garish abrasiveness, to find identities and commentaries on culture and society from the slick wit and prattle of these anonymously-written songs, is to risk forgetting what puerile, ill-thought-out prejudicial slop such cultural forms are sometimes made of. There are certainly jewels here, but to find them a lot of frogs have to be kissed. Nevertheless, these resilient, tenacious editors

have done a fine and important job in opening the door on a dank, dark corner of the early nineteenth century that many scholars will not know even existed.

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Spotlight: Romanticism and Science

Jon Klancher, *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences: Knowledge and Cultural Institutions in the Romantic Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 322. £60. ISBN 9781107029101.

Roderick Tweedy, *The God of the Left Hemisphere: Blake, Bolte Taylor, and the Myth of Creation*. London: Karnac Books, 2013. Pp. 352. £23.89. ISBN 1780491018.

The last few decades saw first a trickle, then a torrent, of literary criticism on the topic of ‘literature and science’. One likely proximate cause of interest in this topic is the fundamental restructuring of the university that has taken place in this same period: as more universities privilege STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and math), position themselves primarily as recruiting grounds for business, and focus on forms of knowledge that can be ‘translated’ into products outside academic discourse, faculty in disciplines and fields left in the cold by this move – for example, much of the humanities – have had to consider anew the place of their intellectual endeavors and pursuits under the broad rubric of ‘arts and sciences’. ‘Literary Darwinists’ have concluded that literary critical methods must be disciplined by the natural sciences; others have argued, more ecumenically, that past relationships between literary and science anticipate the results of a contemporary science (e.g., Alan Richardson’s *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind*). Expanding on Gillian Beer’s pioneering approach in *Darwin’s Plots*, still others have argued that literary elements, such as narrative form or metaphor, are essential parts of the sciences, while historicizing critics have underscored the differences between past and present understandings of the relationship between the arts and sciences. Romantic literature has played an important role in all of these approaches, in large part because both the sciences and the concept of ‘literature’ took on their fully modern forms in the Romantic era. Klancher’s *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences: Knowledge and Cultural Institutions in the Romantic Age* and Roderick Tweedy’s *The God of the Left Hemisphere: Blake, Bolte Taylor, and the Myth of Creation* both exemplify this ever-increasing interest in the history of relationships between the arts and sciences, and both take Romantic authors as their focal points, yet each also takes a new and unusual perspective on this relationship.

Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences focuses on the ‘the arts and sciences’ as a Romantic-era concept that Klancher describes, I think correctly, as ‘an enabling framework of modern literary and cultural studies’ (1), and one that displaced the earlier concept of ‘the republic of letters’. Much of Klancher’s book focuses on the emergence of ‘arts-and-sciences institutions’ (such as the Royal Institution and the British Institution) and Klancher’s key insight is to connect the term ‘arts and sciences’ to ‘institution’. There is no doubt that ‘institution’ was a key Romantic-era concept – it was against ‘institutions’, for example, that William Godwin wrote *Of Political Justice* – but Klancher encourages us to see this concept anew. He argues that the concept and practice of institution was itself instituted in the Romantic era, as part of cultural battles among groups each seeking to determine relationships among the mechanical arts, the fine arts, and the sciences. In the seven chapters of his book, Klancher emphasizes the contingency of these battles by focusing on a wide range of authors, groups, and topics, including an account of the new figure of ‘the administrator’ (Chap. 2); debates over a new mode of book history (Chap. 3); and Romantic-era modes of historical writing about the history of science (Chap. 5).

Although Klancher does not aim to provide a comprehensive history of his topic, his book contains a wealth of details, and will be of great interest to scholars interested in the institutionalization of ‘the arts and sciences’ in this period. Yet one has the nagging sense that Klancher’s primary goals – interrogating the origins of ‘the arts and sciences’, the power asymmetry between the two halves of that pairing, and the relationship of that asymmetry to institutions – require a more reflexive form than the one in which his account is cast. Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of the cultural ‘field’, for example, upon which Klancher relies heavily, would have been such a point for further reflection. The field-concept highlights both contingency and reciprocal relations among many actors, yet this sense of the term emerged in mid-nineteenth century physics (and was employed almost immediately by neoclassical economists as a way of instituting a ‘scientific’ economics) – a fact that is methodologically significant for, but not discussed in, Klancher’s account. And although Klancher productively reads the Romantic-era figure of the institutional administrator through the link that Theodor Adorno noted between the concept of culture and the practice of administration (“Whoever speaks of *culture*,” wrote Adorno, “speaks of *administration* as well,” qtd. 51), Klancher does not pursue reflexively the implications of such a claim for the resolutely historicist and theoretically modest form of his book, which itself seems committed to ‘the administrative view’ of assembling, distributing, evaluating, and organizing. To put this another way, *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences* is a book for academic specialists on Romantic-era literature and culture – by no means a bad thing, but a fact that remains in tension with the broader aims and potential of Klancher’s book.

If *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences* is a book for specialists, Roderick Tweedy’s *The God of the Left Hemisphere: Blake, Bolte Taylor and the Myth of Creation* is something else entirely. Tweedy’s title seems designed to give the reader fair warning that this will be a rather unorthodox book, and the text does not disappoint that expectation. Yet as is often the case when William Blake is involved, this is ultimately a good kind of heterodoxy. The ‘Bolte Taylor’ of the title refers to Harvard neuroscientist Jill Bolte Taylor, and Tweedy’s thesis, in brief, is that William Blake both anticipated and allows us to understand Bolte Taylor’s neurological account of the difference between ‘left hemispheric’ and ‘right hemispheric’ approaches to the world.

Those fearful of a relatively simple symmetry between Blake and modern neuroscience may find the first four chapters (Part One of the book) concerning, for Tweedy argues there that ‘the qualities and functions ascribed by Blake to “Urizen” correspond remarkably closely to the activities and programs of what modern neuroscientists identify as the “left hemisphere” of the human brain’ (4). Yet even in these chapters, there is more going on than first meets the eye. Bolte Taylor, for example, is a rather singular neuroscientist, one who herself experienced a stroke and ‘whose [neurological-scientific] distinctions come from [that] actual personal experience’ (7). Tweedy does not seek to use purported scientific doxa to bolster his claims about Blake’s *oeuvre*. Rather, he picks Bolte Taylor precisely because of her singular and unique interpretation of brain functioning, one based on her own experience of her stroke, and dedicated to the ultimately cultural-therapeutic task of releasing the brain’s right hemisphere from its domination by the rationalizing and abstracting left hemisphere. The intriguing methodological result is that Blake is neither subordinated to neuroscience nor are Tweedy’s claims in danger of being ‘disproven’ should the neuroscientific doxa shift (as it inevitably will, given the nature of the sciences).

Yet it is really in the second half of the book that Tweedy’s account comes into its own. Blake now emerges not only as a medium for translating Bolte Taylor’s neuroscience, but also as a lens through which Tweedy can bring together and into view a series of additional scientific and popular-scientific claims: R. E. Leakey on the prehistoric origins of inequality; S. Taylor on the peaceful pre-historic city of Catal Huyuk; D. Grossman’s research, originally sponsored

by the U.S. military, on the difficulty of getting average soldiers to kill an enemy combatant; R. Sheldrake and I. McGilchrist on ‘the science delusion’.

It is likely obvious from this description that *The God of the Left Hemisphere* is not really literary criticism, nor does it draw upon much contemporary Blakean literary criticism (Tweedy relies most heavily on S. F. Damon’s 1924 *William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols*), and he cites approvingly texts such as E. Tolle’s *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment*. Yet these facts weigh less against the book than testify to the impact of Blake that has been felt by most of his readers: Blake is, in Tweedy’s account, not simply one literary author among many, about whom one must make ‘responsible’ critical claims, but rather a prophetic writer who asks us to reconsider fundamentally ourselves and the world in which we are living – an endeavor that, of necessity, forces us to depart from the narrow genre of literary criticism. While the result will not, I suspect, be to everyone’s liking, it is hard to deny that the spirit of Blake seems truly to shine through in many places in this book.

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Martin Priestman, *The Poetry of Erasmus Darwin: Enlightened Spaces, Romantic Times*. Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 308. £70. ISBN 9781472419545.

Erasmus Darwin has several times appeared as a member of the Lunar Society of Birmingham, that extraordinary constellation of physicians, industrialists, inventors, chemists and natural historians of the Enlightenment. He was a polymath if ever there was one, and Priestman quotes Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s description of him as ‘the everything, except the Christian! Dr Darwin possesses, perhaps, a greater range of knowledge than any other man in Europe, and is the most inventive of philosophical men’ (224). He was a reformer in his political beliefs, one who abominated slavery and approved of the American Revolution and, at least in its early stages, of the French Revolution. He was the author of three extraordinary book-length poems, *The Loves of the Plants* (1789), *The Economy of Vegetation* (1791), and *The Temple of Nature* (1803), which, as Priestman shows us, were almost four. Those poems, enlisting imagination under the banner of science, present natural history, especially botany but also and significantly the history of the earth, human history and a theory of evolution that was perhaps more important for his grandson Charles than is generally acknowledged. Along the way, in the body of the verse and in detailed prose footnotes, he presents a materialism akin to that of Lucretius, Darwin’s principal model, a political philosophy, a cosmos with its own mythology, a theory of knowledge, and much besides.

Priestman tackles Darwin head on, which means that the reach of his scholarship has to match a good part of Darwin’s polymathy; he succeeds, thanks to wide ranging and careful readings, in poetry and prose, in the history of the natural and human sciences, and in the social and political history of the late eighteenth century. He concentrates on the three big poems, along with the previously unpublished and abandoned ‘substantial fragment-poem on *The Progress of Society*’ (3). He indicates that not much is known about the latter, and remedies the situation by not only weaving an account of the writing of that poem into the core of his argument, but also by publishing a very useful edition of it as Appendix A. He provides clear summaries and guides to these four poems, and he treats them *as* poems as well as contributions to varied debates of the day. He shows how Darwin’s poetical techniques work, for example where he demonstrates that his ‘fundamental building block ... is the rigorously end-stopped

Popeian heroic couplet', which 'is the perfect vehicle for moving rapidly between diverse fields of knowledge' (37). He shows how the engravings illustrating the poems really contributed to them, and his interpretation of those engravings (some by Fuseli engraved by Blake) reinforce his reading of the texts. And, as part of his interpretative apparatus, Priestman uses Foucault's distinction between synchronic and diachronic accounts – the former representing spatial arrangement, as in gardens and Linnaean botany; the latter suited to developments through time, as in cosmology and evolution.

Historians have given us accounts of the English and Scottish Enlightenments; Priestman argues firmly for a *British* Enlightenment, in which Darwin, with his robust scepticism and radicalism, is a key figure, as we can see from the diagram of Darwin's networks (16). He was a founder of a Radical political society in Derby, his radicalism was apparent in his poems (especially *The Loves of the Plants*), and it was to prove both courageous and dangerous. In the wake of the French Revolution and the subsequent execution of King Louis, expressions of sympathy with France and democracy, and of philosophical and scientific ideas derived from France, were sometimes met with prosecution for sedition and even treason; capital punishment was a real threat, and gagging bills worked to suppress free speech. Priestman devotes a chapter to politics. He also has a chapter on myths, which Darwin treated as *scientific* allegories. Darwin was a Freemason, and perhaps had links to Rosicrucianism; he connected myths to scientific materialism, 'a world where a lusty paganism is alive and well' (167).

Darwin was a man of the Enlightenment, but one important for Romanticism; Priestman shows that most of the best-known Romantic writers borrowed from Darwin. He makes a case for Blake's indebtedness; he shows how Coleridge and Wordsworth were both influenced by and reacting against Darwin, whose verse had a massive influence on Shelley; and he connects Darwin to later Romantics and women poets.

Priestman has written a wide-ranging and cogent account of the Enlightenment underpinnings of Darwin's verse. He deserves a wide readership among students of English literature, Enlightenment culture, and the history of science.

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Warwick Mules, *With Nature: Nature Philosophy as Poetics Through Schelling, Heidegger, Benjamin and Nancy*. Chicago: Intellect, 2014. Pp. 272. \$43. ISBN 9781841505732.

Among the German Romantics, it has been said, being a genius was not in question; rather, the only question was what kind of genius one had chosen to be. The first task was to transcend Kant and then to transcend everyone else. Perhaps the most well known of these romantics was the young Friedrich Schelling, who took up the challenge of what Warwick Mules calls the 'Kantian gap' (50 ff) between things as they are in themselves and things as they are for us. Since, according to Kant, we have cognition only of the latter (the phenomenal world of the senses) the noumenal realm of things-in-themselves is forever inaccessible to us. Further, what cognition we do have is contingent because it relies on categories of the understanding and ideas of reason with which we find ourselves equipped. Such a stance was not acceptable to the young Schelling, nor is it to Warwick Mules. For one thing, in the act of recognizing the contingency of Kant's approach we reveal 'the possibility of a thinking and seeing otherwise

from the contingency of human knowledge' (50). This is nothing less than 'a potential for a subject to be in the "I think" of absolute thought' (51).

This analysis raises two fundamental questions for the reader of Mules's book. First, since we cannot have cognition (in the Kantian sense) of the Absolute, how are we to apprehend and talk about our experience of being in the 'I think' of absolute thought? Second, supposing that Schelling, Mules, and others can identify means by which we can communicate what it is to be in the 'I think,' why would we want to do this?

To his credit Mules tackles both questions head on. His treatment of the first takes us not only through the works of Schelling, which constitutes a major part of the book, but also through later Continental thinkers Martin Heidegger and Walter Benjamin, especially as they react to the poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin. He also draws on the twentieth-century German poet Paul Celan and contemporary figures such as the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy and modern bioartists, all with an aim to find, though poetics, a way to communicate what cannot be articulated from this side of the Kantian gap.

The second question, dealing with why we should want to move beyond conventional cognition, is motivated by implications of remaining content with the Kantian outlook, something our modern age has largely done. Kant's restriction of knowledge to phenomena fits well with an attempt to know nature through natural science, especially mechanistic science. The objects of nature are mere things just as they appear to the knowing subject. Since Kant rejects the possibility of knowledge of a substrate underlying things, the entities of nature can have no connectedness to other things. In the Kantian perspective the subject may be able to manipulate the natural world, but the subject operates apart from a nature that exists 'out there.' Here the subject is not 'with nature;' rather, nature is to be controlled. If it were possible to be metaphysically with nature, we could open ourselves to the possibility of new human-nature relations that would, Mules assumes, creatively revitalize how we grasp the ecological challenge we have as beings who are, after all, part of the whole that produced us.

This is not an easy work to read. To follow Mules as he helps us understand what being 'with nature' entails is, at least for this reviewer, extremely challenging. One vehicle that gives us a chance to be 'with nature' is art. Mules takes us through Heidegger's distinction between objects and things, the former regarded generically, often in association with usefulness or function. What art expresses, however, is the thing, presented in an existential encounter that takes us suddenly to a place we did not expect to be. The experience is laden with meaning because the thing, in its singularity, brings us into direct contact with reality at a deeper level than mere cognition. It is nature speaking to us in a third voice, not meant for the 'I' or 'you' of usual discourse, but for the earth. By reflecting on the experience we are open to new possibilities of what it means to be human with nature.

This is not an analysis that results in specific recommendations; rather, it is a call to grasp nature with radical openness as an ethical task. Mules sees the enterprise of being 'with nature' as a continuation of the Enlightenment project, but without throwing the self onto uncertain contingent ground as occurred in the late eighteenth century. He hopes to have found 'the light that shines through the post-Kantian abyss of reason' (201).

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Robert Mitchell, *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. Pp. 309. ISBN 9781421410883.

Everyone who has read *Frankenstein* knows that a preoccupation with the principle of life was characteristic of the Romantic era. Literary and scientific thinkers were fascinated by the question of what kind of vital power had to be added to bare matter to make living organisms. Mary Shelley's readers will recall that the 'spark of being' Frankenstein imparted to his creation was never explicitly specified. And indeed it continued to elude those who were seeking it in the laboratories and anatomy theatres of the time. In *Experimental Life*, Robert Mitchell tracks the elusive principle through a wide range of poetic, philosophical, and scientific writings of the period. His capacious and learned survey displays a vitality of its own, as it breathes life into dead texts and exhibits them in sometimes startling juxtapositions.

Mitchell takes some of his leading themes from recent work in science studies. He identifies experimentation as a feature of both the sciences and the arts in this period, and he adopts from Bruno Latour and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger the idea of 'ontogenesis' – the notion that experiments produce the novel entities that they also isolate for study. Borrowing from the historians of science Steven Shapin, Simon Schaffer, and Peter Dear, he argues that Wordsworth and Coleridge were engaged in an original and hybrid form of poetic experimentation in their *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), which both reflected and manipulated contemporary understandings of scientific experiment. He applies the label of 'abandoned experiment' to an unfinished essay by Coleridge on the theory of life, setting the 1816 essay against the background of the well-known dispute between the surgeons John Abernethy and William Lawrence, a celebrated confrontation between vitalist and materialist perspectives.

In a chapter on suspended animation, Mitchell describes the work of the surgeon John Hunter and the campaign to revive victims of drowning. He sketches the background of the developments in physiological theory that had led to the identification of sensitivity as a property of living matter. He then makes a rather surprising turn to argue that suspended animation was paralleled by the literary technique of suspension deployed in poems by John Keats and Percy Shelley. A chapter on the notion of medium or milieu discusses the ideas of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck and others on the relations between organisms and the circumstances in which they live. Another rather abrupt detour plunges Mitchell into the thickets of Hegel's philosophy – more deeply than I, for one, can follow him. The dialectical scheme into which he tries to fit the writings of Lamarck, Hegel, and the surgeon Richard Saumarez does not seem to fit with the chronological order of the texts under discussion. More straightforwardly, Mitchell's final chapter examines the fascination with plant life – its uncanny vitality and strange intertwining with human existence – in the poetry of Shelley and Wordsworth.

Some readers are likely to be unsettled by the more unpredictable turns of Mitchell's argument. He is clearly not interested in a chronological narrative of the development of ideas, but nor does he seem to be systematically exploring links between different discursive domains. He almost seems averse to taking the obvious path or illuminating the more apparent connections. Thus, in his fourth chapter, he introduces Thomas Trotter's book of 1807 on the 'nervous temperament', a slightly paranoid screed on the imported foodstuffs the author believed were sapping the digestive fortitude of the nation. Mitchell mentions in a footnote the writings of George Cheyne, who had explored the links between nervous sensitivity and exotic diets a few decades earlier. But, instead of delineating the genealogy of Trotter's work, he leaps to William Godwin's rather different species of paranoid fantasy, *Caleb Williams* (1794), and then to a speech made by Coleridge around the same time denouncing the slave trade. The links

between these texts seem tenuous on the level of ideas, although Mitchell fastens on their metaphorical dimension to draw out an implicit connection.

It is not obvious to me what more historically-minded readers will make of this. Mitchell's virtuosity is remarkable, his range is deeply impressive, and his readings of all the texts are original and creative. But he sometimes seems to be straining to find the parallels he is looking for, and it is often not clear why he chooses particular works to juxtapose with one another. It is gratifying to find that he has been stimulated by the work of historians of science, but my guess is that they will find his book difficult to assimilate in return. Generically, it may well appear to them as a bit of a monster.

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David Ward, *Coleridge and the Nature of Imagination: Evolution, Engagement with the World, and Poetry*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. £50. ISBN 9781137362612.

The nature and role of the human imagination was extensively theorised in early nineteenth-century literature, and it continues to be considered a central element of Romantic-era writing and philosophy in modern scholarship. David Ward offers a fresh perspective on this element of human experience by mapping Coleridge's imaginative work and philosophy of mind onto twentieth- and twenty first-century brain science and grounding it in an understanding of evolutionary biology. Ward's study focuses on how Coleridge theorised mental processes and his attempts to represent them in his creative work, and even invoke them in his reader.

Chapter 1 begins with an analysis of Coleridge's complex understanding of the relationship between thought and feeling. Ward outlines the importance of looking back to the origins of the human mind to understand the integral role of the imagination in human development, justifying the subtitle that places 'evolution' foremost. He argues that language developed because of the imagination: the need to explain situations outside of immediate sensory experience (13). The power of the human mind above animal life is, after all, to subjectively represent or recreate the world. This faculty remains key to the analysis of Coleridge's work: the creative process and human ability to interpret symbols and images are at the fore of this study.

Chapter 2 examines Coleridge's drive for unity, and the 'One life' he refers to in his conversation poem, *The Aeolian Harp*. The analysis concentrates on perception, or impression, versus reality. Here Ward offers a biographical reading, tracking Coleridge's unhappy union with Sara Fricker and its influence on his philosophy of religion and the mind. Coleridge's experiments with Schillerian 'joy' (34) and the tensions between active and passive modes of imagination provide the focus of Chapter 3. Ward describes this concept as the idea that man, as both sensory and rational animal, acting on nature and being acted upon, must obtain balance between feeling and reason, and being shaped by and shaping the world. Chapter 4 further examines the role of memory and imagination in Coleridge's work, drawing striking comparisons with modern understandings of cognitive processes and faculties.

These first chapters provide the foundation for Ward's discussion of the poems *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Kubla Khan*, and *Christabel* in the final three chapters. Ward focuses on the creative process, while reminding us that 'we should not ask what the poet wishes to *say* but what he wants to *do*' (138). Coleridge's creative intent remains at the foreground of Ward's analysis. It is here that we see the imagination as the interactions between

the conscious mind and the unconscious ‘patterns of mind and structures of brain’ that have accompanied human evolution (1). Supporting this biological methodology are the well-known biographical connections Coleridge had to contemporary scientists such as Humphry Davy, who was experimenting with mind-altering gases to create liminal states akin to those described in Coleridge’s poetry.

Ward demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of Coleridge’s work, parsing the coherent from the contradictory in a confident manner. He dedicates whole chapters to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Kubla Khan*, and *Christabel* but also focuses on Coleridge’s conversation poems and long treatise, *Biographia Literaria*. Use of Coleridge’s correspondence provides a further insight into a complex philosophy of mind. Throughout, Ward draws on twentieth- and twenty first-century psychology, neuroscience, and evolutionary biology and these comparisons are persuasive and do not feel anachronistic. Instead, Ward reveals Coleridge’s nuanced and intuitive understanding of the imaginative processes of the mind.

This is an engaging and persuasive study, accessible and useful to those familiar with Romantic literature. It will be particularly enjoyed by those with an interest in the history of the human mind. The book joins the advancing field of Romantic-era literature and science scholarship alongside texts such as Alan Richardson’s *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind* (2005) and Michelle Faubert’s *Rhyming Reason: The Poetry of Romantic-Era Psychologists* (2009).

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Sharon Ruston, *Creating Romanticism: Case Studies in the Literature, Science and Medicine of the 1790s*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 218. ISBN 9781137264282.

Carmen Casaliggi and Paul March-Russell, eds., *Legacies of Romanticism: Literature, Culture, Aesthetics*. New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2012. Pp. 304. ISBN 9780415890083.

To review these two books together is to be reminded again of the constructed nature of ‘Romanticism’ (or ‘Romanticisms’). Indeed, *Creating Romanticism*, the title of Sharon Ruston’s book, could almost do parallel service as a title for *Legacies of Romanticism*, the essay-collection edited by Casaliggi and March-Russell. Ruston’s book is an investigation of the scientific origins and connections of Romantic discourses and topics; while *Legacies of Romanticism* examines and interprets the reception and adaptation of Romanticism in the Victorian period and in the twentieth century. Both books are clear about the difficulty of using ‘Romanticism’ as a key term when it was not applied to an artistic movement until after the period to which it refers. Ruston is interested in Enlightenment thought, and she notes that it is hard to establish clear boundaries between the Enlightenment and ‘Romanticism’. Casaliggi and March-Russell also refer to the anachronism of the term, and go on to recognise the multiplicity of Romantic phenomena and the consequent multiplicity of their ‘legacies’. Indeed they also, rightly, ask how appropriate the word ‘legacy’ can be when the inheritors are re-shaping what they inherit.

Ruston’s study of science and medicine in the 1790s revolves chiefly around their bearing on conceptions of life in general, of the organic, and of the human body and its

interactions with the mind. Where it addresses discourses which might not be limited by this 'life-science' emphasis, it nevertheless cleaves to that emphasis. Thus the discussion of magnetism and electricity is focused on the controversy about animal magnetism, rather than on terrestrial magnetism. Despite her warning about the vagueness of the boundary between Enlightenment and 'Romantic', she does recognise historical shifts of emphasis. Thus Godwin's scepticism about animal magnetism is contrasted with Percy Shelley's interest in it, and the difference is seen as possibly indicating a change towards a characteristically Romantic emphasis on subjectivity and feeling (95). At the same time, she rightly continues to recognise the vagueness of the boundary as itself something to be encountered within Romantic works. In this connection, Wordsworth is seen as exemplary, and for this reason he provides an illustrative case in her Introduction. Wordsworth saw his innovative poetry of the 1790s as 'experimental', as well as therapeutic, in ways that were influenced by the idea of the 'physician'. But on the other hand, he also draws a distinction between the 'Poet' and the 'Man of Science'.

In subsequent chapters, Ruston examines the way in which Wollstonecraft understood science to provide evidence of the natural strength of women, and the natural affinity with each other of the different human 'races', while she noted the opportunity for 'improvement' or 'degeneration.' In her discussion of Godwin, Ruston spends some time on his distrust of animal magnetism, basing her account on his little-known translation of a sceptical report prepared by commissioners for the French crown. The French commissioners were influenced by a political interpretation of animal magnetism, whereby its deceptions were compared with the inflammatory suggestions of political demagogues. Godwin, by contrast, in the spirit of Paine on Burke, compared these deceptions to those practised by despots, a fact that leaves its mark on the depiction of Falkland in *Caleb Williams*. In a chapter on 'Romantic Creation' Ruston provides further evidence in the long story of 'organicism' and also offers an illuminating account of the contemporary debate about monsters and monstrosity, drawing on the work of William Lawrence, which emphasises the difficulty of differentiating the monstrous from the normal. This idea leads into an original discussion of *Frankenstein*, a discussion which is also sceptical about the credence Mary Shelley gave to the idea of electrical or galvanic creation. Here we find a welcome qualification to received ideas. But Mary Shelley is anything but one-sided: one must be careful not to forget that she is undoubtedly working with ideas of misguided creation, and also toying with different views about what the vital principle might be. A final chapter looks at the work of Humphry Davy and expounds his sense of science and chemistry as 'sublime' in the way in which they offer insight into the transformations wrought by nature, as well as in the transformations of understanding which broaden the vision of the investigator.

Ruston's book offers a valuable addition to the long history of research into science in the Romantic era: its strength resides particularly in its grasp of the political sub-texts of the interpretation of scientific ideas in the period, as well as in the accounts of little-discussed texts, and in the importance it rightly accords to Davy. It apologises for recurring to what might seem like unfashionable topics, such as 'organicism' and 'creativity' (176). But the apology seems to me unnecessary, and based on a category-error: we may not do 'organicism', but many of the Romantics did.

The editors of *Legacies of Romanticism* had a challenging task, as the field it enters is already a crowded one, and they are in the position of marshalling a series of papers by experts on a range of subjects. Their brief introduction rehearses a few of the central topics: the problem of defining 'Romanticism'; its being anachronistic with respect to the period it relates to; its variousness; and the questionable nature of the concept of 'legacy.' On this last point I must declare an interest: the editors refer to my collection *Romanticism and Postmodernism* and suggest that Richard Cronin offers a 'corrective' to its views in the form of the argument that 'writers produce the writers who produce them' (3). One cannot argue with that; but in the

introduction to my own collection I refer to the modern ‘creation of a Romanticism which is fit to act as a precursor for Modernism’. There are other examples of carelessness. For instance, in their preamble to Part I, ‘Early and Mid-Victorian’, Casaliggi and March-Russell offer a summary of Richard Read’s excellent essay on Hazlitt and Reynolds by stating that it proceeds ‘to assess Reynolds’s innovative style with the aim of seeing what it owed to Romantic poetry, British and Continental philosophy, and his own portraiture, and whether it set a reactionary or liberating precedent for later uses of ekphrasis’ (12). Unfortunately, this should be Hazlitt, not Reynolds. The Introduction does offer one fresh emphasis in virtue of the prominence it gives to Andrew Bennett’s *Romantic Poets and the Culture of Posterity*. This might look like confusion of thought (identifying a concern with posterity with an actual future), but there is a substantial point to be found in the ‘inherent instability of a Romantic project that privileges future reception over current tastes and leaves unresolved contradictions in its wake’ (5). The implication is that Romanticism is notably malleable. The editors state another claim to originality: namely, that they are unusual in placing the Victorian period and the twentieth century within one frame. The claim is untrue, but this would still be a potentially valuable exercise if it generated new insights in itself. Unfortunately, there is no overarching discussion which seeks to draw out the significance emerging from this wide view.

This does not mean that the individual contributions are damaged: quite to the contrary. Casaliggi herself purveys valuable detail on Keats and Ruskin; Porscha Fermanis offers support to a much-needed recognition of the influence of Romantic-period drama on the Victorian dramatic monologue; Catherine Maxwell is characteristically sharp on the importance of Shelley to Pater’s thought; Ruth Robbins’s reminder of the strength of the influence of Wordsworth’s poetry and thought in the Nineties is shrewd and necessary. Madeleine Callaghan’s essay on Louis MacNeice is rightly aware of the continued sway of Romantic ideas in the work of writers who present themselves as anti-Romantic; and Stefania Ciocia emphasises the role of a Romantic-influenced imagination, rather than a concentration on technique and rationality, in the postmodern detective story.

The reception of canonical Romantic writers in the former colonies is a topic of great importance, and Daniel Sanjiv-Roberts and Ellen Dengel-Janic are aware of the telling ambiguity of the inheritance. Simon Swift offers a smart deconstruction of the deconstructionists’ diagnosis of melancholy in Romantic and Romantic-influenced texts by finding their own work to be characterised by a form of post-Romantic melancholy. Joseph Tabbi finds a transformation of Romantic rhetoric in the perpetual present of new media. The collection has much of value to the worker in this field, but does not offer a coherent contribution to the larger debate.

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