The BARS Review

Editor: Susan Valladares (Worcester College Oxford)
General Editors: Ian Haywood (University of Roehampton)
& Susan Oliver (University of Essex)
Technical Editor: Matthew Sangster (University of Birmingham)

Published online by the British Association for Romantic Studies

Searchable versions of these reviews with enhanced metadata, as well as the archive of past numbers, can be viewed on the BARS website: http://www.bars.ac.uk/review/.

Richard Squibbs, *Urban Enlightenment and the Eighteenth-Century Periodical Essay: Transatlantic Retrospects*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2014. Pp. 234. £50. ISBN 9781137378231.

This lively and important book attempts to tell an old story in a new way. The significance of the periodical essay to the development of eighteenth-century British literature (and to eighteenth-century life more generally) has been a critical mainstay for some time; few scholars and teachers would omit to mention the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* in their accounts of the period. Richard Squibbs does not ignore these two publications, but he does ask his readers to look behind, around and beyond them, to the host of classical models, contemporary responses, and transatlantic echoes that they draw upon or influence. What emerges is a fascinating portrait of a genre that might, if critics like Squibbs have their way, displace the novel as the arch-genre of the period in scholarly minds.

A particular strength of Squibbs's work is the effort he puts into defining the genre he wishes to examine. 'Periodical', 'magazine', 'journalism', 'essay' and 'history' are all useful terms, but the overlap between them and the potential imprecision of each term can hinder our understanding of what eighteenth-century writers were attempting when they composed periodical essays. Squibbs relies on both production elements and literary qualities to clarify his 'single-sheet, single-topic format' (3), generated by a fictional persona who addressed himself to 'subjects of manners, of taste, and of literature' (3). This clarification does not simply provide workable parameters for what is potentially a vast study; it also points to the symbolic value of the periodical essay as an attempt to counter the distractions and trivialities of the eighteenth-century press with a simple, sustained discussion that would continue to be useful to (and was, in some cases, explicitly aimed at) generations of future readers.

The contrasting temporalities of the periodical essay make for some of the most stimulating conclusions in Squibbs's book. On the one hand, periodical essays were of their

moment, directed at improving the moral literacy of readers whom the essayists themselves often wearily admitted were unlikely to manifest much improvement. It is just this immediacy that made the essays so attractive to the nineteenth-century readers who canonized them and who felt transported to the previous century by their style and content. Yet, the essayists also made it explicit that they were situating themselves within a classical tradition by producing what Squibbs calls 'a modern variant of a tradition of urbane moral history writing that had originated in ancient Athens' (4), and that they were also hoping that their essays, particularly when collected into popular bound collections, would educate later readers who also wished to tap into this tradition.

One persistent feature of the essay, wherever it was attempted, was the presence of 'characters' – sketches of contemporary types, from the speaker of the essay to the people that they met and described. In two detailed chapters, Squibbs traces the history of the idea of the 'character' through key classical and seventeenth-century sources. These characters populate the essays but also serve as mouthpieces for a debate about contemporary individuality that deeply influenced periodical writers. The apparently shallow self-interest of their readers was one of the essayists' chief targets, as they attempted to deepen their audience's sense of the present moment's place within the currents of history.

Mid-century essayists, meanwhile, were faced with a new challenge: how to use the periodical essay to combat shortcomings in the public's reading habits and interests that were often thought to have been caused by the periodical essay itself. The integration of periodical reading into a fashionable lifestyle had robbed the essay of some of its transformative potential; periodicals were just one more part of what Squibbs calls 'a welter of media overstimulation and a corresponding climate of general distraction' (81). Civic-minded bloggers might recognize this pattern, in which the medium they employ is itself part of the culture they rail against.

The final chapters of this book demonstrate how such ideas travelled to Scotland and to America, acquiring local characteristics while sharing the legacy of the English essay model. Readers in these new markets were already primed to see the periodical essay as *the* vehicle for the expression of civic values, of attacks on an overly commercial society, and of an almost comically pessimistic attitude to the possibilities of reforming their readers. The particular importance of the essay to the fledgling American republic of letters is especially illuminated by the foundation in wider periodical culture that Squibbs's book provides. Scholars of eighteenth-century writing, on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond, will be very grateful for Squibbs's close attention to and invigorating reinterpretation of one of the Enlightenment's defining genres.

Nikki Hessell
Victoria University of Wellington

Alex Watson, *Romantic Marginality: Nation and Empire on the Borders of the Page*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012. Pp. 192. £60. ISBN 9781848931923.

Alex Watson's *Romantic Marginality* is a study which explores the role of paratexts, with a special emphasis upon annotation, in Romantic literature. It is a task which remains in keeping with book historians' conviction about the significance of considering the materiality of texts in the explanation of the process of the creation of meaning. Alex Watson analyses various kinds and uses of notes in Romantic texts to demonstrate that, contrary to the

common belief that paratexts play a subservient role to the main text – or centered text, as he prefers to refer to it – they are a crucial site of cultural and political negotiations. Their capacity to disrupt monoglossia renders them an ideal tool for the exposition of the struggle of ideological forces within the texts in which they are employed, and that is why they are particularly utile in texts describing cultures incorporated into the British Empire. The existing studies, as Watson argues, have failed to do justice to the complexity of the uses to which notes were put. Gerard Genette in his *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987), one of the most significant studies on paratextual apparatus, argues, for instance, that it serves a secondary role by definition and is usually used to corroborate the author's arguments contained in the main text. Watson resolves to prove that this is a simplified view on paratexts and in his own book aims to 'enrich and refine' (3) the theory of paratexts in the context of the emerging colonial and imperial discourse.

To elaborate his own theoretical model of paratexts, the author of *Romantic Marginality* analyses diverse texts, representing their use in various kinds of discourse and genres: poetry, national tales, travelogues, historical books, Augustan satires and historical novels among them. Chapter 1 traces changing attitudes towards annotation, pointing to the fact that the modern conviction about the secondary role of paratexts is an inheritance from eighteenth-century scholars and that it is quite astonishing given the fact that before and after the Enlightenment their possibilities for supplementing the main text were frequently exploited. Chapter 2 demonstrates the marginal text as a space frequently used to reveal frictions occurring in the composition of the text. The remaining four chapters are devoted to the principal subject of the study; that is, to the exploration of the role of notes in the construction and deconstruction of the discourses of nationalism and imperialism (3).

One of the greatest merits of Alex Watson's study is that it shows how flexible an instrument paratexts are in the textual negotiations of ideological positions. By the analysis of his multiple examples of pre-Romantic and Romantic texts which employ annotation, the author successfully demonstrates that notes can be used both to verify and subvert the meanings included in the main, or centered, text. They may be used to refer the readers to scholarly, antiquarian, topographical or ethnographic data about the depicted cultures, to present the author's direct experience or merely to give his or her emotional comments. The examples show that the variety of information placed in the notes can serve multiple functions: it can appeal to the readers' reason or emotions, present the viewpoint of the dominant or marginalized culture, and search for dissonances or common points between the culture of the author and the one he or she describes. The scrutiny of the diverse functions which the content of the notes plays in relation to the centered text illustrates the paratexts' suitability for the representation of the inescapable tensions within cultures absorbed within the British Empire. Watson thus demonstrates the notes' inherently dialogic nature and the contradictory forces within colonial and national discourses.

The analyses of numerous texts in *Romantic Marginalities* have the obvious benefit of illustrating the diverse uses to which Romantic, and pre-Romantic, authors put their annotative apparatus. In this sense Watson succeeds in enriching Genette's model of paratextuality. The author, however, stops short of attempting to synthesize the conclusions of the individual texts and of constructing a new, more nuanced, theory of paratexts. The conclusion to the study, where such a model could have been described, offers instead a 'survey of the afterlife of Romantic marginality up to the present' (140). It also comes as a surprise that the analysis of texts which deal with the relationship of dominant and dominated cultures is not rooted more strongly in the theories of postcolonialism and cultural hegemony. The application of such theories could reveal the nature of the correlation between print culture and the creation of national and imperialist discourse.

Alex Watson's *Romantic Marginality* without doubt improves our understanding of the role of annotation in the literature of the Romantic period. The analysis of the interplay of the margins and the centre in numerous and variegated texts is a good way to observe the evolution of colonial and imperialist discourses and their attempts to construct a culture which would accommodate the conflicting worldviews of the cultures absorbed by Britain. The overview of the wide range of Romantic paratexts lays foundations for further studies devoted to the subject of the relations between print and national and colonial discourse.

Joanna Maciulewicz
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

David Stewart, *Romantic Magazines and Metropolitan Literary Culture*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Pp. 248. £50. ISBN 9780230251786.

Kim Wheatley, *Romantic Feuds: Transcending the 'Age of Personality'*. Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 204. £55. ISBN 9781409432739.

David Stewart's clear and concise title is one of many good things about his book, suggesting three of its principal concerns: the development of the genre of the magazine, its symbiotic relationship with metropolitan culture and its surprising appropriations of emerging Romantic notions of the literary. A couple of key terms which the title does not contain are 'commercial', a descriptor which plays a major role in Stewart's characterisations of magazines' activities, and '1815-1825', a tightly-defined period during which he contends that 'the need for a new set of boundaries co-existed with an uncertainty as to where those boundaries would be drawn' (206). In examining this particular decade, Stewart seeks to complicate Jon Klancher's assertion that periodical audiences fragmented after the 1790s, suggesting that a major characteristic of the magazines published at this time was their 'relationship with a market which united all shades of opinion in mutual juxtaposition' (8).

Critical accounts often lump together magazines and Reviews and pay attention principally to what they have to say about the lives and works of poets and novelists. Stewart's book focuses specifically on magazines and takes pains to account for the variety of their forms and contents. In his first chapter, he traces a genealogy distinct from that of the Reviews, arguing that just as the *Edinburgh* outmoded the *Monthly* and the *Critical*, newer magazine forms pioneered by Leigh Hunt in the *Examiner* and developed in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* outmoded older models: 'Where the *Gentleman's* creates a miscellaneity based on the diversity of its readers' interests, the new magazines create a miscellaneity based on the diversity of their readers' (19). His second chapter develops this assertion by arguing that the various magazines were far from being polarised and inexorable opponents. He contends that 'Periodicals are not simply political entities: they are literary styles' (83) and goes on to demonstrate the ways in which these styles coexist with and enhance one another. Readers of the magazines were 'not invited to resolve all their different colours into white, but to enjoy these differences, much as a spectator enjoys the rapid succession of contrasting images in a busy street or in a firework display' (84). These insights allow Stewart to resituate the Cockney School attacks by showing how they had positive implications for Hunt as well as negative ones, serving to increase his profile and as acknowledgements of his work trailblazing new magazine manners.

During the years immediately after Waterloo, Stewart argues that magazine writers wrote into being and worked within a connected, referential periodical culture in which specific audiences were evoked, but in which readers were assumed to be omnivorous, mirroring 'the Cockney's glancing, active vision' in partaking of 'a social, aesthetic and cultural confusion that was as bewildering as it was enjoyable' (119). The difficulty – possibly an unsolvable one – with this contention is the dearth of accounts of readers' experiences, making it complicated to gauge the extent to which readers actually understood magazines in this way. Stewart is certainly correct, though, in arguing for the probability of this interpretation and in pointing out flaws in the contrary case; he writes that there 'is no persuasive evidence that the readerships of different magazines were mutually exclusive' and cites numerous examples of magazines depicting interconnected readerships that 'transcend audience demarcations' (59).

The book's arguments generally circle back to the Blackwoodsmen and their works, and the canonical Romantic essayists play a prominent supporting role, but Stewart pays considerable attention to less well-known writers, including John Hamilton Reynolds, Peter George Patmore, Thomas Griffiths Wainewright and William Frederick Deacon. He also draws examples from relatively obscure titles including *McPhun's Glasgow Magazine,* the *British Lady's Magazine* and *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*. His book innovates in its portrayals of the complex interconnections within the periodical marketplace and in its recovery of neglected magazine discourses. David Higgins has argued, the magazines played a key role in promoting Romantic genius; Stewart shows that they also played a major part in marketising it, contending that writers such as De Quincey and Coleridge were able to make themselves 'instantly recognisable, and hence saleable, by insisting on a literariness [...] defined by its separation from the market place' (184). As he demonstrates particularly effectively in his readings of advertisement-based parodies, whatever their aesthetic achievements might have been, the magazines were also 'unavoidably commercial' (185).

In *Romantic Feuds*, Kim Wheatley distinguishes her own work from Stewart's 'materialist approach to the aesthetic turn in periodicals', stating that she seeks to 'combine a historicist awareness of the circumstances of production and the vagaries of reception with careful attention to the formal strategies of the reviewers' surprisingly imaginative prose' (16). In keeping with this aim, *Romantic Feuds* combines case histories with close readings, locating 'an aesthetic element even in routinely antagonistic, politicized and gossipy exchanges between writers and reviewers' (1). Wheatley sees the clashes she examines as 'behaving like works of literature, ignited and kept alive by mixtures of political, commercial, psychological, and artistic motives, as well as by the exigencies of periodical form' (2). She chimes with Stewart's view of magazines' politics in seeing literary feuds as conflicts that induced further opportunities to write, for the benefit of all concerned: 'although the cycle of attacks and counterattacks may be rhetorically or politically ineffectual, with their proliferation, everyone wins in the sense that feuds take on lives of their own' (5).

Wheatley contends at the outset that the 'quintessentially Romantic quest for transcendence' can be located in the feuds she examines, with their literary and aesthetic qualities causing them to temporarily escape the 'age of personality', which Wheatley defines as a 'cultural preoccupation, frequently malicious, with the private lives of individuals in the public eye' (1). One thing that her book makes clear, though, is the ease with which the potentially transcendent can be pulled back down to earth. Southey's critics might pay tribute to his literary abilities through the 'artfulness' (53) of their responses and in representing him in 'sublime version[s]' (173), but this does not prevent them from dumping these versions unceremoniously into lakes. While the feuds touch on what Wheatley identifies as being the major themes of canonical Romanticism – 'the exploration of the "deep" self, the revitalising of the everyday, the experience of the sublime, and even the power of the supernatural' (2) –

one of the joys of her book is that it also represents and analyses moments of folly and pettiness, such as Lady Morgan's catching 'a "glimpse of the long leg and *ci-devant* white stocking" of the fleeing Hazlitt' (10), the critic desperately seeking to avoid an encounter with a woman he had recently criticised in the *Edinburgh*.

The body of the book consists of four chapters, examining the Wat Tyler controversy; the *Edinburgh*-led attacks on Coleridge and his works in the late 1810s; the *Quarterly's* relationships with Hunt, Hazlitt and Lady Morgan; and, more unexpectedly, the feud between the Arctic explorer John Ross and John Barrow, the second secretary of the Admiralty and a prolific reviewer in the *Quarterly*. In her previous book, *Shelley and his Readers*, Wheatley pointed out something too often neglected in reading literary conflicts; to whit, 'persecution is fun' (4). In this book, she makes a strong case for the 'quarterlies' reputation for stodginess' (15) being an inaccurate one. *Romantic Feuds* excels in bringing out the comedy and the contradictions in the battles which it examines. Wheatley's close readings are informed and subtle, employing detailed knowledge to revivify the pleasures of these clashes. There are a few minor points that could be quibbled; for example, when interpreting Southey's description of Parliament as a 'place that afforded [William Smith] protection' (41), Wheatley does not consider the possibility that the type of protection Southey was referring to was that provided by parliamentary privilege, thereby implying that Smith's words could have been successfully prosecuted as slander in another context. Generally, though, she interrogates her cases with exemplary skill and panache. Her examinations of Jeffrey's 'unprecedented signed rejoinder' (17) to Coleridge and of the subsequent writings which saw the identities of both writers 'transmuted into fictitious creations' (95) are particularly sharp and incisive. The final chapter's examination of the political and sublime representations of Arctic expeditions in the *Quarterly* serves in itself to 'extend the scope of Romantic literature' (16) and makes clear how other critics might break further new ground through following Wheatley's example. Despite the burgeoning of works on periodicals in recent years, both these books make it clear that well-executed new approaches still have the potential to recover a great deal that is interesting, pertinent and valuable.

Matthew Sangster
University of Birmingham

David Worrall, *Celebrity, Performance, Reception: British Georgian Theatre as Social Assemblage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 305. £50.00. ISBN 9781107043602.

'Anyone who has read *Celebrity, Performance, Reception* will', claims its author, 'have been left in no doubt as to the sheer volume of London's theatrical assemblage' (235). He is right, and neither do readers remain ignorant about the 'vast contemporary theatrical network' of provincial and regional Georgian playhouses (237). Market factors loom large in the theoretical formulations Worrall adopts, which is apt given the awesome statistic that at the end of the eighteenth century 'the total population of the capital city (1,096,784 [according to the 1801 census]) more or less mirrored the annual number of theatre seats for sale within it' (38). The author constantly counts – people, plays, pounds sterling – to demonstrate empirically that a 'rebalancing of cultural history' is needed to restore Georgian theatre to its rightful place as the dominant artistic form of the Romantic period – and a fine comparative example follows as he reveals the modesty of footfall and takings at the much more frequently studied Royal Academy exhibitions when seen in a theatrical context (40, 40-42).

This isn't to say that the macro always trumps the micro, or that historical detail and colour are lacking. Worrall also demonstrates that 'the pervasive modern unfamiliarity with both the repertoire and the scale of Georgian theatre has produced a cultural distortion of the past' (41) through fascinating, minute revelations about varied nightly theatre schedules, the mixed fortunes of Shakespeare, cavalier Georgian approaches to textual fidelity, the speediness of topical re-writes and the strikingly alien behaviour of theatre-goers and their 'audience led anti-theatricality' (207).

The book is structured around a series of broad topics which link together to advance these larger arguments about the character of theatrical assemblages in the Georgian era. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with the tricksy nature of celebrity, Chapter 5 with unique theatrical takes on naval conflict, Chapter 6 with Anglo-Ottoman relations, Chapter 7 with the French Revolution and stage representations of French queens and Chapter 8 with issues of censorship, loyalism and treason in Georgian theatre. Given the pivotal role of specific records and material artefacts in Worrall's methodology (he scrutinises and deploys playbills, receipts, newspapers, prompters' notebooks, diplomats' diaries, court archives and much else besides) summary cannot do justice to the subtle textures, and painstaking strategies at work within *Celebrity, Performance, Reception* but, with luck, a couple of examples can convey its flavour. For instance, the stage 'as a gendered workplace' is an expected concern but it is Worrall's burrowing into the Proceedings of the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund, 1789-91 that enables him to reveal what highly progressive employment acting was for women, as he discovers, rather amazingly, that 'benefits were disbursed to both sexes under roughly equal conditions' (42,43). Given women's profoundly inferior financial situation, the independence open to theatrical females in a workplace where they matched men in numbers and often in wages certainly does have 'considerable implications for what is understood about the equality of women in Georgian Britain [...] the benefit provisions of the theatrical funds represent a major social innovation' (43, 235). So, do put your daughter on the stage Mrs Wollstonecraft.

This dynamic and productive movement between the micro to macro characterises the fascinating treatment of sexual themes throughout. For example, consideration of specific stagings of long-forgotten maritime plays reveals 'a network of dramas performed in London that reflect anxieties about British military readiness and the fabrication of appropriate gender roles' (64), or, again, Worrall's delving into the gritty details of Benefit Night ticket sales and wage bills illuminates both the monetary deftness and the pulling power of famous female performers.

In short, Romantic orthodoxies are overturned by expert knowledge of the workings of all levels of the Georgian theatrical assemblage, and in this light celebrity Romantic geniuses are more correctly stage-makers, 'products of voluminous social reception networks as fascinating and varied as the celebrities themselves' (236), patriotic plays put on by the patent theatres actually form 'a contrarian canon of dramas about the war' (131) and so on. The social assemblage and actor-network theories of DeLanda and Latour, to which Worrall passionately cleaves, do not always make for lively or digestible prose – 'In other words' (20, *passim*) is a welcome phrase – but they are put to productive use throughout *Celebrity, Performance, Reception* as Worrall proves that 'Georgian theatre was the nation's dominant culturally expressive form in the long eighteenth century' (1).

Helen P. Bruder
Independent Scholar

Susan J. Wolfson, *Romantic Interactions: Social Being and the Turns of Literary Action*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. Pp. 381. £15.50. ISBN 9780801894749.

In *Romantic Interactions*, Susan J. Wolfson responds to what she terms a 'famed myth' (1) of Romanticism: that which associates it with the solitary, the singular, and the subjective. In doing so, she adds to a growing body of scholarship that seeks to identify the various 'communities' at play in Romantic literature. Wolfson's work in this field, however, is unique in the way in which it defines the dynamics of interaction taking place between Romantic-period texts and authors. This study is not interested in intertextuality, collaboration, or collectives, but rather focuses on examining a range of authors who, while speaking at times as if from a position of solitude, simultaneously display an awareness of audience. Wolfson demonstrates that this audience frequently comprises other authorial voices: the writer, then, comes to a position of self-definition as 'author' through his or her connection with other authors.

The first three chapters of this study look at Charlotte Smith and Mary Wollstonecraft as female writers of the 1790s, examining how these authors responded to male literary traditions. For Smith, the Terror and subsequent conflict with France led to a scathing female perspective on war, with *The Emigrants* illustrating how women have historically been the victims of men's conflicts. In her fast-paced examination of this text, Wolfson traces how Smith responds to Milton, Pope, Shakespeare, and others, not in terms of mere echo and allusion, but through genuine and complex engagement with masculine traditions. Here, we find 'she-shades' of Gray (35), and observe how Smith 'recruits' Collins (48); other interactions are layered, with Milton's words set against those of both Young and Cowper. This 'audit' of the male voices of the past is both proactive and critical, and refuses to adopt a singular or unified perspective: Smith sometimes figures herself as allied to men's traditions, but at other times sets herself up in opposition. Turning to Wollstonecraft, Wolfson examines how *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* addresses poetry of the female character. We are introduced to Wollstonecraft's diverse interactions with writers such as Milton and Shakespeare, with Wolfson demonstrating that Wollstonecraft's female reader is likewise invited to try out different voices and consequently to interact with other readers.

The second section of *Romantic Interactions*, comprising a further three chapters, examines the work of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, deconstructing the dynamics of their complicated and manifold interactions. Wordsworth, the beloved public Poet, is set against Dorothy, who resisted the label of Author. Wordsworth's poetic revisions of Dorothy's records must surely be complicated, Wolfson suggests, by a Bloomian anxiety of influence: a tension made all the more threatening by the fact that he is not engaging with a strong male predecessor, but a cherished sister. The relationship between the pair is shown to be simultaneously productive and defensive, with William struggling with his sister's words while Dorothy experiments with her own authority in a manner that tests some of her brother's established values and ideas. In many ways this is the strongest section of the study, with Wolfson unpicking tiny details in order to open out our understanding of William's and Dorothy's work. Original and ambitious, these chapters refigure our traditional understanding of the sibling dynamic between the Wordsworths and break down the conventional masculine/feminine binary that separates their work.

The final two chapters of this book consider Byron, whom Wolfson examines in terms of his celebrity status. She suggests that the poet not only teased his public with plural Byrons (including Melancholy Byron, Aloof Byron, and Dandy Byron), but was subsequently reproduced by female writers in the Byronic heroine of the 1820s and 1830s. Engaging

closely with various portraits and written accounts by Byron's male contemporaries, Wolfson traces how these 'Byron-smitten' (12) men provided a stimulus for women writing both to and about Byron, from the so-called Female Byron, L.E.L., to Felicia Hemans's 'public displays of affection' (268) in her echoes and epigraphs.

One of the real strengths of this book is Wolfson's talent for close reading, which often demonstrates remarkable sensitivity and is frequently highly illuminating. In the tolling of the masculine rhyme *roar/War* in Smith's poetry, for example, Wolfson identifies an engagement with both Pope's Jove bidding 'the brazen throat of war to roar' and Milton's description of a world in which the 'brazen Throat of Warr had ceast to roar'. By incorporating these words into her own work, Wolfson argues, Smith does not attempt to borrow the authority of her male predecessors, but rather uses the echo created to represent the horrific repetition of war. Always original, Wolfson balances lesser-known texts against more canonical works, but even her reading of Dorothy's famous 'daffodils' journal entry against William's 'I wandered lonely as a Cloud' succeeds in reinvigorating well-trodden ground, suggesting that William 'replays' the shared moment as a 'resource for a solitary self' (175). Often striking, always convincing, and at times ground-breaking, *Romantic Interactions* is a significant contribution to contemporary Romantic studies.

Catherine Redford
St Hilda's College, University of Oxford

Anne Greenfield, ed., *Interpreting Sexual Violence*, *1660-1800*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013. Pp. 220. £60. ISBN 9781848934399.

The study of sexual violence is undergoing a period of introspection as to whether it is a study of sexualities, or a study of violent crime. In exploring this issue, scholars must tackle questions of the relationship between representations of sexual violence and readers' and audiences' reactions to such representations. How far can we infer from the plethora of representations of sexual violence found in seventeenth and eighteenth-century culture deeper indications of contemporary sexualities? This is the question with which Anne Greenfield's edited volume grapples.

The volume is undoubtedly ambitious in its scope, containing fourteen chapters from specialists from a variety of fields, and seeking not merely to explore rape, but to analyse representations of sexual violence as defined by modern parameters. The final result is uneven, although it does raise important questions about the future of studies of sexual violence for this period, and indeed the relationships between historical and literary studies. Particularly strong chapters are provided by Katie Barclay and Lena Olsson, which draw on a great variety of literary and legal sources to explore the blurred boundaries between rape and seduction which existed within eighteenth-century courtship rituals and the difficulties for conscious women to actively resist rape and be believed. Aparna Gollapundi's study of representations of sodomy within the Old Bailey Proceedings, and in particular the ways in which a focus on the violated body of the adolescent boy dominated these proceedings, expertly explores a previously understudied aspect of sexual violence in this period, and one which contains many useful contributions to more traditional conceptions of the subject. Dawn A. Nawrot's chapter on the complicity of female friends in assisting in rapes in *Tom Jones* and *Roxana* complicates traditional narratives of women as eternal passive victims and suggests important connections with eighteenth-century attitudes towards friendship. The volume is however held back by a slight confusion of aims. Both Loring Pfeiffer and Jennifer L. Airey's chapters on the means in which sexual violence was used as a discursive trope in

political discourse are compelling and well-researched, yet the aims of such work are categorically different from those of the chapters listed above, looking at violence as a literary trope rather than a societal actuality – although Airey does make some attempts to infer wider public attitudes towards rape in her study.

While some chapters aim to use the historical context of legal and popular understandings of sexual violence to elucidate readings of contemporary works, others use contemporary works to add to historical understandings of sexual violence, while still more choose a purely literary focus, re-interpreting representations of sexual violence within particular works. While each is done successfully, the overall effect is confused, as can sometimes be the case when historians and literary scholars come together. There is also some confusion emanating from the editor's choice of the broad term 'sexual violence', which in most chapters is interpreted as rape, while in others appears to be viewed as any kind of expression of sexuality whatsoever. Such confusion perhaps emerges from undue reliance on studies which categorise rape as mere extensions of male sexuality. This issue is admirably tackled by the editor herself in her chapter 'The Titillation of Dramatic Rape', but a tendency in the wider volume to assume that all eighteenth-century males were programmed to desire to commit rape sometimes renders conclusions a little unsteady and hinders successful readings of some texts.

Yet despite the unevenness, Greenfield is to be congratulated for the ambitious scope of the volume and for drawing together scholars of a variety of different fields. It is clear that the language and imagery of sexual violence, and in particular of rape, permeated seventeenth- and eighteenth-century culture, and that such a culture had a complex relationship with actual lived experience and sexualities. While this volume perhaps suffers from the confusion of aims that is sometimes the product of interdisciplinary work, it also demonstrates the fruitfulness of interdisciplinarity in covering such a wide range of genres and sources. If the book does not quite deliver on its aim of exploring sexual violence beyond the traditional eighteenth century definition of rape, it does suggest that a range of behaviours that could be viewed as sexually violent did exist in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century society and culture and are worthy of further study.

Anna Jenkin
University of Sheffield

Ann R. Hawkins, ed., Stephanie Eckroth, assistant ed., *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed, Part 1*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011. Pp. 1280. £275. ISBN 9781851964819.

Ann R. Hawkins, ed., Stephanie Eckroth, assistant ed., *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed, Part 2*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012. Pp. 1312. £275. ISBN 9781851964826.

Ann R. Hawkins, ed., Stephanie Eckroth, assistant ed., *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed, Part 3*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013. Pp. 1104. £275. ISBN 9781851964833.

The *Critical Heritage* series, which published contemporary responses to selected authors, chose only one woman writer from the Romantic period, Jane Austen, for inclusion in the

series. Twelve Romantic male authors were selected, implying that Romantic women writers have little or no critical heritage. *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed* is a voluminous response to a critical tradition which has dismissed the historical and literary importance of late eighteenth-century female authorship. In three parts and nine volumes, it edits, indexes, annotates and glosses periodical articles from 1789 into 1792, which comment on approximately 300 female writers. Demonstrating the pervasive tendency to underestimate the reception of late eighteenth-century female authors, the editors themselves were surprised at the number of women writers who were reviewed – the first six volumes were expected to encompass at least eight years, but the unexpected plenitude of reviews resulted in the entire series covering just a little over three years. The nine weighty volumes are a physical monument to the presence of women writers in literary conversations during these years. *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed* includes not only conventional reviews, but other texts that testify to the reception of women authors in the period, such as contemporary biographical notices of women writers, commentary on manuscripts and general articles commenting on female authorship. Notices of publication, and extracts without critical commentary are also recorded in the volumes, giving the reader a larger sense of the contemporary interest in particular authors, and the breadth of their readership. The copious appendices include helpful descriptions of the periodicals, and brief biographies of the woman writers reviewed. The volumes are arranged by year, then by periodical, and finally by author name, which allows each review to be contextualised in the literary conversations of the year it was written.

Romantic Women Writers Reviewed reaffirms the enormous effect gender had on the reception of a writer's work, despite the political and stylistic diversity of female authors in the period. The gender of the author is an issue in all the Romantic periodicals collected in *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed*, despite the periodicals' diverse politics and aims. Women's writing is typically treated by these reviews as a uniform category and with female authorship comes suppositions about subject matter and literary form – a lady is expected to produce texts which are imaginative, sentimental and romantic (1:9). A female name on the title page, the *Analytic Review* (1789) states, signals a 'kind of flimsy writing' and most female authors write in the same way, 'like timid sheep, the lady authors jump over the hedge one after the other, and do not dream of deviating either to the right or left' (1:25). When a woman writer is seen to deviate from this norm, she is praised for not being like the 'generality of female writers' (2:9). *The Monthly Review*'s (1789) response to Laetitia-Matilda Hawkins novel *Argus* is typical, expressing surprise that the 'fair writer is imbued, with a spirit of *philosophy* and *rationality*, not always to be met with in her sex, even where the mind has not been destitute of culture' (1:318).

Women writers had to negotiate expectations that they conform to the laws of appropriate femininity on the page as well as off. Mary Poovey's *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* and Jane Spencer's *The Rise of the Woman Novelist* demonstrated this in the 1980s. *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed* illustrates just how persistent and wide-ranging these pressures were. The *European Magazine* (1789), for instance, reviewing Ann Hilditch's *Mount Pelham* praises this particular 'female pen' for possessing 'the artless and simple elegance characteristic of the sex' (1:181). The *Analytic Review* praises Helen Maria Williams' 'feminine sweetness in her style and observations' (2:268), while Anna Laetitia Barbauld in *The New London Magazine* is praised for both her 'intellectual' and 'personal endowments' (2:37), suggesting that a pleasurable feminine exterior is congruent with admirable literary work. Women writers who are identified as not being appropriately demure in their writings, are subject to innuendos. For example, the *Town and Country Magazine* (1790) criticises the anonymously authored *Sidney and Eugenia*; the criticism that the characters in this novel fall in love too quickly spills into speculation about the susceptibility

of the female author, '[h]ow combustible therefore must have been the feelings of the female writer!' (5:115). In the same magazine, the anonymous author of *The Perfidious Guardian* (1790) is suggested to be possessed of a great deal of sexual experience, because she writes 'familiarly of bagnios, keeping and the various modes of seduction, and talks warmly of love, rapes, and raptures' (5:116).

Of course, authorship itself is frequently represented as being contrary to appropriate feminine behaviour. Female authors are characterised as compromising their 'natural' roles as dutiful wives or daughters, and negative reviews often advise the woman writer to give up her writing and focus her attention on her family, or getting a husband. For instance, writing about female authors in general, *Walker's Hiberian Magazine* (1789) states, 'we admire them more as authors, than esteem them as women. Few men would (I imagine) wish their wives and daughters to prefer Horace and Virgil to the cares of their families' (2:161). The *Analytical Review* (1789) advises the anonymous author of *The Fair Hiberian* to get married, so she will no longer write, and instead 'will employ her time better' (6:154). One of the more scathing examples of a review attempting to resituate the female author in the domestic is the *Town and Country Magazine*'s (1789) response to Esther Finglass' *The Recluse*. The review states: '[i]f miss Finglass knows as little of house-keeping as she does of novel writing, she has no title to a husband; but if she knows any thing of pastry, we recommend her to heat her oven with her works' (2:82).

While female authors are expected to obey the laws of feminine proprietary, the reviewers (regardless of their actual gender) assume a masculine persona, one that makes allowances for feminine weakness, and treats women writers with ostentatious gallantry. Too pointed a critique contravenes the laws of chivalry, and it is typical for a reviewer to announce, as the *General Magazine* (1789) does in a review of Susanna Rowson's work, '[w]e are sorry, as *men*, to criticize a *lady's* work too minutely' (1:219). The weaknesses of the posture of the gallant male critic are exemplified in the debate between Anna Seward and Joseph Weston in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1789-91), ostensibly over the comparative merits of John Dryden and Alexander Pope. As a woman writer, Seward initiates a debate with a man over the respective merits of pre-eminent male poets, and she astutely manipulates gendered social codes to her advantage, responding to Weston's hyperbolic praise of her with modest demurral. Gallantry requires Weston to reaffirm his praise of her. The typical reviewer's performance of masculinity also is compromised when the reviewers guess the wrong gender for anonymous publications. A scathing review of Mary Wollstonecraft's anonymously published *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* in the *Critical Review* (1790), presumes the author is a 'he.' When Wollstonecraft's gender is discovered, an apologetic footnote pronounces that simply swapping pronouns will not correct the misgendering in this review, '[i]t would not have been sufficient to have corrected merely verbal errors: a lady should have been addressed with more respect' (2:353). 'She' cannot simply replace 'he,' the entire review, its tone and content, is contingent on gender.

Romantic Women Writers Reviewed not only provides a nuanced and varied picture of the way female writing was discussed in the late 1780s and early 1790s, it also shows that the writers who were popular in the periodicals are very different from the authors most frequently invoked today when characterising the period. With relatively unfamiliar names dominating its pages, *Romantic Women Writers* suggests exciting new directions for future eighteenth-century and Romantic scholarship. It also points to problems that come from making Jane Austen the single example of a Romantic woman writer, rather than one of many – Austen's muted reception, moderate output and belated popularity, was far from what was typical for a female author in this period. That almost all of the texts reviewed are today obscure, suggests a possible continuity between some of the reviews' representation of women's writing as disposable, forgettable literature and how women's writing is valued at

this present moment. A monumental work of editorial labour, *Romantic Women Writers Reviewed* offers an invaluable insight into the complicated gender politics of print culture in the late eighteenth century, and contributes to general conversations about the relationship between gender, genre and the literary marketplace.

Amelia Dale
University of Sydney

Enit Karafili Steiner, *Jane Austen's Civilized Women: Morality, Gender and the Civilizing Process*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012. Pp. viii + 228. £60. ISBN 9781848931770.

This monograph is the ninth volume in Pickering and Chatto's 'Gender and Genre' Series, a collection which – since its inception in 2009 – has included work as disparate as reconsiderations of Mary Cholmondeley, Edith Wharton and Winifred Holtby. Including Austen on this list brings the first truly canonical writer to the table. Any critic who wishes to publish a new monograph on Jane Austen must of course pick through the scholarly terrain with care. In a dense introduction, Steiner references a great many recent studies on the novelist – this is not, we are told, a similar examination to Hazel Jones's 2009 *Jane Austen and Marriage*, nor is it Sarah Emsley's *Jane Austen's Philosophy of the Virtues* (2005). In its linking of Austen to the philosophical tradition of the eighteenth century, it owes something to Jenny Davidson's *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness: Manners and Morals from Locke to Austen* (2004), but it is clear, and acknowledged, that in some ways the greatest debt is to Peter Knox-Shaw's magisterial *Jane Austen and the Enlightenment* (2004).

That said, Steiner takes care to point out that Knox-Shaw's work pays little attention to gender, and even less to the work of Scottish Enlightenment philosopher John Millar. The 'question of gender hierarchy and its relationship to morality and manners' (2) underpins *Jane Austen's Civilised Women*: her attention to Millar's *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1771), the author feels, is what makes the study important and unique. I quite agree. But I wish that Steiner did not feel the need to constantly differentiate her own work from that of her peers and predecessors. Many readers may wish, too, for greater clarity of prose, and indeed for a great deal less critical apparatus. It can be difficult to sustain interest in the careful close readings of individual novels if we first have to rehearse responses from Richard Simpson in the 1870s to Claudia Johnson in the 1990s, via Bakhtin's dialogical thinking, 'the atomized self contested by Elias, Arendt and Benhabib', and prominent theorists from Freud to Judith Butler. There is, at times, an anxiety of citation, and occasionally a defensiveness that is quite unnecessary. And heavy-handed readings of individual lines quash the exuberance of an author loved by 'common' readers as much as by critics. Let me give an example from the first chapter:

> The opening sentence of the juvenilia and the first line of 'Frederic and Elfrida' ushers the reader into what will be Austen's point of departure during her entire career – the family setting: 'The Uncle of Elfrida was the Father of Frederic; in other words, they were first cousins by the Father's side' (*J*4). As a matter of fact, 'Frederic and Elfrida were first cousins by the Father's side' would have been an easier formulation to follow, but it would have failed to convey the linkage that typifies human existence. (29)

Certainly. It would also have failed to be funny, something that this piece – dedicated by the young Austen to her friend Martha Lloyd – is clearly attempting to be.

This is not to say that there is not a great deal to admire here. The book provides comprehensive coverage of Austen's oeuvre, and reads it alongside important questions of Enlightenment philosophy and proto-feminism. Following recent critical fashion, the writer's career is considered chronologically, and in its entirety – from manuscripts unexplored until the twentieth century to novels the author herself saw into print. An examination of the juvenilia is given an entire chapter, before the 1790s *Lady Susan* and *Northanger Abbey* are read alongside each other, and this is followed by chapters devoted to, respectively, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma* and finally *Persuasion*. We are invited to consider 'the diachronic evolution of Austen's fiction', and as we do so, relevant quotations from Austen's letters punctuate the discussion. The chapter on *Mansfield Park* is particularly fine. It is useful to remember, in this bicentenary year for the novel, that Austen's portrait of Fanny Price is a deep psychological study of a young girl's development, informed by the philosophy of the day and relevant to twenty-first century theories of child development. Steiner reads Fanny alongside the heroines of Austen's contemporaries (Edgeworth, Burney and More), and, like many feminist critics and scholars in recent years, rescues her from scholars such as Marvin Mudrick who have seen only 'uneasy stiffness' in the novel.

This ambitious, meticulously researched and wide-ranging study is likely to be of most use to critically engaged scholars of Austen. Steiner reads Austen in and of her times, as well as in relation to abstract concepts. One must sift through the theoretical framework. But at its best, *Jane Austen's Civilized Women* provides some genuinely new close readings, and insightful comments on much-read and discussed novels.

Gillian Dow
University of Southampton/Chawton House Library

Olivia Murphy, *Jane Austen the Reader: The Artist as Critic*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 248. £50. ISBN 9781137292407.

Jane Austen the Reader is a valuable addition to what may be seen as the already well-mapped territory of Jane Austen's literary influences. Austen's personal views on the novel are sparse. Murphy contends that we can nonetheless recover Austen's critical opinions through her artistic practices. 'Austen belonged to a critical age and we underestimate the extent to which she engaged with her own contemporary culture when we fail to recognise the finely tuned critical perspective with which she read' (111-12). It is this critical quality of Austen's writing that this study sets out to demonstrate, anchoring her in the critical culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Murphy encourages us to see Austen's novels as displaying 'feminist critical practices' (92) and sheds new light on familiar scenes such as Elizabeth Bennet's reading of Mr Darcy's letter, Scott's 1816 *Edinburgh Review* of *Emma*, or Mrs Musgrove's 'fat sighings'. Her study complements Mary Waldron's *Jane Austen and the Fiction of her Time* and Anthony Mandal's recent *Jane Austen and the Popular Novel*.

Murphy links Austen's 'critical reading' to her radical innovations of the novel. She shows that Austen conceived the novel as a porous, flexible form, capable of absorbing and in the process transforming other novels and other genres. Austen questioned and tested the possibilities and limitations of the novel throughout her career. Murphy is particularly successful where other Austen studies sometimes fail, in considering Austen's work as a

coherent whole and in reconstructing the dialogue between the different phases of her writing career, revealing that Austen's earliest compositions share the same critical concerns as her later fiction. One of the strengths of Murphy's study is her analysis of Austen's juvenilia and their 'highly developed critical perspective on the novel' (9).

For Murphy, the genre of the novel in the period is inextricably linked to its reception, and Chapter 1 sets out to outline the critical culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Murphy argues for the importance of the reprinting of novels in the aftermath of the 1774 end of perpetual copyright and for the strong critical presence of women writers in the period. Anna Laetitia Barbauld's 1810 50-volume edition of the *British Novelists* features prominently for its establishment of the genre and its showcasing of women writers. Murphy discusses Austen's own professional ambitions, recognising the 'culture of shared literary production, or at least appreciation, in the Austen family' (6) yet arguing for a strong-minded and self-assured young writer, evidenced by Austen's mock-self-aggrandising 'THE AUTHOR'.

Following on from this, Chapter 2 analyses the juvenilia and *Northanger Abbey* in conjunction, emphasising the point that Austen's works share the same critical engagement. Murphy shows that the concept of realism is central to these works; Austen constantly exposes the fictionality of the texts she engages with, an issue Murphy skilfully addresses throughout her study.

Chapter 3 then illustrates how *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* interrogate the conventions of the eighteenth-century novel through their radical treatment of women's sexuality, their disenchanted perspective on love (an argument that may ruffle Austen devotees who regard her as the romantic novelist par excellence), and their introduction of mixed characters. Austen's use of letters is also presented as a radical stylistic advance as fiction for the time dramatises the '*difficultie*s of reading' (69).

The discussion of *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion* (Chapters 4 and 6) reveals that Austen's mature fiction both critiqued the contemporary literary culture yet remained deeply engaged with eighteenth-century literature. She discusses Austen's 'system of covert quotations' (93) and offers a subtle reading of Austen's reworking of *Paradise Lost* in the context of the Romantic era's reappraisal of Milton's work, which illustrates the novel's porousness and capaciousness.

Chapter 5 the offers an elegant reading of *Emma* in conjunction with the 'Plan of a Novel', a collage of the different 'hints' from various dissatisfied first-readers, 'a spoof of contemporary taste' (123), in line with Austen's critique of the novel at the turn of the century. *Emma* participates in the shift in the criticism of the novel from moral to aesthetic questions.

Finally, Chapter 6 persuasively suggests we read *Persuasion* in the light of the juvenilia's 'Jack and Alice', continuing the analysis of the critical connections between the early and later work. By way of a conclusion Murphy provides an appendix on the fate of Jane Austen's personal book collection and the family's repositioning of the author's own published novels with works of 'unimpeachable orthodoxy' (182), which Murphy convincingly argues exemplifies the family's attempt to construct Austen as 'dear aunt Jane'.

Murphy's prose is lively, incisive, and stimulating. *Jane Austen the Reader* will be of interest not only to Austen scholars and enthusiasts but also to anyone interested in the history of the novel.

Anne-Claire Michoux
Lincoln College, University of Oxford

Gillian Dow and Clare Hanson, eds., *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Pp. 256. £53. ISBN 9780230319462.

'Miss Austen', wrote T. E. Kebbel in 1885, 'could hardly be appreciated by any one not thoroughly English' (136). Today, such a statement appears absurd. The essays collected in *Uses of Austen*, edited by Gillian Dow and Clare Hanson, demonstrate that Austen's appeal is resolutely international: as Stephanie Jones puts it, Austen exists within the 'contemporary milieu of global mobility' (175). Moreover, the commemoration of Austen has long been bound up with what Felicity James describes as a 'tradition of transatlantic pilgrimage' (141). But while Kebbel's parochialism seems particularly antiquated, the vexed question of what it means to 'appreciate' Austen remains open to question. As several of the contributors to this volume note, scholarly and popular approaches to Austen are increasingly configured as dialogic, rather than antagonistic. What Keppel refers to as 'appreciation' may take many forms: from early-twentieth-century attempts to re-position Austen as an object of academic study, to the online publication of fan fiction.

The opening essay by Deidre Lynch examines how, in the decades following the First World War, Austen was reimagined as an eighteenth-century author, distinguished for her satire, her Johnsonian prose and even the 'Homeric' quality of her sentences (26). As Lynch makes clear, the construction of an 'Augustan' Austen was not a case of indulging in 'nostalgic escapism' but a means of producing an Austen to match the austere modern aesthetic of the early twentieth century (29). Lynch's careful argument poses a significant challenge to the kind of linear literary tradition that functions by 'drawing straight lines between points in time' (30). The workings of literary influence are taken up by several contributors here. William May suggests that the informal, occasionally caustic, tone of Austen's letters offered many twentieth-century women writers an alternative way of relating to her, allowing them to sidestep her formidable fictional legacy. Similarly, Rebecca Munford's exploration of Emma Tennant's sequels to Austen's novels addresses the 'anxieties about legitimacy, inheritance, and re/production' provoked by such 'literary reimaginings' (66, 59). The tensions between the scholarly and the popular reappear here, as Munford argues that Tennant's encroachment on the limits of Austen's original novels saw her labelled 'a violative interloper who had trespassed on the Austen estate' (61).

The spatial terms that Munford employs recall Michel de Certeau's formulation of readers as travellers, moving 'across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write' (*The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 174). The productive possibilities of literary trespassing are explored in Juliette Wells' insightful essay on Austen and the popular reader. Drawing upon Abigail Derecho's theorisation of fan fiction, Wells develops the notion of the 'archontic text': one that invites creative interpretation, blurring the borders between source text and the archive that it inspires. This model seeks to dissolve literary hierarchy without losing sight of 'the power of certain texts to inspire, even demand responses' (82). While Wells provides a valuable critical framework for discussing Austen-related fan fiction, Mary Ann O'Farrell's essay identifies a less productive present-day 'use' of Austen. With reference to a headline declaring 'Bin Laden a huge Jane Austen fan', O'Farrell explores the 'contemporary habit of reimagining Austen as a punchline' (192). Referring to a range of contemporary, predominantly North American, media sources, O'Farrell provides a snapshot of how the 'blunt-force juxtaposition' that informs such headlines derives from a popular (mis)understanding of Austen as 'unknowing and unworldly' (192, 202).

A welcome correction to this notion is offered by Felicity James, who reminds us that a 'local' Austen is not necessarily a conservative one. James's essay on literary pilgrimage focuses on the intertwined histories of the Jane Austen's House Museum and Chawton House Library. Like Lynch, James complicates the association of Austen with ahistorical nostalgia. While adaptations of her work may fetishize an 'English heritage' version of Austen, they can also inspire 'a deep engagement with [her] historical and literary context' (145, 146). This is certainly true in the case of Sandy Lerner, whose 'revitalization of Chawton House Library' – complete with a working farm – represents a sympathetic and dynamic engagement with the past, rather than a simple exercise in nostalgia (146).

As James notes, Lerner's enthusiasm for Austen was influenced by feminist literary criticism. In the volume's final essay, Shelley Cobb highlights the complexity of postfeminist responses to Austen. In their most conservative guise, productions such as the television serial *Lost in Austen* employ traditional romance structures to suggest that 'heterosexual coupling' can resolve the dissatisfaction that haunts postfeminism's complacent relegation of feminism to the past (222). Cobb's attentive analysis demonstrates the exclusions at work in this formulation: such happy endings are, she suggests, reserved for 'heterosexual white women' (224). As Cobb notes, attending to the dialogue between the scholarly and the popular tells us as much about ourselves as it does about Austen and her work. Similar insights recur throughout the essays that feature in this exciting collection. The editors of *Uses of Austen*, Gillian Dow and Clare Hanson, have succeeded in bringing together a remarkably coherent selection of essays that offer a rich account of the many ways in which Austen has been reimagined over the last century.

Richard De Ritter
University of Leeds

Bonnie Latimer, *Making Gender, Culture, and the Self in the Fiction of Samuel Richardson*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 215. £54. ISBN 9781409446323.

Popular in its day, and with many admirers thereafter (most famously, Jane Austen), Samuel Richardson's final novel, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-4), is no longer widely read outside specialist circles, though it is beginning to appear on teaching syllabuses. Bonnie Latimer begins her engaging and perceptive monograph with an exploration of the 'immediate cultural impact' (2) of the novel in which she emphasises *Grandison*'s prominent place in Richardson's works. Her central premise is that it 'represents the most sophisticated, subtle and intellectually compelling' of Richardson's three novels, which taken together were 'instrumental in a cultural shift according to which women became imaginable as individuals', by which she means 'stable, autonomous, contained and rational selves' (3).

The book is divided into five chapters, each of which explores a dimension of Richardson's fictional innovation in 'gendered individuality' (3). The first chapter on 'The Modern Individual' explores how Richardson's heroines parody the irrational and intemperate women of Augustan satire and early amatory fiction. Chapter 2 ('The Manhood of the Mind') describes how Richardson endows 'his heroines with the masculine qualities of reason and understanding' (47) and contains an excellent discussion of how his heroines control 'unwanted sexual meaning by understanding and disarming it' (59). The next chapter, on 'The Moral Economy', includes a thought-provoking analysis of free will and choice in terms of female virtue, which confronts the troubling nature of 'the competitive self-

construction of Richardson's heroines' (71). Chapter 4 ('The Practice of Piety') reads Richardson's novels alongside Latitudinarian devotional writing in order to show how his female characters use their 'doctrines of exemplary goodness' to question 'masculinist authority' (145); as Latimer comments about Clarissa's deceptions: 'Canny contrivance is not the same as immoral falsehood' (138). This chapter ends with a brief discussion of masculine benevolence in Sarah Scott's *George Ellison* (1766). The last chapter argues against recent 'feminised' readings of Richardson's last novel, sensitively showing how his novels explore the cost of marriage for women as they move falteringly from 'singleness of identity [...] into mutuality and communality' (155).

Latimer is an astute critic of Richardson's writing who makes careful distinctions, noting 'the distance between the moral vision of Sir Charles Grandison and that of his novel' (6). One of the book's many strengths is its ability to integrate readings of the novels' major and minor characters. Another is the careful attention Latimer plays, not just to Richardson's epistolary form in a general sense, but specifically to how rhetorical artifice is inextricably linked to moral rectitude. She elucidates the way in which Richardson's central characters make themselves in the creative act of writing a letter and mimicking other voices: 'Harriet is able to judge precisely because, as she demonstrates throughout her letters, she *can* "be that very other in imagination"'(94). An intriguing discussion of Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* as an important heir to *Grandison*, as well as a reading of the heroine, Harriet Byron, alongside Milton's Eve, both deserve expansion. Especially as the latter example demonstrates Richardson's thoughtful engagement with *Paradise Lost*; yet more evidence of his conscious, and still often overlooked, artistry.

Some of the book's broader premises and conclusions are debatable: the arguments about *Grandison*'s afterlife don't sufficiently differentiate between reception and influence. Not all readers will easily agree with Latimer's emphasis on '*Grandison*'s primacy as the author's final word' (7). Richardson was an inveterate reviser: the many changes he made to his novels over his lifetime, particularly noticeable in the differences between the first edition of *Clarissa* (1747-8) and the famous third edition (1751), with its numerous added footnotes and commentary, create an authorial indeterminacy that raises tricky editorial problems. For all of its interest, few readers now prefer the cluttered, latter edition to the first version. In 1761, the year of Richardson's death, he borrowed copies of *Pamela* and *Clarissa* to make further revisions: therefore proclaiming Richardson's 'final word' on anything is a perilous task.

Latimer's book is an erudite, original, and provocative contribution to Richardson studies and to scholarship on the novel more generally. Indeed, the quibbles noted above testify to the success of a book whose aim is to extend and open up discussion around Richardson's final novel. Upon coming to the end of a volume of *Grandison* in 1753, the writer Catherine Talbot commented to a friend (in a letter now in the Bodleian Library): 'What will become of us all when we have concluded the whole Six Volumes? Will any common book of Amusement appear tolerable after this? [...] And are you not as much in love with Sir Charles as poor Harriet herself can be?' Not all of its readers will find *Grandison* Richardson's most compelling achievement, nevertheless Latimer's book makes a convincing and sophisticated argument for its central place in the development of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prose fiction.

Louise Curran
Trinity College, University of Oxford

Noah Comet, *Romantic Hellenism and Women Writers*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 167. £50. ISBN 9781137304971.

In *Romantic Hellenism*, Noah Comet takes a refreshing new look at Greek influences in the Romantic period, focusing on women writers and readers in the contexts of magazines, annuals, and areas like fashion. These constitute ephemeral but pervasive reinventions of Greek ideals by women who, while admiring Hellenism, balanced this by noting the social inequities and misogyny of Greek society. Comet offers a persuasive critique of traditional attitudes to English recoveries of Greece, demonstrating that the systematic revival of knowledge about Greece did not wait for those marvellous Victorian recoveries, but was deeply rooted in the Romantic tradition.

The women writers discussed – Lucy Aikin, Felicia Hemans, and Letitia Landon – have a separate chapter, but other women are referred to throughout. The 'Introduction' sets a wonderful tone of wittiness, yet seriousness, in its lucid critique of accounts of Greek cultural reception into the early nineteenth century. These accounts argue that 'the reception of Greek antiquity, which had, among men, blossomed into a many-faceted and well-noted neoclassicism, languished, among women, as a mere fad' (2). On the contrary, women 'were profoundly involved in shaping and sharing the Greek influence […] [so that] the Greek mania, which had enraptured poets […] [and] inspired a generation of artists and architects […] was for England's women too a consuming idea' (2). This heart of the study is compellingly and beautifully woven into a many-coloured tapestry, illustrating these 'other' Greece imaginings by women who did not know Greek, probably, but who also bridged the less well-understood period of the mid-1820s and 1830s. Those were the years after Romantic enthusiasms and before Victorian recoveries. Such knowledge of women's reception of Greece disrupts traditional notions of Hellenism-in-Romanticism as the preserve of men, usually highly educated and often members of universities, men who followed the scholarly Germanic lead of the late eighteenth century.

One characteristic of the authoritative account of Hellenism in England is to imagine Greece 'as a monumental inheritance, as an ancestral voice' (3), arousing lofty ideals and encased in marble monuments or grand historical narratives of Troy, or in the sublime plays of Aeschylus. Comet's book, chapter after fascinating chapter, challenges this characterization, and demonstrates time and again how the ephemeral modes of women's Hellenism were themselves valuable and iconoclastic critiques. These critiques imagined Greece as an evanescent ideal and rejected the univocal and monumentalist approach; they refused to ignore the deeply undemocratic structures of Greek society. Such structures constituted a corpus of social inequity that, once acknowledged, revealed an 'other' Greece, one so prevalent as to force the admirer of the classical realm to recognise Greek ideals of democracy, beauty, wisdom, and freedom as limited and in need of close scrutiny.

Comet insists, however, that his study is not comparative, but an effort to show how prior inattention to women's reception of Greece has made it difficult to imagine what a larger paradigm of Romantic Hellenism might look like. He views the Greece of women writers as part of a cultural phenomenon so broad and far reaching as to diminish the importance of gender. His study, then, is indeed a study of Romantic Hellenism, but one describing England's Greece by narrating the so-far' untold half' of that story. That new half illuminates a much wider sphere than merely shedding light on the masculine, dominant account. Comet's *Romantic Hellenism and Women Writers* is also an astute supplement to Jenny's Wallace's study of 1997, *Shelley's Greece: Rethinking Romantic Hellenism*. Wallace's book is similarly iconoclastic in disrupting monumentalist or univocalist accounts of Greece, through an examination of Shelley's ambivalences, his heterogeneous responses, and his sophisticated appreciation of the need actively to recreate and re-imagine the past,

since it cannot be passively inherited. Like Comet, Wallace advocates the need to accept the idea of the 'other' as necessary for our understanding of ourselves and our own culture (compare *Black Athena*, by Martin Bernal). And we must accept a heterogeneous Greece split between Byzantine (Eastern) and Hellenist (Western) history and heritage. Comet extends these vital insights to articulate an English reception of Greece varied and unsettled, less unified and self-identical than previous masculine and Christian appropriations of ancient (pagan) Greek culture allow.

While the three chapters on Aikin, Hemans, and Landon are examples of scholarship at its most impressive, innovative, and convincing, my favourite chapters are, after Comet's simply remarkable and articulate 'Introduction', the first chapter, 'Hellenism and Women's Print Culture', and the final pages, 'Conclusion: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Reception of Romantic Women's Hellenism'. No reader interested either in Romanticism or in the English reception of Greece, in any period, should miss the opportunity of studying closely this astute, concise, and engaging account by Noah Comet.

K.M. Wheeler
Darwin College, University of Cambridge

Stephen Ahern, ed., *Affect and Abolition in the Anglo-Atlantic, 1770-1830*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 225. £55. ISBN 9781409455615.

This volume considers the role and influence of affect, sentiment, and pathos in a wide variety of both abolitionist and pro-slavery texts. The collection consists of nine essays, ranging from the theoretical to the expository, and an introduction. The book is divided into four sections: 'Sympathy's Empire', 'Nation, Narration, Emancipation', 'Spectacles of Suffering', and 'Sentimental Bondage'. The divisions are apposite, and the essays cohere well as a whole, which is one of the positive qualities of this book.

Stephen Ahern's fine introduction situates the debate in its broader historical and philosophical context, and his copious footnotes provide references to the most recent scholarship, which makes the introduction a valuable resource for scholars at all levels. Ahern points out that while much work has been done on affect and gender, this volume focuses on affect and race (3), and explores the 'paradoxical uses to which affect – its embodied realities, its discursive structures – was put in this era' (19). George Boulukos considers the relationship between sentiment, capitalism and slavery. His argument that 'sentimental sympathy' went from being used to 'attack and expose the sinful excesses of self-interest to defending rational self-interest – and ultimately even slavery itself' (42), is well defended. The idea that sentiment is a double-edged sword, used and abused by both abolitionist and pro-slavery activists, is an argumentative thread with which most of the other contributors engage.

Tobias Menely analyses the 'ethico-political efficacy of sympathetic identification' (58) and how it is the 'situation of suffering rather than its vivid representation' that 'give[s] sympathy its direction' (57). While sentiment and sympathy can easily be criticised, Menely argues strongly for sympathy's 'performative "force"' (67). It would be interesting to question why sentiment was more affective/effective in certain genres than others. Brycchan Carey, for instance, points out how much eighteenth-century drama about slavery 'overplayed its sensibility' (128) and largely failed to contribute towards abolitionism.

Anthony John Harding examines how the nationalist trope of the 'free air' of Britain was not as 'inimical' (71) to slavery as one might imagine, and Mary A. Waters, through a reading of the medical and physiological underpinnings of the discourse of sensibility in the

poetry of Anna Laetitia Barbauld, shows how Barbauld could use this rhetoric to warn that when slaveholding perverts 'the resolute virtues arising from sympathy', the individual, as well as the body politic, is threatened by degeneracy, 'debilitation' and 'mental instability' (105).

Joanne Tong's sensitive reading of William Cowper's anti-slavery verse highlights the problems associated with pity and political effect, which still resonate in the post-Holocaust world. When representations of the horrors of slavery, for instance, achieve '*mere* effect, such literature becomes the fodder of a debased public that demands ever more texts of shocking brutality and pitiable victims for it to consume' (147). Christine Levecq considers the presentation of suffering in petitions written by slaves and freed slaves in the United States. She shows how the language of affect was competing with several other discourses, and was often more successful when focusing on one person, rather 'than having readers envision broader, more systematic change towards an egalitarian community' (167).

Jamie Rosenthal's essay examines the way that white, female colonists could use the 'discourse of sensibility to assert female moral authority, while simultaneously reinforcing the subjugation and exploitation of black slaves' (171). Similarly, Margaret Abruzzo shows how 'appeals to suffering, victimhood, and cruelty both challenged *and* reinforced slavery' (190).

This volume is well edited, has a good index, and a useful selected bibliography. The footnotes to the chapters also contain valuable references. My major quibble with the book is with its title. The vast majority of the contributions consider texts which relate to the abolition of the slave trade, rather than the abolition of slavery itself. This could have been made clearer. Furthermore, the dates chosen in the title, '1770-1830', are not fully justified. Many of the contributors discuss texts from well before 1770, starting with Richard Steele's 'Inkle and Yarico' (1711). A tighter focus on texts relating only to the abolition of the slave trade would have been welcome, as the fight against slavery itself elicited subtly different responses in the language of sentiment when compared to the campaign against the slave trade. Abruzzo's observation, in the book's final chapter, that debates change over time, could, indeed, be used to introduce a further volume concentrating on affect and the abolition of slavery during the period 1807 to 1835. The present volume, however, remains a valuable contribution to the consideration of a problem of representation which is still very much with us today.

Damian Shaw
University of Macau

Paul Youngquist, ed., *Race, Romanticism and the Atlantic*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 267. £65.00. ISBN 9780754669272.

In his excellent introduction to this needful volume of essays, Paul Youngquist describes how 'race hardens into racism just as revolution, so the story goes, gives rise to Romanticism' (5). It is this crucial conjunction of circumstance that means that any general discussion of Romanticism is undermined by a disavowal of the importance of race. In his virtuoso, interdisciplinary essay on 'The African Queen' which narrates the history of the racialised representation in portraiture and caricature of Queen Charlotte, George III's African descended consort, Youngquist reflects that 'British Romanticism is white… however broadly this culture gets conceived, it remains all but oblivious to its whiteness. It occludes the blackness at its core' (81). This volume is a multi-accentual revision of that occlusion. The essays range from Black Loyalists in Canada through the black American boxer Thomas

Molyneaux's transatlantic sojourn to Emma Hamilton's North African representations. The essayists find black Atlantic resonances even at the centre of Romanticism. In her essay on 'Black Single Mothers in Romantic History and Literature', Debbie Lee illustrates that these figures are central in Blake and Wordsworth's 'The Black Boy' (1788-9) and 'The Mad Mother' (1798) enabling her to make the case 'that even the canonical core of Romanticism was a site of hybridity and difference' (180).

As Peter Kitson elucidates in his essay on Robert Southey and Charlotte Smith, Romantic responses to race are often highly ambivalent and show a problematic attitude to black suffering. Hence, in Southey's poem 'The Sailor who had served in the Slave Trade' (1799) 'the psychological suffering or possession of the sailor' as a trauma 'seems to be worse than that of the actual torture and murdering of the slave, and the concern with the damage that the slave trade does to those who participate in it is fetishized over and above the suffering of those who were its victims' (119). However, Kitson concludes that despite their limitations, both Southey and Smith contribute works that acknowledge black agency and 'that black resistance will be the force which will end (the system of slavery in) its present form' (123), as the ramifications of numerous slave revolts and the Haitian revolution play themselves out.

Gregory Pierrot's essay on Edward Rushton's vernacular poetry, discusses his reaction to the Haitian revolutionaries in his poem 'Toussaint to his troops' (1806) which does not, like Wordsworth's famous poem, present the general in jail and defeated, but shows him at the height of his powers, just before battle. As Pierrot elucidates, '(W)here Wordsworth steers clear of the material world and invokes L'Ouverture as a disembodied ideal, Rushton grounds him in his social and historical consciousness' (139). The essay brings this important working-class figure back to the centre of the history of Romanticism. The essay collection as a whole rather downplays black working class consciousness at the time with only passing mentions of the dynamic figure Robert Wedderburn and the culture of radicalism that produced him. Reference to his amazing biography and writings such as the disgracefully critically ignored 'Cast Iron Parsons…' (1822) or to the pictorial history of black working class life referred to in J.T. Smith's *Vagabondiana* (1815) with colourful vagrant figures such as Billy Waters or Joseph Johnson, would have fleshed out the discussion and made free black figures as important as the enslaved Africans which the Romantic writers and their critics so often focus on.

The African Atlantic figures specifically discussed include the canonical black writer, Olaudah Equiano. He is compared to Mungo Park in Marlon B. Ross's essay and although it is theoretically well conceived, there is little new here to justify using him as an example (we surely have said all that needs to be said about his role as English gentleman) and Ross might have done better foregrounding a different figure such as Ottobah Cugoana, whose more radical stance than Equiano and status as the only African survivor of Cape Coast Castle whose image we have, makes his story very compelling. Canons of black writing and writers need to be disturbed as much as those of the Anglo-Americans and their texts. One of the strengths of this volume is the variety of texts discussed and Frances R. Botkin's essay on Ira Aldridge's championing of the 'Three Fingered Jack' melodrama is a tour-de-force which illustrates the seminal importance of Aldridge's work on the European stage.

Likewise, there is great work here on the visual culture of Romanticism and the way race plays out in it. Elise Bruhl and Michael Gamer do a wonderful job of tracing the racialisation of Lady Hamilton and Daniel O'Quinn is similarly astute in his discussion of the commodification of Thomas Molineaux in caricatures that foreground the John Bullish heroism of his white adversity, Thomas Cribb. Both are somewhat undermined by black and white, indistinct images that make their arguments harder to follow than they should be. This

is a minor caveat, however, as this collection delivers a wonderful variety of incisive essays essential to the remaking of the Romantic canon and its criticism.

Alan Rice
University of Central Lancashire

Alexander Dick, *Romanticism and the Gold Standard: Money, Literature, and Economic Debate in Britain 1790-1830*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 264. £53. ISBN 9781137292919.

David E. Latané, *William Maginn and the British Press: A Critical Biography*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 362. £63. ISBN 9781409449416.

The Romantics were never terribly interested in debates about money, judging by some of our most entrenched views of them. Or so we used to think, but in recent years a number of scholars have revised this impression by demonstrating just how engaged Romantic writers were with debates about commerce and how deeply integrated these monetary issues were with more profound metaphysical questions about emerging forms of individual and social identity. Alexander Dick's *Romanticism and the Gold Standard* tackles these issues by exploring the ways that ideas about Romanticism were bound up with a set of debates that circulated in the opening decades of the nineteenth century in the wake of the government's 1797 decision to suspend cash payments after that year's invasion scare had triggered a run on the banks. The turmoil that followed this decision culminated in the government's eventual decision to adopt the gold standard in 1816. The idea never really worked. Market crises and jarring social inequalities remained familiar aspects of British life, but as a result of these debates, 'the idea that Britain had a standard became one of the keystones of nineteenth-century economic, social, and even religious thought' (ix). These ongoing problems may have suggested the darker truth that the ideal of a standard, whether based on gold or anything else, was at best a necessary fiction, but this did little to diminish the strength of the idea's appeal.

This tension constitutes Dick's historical and theoretical starting point: 'How did an economic principle that everyone knew did not really work come to play such a central role in British national identity and intellectual culture?' (2-3). Giving this question its full weight, Dick sets out to explore not just "the networks of exchange and information that made up the standard" in the Romantic period, but even more ambitiously, the way that what we now think of as Romanticism became a means of engaging with these questions without subscribing to the illusion of any final answers. In other words, Romanticism emerged as a set of cultural dynamics that enabled people 'to accept as a fundamental standard that there are no standards.' Or to put this more radically, 'Romanticism *is* the standard' (ix, 9).

Having set out the cultural landscape by exploring 'The Bullion Controversy' which raged between 1810 when the Select Committee on Bullion issued its report, and 1812 when its recommendations were rejected by the House of Commons, delineating the main lines of contention and developing the more theoretical issues at stake, Dick turns his focus to the ways that Coleridge's ongoing pronouncements on economic issues, from questions about the national debt and taxation to debates about paper money, reflected his sense of the profoundly metaphysical dimension of these issues – a theologically inflected perspective that marks Dick's turn to a more direct focus on the ways that these various economic debates helped to foster the idea of Romanticism. From the series of six editorials he published in the

Courier in 1811-12 entitled 'The Bullion Controversy' to his 1809 article on taxation in *The Friend* to his economic reflections in the Lay Sermons, Coleridge's analyses were driven by a fundamental recognition of the need to forge 'an ethics for a world without standards' – a world where the very idea of 'the standard' could, like his theory of the symbol, only be realized as something that was forever in process: a concept that retained its persuasive force and stabilizing power to the extent that it remained something evermore about to be (102).

Shelley and Coleridge may have agreed on little else when it came to politics, but, as Dick points out, they shared an antipathy towards the heartless calculations of political economy and, more positively, an emphasis on 'the poetic spirit' as 'a unifying force that exists through and in the mutual respect of individuals' and which 'represents in this perspective a fairly straightforward call for a universal standard of value' (111). Their shared understanding of the inherently contradictory but philosophically necessary nature of this position would eventually 'become the basis for a new mode of late Romantic poetics, one that in its engagement with economic debates and its experiments with self-conscious modes of poetic failure and collapse, reformulates Shelleyan confidence into a new dynamic of aesthetic embarrassment' or acute self-consciousness and perplexity (111). In this contradictory state, literature 'does not simply represent the standard of value: it *is* the standard' (130).

Having extended his argument about literature's paradoxical role in a world without standards to readings of Keats and Byron, as well to more topical works such as Thomas Moore's *Odes on Cash, Corn and Catholics* (1828) and Thomas Love Peacock's *Paper Money Lyrics* (1825-26), Dick's argument culminates in a final chapter on the ways that the early nineteenth-century novelists, and particularly Jane Austen and Walter Scott, responded by reframing the debate in terms of the ongoing power of nationalism, not as a means of insisting on the availability of a standard but, picking up the central theoretical trope that runs through the book, by constructing the genre of the novel as a site of 'embarrassment' or intense self-consciousness that articulates a 'new kind of standard' by performing the contradictions of the age (175). Dick's ability to combine careful attention to the age's debates about monetary issues with a more speculative sense of the broader theoretical possibilities generated by the idea of the standard in its various forms constitutes an important addition to these discussions.

David Latané's biography of William Maginn offers an equally fresh perspective on Romantic literature by zeroing in on one of the age's most elusive but influential writers. Maginn's highly allusive style, love of pseudonyms and collaborative writing, and increasing debauchery as his exuberant socializing and weakness for drink took their toll, all make him a challenging target for any biographer, but Latané does an impressive job of balancing an appraisal of Maginn's extraordinary achievements with an honest sense of his shortcomings. Maginn was an uncompromising ultra-Tory from the beginning, immersing himself in the literary coteries that gathered around various conservative periodicals and newspapers, especially *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, whose freewheeling tone suited him perfectly. He quickly became a prominent contributor, most notably to *Noctes Ambrosianæ* which featured 'Ensign Morgan Odoherty.' O'Doherty's description of Maga, as *Blackwood's* was known, 'doing all that ever these folks could do in one Number, and then undoing it in the next, -- puffing, deriding, sneering, jeering, prosing, piping, and so forth,' was a perfect description of Maginn's relentlessly ironic style generally (42).

A prominent figure at both ends of the journalistic spectrum, from the most respectable periodicals of the day to more scurrilous rags, Maginn made a career of sailing dangerously close to the wind, relentlessly lampooning powerful figures though he was always in demand by editors and publishers. His reputation for '360° satire' had its price though (132). At one time or another he knew just about every literary figure of the age,

though few of them knew quite what to make of Maginn. With a young family to support, Maginn had hoped to land a stable government appointment but no offer arrived. Instead, his next important opportunity came with the 1830 launch of the monthly periodical *Fraser's Magazine* in which he played a leading role on both the literary and business sides. The magazine's spirit of playful erudition suited Maginn perfectly (124). So too did its collaborative approach. 'From the beginning the Fraserians gathered around a large roundtable in the back of Fraser's shop […] where the magazine was created in a masculine spirit of bonhomie, fun, and a haze of alcohol' (125). Literary success was never free of personal difficulties though. While early colleagues were aging into sedate dignity, Maginn was carousing with an increasingly mixed group in Fraser's back parlour and hiding from bailiffs in the Irish slums of St. Giles, but Latané's study does a fine job of balancing a careful assessment of Maginn's excesses with an appreciation of his immense productivity. Latané has offered an extraordinary picture of the bustling world of literary London that, like Dick's study of monetary debates, runs against the grain of Romantic stereotypes of creative genius. In doing so, both books offer compelling accounts for the importance of Romantic literature.

Paul Keen
Carleton University

James Grande, John Stevenson and Richard Thomas, eds., *The Opinions of William Cobbett.* Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 214 + x. £25. ISBN 9781409464327.

'Put me on a gridiron and broil me alive if I am wrong' proclaims the masthead of William Cobbett's post-1819 *Political Register*, predicting that paper money would lead to disaster. The statement is also the motto of the William Cobbett Society that held an event at Nuffield College to celebrate his 250 birthday in 2013. But, as this outstanding book demonstrates, Cobbett was a man who changed his mind on matters as various as reform, war, and Catholicism in the course of five decades and over 20 million published words. This accessible and brilliantly chosen selection, which is interspersed with judicious directive comments, is the first collection of Cobbett's writings in forty years, following previous collections by Richard Ingrams, who writes the Foreword to this book, John Derry, G.D.H. and M.I. Cole, and Cobbett's children who published selections soon after he died in 1835.

Reformer, agriculturalist, historian, politician, journalist, soldier, convict, speechwriter to Queen Caroline, and MP, Cobbett was a remarkable figure. A.J.P. Taylor thought him second only to Samuel Johnson as 'greatest Englishman'. Many admired him, including Arnold, Morris and Ruskin. Samuel Bamford wrote: 'The writings of William Cobbett suddenly became of great authority; they were read on nearly every cottage hearth'. Shelley and Blake, barely read in their lifetime, are taught, but Cobbett is denied the visibility of other major figures of the period. This book is an excellent guide as to how a student or teacher might start with Cobbett and best discover his work.

Divided into thirteen chapters, each with a theme, such as 'America' and 'Literature, Sensibility and the Romantics', this book captures Cobbett's largeness in only 200 pages. The editors, Grande, Stevenson and Thomas, well-known for their expert knowledge of Cobbett – Grande has a monograph, *William Cobbett, the Press and Rural England: Radicalism and the Fourth Estate* appearing this year – do an admirable job of presenting Cobbett's opinions in an objective light. As far as possible they seem to have followed the advice of Cobbett's *English Grammar*: 'the *only* use of words is *to cause our meaning to be clearly understood*;

and that the best words are those which are familiar to the ears of the greatest number of persons' (9-10).

Cobbett was proud that a simple education consisting of country games, and work, saved him from 'those dens of dunces called Colleges and Universities' (17). After eight years in the army he set out against corruption: 'My head was filled with the corruptions and the baseness in the army' (30). Imprisoned in 1810 for protesting against the flogging of militiamen he wrote *Paper Against Gold* during two-years in Newgate. The chapter 'Corruption' shows Cobbett rail against '*taxes,* which the government compels us to pay for [...] the payment of interest of its debt.' He fingers 'merchants, manufacturers, and bankers' as 'the cause of our present miseries' (39). The chapter 'Parliamentary Reform' shows Cobbett shift from a conservative defence of the 'traditional status quo' (57) to someone who saw the need for every man 'who pays *a tax,* of any sort' the right to vote to '*give his consent'*. Attempting to become MP for Coventry, he, usually a willing scrapper, met the physical force side of Old Corruption: 'never did my eyes behold any thing in human shape so ferocious, so odiously, so diabolically ferocious, as those bands of villains, hired, paid, fed, and drenched by the Rich Ruffians of Coventry.' (72)

Cobbett was politically idiosyncratic. As G.D.H. Cole asserts: 'Cobbett the Anti-Jacobin and Cobbett the Radical Reformer were definitely the same person'. Whatever his shade of politics his greatest beef was with the 'Scotch feelosophers' (1) who were obsessed with how 'the *"national wealth"* can be increased by making [...] people work *incessantly,* that they may raise food and clothing, to go to feed and clothe *people who do not work at all?'* (88). Of Scots in general he wrote: 'These vagabonds [...] will *not work;* they depend on the taxes in all countries whither they go' (169). Cobbett hated many things as 'Villains and Pet Hates' shows. The editors write that a 'single chapter will inevitably fail to do justice to the full range of Cobbett's prejudices: [...] a full Cobbett demonology would run to several volumes' (77). Cobbett hated, amongst many other things: potatoes; London; loans; Shakespeare—'punning and smutty'; tea; *Paradise Lost*—'barbarous trash, so outrageously offensive to reason'; pianos and paper-money. Cobbett also had irrational prejudices, that he tried to rationalise, calling Jews 'stockjobbers' (78) but this fronts a deeper anti-Semitism that he recited disturbingly regularly. The chapter 'Religion' displays Cobbett's hatred of tithes that demanded farmers surrender 10% of crops to the parson. 'Poverty and the Poor Laws' shows Cobbett at his most admirable: 'I have *occupied my whole life [...] to better the lot of the Labourers*' (133).

This book has just the right mix of extracts and direction from the editors, who one feels are familiar with not only everything that Cobbett's published, but also his unpublished correspondence. Tribute is paid to the many sides of Cobbett here, and the darker ones are not ignored.

John Gardner
Anglia Ruskin University

J. H. Alexander with P. D. Garside and Claire Lamont, eds., Walter Scott, *Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus: Waverley to A Legend of the Wars of Montrose*. The Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012. Pp. 493. £85. ISBN 9780748605903.

J. H. Alexander with P. D. Garside and Claire Lamont, eds., Walter Scott, *Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus: Ivanhoe to Castle Dangerous*. The Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012. Pp. 761. £85. ISBN 9780748614912.

The study of Sir Walter Scott's works reached a crucial stage of its development in the early 1990s, with the presentation to the public in 1993 of the very first volumes of the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels (EEWN), including *The Black Dwarf*, *The Tale of Old Mortality* and *Kenilworth*. However, this large-scale and long-term project was in fact initiated as early as February 1984, and the last two titles of the edition, *Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus: Waverley to A Legend of the Wars of Montrose* (Volume 25a) and *Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus: Ivanhoe to Castle Dangerous* (Volume 25b), were published in October 2012, almost twenty years after the appearance of the first volumes. The publication of these latest and last volumes therefore marks a significant milestone in the modern history of the publication of Scott's works for they conclude the EEWN. This complete set of the EEWN, in total, comprises thirty volumes – twenty-eight volumes of novels and two volumes of Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus, the last collected edition of Scott's novels published during the author's lifetime.

The Magnum Opus edition, published between 1829 and 1833, contains altogether 48 volumes. Its emergence was largely due to the financial crash that Scott, his publisher Archibald Constable (1774-1827), and printer James Ballantyne (1772-1833) suffered in January 1826. This financial crisis thus spurred plans for the new annotated edition of the Waverley novels, and at the same time precipitated the acknowledgement of Scott's authorship, which, out of necessity, was disclosed to the Trustees in order to deal with the outcome of the bankruptcy.

Despite its rather novel beginning, the Magnum Opus is itself a rather remarkable work as it is made up of all the corrected texts of the Waverley novels, plus newly added Introductions and Notes. These three main innovations are Scott's alone. According to the information given by the general introduction to the EEWN's *Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus*, 'Scott is probably the only writer of the Romantic period whose works were collected in his lifetime' (xliii-xliv). Despite the fact that Scott did not live to see the completion of the Magnum Opus edition as he died in 1832, the set was the most complete collection of the Waverley novels published in his time. Besides, this was the first time all Scott's novels had been brought together, and given a shared official title, the Waverley Novels. Many of the later editions, such as the People's edition (twelve volumes) and the Abbotsford edition (forty-eight volumes) published by Cadell in 1842-47, were based upon it. Because of the uniqueness and significance of this Magnum Opus edition, its Introductions and Notes are, for these reasons, included in the final volumes of the EEWN.

In addition to offering the original texts of Introductions and Notes from the Magnum Opus, the editors of the last two volumes of the EEWN also provide readers with highly useful introductory and explanatory notes. This EEWN's general introduction tells the story of the Magnum Opus from its genesis to publication, and finishes with a brief survey of its

reception, its import, and its later nineteenth-century history. The introduction thus encourages readers to recognize Scott's achievement as not only a great novelist but also as an outstanding editor of his own work. Scott's innovations in the Magnum Opus in actual fact served as a model for the editors of Jane Austen and Charles Dickens in the twentieth century.

The introduction and notes in these two EEWN volumes have further functions. Even though Scott's own Introductions and Notes have already served as major sources for readers to gain insight into his texts, modern readers will on occasion still require assistance from the EEWN's further introductions and notes to each work in order to fully comprehend them. It is mainly because, as David Hewitt has pointed out in the Foreword to the two EEWN volumes, Scott's Introductions and Notes are 'often not explanation but another narrative which has only a tangential relationship to the material he is illustrating' (v). For example, the Magnum series' Introduction to *Rob Roy* extends to more than fifty pages, and the story of the MacGregors it recounts is rather complex and not directly related to the main story of the novel. Therefore it may appear somewhat daunting and less useful to modern readers. In contrast, the introduction and notes provided by the editors of the two EEWN volumes are customized for modern readers. For this reason, both Scott's own Introductions and Notes and those offered in the two EEWN volumes can therefore be seen as useful complements to each other.

Scott's and the EEWN editors' introductions and notes are both of great importance and utility to Scott's domestic and international readers. They are, additionally, sources of great value for teaching, particularly when seeking to illustrate Scott's role as the father of the historical novel in English literature. In order to fully understand Scott's works from a historical perspective, these introductions and notes are most valuable sources.

The two EEWN volumes can be studied independently from the novels, as they demonstrate Scott's consummate professional editing skills. Each of Scott's introductions (or Advertisement in the case of *The Antiquary*) has its own value, whether short or long, since it enables us to understand the appropriate novel from the author's own perspective it provides. Moreover, as David Hewitt has pointed out in his General Introduction to the EEWN, Scott's 'introductions are fascinating autobiographical essays which write the life of the Author of Waverley' (xv). Therefore, these two volumes of the EEWN can also be taken as general reference to Scott's works as well as life.

The full set of the scholarly EEWN is vital to the development of Scott studies as it makes available not only original texts based on Scott's manuscripts but also detailed notes and a full glossary for modern readers. Moreover, as Jill Rubenstein importantly stressed, this edition helps to inaugurate 'the much-needed corrective emphasis on Scott as a conscious craftsman who carefully revised and corrected the proofs of his novels' (*Sir Walter Scott: An Annotated Bibliography of Scholarship and Criticism*, 1975-1990 (Aberdeen: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1994), 3). The 2014 bicentenary of the publication of Scott's first novel, *Waverley*, and the completion of the EEWN in late 2012 can thus be seen as a celebration of this great work. Modern readers are extremely lucky to be now provided with such complete access to Scott's works. I myself wish to express deep gratitude to those editors of the EEWN who have devoted so many years of their life in order to give us these most reliable and high quality texts. The EEWN's completion is not a conclusion to this dedicated work, but a staging-post in a journey of discovery as it heralds the coming of the first scholarly edition of Scott's poems. We eagerly anticipate its arrival.

Kang-yen Chiu
Sun Yat-sen University

Graciela Iglesias Rogers, *British Liberators in the Age of Napoleon: Volunteering under the Spanish Flag in the Peninsular War*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012. Pp. viii, 342. £65. ISBN 9781441135650.

This book is the first examination of the phenomenon of Britons volunteering to join the Spanish army and fight against Napoleon's attempted subjugation of the Iberian Peninsula between 1808 and 1814. These volunteers, where they are mentioned in the existing works, are often portrayed rather dismissively as romantics and the epitome of quixotic endeavour, but this monograph offers the first comprehensive exploration of their background, motives, activities, and legacies. In undertaking this exercise, *British Liberators* challenges scholarship that is largely riven by divergent nationalistic prejudices, with a British tendency to concentrate on the British army and Wellington under the umbrella of the Peninsular War, whilst Spanish historians focus on their 'War of Liberation'; indeed the nomenclature of this conflict is in itself indicative of the divide. In contradistinction to this, *British Liberators* is firmly rooted in the framework of an Atlantic world and a transnational approach to history. Additionally, it demonstrates a thorough understanding of the complexities of society, culture, and politics in Spain at the time, something that is not always appreciated in the English-language work on the subject. In these regards alone the book is worthy of attention.

Immediately, the book has to deal with the question of cataloguing and categorising these volunteers, with their selection detailed in the introduction that clearly sets out the criteria for who will and will not be discussed. This results in a total of 42 individuals for the basis of the study. Throughout, the author is careful to use their stories to explore themes rather than present a conglomeration of biographies (although short biographies of the volunteers are provided as an appendix). This is handled through the arrangement of the chapters, which work through their previous backgrounds and experience, why they volunteered, their ideology (in the sense of what they hoped to achieve), their role in mediating and shaping Anglo-Spanish relations and cultural awareness of each other, along with a consideration of their changing identity and impact after the wars. Although the British volunteers were not large in number, a convincing argument is made for their influence and impact. They are shown to have effected social change in Spain, albeit sometimes unwittingly, for example championing education in the armed forces as a prerequisite for an effective army of liberation. Furthermore, at particular moments they were determined and effective leaders that shaped the politico-military situation in Spain, yet within the broad cause of Spanish liberation and notably eschewing opportunities to seize power. Perhaps some of the most interesting material delves into the volunteer's cultural role. For example, John Dowie's *Legion de Extremadura* (a particular study of Chapter 5), in which Dowie appealed to a Spanish golden past to encourage recruitment and motivate it's men even to the extent of dressing the unit in sixteenth-century uniforms, is transformed from a military oddity to a cultural signifier of great value in understanding the motivations and beliefs of the British volunteers and Spanish resistance fighters. This and other examples serve to interestingly nuance the prevailing view of Romanticism, with the author showing that appeals to emotions and spontaneous acts sprang from reasonable and rational motives. Additionally, this case, and others discussed, points to the important role that the British volunteers had in creating the image of Spain in the British consciousness; one that was long-lasting and rooted in a perception that Spain was the last bastion of ancient moral values.

The academic credentials of the book are impeccable, and it is a model for future studies of conflict. As its bibliography demonstrates, *British Liberators* embraces material

from archives across Britain and Spain, both at national and local levels. Half the book's pages are turned over to appendices, notes, the index, and its bibliography, all of which ought to be invaluable as a stimulus for further research. This painstaking level of research underpins cogent, thought-provoking, and well written analysis. It is a pleasure to see that already this book is available in paperback and as an e-book, as it is certainly a monograph that anyone with an interest in the period and history of Spain should read.

Kevin Linch
University of Leeds

Alison E. Martin and Susan Pickford, eds., *Travel Narratives in Translation, 1750-1830: Nationalism, Ideology, Gender*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012. Pp. 232. £85. ISBN 9780415539944.

Alison E. Martin and Susan Pickford's edited collection *Travel Narratives in Translation, 1750-1830: Nationalism, Ideology, Gender* is a timely and important contribution to the continued growth of Translation Studies and catches the *zeitgeist* currently emerging in the field of Romantic-period studies concerning the significance of translation as the means of inter-cultural, literary and socio-political exchange. The work covers the period 1750-1830 as it 'was one of the most sustained and intense periods of cultural transfer through travel writing in translation' (7), with travel writing one of the most widely read genres of the time.

Metaphorical associations between notions of travel and translation are readily constructed. It seems the most obvious analogy to be made when thinking about translation is that of a journey between source and target texts and, by extension, source and target cultures. As Martin and Pickford point out, the history of translation studies is replete with associative investigations based largely in conceptions of translation as travel, either physically or metaphysically. However, the editors firmly define their terms, framing the collection against such travel/journey paradigms and arguing that the development of understanding 'translation and travel in purely metaphorical terms' is what their study seeks to counter (2). Consistent with pre-eminent translation scholar Susan Bassnett's championing of specificity, the editors have constructed a collection of examinations of '"actual practices" and protagonists at work in translating travel literature' (2), their stated aim being to explore 'how travel writing was translated across the best part of a century, by ranging across major European Languages' (mainly French, German and Spanish) (7).

Organised into three sections, 'Translation, Identity, and Ideology'; 'Extra-European Travel Writing and Translation'; and 'Women and Translation', the chapters explore particular instances of travel writing in translation. The first section examines the ways in which non-fictional travel writing affected the consciousness of national identity in Europe. These include Clorinda Donato's account of the work of Marc-Antoine Eidous, a contributor to the force of French cultural hegemony in the early part of the eighteenth century; a chapter by Jeff Morrison showing how German writers had begun to undermine this hegemony through translation and importation of the foreign through classical models; Anthony Ozturk's analysis of Carbonnières rendering of Williams Coxe's 1779 travel book on the state and politics of Switzerland, showing how translation can be used to interrogate the source text in ways which promote the translator's visibility; and the section's final chapter by Immaculada Tamarit Vallés: an account of the ways in which liberal adaptation and creativity can be applied by the translator according to perceived reception, in this case the ways in which the Spanish readership of the translation of Alexandre de Laborde's travel

writing on Spain (from the French source text) influenced translatorial choices as to portrayals of national identity.

Beginning with Vladimir Kapor's fascinating account of Johann Reinhold Forster's 1772 translation of Bourgainville's *Voyage autour du monde* (1771), showing the translator's agency in the creation or recreation of the public image of the originating author, the book's second section addresses representation and sometimes misrepresentation of source subject and source text according to the translator's politico-literary purpose, disclosed or otherwise. Carl Niekerk's chapter continues with the *Voyage round the World*, as translated by another Forster, Georg. The piece is complimented, in its attention to the representation of the exotic other, by the section's concluding chapter on Freidrich Ludwig Langstedt's travel writing on India, in which Chen Tzoref-Ashkenazi shows a complex network of British and German ideological influence at work.

The book's final section covers an area currently the focus of increased critical attention, particularly in Romantic studies, that of the role of women writers, translators and translated, in the long eighteenth century. Susan Pickford's chapter on Anne Plumptre's 1813 translation of François Pouqueville's *Voyage en Morée, à Constantinople, en Albanie et dans plusieurs autres parties de l'empire othoman* (1805) succeeds in drawing out some of the concerns currently under scrutiny in relation to the work of women translators, sometimes regarded as mere automatons, undertaking the mechanical transcription of a creative male originating authorship. Pickford offers, not only a further name with which to populate the growing canon of women contributors to Romantic-period translation, but also a study of the ways in which translation could be used as a means to inscribe a creative authorial voice, thereby mediating cross-culturally and intra-culturally.

There is, as Martin and Pickford suggest, much work to be done and the scope of this collection is concentrated within Western Europe, offering perhaps a too-limited geo-political field from which to draw conclusions as to translation on a wider scale. However, the depth of analysis and the complementary thematic structure which frames the collection combine to provide an exemplary contribution to the translation groundswell and to the growing awareness of the complexities of the process, offering useful stimulus for further research. Research in which, given the current interest in Romantic translation, scholars of travel writing, translation, Romanticism, and other areas may continue to cross paths, proving the mediatory aspect of translation as a concept in itself.

Paul Hague
University of Wolverhampton

Barry Hough and Howard Davis, *Coleridge's Laws*: A *Study of Coleridge in Malta*. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2010. Pp. xxviii + 375. PB. £15.95. ISBN 9781906924126.

In his introduction to this study of *Coleridge's Laws*, Michael John Kooy reflects on Coleridge and the rule of Law, and makes the point that this study complements Donald Sultana's authoritative account of Coleridge's sojourn in Malta during the years 1804-1805 in *Coleridge in Malta and Italy*. With its detailed account of the British system of administration and legal process, this book sheds fresh light on the complex relations between the British administrators and the Maltese public during Coleridge's sojourn on the island.

Barry Hough and Howard Davis have a remarkable story to tell about the months Coleridge spent in the service of Sir Alexander John Ball, the Civil Commissioner of Malta, in his capacity first as Under-Secretary and later as acting Public Secretary. The poet was at the time recovering from poor health, a broken marriage (to Sara Fricker), the pangs of unrequited love for another woman (Sara Hutchinson), and a deep sense of his failing poetical powers. In Malta Coleridge felt isolated from his friends, stranded in a lonely British outpost and naval base where he was mainly occupied in the dreary task of writing official reports and issuing *bandi* and *avvisi* (or official proclamations and public notices) in a language he did not quite understand (Italian, which was then the official language of the law courts).

In the early chapters Hough and Davis judiciously provide the social, political and economic context of the first years of British rule in Malta following the uprising against the French garrison by the Maltese population. This important phase of the Maltese insurrection against the French and their seeking the help of Captain Alexander Ball, who was to become the first British Civil Commissioner, is surprisingly, and, somewhat inexplicably, relegated to an Appendix at the end of the book. And yet it was an essential phase in the gradual disaffection of the Maltese when they felt that their expectations were not fulfilled.

The authors of *Coleridge's Laws* provide a thorough and rigorously researched study (drawing on new archival material) of Malta in the first decade of British rule, focusing largely on the legislative and executive powers of the civil administration and Coleridge's role (as Public Secretary) in securing the loyalty of the Maltese to the British administration.

The study shows how Coleridge found himself in a rather ambivalent situation – on the one hand, in the role of a leading civil servant, assiduous in propagating the strategic and diplomatic goals of the British administration, and, on the other, as an intellectual who was to abandon the values of the rule of law and the morality of justice which he was to write about so eloquently in his articles in *The Friend*. He was indeed to sacrifice principle to political expediency, as the authors convincingly argue. In this predicament, Coleridge reveals his uneasiness at being complicit in attempts to win over the Maltese public to support British interests. In some of his articles in *The Friend* Coleridge went so far as to argue in favour of 'expediency' and necessity against his own deeper feelings about the importance of the spirit of the law which he formerly felt to be inviolate and universal.

This book is an important contribution to Coleridge studies in that it explores the complex relations between the British administration under Ball and the Maltese people against the wider social, economic and political background in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and provides a thorough analysis of some of the main issues with which Ball was concerned, such as: the cotton industry; the 'continuation' strategy; the Maltese institutions – in particular legislation and the authority of Maltese courts; the appointment of judges and the judicial process; the role of the Università; the arbitrary rule of the *Segnatura*; the Civil Service and the right to make appointments; *ultra vires* actions; and the

proclamations issued under Coleridge's name. Some of these proclamations are usefully reproduced in an Appendix (capably translated from the Italian by Lydia Davis). In dealing with his onerous official duties Coleridge was assisted by Nicola Zammit, the Maltese Secretary, who conveniently provided a translation of the proclamations for Coleridge's benefit and who shared part of the burden of administration. The *bandi* and a*vvisi*, as the authors convincingly argue, served as useful propaganda tools to influence Maltese opinion and to channel behaviour and attitudes. And yet for all his personal misgivings about the occasional disregard of the rule of law by Ball, and his gradual disaffection by some prominent Maltese (such as Vincenzo Borg), Coleridge was to write a eulogy of Ball after his death in 1809 (in *The Friend*) in the form of a character-study of this principled administrator – fulfilling the abstract idea of 'a wise and good Governor' (293) – that defends his former friend against the detractors who had accused him of despotism.

Peter Vassallo
University of Malta

J.C.C. Mays, *Coleridge's Experimental Poetics.* Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 287. £55.00. ISBN 9781137350220.

This monograph very much exists in relation to Mays' enormous editorial effort on the poetry volumes of the Bollingen Collected Coleridge. Revisionary work since, for example, Morton D. Paley's *Coleridge Later Poetry* notwithstanding, it is still relatively unusual to find any post-1802 texts so fundamental to a study of Coleridge, let alone some of the more obscure highways and by-ways tracked by Mays: translations, metrical experiments, epigrams, and so on. It is quite obvious that he wishes to give credit to the fullness of the poet's achievement, as explored and archived in Volume 16. Nevertheless, it is also intrinsic to the conceptual argument presented here that the notion of a watershed – a division into a gilded youth and sad, sterile decline – is revisited and challenged.

In essence, Mays contends that a remarkable consistency drives Coleridge from his earliest work, across the canonical staples ('Mariner', 'Christabel', 'Kubla Khan', the conversation poems), and onwards throughout his later career. Certain ambitions for poetry may have been abandoned or turned over to Wordsworth, but other problems (such as the reconciliation of opposites, or the problem of work-without-hope) find the poet returning to find new formal engagements and solutions. This continued vivacity – which Mays terms experimental – is related to a demarcation of poetry as a provisional or hypothetical space, a sort of 'what if' language game bound by its own rules and set off from the world: 'verse as a kind of memory theater in which a small cast of actors rehearse what is in the end the same plot over and over again in a variety of ways' (43). This not only helps mark out Mays' interpretation, in particular, of how the famous supernatural verse works, but also leads him to partition his own method away from the directly biographical on the one hand, and the historicist on the other. The former – highlighting distance, irony, and a reflexively speculative cast to the work – is certainly in tune with current criticism; the latter, obviously, less so: Mays' contexts, when invoked, are more textual and literary than material or political.

One key claim made repeatedly is that the poetry – especially the late poetry – does something that the philosophy (usually taken, of course, as Coleridge's central calling after the 1810s) cannot do. This is to trace a level of affect that lies just below explicit articulation, underwriting Mays' interest in the passions (and in the manuscript essay on the passion of 1828, which he considers fundamental) and in large, apparently allegorical formations like

'Love' and 'Hope'. The sense that such experience of feeling is defined precisely through being barely there, or just beneath language, also intertwines with the study's interest in prosody. Foregrounding this not only subtly repositions 'Christabel' as central (as a pioneering experiment in ballad meter) but makes the creative interplay between 'syllabic' and 'accentual' (and, by extension, the rationalized and the rhythmic) a key point in both formal and philosophical terms: 'sound and rhythm were the driver; the visual grid of Classical scansion was the liberating constraint without which sound can descend to animal cries of tie itself in knots' (71).

Although much recent work has been done on prosody, especially in Victorian Studies – and it is self-consciously a Victorian poet's poet, such as Swinburne's Coleridge, that is being returned to view here – this emphasis is typical of the way that Mays' book is distinctive. Its commitment to close-reading and prosody, as mentioned, is striking. Its interest in elements of the oeuvre often overlooked – be those translations, dramas, comic verse or fragments – is unusual. It is clear that the book's view is long-range: the Victorian interest in 'Love', 1890s school editions, or I.A. Richards on Coleridge are more prominent than recent critical battles. Its index is wonderfully idiosyncratic, with 'Ramus on "hearing" Classical scansion' sitting alongside 'theater: stage-situation creates a shared act of self-consciousness' and 'style, some aspects of'. Opting for none of the current modes which seem to constitute current Romantic scholarship – fine-grain historicism, book history/networks, late theory – Mays' voice is refreshing in being individual and, through a fitting reconciliation of opposites, rather innovative in its very traditionalism.

Christopher Stokes
University of Exeter

Chris Murray, *Tragic Coleridge*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. Pp. 194. £60. ISBN 9781409447542.

The theatre has a central role not only in Coleridge's works and intellectual development, but also in Coleridgean studies. The pages he dedicated to the analysis of Shakespearean theatre, for example, contain one of the most original and compelling theories elaborated by the poet, that of *dramatic illusion*. However, although many studies have been dedicated to what Coleridge wrote *about* theatre, the studies that deals with the plays he wrote are very few and, as Murray writes,'based primarily upon their relevance to his writings in other forms' (95).

Tragic Coleridge contributes towards filling this gap, dedicating specific attention to Coleridge's plays, considered 'in their own right' (95), but at the same time analyzed in the context of a research about the role of the *tragic* in Coleridge's productions.

Before analyzing this role, Murray deals with the difficult task of managing ambiguous notions such as those of *Romantic tragedy*, *tragic Romanticism* and *tragic* in general. He proposes to abandon the notion of *Romantic tragedy* and to adopt that of *tragic Romanticism*, 'to signify literature in the spirit of Classical tragedy' (1). Even so, the *tragic* concept remains problematic. The author proposes an extensive definition: *tragic* is the 'literature that depicts catastrophe and emphasizes pathos. Catastrophe is misfortune of widespread significance, not solely personal experience' (1). Murray refuses to identify the term *tragedy* with a canon of plays. He rather prefers to 'cultivate a *sense* of tragedy, comparable to a sense of irony' (3), because 'tragedy', Murray claims, quoting F.R. Leavis, 'is something you will have to *invent* for yourself' (3).

Such a wide definition, as every wide definition, risks being epistemologically inadequate, because it potentially applies to a infinite range of phenomena. Murray prevents

this risk thanks to a close textual analysis that shows how tragedy functions in Coleridge's works, in which, Murray argues, a theory of tragedy is absent, but there appears instead a tragic conception of life, because 'an impulse to seek redemption in crisis is common to many of his creations in various forms' (9).

The author analyzes first of all Coleridge's background, searching for the influences that could have formed his *sense of tragedy*. The author concludes that, notwithstanding the presence of authoritative scholars of Greek tragedy in Cambridge, that 'Coleridge's engagement with tragedy was entirely self-determined' (17). After this discovery, however, his sense of the tragic was certainly infuenced by his time in Germany, where he studied under one of the greatest classicists of his time, Christian Gottlob Heyne.

In Coleridge's poetical works the above-mentioned sense of the tragic assumes the form of transgression and suffering, often associated with the supernatural. A perfect example of this is offered by the figure of the *Ancient Mariner*, whose suffering is in consequence of an involuntary transgression. This dynamic is typical of Colerdige's sense of the tragic, that often assumes the form of a 'catastrophe as consequencial to acts that are unintended by those who perform them' (28).

After examining the role of the tragic in Coleridge's poetry, Murray examines Coleridge's reading of real events as tragedies. The section of this analysis dedicated to the way in which Coleridge deals with the Buttermere scandal is particularly useful to understanding the specific characteristics of the poet's *sense of tragic*. In 1802 a waitress married a gentlemen calling himself Alexander Augustus Hope, but some weeks later he was revealed to be an impostor, bigamist and a forger named Hatfield. Murray juxtaposes Coleridge's account of the scandal in a series of articles for the *Courier* and the *Morning Post* with Wordsworth's account in *The Prelude*. While for the latter the incident is a private matter, a personal tragedy that struck Mary Robinson, Coleridge 'renders the incident tragic with the insistence that its importance is not solely personal but public and exemplary' (68). 'By broadening the scope of the incident from Mary's life to imply that the entire nation is affected', Murray adds, 'Coleridge presents Hatfield's crime as a phallic intrusion to spoil a virgin community rather than the deception of one woman alone' (69). As we have seen, this is a central feature of Coleridge sense of the tragic, one that we can find also in his tragedy *Osorio* and in his two plays intended for the stage, *Remorse* and *Zapolya: a Christmas Tale*. This tendency to universalize, Murray argues, is a strategy to justify suffering within a greater context of redemption, to search for benefits that can arise from misfortune and this, in conclusion, is Coleridge's use of tragedy. A close analysis of this use is the main contribution of *Tragic Coleridge*, a book that, through the examination of a specific and quite neglected aspect of Coleridge's work, sheds light on different fields of the poet's production.

Gabriele De Luca
Università di Pisa

Theresa M. Kelley, *Clandestine Marriage: Botany and Romantic Culture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012. Pp. 342. $55. ISBN 9781421405179.

John Rignall and H. Gustav Klaus, with Valentine Cunningham, eds., *Ecology and the Literature of the British Left: The Red and the Green*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. Pp. 267. £60. ISBN 9781409418221.

Given the current debates about climate change, two recently published books are especially timely – Theresa Kelley's *Clandestine Marriage* and John Rignall, Gustav Klaus, and Valentine Cunningham's *Ecology and the Literature of the British Left*. These books explore human interaction with the environment as a key site for the production of literary meaning in Romantic-era and later literature.

Kelley's *Clandestine Marriage* takes botany as its focus and engages in the ambitious project of examining the material culture of plants for Romantic-era writers. Kelley is especially interested in the practice of exchanging plant specimens and in the creation of plant illustrations during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. She starts her discussion with nothing less than the definition of life, pondering early definitions of plant life as 'neither fully mineral nor fully animal but disturbingly in between' (4). She questions the efficacy of plant taxonomy schemes and notes significant flaws even in the accepted taxonomical model advocated by Carl von Linnaeus. As Kelley asserts, 'botany is the cultural imaginary of romantic nature', and the classification of plants reflects the collision of 'the interests of individuals and collective identities' (11). Kelley's book ranges broadly, discussing contributions by the likes of Erasmus Darwin, John Clare, and Shani Mootoo. In Kelley's terms, botany became a site of cultural conflict in which women could participate and in which Britain's colonial aspirations found expression through botanical illustration and classification. By the end of her discussion, Kelley has taken up Goethe and Hegel in what essentially becomes a philosophical examination of the nature of meaning. While the first chapter is perhaps unnecessarily dense, the book succeeds in illustrating the complexity of botanical inquiry for Romantic-era writers and artists. The book is meticulously researched and is exceptionally well illustrated, with three ample gatherings of botanical art that help to inform Kelley's discussion. *Clandestine Marriage* is an intellectually rigorous and well-conceived scholarly contribution both to the study of botanical history and to the study of Romantic-era literature. Readers interested in the confluence of these areas of study will find Kelley's book especially intriguing.

The essay collection edited by Rignall and Klaus (assisted by Cunningham) also takes plant life as one of its major themes. In a series of sixteen essays whose early versions appeared originally as papers at a conference held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 2007, the contributors study the relationship between ecological awareness and leftist politics. In the introduction, the editors assert that both intellectual viewpoints share origins in the Romantic period, when many of those who espoused one view also espoused the other (1). The editors acknowledge that 'poets like Clare and Wordsworth were no more aware of being Green than they were of being Romantic', and they further point out that the definitions of 'Green' and 'Leftist' have varied over time (2-3). Even so, Klaus and Rignall state that 'the editors and most of the contributors to the present collection share the conviction that a social and an ecological agenda are not separable or irreconcilable concerns but require to be brought together and thought through together' (9). The collection is competently edited and provides well-researched essays that offer unique insights into important philosophical fields.

The sixteen essays that constitute this volume cover a wide range of authors, from William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge to such late-twentieth-century authors as George Mackay Brown and Alasdair Gray. In so doing, the book offers more than two centuries' worth of evidence that the Red and the Green—the leftist and the ecocritical viewpoints—are intertwined. In 'Contemporary Ecocriticism between Red and Green', Richard Kerridge surveys 'the troubled relationship between environmentalism and the Left' to illustrate the fluid nature of the connection between the two (10). With 'Was Coleridge Green?', Seamus Perry suggests that Samuel Coleridge retained a complicated relationship with green thought—as evidenced in poems like 'Kubla Khan'—that would not allow definitive characterization. In '"Wastes of corn": Changes in Rural Land Use in Wordsworth's Early Poetry', Helena Kelly highlights William Wordsworth's responses to land enclosure and argues that Wordsworth developed a Godwinian distrust of the practice because of its damaging effects. This distrust may have been one catalyst for the mature Wordsworth's conservatism. 'John Clare's Weeds', by Mina Gorji, explores the significance of weeds in Clare's writing and explains how Clare celebrated the weed's tenacity and beauty in the face of the same enclosure system that tended toward its destruction. Simon Kövesi also discusses Clare's work in 'John Clare &… &… &… Deleuze and Guattari's Rhizome'. Kövesi points out that Clare's politically radical desire to reduce the differences surrounding social hierarchies dovetails with his poetic efforts to depict humanity as little more than a link in a nonhierarchical botanical and animal network of the natural world.

Stephen Harrison's essay moves the book into the Victorian era with an examination of works by Arthur Clough and Thomas Hardy. 'Graeco-Roman Pastoral and Social Class in Arthur Hugh Clough's *Bothie* and Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*' suggests that the two authors in question merged ecology and politics by using the classical pastoral as the basis for novels that examine contemporary socio-political debates. With 'Landscape, Labour and History in Later 19th-Century Writing', John Rignall examines the significance of workers who appear in literary landscapes to argue that the political implications of their status as labourers is intricately intertwined with the ecology of their milieu. Dinah Birch examines works by John Ruskin in 'Fallen Nature: Ruskin's Political Apocalypse'. Birch maintains that Ruskin's early idealism gave way to cynicism about the relationship between humanity and nature and suggests that Ruskin believed humanity needed to atone for the damage to the environment. Anna Vaninskaya then moves the discussion to William Morris as a conjoiner of both Red and Green in a way that was even more radical than the philosophies espoused by the Garden City movement in 'William Morris and the Garden City'. John Sloan suggests in 'H.G. Wells, Fabianism and the "Shape of Things to Come"' that Wells was less cynical than most scholars would argue because he believed in the 'human powers of initiative and invention' (13) that would allow humanity to take responsibility for the natural world. Sloan argues, however, that Wells found socialism and ecology incompatible. With 'Guardianship and Fellowship: Radicalism and the Ecological Imagination, 1880-1940', William Greenslade examines new-life socialism of the late nineteenth century as a source for environmental thinking.

The final essays move the discussion more solidly into the twentieth century. In 'Felled Trees–Fallen Soldiers', H. Gustav Klaus connects environmental and human disaster as two interconnected results of World War I. In Klaus's terms, 'the destruction of the green world is seen from a red perspective, and the meeting of environmental concern and socialist commitment springs directly out of lived experience' (14). In Valentine Cunningham's 'Marxist Cricket? Some Versions of Pastoral in the Poetry of the 30s', the author connects classically inspired environmental awareness with leftist ideals. James Radcliffe focuses on works by Theodore Roszak in 'Eco-anarchism, the New Left and Romanticism' to show how Roszak's views coincided with the New-Left ideas during the 1960s that 'man's destructive

domination of nature is rooted in the domination of man by man' (14). In 'A Huge Lacuna vis-à-vis the Peasants: Red and Green in John Berger's Trilogy *Into Their Labours*', Christian Schmitt-Kilb argues that Berger's trilogy contradicts the Marxist view that the peasantry must be eliminated and thus merges social and environmental issues. Finally, 'Green Links: Ecosocialism and Contemporary Scottish Writing' offers Graeme Macdonald's discussion of recent Scottish literature that hints at the necessity of combining social and environmental problems.

The two books reviewed here offer compelling arguments about the relationships between nature, literature, and philosophy. Both are worthwhile reading and undoubtedly will stimulate additional debate.

Ben P. Robertson
Troy University

Paul Kléber Monod, *Solomon's Secret Arts: The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013. Pp. 430. $45. ISBN 9780300123586.

John V. Fleming, *The Dark Side of the Enlightenment: Wizards, Alchemists, and Spiritual Seekers in the Age of Enlightenment*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013. $27.95. Pp. 414. ISBN 9780393079463.

Big books on eighteenth-century developments in science, politics, philosophy, religion and the creative imagination abound. Porter's *Enlightenment* (2000), Uglow's *The Lunar Men* (2002), Holmes's *The Age of Wonder* (2008) and Pagden's *The Enlightenment and Why it Still Matters* (2013) are just a few notable twenty-first century examples. With *Solomon's Secret Arts* and *The Dark Side of the Enlightenment*, Paul Kléber Monod and John V. Fleming have published two studies on eighteenth-century occulture – to borrow Christopher Partridge's term – that in their scope and mode of presentation resemble some of the books mentioned above. Monod's and Fleming's scholarship offers students and scholars of the eighteenth century an opportunity to rethink and re-evaluate their understanding of 'the Age of Reason,' as it was popularised by Nicolson in his monumental study of 1960. While Nicolson argued that the Enlightenment had 'destroy[ed] the belief in the supernatural' (290), Monod's and Fleming's books chronicle and foreground the persistent presence of alchemical, magical and mystical discourses in eighteenth-century science, religion and philosophy. As such, these books can help students of the Enlightenment to develop a balanced understanding of the eighteenth-century intellectual environment; one in which the concepts of reason and imagination, religion and science, nature and the supernatural are equally weighed.

Monod's book is 'a study of texts and how they were used' (8). As a history of occult writings it is fundamentally a work of intellectual history. Monod commendably contextualizes his intellectual history in social, economic and political contexts. By drawing engaging and nuanced portraits of the life and thought of important historical figures such as Elias Ashmole, Thomas Vaughan and William Yworth, amongst others, Monod convincingly illustrates that in the late seventeenth century science and the occult were 'not at war with one another' (16). He defines 'the period 1650-1688' as 'an alchemical heyday' (29) and shows how important print culture was in disseminating occult learning. In the second part, Monod explains that the marginalisation of occult thinking in the early eighteenth century was not

just an effect of scientific developments and the waning of belief in the supernatural. He shows that the occult was also marginalised by a changing political, social and economic climate. Moreover, as sales of occult literature dwindled and the practice of astrology and alchemy was increasingly commercialised, the occult was bereft of intellectual respectability. As a consequence, 'the Newtonian Magi' (166) remained quiet about their serious interests in alchemy and astrology. Part Three, which will be of direct interest to students of British Romanticism, concerns the occult revival in the second half of the eighteenth century. In this section Monod again emphasizes the significant role that commercial publishers played in keeping alive and fostering the spread of seventeenth-century occult writings. He also shows how the occult, now ousted from scientific discourse, found a new home in imaginative literature via the culture of sensibility, the gothic revival and the stage. While this point may be familiar to scholars of Gothic and Romantic literature, Monod brings important new material to light from which literary scholars can develop new insights. The sections on the mystical contexts of the late eighteenth-century occult revival, the portrait of the astrologer Sibly and the story of the alchemist Bacstrom's 'beautiful dream of knowledge, riches and power' (287) will enhance any student's knowledge and understanding of eighteenth-century occulture in relation to Romantic and enlightenment discourse.

In 'a brief word to the reader' Fleming explains that his book 'is intended for the educated general reader rather than the specialist' (xiii). I believe, however, that scholars working in the fields of eighteenth-century intellectual history, Romanticism, or the Gothic, will find much in *The Dark Side of the Enlightenment* that will further enhance their understanding of eighteenth-century occulture. Like Monod, Fleming points out that the interest in alchemy, astrology, and 'magic' was far from marginal in the period. For a time it was actually in vogue with the cultural elite. Fleming's great expertise in medieval English literature and religious thought allows him to develop fresh and valuable new insights on the occult enlightenment that complement Monod's work. He is able to show that 'there are numerous aspects of the intellectual life of the Enlightenment in which the medieval continuities are as conspicuous as the medieval rejections' (9). Where Monod's study seems more directly concerned with the relation between the occult and the rational enlightenment, Fleming focusses specifically on the occult's relation to 'traditional' religious discourse and eighteenth-century spirituality.

Monod's study is structured as a flowing historical narrative. He pinpoints a hey-day, a period of demise, and subsequent revival of occult learning. Fleming's book is organised around case studies of 'occult' movements such as the Convulsionists and Freemasons, and personalities such as Cagliostro and Julie de Krüdener. He begins his exploration of the dark side of the enlightenment by exploring the career of the mid-seventeenth-century 'healer' Valentine Greatrakes, whose miracle cures brought him from provincial Ireland to the centre of British intellectual and scientific society. Greatrakes became the subject of discussion 'in the London coffeehouses' (55) and a pamphlet war between adherents of the 'old' and 'new' science. This chapter, like Monod's sections on Ashmole and Vaughan, shows the extent to which occult thinking was part of, and brought together, seventeenth-century scientific, medical and religious discourse. Fleming specifically foregrounds the idea that in the long eighteenth century 'the mainstream of European thought was not materialist but *sacramental*. In the sacramental view, the material and visible wold paralleled another that was immaterial and invisible' (112). This quotation highlights a difference between Monod's and Fleming's approaches to eighteenth-century occulture. Monod's book focuses on the British Enlightenment; Fleming's study is European in scope, like Nicolson's *Age of Reason,* and covers international phenomena such as The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross in more detail.

With their portraits of Cagliostro, Monod and Fleming continue a tradition instigated by Nicolson, you could say. While Nicolson seemed to revel in the gullibility of the European

courts and the demise and punishment of its favourite magician, Monod is more astute in explaining Cagliostro's temporary success in commercial terms: 'Cagliostro was essentially marketing an old product under an exciting new label' (296). His explanation of the Count's demise is also more convincing. According to Monod, he was a colourful and public individual who simply could not identify himself in a society in which 'proper social identification' (298) was increasingly important. Naturally Cagliostro's person and actions became suspect. Fleming also treats Cagliostro in some detail. He seems more sympathetic towards the occult philosopher's learning and plight. He investigates not only the life and legend of the historical Giuseppe Balsamo, but also the reliability of the sources on which the many stories have been based. Fleming does not treat Cagliostro as an impostor or deluded seeker, but as a figure on the margins of the enlightenment who sought to re-introduce a very old intellectual tradition into his world: 'the so-called Egyptian rite' (236). Fleming explores Cagliostro's fame in the context of late-eighteenth-century 'Egyptomania' (236). In this intellectual context his identity as 'enlightened wizard' (252) is more plausible, even if it remains part of a 'magical' subculture, and ultimately fantastic.

Monod's and Fleming's different approaches to the occult enlightenment, as well as their different focus points, have resulted in two wide-ranging, erudite and engaging studies that truly complement each other. They will be of great value to any student of eighteenth-century intellectual and cultural history and should find their place alongside major studies of the 'age of reason' in personal and institutional libraries.

Evert Jan van Leeuwen
Leiden University

Vincent Quinn, *Pre-Romantic Poetry.* Writers and their Work Series. Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers/British Council, 2012. Pp. 125. £12.99. ISBN 9780746311882.

Bill Roberts, *Thomas Gray's Journal of his Visit to the Lake District in October 1769 with his Letter on his Tour of the Highlands in 1765 and a Commentary on each Journey*. Kirkoswald: Northern Academic Press, 2012. Pp. 160. £12.99. ISBN 9780952810322.

'Pre-Romantic', admits the author of this short and stimulating study, is a label which 'creates as many problems as it solves' (3). William Cowper, gracing the cover in a 1792 portrait by Romney, looks – half-expectant, half-anxious – as if he probably agrees. Perhaps he can see them all lined up and waiting, the Posterity gang: 'Wordsworth, Arnold, T.S. Eliot and F.R. Leavis' (103), co-creators of the canon that left the second half of the eighteenth century looking like a warm-up act for the real thing. Vincent Quinn's task in this volume is to challenge the whole notion of 'preromanticism' and the curiously teleological version of literary history it implies. He does so engagingly, and with verve, in an introductory chapter which unpicks the problems of a narrative about the development of English literature essentially formed during the nineteenth century, and from whose assumptions of literary value we are still not entirely free. Three thoughtful studies then tease out some of those ideas in readings of mostly Cowper and Thomas Gray, though others are drawn into the discussion: Yearsley, Leapor, Pointon, Pope and Keats amongst them.

Quinn has a knack for taking well-worn critical themes and reinvigorating them (what, after all, could there be left to *say* about 'Poetry and Patronage' in this period?). He

does this partly by shifting focus, in the first two studies, to lesser-known poems, like Cowper's 'On Mrs Montagu's Feather-Hangings', which he locates in a subtle nexus of social aspiration and indebtedness involving the poet, his cousin Lady Hesketh, and Elizabeth Montagu (whose Portman Square mansion contained 'a room decorated entirely with feathers' (19)). In 'The Occasions of Poetry', Quinn spends time with Gray's 'Ode on the Death of Favourite Cat' and Mary Leapor's 'Upon her play being returned to her, stained with Claret', questioning (with Keats' 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' by way of demonstration) some assumptions about 'occasional verse' and its suitability as a vehicle for 'high' poetry – a discussion which opens out to consider how such writing has been edged out of later constructions of the sublime. The third chapter, 'Homoeroticism and the Pastoral' returns to Gray, exploring the various ways – in letters, jokes, allusions and poetry – in which the poet figured and expressed his feelings for Richard West through the ambiguous – and here, beautifully nuanced – tropes of pastoral. A fine reading of Gray's 'Elegy' follows, which hinges in part on an idea developed by Pierre Macherey that 'gaps and absences reveal the ideological tensions that inhabit every text' (95). Drawing attention to the sheer awkwardness of the final stanza ('Even interior readings struggle to make this verse coherent; it falls completely apart when spoken aloud)', Quinn argues that this 'stutter' reveals a moment of cultural pressure, where the conventions of literary pastoral come up against the rules of eighteenth-century Christian morality.

Quinn shows how all three categories of writing discussed here failed to conform to post-Wordsworthian notions of the function and nature of poetry ('real' poets are not supposed to do it for money, for fun, or in ways that might be construed as unmanly). Close attention to historical context can help us to bear in mind the changing nature of perceived literary value, and understand why certain genres or types of poetry find favour at certain times. Which is not to embalm them or to hedge them in impenetrable scholarship; it is more a case of learning a language well enough to get the jokes. Nor, as Quinn demonstrates, need Historicism preclude dialogue across the centuries: Plath, Woolf, Lyotard and others have some interesting things to contribute here.

The ability of eighteenth-century texts to speak out across time is a preoccupation in the second book under review, a new edition of Thomas Gray's accounts of two tours made in the Scottish Highlands and the Lake District in 1765 and 1769. These journeys, undertaken more than twenty-five years after his European Grand Tour with Horace Walpole in 1739-41, situate Gray interestingly near the beginnings of the fashion for tourism within Britain that would so characterise the second half of the eighteenth century. He is, indeed, just ahead of Thomas Pennant, who is often credited with 'opening up' Scotland with his published *Tours* of 1769 and 1772. Gray's account of the Lakes was not written for publication, but appeared after his death, annotated and considerably revised, in 1775. Bill Roberts, in what is effectively a diplomatic edition, returns us to the raw, jolting, episodic texts of the note-book journals, which Gray copied out more or less verbatim and sent in letters to his friend Thomas Wharton.

The account of his five-day Scottish tour is also a letter to Wharton, setting out his itinerary from Edinburgh to the Highlands, and describing at length the grounds and castle at Glamis, where the ninth earl was busy with a vast programme of land improvement: 'all the Highlanders, that can be got, are employ'd in it' notes Gray, adding that 'many of them speak no English & I hear them singing Erse songs all day long' (22). That interest in local lives and stories is also revealed in his comment on one of the Pictish carved stones at Meigle, explained to him by local women as 'the tomb of *Queen Wanders* [i.e. Guinevere], *that was riven to dethe by staned-horses for nae gude, that she did*'(23).

It is in the journal of the Lakes tour, however, that Gray's gift for capturing visual effects in words becomes most evident. There are phrases of lovely precision – from October

grass 'cover'd with a hoar frost, wch soon melted, & exhaled in a thin blewish smoke' (58) to 'the shining purity of the Lake, just ruffled by the breeze enough to shew it is alive' (59). The quality of the attention Gray paid to his surroundings arose, perhaps, from the need to share this lived experience of a new landscape with what William Ruddick calls 'an absent but imaginatively present companion' (cited 152): Thomas Wharton should have accompanied him on this trip, but turned back at Brough after a bad attack of asthma. Gray was a conscious connoisseur of landscape, using his Claude glass assiduously and referring to scenes published in prints by Thomas Smith of Derby. But, just as in Scotland, he is not only interested in effects of light and shade amongst these awe-inspiring mountains: he talks to local people, picks up stories, accents – 'Ilkeley (pronounce Eecla)' – and learns how they make a living. We meet the farmer 'let down from the cliff in ropes' to raid a predatory eagle's nest (62); we hear 'the thumping of huge hammers' near the forges at Sizergh ('pronounce Siser') (71) and are moved by the story of an experienced family of cockle-pickers caught in the treacherous tide at Poulton sands.

Preserving the immediacy of such writing in a published text is always difficult, but it must be said that this hyper-faithful edition (which mimics every feature of the manuscript down to the long S's) can be quite hard to read. The illustrations are illuminating, but it would have been good, too, to have a couple of maps; I would recommend reading this book in conjunction with Lancaster University's 'Mapping The Lakes' website, which devotes several pages to the itinerary of Gray's tour. Roberts's commitment to Gray the poet and the man, though at times bordering on the downright defensive, is admirable, and his commentaries (both treble the length of the originals) are fascinating. They effectively give us a new narrative, that of a traveller trying to walk in eighteenth-century footsteps through a modern landscape. It is an excellent way to grasp the both the lost-ness and the immediacy of history; for if the inns today are less dark and damp, and the roads are that much smoother (and noisier), you can still catch that interplay of light and cloud on the hills, or reach out across centuries and touch the bark of a tree that Gray once measured and described. And people still drown on those dangerous sands.

Mary-Ann Constantine
University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies

William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads 1798 and 1802*. Edited and with an introduction and Notes by Fiona Stafford. Oxford: OUP, 2013. Pp. xlv + 371. £8.99. PB. ISBN 9780199601967.

Lucy Newlyn, *William and Dorothy Wordsworth: 'All in Each Other'*. Oxford: OUP, 2013. Pp. xiv + 386. £19.99. ISBN 9780199696390.

In terms of methodology, these books make a fine contrast. While Lucy Newlyn presents a kind of double biography, explaining William and Dorothy Wordsworth's writings as a collaborative creative effort emerging from a special symbiotic relationship, Fiona Stafford's new edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, which is the first to print the 1798 and 1802 versions together, enters its subject from the opposite direction. Stafford opts to approach the first collection of 1798 'with the original readers in mind, who were picking up a slim, anonymous volume of new poems' (xiii). These readers, as laid out by her very fine introduction, were in for a surprise. Whilst modern readers can hardly elude the famous Preface of 1802 as a guide to their understanding, the contemporary readers of the first

edition would have been able to rely on the anonymous advertisement only, providing 'little guidance as to meaning' (xiii-xiv). Stepping back in focus in order to recapitulate how these readers would have immediately found themselves plunged into confusion in the face of the first baffling and terrifying poem 'The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere', the editor delineates the undoing of the contemporary horizon of expectations achieved by the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798. As the opening poem 'came laden with unpredictable possibility', presenting itself as 'at once traditional and experimental' (xvii), the recommendation 'to abandon "pre-established codes"' (xviii) persisted, as Stafford shows, following the sequential logic of the poems to conclude: 'This is a volume in which nothing is quite as it seems', and 'from the very first poem, readers were disconcerted and dislocated' (xix). With this introduction in mind, the reader is well prepared indeed for the juxtaposition of the 1798 and 1802 editions – realizing how much the sequential arrangement in a collection actually matters. What Stafford's introduction thus beautifully achieves is to let the modern reader share in the 1798 reading experience of having one's preconceptions unsettled, 'of seeing something that has been seen before' (xxiii) in a new light, and to read the poems as significantly positioned in a collection. The elegant transition to the inevitable biographical context – Wordsworth's and Coleridge's collaboration – comes only after the concluding 'Lines Written a few miles above Tintern Abbey': with Wordsworth's turn from loco-description and eighteenth-century abstract personification to his sister's actual presence, 'a real women in a real place' (xxiii). It is in the context of the poets' real lives at the early stages of their careers that the history of the *Lyrical Ballads* is accounted for in informative detail. The text comes first (along with its literary and critical contexts explained in the annotations), and biography comes second.

The opposite construction is at work in Newlyn's biography, which offers not a tandem of texts, but of lives deeply entwined. (What both books share, however, is the importance they attach to the motif of 'thankfulness'.) Newlyn's *William and Dorothy Wordsworth: 'All in Each Other'* undertakes to deliver a comprehensive account of how Dorothy and William Wordsworth's lives and writings were inextricably and reciprocally linked. Her principle objective is to work out 'the quality and intrinsic value of their partnership in writing; to explore the therapeutic benefits, for both siblings, of their shared regional attachment; and to investigate their distinctly symbiotic contribution to Romantic environmentalism' (xiii). In other words, there is a twofold motive behind her narrative: firstly, to portray the siblings' relationship not as a lopsided relationship but as one of manifold 'interminglings in their work', of – quoting from the *Prelude* – 'ennobling interchange' (xiii), and secondly, to highlight their regional identity, the bond to their local environment.

Punctuating her biography by allocating stages to places, Newlyn's narrative opens with a chapter entitled 'Homelessness'. The family's break-up after their mother's death is recaptured as the key to the Wordsworths' nostalgia for a 'home', for the Lake District, for a familiar regional topography. Both their cohabitation and collaboration spanning more than fifty years, and their attachment to the local topography spring from their childhood loss, causing 'an almost compulsive need to compensate for the past by laying up a store of memories for future years' (6). It all comes down, Newlyn claims, to acts of remembering and returning as part of coming to terms with the loss of their family home at Cockermouth – to a long process of repairing the 'trauma' (xii and *passim*) caused by their early separation through 'collaborative efforts to rebuild their scattered family's regional identity' (xii).

Thus 'Home at Grasmere' in particular, alongside the *Grasmere Journal*, the *Prelude* as well as *Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland*, are attributed 'the great Homeric motifs of wandering and returning home intertwined with the georgic theme of dwelling in a place of work' (203). Citing Freud's 'Mourning and Melancholia', Newlyn suggests that the repeated instances of revisiting – mental or physical – are part of the work of grieving, and of

looking for a new place 'that would restore them to their lost origins and compensate them for the deaths of their parents' (5). In this sense, 're-familiarisation' (146), not defamiliarisation, is their poetic principle. This is, in brief, the overarching psychological angle organizing Newlyn's narrative. From this viewpoint, the delicate matter of possible incest that has kept previous biographers and critics speculating can be safely leaped across, while Dorothy's well known journal entry, 'in the style of a novel of sensibility', on William's wedding day is treated with explicit authorial approval, refraining from all further speculation: psychosomatic aches and pains are 'noted, but not dwelt on for longer than is necessary' (144). (At times, a slight note of all too easy authorial judgement seems to slip in, governed by sympathy with the protagonists, while their companions fare less well. Thus Thomas Monkhouse is briefly attested to have 'somewhat selfishly' (244) continued his Alpine trip without his bride, while William and Dorothy, leaving Mary behind with a young baby as they set out for Scotland, get away with more biographical understanding.) Indeed, Dorothy's 'unfailing sympathy' (230) with her brother seems to be echoed by the biographer's attitude to her subjects, resting, perhaps, on her own acknowledged concern with homesickness.

Next to the psychological explanation of the Wordsworths' focus on local places, supported by occasional reference to Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* – remembering places of their childhood, returning to them, experiencing them, their peripatetic experience as much as their poetic representation – Newlyn brings into play another 'big theory': the anthropologist Marcel Mauss's notion of 'gift exchange' as a means of establishing bonds between giver and receiver. What Newlyn sees at work throughout is a complex system of an exchange of gifts once the siblings had been reunited. Thus William gives his poetry as an expression of gratitude for Dorothy's existence and presence in his life, or rather: 'Gratitude itself becomes a gift when expressed in such eloquent and generous terms' (7). However, the emphasis is placed on the reciprocity of this arrangement, exculpating, one might add, William from any feminist indictment as to his exploitation of Dorothy's fine diurnal nature writing that found its way into his poetry, notoriously in the case of his Daffodils and her earlier account of them. Their relationship was, according to Newlyn's book, not one of asymmetrical poet and his sibling muse; rather, the writings of both reflect an intense 'shared creativity' (55).

In sum, Newlyn's very readable, beautifully illustrated book offers a wealth of details and insights into the extent and intensity of the Wordsworths' creative life together. Its material is expounded in a way that primarily aims at an audience beyond academia, addressing the community of Wordsworth readers and lovers of the Lake district, who flock in thousands every year to visit its monuments. The almost inevitable price to pay for her wide intended readership is a certain tendency to an all too simplified evocation of theory. Conversely, this biography is at its best, I believe, when it relates the Wordsworths' permanent homesickness, biographically motivated, to the spiritual yearning of a larger Romantic *heimweh* – rendering the two Wordsworths true epitomes of European Romanticism. For students of the *Lyrical Ballads* as one of the key texts of Romanticism, Stafford's new edition, juxtaposing the two 1798 and 1802 versions, is highly recommendable as it finely lays out both the reader response dimension of its poetics and the contexts of its production.

Helga Schwalm
Humboldt-University, Berlin

Anthony Howe, *Byron and the Forms of Thought*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013. Pp. 196. £70. ISBN 9781846319716.

This fine new study engages with the critical debate over Byron's philosophical ideas, a debate which has developed from Arnold's and T. S. Eliot's declarations of the poet's intellectual nullity, through to recent attempts by critics such as M. G. Cooke, Terence A. Hoagwood and Bernhard Jackson to identify Byron's philosophical tenets. Anthony Howe's contention is that, while philosophical trends are certainly relevant to Byron's poetry, the poetry is not 'reproducible as a discrete branch of philosophy'. Rather, Byron distrusts overt argumentation, but makes 'philosophical thought [...] a prelude to self-understanding' (6). Crucial to Byron's enterprise, according to Howe, is poetic form. It is this that engages, investigates, subverts and energises thought, such that in the poetry, 'we often stumble into quiet clearings of lucidity, but we are rarely allowed to stray too far from the truths of disorder' (3).

The central chapters of Howe's book constitute a series of six essays: a deliberate strategy that evokes Byron's admiration of Montaigne and the form associated with him – suggesting, as it does, gestures or speculations, rather than a fully worked-out world-view. The first two essays, under the rubric 'Philosophy', explore Byron in relation to the tradition of philosophical scepticism, and go on to examine his ambiguous (and critically neglected) 'Mystery', *Cain*. Howe makes a convincing case for locating the play's 'uniqueness and experimental force' in Cain's combination of Enlightenment thinking and potential as a vatic poet (65), and for seeing Adah's take on human experience as an important counterweight to that of Lucifer.

The next two chapters consider Byron's involvement in the Pope-Bowles controversy, via his prose compositions, and trace out the implications for his poetics of the ideas at stake here, invoking as well the legacy of Locke and Burke. Bowles's crude misrepresentation of Pope (as he saw it) was baneful for Byron, Howe argues, because it was 'linked to the kinds of linguistic dishonesty that expedite moral and political degeneration' (77). By contrast, Dr Johnson, although somewhat critical of Pope, exemplifies 'lived experience' via his own performance of writing (84): Byron held a similar aspiration, and also insisted 'that we might think in more ways than one and at the same time' (98). Thus the apparently idealistic sections of *Childe Harold* 'suggest a mind more than aware of the forces that loom up against the possibility of vision', whereas in *Don Juan*, the 'threat of total scepticism … finds mitigation in poetry's "outlines" or "hints", which [...] offer an unspecified hope' (112-15). Hence the later poem 'is not so much a clean break from or abandonment of earlier 'romantic' Byronic texts as a haunting of their problematic possibilities' (118).

The final two chapters, 'Outlines', develop the earlier themes of the study. Although all the chapters contain excellent close readings of the poetry, these last ones concentrate more fully on it, and focus especially on *Don Juan*. The first considers the differing tonalities through the representations of Juan's actual and potential love-interests, Haidée, Adeline, and Aurora Raby. The last is for Howe 'Byron's most resplendent symbol of poetic possibility' (141), yet she does not enable the poet to escape 'his own far muddier sceptical mire' (144). The following chapter takes up the issue of 'linguistic dishonesty' in relation to the siege cantos of *Don Juan*, looking back at Byron's earlier treatments of battles and their 'heroes'. Byron comes to 'think about how and why the individual emerges from the variety of "Brave men" who have "shone not on the poet's page"' (158), and the siege cantos do demonstrate a probing critique of language - but they also suggest that 'words can be instinct with virtue' (160).

If the achievement of poetry is more complex than the polemic of argument or the claims of philosophical discourse, then that is partly because of Byron's intellectual energy,

the passion he both feels and registers, and, of course, his own subtle and varied use of language. But for Byron, according to Howe, the impact of poetry was crucially dependent on readers, and, moreover, readers whose reactions the poet was less certain about once he no longer published with John Murray. One way in which the book delineates the difference between philosophical argument and Byron's poetry is through illustrating the latter's implicit or explicit reliance on reader response. The 'lively reader's fancy' invoked in *Don Juan* (VI, 98) is 'an object of great anxiety but also of great hope' (144). Thus we later readers understand Byron's legacy, Howe concludes, by accepting 'his invitation to think, read and imagine' (175).

Anthony Howe's study is well-written (if occasionally gnomic) and full of insights, combining a strong awareness of Byron's various intellectual engagements with consistently persuasive interpretations of the poetry.

Joanne Wilkes
University of Auckland, New Zealand

John Goodridge, *John Clare and Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 252. £55. ISBN: 9780521887021.

Kirsty Blair and Mina Gorji, eds., *Class and the Canon: Constructing Labouring-Class Poetry and Poetics, 1750-1900*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. 216. £50. ISBN: 9781137030320.

Clare is often championed for his lyric verse, so John Goodridge's argument for the poet's 'habitual commitment to the narrative mode' (162) in the second half of this monograph signals a shift in critical focus. The presentation of Clare as a storyteller in this book is closely connected to the central notion of community, which has also been the subject of recent critical work on Clare and other poets of labouring-class social origins.

Indeed, the presence of Robert Bloomfield (in terms of his influence on Clare and Clare's deep admiration for his poetry) in Goodridge's book is striking, and it is with reference to Bloomfield that the claim for 'the intense loneliness and the sociability of rural life in the era of enclosure' (86) is made in *John Clare and Community*, which, like a number of recent monographs on the poet, focuses mostly on work from his early and middle periods (c.1810-35). Goodridge says that he is approaching the subject in the spirit of the 'enthusiast' (8): in practice this means following a number of different directions (including 'counterfactual' ones (60)) in order to help us better understand Clare. The result is a study which is both accessible and scholarly, driven by the clarity of the writing. Goodridge offers a carefully balanced account of the 'isolated' and the 'sociable' Clare, claiming with considerable justification that if we try to pin him down to either one of these profiles we will end up going astray. The isolated Clare, for instance, felt cut-off from his rural neighbours due to his desire to enter 'the world of polite poetry' (170), while the sociable Clare, for example, had instant success with his first collection *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery*, resulting in dinner meetings in London with Coleridge, Hazlitt, and De Quincey.

Goodridge frequently employs an approach that he refers to as 'psycho-biographical' (14). In relation to Clare's reading of Thomas Chatterton, this helps us to see the latter as a kind of 'subversive' (34) model for some of the survival strategies which Clare tried to take up through his writing career – primarily as a way of dealing with the contradictory 'peasant poet' label (the one that appeared on the title page of *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and*

Scenery). The argument in these sections of *John Clare and Community*, furthermore, is that rather than seeing Clare as having an awkward relationship with the eighteenth-century poetic tradition (as John Barrell and others have done), we should instead look at the examples of Chatterton, John Pomfret, John Cunningham, and Thomas Gray as fundamentally enabling for him. Chatterton (along with Bloomfield and Keats) was also named by Clare in an early 'tombstone drawing' (13). Understandably, Goodridge places a lot of emphasis on Clare's 'gravestone triumvirs' (60): the picture which emerges from these chapters is of Clare's fraternal attitude towards Bloomfield and Keats, neither of whom he actually met.

In the second half of the book Goodridge argues that Clare brings together popular, pastoral, and political discourses in his poems about enclosure, while Clare's poems on bird's nests are contextualised with reference to agricultural work practices, and this signals his difference from 'the familiar, aetherialising Romantic [poetic] formula' (144) of Shelley and Keats. In Chapter 7, the Clare-Keats connection is further developed through some insightful thematic and verbal parallels in 'St Martins Eve' and 'The Eve of St Agnes': one of the things that we see is that Clare's narrative lays bare the cruelty inherent in some rural customs and rituals.

The figure of 'Granny Bains' (in both Chapters 7 and 8) provides a welcome focal point for discussion of a female influence on Clare in terms of an 'oral tradition of songs, ballads and stories' (169). Clare, like Bloomfield, is 'interested in the scene of storytelling as much as in the tale itself' (172). The return to the comparison with Bloomfield helps to integrate the first half of the book with the second, and Goodridge contends that 'Betrayal is […] arguably Clare's greatest theme' (161): betrayal in terms of social and political issues such as enclosure, but also betrayal in love. As these ideas indicate, *John Clare and Community* is a compelling study: the book will advance considerably our understanding of Clare's narrative modes and his relationship to the eighteenth-century poetic tradition.

Goodridge's essay on Clare and Bloomfield is one of two chapters on the former poet in *Class and the Canon: Constructing Labouring-Class Poetry and Poetics, 1750-1900*, which has its origins in a highly enjoyable conference held at the University of Glasgow in 2008. In her Introduction to the volume, Kirsty Blair offers a lucid summary of new developments in this burgeoning area of scholarship, while she also provides an outline of key problems and issues that are beginning to be tackled in the critical field. Blair begins by attending to the potential inadequacy of the label 'labouring class', pointing out that there is something of a trap ahead if we try to think of the label as conveniently pigeonholing writers based on their economic and social circumstances. There is, for instance, an essay in this collection by Matthew Campbell on Samuel Ferguson, a barrister and antiquarian. With reference to the example of the poet James Bird (1-2), Blair points out that he was very self-conscious about being considered to be a 'labouring-class poet'. One of the main themes running through the essays in the collection, then, is that the poets under discussion were acutely aware of the terms in which they were constructed and (frequently) marketed for middle- or upper-class readerships – even if, as Blair acknowledges, the idea of the 'labouring-class tradition' has partly been a product of twentieth- and twenty-first-century criticism.

What also emerges from these essays, as the title of the collection indicates, is that the poets (and prose writers) in this volume draw on canonical literature (Shelley and Byron being two key examples here) in innovative kinds of ways. To this end, a number of the essays focus on labouring-class writers 'and their importance in the literary cultures of their time' (3). Still, as the contributors are aware, the label 'labouring class' remains a 'tricky' (3) one, and Nigel Leask, in the first essay in the collection, examines whether or not Robert Burns was a labouring-class poet. This examination involves a discussion of 'class' itself and no less difficult terms such as 'plebeian' and 'peasant'. To summarise a careful and complex

argument, it seems that while Burns served as inspiration for English writers such as Bloomfield, Clare, and – later in the nineteenth century – dialect poets such as Edwin Waugh (the subject of Brian Hollingworth's essay in this collection), ultimately, Burns can be described as 'a labouring poet, if not a labouring-*class* poet' (27).

Burns is also cited in Mina Gorji's essay on Clare, where the metaphors of enclosure and concealment and detailed attention to the poet's particular word choices are used to argue for his 'poetics of littleness' (79). In the next essay, Kerri Andrews analyses how the theme of time (and its relationship to memory and remembering) connects Ann Yearsley with William Cowper and William Wordsworth. Yearsley's poetry, it is argued, is a 'crucial bridge' between late eighteenth-century and Romantic writers (114). Indeed, the idea of a bridge between different cultures and traditions informs Jennifer's Orr's contention that the late eighteenth-century poet Samuel Thomson 'maintained a tension between his bardic representation of lower-class regional life and a desire to associate with men of more intellectual predilections' (37). Orr's outline of a 'bardic' tradition dovetails with Michael Sanders' focus on the Chartist theorising of poetry as '"prophetic or bardic"' (162): Romantic poets such as Shelley and Byron 'exemplify the former', while most labouring-class poets are viewed in terms of the latter category. Indeed, in an earlier chapter in the collection, Marcus Waithe takes up the issues of labour and writing in regard to Thomas Carlyle and Ebenezer Elliott. In an essay on William Barnes, Sue Edney points out that self-taught and working-class poetry is difficult to situate within 'theoretical frameworks' (194): this issue is connected to the question of aesthetic quality, and while there is still much work to be done on aesthetic and canonical valuations in relation to labouring-class poetry, *Class and the Canon* offers much analysis beyond the biographical approaches which have so far tended to dominate this critical field.

Adam White
University of Manchester

Mary-Ann Constantine and Dafydd Johnston, *'Footsteps of Liberty and Revolt': Essays on Wales and the French Revolution*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013. Pp. xvii + 330. £24.99. ISBN 9780708325902.

This volume represents one interpretive dimension of a larger project on 'Wales and the French Revolution', engaged in recuperating the textual record of what was clearly a complex political and cultural encounter, yet neglected by the Anglophone world. As such, the essays here have a difficult, multi-dimensional job to do – making the responses of a periphery relevant to audiences more familiar with centres; taking fragments of evidence and fairly depicting a whole; explaining why somewhere so close geographically and distant linguistically from France merits attention when 'global' histories are focusing on the inverse of those connections across oceans and continents. In the academic context of their own production, the essays also struggle with the boundary between history and literature – the different disciplinary approaches to style and content, that could as well be raised about English or French political songs, ballads and poetry, seemingly particularly at issue when so much of the surviving Welsh output comes in the forms of such literature.

As a result, it must be observed that, despite some high points of very real interest, this is a very uneven collection. Some essays, such as John Mee's on the Welsh-born author and artistic patron Hester Lynch Piozzi, touch on a variety of noteworthy themes (in this case including national and class identities and female solidarities) while finding little to connect

directly Wales with Revolution. Others, such as Murray Pittock's discussion of 'What is a national Gothic?' seem to say not very much about Wales, preferring to take examples from the larger corpus of Scots and Irish invocations of the genre. Some other contributions hover awkwardly at the borderline between agitprop and antiquarianism in their enthusiasm for the radicalism of figures of dubious consequence.

However there are a significant number of highlights to note. Caroline Franklin's essay on 'Wales as Nowhere' demonstrates that the country in fact occupied a significant place in literary-political imaginations, often being placed alongside America as a place for utopian new beginnings. Before the Welshman Robert Owen began his practical experiments in utopian living, others had long imagined Wales in print or in private (as did Coleridge and Southey) as the site of escape from oppressive English conditions. Mary-Ann Constantine offers an engaging chapter on those individuals who took their Welshness across the Channel to revolutionary Paris – a mixed group with connections both significant and shady, including for one unfortunate the descent into what would become a textbook case of paranoid schizophrenia. As this figure, James Tilly Matthews, had been imprisoned as a suspected spy throughout the Terror, we might wonder whether his was another case of the trauma of revolution – a key aspect of recent study.

Marion Löffler traces the significant Welsh-language reception and adaptation of the *Marseillaise* through the years of the 1790s when it was a bold and dangerous text to own, let alone to declaim. Several chapters address the overlap and cross-fertilization of old and new Welsh-language cultural production with French news and radical principles: Dafydd Johnston on the new messages in recuperated medieval poems, Ffion Mair Jones on a traditional pantomime-like 'interlude' as a political commentary on the fate of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, and Elizabeth Edwards on 'voices of war' – stark new poetry lamenting the impact of famine and repression in the decade from 1794.

In counterpoint Hywel M. Davies offers a case-study of the iconic 1797 French 'invasion' at Fishguard. It is a veritable treasure-trove of pointers towards wider themes and significances. From the French side, the episode speaks of both the transnational sweep of republican ambitions, and their cold pragmatism: entrusting of the mission to an American adventurer, bold plans to burn Bristol and paralyse the west coast in support of invasion of Ireland, and the brutal cynicism of sweeping the gaols to provide 'troops' most suitable to spread terror of pillage and rape (which, in the few hours they were ashore, they emphatically did). From the Welsh, it was a collision of anxiously mixed solidarities and fears of social subversion, and the 'legend' of red-flannel-clad women tricking the French into surrender was born scarce days after the events themselves – raising intriguing questions about how large the kernel of truth in it was. For the English, the landing offered reassurance that Wales was not going the way of Ireland – and created a site of touristic curiosity in the years ahead – while also offering valuable propaganda to reaffirm the ghastly nature of the French regime.

As an historian I am perhaps biased in finding a chapter on striking and unusual events to be amongst the best in the volume, but overall, despite its unevenness, there is much in this collection to draw the attention of anyone interested in the potential for a rounded picture of its focal time and place.

David Andress
University of Portsmouth

Marianne Van Remoortel, *Lives of the Sonnet, 1787 -1895: Genre, Gender and Criticism.* Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011. Pp. 204. £49.50. ISBN 9780754669340.

The introduction to *Lives of the Sonnet* presents the sonnet as an unstable entity, the paradoxically precise formal qualities of which fail to preserve it from an onslaught of critical approaches and poetic practices that threaten to reduce it to incoherence. The problem of the sonnet, as Van Remoortel identifies it, is the type of discourse the form produces, ranging from the highest reaches of poetic achievement to a banality let loose by its closeness to questions of personal feeling and display. One of the most significant aspects of her approach is the extent to which she convincingly argues that it is precisely the less than perfect manifestations of the genre that constitute the most culturally significant; far from being peripheral, for Van Remoortel, the sonnet is more central to the recognition and acceptance of women's writing than the 'pubescent novel' (11).

The critique of the short-lived newspaper *The World* (1787-1794), with its innovations regarding script and typesetting, presents the turgid sonnet 'To the Countess of S—y' as 'a flamboyant exhibition of cutting-edge typography, a spectacle of form rather than content' (20). The conceit (borrowed from Genette) of the empty margins of Elizabethan poetry manuscripts replaced with the crammed text of a newspaper, with its heated immediacy of fact and reportage, is telling. But this fascinating contextualizing, while it uncovers the multifarious ways in which the sonnet makes meaning by being embedded in a dense cloud of gossip and social events, eclipses its status *as* sonnet. For Van Remoortel this is the point. The punning main title of Chapter 1, 'Invaluable Commodities,' points to the ways in which seeing the sonnet solely as a commercial entity is both liberating and depressing. In densely detailed analysis *Lives of the Sonnets* establishes how the sonnet becomes a battleground for competing ideas of prestige and artistic value. The conflicting nature of the claims made for the sonnet can become confusing: it works for the empowerment of women, forms part of new modes of publication, and becomes a tool for the marginalization of both. Gifford's attacks on the Della Cruscans, Van Remoortel argues, invoke a world where increasingly nasty turf wars propel the literary into a kind of cultural gutter. The sonnet's appeal to outsiders becomes the sign of its toxic nature as fatally easy form (easy because its form is so often breached) that dupes the incompetent into thinking they have "mastered" it. The chapter on Coleridge is typical of Van Remoortel's approach. Coleridge's negotiation of the minefield of commentary on the sonnet is presented as more definitive of his way of writing sonnets than either content or form. This procedure is identified as a matter of 'contemporariness,' a cultural immediacy that morphs into a determination that the sonnet is 'an activity shared among men' (69) even as the form of the sonnet itself is becoming feminized and subject, therefore, to ferocious parody. The overwhelming sense conveyed of jostling egos, combined with a relentlessly vicious triviality in 'Coleridge and his Circle,' opens up some unedifying ways to conceptualize a rather shop-worn Romanticism, a process enacted over the battered carcass of the sonnet.

The lack of the 'commercial paratext' characteristic of earlier publication allows for some suggestive readings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, most notably the collapse in the distinction between the metaphoric and literal in the deployment of images of sickness and submission. Her brief account of the 'poetess' allows Van Remoortel to suggest a different literary history unfolding between the sonnet revival and Barrett Browning's sequence. In the case of Meredith's *Modern Love* the generic constituents of the sonnet have become subsumed within the multitude of ways to circumvent them: the sonnet has become 'the sonnet label.' Some of the most illuminating analysis in the volume resides

in Van Remoortel's comparison of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's 'metaphorization of maternity' in *House of Life* and Augusta Webster's reclamation of birth and maternity from their metaphoric status in male writing in *Mother and Daughter*.

Van Remoortel's deployment of the trope of disease, 'sonnettomania,' is instructive. If formalism elides contexts, then contextual criticism consumes, as it displaces, text. *Lives of the Sonnet* is a fascinating exposition that proposes a new literary history. Nevertheless, in spite of consistently informative and stimulating readings, it leaves various methodological and aesthetic questions unanswered. As a reader of this volume I still find myself wondering about the sonnet. What on earth it is that stimulates such a passion for analyzing what is not reducible to the context that produces it? Van Remoortel provides a rich cultural field for such speculations.

Lee O'Brien
Macquarie University

Fiona Stafford, *Reading Romantic Poetry*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. Pp. 237. £52.50. HB: ISBN 9781405191555; PB (2014) £27.99: ISBN 9781118773000.

Fiona Stafford's book is a superb introduction to Romantic poetry. Wide-ranging, detailed, ingeniously organised but at the same time clarifying, the book persuasively combines astute close readings of key poems with larger social, cultural and political considerations in a way that manages to make the conventional opposition of text to context seem to melt into air as we read. And as it proceeds, in fact, the book turns out to be structured around a series of such oppositions – which are shown to be complex, unstable and intricately inter-involved: oppositions not only of the private to the public, but also of pleasure to pain, of the Romantic 'ideal of sociability' to the traditional concept of Romantic solitude, of the poet to the reader, of orality to literacy (or speech to writing).

One of Stafford's major concerns is to analyse the ways in which the conventional understanding of the inward turn of Romantic poetry can itself be understood to have wider social, cultural and political implications. Indeed, her major claim is that canonical Romantic poems cannot effectively be read in isolation from the wider literary culture of the period on the one hand, and from scientific, economic, and political forces and developments of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries on the other hand. While such a position may now seem familiar, Stafford uses it as a foundation on which to embark on stimulating and insightful discussions of both well-known and more obscure writers and texts (in a way that seamlessly joins the still-canonical with the less well-known, Stafford pays detailed and expert attention to Robert Burns, Ann Yearsley, William Cowper, John Clare and others as well as to the canonical six, Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron and Keats). The first chapter, for instance, includes a series of deft and elegant moves: Stafford links an aesthetics of pleasure, including 'delight in the immediate world' (5) and a concern with the interrelationship of mind and body that she argues characterizes Romantic poetry, with the gothic, a fashionable 'taste for melancholy' (17), the culture of sympathy, and the slave trade and abolition movement, on the way to addressing the abolitionist Samuel Taylor Coleridge's apparently inward-looking, self-contemplative 'Dejection' ode: 'To read or write about "Dejection"', Stafford notes, 'was not necessarily to retreat from society because "fellow feeling" was coming to be seen as foundational to morality' (23). And by arguing that poetry allowed for the development and articulation of the 'sympathetic imagination' as 'crucial to

the nation', Stafford allows the reader to grasp, and even to make sense of, for example, the political cogency embedded within Percy Bysshe Shelley's otherwise seemingly extraordinary and indeed tendentious claim that poets are the 'unacknowledged legislators of the world'.

If I have a reservation about Stafford's book it has to do with what is no doubt a response to the requirements or perceived requirements of the textbook mode: after attentive and compelling readings of poems and contexts, Stafford almost invariably rounds-off her chapters with rather flat and even slightly wooden accounts of what she has just done: while urbanization leads to an 'especially strong' sense of isolation, we are told, poetry offered 'congenial voices to combat feelings of alienation' (62); reading Romantic poetry, she remarks, is 'greatly enriched by some awareness of the cumulative discourse of the age' (79); the best Romantic poems 'can always be read and enjoyed independently, but they benefit, too, from being seen in good company' (92); and so on. Impelled, no doubt, by the exigencies of textbook publication, such comments allow truth to slide into truism, failing to do justice to the probing subtlety of the analyses that they follow and attempt to encapsulate.

And yet, written with an undergraduate audience in mind as it is, the book also offers in its detailed readings – of Romantic birds and the aesthetics of bird song, of conversation and the freedom of speech, of Romantic rainbows and Newtonian science, of ways of reading and ways of writing, of friendships and literary communities – as much as in its historical breadth and insight, an excellent 'advanced' introduction for graduate students and beyond. There are gems of insight on every page of this engaging and clarifying book, which opens up familiar and unfamiliar poems to considerations of verbal texture just as much as it reveals them in their cultural and political contexts. Stafford's *Reading Romantic Poetry* teaches as much by example as by precept. This is how to read Romantic poetry and it is, as such, an ideal introduction to the period's literary culture as a whole.

Andrew Bennett
University of Bristol