General Editors: Leigh Wetherall Dickson and Allan Ingram; Volume Editors: David Walker, Anita O'Connell and Michelle Faubert. *Depression and Melancholy, 1660-1800*. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012. 4 vols. Pp. 1,264. £350. ISBN 9781848930865.

Depression and Melancholy, 1660-1800 provides readers with four volumes of carefully selected, predominantly British, primary-source texts conveying people's subjective experiences of, and popular attitudes towards, depression. The editors divide the topic into four distinctive areas: religion, medicine, autobiography and popular culture, which correspond to the headings of each volume. At the same time, Wetherall Dickson, Ingram and their co-editors elucidate the historical interconnectedness between the four sections and, generally, between disciplines; for instance, by emphasizing that medicine (Vol II) and religion (Vol I) were seen as equally responsible for 'spiritual and physical wellbeing' (I, xii). The contrasts between volumes III and IV seem at first sight stronger than between the first two. Volume III contains autobiographical writings by melancholics, hypochondriacs, and depressives comprising a wide range of diaries, journals, letters, poems and private accounts, which give readers rare insights: 'nowhere else are we able to come so close to what the eighteenth-century melancholy mind thought of itself and how it chose, or was obliged, to express those thoughts' (I, xii). By contrast, in volume IV, concerned with the then popular print culture featuring theatrical works, prose and poetry, melancholy tends to be 'represented as an amusingly displayed set of standard symptoms, not as an invitation to enter a suffering mind' (IV, ix). But even the seemingly disparate autobiographical and popular, commercial accounts of melancholy overlap sometimes, as the editors show, for instance, in the case of Wetenhall Wilkes's *The Humours of the Black Dog* (1737). While most of the texts in this collection are available online from databases like ECCO, the wealth of materials in *Depression and Melancholy* represents an important contribution to the study of British literature and medicine of the period because it offers an excellent anthology suited for introductory as well as advanced purposes of study.

Depression and Melancholy, 1660-1800 is not the first anthology of this kind. The editors build on and expand previous primary-source collections, in particular Richard Hunter and Ida Macalpine's pioneering publication *Three Hundred Years of Psychiatry, 1535 –1860* (1963), which did much to inaugurate the history of psychiatry as a field of enquiry in Britain, Allan Ingram's *The Madhouse of Language: Writing and Reading Madness in the Eighteenth Century* (1991), *Voices of Madness: Four Pamphlets, 1683 – 1796* (1997), and others. It is worthwhile mentioning that one of the eighteenth-century precursors for this kind of anthology, K. P. Moritz's German *Magazine for the Study of the Psychic Experience* (1783-1793), also called the 'world's first psychiatric journal' (Hunter and Macalpine (1963), 559), remains unnoted in the edition although Moritz's anthology ('Lesebuch') would have matched the editors' intention to de-stigmatize depression.

As the title of the edition indicates, the period covered in this collection ends in 1800. This cut-off point seems somewhat tantalizing not only for scholars of the Romantic period but also for cultural historians of psychology. 'The Romantic period was' after all, as Clark Lawlor notes in *From Melancholia to Prozac* (2012), 'the high point of the cult and culture of melancholy' (105). The editors explain their periodization with their dedication to a 'comparatively neglected area of eighteenth-century studies' (I, ix). And so it is that, although Faubert and Ingram mention Romantic melancholy and some of their representatives (II, xvii), this anthology neither includes excerpts from some of the most influential, and admittedly best known, literary texts on depression, such as John Keats's 'Ode on Melancholy' and his letters, Charlotte Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets,* or Coleridge's notebooks and

poetry; nor does the collection feature less well-known but no less significant texts on nervous diseases like volumes IX and X of Dr Thomas Beddoes's *Hygeia*. An inclusion of Coleridge, for example, would have contributed to an even better understanding of the changing significations of the term 'depression' (see Neil Vickers, 'Before Depression: Coleridge's Melancholia', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 44, 85-98).

Yet concepts of health and illness are a slippery slope and the subject of intensive inquiry in medical ethics. The editors of this collection engage, albeit carefully and almost reluctantly, in a form of retrospective diagnosis when they compare the written records of the eighteenth century with the list of recognized symptoms of depression in the 4th edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (I, xvii-xviii), published by the American Psychiatric Association. It remains unclear why the editors say they 'must' (I, xvii) do this, for the classifications in the *DSM* have been widely criticized for pathologizing common emotions, such as grief (see latest *DSM* edition of May 2013), and concomitantly for feeding into pharmaceutical profits. The editors observe that the *DSM* 'merely offers a description of a cluster of symptoms that denote a shared discourse between practicing clinicians without referring to any underlying causes' (I, xviii). If this is so and one of the lessons of the history of depression consists in the significance of enquiring after causes of mental disorders by means of discursive therapies, then the use of the *DSM* is somewhat counterproductive as it associates this scrutinous editorial project with a twenty-first century standardized version of the lowness of moods.

However, these are quibbles. Readers will find *Depression and Melancholy, 1660-1800* an extremely helpful resource for their pursuit of the fascinating cultural and literary history of this mental condition.

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