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Beyond Auschwitz: Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought in America, by Michael L. Morgan. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Pp. 304. \$24.95 paper, \$65.00 cloth.

Poetry after Auschwitz: Remembering What One Never Knew, by Susan Gubar. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. Pp. 288. \$35.00 cloth.

Holocaust Representation: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics, by Berel Lang. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. Pp. 200. \$19.95 paper, \$44.95 cloth.

Ethics after Auschwitz:

The Holocaust in History and Representation

To focus on the impact of an event (on poetry, on identity, on art and aesthetics) is to enter into a specific and important engagement with history, with the concept of “the past,” and with the nature of “event.” For Holocaust scholars, these issues are fraught: on the one hand, the Holocaust is the Nazi Judeocide that, in its most organized and deliberate form, began with the rise of the National Socialist Party and ended with the defeat of the Third Reich—the deportations, executions, forced labor, concentration camps, death camps, and general privation that claimed about six million Jewish lives. On the other hand, this stark description is almost overwhelmingly inadequate: as Susan Gubar puts it, “the calamitous effects of the Shoah spill over beyond the brackets provided by dates like 1933 and 1945, making it a continuing, lasting phenomenon, not a contained event but an unceasing series of casualties” (40). Although the Holocaust occurred in the past, it is not entirely of the past: in the work of mourning (individual and collective), as the wound of trauma (political and psychic) the Holocaust haunts the present; its challenge to narrative closure, aesthetic value, and discursive coherence emblemizes much of contemporary critical theory’s vexed relation with the process of representation. Consider, for instance, the myriad explanations and caveats evoked in attempts to *name* this event: while Auschwitz (a single concentration camp in occupied Poland, itself responsible for the deaths of one million Jews) often emblemizes the killings between 1933 and 1945, Holocaust, Shoah, *Churban*, genocide, and Judeocide are also applied, while some scholars prefer to refer only to “the event,” “the catastrophe,” or “the disaster.”

To approach the Holocaust’s *impact*, then, is to engage with a past that has not passed, an event that defies designation. This juxtaposition and interrelation of past and present pose crucial challenges to representation—if we include, in this term, the flickering recurrence of the past in the present as that past is re-presented—and to ethics: negotiating the potential of inaccurate or overly simplistic images to inflict harm on the past by dismissing the Holocaust’s scope or enormity or belittling its victims’ suffering. History, ethics, and representation are interrelated, and a concern with this interrelation and with

its implications for the present characterizes Michael Morgan's *Beyond Auschwitz: Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought in America*, Susan Gubar's *Poetry after Auschwitz: Remembering What One Never Knew*, and Berel Lang's *Holocaust Representation: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics*.

These books emerge from different disciplines (theology, Jewish studies, literary criticism, philosophy, and aesthetics) but converge as they focus on the Holocaust—not as an object of study in itself but in its impact on the contemporary. Morgan traces how the Holocaust moved to a position of centrality in American Jewish self-consciousness, examining how certain Jewish theological thinkers from the mid-1960s to the 1980s—Richard Rubenstein, Emil Fackenheim, Irving Greenberg, Eliezer Berkovits, and Arthur Cohen—engaged the Holocaust in their writings on Jewish identity. Gubar identifies and delineates a tradition of Holocaust poetry written in English by non-survivors—a tradition that displays a consistent engagement with and reaffirmation of Adorno's famous statement that “to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.” And Berel Lang reflects on the complex interrelation of ethics and art in light of the Holocaust, an event of “moral enormity” (18) that forces a rethinking of art, ethics, and representation and its limits. Each of these books is concerned with how we represent the Holocaust in a post-Holocaust world; for these authors, the Holocaust emerges and reemerges as we explain it to ourselves and ourselves to ourselves in its wake.

For Michael Morgan, the presence of the Holocaust in the past poses a fundamental ethical injunction to the present: the historical fact of the Holocaust, says Morgan, poses certain “demands” on the post-Holocaust era, and from the mid-1960s to the 1980s “Jewish religious thought . . . was dominated by the demands of Auschwitz and what seemed to follow from those demands” (3). Each of the theologians Morgan studies asks this question: Given the historical fact of the Holocaust, should Jewish identity transcend history or be overwhelmed by it? In answering this question the theologians are required to situate themselves ethically in relation to the Holocaust: to transcend history runs the risk of dismissing the momentous nature of this cataclysmic event; to be overwhelmed by it risks submitting to the evil the Holocaust represents, abandoning fundamental tenets of Jewish faith and rejecting Jewish particularity, or what Morgan calls an “authentic” or “genuinely Jewish” identity (50)—essentially, awarding Hitler a posthumous victory in his war against the Jews. As they negotiate these options, the thinkers Morgan studies engage in a complex interrelation between the transcendental nature of religious faith and the bleak factuality of the historical event.

For Richard Rubenstein, for example, the presence of the Holocaust in history dictates that Jewish identity be conceived as the product of and response to historical processes, a conception that requires revision and, ultimately, rejection of traditional religious discourse. In Morgan's summary of Rubenstein's argument, Auschwitz “shocks and horrifies; it moves us to try to

understand what the event means, how it might be assimilated to religious categories and to sociopolitical, historical frameworks. When we do this, we find that the religious terms are repulsive, while the naturalist accounts reveal something useful and informative about our world and our religious life in it" (107). According to this concept, which Rubenstein terms "Jewish paganism," Auschwitz catapults theology into history; in the wake of the Holocaust, Jewish identity needs to perceive itself as historically formed and situated. Eliezer Berkovits, on the other hand, accepts Auschwitz's historical influence but maintains that Jewish beliefs and doctrines retain their ahistorical nature. For Berkovits, says Morgan, "Auschwitz provides a historically particular standard for the character of faith. . . . What Auschwitz does not do, however, is pose a new problem for Jewish theological self-understanding" (119). Berkovits's achievement, according to Morgan, is his recognition that "Auschwitz leaves faith untouched, at the same time that it decisively affects the life of faith"—a recognition that is an expression of "a serious problem": Berkovits's "allegiance to an ahistorical set of Jewish beliefs and doctrines and his honest and deep sensitivity to the victims of Nazi criminality" (120).

As the thinkers he discusses negotiate the need to recognize the historical fact of the Holocaust and the plight of its victims, on the one hand, and an equally compelling need to maintain, or reclaim, a coherent notion of Jewish identity that preceded, endured, and succeeds the Holocaust, on the other, it is the recognition of this paradox that Morgan seems to privilege. He is critical of Rubenstein's radical historicity and sympathetic to Berkovits's wrestling with the nature of faith. Ultimately Morgan's allegiance seems to lie most strongly with Emil Fackenheim's concept of post-Holocaust Jewish theology that dwells in the uncertainty and ambiguity of the relation between the historical and the transcendental (here defined in terms of the Jewish people's relation to God), "a recovery of tradition [that] is also fragmentary and at risk . . . both an effort at mending and an act of *t'shuvah*, of return to the past that is also a return to the God of the past" (194).

Beyond Auschwitz describes the work of these theologians in great depth and with immense sympathy, but Morgan's assessment of the impact of their work on American Jewish thought is somewhat hobbled by his own privileging of the Holocaust as central to Jewish identity and Jewish history. Richard Rubenstein, Emil Fackenheim, Irving Greenberg, Eliezer Berkovits, and Arthur Cohen were, Morgan argues, too casually dismissed by scholars and leaders of the American Jewish community who aligned them with popular responses and therefore underrated the sophistication of their engagement with the implications of the Holocaust for Jewish identity. But Morgan's own assumption of the Holocaust's centrality to this identity too strongly informs his assessment of this reception. Those who dismissed the post-Holocaust thinkers, Morgan argues, "did not accept this hermeneutical centrality for the Holocaust" (199), and Morgan concludes that "what was denied [by those

who dismissed the post-Holocaust thinkers] was that historically Auschwitz was undeniable” (199). This tautology (“what was denied was that Auschwitz was undeniable”) detaches Morgan’s careful readings of post-Holocaust thinkers from their own historical context: the issue becomes one of incommensurable assumptions about the centrality of the Holocaust rather than an effective assessment of post-Holocaust thought and its role in American Judaism.

Susan Gubar’s elegant and eloquent *Poetry after Auschwitz* is subtitled “remembering what one never knew.” Gubar echoes Morgan’s partiality to paradox, as the tension between knowledge and its absence, memory and its inevitable distortions, informs this work. “The Holocaust,” says Gubar, “is dying” as it moves into the past, with the aging of survivors, in the silence of denial or of misguided awe, and by its co-option by “facile or banal reconstructions that fashioned the past to suit ideological and economic agendas of the present” (5). Gubar also echoes Morgan’s assumption that the Holocaust poses ethical demands on the present as she states that “those of us who know that the Holocaust is dying should discern the ways it can be recognized and felt in the present; we must keep it alive *as dying*” (7). Poetry, she claims, is in a unique position to do so. Because it eschews narrative coherence, because it communicates without claiming to comprehend, and because it poses a crucial and fundamental challenge to narrative logic, poetry can create a space in which the historical fact of the Holocaust—itsself of the past—can be maintained in living memory: “Like symptoms in the aftermath of trauma, lyrical utterance often announces itself as an involuntary return to intense feelings about an incomprehensible moment. But recollected in relative safety, if not tranquility, such a moment rendered in writing allows authors and readers to grapple with the consequences of traumatic pain without being silenced by it” (8).

Poetry after Auschwitz is the first sustained study of that unique tradition, poetry about the Holocaust written in English by non-survivors. The authors Gubar studies encounter the Holocaust through various levels of mediation: time, loss, experience, and language; their work both sustains the past and underscores its pastness, mourns loss while evoking the irrecoverable, underscores the inaccessibility of the victims’ experience while keeping that experience in view, and consistently questions the ability of language to negotiate these paradoxes. Though Gubar does not say so specifically, three central devices seem to inform this tradition: poets after Auschwitz confront their own position as poets and highlight the challenge that the Holocaust poses to aesthetic expression, foregrounding “the inadequacy of the poetic imagination” and “making the reader fully aware of their own suspicions about the aestheticizing in which they engage” (20, 64); they underscore the inaccessibility of the object of representation to the process of representation itself, “stress[ing] their oblique access to remote events” or remembering the dead “in a way that preserves the vexed and finally incomprehensible circumstances of their

dying" (22, 54); and they lay bare the device by which they engage in this work, "put[ting] on display the tension between historical reference and imaginative figuration" or "highlight[ing] the necessity of documenting the otherwise unimaginable and the difficulty of doing so, the need to put in its place merely belated, fractured, indecipherable versions of an often enigmatic reality" (27, 102).

By articulating and questioning their own situatedness, their ability to access the event, and the devices by which they do so, the poets Gubar discusses confirm the tension between historical particularity and its reverberations in the contemporary, and situate themselves ethically vis-à-vis this tension by enshrining its paradoxicality. One way they do so is by "embed[ding] visual and auditory documents into verse that attests to the futility of the poet's imaginative task" (98). In a chapter titled "About Pictures Out of Focus," for example, Gubar describes the various ways these poets place photography (with its connotations of realist documentation) into dialogue with the poetic language that photographic images both challenge and confirm. In a fascinating discussion of ecphrasis (a literary technique involving the verbal description of a visual work), Gubar traces how post-Holocaust poets in English utilize the technique of describing photographs—meditating on all-too-familiar images or evoking achingly absent ones—a technique that enables these poets to produce "the discontinuity that calls out for, yet refutes the explanatory language of the poem" (106).

It bears mention, however, that Gubar's observations about post-Holocaust poetry are determinative as well as descriptive. Because of the relative paucity of critical attention to many of the poems Gubar discusses (one wishes for an anthology to accompany, or closely follow, her book) and because, as she puts it, this body of work constitutes a unique tradition that has yet to receive the kind of sustained scrutiny she grants it, Gubar is in the position of creating the tradition she examines. She specifies her criterion for inclusion as a rigorous engagement with "aesthetic, ethical and historical inquiry"—a choice that leads her to exclude "many volumes of verse composed as a therapeutic response to the catastrophe, as heartfelt and personal reactions to the disaster" (xvii). As she privileges the formal techniques of proxy-witnessing, anamnesis, antimorphosis, and prosopopoeia, Gubar is not just establishing a tradition but defining a genre. And because the Holocaust, says Gubar, "cannot be taken into consciousness through the usual models of comparison, parallelism, symmetry, similitude, metaphor, resemblance, correspondence" (98), *Poetry after Auschwitz* privileges "hesitant, stymied, stalled words [that] relinquish the hope of closure or finality" over less formally sophisticated poetry that Gubar designates, reluctantly, "banal" (24). Implicitly if not explicitly, then, *Poetry after Auschwitz* identifies aesthetic complexity as an index of ethical commitment: "the most scrupulous of the poets," writes Gubar, "strive to braid their

and our apprehensions of the Shoah with an earlier generation's memories of a history that continues to demand a personal, ethical response" (23), and the ellipses and breaches generated by this endeavor "characterize the humility of literary men and women aware of the oxymoronic nature of the very idea of 'Shoah-verse'—a term that Gubar deems "obscene" (26).

If, in *Beyond Auschwitz*, Morgan's assumption of the Holocaust's centrality to history is so crucial that it ultimately becomes the final criterion for examining and assessing the work of Jewish theologians in America, *Poetry after Auschwitz* expands this assumption and applies it to the work of representation: for Gubar, reflecting this centrality while maintaining history's inaccessibility is the definition of ethical aesthetics. In *Holocaust Representation: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics*, Berel Lang addresses this interrelation of history, ethics, and representation directly, positing the vexed relation between representation and history as an explicitly ethical challenge that the presence of the Holocaust in history poses to representation in general, aesthetics in particular. Lang's foundational assumption is that "the character of a subject or topic will, and should, have some direct bearing on the form of its expression" (x), and he argues that in the context of the Holocaust's "moral enormity," establishing and enforcing limits of representation take on the dimensions of ethical action. Referring to legal prohibition of Holocaust denial in some European countries, for example, Lang suggests that the "moral basis of such legislation" (which he considers "substantial") "applies . . . with only slight alteration not only to Holocaust denial but to Holocaust distortion, to Holocaust diminution, to Holocaust titillation, to Holocaust kitsch" (31).

Lang's argument, then, advances the somewhat paradoxical view that although the Holocaust in itself does not pose limits to representation (he argues strenuously against the notion that the Holocaust is "unspeakable," "incomprehensible," "indescribable," or "ineffable"), artistic representations of this event are enjoined to treat it as if it did. Concurrently, however, Lang appeals to limits of representation, locating these limits not in the object of representation but in the context in which that representation functions: "almost everybody . . . can name some examples of Holocaust representation that seem to them to warrant such criticism [that they 'deform' or debase or diminish the Holocaust]," writes Lang, and "this finding is itself strong evidence, more than only prima facie, of the limits posited around the representations of this event." While "such limits are often vague or unarticulated," he concludes, this "is less to the point than that they are appealed to and applied: it is the assumption of their relevance that is decisive" (6).

The argument that limits of representation exist because people appeal to them echoes strangely in the ears of those who are accustomed to rigorous critiques of such foundationalist (or fundamentalist) claims. And yet this is the logic that underlines Lang's argument, in which representation's responsibility

to its object (in this case, the Holocaust) oscillates with representation's responsibility to its audience (the social context into which art enters and functions). Both cases presume that representation per se possesses some degree of agency that is, or can be, "responsible," and the Holocaust's "moral enormity" is appealed to in order to evoke a sense of agency, if not a definition of it. The question, then, arises: in the case of the Holocaust, who (or what) possesses the agency to which responsibility may be ascribed? If Holocaust representation requires an ethical context, who—or what—is required to act in an ethical manner?

The answer lies in the final pages, in which Lang champions for general moral principles against the individual, situational ethics of postmodernity, effectively removing the burden of representation's responsibility from representation itself and situating it in the ahistorical realm of moral principles. "Perhaps," Lang suggests, "it is the desire for explanations of the moral continuum that is the problem, not the constant failure to find it and the new pangs of conscience that such failures then add" (157). Advocating such a moral continuum produces, for Lang, a concept of "post-Holocaust understanding" as a return to and enhancement of "pre-Holocaust understanding" (157), an ill-disguised attack on what is generally (and simplistically) denigrated as post-modern relativism in the name of ahistorical moral certitude and unapologetic assumption of access to reality.

Lang is ultimately concerned with the issue of, as he puts it, "judging and discriminating among Holocaust images in terms of their aesthetic, historical, and moral qualities" (10), and the spectre of Plato's *Republic* that such judgment evokes is not accidental. In the case of the Holocaust (and, Lang suggests, more generally) "is" merges with "ought," epistemology with ontology; thus "how the Holocaust can be represented" merges with "how it ought to be" (4). The civic and aesthetic implications of such merging are evident; more significant are its historical and ethical consequences, as factuality ("is") combined with obligation ("ought") controls both access to history and responsibility for it, wedding verifiability to morality. "If ever facts have spoken for themselves, this is the case for the body of fact surrounding the Holocaust," writes Lang (11), and he goes on to argue that representations of the Holocaust need to acknowledge the primacy of such facts over and above their inevitable distortion by representation: "there are undoubtedly many directions to which reflection or memory or the imagination may turn in the aftermath of the Holocaust, but the one direction on which any such movement is dependent is in knowing and following the contours of what that event was, as it was and how it came to be. And that dependence, which on the face of it is both logical and chronological, in my view also attests to a moral order" (11).

If, as the subtitle of *Holocaust Representation* indicates, Lang opens his discussion by situating "art within the limits of history and ethics," he concludes

by identifying history as ethics and by identifying art's "responsibility" as reinforcing the merging of "is" with "ought." This is a limited role indeed, but an understandable one given how, as we saw, to focus on the impact of an event is to enter into a specific and important engagement with history and with its re-presentation in the present. Lang's *Holocaust Representation* illustrates just why these issues are so fraught for Holocaust scholars: the relation of representation to morality is echoed in Gubar's characterization of the "genre" of Holocaust writing as an ethical engagement with history—this "genre," writes Lang, is "rooted in its moral connection to the writing of history" (20). Morgan's dedication to the Holocaust's centrality to this history (a dedication that forces a tautology into his argument) echoes Lang's positing history as Holocaust representations' final determinant: for Lang, in the case of the Holocaust, "history functions both as an occasion—that is, as a subject and incentive—and also as an end" (20).

For Morgan, for Gubar and for Lang, then, the interrelation of history, representation, and ethics is manifested in this mantra: to lose sight of history, to let its re-presentation in the present obscure its presence in the past, is to be, simply, unethical. Hence, for Lang, this primacy of historical factuality takes the form of an ethical injunction, however obscurely worded: "there is a strong sense in which the chronicle of the Holocaust—the rudimentary details of the answers to the questions of who, what, and when—remains at the center and as a test of whatever else is constructed on them. Both as a matter of fact and as a matter of justice" (13). Hence, too, Gubar's identification of aesthetic complexity as an indicator of ethical and historical engagement that leads her to pose the "rigor" and "vigilance" evinced by post-Holocaust artists as criteria with which to distinguish between "honorable and dishonorable representations of the Holocaust" (57–58). In Morgan's case, this ethical injunction may be the origin of the appeals to "honesty," "genuineness," and "authenticity," appeals that so saturate his analysis that some parts of *Beyond Auschwitz* read more like a paean to integrity than an academic inquiry: "their attempts to grapple honestly and profoundly with the Holocaust lead [post-Holocaust thinkers] to consider at a fundamental level the very nature of religious thought in general and Jewish belief in particular . . . they are driven by a sense of utter honesty and genuineness . . . they recognize that an honest encounter with the Holocaust demands a sense of discontinuity or rupture with the past and yet, at the very same time, a sense of continuity or accessibility . . . their commitments to fidelity and honesty are especially powerful" (6–7; see also 210).

What is the source of this mantra? Why, for these authors, does the interrelation of history, representation, and ethics take this particular form? For Morgan, Gubar, and Lang, the sense that maintaining the primacy of the past to its re-presentation in the present is an ethical act is predicated on the assumption that the Holocaust cannot, should not, must not fade from view or

be subsumed into or by the past. That assumption itself bears close scrutiny—tensions between the past and its re-presentation are hardly unique to the Holocaust. And yet, Morgan, Gubar, and Lang do proceed from the fundamental assumption (an assumption that, in the context of the Holocaust, is generally taken as a given) that this particular moment in history constitutes some kind of break, rupture, or breach, with crucial implications for culture “after Auschwitz.” Any attempt to generate continuity between the Holocaust and what follows it implies one of two options—negotiating this breach (which implicitly affirms it) or dismissing it—and the authors discussed here align themselves with the former. Morgan refers to the Holocaust as “an epoch-making event,” “particular, unprecedented and important” (198, 199). Gubar expands this centrality: the Third Reich inaugurated a linguistic crisis; the Shoah inaugurated a cognitive one (10, 12); both crises generate a distrust of narrative closure to which poetry is in a unique position to attend, “to underscore the central significance of what is deemed to be a decisive convulsion in culture” (11). Lang, who denies that the Holocaust is inherently unique or unrepresentable, nonetheless awards it a singular position, as “the problem of Holocaust representation . . . [warrants] attention to an extent commanded by few other contemporary or past historical events” (x); “the Holocaust as a subject of representation makes unusual demands in its role as a subject of discourse” (47); Holocaust images are subject to “unusual pressure,” and in the case of the Holocaust, the limits of representation have “a special force” (x–xi).

It bears mention that for Morgan, Gubar, and Lang the assumption of the Holocaust’s centrality to history does not function as an argument for the uniqueness of Jewish experience or for the privileging of Jewish suffering. It does, however, authorize and inform the tensions between the past and the present, the historical event and its representation, that I have been describing. Assuming that the Holocaust is, somehow, central to history accords the Holocaust some degree of incommensurability that needs to be acknowledged before it can (if indeed it should) be surpassed. Proponents of Holocaust sacralization like Elie Wiesel reify this incommensurability, positing it as an ethical injunction that is analogous with a divine decree (the second commandment, to be precise); Morgan, Gubar, and Lang, however, perceive this resistance as a potentially productive space, and their studies of the Holocaust’s impact on Jewish identity, poetic language, and aesthetic work take the form of delineating the implications and products of such engagement. In other words, like the tension between the specific historical event and its reverberations in the contemporary, the tension between the uniqueness of the Holocaust and its empirical presence in human history is posited as both a paradox to be acknowledged and a challenge to be met. But when Morgan refers to Holocaust suffering as “unimaginable” (6), when Gubar states bleakly that “the Holocaust is like nothing else” (98), a “phenomenon that still defies

understanding" (8), and when Lang posits that "traditional forms . . . are quite inadequate" for Holocaust images (10), each is expressing a resistance to perceiving the Holocaust through established, conventional, and unproblematic frames of reference, and their subsequent treatment of Holocaust representation endows this resistance with an ethical quality. In this way, the books discussed here reiterate the Holocaust's incommensurability implicitly, while explicitly they deny it.

If "ethics after Auschwitz" rings strangely in our ears, it is not because the immensity of Holocaust destruction overshadows the possibility, or potential value, of ethical action. Such strangeness more likely emerges from the assumption of the Holocaust's incommensurability, an assumption that dictates a principle of representation that detaches the Holocaust from the historical and situational context which defines ethics per se (ethics is, after all, a practice and not a principle). In other words, though each of these authors emphasizes the necessity of perpetual engagement with the Holocaust, and each balks at the notion that the Holocaust is ahistorical and hence cannot be subject to historical scrutiny (if anything, they privilege such scrutiny), their definition of the Holocaust as a rupture or break, as unprecedented, special, unusual, or unique, ultimately undermines their efforts to generate continuity between the present and the past. If the Holocaust is to continue to function as an object of study, if its presence in the past is to continue to inflect and infect the present, the notion—however limited—of its incommensurability needs to be critically addressed. Such critique may well be the work that ethics after Auschwitz ought to undertake.

Naomi Mandel
University of Rhode Island



Libertines and Radicals in Early Modern London: Sexuality, Politics, and Literary Culture, 1630–1685, by James Grantham Turner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. 343. \$65.00 cloth.

Professor Turner's valuable study of the intersection of sexual and political culture during the Civil War, Interregnum, and reign of Charles II focuses on the European evolution of pornography and its relationship to women's attempts to achieve both literary and social power. Examining a wide range of "porno-political" texts, practices, and preoccupations, Turner demonstrates the cultural importance of a pornographic discourse normally marginalized and shows how it provides an important register of both political and sexual attitudes and practices.

Turner defines his subject as the “discourses and rituals that constituted illicit, transgressive sexuality in the early modern period” (ix); as such a definition suggests, he focuses throughout his study on both literary and social history. He therefore pays as much attention to charivari, carnival, apprentice riots, and the scandals of Charles II’s court as he does to literary texts, particularly because he insists from the beginning that the libertinism upon which he focuses “was not so much a philosophy as a set of performances” (x). Turner begins, in fact, by defining *pornographia* in chapter 1 as an act as well as a text, an accusation directed against the prostitute or whore that suggested both transgression and its punishment. But a male discourse initiated to contain, designate, and ridicule could be manipulated by the object of its scorn and turned to her own advantage: *pornographia* becomes equally an expression of female power and social rehabilitation. This leads to what Turner identifies as “the crux that runs through virtually all representations of sexuality outside the sanction of marriage: the abject associations of the common prostitute constantly conflict with the glamour and prestige of the *cortegiana honesta* or the royal mistress. Given this inversionary affinity of high and low, the courtesan becomes a perfect vehicle for political commentary” (3). According to Turner, pornography, which begins as an act dedicated to the policing and maintenance of traditional sexual categories, actually destabilizes the hierarchies it is designed to protect.

In chapter 2, Turner considers the sanctioned rituals and festive violence that surrounded illicit sexuality in mid-seventeenth-century England. Here, too, he delineates his subject through a series of paradoxes: do English charivari and Skimmington rides represent punishment or celebration? the control of deviant sexual behavior, or its release? the castigation of female agency, or an expression of women’s sexual power? Such fundamental uncertainties, according to Turner, make political reading of such rituals particularly difficult, because they could function as expressions of both royalist and radical sentiment.

Chapter 3 charts these paradoxes as they reveal themselves in pornopolitical writing during the years 1640–60, when the proliferation of satire that accompanied the revolution illuminates the male fears engendered by female assertions of power. The years of civil war provided opportunities for women to wield power in ways that were both new and frightening; as public speakers, political petitioners, and religious activists, they began to assume roles that questioned their subordination to men, the image of a “commonwealth of women” employed both to glorify and denigrate newly empowered women. The larger European context of Turner’s argument works particularly well here, since the French cult of the *femme forte* had a powerful influence on English culture.

The heart of this book, however, concerns Charles II, and the final three

chapters and epilogue all deal with libertine culture and pornography during the reign of the “Merry Monarch,” whose sexual appetites and political indiscretions helped to engender a complex erotic discourse that highlights the tension between carnivalesque hedonism and Puritan repression. Proceeding more or less chronologically through Charles’s reign, Turner examines a wide variety of literary texts and political events, focusing particularly on the “sexualization of urban geography” (136) during the early years of Charles’s rule, the bawdy-house riots of 1668, the violent sexual antics and libertinism of Charles’s court—especially the roles played by Wycherley and Rochester in defining this ethos—and the final years of Charles’s reign when the Popish Plot, Exclusion Crisis, and lapsing of the Licensing Act in 1679 “revived the entire range of ‘pornographic’ text and gesture, in popular as well as elite culture” (252). In these chapters Turner surveys the literary representations of Charles’s royal mistresses, particularly Gwyn and Castlemaine, to demonstrate how the monarch’s indiscreet sexuality problematized ostensibly stable distinctions between high and low, elite and popular, in ways that dramatized national fears and civic disorder. Again, Turner’s attention to the European dimensions of pornographic discourse pays dividends, for it allows him to define a specifically Restoration porno-political culture through the convergence of a continental tradition of writings about prostitutes exemplified in Aretine, and a bawdy native literature of whore-baiting and satire.

Professor Turner acknowledges the difficulties inherent in moving between the textual representations of pornography and “what really happened in the world of illicit sexuality” (164), and at times he moves awkwardly and unconvincingly between the two. In chapter 4, for instance, he distances himself from what he denigrates as Bakhtin’s “sympathetic but misty-eyed interpretation” of Rabelais by insisting that it “underestimates the edge of real violence in carnival, sometimes directed against the authorities but often unleashed on their behalf” (139). And in chapter 3, in the same vein, he emphasizes the physical violence directed against female petitioners in the early 1640s, when women besieged Parliament and were attacked by horse-troopers: “at least one woman bled to death after her nose was cut off” (89). At times like these, Professor Turner wants to insist on the brute force and coercion that can lie behind acts of aesthetic representation.

At other times, however, he becomes as misty-eyed as Bakhtin, particularly in chapter 2, when dealing with representations of the charivari and Skimmington ride, defamatory rituals designed to both mark and police unruly women. Because he is committed to demonstrate that these rituals can move between the poles of discipline and celebration—ostensible ridicule and punishment turned into “a kind of roguish solidarity with the loose woman” (49)—on occasion he appears to ignore the violence that was a part of these practices, insisting, for example, that Butler and Hogarth both represent “the

supposed victim [playing] her part with evident gusto" (51). Although he recognizes that branding and other facial mutilations could play a part in these rituals, his emphasis on their "anarchic obscenity" leads him to ignore or marginalize the victimization of, and violence directed against, women that in other contexts he wishes to emphasize. This is particularly evident in his reading of an etching by Giuseppe Maria Mitelli that depicts the slashing of a whore's face. Turner looks at this etching twice, both times to emphasize "the paradox at the heart of these rituals of humiliation . . . it is the assailant who looks more furtive, raising doubts about whose face is more shamed" (25). Attentive exclusively to this paradox, to the equivalence established between the two figures, Turner never registers the pain, blood, and disfigurement that make it perfectly clear whose face is more shamed.

In spite of such problems, this is an important book that will add a great deal to current discussions of early modern sexuality. Professor Turner has read very widely in the literature of pornography, and such texts provide a refreshing and illuminating context for reevaluating authors like Butler, Rochester, Wycherley, and Cavendish. There is a tremendous range of texts examined in this book, and much learning. The links Professor Turner establishes between libertinism and political radicalism will certainly affect our understanding of seventeenth-century English culture and politics.

Harold Weber
University of Alabama



Fair Exotics: Xenophobic Subjects in British Literature, 1720–1850, by Rajani Sudan. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. Pp. 200. \$45.00 cloth.

Rajani Sudan's *Fair Exotics: Xenophobic Subjects in British Literature, 1720–1850* insightfully extends a growing body of criticism that examines the shaping force ideas about the Other (national, colonial, gendered) exerts on British literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly Daniel Defoe, Samuel Johnson, Thomas De Quincey, Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Charlotte Brontë. Somewhat less successfully, the book participates in (without discussing) another movement that seeks to extend the romantic period back into the eighteenth century, by arguing that romantic patterns of imagining the colonial and gendered other—and by extension the subject—can be traced back to *Robinson Crusoe*. Sudan's contribution to this scholarly inquiry is her articulation of how xenophobia and xenodochy "work as an economy because they are mutually constitutive" (6–7). This subtle theoretical

paradigm suggests that, far from operating as a corrective to xenophobia, xenodochy (the welcoming and entertainment of the foreign) works in cooperation with it to construct both the foreign and the domestic. She further argues that national and cultural identity are manifested through this economy. This ambivalence, which is “particularly resonant with romantic discourse,” establishes a distinct place for the self” (7). The book’s argument focuses increasingly on gender, domesticity, and the maternal, culminating in the final chapter on *Frankenstein* and *Villette*.

Although Sudan apparently recognizes the difficulty involved in trying to make a case about romanticism by concentrating on marginalized figures (18), she offers no sustained justification for this emphasis, only suggesting that the ideology in question “may have been more dramatically exemplified by its outcasts than by the main characters themselves” (18). Ultimately, she only makes a handful of references to the poets most closely identified with the period (Wordsworth, five or six; Coleridge, one or two; Blake, one; Percy Shelley, one or two; and Byron, one or two). And some of these references are erroneous. For example, in the introduction she discusses Wollstonecraft’s interest in the “political causes Wordsworth and Coleridge ended up discussing in their *Preface to the Lyrical Ballads*” (21). The preface was written by Wordsworth. Although Coleridge wrote to a mutual friend that “Wordsworth’s Preface is half a child of my own Brain,” he did refer to it as “Wordsworth’s Preface” (see the “Editors’ Introduction” in *Biographia Literaria; or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, ed. James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983], xlvi). What is more, there is no “the” in *Lyrical Ballads*. This is a trivial issue, but the trivial errors accumulate. She rightly enough dates Blake’s “The Tyger” to 1794, then argues that it was drawn between 1792 and 1798 (72). In a note to an earlier passage, she refers to *Gulliver’s Travels* as “Swift’s novel” (155 n. 17). In some of these cases there may be an argument that would defend these choices, but none is offered. I can think of no explanation for the gaffe in her discussion of *Frankenstein* that purports to describe “Walton’s sister Safie’s role in the De Lacey family” (128). Walton’s sister, in fact, is suggestively named Margaret Walton Saville; Safie is the “fair exotic” imported into the French family’s domestic scene. These errors are trivial enough that it is embarrassing to discuss them in a review, but they add up and undermine the credibility of the argument, especially one attempting to define elements central to romantic discourse. I frequently found myself questioning interpretive moves because of these slips that are, by themselves, insignificant.

The large number of solecisms (comma splices and problems in both tense and number agreement), editorial oversights (words and syllables repeated), factual errors and fuzziness (problems in chronology), mangled quotations (omitted words and introduced grammatical problems), and overly

complicated sentences make reading *Fair Exotics* a frustrating and time-consuming experience. I found myself dwelling on sentences, trying to discover if the confusion was a function of my own inattentiveness or the sentences' structure. This makes it difficult to follow the argument at times, which is a shame, because the book's argument is occasionally compelling.

Sudan begins her introduction with a brief reading of *Robinson Crusoe*, focusing on Crusoe's perverse refusal to go without clothes, suggesting that clothing is the mark of distinction between a civilized Briton and savages. Similarly, Crusoe's weakness—his inability to endure heat—is evidence of his superiority, his inability to be a savage. This concern for the skin—which is at once naturally fair and in need of policing to prevent it from appearing like a “Mulatto”—explains why Crusoe sees his goatskin umbrella as “the most necessary thing I had about me, next to my gun.” The umbrella and the gun are both crucial to his dominance—the umbrella providing a “visible sign of ideological dominance based on the color of his skin” (1–2). What makes *Robinson Crusoe* romantic, however, is his “compelling—and romantic—desire, his desire to give himself over to the other.” This desire, she speculates, makes his xenophobia necessary as a protection of the integrity of his self (5).

In the introduction, Sudan makes the case for her claim that it “should not be possible to think about romanticism without invoking xenophobia” (8). Her argument about romanticism—which is one of the primary thrusts of the book—is based on the period's celebration of inwardness and the notion of an essential authorial subject (16). The study, which is a version of Sudan's 1991 dissertation, seeks to distinguish itself from the growing body of investigations of the period's investment in the colonial enterprise by examining “the psychological structures set up to account for these anxieties about national identity . . . and claim that these concerns are historically based on an economy of xenophobia and xenodochy” (15). A pared-down version of the argument linking romanticism, the notion of an essential inward self, and xenophobia would go something like this: anxiety about the threats that the unknown foreign other poses to the integral coherent self—national or individual—provokes an effort at containment, the creation of a border to protect that self. That self, Sudan argues, is created in response to the threat of the other. What distinguishes romanticism is that it simultaneously seeks to internalize that feared other.

The first chapter presents a sophisticated analysis of Samuel Johnson's *Preface to the Dictionary*, his poem “London,” and his *Life of Savage*. It takes its theoretical bearings from Derrida, Freud, Kristeva, and Homi Bhabha and yokes together concerns about xenophobia, gynophobia, and class anxieties. It makes a strong case, seeing Johnson's francophobia as a cover for the more pronounced anxiety about the colonial other. Johnson's emphasis on the domestic scene and his anxieties about foreign corruption are bound up with his

anxieties about an “infecting maternal body” (143 n. 1). This plays out in a particularly interesting way in her discussion of his *Life of Savage*, in which the powerful mother replaces the lower classes (57) and provokes the fear of contamination from an exotic other (60).

In chapter 2, Sudan examines De Quincey’s fascination with monsters—crocodiles, tigers, Malays, and children. Given the focus of the book (and De Quincey’s writings) it is not difficult to understand why a Malay would be included in a list of monsters, but the inclusion of children requires a little explanation. The explanation Sudan provides is not entirely satisfying. She justifies her identification of children as monsters because De Quincey describes his habit of awakening from a recurring dream of “a cursed crocodile” and a “Chinese house” in which all “the feet of the tables, sofas &c soon became instinct with life” to see his children. Although De Quincey calls this an “awful transition,” Sudan sees the juxtaposition in De Quincey’s text as evidence of their similarity. The fact that the obvious monsters are in a dream and the children, with their “innocent human natures,” are in the room with him makes the identification a little troubling. What is more, in the excerpts she cites, De Quincey discusses the dreams as a persistent pattern (“so often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams”), but Sudan describes them as a single event (“Shortly afterward, De Quincey awakes”) (85). One of the more interesting parts of the chapter is Sudan’s reading of De Quincey’s perceived threat of the Malay’s invasion as analogous to his own ambivalent attempts to gain entry to the Lake District poets (77–81).

In chapter 3, Sudan turns to Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Mary, and Maria; or, the Wrongs of Woman*. Her project in this chapter is twofold: to challenge the assumption of Wollstonecraft’s radicalism and to demonstrate the role of the maternal in the construction of the domestic through the interplay of xenodochy and xenophobia. The first is a bit of a straw argument, since few would actually claim Wollstonecraft as an uncomplicated radical, but Sudan’s argument is interesting. She suggests that her feminist essentialism is continuous with the forces of nationalism, imperialism, and xenophobia (99). Sudan goes on to assert that British ideologies of the relation between maternity and patriotism inform Wollstonecraft’s own writings, especially her discussions of reading (104, 106). She argues that Wollstonecraft’s invocation of the patriotic duty of mothers to create good citizens is bound up with the xenophobia she shares with her fellow Britons. She inserts this analysis within an imperial framework by asserting that Wollstonecraft operates within the common eighteenth-century analogy of the mother country bearing colonial offspring (103).

Sudan’s final chapter, on *Frankenstein* and *Villette*, is arguably the strongest section of the book. She identifies a common pattern linking all of the female characters in Shelley’s novel (Caroline Beaufort, Elizabeth Lavenza,

Justine, and Safie): they are all “fair exotics.” The importing of these “fair exotics” (Victor’s phrase for his mother) suggests xenodochy, the entertainment of the foreign, which Sudan argues is so central to romanticism. The need to import these exotics suggests a lack, a need of repair inherent in the English domestic scene. Walton, the novel’s only Englishman, and his lament about his own faulty romantic education (122), personifies that lack (124). However, these imported exotics are “infected” (127) and cannot survive; their presence serves to “disarticulate the domestic space” and rearticulate it as English “through xenophobic representation” (119). Turning to *Villette*, she argues that in spite of the novel’s ostentatiously non-English setting, it becomes English by setting up a household.

While *Fair Exotics* has flaws, its insights into the profound ambivalence about the exotic Other which characterizes the texts she examines will reward readers patient enough to sift through its frequently tortured sentences, solecisms, and gaffes.

Robert Anderson
Oakland University



Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770–1840: “From an Antique Land,” by Nigel Leask. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Pp. 328. 19 illustrations. \$70.00 cloth.

This complicated book reads quite well cover-to-cover. Nigel Leask has woven several strands together to craft persuasive narratives of the histories of science and literary romanticism—the “curiosity” and “aesthetics” of the title. Leask also refers to (post)colonial theories and illustrates nicely how a multidimensional analysis of the context of travel writing can inform those generalizations.

The book is organized as a series of stories about travels to the “antique lands” of Abyssinia (Ethiopia), Egypt, India, and Mexico. The stories are told through the writings of Europeans, mostly English men and women, but also works in other languages that were available to the British audience. For those interested in the way those four countries were perceived from the late Enlightenment through the eclipse of romanticism, the road map is clear from the table of contents: a chapter on James Bruce’s fantasized travels in Abyssinia and the upper Nile (1790), another on the French and then British efforts to capture Egypt and bring it home to London museums, two on Imperial India (through the 1840s), and an account of Alexander von Humboldt’s struggles to capture Spanish America on paper. A brief coda shows how the museum

entrepreneur William Bullock brought Mexican antiquities to London in the 1820s.

These accounts are valuable for contemporary historians of those regions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Travel writing gives an invaluable perspective, at times because it might be the only eyewitness account; Leask self-consciously is retrieving “lost” texts from rare book rooms. Of, course, these are heavily biased versions of history, but that is a caveat about all texts.

For the reader not familiar with the details of historical contexts, the chapter on “Egyptomania” is the most satisfactory. The events between Napoleon’s occupation of Egypt (1798–1801) and the creation of museum displays of Egyptian antiquities in London in the 1820s are a tale of state-sanctioned institutional programs that involved national prestige, connoisseurship, and the gathering of scientific knowledge about archaeology. The process was begun with the savants who were sent by Napoleon to accumulate information for the multivolume *Description de l’Égypte* (1809–22).

During Muhammad Ali Pasha’s control of Egypt (from 1805), John Burkhardt achieved fame as a scientific traveler and for his heroic account of his search for the source of the Nile (1820). The former stage performer Giovanni Battista Belzoni proudly described his role in expropriating antique objects and papyri back to England for eventual display at William Bullock’s Egyptian Hall, but not at the prestigious British Museum. Leask places these rival accounts of the search for the Egyptian past as counterpoints to Constantin Volney’s ethnographic interest in the lives of contemporary Egyptians and Vivant Denon’s enthusiasm at the wonders he saw firsthand. Both men wrestled with the question of whether Egypt could be a rival to classical Greece and Rome as the source of Western civilization.

Leask uses travel writing as an example of changes in British-based social science. “Curiosity” as a concept becomes a fulcrum to tell the stories of European science and popular culture. His controlling image is of two kinds of travel books that were developed during the early nineteenth century—one for the parlor table, the other for the gentleman’s library. The former focused on the traveler’s human drama and adventures and his (or occasionally her) confrontation with the previously unrecorded, the “curiosity.” Books for the scholar’s library are increasingly “scientific” in the sense that we understand the term as applying to archaeology and ethnography—“curiosity” as what motivates the scientist.

The two chapters on travel to India are not as self-contained as the earlier ones, owing to the longevity and complexity of Anglo-Indian history. Instead we are placed in the middle of the “creole” debate of the early nineteenth century. On one side is George Annesley, Viscount Valentia, who supported the East India Company’s policy to prevent race mixing, since half-castes would

become colonizers and then likely demand independence. In contrast Reginald Heber, bishop of Calcutta, is tolerant in his views of Hindu and Muslim religions, and his is “clearly the voice of hegemonic liberalism” (187) in finding race to be defined by climate and custom, not an essential human quality. The accounts are presented in different genres: Valentia in official journal form, Heber’s as letters to his wife. One of the strengths of Leask’s book is the attention he pays to how travel accounts were published and received. In this chapter, for example, contemporaneous British reviews followed political party lines, while the *Asiatic Register* objected to Valentia’s superficial discussion of issues that had been familiar to Anglo-Indians for many years.

As Leask’s story moves along in these chapters, he outlines styles or “modalities” of scientific travel writing. The “survey,” named after the efforts to map the subcontinent, led to a world defined by space, not time; by a map, not an itinerary (Michel de Certeau’s distinction). The survey is presented from an aesthetic distance with no personal narrative; often it uses the apparatus of scientific work, with statistics and a sense of objectivity and comprehensiveness.

The “picturesque” modality is neither utilitarian nor disinterested. It is typically practiced by an outsider, since long-term, resident insiders cannot appreciate the images and what they represent for the British public. In India this often focuses on antiquarian curiosity—old buildings and ruins—or singular features and ethnographically interesting natives placed in a “typical” landscape. It “commodifies British India for a metropolitan public” (170), consciously avoids features that disturb aesthetic form, and defines a nostalgic past that British imperialism will set right.

While the bulk of Valentia’s narrative is a survey, some of his descriptions and certainly the engravings appeal to the picturesque sensibility. Heber’s balance is in the opposite direction—a touching personal portrait and descriptions framed by literary, “oriental” romances, most notably Southey’s.

The third modality, the “scientific,” is defined by James Mill in the *Edinburgh Review* (1810) and later in his *History of British India* (1817). He discounts both the personal and the aesthetic and favors the geographical. The example Leask presents is Victor Jacquemont, who embraced republican values, was an atheist and a utopian socialist, but had no empathy with Hindus, and, on racialist grounds, distrusted indigenous sources. While this approach clearly fits what Edward Said describes and denounces in *Orientalism*, one of Leask’s points is to demonstrate the range of writing about India.

The second India chapter focuses on three women, Maria Graham (Lady Callcott), Emma Roberts, and Fanny Parks, and illustrates Leask’s sense of the diversity of approaches. Graham gives unsentimental reflections on the “ethnographic picturesque” from an outsider’s perspective. Roberts’s *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan* is light literature—a guidebook for tourists who

seek the picturesque, and for Anglo-Indians, especially women, who wish to escape the tedium and entrapment of colonial life. Parks was fascinated with the grotesque, macabre, and distasteful and returned to England with a cabinet of curiosities; she used travel and collecting as a way to overcome her boredom as the wife of a customs officer stationed in Allahabad for many years.

Alexander von Humboldt's massive study of the Americas is a romantic geographical narrative. Because of his claims about global uniformities in geography, it is not an old-fashioned "curious" study. He sought to represent the experience of the tropics in visual and verbal form for a metropolitan public, to create a "tropical aesthetic" for the European mind. Leask cites a fold-out table that is a graphic capsule of the whole project of the *Voyages*—an aesthetic tableau along with a compendium of scientific facts. Von Humboldt presents a systematic alternative and refutation to the claims of Buffon and others that the Americas are comprehensively "new" and hence immature. For example, geological formations are echoed on both sides of the Atlantic, and flora and fauna have counterparts. This attitude leads to his assessment of American antiquities, to be seen in the context of historical uniformitarianism. He rejects various theories and fantasies about Old World origins of Aztec and Mayan cultures, and argues for independent origins of the world's high civilizations. However, in his later works von Humboldt failed to integrate his "scholarly observation on the antiquities of pre-hispanic America with his ethnographic account of modern native Americans in his travel account" (266). His inability to develop a personal voice meant that his work was the "terminus of the 'integrated' travel account of the late enlightenment and romantic period" (282). No longer was global romanticism possible, and we are left with the Victorian civilizing mission as the vehicle for touching the heart and awakening the imagination.

The book also taps into the trajectory of romanticism. Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, and De Quincey appreciated personal narratives for their putative insights into foreign peoples and ancient civilizations. Coleridge, for example, preferred Marco Polo in Purchas to modern travel books, although he objected to the sentimentalism and egotism in contemporary naval officers' accounts. He joined others in celebrating James Bruce's book as a "work of imagination," which it indeed seems to have been.

Leask places Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ozymandias" in the chapter on Egyptomania. He argues that Shelley was familiar with the *Description de l'Égypte*, which he probably saw even though he did not own a copy. One engraving, a reconstruction of a colossal statue of Memnon, has enough of a "sneer of cold command" to recommend it as a possible source, although the poem shows Shelley's imaginative rendering of various images. Its political message comes closest to Constantin Volney's *Ruins . . . of Empires*. The romantic picturesque also informed some accounts of India, most notably that of

Reginald Heber, whose experiences were framed by Robert Southey's *Kehama* (1810). "Picturesque associationism and the 'esemplastic' romantic imagination here replace the empirical obsession of eighteenth-century travel writing" (191). Thomas Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (1817) was noticed and attacked by Victor Jacquemont for being untruthful; nonetheless, it positively influenced Emma Roberts's volume of *Oriental Sketches*.

Leask locates his description in controversies in (post)colonial theories and invokes his historical accounts as a valid vehicle for examining those theories. Travelers' attitudes were varied, not a "manichaeic opposition of power and innocence, a uniform global plot resulting in 'fatal impact'" (16). The accounts combat the tendency to exaggerate the reach of European hegemony. The European powers were relatively weak during these years; for example, the British had been defeated in the 1770s and 1780s in India and the United States. Abyssinia was independent until the twentieth century, Egypt and Mexico got the Europeans out militarily (if not economically) in the early 1800s, and Asia and Africa were relatively stronger in 1800 than in 1900.

Leask's insistence on the complexity of categories (for example, romantic and Enlightenment) and the need to avoid dualism or facile generalizations about colonizers or imperialists (or travel writers) encourages us to look closely at the texts as well as their rhetoric, production, and reception.

Donald Ross
University of Minnesota



Deleuze on Cinema, by Ronald Bogue. New York: Routledge, 2003. Pp. 231. \$90.00 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

The pleasure of seeing not one but three new works on Deleuze authored by Ronald Bogue is increased by understanding the intelligent manner in which Routledge has edited material that initially was intended for publication in a single volume. Accompanying *Deleuze on Cinema* (under review here) are also *Deleuze on Literature* and *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*. The first in North America to have concisely articulated an introductory text, *Deleuze and Guattari* (Routledge, 1989), Bogue has worked for over a decade to achieve the current threefold examination of the Deleuzian corpus. The strategy for *Deleuze on Cinema* continues the efficient and thorough approach that Bogue adopts in all of his works. For in his introduction, Bogue explains that his task is not to extend Deleuze's analyses into new studies on film; rather, he proposes to develop further both how Deleuze's analyses are situated in relation to contemporary philosophy and how his dense arguments may be understood through a coherent conceptual framework.

In chapter 1, “Bergson and Cinema,” Bogue studies the theoretical bases of Deleuze’s reflections on cinema in his successive studies *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (1983) and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1985). As Bogue emphasizes in the introduction, Deleuze develops philosophical concepts proper to cinema, particularly of the shift in cinema between a logic of the movement-image (roughly pre–World War II) into one of the time-image (following the collapse of the sensorimotor schema). In this light, the opening chapter situates Deleuze’s project squarely within his continued elucidation of Bergson’s conception of time, with Deleuze drawing heavily, says Bogue, from his earlier studies of Bergson (notably, the 1966 *Bergsonism*). The specific hinge for this explication is “the most puzzling of Bergsonian propositions—that the things we commonly call space and time are merely extremes of the contraction and dilation of a single *durée*, or duration . . . as a time-space flux of a vibrational whole” (3). Hence the purpose of chapter 1 is to consider how Deleuze applies his conception of Bergsonian principles to time and movement in the cinematic image. Bogue opens the book, then, around the two axes, vertical and horizontal, that Deleuze identifies in the movement-image. Says Bogue: “In the following chapters we will consider the ways in which great directors shape this signaleptic matter through the vertical processes of framing, cuts, shots, and montage [chapter 2], and through the horizontal processes of long-shot perception-images, medium-shot action-images, and close-up affection-images [chapter 3]” (39).

The reader will note quickly, however, that Bogue’s study reaches far beyond a relatively simple tripartite typology and criss-crossing axes. For, after examining globally the importance of frame, shot, and montage, he closely explicates the elaborate taxonomy of images and signs that Deleuze develops in *Cinema 1* inspired by the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce. Bogue makes clear that despite this important reference, Deleuze remains chiefly inspired by Bergson, only taking what he needs from Peirce, specifically his three modes of being, Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness. Deleuze then conjoins these to the already posited trio of images as follows: “Rather than tying the perception-image to Thirdness, Deleuze posits the existence of a fourth movement-image corresponding to the category of Thirdness, the relation-image . . . and then treats the perception-image as a species of image that lies outside Peirce’s classification schema (a Zeroness)” (67–68). To these Deleuze adds two more types (the impulse-image and the reflection-image) and then goes on to differentiate each image three ways: “by its genesis; by its composition as function of the interval; and by its composition as function of the whole” (69).

Fortunately, Bogue tracks this taxonomical expansion with two very crucial tables (70–71), one of the images and corresponding signs of the movement-image (both “signs of composition” and “signs of genesis”), the other comparing the *Cinema 1* glossary with a recapitulation of movement-image

signs from *Cinema 2*. After reviewing each of the images/signs as they are manifested within particular directors' works, Bogue concludes by attempting to summarize the proliferation of the Deleuzian semiotics. He indicates that the signs of the movement-image are at least fourteen, at most twenty-three, but also that "for Deleuze, cinematic images constitute the 'signaletic matter' that directors, like sculptors, mold, bend, smooth, scrape, gouge, cut, paste, and weld to form light-and-sound sculptures in time," with his taxonomy serving as a tool "for inventing a language adequate to those sculptures and the creative processes that generate them" (105).

So far, Bogue has only explored how Deleuze accounts for the movement-image, that is, based on the sensorimotor schema, but with its collapse, the time-image emerges, necessitating a whole new set of terms. While montage, according to Deleuze, provides an oblique view of time, he posits a new category of images and signs through which the time-image is directly manifested. As with the movement-image, Deleuze divides the time-image into subgroups: hyalosigns, which include optical and sonic images, memory-images and dream-images, and crystal-images (chapter 4). Moving on to a different order of the time-image, Bogue considers chronosigns (chapter 5), which present "either coexisting relations and simultaneous elements of time (the order of time) or a before-and-after in a single becoming (the series of time)." Then he examines noosigns (chapter 6), which "reveal a new relation between thought and image," and lectosigns, which "manifest a new relation between the visual and the sonic" (107–8). Suffice it to say that to each of these technical and cinematic details, Deleuze (and Bogue) juxtapose new concepts—crystalline states for the hyalosigns; sheets of past, peaks of present, and powers of the false for chronosigns; linked to the latter, the power of the outside and the interstice for noosigns; and also linked to chronosigns, silent and audible lectosigns as well as the modern dimension of the time-image as "archeological, stratigraphic, and tectonic" (189).

Given the complexity of these three facets of the time-image and the myriad examples of directors to whom Deleuze refers, I can hardly do justice either to Deleuze's elaborations or Bogue's careful explications, and can only assert that Bogue opens up Deleuze's two volumes in unprecedented ways. Clear proof of this is located in the conclusion, where Bogue provides a succinct yet thorough review of all six chapters, tying the whole volume together. He also reminds us why Deleuze's project remains first and foremost a work of philosophy, one rejecting narratological and psychoanalytic approaches to film. For Deleuze, directors invent images just as philosophers invent concepts, and Deleuze seeks to reinforce the fundamental relation between philosophy and non-philosophy. As Bogue concludes, this Deleuzian task transforms the question "What is cinema?" into an equally fundamental question, one that Deleuze (with Guattari) pursued to the end of his life, "What is philosophy?"

Bogue's study thus contributes immeasurably to the work of students and teachers alike in their pursuit of a clear understanding of Deleuze's lifelong study of the intersection of philosophy within and through the arts.

Charles J. Stivale
Wayne State University



The Author's Due: Printing and the Prehistory of Copyright, by Joseph Loewenstein. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. Pp. x + 349. \$45.00 cloth.

Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship, by Joseph Loewenstein. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. xii + 221. \$75.00 cloth.

The result of unusually sustained research and careful reflection, these books offer a fresh approach to older problems, and establish an interesting set of newer ones. *The Author's Due* is especially concerned to explain the emergence of a modern notion of authorship, linked as this was with modern concepts of literary and intellectual property. *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* is more trained on the much less discussed matter of what early modern authorship felt like to writers and how those feelings contributed to the thematics and texture of their works. Taken together, the books make a brilliant contribution to the burgeoning, and in Loewenstein's view coterminous, early modern fields of bibliography and book culture.

The Author's Due locates the formative period of modern authorship in a long stretch of time. It begins with early Continental presses' struggles over copyright (most especially with Aldus Manutius's securing of patents on the use of his italic type and on the publication of certain classical authors). The period closes with a mid-eighteenth-century judicial misreading of the 1710 Statute of Anne, whereby an act originally intended to limit and clarify stationer's copyright was understood to suppose that an author's production of a literary work entailed that author's original and exclusive right to exchange said work. One might say, though Loewenstein never puts it quite this way, that the 1710 statute was supposed to have made the literary work a commodity from its very inception, or at least upon its composition, and thus to have placed a new effective stress on a work's novelty, in the sense of its distinguishability from preexisting works. Roughly speaking, then, the notion that an author's work, if it is indeed hers (i.e., if she can indeed be said to have composed it independently), is hers to sell (or *not to sell*, if she chooses to use it in other ways)—that is the modern notion of authorship; and modern authorship actually exists when the notion receives institutional and general

ideological sanction, which is to say when social relationships are such as to make it seem natural. So Loewenstein argues, to my mind uncontroversially. During the period of early modern authorship, he understands and argues, this modern notion is available and indeed insistent—it is pressed by a number of people and tends to become more pressing; but it fails of general social currency for lack of an institutional basis.

Insofar as Loewenstein's aim is to tell the story of how modern authorship came to be, not the more strictly historicist aim of sketching the shape of an earlier period to demonstrate its difference from our own, he develops two narrative strands. One concerns the pressure for authorship and features the efforts of what might be called a social group, the "class" of authors themselves. Here the agitation of a number of individual writers is assiduously recorded and analyzed. In parts of *The Author's Due* that were mostly news to me, Samuel Daniel, Sir John Harington, and George Wither stand out for their cunning perseverance, preternatural insight, and angry lucidity, respectively, with respect to the early modern author's position and the possibilities of print. Less surprisingly, Jonson, Milton, and Pope assume salient roles in claiming the author's due. But there are unexpected twists. Milton accomplishes his role so unconsciously, and to such an extent by virtue of what he came to stand for rather than by purposive commitment to authors' rights, that the credit reflected on him seems less deserved than that accorded here to lesser-known writers who did know what they were about; while Pope is presented as so canny a player where his own authorial rights and interests are concerned, and his work as so thoroughly a market product, that the notion of the literary work as an independent individual creation tends to be jeopardized, the modern author-function, in its first secure practice as such, to be (de-)realized as market-effect.

The Author's Due does tell a story, then, of early modern authors struggling for a new social valuation and understanding of literary labor, and winning through to the goal. There is even something progressive and inevitable about this struggle as it is presented across Loewenstein's pages. Yet success and inevitability are not chiefly owing to the skill with which the struggle was conducted, nor to its inherent justice. Rather the conquest of authorial copyright comes across as in good part accidental. Individually sagacious and powerful some of their number were, but the writers were mainly just lucky that conditions of publication came over time to favor their rights. How this came to be—how the conditions of publication, and the associated human agents, that initially worked to curtail authors' claims to control over their productions, eventually wound up needing such claims, and resorting to them for the sake of their own continuance—this is the matter of the second narrative strand mentioned before, which is quite clearly and cogently cast as determinant-with-a-difference, as the story that really moves.

Since this story is about conditions, heroes in the garden-variety sense of the word figure rarely in it, at least by comparison with the former story strand. A medley of institutional structures and practices—economic, regulatory, censorious—combine complexly throughout the early modern era to produce what might be called a print settlement, and to enforce shifts within it that end with the settlement itself “washing far away” (to pick up on one of a series of allusions to “Lycidas” that Loewenstein filters into his presentation of the passing of early modern authorship). The starring institutions are three: the London Stationers’ Company; the royal patents that were issued to particular booksellers in certain lines of publication; and censorious licensing. There are several supporting institutions, in addition, with important roles to play; and the mode of interaction of the whole is constitutively shifting and loose—the settlement is never so settled as all that. I would note, and stress, that Loewenstein’s preferred mode of explanation is low to the ground indeed, his implied message being that low to the ground is generally the way things work, particularly when early modern authorship is in question. Yet, since the royal patents had been sufficiently integrated into the stationers’ everyday practices to count as customary by the late sixteenth century, and since the licensing system came to depend on company compliance for its effectiveness, one may with considerable justice generalize that for Loewenstein it is the Stationers’ Company itself that is key to understanding early modern authorship and the emergence of modern authorial copyright.

Three moments, and three heroes of them, tend to stand out in memory as beginning, middle and end of the stationers’—hence of early modern authorial—history. The first moment, in the mid-1580s, features a revolt on the part of some printers and journeymen within the livery, spearheaded by one John Wolfe, against the system of patents and increasing control of the company by the more mercantile element. This revolt figures prominently in Loewenstein’s book because it exhibits future fault lines so clearly, anticipating so much history still to come; but it was important in its time for backfiring—provoking a counterrevolution that brought a closer, more secure relationship between the Stationers’ Company (or its court of assistants) and the monarchy, with Wolfe gladly lending himself to co-optation by the winners. This early, telling event, was in some respects repeated in the 1640s, though—at least from the big stationers’ point of view—less in the mode of farce than of tragedy. In the unruly conditions of the early 1640s, when the censorship fell into abeyance, printers were not to be stopped from infringing patents and the stationers’ monopoly; the stationers could not protect their trade either from incursions or, more importantly perhaps, from serious discussion. Not a stationer, accordingly, but a writer, the Milton of *Areopagitica*, emerges as the hero of the moment, and he is exemplary, I take it, both for the radical nature of his implicit claims about the rights of authorship and for his failure to

grapple very seriously, in fact, with basic practical questions of how publishing was to be organized. (I can only remark in passing that Loewenstein's analysis of Milton's great pamphlet is intricate and powerful, and should be read by anyone interested in the poet.) The third moment is that of the Stationers' Company's return to power after the Interregnum and its gradual transformation, under pressure of the expanding market and increasing stratification within its ranks, into something less like a guild and more like an employers' union. Jacob Tonson, the eminently successful bookseller who held copyrights to the work of many best-selling authors of the day and who effectively patronized market authorship into being, is cast as the ambivalent hero of this concluding phase.

Loewenstein frames this long and complicated story in part as a correction of Foucault's argument (in "What Is an Author?") that modern, individualized authorship stems originally from a systemic need for "penal appropriation" (or perhaps one should say "stemmed originally," since Foucault wrote hopefully from the moment of the individualized author's disappearance). Loewenstein's revision of Foucault's "sensationalist understanding," to use his phrase, of the history of authorship is generally convincing in its own terms and lends polemical point to his study. Still, even one who is not a fan of Foucault can feel that "sensationalist" is a bit unjust and that the encounter with "What Is an Author?" is less consequent than it might be. Not wanting to claim any particular expertise, I'd nonetheless venture that "What Is an Author?" directs itself against two basic alternative ideological positions. The main target is surely liberal individualism and what was in the 1970s, and is still, the most common understanding of authorship, as pretty much naturally an individual affair: Foucault's brilliant definition of the individual author as a principle of thrift in the circulation of meaning is so memorable because of its clash with the everyday idea that the great writers have always become such by the *richness* of their imaginations.

A second target, as usual in Foucault, is Marxism as he understood it, and the axe grinds to upend the axiom of determination-by-the-economic-in-the-last-instance. This perhaps explains the term "penal appropriation" (which would sound odd, I believe, if it hadn't been taken into academes): the implication is that bodies must be appropriated for the state to come into existence, hence before lands and goods can be; so politics, and in a sense the state, come first, are most determinant. It's because this second attack, on Marxist economism, must be trained more on the emergence of the state itself—more on a transition from a rather remote past than on the transition to capitalism or bourgeois society—that Foucault's periodizing moves are so confusing. As Loewenstein notes, sometimes "pre-individualistic" authorship seems to mean "primitive" authorship, sometimes medieval or Renaissance.

Now it seems to me that Loewenstein plausibly reworks and corrects,

while muting somewhat, Foucault's implicit attack on liberal individualism. To cast authorial copyright, hence the autonomous author, as "a back-formation of stationer's copyright" is less gratifying than rendering individual authorship as the privileged moment of censorship itself, but it is similarly deflating and has the advantage of applying transparently to the way things actually happened in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Loewenstein intends to be reworking the attack on Marxism, too, and to be answering it more than correcting it, by suggesting that one must attend to the relation between economic and political levels, rather than choosing one over the other, and maintaining that in the run-up to modern authorship, an economic institution holds the key. Here, though, the principled decision not to follow up Foucault's reference to an "earlier" break (between societies that engage in penal appropriation and those that don't) leaves one feeling that a useful and advertised encounter has not in fact been fully joined. One doesn't miss the discussion of general theoretical issues that would pretty much have to be entered into in a full response; rather one is troubled by a sense of uncertainty about how exactly to conceive (how Loewenstein conceives) premodern authorship especially, but thereby authorship in general.

Shortly after reading *The Author's Due*, I happened upon a paragraph toward the beginning of "The Apology for Raymond Sebond," in which Montaigne, wondering how someone so unknown could have written so remarkable a work as Sebond's *Theologia Naturalis*, reports that a learned friend of his was of the opinion that it was "a quintessence distilled from St. Thomas Aquinas, only a wit like Thomas's, full of infinite learning and staggering subtlety, being capable of such concepts. Anyway," Montaigne goes on, "whoever it was who conceived and wrote this book (and it is not reasonable to deprive Sebond of his title without greater cause), he was a most talented man, having many fine accomplishments." Montaigne would not seem to question that there is a debt to Aquinas, who is understood here as one of the great and unavoidable makers of theological discourse, a theological "auctour." The difference between his friend and him is over what exactly Sebond can be said to have done in relation to that previous great act of making, Montaigne evidently feeling that Sebond did enough to qualify him as author, his friend thinking not. Montaigne's final point is that even if his work is an epitome, Sebond still deserves credit. Still, there is a notion of independent authorship here—a notion that, if Sebond has differentiated his thought sufficiently from Aquinas's to be said to have come up with his work on his own, then he deserves a special sort of recognition; he deserves, at the least, to be remembered through the work. Montaigne of course does not make much of the issue—it's evidently not important enough to him to pursue—but presents it as a routine concern. I take it that it *was* a routine concern, and I think Loewenstein would agree with me; I also imagine he'd agree that, given the assumption that an

author deserves credit or recognition, then once there is a market in authored books large enough to yield sufficient profits, the notion will emerge that authors deserve, along with the recognition for having written them, a measure of control over their merchandizing and an equitable share of the money made from it. I imagine this last because, as observed already, Loewenstein charts the emergence, or records the repeated occurrences, of authors protesting their rights. What I'm not sure of is how he understands the existence to begin with of the routine concern about authorship. Is it specifically early modern, or more general than that?

To take another possibly transitional example from two centuries earlier, one that Loewenstein himself quotes early on in *Jonson and Possessive Authorship*—Chaucer's little poem cursing his scribe Adam: "Noting the texts traduced," Loewenstein writes of the poem, "—'Boece' (Chaucer's translation of a late antique treatise) and 'Troilus' (a 'translation' of a late antique tragedy [Loewenstein can only be referring to Chaucer's pretense that he follows Lollius])—we can see that [Chaucer's] complaint against manuscript transmission is specifically aroused and authorized by early Renaissance philology, with its broad dismay about textual variability"; this is a personal reaction, he allows, but he goes on to contrast Chaucer's "inscriptional" with later "impressive" complaints, which latter frequently make use of a personification of the printed book to convey, among other qualities, the theft of identity, and the uncanny anonymity, involved in print publication. What Loewenstein has to say about the singular species of alienation accorded to print publication by early modern writers is sensitive and brilliant; but I would question his handling of the Chaucer poem. It seems more likely that *Boethius* and *Troilus* are chosen as long works he took special pride in when he wrote the poem than as translations (it is merely clever to call *Troilus* a translation). More debatably, perhaps, the logic of the curse Chaucer delivers in the poem would seem to expose, and play on, intimate authorial feelings. Chaucer wishes that Adam's scalp will be afflicted with the like condition Adam has brought on his text(s), or has forced Chaucer to bring on them in correcting them. Doesn't the humor of the curse reside in the actual disequivalence between text and body, a disequivalence, however, that implies an underlying psychological equation? Chaucer's text is his body, his memory; it is Chaucer himself that the hasty Adam tortures. The idiot question that comes up, then, is "How exactly is this *not* possessive authorship?" And though I would not be taken to be holding that one cannot distinguish between the quality of Chaucer's authorship and Jonson's, I doubt whether it can be accounted for chiefly by reference to the different modes of transmission or publication, as Loewenstein here and at times tends to do.

Though the discussion of Chaucer's poem is found in it, such questions do not in fact often come up in *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship*. For

Loewenstein's project here is to track the early modern change in the sense and understanding of authorial creation from the inside. His focus is on the novel practices and fantasies that emerge in fairly immediate response to the various features and developments of the new printing regime, and on their dynamic. An especially illuminating set of chapters shows how the piratical printing of plays encouraged acting companies to take printing into account from the beginning of their productions, and stimulated the practice of publishing edited and corrected—enhanced and authentic—plays, whose composition was then usually attributed to a single author; Loewenstein refers to this as the editorial repossession of play texts, and shows the utility of the practice to Jonson's development. He also shows how the book market served as the stage for theatrical battles over rights to standard dramatic fare (e.g., "the inheritance of Kyd") and over originality; a particularly stimulating section has Shakespeare responding to Robert Greene's charge of plagiarism against him over a long series of plays, and working out a seemingly bookish, extremely media-reflexive theory of imitation in his defense.

In such sections the problem of what to think of authorship in general doesn't come up because one is seeing specific instances, new variants, of authorship being invented and offered as solutions to immediate problems. Meanwhile, in other sections of the book, mostly devoted to Jonson, the problem is handled more positively, insofar as the early modern concept of authorship is shown to emerge as a result of engagement with anticipatory versions. A general tenet that becomes evident in these sections is that Foucault was wrong to speak of a single moment of individualization in history. Rather there are different individualizations, which perhaps contribute differently to the "last," leveling, bourgeois or modern, one. The new conditions of competition and constraint, Loewenstein shows, led Jonson and others to return to and make use of classical figurations of plagiarism; Jonson indeed may be said to have *imitated* Martial's and Horace's renditions of plagiarism and of the authorship contradistinguished from it, in the process shedding a comparative light on the novelty of the modern situation and redefining the practice of imitative creation itself. "Re-reading and re-writing Martial," Loewenstein remarks, "Jonson discovered the book market as such." By imitating Martial, that is, Jonson ascribed to print a re-situation and generalization of the category of plagiarism, and specified its uncanny iterative effects as a figure for the emergence of a capitalist market. This and more is conveyed in Loewenstein's bravura reading of "Inviting a Friend to Supper," from which I'll conclude by quoting a couple of summary sentences, both as an example of the rigor and elegance of Loewenstein's writing at its best and for the remarkable subtlety of the message they trace:

The host's promised self-effacement [his promise not to read his poetry at the supper] should not be taken in isolation, for it joins a

pervasive modesty voiced as a response to the careful contingency of the world; whenever individual will expands to express itself in festivity, it finds itself defined by dearth. Such measured and dispossessed ethics are the perfect analogue to an imitative poetics, with its lid on the individual poetic will. (113)

That such readings derive from what Loewenstein rightly insists is a properly bibliographical attention to books and the conditions of their production—this should be more than enough to justify its resurgence to those inclined to skeptical misgivings as to whether life is finally long enough for bibliography.

Chris Kendrick
Loyola University–Chicago



Shakespeare's Domestic Economies: Gender and Property in Early Modern England, by Natasha Korda. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. Pp. 288. \$49.95 cloth.

Shakespeare's stage—that infamously barren, wooden O—was perhaps a bit more cluttered than previously thought. In *Shakespeare's Domestic Economies*, Korda analyzes the forgotten trifles of the early modern stage: the handkerchiefs, stools, and other props routinely used to stage domesticity. Arguing that such “household stuff” was constitutive of Elizabethan theatrical subjectivity, Korda empties the O and exposes the ideological, linguistic, and material baggage of Shakespeare on the Elizabethan stage. In doing so, Korda's work adds an important contribution to a growing field of women's history that explores the lives of early modern women through literary representations and material history of the domestic realm.

As critics such as Lena Orlin and Wendy Wall have recently argued, the proper production and, increasingly, consumption of domestic goods was of critical importance to Elizabethan theater audiences. Whereas these recent critical endeavors have analyzed theatrical representations of domesticity on the Elizabethan stage, Korda's claims extend the implications of such arguments through a careful linking of economic and literary histories of stage props to subsequent literary representations. Firmly situating Shakespeare within “broader historical shifts in modes of production and property relations,” Korda refines our understanding of early modern English women's lives by analyzing the tools used to create such convincing theatrical representations of them on stage (8).

The importance of Korda's methodology is heightened when one considers that these domestic representations occurred on Shakespeare's stage,

which was devoid of women players. Feminist and queer literary scholars have struggled to understand the role of the boy-actor in representing Shakespeare's women. Korda's analysis of stage props provides us with another approach to understanding the dearth of women's parts on the Elizabethan stage. The absence of women must be balanced against an excess of their domestic parts: the implements that surrounded and defined their existence in the home. For example, the multiplicity of domestic parts possibly used on stage is suggested by a copious visual catalog of household items that formed part of a nine-volume encyclopedia of heraldry published in the seventeenth century. The magnitude of the catalog clearly introduces Korda's two-pronged project: there was a superfluity of household goods introduced into early modern English markets during the late sixteenth and seventeenth century and a superfluity of systems of classification designed to order and manage domestic goods. The vast catalog of female domestic "parts" underscores Korda's broader point that our separation of theater history from other fields of inquiry has "calcified concepts such as the all-male stage" (198).

Rather than rely on ahistorical assumptions of what domesticity may have meant onstage or use contemporaneous published texts meant to instruct unruly women on proper housewifery for guidance, Korda interprets the early modern domestic through the history of movable property. Such a project demands a creative methodological approach. Citing Penelope Johnson's argument for a "theory of practice," Korda announces that new methodologies can complicate the overly broad conclusions about women's lack of agency in the past (7). These conclusions are comprised largely from an overemphasis of legal, medical, and print culture. Whereas such cultures certainly constitute a large part of the history of women's lives, they fail to capture "the complex history and dramatic representation of women as subjects, as well as objects, of property" (12). Citing feminist historians' recent claims that our understanding of coverture in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century is based solely on analyses of land and ignores the creation and expansion of the legal concept of movable property, Korda effectively demonstrates that household objects comprised a significant part of Elizabethan culture and, by extension, the Elizabethan stage. Such stuff may not have seemed so trifling to women playgoers, since women exerted greater control over movable objects than did men. These objects have been excised from canonical understandings of the early modern stage due in large part to their historical connection to female spheres of influence. That Shakespeare's stage could be conceived as barren, Korda's book deftly reminds us, largely demonstrates how women's participation and relationship to the stage have been swept under the Elizabethan carpet.

But anyone familiar with contemporary Shakespearean or early modern studies would hardly be surprised to learn that Shakespearean subjectivity was

composed of the goods, commodities, or other materials of everyday life. Subjects, objects, fetishes, and worldly goods have long held critical currency within early modern studies. Within Korda's interpretive strategy, however, these topics seem surprisingly fresh. Whereas clearly influenced by new historical traditions, Korda resists the temptations of bricolage, choosing instead to accentuate the relationship between key linguistic phrases and material goods in four Shakespearean plays: the role of household "cates" or commodities in the induction scene in *The Taming of the Shrew*, their role in Falstaff's shaming scene in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the value of Desdemona's handkerchief in *Othello*, and Isabella's invocation of St. Clare in *Measure for Measure*. Like the best of scholarship in the field, Korda's goal is to offer much more than new readings of Shakespeare: she seeks to offer a new way of reading Shakespeare. Through her exploration of the entwined linguistic and domestic economies of early modern culture, Korda reanimates a lost history of the domestic by exploring the domestication of women's goods, bodies, and voices on the early modern stage.

Each reading explores a female character's relationship to movable property. Of the four readings produced, the first seems most effective, due in large part to its ability to bare Korda's analytical framework. Indeed, her analysis of Petruccio's "unorthodox methodology" in chapter 2 largely enables her to proffer her own. Petruccio's schooling of Kate on the proper consumption of household goods or "cates" advances the central thesis of this book: that proper wives were created through proper management of proper goods. This thesis is developed in each of the subsequent chapters. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Korda argues that such a schooling scene is unnecessary, since the merry wives employ a Foucauldian scrutiny of themselves and each other in order to ensure proper sexual and domestic behavior. But whereas the merry wives pass their husbands' jealous tests, Desdemona's failure demonstrates the stakes of such complicated systems of wifely evaluation. Othello's jealousy results from his simultaneous over- and underevaluation of Desdemona's lost handkerchief. Desdemona and her handkerchief are caught within contradictory systems of evaluation wherein the economic effects of Eastern trade and New World exploration introduced new subjects—and objects—of property into the English market. Finally, if *Othello* represents the challenge of understanding certain women within competing systems of exchange, *Measure for Measure* gestures to a significant absence of others: single women. Isabella, as a single woman, is silenced through such systems of evaluation since coverture links women's voices to husbands' property. *Measure for Measure's* plethora of single characters presents a problematic loophole in a system that links property and economic exchange to marriage.

In perhaps the boldest of the four readings, Korda analyzes Isabella's silent relationship to the world of goods. Here, Korda assays the goals—and

limits—of her methodology, querying “what is at stake in articulating that which remains unarticulated in a literary text?” (159). As this chapter reveals, there is much to be gained from such a creative methodological endeavor. As Korda notes, Isabella’s silence ironically emphasizes the mutually constitutive relationship between words and objects in previous chapters. Certain objects became visible through Korda’s nuanced close readings of key phrases in the play. But in *Measure for Measure* there is no clear textual referent. Can we trust an interpretation of early modern objects that relates only implicitly to textual practices? Korda admits that she may be “breaching the boundaries of what may properly be said to belong to the text,” but she is adamant that success or failure depends first on the attempt (159). In order to understand those who have been domesticated by domesticity, she reminds us, we must creatively explore key silences in historically responsible ways. In this final chapter and conclusion, Korda is true to her word and demonstrates how: she enacts both “the nucleus of an argument and a method” as well as a “template for future research” (14).

In doing so, Korda achieves the best of what feminist scholarship can offer to our understanding of the past. The dismissal of household goods as mere trifles ignores an essential component of early modern culture and the history of the Elizabethan stage: the participation of women. *Shakespeare’s Domestic Economies* seeks to account for the historical absence of women’s voices, but it also seeks to understand how and why such absences were ideologically produced. As her reading of Isabella reminds us, the link between the domestic and women’s agency is paradoxical at best. The very objects that rendered certain women’s participation in the household visible were also used to regulate and silence others. Korda effectively argues that these trifles reveal that the “theater of property we have inherited is not so limited in women’s parts”—it was the very “stuff” of Shakespeare (12). But as Isabella’s silence and Desdemona’s death remind us, it was brutal stuff indeed.

Holly Dugan
University of Michigan



Maternal Impressions: Pregnancy and Childbirth in Literature and Theory, by Cristina Mazzoni. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. Pp. vii + 228. \$45.00 cloth.

The early signs of pregnancy are often illegible and unpromising at once. A vague sense of fatigue can mean an overly taxed schedule as easily as it means a newly implanted zygote. A rise in basal body temperature may signal

either a passing virus or a viable fetus. Nausea in the morning may arise from indulgences of the night before or indiscretions some weeks before. Unclear and inauspicious, the early signs of pregnancy gain meaning and change valence only as knowledge of pregnancy is pursued. Cristina Mazzoni's *Maternal Impressions* bears a resemblance.

The readerly expectations the book evokes in its early pages are later upset. She begins with a title that invites expectations of an interpretative text that brings theory to bear on literary works to illuminate them, but what Mazzoni delivers is a theoretical text that draws on the literary texts of a number of Italian women writers from the turn of the last century, medical advice manuals from that period and the present, and personal experience to elaborate a theory of maternity. The set of questions she raises in her introduction seems unsophisticated and a bit contrived, promising little intellectual merit. Finally, the primary texts she brings together seem, at first blush, awkwardly joined. But this unclear and inauspicious beginning soon gives way to a rich study of how the maternal body signifies, produces both material and knowledge, and circulates in the cultural imaginary.

Mazzoni pursues knowledge of pregnancy and the knowledge pregnancy produces through four questions that serve as the center of gravity for the four chapters that follow her dense introduction. Asking "what role does the pregnant woman have in the physical and psychological development of the child in her womb, and how is female desire constructed in this process?" (6), Mazzoni develops in her first chapter an artful reading of the relays between the desiring pregnant woman, given to insatiable cravings, and the impressionable fetus she carries, drawing on the shifting lore of birthmarks to bring into relief historical contentions over the nature and extent of maternal power. An early folklore proposes that if a pregnant woman's desires go unsatisfied, her child will bear the mark. The woman who yearns for strawberries in December may bear a child who wears a red patch on her forehead in June. Contending with this interpretation of the birthmark, and sometimes accompanying it, is the notion that what the pregnant woman sees while conceiving the child will be born in the child's features. This early folklore endows pregnant women with, in Mazzoni's terms, impressive power, but this power is called into question after the Renaissance. The generative power of a woman's ability to mark her fetus is dismissed as mere superstition while the cravings and markings that theories of maternal impressiveness had first sought to explain are instead read as signs that a woman's body is both categorically different from a man's and in much greater need of discipline. Mazzoni then pursues the experiences of pregnancy as an epistemology of relatedness, where the continuities of bodies, not reducible to two separate subjects or to a unified subjectivity, undoes privileged dichotomies in Western science and philosophy, and proposes an ethics

of relatedness. She begins here, too, a discussion of a female genealogy, a project undertaken by other feminist theorists, and pursues it, if unevenly, throughout the book, but this is not one of her more productive pursuits. The ongoing conversation as she recounts and contributes to it so privileges the bearing of a daughter, and usually considered singularly, that it leaves too ambiguous the relationships of women who bear multiple children of both sexes.

Pregnancy as a way of knowing or a distinctive form of epistemology is more thoroughly pursued in the second chapter, where Mazzoni uses the experiential knowledge of the fetus that the pregnant woman gains through conscious engagement with bodily sensations as a way of critiquing the discursive knowledge gained through patriarchal practices of science that privilege the abstract and the scopic at the expense of the embodied and the sensate. Mazzoni also, however, uses maternal knowledge gained through the experience of quickening to question feminist versions of science, drawing on Toril Moi's critique to reinforce her own argument. Mazzoni's primary claim here is that the experience of quickening calls into question both the stability and boundaries that patriarchal science assumes and the dissolution of boundaries that feminist science asserts. Instead, in the moment of quickening, the mother knows both similarity and difference simultaneously, a doubling of knowledge unthinkable outside of the experience and unrepresentable in a language that proceeds one word after the other: "The uncanny, visceral interoception of an otherness within the self is a fracture merging the otherwise irreconcilable dualities generated by quickening: power and surrender, knowledge and ignorance, choice and fate, fullness and emptiness, words and silence" (91). While she follows this initial theoretical scaffolding with a delightful reading of the visit between Mary of Nazareth and her cousin Elizabeth taken from the gospel of Luke, and an insightful reading of Neera's *L'indomani*, the perhaps more productive theoretical work arises in the latter part of the chapter when Mazzoni considers the challenges a pregnant knowledge poses to language itself, which depends on difference for its ability to signify. As she does throughout the book, Mazzoni produces exemplary readings of Italian, French, and American feminist theories of language. Her reading of Irigaray is sensitive without being too celebratory, critical without being cynical, as her reading of Cixous highlights the provocative nature of her claims for *écriture féminine* while not claiming for it an explanatory power that it does not actualize. Mazzoni does not attempt here to reconcile the very real differences between these theories of language informed by bodily knowledge, arguing instead that pregnancy is paradoxical and so not reducible to a single explanatory frame. With Stanton and Fuss, however, she proposes thinking of the pregnant body as a place and time of metaphorical metonymy, where the pregnant body is both absorbed and appropriated by the symbolic through metaphor at the same time that it

is contiguously embedded in and thereby expanded into the materially consequential structures of language and culture.

The third chapter of the book marks a turn from thickly theoretical readings of pregnancy and maternity to considerations of the cultural construction of pregnant bodies. While she does not entirely abandon theoretical pursuits, Mazzoni highlights here the familiar cultural cul-de-sacs that have confined the literary and material terrain of pregnancy. Popular medical and anthropological texts of the time emphasize that a lack of maternal feelings, purportedly discovered in studies of prostitutes and other criminal women, indicate degeneracy of character, yet it is precisely maternal feelings and physiology that assign women to the natural and the private and bar them from the symbolic and public. The pregnant body, in its changeability, defies Western and masculinist constructions of the unified rational body, pushing it out of the bounds of normalcy at the same time that the woman who does not become pregnant falls outside the boundaries of the morally correct. The body bearing evidence of sexual activity is simultaneously excluded from the category of the sexually desirable. Culturally and corporeally, she argues, pregnancy yields a change in body and meaning, altering the physical landscape of the woman who bears a child, the subjectivity of a person who delivers both a child and a mother at the moment of birth, and the cultural constructions and conscriptions of that person. She weaves into this argument an analysis of Daniel Paul Schreber's *Memoirs*, reading against Freud's interpretation of the man's hysterical pregnancy as caused by homosexual anxiety and Lacan's analysis of it as a fear of fathering. Mazzoni proposes that their readings are instead indicative of their own foreclosure of maternal power, pointing out that if the desire for pregnancy Schreber so clearly displays can be dismissed as merely a transformation of penis envy, then the possibility of womb envy is, for these men, safely foreclosed. It is a possibility Mazzoni leaves provocatively open.

Mazzoni closes with a pattern of readings that is by now familiar to readers—a narrative of the author's own experience of current maternity texts and lore, an examination of similar texts from the turn of the century, a reading of novels by Italian women that provide a poetics of maternity, and closing arguments produced through a careful analysis of her primary theorists. She concentrates here on her fourth question: "What is the significance of the act of giving birth to another human being—for a woman's life, for a woman's self—and why does it entail so much paradox?" (6). She examines here the chronology of pregnancy and its discontinuities with other ways of keeping time, drawing explicitly on the difference between timekeeping in efficient labor practices advocated by emerging medical practices and the body's own time, making excellent use of Iris Marion Young's analysis of mother time and doctor time. She takes up a discussion long pursued in feminist studies of the relationship of the maternal body to material work processes and the social body,

but turns, or perhaps returns, to the question of the relationship between writing and birthing. She claims an analogous relationship for the two, pointing out that both are exercises in making the interior exterior, taking in, reproducing, and returning, exercises “in splitting, difference, separation, and division” (182). She extends that analogy to claim that while childbearing is most often conceived of as material or manual labor, it may be argued that it is indeed intellectual labor, evidenced, she claims, by the ubiquity of metaphors that compare writing a book to bearing a child. Both acts, she notes, begin with the conception of something not there before, take place almost entirely inside the secrecy of the body, and result not in the reproduction of the always the same but in procreation of something new.

The readings Mazzoni provides of the Italian literary works of Grazia DeLedita, Neera, and Sibilla Aleramo serve to introduce these texts to a broader reading audience and to expand the transatlantic feminist dialog. Likewise, her use of turn-of-the-century scientific texts of Cesare Lombroso and Paolo Matengazza adds usefully to the ongoing cultural critique of science, most particularly as the critique turns its attention to the medical grasp on the female body. Mazzoni raises here the question of essentialism, sometimes charged against the credit of feminist theorists and sometimes embraced as a critical strategy for feminist work, and calls the question into question. She proposes that essentialism is the structural principle of patriarchy, which relies on characterizations of the masculine as the universal to deploy power, and not a structuring principle for feminism, which relies on characterizations of difference to produce representation. Since essentialism is not a structuring principle for feminists, she argues, it need not occupy such a central place in feminist concerns. Her treatment of this question is exemplary of the finest work she accomplishes here. The real contribution Mazzoni makes here is in her introduction of Italian feminist theorists Andriana Cavarero and Luisa Muraro to an English-reading audience (much of their work is unavailable in English) and in her closely-reasoned use of other feminist scholars, Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, Gayatri Spivak, Elizabeth Grosz, Domna Stanton, and Iris Marion Young among them. More provocative than explanatory at times, this is still a book that should find a place on the shelves of any feminist scholar.

Barbara Schneider
University of Toledo



Jensen. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999. Pp. 512. \$27.50 paper, \$75.00 cloth.

Paul Bénichou's monumental study of the emergence of a writer liberating himself from religious and other doctrine to assume in turn a quasi-religious status as "consecrated" is in a certain sense not of our time. It makes some gestures in its introduction and conclusion to debates around the status and function of literature, debates that in North America in particular continue to occupy a central place in literary scholarship. Yet these remarks are confined for the large part to the margins of a book whose main concern—and merit—is to trace a comprehensive and seemingly exhaustive study of that point in literary history at which our modernity is arguably born, and to do so by tracing in detail how literature conceived of and represented itself. The translator's introduction perhaps captures the spirit of the book best when it remarks that "these pages attest to a profound belief in human dignity" (xiv). Indeed, the phrase that perhaps most accurately approaches what animates these pages, if not their subject, is *literary humanism*.

Some will no doubt find fault with that humanism, at least to the extent that it remains a presupposition. What is beyond question, however, is that this is a work of great importance whose translation for an English-speaking audience should do much to take our understanding of French literature, French Romanticism in particular, beyond the usual suspects: Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Hugo, Stendhal, Nerval, and so forth. They too figure in Bénichou's study, but one also finds substantial contributions, for instance, on figures from Saint-Martin, Senancour, Cousin, and Jouffroy to Borel and Gautier, as well as consideration of broad historical and intellectual trends from the Enlightenment and the subsequent reaction to it, through the Revolution. Counterrevolution, into Romanticism. Indeed, Bénichou's great strength is his encyclopedic command of French literature; but this is an understanding that is everywhere marked by a sensibility for the literature he reads, in Jensen's words, by approaching "writers, works, and ideas . . . on their own terms" (xiv). The vast and rich learning displayed here, the sheer breadth of reading, and the ability to synthesize the results of that reading produce as comprehensive and inclusive an account of this rich period as one is likely to find. (To get a sense of the extent of this study's scope, one need only consider the near 90 pages of notes.) If this is an eminently readable study as well, that is thanks in no small part to the skillful translation.

Bénichou's study traces what one might term the progress of the writer, the process in which he—the gendered pronoun has its place here—usurps traditional powers, religious in particular, to assume a consecrated role in literature, if not always in society. It begins by historicizing the notion of the intellectual, returning before that term to the *gens de lettres* out of which it

developed and with it to a category of author "In Quest of Secular Ministry," as the title to the first chapter puts it, that is, art that became "in its own way a religion" (23). Bénichou follows the uncertain status of the author and of this "new faith" in the context of the relation between the nobility and the bourgeoisie, though he rejects any simple notion of class struggle, seeing the two classes, rather, as sharing the goal of harmonizing their values. Emphasizing that in the eighteenth century the term *literature* was much broader than it is today and included fields such as philosophy and politics, he also does us the somewhat rare service of considering in some detail the place of poetry in the Enlightenment. But it is in many ways in the Revolution that poetry and the poet begin to achieve their "active role" while at the same time being called into question (39). The historical trajectory Bénichou sees poetry following cannot be fulfilled in the Revolution, however, for poets there remain "intermediaries rather than guides" (50). While the revolutionary state took "upon itself the august function of the man of letters" and poetry found "new opportunities for work," as mere mediator it had, by definition, not yet found its new definition (50).

Turning to what he terms a "religious poetics" (57), Bénichou continues to trace the relation between poetry and the sacred, the conception of poetry, for instance, as the "original relation of human beings to God" (53). If poetry's ultimate destination is to usurp religion, it can do so only first by elevating itself through its relation to the sacred, even if this process remained incomplete in the eighteenth century as poetry did little more than revive the idea of a religious vocation, thereby nonetheless opening the way for the consecration of the writer. In the Illuminism of Saint-Martin, Bénichou finds what in many ways enables that ultimate consecration; for Illuminism will form a bridge between religion and poetry and between "literature and speculation about humanity" (61) that ultimately allows for the articulation of a "poetic ministry" (64) as poetry is what brings us closest to the "first Cause" (67).

Crucial in laying the ground for some of the most important poets of the nineteenth century, Lamartine, Hugo, and Vigny in particular, the Counterrevolution as Bénichou reads it finds fault with the very idea of the men of letters and with their influence on a society that had fallen into disorder, sparing only the figure of the poet its criticism. Yet the Counterrevolution also contributed to the continual development of the ministry of the writer in that it did not condemn misplaced sensibility so much as it "attempted to convert it to its own ends, especially by integrating it into religion" (92). The ultimate outcome of this process Bénichou expresses in a sentence whose broad, theoretical implications for aesthetics and religion, what, to adapt Benjamin's phrase, one could call the aestheticization of religion, he does not explore: "An aesthetic defense of religion consecrates the poet, the designated priest of the beautiful" (101).

One might lament the absence of such an exploration, of any sustained reading—in the strongest sense—not only of this aesthetics but of Ballanche's conception of poetry as "primitive speech, revealed to man" (107), to choose but one example from this chapter; however, it should no doubt be noted that Bénichou's intention is not so much to elaborate such criticism as to enter into the history of the idea of the writer. Still, he does offer important insights into the history of poetic genre, for instance, and into Lamartine's ability to cross generic boundaries to produce the *méditation*. In fact, the extensive analysis of Lamartine's poetic project and its religious vocation is one of the most satisfying sections of the book. Here, Bénichou does more than summarize or synthesize the spirit of an age; he moves beyond what the poet says about poetry to consider the consequences of Romanticism's poetic longing: the secret of the "vitality and of the exceedingly numerous efforts during the course of a half century" to realize a Romantic epic lies in its longing to be more than a genre, which is also the source of its failure. And as Bénichou points out, Lamartine himself can never complete the poem that would replace the sacred texts.

Bénichou sees what he terms the "liberal" tradition, a tradition marked by its privileging of thought above poetry, contributing to the elevation of poetry through its "greater independence with regard to established religions," this independence further establishing poetry itself as an "original spiritual power" (135). The influence of the Enlightenment is evident in this tradition of liberal thought, which he traces from Senancour through Nodier and the group the *Méditateurs* to a secular spiritualism and the aesthetics of the Left. Interestingly, this tradition, while it contributes to the notion of a poetic ministry, produces little poetry of note—and less that receives any critical attention today. Bénichou's account of the aesthetic tradition of the Left, especially as it is articulated in terms of politics, should be of interest to those working in theory, and in particular on the aesthetic tradition from Kant and Idealism to Benjamin and beyond. For Bénichou, Mme de Staël is the figure in whom this tradition culminates, in whom a union between "metaphysical impulses" are linked to the "development of aesthetics and to the promotion of the artist to a higher social status" (158–59). But while the synopsis of Mme de Staël's conception of the philosopher's role in what we would now call the public sphere is entirely to the point, here, the strength of this section lies in the discussion of philosophical eclecticism of Cousin and Jouffroy, as well as of its limits, culminating in a consideration of the aesthetics of the symbol and its relation to the infinite.

Indeed, it is at these moments, when Bénichou does not leave the subject of poetic ministry behind so much as he takes it up in a wider range of related issues, a process at work to various extents throughout the book, that his analysis bears the most fruit. This is the case, for instance, in one of the most important chapters in the book, "The Romantic Revolution." Here, Bénichou lays

out an understanding of Romanticism in terms of the humanist and spiritualist traditions he has traced, and of which Romanticism is in some senses the culmination: "romanticism is in its very essence a consecration of the poet" (189). Emphasizing the sense of modernity he sees as at the heart of Romanticism, Bénichou considers the liberal Romanticism of Stendhal and his ideal of a modern drama in prose as a modernization of tragedy. Yet here too there is a strange dissymmetry, as the liberals' powerful aesthetic conception "stands empty, unable to find expression in militant poetry" (223), and results, rather, in a certain competition between the philosopher and the poet (225). The ultimate destination of Romanticism in its search for a "new literary doctrine" for the nineteenth century is thus to overcome this opposition, like that between royalist and liberal Romanticism, to assert a higher unity (229). While this unifying impulse leads Romanticism to an idealization and ideology of thought as "above classes" (238), Bénichou is also quick to analyze the extent to which the antibourgeois stance is merely bourgeois bad faith; in a sentence that, however unwittingly, looks back to Schmitt and forward to George W. Bush, he articulates one of his most clearly political stances: to say that such bad faith merely serves the bourgeois ideology is a "totalitarian axiom according to which one can only be *for* or *against*: an effective means of intimidation, but not of seeing truth" (238).

Reading Bénichou, then, one quickly finds that seeking that truth might mean precisely following the details of Romantic thought, not only in its broad philosophical conception but also in its forms. Thus, the consideration of the beginnings of "the great generation" is remarkable for its emphasis upon generic distinctions that are often lost today and that, he points out, carried great poetic implications that were inseparable from the philosophical. Vigny emerges as a key—and underappreciated—figure here for his generic experiments as for his reintegration of "the Philosopher and the Poet, reason and myth," which allowed him to achieve to a large extent the ultimate goal of a Romanticism that sought to "take upon itself the claims of the Philosophy it supplants" (254). If the rigor of Vigny's thought never allowed him to dazzle (254), Hugo is more than able to do so, not least by taking a decisive step toward the consecration of the poet and poetry, declaring that the value and esteem of poetry is inherent in it and is not derived from its relation to anything outside it, a view Bénichou asserts is "characteristic of every religion" (280). The concept of art as sovereign opens the way for it to assume its ministry. This is no renunciation of its influence in the world, however; rather, just as Hugo's conception of poetry's sovereignty lends it a "special prerogative in the world of thought" (286), Sainte-Beuve's efforts to modernize poetry lead him to draw into it what had been held to be "vulgar or aesthetically plebian" (289).

It is in a sense that same relation between art and the vulgar that Bénichou

takes up with his final chapter on 1830 and the Jeune-France: the question, here, of whether a “high bourgeois literature [was] impossible” (298). Answering affirmatively, that for several generations there is a divorce between literature and the bourgeoisie, he in effect continues to trace the “special prerogative” found in Hugo through the *petit cenacle*, which similarly sought the preeminence of the poetic spirit now in the face of a society consolidating itself (306). The result is an often uneasy relation between literature and society, fluctuating between the desire to unite poetry and action and the concern that such a synthesis might be impractical, even impossible. Nerval stands as the prime example of the parting of ways, in the Jeune-France, between the “spiritual and intellectual realm and the world as it exists” (319), although for Bénichou it is Gautier who will have the most immediate influence on post-Romantic literature, Gautier who “went to the limit of the experiments according to which Art, taken to be a supreme value, discovers that it has been divested of its former function and is alone in a hostile universe” (321).

It is perhaps no accident that Bénichou’s study should end with these poets for whom “society poses an obstacle to their wish” (330). For while in both his introduction and his “Final Reflections” he claims to trace “how the history of society and the history of literature were linked,” he does so with an important proviso: “We must accept as a self-evident truth that the writer is on a different plane than the producer of consumer goods, of any kind whatsoever; if we want to attribute to the writer a social existence, we ought to make up our minds to define this existence and the function that is associated with it separately, in a manner that does not depend on preconceived ideas” (333). The danger with an imperative of this sort, the absolute necessity that we accept that the writer is on a different plane (and it would seem, at any rate, that “different” here actually means “higher”) as “self-evident” is that it itself constitutes a preconceived idea. Indeed, it is the major presupposition of the entire study, one that becomes all too evident in the sentences that follow, as Bénichou argues that “one can really inquire about the relation that links works of the mind to the social substratum only if one first *presupposes* what can be called the mind or spirit acting according to its peculiar nature” (333, emphasis added). The imperative not to enlist preconceived ideas is itself based upon a presupposition of the independence and even superiority of the mind. The point here is not to catch Bénichou in contradictions or even to dispute the claim of the independence of the mind so much as it is to question whether such a claim can be made in the terms he articulates in the opening and closing of his book. This would also be to inquire into the limits of a reading of texts strictly according to their own claims, according to the very ideas he asserts, once again, they self-evidently carry, a reading that will no doubt be charged with reproducing the Romantic ideology: “literature handles ideas at a level all its own, in the realm where they are born from deep human

causes, speaking in the name of human life and guiding it in its proper pathways. The perfected elaboration of ideas as ideas interests literature less than their self-evidence, their truth-value, their direct applicability" (7). That Bénichou has produced such a thorough account of the period in fact allows one to raise this question. This, rather than its "theoretical" underpinnings, will be the lasting impression the book leaves, that of a learned and passionately argued account of the consecration of poetry.

Jan Plug

Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität