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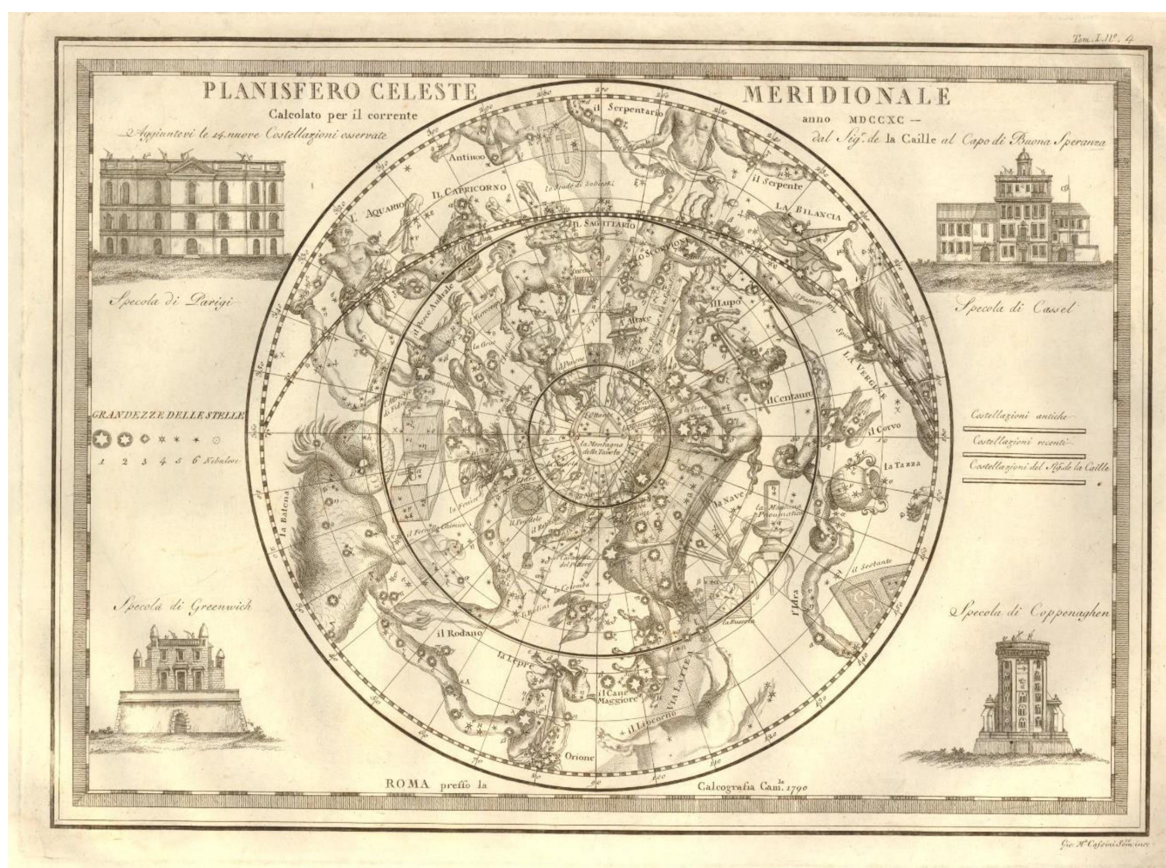

Map of the celestial sphere (northern hemisphere) showing various zodiacal constellations including Gemini, Leo etc, surrounded by four observatories in Rome, Bologna, Padua and Milan (1790). © The Trustees of the British Museum. Reproduction used under a Creative Commons CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license.

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Julia Straub, *The Rise of New Media, 1750-1850: Transatlantic Discourse and American Memory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. Pp. x + 193. £79.99. ISBN 9781137589788.

Julia Straub's book is about cultural memory in the colonies that then became the United States. Like a lot of interesting work in Romantic literary studies these days, it is about the category of literature itself. Its method is distant reading, not so much of the kind practised by digital humanists as the kind familiar to book historians. It has more in common with the sociologists of literature, especially Pierre Bourdieu, than it does with new ways of reading old texts; it is much more likely to discuss imprints than rhyme schemes; and is more interested in metaliterary texts such as prefaces, reviews, addresses and in the 'reprinting of texts, hack writing, and manuscript circulation' (18) than in canonical works: Charles Brockden Brown features not as novelist but as the editor of *The Literary Magazine, and American Register*, Edgar Allan Poe as the author of the essay 'The Literati of New York'. (Straub later remarks that 'Poe's literary New York, peopled as it is with players engaged in a continuous game, seems to be the most suitable equivalent to Bourdieu's Paris as a literary field' (138)). The book is about the way the new republic constituted itself as a culture.

That culture is transatlantic – a word that, Straub points out, had been in use since the early 1780s (72). Her book is concerned neither with Britain nor America exclusively but rather with how America drew on the cultural capital of Britain while also minting a new currency of its own (or, remembering that early scene of money-changing in Francis Spufford's *Golden Hill*, perhaps we should say rather currencies, plural). Anthologies might include American poets alongside British – both Augustan and 'Columbian' items – but not until the early nineteenth century were they more explicit in registering an independent tradition, presenting poems not as 'specimens' but documents of the past, 'carriers of memory' (99), while British anthologies of the same period could see America as a commercial culture inimical to poetry.

In an introduction and four chapters that are cogently written, but may rely on rather bland descriptions of some of its generic examples, Straub makes the case for magazines, anthologies and literary histories as the new media of the book's title. The book has interesting things to say about these related means of preservation and selection and hence about the formation of an American canon and the translation of literary into cultural memory.

Like its English counterpart, the American magazine had a memorial function and could function as repository or rather museum: it could be skimmed, did not differentiate high and low items and might aspire to an ontological status more permanent than the newspaper. Anthologies and literary histories were not distinct, though the model for both was still biographical. Early literary histories tended to assume that, Puritans aside, there was no 'American Literature' until the 1830s, an assumption that was itself the product of a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century desire to commemorate and systematize the past and to identify a national canon. The book therefore finishes at the point in time where many others begin – a point at which histories of American literature could be advertised as being no longer for college libraries but as 'Splendid Gift Books' for the middle-class home (148-49).

Two issues in particular are hinted at from this context which registered both autonomy from and allusion to, if not dependence on, Europe. The first is secularization – suggested by the early use of the term 'sanctuary' for the library (9) – and familiar from the notion of the transfer of the term 'canon' from a reference exclusively to sacred works. If the work of book historians (such as Robert Darnton or Simon Burrows) shows how religious works kept a tenacious hold in Europe, such works seem to have figured less in the print culture of America in the long eighteenth century. The second is the element of nationalism itself – which, as Straub points out, is necessarily a complicated business at a time when the term nation itself is one among several malleable but 'handy categories' which also include 'the author, ownership, or the novel' (17).

Literary culture in the United States was not a blank slate so much as it was an anthology, and the product of what is called here, in a somewhat uncertain conclusion, 'old "new media"' (155). The bold analogy implied by the sub-title of Straub's book is most strongly made in its closing speculation: 'The Internet – which facilitates learning, connects people, erodes traditional boundaries between texts, changes epistemological hierarchies, invites cooperation and shared authorship, threatens ownership, and converges with old media – comes across as an equivalent to the heterogeneous, polyphonic world of eighteenth-century periodical publishing' (154).

Stephen Bygrave
University of Southampton

Clara Tuite, ed., *Byron in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xxix + 343. £79.99. ISBN 9781107181465.

Lord Byron is a poet who frequently demands to be read with an awareness of context, so this latest addition to Cambridge University Press's Literature in Context series is a welcome one. This is a big book of small parts. It showcases 37 chapters, each running to approximately 4,000 words, in keeping with the remit of the series. As such, the reader gets the benefit of great coverage, without the volume ever appearing monumental or unapproachable. Even when tackling it in its entirety, it never feels baggy.

The first thing to be said is that, despite its comprehensiveness, a book of this kind still involves balancing acts and choices about what to include and exclude, and that goes for both editor and contributor. Clara Tuite has done a splendid job of assembling a roster of well-known and newer names that parades the current depth of Byron studies. There are four sections: Life and Works; Political, Social and Intellectual Transformations; Literary Cultures; Reception and Afterlives. The section on the life of the poet plays it safe by sticking to an ages and stages model, although there is reason for this given that the biography divides quite neatly into the early years, years of fame and years of exile scheme. There is also a largely chronological approach to section four, which moves from contemporary reception to a chapter on 'Byron Now'. The middle sections offer the big political, cultural, literary and intellectual contexts for reading Byron alongside some quite focused themes, where we find some of the most intriguing new contexts, including Susan J. Wolfson's reappraisal of Byron and Robert Southey.

For authors, the fairly brief space means making choices between summary and advancing new arguments and balancing the attention given to Byron and the context under focus. One benefit is that there is little wastage and we cut to the core of matters quickly. Manifestly, some subjects, particularly the ones on the life, demand more of the summary mode. There are some slick exchanges of the biographical baton in the first section, even as it would be nice to know more about, for instance, Diego Saglia's argument about the centrality of Byron's body in 'The Years of Fame'. The danger is the tendency to cram, list, or leave a final thought hanging, although this is avoided in most chapters.

Tuite's careful arrangement of subjects provides cohesion. This works particularly well when contexts arise and expand across a series of chapters, as in the sequence that runs from Mirka Horová's account of the Satanic school of poetry to Caroline Franklin's discussion of Byron's attitude to the bluestockings, where we are reminded that Byron's tendency towards antagonism and opposition often occludes more congenial moments. The sequence speaks back to John Beckett's chapter on Byron's politics, which usefully demonstrates the historical situatedness of Byron's statement from Canto XV of *Don Juan*, 'I was born for opposition', in the context of a long period of Tory government.

Recurring themes across the book include the attention given to Byronic theatricality and his manipulation of readers, established by Saglia and Jane Stabler. It is picked up in different contexts by Laura J. George on fashion and dandyism, Adam Komisaruk's chapter on libertinism, and by Alan Rawes, whose excellent chapter on autobiography provides an intriguing context in itself for reading many of the chapters that make up Part Four, particularly Julian North's 'Recollections, Conversations and Biographies'. The idea that Byron wrote an 'autobiographical mode of discourse to achieve un-autobiographical ends' (232) reworks, without announcing it, the territory of Tom Mole's and Tuite's recent investigations of scandalous celebrity – touchstones in this book and throughout Byron studies right now – and Andrew Stauffer's work on readerly alienation.

Recurring contexts reveal something of current literary preoccupations. There is quite a lot here that addresses Byron's place in contemporary print culture. The chapters by Mole on editions of Byron's works, Mary O'Connell on Byron's publishers, and Gary Dyer on pirated editions of Byron's works find echoes later on when Tuite writes about literary theory and Andrew Franta addresses periodical culture. Materiality – textual and bodily – and its relation to mind and spirit has been a characteristic concern of Byronists and new work on the history of the book demonstrates critics retain, in different guises, pronounced interests in issues of Byronic embodiment.

Overall, this book is a fine achievement that will provide a route into studying Byron for students and also give new insights for scholars in the field. It is no easy job to represent a field of study that has developed over 200 years, whilst allowing scope for new directions, and Tuite does it very successfully. Byron lends himself rather well to the fairly rapid changing of lenses, voices or subject positions we get here, partly because, as North puts it, he maintained a 'skeptical resistance to the single vision' (282).

Jonathon Shears
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Angela Esterhammer, *Print and Performance in the 1820s: Improvisation, Speculation, Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. x + 280. £75.00. ISBN 9781108656832.

In pondering the performativity of language and literature, no surer and more capable guide can be found than Angela Esterhammer. Her fifth book on performativity, *Print and Performance in the 1820s: Improvisation, Speculation, Identity* (2020), explores more widely and probes more deeply into the phenomena than her previous studies. Followers of her work will quickly perceive that, without repeating the analysis of past examples, she carries with her the insights and interpretive tools developed in her previous books, each appropriating aspects of speech act theory and performativity in developing new approaches to literary exposition.

In her ground-breaking book, *Creating States: Studies in the Performative Language of John Milton and William Blake* (1994), Esterhammer examined the biblical language of prophecy in the poetry of Milton and Blake, taking that methodology into a new literary arena with fresh insights into the rhetorical and poetic strategies of both poets. Her next book, *The Romantic Performative: Language and Action in British and German Romanticism* (2000), traces the historical antecedents of ideas about speech acts and performativity, subjectivity and intersubjectivity. In her next monograph, *Spontaneous Overflows and Revivifying Rays: Romanticism and the Discourse of Improvisation* (2004), Esterhammer turned to the phenomena of impromptu performativity and the Romantic fascination with the illusions of spontaneous genius and rhapsodic inspiration. In *Romanticism and Improvisation, 1750-1850* (2008), she

resurrects the careers and the performances of the Italian *improvvisatori*. Shelley, Byron, and other visitors to Italy described these performances, emphasizing the ability of the *improvvisatori* to tap into the very sources of poetic inspiration and expression.

Her latest extension of literary performativity examines the three arenas indicated in her title: improvisation, speculation and identity. All three are encountered in her introduction, 'Being There, circa 1824' (chapter 1). For Esterhammer, 'Being There' is a narrative strategy and conjuring ploy: the narrative creates a story of life in London during a year in which its vital qualities were especially rampant; the story enables the reader to experience vicariously the multitude of activities confronting Londoners of the time. In *Revelations of the Dead-Alive* (1824), John Banim imagines a Londoner of his day resurrected in the future to witness the London of 2023. Esterhammer reverses the process to take the reader two centuries into London's past. Encounters with 'identity' occur in William Hazlitt's prose portraits of prominent poets and politicians who either led or obstructed the tendencies of the times ('Spirit of the Age', *New Monthly Magazine*, 1824). Byron's *The Deformed Transformed* about identity-switching had just been published, soon to be followed by the complete *Don Juan*, with alternating role-playing of author and character. The performance of identity, improvisation, and speculation, as manifest in the 1820s, is further examined in each of the subsequent chapters.

Observing how editors and authors collaborate to create a journalistic identity, Esterhammer tracks the preoccupation with performance in the periodical culture (chapter 2). Serving a readership of a religious community, a political affiliation, or social class, the periodicals adopted and performed a consistent public role. Articulated in terms of factional rivalry, that performance, she argues, contributed to the rise of the media concept in the 1820s. Among the theatrical innovations of the time were the one-man shows: Tommaso Sgricci, an Italian *improvvisatore*, would extemporize a full-length tragedy (chapter 3); Charles Mathews, a quick-change artist adept at impersonations, delighted his audience by transforming himself into a full cast of characters (chapter 4).

Speculation, Esterhammer reminds us, has roots in Latin designations for sentry, spy, and watchman. In addition to connotating observation, speculation also referred to conjecture and surmise. In the 1820s the word took on its economic associations, as abstract reasoning applied to market trends. In the several editions of Theodore Hook's *Sayings and Doings* (1824, 1825), the disparate meanings converge. As in his melodrama, Hook developed narratives of speculative dilemma with mistaken identities, disguises, and impersonations (chapter 5). Esterhammer further links the speculation of the financial market with the speculation-based narrative as literary form, in which readers are solicited to invest belief in fiction (chapter 6). She concludes with *Walladmor*, ostensibly a German translation of a Waverley novel, in fact a forgery by Willibald Alexis. De Quincey, who delighted in the impersonation of the Great Unknown, transformed the novel into a superior counterfeit (chapter 7).

Esterhammer concludes with De Quincey's *Walladmor* as appropriate counterpart to her opening study of Banim's speculative time-travel in *Revelations*. As a tale of twin brothers separated at birth, *Walladmor* is constructed on similar strategies of self and other. Throughout the various modes of performativity, she raises awareness of the otherness essential to performance. Identity slips into alterity and imposture; speculation into hypothetical reasoning or risk-taking. Beneath the apparent spontaneity of improvisation lies the disciplined rehearsal of dialogue and plot structure. Esterhammer has extended the range and manner of performative criticism.

Frederick Burwick
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Kenneth McNeil, *Scottish Romanticism and Collective Memory in the British Atlantic*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020. Pp. 384. £90. ISBN 978474455466.

Notable among influential studies that opened the borders of Romanticism to the 'Celtic world' in the late nineties and early 2000s were Katie Trumpener's *Bardic Nationalism* and Ian Duncan's *Scott's Shadow*. Trumpener's 1997 book redrew the contours of 'English' literature through an examination of that literature's deep indebtedness to the products of cultural (bardic) nationalism coming from the Celtic peripheries: Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Duncan a decade later proposed a Scottish Romanticism centered in early nineteenth-century Edinburgh and continuous with the Scottish Enlightenment, especially with the sceptical empiricism of David Hume. Hume's theory of *belief,* Duncan argued, posited a shared border between history and fiction that found its 'fullest realization in Scott's novelistic practice' (127). The shared spaces of history and fiction, and the interconnections among Britain's Celtic peripheries: both formulations are central to Kenneth McNeil's expansive and fascinating book, which builds upon the studies of Trumpener, Duncan, and others as he proposes to situate Scottish Romanticism geographically in the broader British Atlantic and epistemologically among sites of collective memory.

In this latter connection, McNeill cites Maurice Halbwachs's 1925 *The Collective Memory*, where Halbwachs sets collective memory against history understood as overarching and unitary. While historians, in Halbwachs's view, understand that 'there is only one history,' collective memory is a local phenomenon whose 'chief function is to provide a sense of cohesive group identity […]: "when it considers its past the group feels strongly it has remained the same and becomes conscious of its identity over time"' (quoted in McNeill (10)). The longing of the group to feel 'strongly it has remained the same,' the need to hold on to 'rituals and repeated acts located in the ephemerality of day-to-day experience […] [and] passed down from one generation to another' (2) are particularly felt, McNeill suggests, by Scottish writers in the early nineteenth century: a point in time when the failure of the Jacobite rebellion is still in living memory of a diminishing few even as the period since 1745 in Scotland has been one of unparalleled transformation and modernization. As Scots in the early nineteenth century recollect the Highland Clearances, emigration to North America, interactions with indigenous Native Americans, involvement in or opposition to the slave trade, they do so, McNeill argues, steeped not only in a universalizing Scottish Enlightenment Philosophy of Man, but against the backdrop of a Highland-Lowland divide which leads to 'self-awareness that "Scottishness" partook of both the primitive and the civilised' (8).

While the above limns the theoretical approaches that McNeill develops in an introductory chapter that is at once capacious and focused, space does not allow me to summarize fully how he deploys this multivalent approach in each of five body chapters. In Chapter 1, to take one example, McNeill identifies in Scott's Waverley Novels a 'particular mode of historical consciousness configured as a crisis of memory […] in which the past has been ruptured from the present' by a single historical event within living memory of a dwindling few, the Forty-Five (34). McNeill terms this mode of consciousness 'aftermath', and he traces its tropes of generational remembering and amnesia from Scott to the Scottish memoirs of Henry Cockburn (*Memorials of his Time*, 1856) and Robert Chambers (*Traditions of Edinburgh*, 1825), but also to North American fictions: Washington Irving's 'Rip van Winkle' and John Neal's *Seventy-Six*. In this chapter and others, the connections between 'transperipheral' – McNeil contrasts his term with a centre-periphery model – British Atlantic sites are more often direct than merely conceptual, as the relationship between Scott and Irving was, for example, personal and, in McNeill's account, the literary influence mutual (54–55). Similarly direct connections among the transperipheries are taken up in chapters on: Anne Grant, whose *Letters from the Mountains*

and *Memoirs of an American Lady*, both published in 1808, provide Grant's first-hand recollections of everyday life in, respectively, the Scottish Highlands and colonial America; the Earl of Selkirk's theorisation that Scottish emigration to North America, necessitated by the Clearances, provided a way for dispossessed Highlanders to preserve customs and traditions; and the contributions of Scots to discourses on transatlantic slavery, which, McNeill suggests, uniquely reflect their 'experiences of diasporic and expatriation migration and colonial occupation' (206). A closing chapter on John Galt argues that his emigrant novels *Lawrie Todd* and *Bogle Corbet* are best understood as exercises in decentred cultural memory, memorialising the circum-Atlantic world as a place of trauma 'without a historical centre or fixed point of reference' (275). Each chapter delves deeply into a topic fascinating in its own right and engages fluently and persuasively with recent scholarship on a remarkable range of primary materials before returning to the central claim that collective memory is, in its many forms, a defining feature of Scottish writing in the British Atlantic world in the early nineteenth century. In its scope and achievement, this study is an important contribution to our ongoing project of rethinking – indeed, opening – the borders of British Romanticism.

Gerald Egan
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Claire Connolly, ed., *Irish Literature in Transition, 1780-1830*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. xvi + 456. £89.99. ISBN 9781108492980.

Irish Literature in Transition, 1780-1830, edited by Claire Connolly, is part of an ambitious six-volume series that offers a dynamic re-evaluation of Irish literary history from 1700 to the present day. As Connolly argues in her introduction, and as the chapters that follow convincingly demonstrate, the period 1780 to 1830 is 'the crucible of Irish writing in English' (9). While political history informs the volume, emphasis is placed on 'the intense and turbulent creative effort' which led to 'the emergence of modern Irish literature as a distinct cultural category' (1), exploring the multifarious ways Irish writing intersected with transnational cultural, intellectual, and aesthetics debates of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Historicist approaches have too often dominated Irish studies, with texts divided between pre- and post-Irish rebellion, either looking forward to or reflecting back on the Act of Union of 1801. The contributions challenge the perceived limitations politics imposed on imaginative writing in Ireland in this period. Charting the 'new maps' Irish writers drew 'between and across Enlightenment, antiquarian, and romantic modes' (11), the volume is a timely intervention in the field of Irish and Romantic studies, showing the dynamic interconnections and cross-pollination between Irish and British, European, and transatlantic writing, and thus offers a rich and comprehensive re-evaluation of Irish literary history between 1780 and 1830.

The volume is to be commended for the impressive range of its contributions, which cover all aspects of literary culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, from fiction, poetry, and drama, to magazine culture, literary criticism, and musical performances, as well as lesser studied forms such as the popular fiction of the Minerva press. Divided into sections on 'Origins', 'Transitions', 'Reputations', and 'Futures', the chapters offer fresh readings of familiar figures such as Maria Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, and Charles Maturin, alongside compelling discussions of lesser-known writers such as Gerald Griffin, John and Michael Banim, and William Maginn. The chapters engage with issues that animate romantic critical debates today, such as the enduring and fertile relationship between print and manuscript cultures, as Harriet Kramer Linkin demonstrates in her persuasive reading of Mary Tighe's

poetry; the importance of metropolitan life to romanticism, as David O'Shaughnessy explores in relation to Irish theatre and urban culture; and myths of individual and solitary romantic creativity, addressed in Jane Moore's discussion of Thomas Moore's reputation as an effeminate poet of surface. Moore deftly positions Moore as a poet of sociability, whose very surface poetics carry the democratic impulse that animates his verse. Noting that 'our notion of romanticism is wholly predicated on the poetics of artistic creation' (349), Joep Leerssen argues for a comprehensive consideration of Irish romantic intellectual and cultural modes of production within a larger European context. Analysing the confluence of Enlightenment and romantic ideas in the Belfast periodical *The Microscope and Minute Observer* (1799-1800), Jennifer Orr highlights the role of popular print culture in uniting networks in Ireland and in shaping images of Ireland in Britain and America.

One of the strengths of the volume is its careful mapping of 'the ongoing process of transition between and across linguistic, religious, and political divides' (5) and its emphasis on networks. Lesa Ní Mhunghaile and Matthew Campbell's chapters consider the ways in which linguistic and cultural contexts shaped Irish writing. Contacts between Irish and English languages, between Gaelic and Anglo-Irish cultures, and translations, 'led to a two-way process of literary cross-pollination' (38) that spurred new innovations in prose and verse. Norman Vance underlines the unity between Protestants and Catholics that the diffusion of classical tradition allowed. Similarly, Moore highlights the sociability of singing clubs, which fostered connections across religious and class divides.

Another urgent issue the volume engages with is the position of Irish writing within the context of empire. As Murray Pittock argues, archipelagic connections contributed to the emergence of a distinctive Irishness. Placing Irish literary history within this political context leads to the difficult yet necessary question of Ireland's position as a colonial subject alongside 'a new imperial identity and authority within the global sphere of empire' (362). Sonja Lawrenson persuasively shows the role of popular fiction as a 'proxy political arena' (360) that imagined Ireland's imperial status while considering the socio-political realities of British imperial expansion. Expanding on Ireland's global connections, Joseph Rezek examines understudied transatlantic influences, including the variety of Irish responses to slavery. Sarah Isdell's *The Vale of Louisiana* (1805), a trans-Caribbean gothic novel, obscures Irish and British connections to the slave trade, thus stressing the need to consider Irish writing in a global context.

Irish Literature in Transition, 1780-1830 is an invaluable collection, of interest to all scholars of the Romantic period. Confirming the need to read beyond the nation, this volume's contributions successfully redraw the map of Irish literary history, offering innovative and invigorating new avenues of research.

Anne-Claire Michoux
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Spotlight: Romantic Locations, Locating Romanticism

Simon Bainbridge, *Mountaineering and British Romanticism: The Literary Cultures of Climbing, 1770-1836.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xiii + 300. £60. ISBN 9780198857891.

In this informative and original study, Simon Bainbridge reminds us that the word 'mountaineering' used to describe a recreational pastime was coined by S.T. Coleridge in 1802. Challenging the view that locates the rise of British mountaineering in the Victorian period, Bainbridge convincingly demonstrates that major romantic writers like William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Coleridge, Ann Radcliffe, John Keats, Lord Byron and Walter Scott were all central to its invention. Given the currency of mountains in Romantic literature, this is perhaps hardly surprising – all students of Romanticism are familiar with the mountain aesthetics of 'vision, insight, elevation, revelation, transcendence, and the sublime' (1). But Bainbridge is keen to qualify the exclusive connection of mountaineering with vision and imagination, by underlining the 'role of embodiment and movement in the creation of Romantic-period texts' (1). In particular, he argues that the physically exacting practice of 'climbing', alluded to in the book's subtitle, 'enacts an extreme version of the hands-on engagement with the material world' (134), although climbing does not always equate with 'mountaineering', as in chapter 8, where Scott's usages more often refer to scaling coastal cliffs rather than mountain crags. As Bainbridge demonstrates, nearly all of Britain's mountain summits could be 'conquered' without doing any climbing at all: some even on horseback, as demonstrated by Ann Radcliffe, whose 'account of her ride up Skiddaw derives from its presentation of a British fell ascent as if it were an Alpine mountain experience of the sort that Radcliffe herself had described in her Gothic novels' (207). Complicating Marlon Ross's linkage of romantic mountaineering with performative masculinity, Bainbridge dedicates a whole chapter to women mountaineers, showing that 'women participated keenly in the climbing of British mountains from as early as the 1770s' (200), well exemplified by Radcliffe's ascent of Skiddaw.

A decade in the making, this book resonates with the author's personal passion for mountains, a feature shared with Robert Macfarlane's *Mountains of the Mind* (2003): both are seminal contributions to what Paul Gilchrist denominates as 'a vibrant and vital strand of research currently being conducted on the cultures and practices of mountain climbing' (10). Yet impressively, Bainbridge deploys his expertise on the current scene to illustrate the very different romantic culture of recreational 'mountaineering', respectful of historical contrasts as well as continuities (for example, the excellent discussion of the role of the mountain guide in chapter 6, a figure who has virtually vanished, at least from Britain's mountains today). There is an irony though that the core texts of Romantic mountaineering by Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats discussed here were hardly known (if they were known at all) during the romantic period itself.

Bainbridge's thoughtful study of these texts in relation to the aesthetics of viewing, sublimity and embodiment are a major addition to the considerable secondary literature on romanticism, even if the discussions of Byron and Scott are perhaps less persuasive. Impressively, the book engages with a copious body of lesser-known mountaineering literature from the period, mainly contained in travel accounts, either published or in manuscript. Highlights include the first chapter's focus on the 'pre-recreational' writings of Horace Bénédict de Saussure in the Alps and Thomas Pennant in Wales (*Journey to Snowdon* was published in 1781, as the second volume of his *Tour in Wales*, and is shown to have had an enormous influence on the subsequent literature of mountain ascent, including Wordsworth's *Prelude*). Chapter 2 presents cases studies of three 'inventors of mountaineering': Joseph Budworth, William Bingley, and the egregious John MacCulloch, Scotland's first 'peak bagger', who certainly justifies Ross's remarks about performative masculinity and an imperialising discourse

of conquest. In chapter 7, it is instructive to learn that Radcliffe's chapter 'Skiddaw' from her *Observations during a Tour to the Lakes* (1795) was 'one of the best-known ascent narratives in the Romantic period, perhaps second only to Rousseau's Letter XXIII in *Julie*' (206); other popular works in this genre were John Stoddart's *Local Scenery and Manners of Scotland* (1801) and Thomas Wilkinson's *Tours to the British Mountains* (1824). Apart from a brief excursion to the Alps, Bainbridge's focus is on North Wales, the English Lakes and the Scottish Highlands. Although this is already a long book packed with examples, it would have been interesting to consider the fascination with more exotic peaks in an age of exploration and empire: for example, Alexander von Humboldt's high-altitude ascents of Pico del Teide in Tenerife and Chimborazo in Ecuador, or James Baillie Fraser's *Tour through...the Himālā Mountains* (1820). The latter in particular resonates with Bainbridge's conclusion to this excellent book, George Mallory's quotation from Keats's 'Bright Star' in evoking Mount Everest, seen during his Himalayan expedition of 1921: '"in lone splendour hung aloft the night", a watcher of all the nights, diffusing, it seemed universally, an exalted radiance' (274).

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Will Bowers, *The Italian Idea: Anglo-Italian Radical Literary Culture, 1815-1823*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. xviii + 269. £75.00. ISBN 9781108491969.

Will Bowers's study focuses on the period between 1815 and 1823, which saw 'significant Anglo-Italian [cultural] interaction' (177), thus being the second of three waves of cultural exchange between the two countries. If 1815 is the year in which European peace began, which facilitated travelling to the continent, 1823 marks the Italian writer and intellectual Ugo Foscolo's retreat from London's literary scene as well as Lord Byron's journey to Greece, one year after his friend Percy Bysshe Shelley's death. This time-span of merely eight years seems short, yet through activities of mediator figures, literary and formal influences, translations, editions, reviewing, literary production by authors such as Byron, Shelley and Leigh Hunt, as well as travels to Italy, the period emerges as incredibly wealthy and fertile in terms of cultural and literary exchange. Bowers situates the 'radical' element of his title not so much in the field of political ideas than of innovations in poetic form, which stood in marked opposition to the correctness of the French school favoured by eighteenth-century British writers. This meticulous survey carefully contextualizes second-generation British Romantic writers' texts, among them Byron's *Parisina*, *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, Shelley's 'Euganean Hills', *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *The Triumph of Life*, proving that a study of Anglo-Italian cross-currents provides additional insights.

The first chapter, which looks at the years leading up to 1815, stipulates that for the British, two Italies existed: the historical Italy of ancient Rome and the Renaissance as opposed to a modern Italy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. If the former was praised and investigated by historians and sought out by travellers on the Grand Tour, the contemporary Italy they in fact encountered did not always elicit a similar amount of unfettered enthusiasm. Italians were stereotyped as extrovert, theatrical and libidinous, and a danger to English restraint. Although Londoners flocked to the opera, Italian cultural products (including even Dante's works) were viewed with suspicion. Much of Italy's contemporary poetic production was not even known by the British, a fact that intellectuals like Lorenzo Da Ponte attempted to remedy, who, while in London, not only wrote librettos but also sold Italian books and published Italian poetry e.g., by Giovanni Battista Casti, which in turn contributed to making Byron aware of the potential of the *ottava rima.*

Chapter two maps out the genesis of an Italian style, taking Byron's *Parisina* and Hunt's *The Story of Rimini*, both set in medieval Italy, as case studies. The poets combined Italian sources with the genre of the romance, associated with a conservative nationalism to which neither of the two subscribed. Critics showed hostile reactions: it was the newness in form they reacted to, for example Hunt's free remodelling of the heroic couplet, which markedly departed from Alexander Pope's use and later resurfaced in Shelley's *Julian and Maddalo*. Chapter three returns to contexts by focusing on mediator figures and the literary-political salon at Holland House, where Foscolo, Giuseppe Binda and Serafino Buonaiuti held various positions over the years, while Lord Holland – unauthorized by his own government – made diplomatic interventions in Italy. Foscolo no longer published literature but turned to literary criticism and translation. Although a major figure, he was not the only Italian mediator in those years.

Chapter four highlights the centrality of Venice to Romantic writing, considering two texts, which are very different in tone and outlook, Shelley's 'Euganean Hills' and Byron's *Beppo*. Bowers shows that *Beppo* was influenced not only by the Venetian Carnival Byron experienced while living in Venice, but also by Casti's contemporary Italian satire and by Venetian café society. Chapter five looks at Caroline of Brunswick's return from Italy in 1820 and her subsequent trial in the House of Lords. Having stayed in Italy for a prolonged period of time, Caroline, who, in the context of the revolution in Naples, eventually became equated with European liberty, found that Italian witnesses were invoked to testify against her, a circumstance leading to satirical reactions, among them Shelley's *Oedipus Tyrannus*. The Pisan coterie (Byron, Shelley and Hunt) are treated in chapter six and in the coda.

One of this study's great strengths is the wealth of diverse material Bowers welds together, combining reflections on authors' influence; rhyme schemes; sub-genres such as romance, the satirical mode, history, translation; mediator figures; and even advertising (in *Beppo*) to add new angles of analysis. One weakness, though, is the choice of the term 'radical' to indicate mostly poetic innovation. Since many actors of Bowers's Anglo-Italian theatre flirted with radical political positions, as did other contemporaries, the title raises expectations for more political analysis.

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Sophie Laniel-Musitelli and Thomas Constantinesco, eds., *Romanticism and Philosophy: Thinking with Literature*. New York and London: Routledge, 2019. Pp. ix + 274. £36.99 (pb). ISBN 9780367870768.

Published in 2015 and now in paperback, this impressive collection originated in an international conference held in Lille in 2012 under the auspices of the French Society for the Study of British Romanticism (SERA). In their lucid introduction to *Romanticism and Philosophy: Thinking with Literature,* Sophie Laniel-Musitelli and Thomas Constantinesco explain the two kinds of 'thinking' the essays explore: literature as a topic of philosophical inquiry, and as a form of thought in its own right. The volume reappraises the familiar argument that Romanticism marks the emergence of literature as a site of philosophical speculation by examining both the historical origins of this aesthetic revolution and its far-reaching implications, from German Idealism through to Deconstruction. Equally ambitiously, it moves beyond philosophical interpretation of literary works to explore 'verse-thinking', or 'verse philosophy', the workings of thought made possible by literary form (prose as well as verse), with its distinctive structures, rhythms and language.

The reappraisal begins with a critique by Christoph Bode of the book which set the terms of modern critical discussion of the literature-philosophy relationship in Romanticism, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy's *The Literary Absolute* (1978). Bode reveals how selective a version of German Romanticism is conveyed by the texts anthologised (in the original French edition) and discussed by Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, and how they misinterpret Jena theory by describing literature as 'controlled, determined, and dependent on Philosophy' (28), rather than as aspiring to 'take over where Philosophy ends' (31), Friedrich Schlegel's more radical proposition. Far from representing the 'absolute', Romantic literature conspicuously fails to do so, and Schlegel's point, Bode explains, is that it is 'by acknowledging its limitations' that literature 'becomes limitless, inexhaustible' (32).

Other contributors explore different philosophical traditions modified or inaugurated by Romanticism. Eric Dayre traces the conceptualisation of the poetry-philosophy relationship back to Aristotle and forward to Derrida and de Man, showing how de Man, in deconstructing Coleridge's theory of the symbol, misunderstands 'Romantic time perception' (50), central to the concepts of both symbol and allegory. In a similarly wide-ranging essay, Arcady Plotnitsky invokes Alain Badiou and Maurice Blanchot to rethink Shelley's Platonism, crediting him with an ultra-radical scepticism which involves 'thinking with the unthinkable' (76). Simon Jarvis shifts attention to Shelley's technique, developing the idea of 'verse cognition' through a reading of 'The Triumph of Life'. His subtle demonstration of how 'meter, rhythm, and rhyme are at once constraints upon meaning and generators of it' (110) brings into focus many of the issues raised in the editors' introduction.

Other contributions that examine the relationship between literary thought and technique include Mark Sandy's suggestive analysis of sound patterns and 'spectral presences' in Wordsworth's *Salisbury Plain* poems, Pascale Guibert's Badiou-inspired account of Wordsworthian metrics (a 'thought-language of numbers' (122), in Badiou's terms), and Yves Abrioux's ambitious essay on Clare, which invokes multiple critical and philosophical models to capture the 'peculiar music of Clare's poetics' (142). Though the sheer number of philosophers and theorists brought to bear on some authors can be bewildering, many essays achieve insight through unexpected juxtapositions, as with Joel Faflak's comparison of Austen and Schopenhauer as philosophers of happiness (or the social and psychological obstacles to it), Laura Quinney's pairing of Blake and Kierkegaard as explorers of 'existential despair' (190), and Françoise Dupeyron-Lafay's linking of Kierkegaard and De Quincey as, respectively, an autobiographical philosopher and a philosophical autobiographer with a shared penchant for pseudonymity and self-theatricalisation. Angela Esterhammer provides a context for such late-Romantic performances of the self by charting the obsessive discussion of personal identity in the literary and magazine culture of the 1820s. She focuses on Hogg's *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and the performances of the comic actor and mimic Charles Mathews, both of which she claims illustrate an alternative Romantic tradition of 'fragmentary and constructed selves' (163), in contrast to the authentic, autonomous self traditionally seen as emergent in this period.

The final section, 'Transatlantic Romanticism', traces other convergences of literature and philosophy that constitute 'poetics of thought'. The most striking example is Paul Grimstad's brilliant description of Poe's prose style. Instead of the 'metre-making argument' called for by Emerson (cited by Susan Dunston on p. 230), he shows how Poe 'turns the *sound* of argument … into a strange sort of analytical music', exemplified by the 'fantasias of ratiocination', 'faux treatises' and bizarre dialogues of his tales (241). If Wordsworth's unwritten and unwritable 'philosophical poem' is one answer to Schlegel's question of what kind of literature lies beyond philosophy, another is the 'perverse thought experiments' (242) of Poe's essay-tales. In bringing together these diverse manifestations and trajectories of Romantic literary-philosophical thinking, the book makes an important contribution to scholarship. Other valuable essays from

the Lille conference were published by the same editors in *Romanticism and the Philosophical Tradition* (Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 2015).

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Richard Marggraf Turley, ed., *Keats's Places.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. Pp. xvi + 305. £99.99. ISBN 9783319922423.

Where many of the canonical Romantics are frequently read in accordance with theories of 'place' – William Wordsworth's name is inseparable from the Lakes, for instance – John Keats has not until now received such treatment. The title of this new collection of essays, *Keats's Places*, implies an emphasis on particulars rather than abstract theories, and Richard Marggraf Turley affirms such an emphasis in his introduction: *Keats's Places* pits the reality of place against any notion of Keats's poetry as escapist fantasy, or what Marggraf Turley calls 'literary confections' or 'ideological blind spots' (1). This matters, because Keats is so often treated as fantasist or pure aesthete; in focusing on the reality of place, *Keats's Places* is also making a claim about Keats's real-worldliness. Marggraf Turley himself is interested in Keats and 'literary geography' or 'geocriticism', and his contribution here reflects that. 'Keats Underway' reconstructs the poet's 1817 journey by coach from London to Southampton, arguing for an act of 'counter mapping' in Keats's recollections of the journey that inform the poetic landscapes of the 1818 epic *Endymion*. That reconstructive methodology is also taken up by Hrileena Ghosh, who highlights the importance of Margate as a location for Keats, and makes a speculative claim about how Keats may have shored up in Margate – via one Joshua Waddington, an associate of Leigh Hunt's and a student, with Keats, at Guy's Hospital. Elsewhere, very different methods are taken up in the pursuit of Keatsian journeys. Heidi Thomson argues that Keats's take on the 'Meg Merrilies' character was an assemblage of his experiences during his Scottish tour, and figures as an 'Amazonian' personification of landscape and local myth that lent itself to the recurrent 'mature, experienced women' (136) who would populate his later epics. Meiko O'Halloran and Alexandra Paterson also take up that walking tour. For O'Halloran, it was on that journey that Keats 'began to look both physically and metaphorically towards the landscape of the epic' (21); likewise, for Paterson, the rugged Scottish landscape was a useful counterpoint to the polished marbles Keats saw in the British Museum, offering the poet a glimpse of 'the geological origin of sculptures' (182).

Recent discussion of place in literary criticism has been inspired in no small part by Fiona Stafford's 2010 book *Local Attachments*, and Stafford's contribution here, 'Keats, Shoots and Leaves', is similarly exemplary, tracing Keats's knowledge of botany into his evolving poetic images. Hampstead Heath is not just a site for poetic revery or the home of Leigh Hunt, but it is also the place where London's young doctors in the early nineteenth century set about gathering samples of the local flora. Stafford's chapter ultimately reads poems including the early 'I Stood Tip-Toe Upon a Little Hill' in a new light – as representatives of landscapes overladen with real, taxonomically accurate flowers that keep the poet's feet, even if only by the tips of his toes, grounded in reality.

Despite Marggraf Turley's stated intentions, it is not altogether clear if *Keats's Places* adumbrates anything like a refined methodology concerning place, 'geocritical' or otherwise. It feels telling that some of the most engaging material in the volume is not really concerned with place at all. Grant F. Scott is more interested in Keats's reception, and his essay, 'Keats's American Ode', offers a cogent and incisive history of his twentieth-century readers, including the turn in the 1980s from the apolitical formalism of Helen Vendler to the 'relentless

historicism' that followed Marjorie Levinson's *Keats's Life of Allegory* (207). And Michael O'Neill is interested only in 'textual spaces', and of the 'place' within literary history that Keats and Shelley both sought (O'Halloran similarly invokes the 'place for posterity' of Keats's works (159)). His essay offers a sensitive reading of Keats and Shelley's exchange of letters in 1820, with reflections on the writerly dynamic that, O'Neill suggests, helped each poet to form his own enduring identity in response to the other's commentaries. Through attention to poetry and prose alike, O'Neill shows how 'Shelleyan metaphysics and Keatsian physics reach out to their opposite' (99) – how the very groundedness of Keats's poetry, discovered elsewhere in this volume in his flowers, coach journeys, medical notebooks, and letters from Scotland, is precisely what allows him to reach towards the idealist flights for which he is so well known. There's no single methodology nor critical approach to 'place' on display here, yet through its variety of perspectives *Keats's Places* does offer a counterpoint to the view that the central impulse of Keats's poetry was to 'fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget' historical circumstance, political reality, or social affairs. Taken as a whole, the essays in this ranging and enlightening volume remind us that, however freely his imagination roamed, Keats remained, always, locally attached, and anchored in the living and breathing reality of the world in which he lived.

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Nicholas Mason and Tom Mole, eds., *Romantic Periodicals in the Twenty-First Century: Eleven Case Studies from* Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020. Pp. 288. £80. ISBN 9781474448123.

Romanticists, in Nicholas Mason's and Tom Mole's view, have displayed a regrettable 'slowness […] to develop their own distinctive approach to periodical studies' (4). We have been outmatched by 'industrious Victorianists' (4), who have muscled in on Romantic turf and produced century-spanning volumes like the *Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth-Century British Periodicals and Newspapers* (2016) without a single Romanticist contributor. Framed in this context, Mason and Mole's edited volume does not just serve as a waymarker, highlighting new trends and directions in twenty-first-century Romantic periodical research; more fundamentally, it is a wake-up call.

Taking *Blackwood's* as an 'Exceptional, but Representative' example of Romantic periodical output, they invite their contributors to help remedy this deficiency by illustrating how modern critical approaches and digital tools might allow researchers 'to ask questions we might never before have entertained' (7). Jon Klancher's opening essay on how research practices have changed since the 1980s argues that, while 'digital's great capacity for search' (18) has allowed for precise examinations of works like *Blackwood's*, it also 'seriously compromises our ability to browse' (26). Though this limitation to 'random access' may perhaps be overstated, Klancher's piece contains many astute and subtle observations on evolving research practices.

Where Klancher is open-ended and reflective, Megan Coyer's subsequent essay focuses specifically on the importance of rigorous search techniques in her attempts at 'identifying embedded medical content' – despite the tendency of database search results to prove 'difficult to navigate' (38). Illustrating how she has achieved this in her research, the piece neatly mirrors Klancher's analysis of pre-digital scholarship, fittingly dissecting modern critical approaches to *Blackwood's* own critical dissection. Just as Coyer explores the usefulness of modern search methods in making sense of the sprawling mass of *Blackwood's* content, so Christine Woody considers modern theoretical tools, particularly 'the speech act theory of J. L. Austin' (78), as a

means of assessing the authenticity of the periodical's unstable personae. Nicholas Mason similarly reflects on modern critical developments, arguing that regular contributors like Caroline Bowles reveal that, whilst 'it would be a stretch to label the publisher or his magazine proto-feminist, both were considerably more forward-thinking on women's literature than most scholarly accounts would have it' (178). Like Coyer, Woody and Mason update and nuance *Blackwood's* image for the twenty-first century.

Each of these essays, to varying degrees, develop the collection's titular interest in *Romantic Periodicals in the Twenty-First Century*, but, as the volume progresses, this focus shifts elsewhere. Tom Mole's excellent essay on legal authority picks up and develops some of the questions of literary identity and linguistic control that Coyer and Woody explore, but it does not speak to the introduction's interest in twenty-first-century research practices and concerns. Similarly, Alexander Dick's essay on colonialism and the highland clearances, and Caroline McCracken-Flesher's on the former slave Mary Prince and her relationship with *Blackwood's*, both focus more on their material than their research methods. They do however add considerable depth to issues that are very much modern concerns, illustrating how, despite its bluster, *Blackwood's* was rarely straightforward or single-minded in its stances.

Mark Parker positions *Blackwood's* within the broader sweep of intellectual history, arguing that the brutality of the Cockney School attacks reflects the magazine's 'capacious programme of counter-Enlightenment resistance' – its rejection of excessive rationality (99). Mark Schoenfield also takes up this broader view, reflecting on how its 'blend of the secretive and the confident' represents an important stage in the 'development of the periodical industry from the era dominated by the polite essays crafted by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele' (116-17), replacing their rhetoric with confessional intimacy. Kristin Flieger Samuelian's penultimate essay echoes some of these ideas, considering how *Blackwood's* approach to extracting medieval source material influenced subsequent publications. In taking these wider perspectives, Parker, Schoenfield and Samuelian begin to unravel the degree to which *Blackwood's* is in fact 'Exceptional, but Representative', as suggested in the introduction (7).

Some of the inherent tensions in this positioning of *Blackwood's* as 'representative' are however revealed in Joanne Shattock's concluding essay, which explores its 'longevity' with a detailed account of its post-Romantic history up to 1980. The piece is thorough and wide-ranging, satisfyingly bookending our consideration of the magazine – but, by its nature, it has little to say on the volume's defining interest in twenty-first-century research practices. Similarly, given the introduction's criticism of century-spanning collections' neglect for the Romantic period as a whole (a symptom of the 'vogue for "long" literary periods'), it is noticeable that this volume on 'Romantic Periodicals' spends more time considering the 1890s than the 1790s (5).

However, the concentration on *Blackwood's* and its characters does, of course, have advantages, giving focus and personal interest to what might have been an overly technical and theoretical volume. With its varied strands spreading out rather than intertwining, the volume captures the diversity of modern periodical research, achieving its goal of signposting these trends for future Romanticist scholarship.

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