Politics, Emotions, and Romantic Periodicals

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Scholarly investigations of the politics of Romanticism and the role of emotion in Romanticism have been at the forefront of Romantic studies for some decades now, but these two fields of study have typically moved in different directions. Moreover, both fields have focused primarily on what we might loosely call 'literary' works (whether canonical or not). The current collection departs from this wide body of scholarship in that it addresses the multiple and varied links between politics and the emotions in the periodical press from the 1790s to the early 1830s. It approaches this complex

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topic through analyses of both the politics of emotion and the emotional registers of political discourse in the public sphere. Its value as a collection, as distinct from a monograph, lies in the variety of perspectives it brings to bear on the topic. The volume thus offers a study of the rich combination of politics, emotions, and print media during the Romantic period in Britain. In shifting the focus this way, it extends our understanding of the contested and complex relations between politics and feelings at that particular historical juncture. Although not its primary concern, it also raises important questions relevant to contemporary debates between practitioners of affect studies and political criticism. These are addressed in the first two sections of this introductory essay. In section three, we set out an argument for the importance of studying periodicals in this context, while section four provides a summary of the essays that comprise the collection.

The volume is necessarily selective, both in the specific dimensions of politics and emotions discussed, and in its choice of periodicals. This selection is characterised by several recurring themes, including the contested place of the emotions in radical political discourse; the role of print media in mediating 'immediate' action and performance; the changing affective frameworks of cultural politics, especially those having to do with gender and nation; and the shifting terrain of what constitutes appropriate emotions in public political discourse. What emerges from these recurring themes is a rich sense of the uneven and contradictory relations between radical and reformist discourses, and between different 'class' publications as they grappled with the emotions as part of their political agendas. To that end, the periodicals selected for analysis range from handbills through popular weekly publications and later more extensive weeklies of politics and culture, to both specialised and generalist monthly magazines and quarterly reviews. While the majority of the publications addressed in the collection sit on the radical/reformist side of politics, there are also several whose politics are fundamentally conservative.

ROMANTICISM AND POLITICS

It is now almost 40 years since Jerome McGann published *The Romantic Ideology* (1983), a book whose iconic title encapsulated the tone of a variety of political criticism in Romantic studies that emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s. Influenced by contemporary Marxist critics such as Louis Althusser, Pierre Macherey, and Terry Eagleton, McGann argued that Romantic poetry, in its efforts to transcend the material conditions

within which it was produced, is characterised by acts of 'displacement', 'occlusion', 'erasure', and 'evasion', with the aim of criticism being to 'show the text as it cannot know itself, to manifest those conditions of its making ... about which it is necessarily silent' (Eagleton 1976, 43). In the wake of the revisionary enterprise begun by McGann and of the revisionary history of Marilyn Butler's *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries* (1981), critical and cultural analyses of Romantic literature took up a position in wilful and explicit contrast to what they saw as a two-hundred-year-old tendency to play right into the hands of a Wordsworthian Romanticism by uncritically accepting its rapt privacies and spiritual hierarchies, along with its suppression of the historical and political temporality of the text (Christie 2009). Reading 'against the grain' from the vantage point of the present, such an approach had in its sights, not just the gaps and silences of Romantic poetry and the historical dilemmas that generated them, but also an earlier generation of critics such as Harold Bloom, M. H. Abrams, and Geoffrey Hartman. Where Abrams had sought to recover a high-minded, creative optimism, for example, this new generation of Romantics discovered an often self-deluding, self-defeating evasiveness.

Political criticism of this kind was ultimately concerned with the workings of power: how power relations operated in a society, and how those power relations functioned in literary works. Initially a form of what became known as 'ideology critique', it generated a range of critical positions in the 1980s and 1990s which sought greater knowledge of historical specificities within which, and against which, to read literary texts. These positions have sometimes been categorised loosely as the 'new historicism', a term made fashionable by Stephen Greenblatt and others in relation to Renaissance studies. Yet as David Simpson has argued, the new historicism in Romantic studies emerged in a very different context from that in Renaissance studies. In contradistinction to the latter, where 'representation and circulation tend to replace cause and effect as the dominant mechanism of cultural energy' (1998, 403), 'the history that was available [in Romantic studies] was premised (especially among British critics) on an awareness of conflict and contention—about the French revolution and the wars that followed it, about class struggle and industrialization' (406–407). Nevertheless, and despite significant differences between the historical work of McGann and someone like Butler, the term 'new historicism' has tended to be used as a catch-all for work grounded in the politics and history of the period. In addition to McGann, for example, the following have also been called new historicists, despite their significant differences: James Chandler, Marjorie

Levinson, Alan Liu, Clifford Siskin, and Simpson himself. Simpson's essay was published in 1998, but even at that late stage he was able to claim that:

historical work in Romanticism has recently been obliged to define itself in relation to new historicism, and many Romanticists have had the title of 'new historicist' bestowed upon them, a process which has been to some degree resisted (in the interests of accuracy) and to some degree accepted (for the sake of appearing fashionable). (402)

Although at times verging on the reductive, the new historicism opened up the corpus of Romantic poetry in subtle and exciting new ways. Reflecting a few years ago on her own practice, Levinson noted that 'new historicism, unlike old, demanded reciprocity', 'its knowledge arising at the intersection between the past and that past's future, namely the historian's present'. The past to be taken up, she claimed, following Walter Benjamin, is 'not some randomly chosen past, but the past of one's particular present, the past which, as I said in the Wordsworth book, gives back an echo when we call its name' (Levinson 2012, 357).

This sense of reciprocity between the Romantic past and the critical, as well as political, present was spelt out by Clifford Siskin in *The Historicity of Romantic Discourse* (1988). Like other critics associated with the new historicism, Siskin, too, is concerned with power. However, by utilising the work of Foucault rather than Marx, he focuses on the discursive practices through which humans produce knowledge, rather than on the ideological silences in texts. The consequence is a significantly different kind of project from that of McGann, Levinson, and other new historicists who had written on Wordsworth and others of the 'big six'. For Siskin, political critics such as McGann were still immersed in Romantic values insofar as their focus on the Romantic canon remained within the traditional parameters of the study of 'literature', a concept which itself had been formed in the Romantic era. Nevertheless, while the focus might have shifted to regimes of classification and technologies of perception, as crucial to the operations of power, Siskin's aim is still to move 'outside' Romanticism, to distance his project from its assumptions and modes of thinking. As he remarks, the value of his project lies in its potential to set the stage 'for more work that, in examining the transition to the Romantic norm, will help to construct the next one' (Siskin 1988, 14).

Similar aims also characterised feminist approaches to Romanticism in the 1980s and 1990s, albeit in very different registers. Siskin's anti-canonical argument was replicated, for example, in the recuperation of a wide range of women writers and the revaluation of genres such as children's literature, novels of sensibility, and the gothic. Anne Mellor's important (1993) study, *Romanticism and Gender*, not only recuperates about twenty of the 200 or so women writers of the time, but also maps out some significant differences between their 'thematic concerns, formal practices, and ideological positionings' and those of their male contemporaries (2). Moreover, the emergence of 'literature' as a critical category was itself being understood as deeply imbricated in questions of gender, as was the distinction between the novel (primarily the realm of the feminine) and the more highly valued poetry (the realm of the masculine) (Alexander 1989; Ross 1990; Kelly 1993).

Feminist literary criticism also made a significant contribution to Romantic studies through its take-up of the emotions. The cognate but separate terms 'sentiment', 'sensibility', and 'the passions' had long been topics of concern for Romantic scholars, but their political roles in what might be called forms of intersubjectivity and community, especially in women's fiction, became a critical focus for scholars of the period (Todd 1986; Mullan 1988; Van Sant 1993; Skinner 1999). Like Siskin, whose interest in a 'politics of feeling' had to do with the relation between aesthetics and broader social questions of proper conduct, some feminist scholars of Romanticism in the 1980s, such as Mary Poovey and Margaret Homans, attempted to reveal the ideological gender system within which the place of 'emotion' in literature was located; others—especially those influenced by French feminist theory—approached emotions very much in the context of moving beyond male-constructed binaries, but again with an eye to contemporary politics. As Elizabeth Fay was to argue in 1999, 'feminist theory assumes social critique to be the mainstay of feminist writing, and social correction the mainstay of women's thought and art' (Fay 1998, 5). With its focus on gender difference, patriarchy, and sexual politics, the nature and extent of that critique were different, as was the sense of who was marginalised, and the premises for arguments for social change.

Whether inflected by Foucault or feminist theory (Armstrong 1987; Craciun 2003), or later by identity politics and post-colonialism (Makdisi 1998, 2003), the new historicism, in its various guises, dominated the ways in which scholars understood and wrote about the 'politics' of Romanticism for over two decades. This is no longer the case. As a critical orthodoxy, it

has, in many ways, run its course, and over the last decade, there have been a number of retrospectives, personal reminiscences, and summaries of its place in Romantic studies (see, for example, Davies 2009; Christie 2009; Levinson 2012; Fermanis and Regan 2014). Nevertheless, the wide body of work which has been amalgamated under the term 'new historicism' stands as a key moment in modern 'political' Romantic studies. For all their diversity, what characterises these different forms of political criticism is the attempt to distance oneself from the assumptions of the Romantics in order to critique those assumptions. Like Jerome McGann, they find Romantic poetry 'everywhere marked by extreme forms of displacement and poetic conceptualization whereby the actual human issues with which the poetry is concerned are resituated in a variety of idealized localities', and help 'to expose these dramas of displacement and idealization' (1). Ideological criticism constitutes a particular 'family' of scholarship by which the politics of Romantic literature is read against the politics of the time, understood through the lens of the politics of the present. And not just Romanticism, of course. In the introduction to their recent collection, *Critique and Postcritique* (2017), Elizabeth Anker and Rita Felski claim that 'virtually every field in literary and cultural studies—from American studies to animal studies, from feminist theory to New Historicism—has developed local inflections of, and variations on, critique, whether in relation to its central terms of reference, in-house debates, or styles of argument' (3).

It is this dimension of 'critique' that has been increasingly questioned in recent years. Felski, for instance, sees her work as joining 'a growing groundswell of voices, including scholars in feminist and queer studies as well as actor-network theory, object-oriented ontology, and influential strands of political theory' (2015, 8). As we might expect, those voices are singing from different songbooks. In Felski's case, one of her aims is to argue for the view that 'political linkages and effects are not immanent, hidden in the convoluted folds of texts, but derive from connections and mediations that must be tracked down and described' (11). Such an aim fits well with the broad intent of Bruno Latour and actor network theory; Latour himself claiming that critique has 'run out of steam' (Latour 2004). From an entirely different perspective, Caroline Levine also seeks to describe the complexity and fluidity of the ways 'that power operates in a world dense with functioning forms' that 'can be at once containing, plural, overlapping, portable, and situated' (2015, 9, 11).

The current collection is also located outside the project of critique, but in saying that, we want to reiterate its central concern with politics in

the Romantic period. Politics here is understood not simply as ideology or the dispersed and pervasive nature of power that Foucault locates in forms of knowledge, to be interpreted and critiqued. Taking a leaf from Felski's comment above that 'political linkages and effects ... derive from connections and mediations that must be tracked down and described', we are concerned primarily with mapping out effects, rather than interpreting causes: instead of starting with the general and 'finding' it in local instances, the essays in this collection examine the local first to see where it leads us. Of course, any mapping exercise involves theoretical and interpretative assumptions. While some individual essays in the collection have recourse to theoretical positions, the collection as a whole breaks out of any given framework in order to open up the overall picture of politics at work in Romantic print media.

Felski's argument specifically addresses the affective element in the practice of political criticism, and it speaks to the title of the current collection. In it, she approaches critique as just one way of reading texts, with its own particular 'constellation of attitudes and beliefs' (2015, 21). In particular, she is interested in the affective range comprising this 'critical mood', this 'style of thought infused with a range of reasons and passions' (10). Arguing that 'works of art do not only subvert but also convert' (17), she suggests that we need to move beyond the narrowness of symptomatic reading, the 'affective inhibition' (188) of critique, to other forms of reading.

ROMANTICISM AND THE EMOTIONS

Felski's interest in what she calls an 'affective hermeneutics' (2015, 178) alerts us to the impact of the 'affective turn' (Clough 2007) on Romantic studies. Its impact on the political study of Romanticism is noted by Lisa Ottum and Seth Reno in their introduction to *Wordsworth and the Green Romantics: Affect and Ecology in the Nineteenth Century* (2016): 'Similar to the impulse of ecocriticism, the so-called affective turn in the humanities and social sciences has sought to renew emphasis on emotion, which, like nature, has experienced relative marginalization in new historicist scholarship' (5–6). The critical significance of emotion's place in Romantic literature has made Romantic studies fertile territory for such scholarship. Early examples can be seen in the revival of interest in the literature of sensibility in the mid-1990s. Barbara Benedict (1994), Claudia Johnson (1995), Markman Ellis (1996), Howard Barker-Benfield (1996),

and McGann himself (1996) have been instrumental in this wave of scholarship. For many of these scholars, though, the task is still to read the politics (or in some cases, 'ideology') of sensibility. Benedict, for example, attends to the ways in which feelings were incorporated into polite manners, with their class and gender overtones; Johnson links the practice of 'chivalric' sentimentalism to the concurrent need for female suffering as the object of sentiment, with women risking becoming 'equivocal beings'; Barker-Benfield traces the development of sensibility in relation to the multifaceted debate about commercial modernity, arguing that the 'cult of sensibility' exerted a defining influence on the culture of middle-class women that emerged in eighteenth-century Britain; and Ellis directly connects sentimental literature to the growth of the anti-slavery movement, arguing that both were ultimately complicit in their willingness to feel but not to act. Adela Pinch's *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen* (also 1996) takes the concept of sensibility a step further, however, in mapping out the epistemological problems at the heart of 'feelings talk'. Pinch's account is more subtle and suggestive. She situates Romanticism's 'investment in finding feelings out' (1996, 11), its concern with the epistemological issues raised by feelings, in a longer political context:

Politically, this long age of feelings is framed by the emergence of feeling as the center of civic identity in postabsolutist English political thought, the reformulation of questions about rights during the late eighteenth-century revolutionary period, and the development of theories of relations to others and to objects necessitated by colonialist and commercial expansion. (11)

This link between the epistemology of feelings and broader political concerns in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries should have received more scholarly attention, as it promised to push studies of sensibility in new directions. At the time, however, such epistemological problems were constructed in terms that became part of what is now called the affective turn. Here, the key issue revolved around the role of the body in shaping perceptions and experiences of the feelings or the emotions, with 'affect' becoming the central term. Taken up especially in feminist and queer theory, the new focus on embodiment was probably given its strongest impetus by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003). Sedgwick's argument drew on the work of the psychologist Sigmund Freud (1962–1963), who proposed 'the existence of a limited number of "affect programs" or basic emotions, which he theorized as

innately triggered responses that functioned independently of objects or cognitions' (Leys 2017, 22). Also critical in this shift was the work of Brian Massumi who, in 'The Autonomy of Affect' (1995), differentiated between affect and emotion, arguing that affect is 'irreducibly bodily and automatic' (see Massumi 2002, 28). In the words of Rei Terada, 'emotion is a psychologically, at least minimally interpretive experience whose physiological aspect is *affect*. *Feeling* is a capacious term that connotes both physiological sensations (affects) and psychological states (emotions)' (2001, 4; original emphasis).

Within Romantic studies, the role of affect was explored in numerous ways, ranging, for example, from Thomas Pfau's (2005) investigation of the 'moods' of paranoia, trauma, and melancholy, through Kevis Goodman's (2004) analysis of the georgic mode, Mary Favret's (2010) account of the affects of war, and Nancy Yousef's (2013) study of intimacy. A related strand of scholarship examined the place of science in constructing the ways Romantics came to be preoccupied with 'affect'. Noel Jackson's *Science and Sensation in Romantic Poetry* (2008) is a fine early example of this approach, as is Amanda Jo Goldstein's recent *Sweet Science: Romantic Materialism and the Logics of Life* (2017). Common to many of these studies is a deliberate rejection of the politics of critique which sees Romantic poetry as 'assent[ing] to the mechanisms of disciplinary power' (Jackson, 148). Thus Goodman's account of the georgic mode consciously moves beyond 'ideology critiques' of its supposed burying of history, turning our attention instead to the ways it acts as a '[channel] of sensation and perception' through which its readers could feel 'the world's strangeness' (2004, 22, 90). Accordingly, what we might think of as history escapes cognition but is felt through affective responsiveness.

The common denominator here is the concern with affect as a non-cognitive mode of experience or apprehension. But while poetry might require 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings', it only becomes poetry when 'recollected in tranquillity', and it is precisely this temporal (and cognitive) dimension that is problematical for affect theorists. Favret, for example, sees literature during wartime as 'an attempt to trace and give shape to such affect [created by war]' (2010, 11). The same holds for the experience of reading. Goodman's argument, for example, reminds us of the importance Felski attaches to the affects of readers in her criticisms of critique, though in the case of the georgic, the 'reader' is the poem's reader of graves and other objects of the past. Felski sees the affects of reading as potentially life-changing, asserting that 'affective engagement

is the very means by which literary works are able to reach, reorient, and even reconfigure their readers' (2015, 177). But affect here is a means to an experience, not the full experience. Indeed, Noel Jackson argues that we can see 'poetry as making us feel not in order to suspend critique but rather to make it possible' (2008, 162).

That may well be so, at least for some poetry, and it offers a welcome alternative to the dismissive tone of much criticism driven by political critique. At its heart, though, remains the assumption of a temporal lag between the 'original' or prior affective experience, and the input of cognition or intentionality. Theoretically, this is based on the 'half-second delay' between actual brain activity and consciousness, an argument pursued by Brian Massumi based on the experimental work of Benjamin Libet (see Massumi 1995). Affect's purported non-cognitive nature raises a number of problems though, especially for critics interested in politics generally and the politics of literature and literary culture in particular. These problems have been addressed by a number of writers, but perhaps the most detailed and extensive criticism has been that of Ruth Leys. In her wonderfully forensic analysis of affect theory and the psychological experiments on which it is based, Leys notes that

What is at stake for the theorists whose turn to affect I have been analyzing is a "logic" according to which attention to ideology or belief is replaced by a focus on bodily affects that are understood to be the outcome of subliminal, autonomic corporeal processes. Stressing bodies over ideas, affect over reason, the new affect theorists claim that what is crucial is not your beliefs and intentions but the affective processes that are said to produce them, with the result that political change becomes a matter not of persuading others of the truth of your ideas but of producing new ontologies or "becoming" new bodies, and new lives. (2017, 343)

Leys is not arguing for a Habermasian position on the rationality of communicative action and certainly takes on board our embodied nature in which emotions and affects (however defined) impact on the nature of our political and other beliefs; but she is concerned to challenge the anti-cognitivist and anti-intentionalist assumptions of affect theory.

This introduction is not the place to rehearse these deeply conflicted arguments, many of which are based on claims and counter-claims regarding the validity of earlier psychological experiments. Like contemporary affect studies, the current collection is located outside the tradition/project

of critique, and like affect studies, it is fundamentally concerned with the emotions in their various guises. However, unlike affect studies, it explores the relations between emotions and politics not as indirect, but as part of the intentionality of consciousness. If, as Leys suggests, 'cultural theorists who have turned to affect convert questions about the meaning of works of art into ones concerning their traumatic-affective effect or influence on the reader or viewer' (323), then it is reasonable to say that the essays in the collection are more interested in meaning and signification than in affect. As a result, while our collection certainly engages with issues of affect, we have deliberately avoided the term in our title, opting instead for a description which more accurately foregrounds our primary interest in the complex relations between politics and the *emotions* in Romantic print culture.

This is partly because, at best, we can only infer emotional responses on the part of Romantic readers, given the paucity of evidence. More importantly, it is because we are not dealing with works of art, but prose articles in periodicals. In this, the collection differs significantly from that of Fadlak and Sha (*Romanticism and the Emotions*, 2014), which is not only primarily concerned with the 'unexpected affective resonance' (4) of Romantic literature, as distinct from periodical articles, but frames the problem as a kind of paradox, in which emotions have both temporality and ontology: 'Together, these essays argue for the unacknowledged forms of Romantic productivity especially when they interrupt the possibility of productivity, and in so doing, hope to encourage disruptions of current neuroscientific accounts of emotion that insist upon the automaticity of the emotions at the expense of their intentionality' (13). Here, too, despite the use of both words 'emotion' and 'affect' in the essays, the contributors generally take what might conveniently be called an intentionalist approach to how emotions work. But the recourse to intentionality is specifically relevant to our concern with emotion and politics, not just with emotions per se. Indeed, the politics of emotion-talk and the emotional register of politics-talk in the periodical press require us to focus precisely on meaning and signification. We ask what these periodicals were trying to achieve politically (both in the sense of politics as we generally understand it and in the more localised realm of cultural politics) when they wrote about the emotions (whether in literary works or elsewhere) or employed emotional rhetoric in their analyses of political situations.

In deliberately taking this approach, and despite the differences in emphasis across the chapters, we draw on a valuable body of work on politics and emotions in the Romantic period that remains historicist but

moves beyond earlier new historicist criticism. One aspect of this scholarship recalls Elizabeth Anker's and Rita Felski's words in the introduction to *Critique and Postcritique*, where they differentiate 'between those thinkers who hail the turn to affect as a means of breaking with critical or skeptical modes of analysis and others who insist on the inescapable entanglement of power with affective life and a resulting need for ongoing critique' (2017, 12). Thus, for example, Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite's 2002 collection, *Romantic Sociability*, takes up the fraught and fragile nature of idealism (with its concomitant disillusion) by showing how 'highly charged combinations of politics and sociability' (7) enabled many writers to retain hope in the face of the political climate. Like Gillian Russell, Jon Mee is also a contributor to this volume, and his *Romanticism, Enthusiasm and Regulation* (2003) represents a major contribution to a post-new historicist study of the cultural politics of emotions. For Mee, 'enthusiasm' was a double-edged sword politically, being a necessary generator of change, but at the same time requiring regulation to be effective. The vulnerability of emotion had already been beautifully analysed in John Barrell's *Imagining the King's Death* (2000), in which what he calls 'the language of sentiment' was a primary medium for accounts of the execution of Louis XVI in 1793. More recently, Mary Fairclough's (2013) analysis of sympathy as an agent of sociality in *The Romantic Crown* explores the tensions generated between hopes for potential harmony and fears of social unrest. In a different vein, but with similar dexterity, Harriet Guest's *Unbounded Attachment* argues that 'the language of sensibility provides a means of imagining the position of women in relation to the broader political identity of the nation' (2013, 4), while Kevin Gilmartin's superb study of William Hazlitt shows how 'he was motivated partly by a commitment to disinterested reflection, and partly by a growing frustration with the defeat of liberty at home and abroad' (2015, 15). In fact, Gilmartin argues, 'there was ample room for passion and partisanship in Hazlitt's theory of disinterestedness' (2015, 15).

Work of this kind has been immensely influential in re-shaping how we think of 'politics and emotions' in the Romantic period, in the sense of both (a) emotional styles in political discourses and (b) discourses about the emotions, including their function in attempting to distinguish 'literary' from 'non-literary' works. Most of the works mentioned above are concerned more with discourses about emotion than with emotional styles, and address a specific aspect of the emotions: enthusiasm (Mee), the politics of feeling (Guest), and sympathy (Fairclough). Similarly, they tend to

consider the emotions in relation to the discourse of sensibility rather than the more capacious, variegated category of the emotions, as it is currently applied in theories and histories of affect. Moreover, much work on both the emotions and affect has been devoted to imaginative literature, whether canonical or non-canonical texts. The current collection extends this work in new directions. Rather than focusing on specific emotions or ideals of sensibility, it is concerned with emotions in the sense of both emotional styles and discourses about the emotions. More significantly, it approaches the study of the politics of emotion through the medium of Romantic periodicals rather than literary works.

ROMANTICISM AND PERIODICALS

'From the perspective of readers', write Gowan Dawson, Richard Noakes, and Jonathan Topham of the nineteenth century, 'general periodicals probably played a far greater role than books in shaping the public understanding of new scientific discoveries, theories, and practices'. The authors then go on to explain why this should have been so:

For the historical scholar, it is, paradoxically, the very time-sensitive nature of periodicals that gives them their permanent value. Of course nineteenth-century books were written in response to other books, but the fine texture of debate was embodied far more completely in the periodicals. Day by day, week by week, month by month, periodicals addressing widely diverging reading audiences contained implicit and explicit dialogues concerning the sciences. Such interchanges, occurring both within and between periodicals, represent a remarkable, almost overwhelming, body of evidence. ... Books were also secondary to periodicals in other significant ways. It was in periodicals, for instance, that many of the best-known books of the nineteenth century first appeared, ranging from a considerable portion of the novels to such scientific classics as John Tyndall's *Fragments of Science* (1871). In addition, those works first published as books were often primarily known through their representations in periodicals, whether in reviews, extracts, advertisements, correspondence, or passing comments. (2–3)

Dawson, Noakes, and Topham are introducing a volume on *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical*, so their generalisation is deliberately focused or circumspect. The truth is, however, from the perspective of nineteenth-century readers, general periodicals almost certainly played a

far greater role than books in shaping the public understanding of everything, not least of politics. Burke, Paine, Godwin, Bentham, Coleridge, and Mill came to the average middle-class reader refracted through the pages of a periodical, each servicing the interests of a contemporary faction while at the same time appealing beyond that faction on a variety of issues of interest or concern to the literate British public. Indeed, the ideas and opinions to which most Romantic readers were exposed were more often those of Francis Jeffrey, Henry Brougham, or Sydney Smith at the *Edinburgh*, William Gifford, Robert Southey, or John Barrow of the *Quarterly*, Leigh Hunt in the *Examiner* or John Wilson or John Gibson Lockhart in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Clifford Siskin and William Warner have asked us to think of intellectual history as a history of mediation or infrastructure; the periodical press both enabled and comprised the intellectual history of the nineteenth century (616–18).

Printed forms published periodically had been around in Britain since the beginning of printing in the fifteenth century in the form of almanacs, annals, and annuals. Ephemeral publications discussing contemporary issues and events had been around since the Elizabethan period, and newspapers or newsbooks (called 'corantos') had begun to appear in numbered sequences during the 1620s. It took a number of legal, cultural, and political changes, however, as well as changes in what we would call communications and technology, to allow the network of newspapers, magazines, and reviews that we immediately recognise as a periodical press to develop and flourish. We know that the number of books available for purchasing or borrowing from the new libraries that were starting up everywhere climbed steadily throughout the eighteenth century, quadrupling between 1750 and 1800, but the surest sign that a publishing revolution was taking place was the proliferation of periodicals. The periodical press evolved to meet a new demand, firstly, for information ('intelligence') and, secondly, for a critical position or *opinion* on most aspects of communal life, joining a steady stream of pamphlets and digests and encyclopaedias in offering ideas and information and argument in a condensed form. Most writers and thinkers during the Romantic period involved themselves in the periodical press, writing for periodicals to reach a broader public and/or to supplement whatever income they could manage from their profession, their inheritance, or their book publishing.

With the rise of printing and the demand for printed material, in other words, came the rise of newspapers and weeklies, reviews and magazines, part of a massive bureaucracy organising ideas and opinions—what Siskin

and Warner call 'mediation or infrastructure'. Readers could look to the abstracts and extracts reproduced in periodicals and to the critical recommendations of their articles to help them make better-informed choices, or to save them the trouble of reading the books themselves. Between 1790 and 1832 alone, according to Jon Klancher, over 4000 periodicals were launched in Britain (Klancher 1987, ix). By the 1820s, new titles were appearing so rapidly that contemporary observers complained about the 'multiplicity of periodical publications' (*New Monthly Magazine*, January 1824, 42), which constituted a 'countless throng' (*Oriental Herald and Weekly Review*, February 1824, 232), 'their vast increase, and the constant additions which are almost daily making to their number', as a piece in *Blackwood's* opined, being 'too notorious to require proof or illustration' (*BEM*, November 1824, 519). The vast majority were short-lived, it is true, but the number relative to the literate adult population was a large one, and what we know of the book sharing and book borrowing habits of the late eighteenth-century reader suggests a much wider circulation—wide enough, certainly, for us to regard periodicals as both an index of and influence on opinion during a vitally contentious period of the nation's intellectual and cultural history.

The distinguishing feature of the monthly magazines that dominated post-Waterloo literary culture was their formal heterogeneity, publishing criticism and gossip and poetry and songs and curiosities and scientific information and anecdotes and book extracts and reviews of books. The magazine had become increasingly popular early in the eighteenth century and had been around some time before Edward Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine* (1731–1914) first used the actual word in its title and described itself as 'a monthly collection, to treasure up as in a magazine' ('magazine', from the original Arab word meaning 'a storehouse'). The very number, variety, and brevity of the magazine's various components were central to its appeal; its *raison d'être* (to quote Oliver Goldsmith) was 'never to be long dull upon one subject'. A magazine market already amply supplied by the late eighteenth century was glutted by 1817, the date of the launching of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. The exigencies of this, as of other competitive markets, meant that, to stand out, a sensational critical and creative talent was required—or, at the very least, sensationalism itself was required. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* offered both.

The public may, in time, see how they will be affected by the *freedom* or *slavery* of this great and moral engine', wrote William Cobbett of the periodical press in 1811 (*Political Register*, 23 February). The government,

however, had seen it a hundred years earlier. The number of newspapers and periodicals that started up in the early eighteenth century became so alarming that in 1712 the government had introduced stamp duty to keep up their price and restrict their readership. In spite of stamp duty, however, which had been regularly increased in the decades following its introduction, the number of periodicals carrying the most recent knowledge in the 'arts and sciences' and the most recent commercial, political, and social 'intelligence' relevant to the life of the community it serviced—as well as gossip and other diversions, of course—had grown steadily throughout the eighteenth century, as we saw earlier. Because of the presence and influence of the periodical press, senior government ministers and members of the opposition invested heavily in newspapers and periodicals (like the *Quarterly Review*) as affective forms of knowledge control and party propaganda. Even when subsidised, however, the periodical press seems to have relied primarily, not on sponsorship, but on sales and advertisements. Polemic might have been encouraged by political pay-offs or house-trained by the perennial threat of arrest for 'seditious libel', but information was still at a premium and competition was fierce. Like so many other aspects of British culture in the Romantic period, the world of periodicals was a world of supply and demand driven as much by commercial as by political interests. However, this is not to say that individual periodicals were politically disinterested. Quite the opposite. Periodicals frequently laid claim to disinterestedness and took pride in their role as instruments of social progress and cultural improvement. But in the wake of the French Revolution, they became increasingly partisan, and their pages were shot through with combative aggression as much as refined, rational debate.

Only a handful of books have been published specifically on Romantic periodicals since Jon Klancher's study of *The Making of English Reading Audiences* in 1987. Significantly, almost all these books have been published since 2000, a moment when, as Mark Parker (2000) intimated, the study of Romantic periodicals as a dominant cultural form was still a relatively new enterprise. Despite differences in focus, the major books in this emerging strain of scholarship can be characterised according to several broad concerns. The first and most common of these is the role of periodicals in constructing diverse and contested readerships and social identities (Klancher 1987; Gilmartin 1996; Parker 2000; Higgins 2005; Schoenfeld 2009; Fang 2010; Stewart 2011; Wheatley 2013; Morris and Roberts 2013; Benchimol et al. 2015). A second large and related body of work has taken up the role of reviews in the cultural politics of the time

(Duncan 2007; Butler 2010; Gilmartin 1996; Wheatley 2013; Demata and Wu 2002; Finkelstein 2006; Cutmore 2007; Schoenfeld 2009; Christie 2009; Stewart 2011; Morris and Roberts 2013; Benchimol et al. 2015). Thirdly, a smaller body of scholarship has explored the role of periodicals in constructing 'Romanticism' and some of the central concepts we have come to associate with Romanticism (Parker 2000; Higgins 2005; Shattock 1989; Wheatley 2003; Finkelstein 2006; Morris and Roberts 2013), as well as critiques of Romanticism (Christie 2009). Other scholars have offered reinterpretations of Romantic poetry and prose from within the context of the periodicals in which they were published (Parker 2000), and finally, some have investigated the role of periodicals in the construction, differentiation, and organisation of knowledge (Demata and Wu 2002; Cutmore 2007; Parker 2000; Schoenfeld 2009; Christie 2013; Stewart 2011).

While the current collection draws on this developing engagement with periodicals in the politics of Romantic print culture, its central concern with politics and the emotions extends it in new directions. Where periodicals have been employed in Romantic emotions scholarship, their use has been incidental rather than central. Where they have been studied for their engagement with politics, and more broadly the politics of print culture, scholarship has neglected their affective dimensions. Yet it is precisely in the burgeoning periodical press that we see many of the explicit arguments about the place of emotions in politics and cultural politics, as well as many of the examples of emotional rhetoric at work.

THE VOLUME

The essays in this collection directly examine the political dimension of articles in the Romantic periodical press, ranging from book reviews, through military essays and critiques of religion, to debates about parliamentary policy and practice. Part I begins with Jon Mee's analysis of the multiple tensions around appropriate forms of intellectual exchange in the mid-1790s in the wake of the publication of the second part of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*, specifically those concerning politics, based on readings of *Pig's Meat*, *Hog's Wash* (later renamed *Politics for the People*), and the *Tribune*. Applying Christina Lupton's work on 'the ontology of print', Mee addresses debates about the legitimate forms of radical or reformist political discussion, from the 'leisure' and 'reflection' mandated by anti-populist thinkers like William Godwin to the 'affective spark' of performative speech in political lectures like those of John Thelwall. For Thelwall, as Mee shows,

the portable 'diurnal' publications of the periodical press were designed to replicate the immediacy and rhetoric of weekly meetings of the London Corresponding Society.

Peter Denney also focuses on the intellectual culture of popular radicalism, but extends his analysis of the role of the passions to include that of sensory experiences. While much scholarly attention has been devoted to the significance of the emotions in political debates prompted by the French Revolution, little consideration has been paid to the ways the senses featured in the propaganda war. Denney's chapter examines the links between the senses and the emotions in popular radical print culture through an analysis of the *Moral and Political Magazine*, the official periodical of the London Corresponding Society, which was published in monthly instalments for around twelve months, beginning in 1796. Like many radical pamphlets, the *Moral and Political Magazine* attributed to the senses a wide range of political meanings, which intersected in complex ways with discussions concerning the significance of different emotions. Its aim to combine cultural improvement with radical polemic, however, meant making the senses prominent aspects of political argument while at the same time acknowledging them as impediments to enlightened political activity.

Also concerned with the politics triggered by the French Revolution, but in a very different register, Neil Ramsey investigates military journals of the late 1790s, such as the *Monthly Military Companion* and the *British Military Library, or Journal*. During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic period, Britons lived 'through but not in a war', notes Ramsey, quoting Mary Favret, an experience fundamentally constituted by the circulation of information in the era's burgeoning print media. Central to this idea of mass-mediated war was the way in which experience circulated as affect. The wars gave rise to what Lauren Berlant (2011) would term an affect world, in which emotion circulated as widely as rational discussion within the public sphere. The reporting of war began to become, itself, an object of affect associated with the expectations, anxieties, comforts, and impotence of waiting for and receiving daily war news.

Like Ramsey, Thomas Vrancken addresses forms of affect in conservative politics, as distinct from those of the radical publications analysed by Mee and Denney. Questions surrounding the emotionally charged politics of nationalism characteristic of the military journals are the focus of Vrancken's chapter on the older counter-discourse that lingered on during the Romantic period in the pages of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Founded in 1731, *The Gentleman's* continued to operate in the new century: a 'well-preserved

piece of useless antiquity', in William Hazlitt's patronising phrase. Explicitly rejecting 'party spirit' and 'the bitterness of controversy', in its centenary Preface of 1830, *The Gentleman's* instead sought to bind the nation together—to 'pour oil over ... agitated waters' and omit that which was 'calculated to increase animosity'. Paying particular attention to the 1790s, Vrancken's chapter focuses on the magazine's impact on the Romantics and on its interactions with new forms of emotionally infused nationalism, part of a broader examination of the contested politics of nationalism in the Romantic public sphere.

Part II addresses several issues emerging in the post-Waterloo period through to the First Reform Bill, an interval quite different in its political rhetoric from the 1790s, not least due to the shift in print culture caused by the creation of the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Quarterly Review*, and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Gillian Russell's chapter functions as a transition from the 1790s to the 1820s, as she notes that an explosion of print ephemera in the wake of the French Revolution influenced, much later, William Hone's *The Every-Day Book* (1825–1827), an innovative project, which combined the literary journal with other cultural forms. Going back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to identify landmarks in the early culture of periodicals, Russell offers a genealogy of *The Every-Day Book* in various journalistic forms and print ephemera, often initiated in response to political events. In the course of reconstructing Hone's formal, topical, and functional antecedents, Russell ranges from the newsheets and other 'diurnal' publications that appeared and proliferated from the early seventeenth century—now best known to us in Addison and Steele's reflexive cultural adaptations, *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*—through that long-lasting 'repository', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, to the 'job'-printed handbills that became prominent from the 1750s and flourished in 'inflammatory' versions in the 1790s, when Hone learnt his skills as a pressman amidst anxieties regarding the role of print ephemera in transmitting dangerous passions. This print history allows Russell to reflect on the 'affect and politics of periodical time' in Hone's mixture of immediacy and antiquarianism, reportage and anecdote, social history and literature.

Joanne Wilkes, Kim Wheatley, and William Christie all take up ways in which the emotions played a role in the cultural politics of the post-war period. Joanne Wilkes's chapter explores the ways in which 'Austen's fiction can be related to the gender politics of the periodical press in the early nineteenth century'. Examining assumptions made about gender and

the emotions in the cultural sphere, Wilkes uses the case of Jane Austen's reception to challenge and complicate the widely held view that the affective life was specifically the province of female writers. Regarding contemporary attacks upon Maria Edgeworth's unemotional moralism and lack of acquaintance with the public sphere as indicative, Wilkes sees Jane's brother Henry Austen's 'Biographical Notice' of his sister as negotiating the risks to a woman's reputation posed by a misogynistic periodical press. At the same time, Wilkes's chapter recognises in the *Quarterly* reviews of Walter Scott and Richard Whately, and in a less well-known article by Maria Jane Jewsbury, critical insights that go beyond the conventional, usually invidious gender dichotomies of the period.

Analysing the politics of John Wilson's many *Blackwood's* articles on Wordsworth and the feelings, from his 'rhapsodical admiration' of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) to his sharp criticism of Wordsworth on revealed religion in *Eccelesiastical Sketches* (1822) and other later collections, Kim Wheatley argues that Wilson's responses to the poet can be viewed as politically motivated re-writings of Wordsworthian 'natural feelings'. In particular, reading Wilson's reviews in the light of Paul Fry's *Wordsworth and the Poetry of What We Are* (2008), Wheatley counterposes Wilson's (admittedly inconsistent) readings to Francis Jeffrey's attack on the poet in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, the former offering a defence of nonhuman emotions bound up with a conservative nationalistic outlook, as distinct from the latter's Whiggish and anthropocentric insistence on human emotions.

William Christie, too, is concerned with *Blackwood's* and John Wilson, taking Wilson's emotional ambivalence as his point of departure for an analysis of the politics of emotion in reactionary episodes of *Noctes Ambrosianae* and in the critical reviewing of *Blackwood's* more generally. While his character 'Christopher North' and other 'personations' allowed Wilson subtle arrogations and exploitations as the Lord of Misrule, the formal, intellectual, and emotional instabilities that the *Noctes* shared with the tradition of Menippean satire were central to its intervention in literary criticism and the culture wars of the early nineteenth century. After establishing the nature and extent of *Maga's* self-conscious resistance to the philosophic Whiggism of the influential *Edinburgh Review*, the chapter analyses the three-act No. V of *Noctes* on the King's Jaunt (September 1822), reflecting on the role of sentiment (and sentimentality) in *Maga's* critical practice and political self-projection as the flag-bearer of a populist Tory nationalism.

While reviews of contemporary writers open up a range of issues concerning the politics of emotions in the periodical press, there were other ways in which the emotions had a political edge. One of these is discussed by Tom McLean, who addresses the emotional politics of women's writing through the periodical strategies employed by novelist Jane Porter to balance her political convictions with her emotional need to support the political interests of her brother, the artist, traveller, and British diplomat, Sir Robert Ker Porter. The essay draws on recent discussions of women and the emotional politics behind their labour, as well as on work on Romantic literary families, to consider the conflict behind Porter's periodical writings and the affective strategies she deployed to navigate her public and private opinions. Among other things, it uses Sara Ahmed's work on ethical encounters to consider the way in which Porter's efforts on behalf of her brother compromised her sense of duty to the broader political realm and to her 'family' of readers.

If McLean's chapter can be thought of in terms of 'private' politics, the book's final chapter by Jock Macleod returns to the broad issues of public political discourse raised by Jon Mee in the first chapter. In it, Macleod analyses the rhetoric of the *Examiner* (established 1808) and the *Spectator* (established 1828) in the years immediately leading up to and following the Reform Bill of 1832, arguing that, despite their similar political positions and cultural locations (both of them supported the Bill), the *Examiner* deploys a rhetoric characteristic of its emotional tenor under the Hunts, whereas the *Spectator* manifests an emerging 'liberal' register of emotional distance and putative objectivity that would become the dominant ideal of political discourse in the mid-Victorian years. Following the work of Martha Nussbaum and others who see emotions as 'inchoate cognitive appraisals', it shows how in both cases the rhetoric reveals attempts at negotiating emotional responses to a series of fraught political situations, but that, in the *Examiner*, it is a rhetoric aligned to an earlier, more affective form of periodical political culture, whereas in the *Spectator* it is a rhetoric closer to what we would now call liberal.

All the contributors to this collection are aware of the multiplicity of voices in periodical texts, and of their sometimes deliberately contradictory nature (often the case in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*), whose emotions, then, and whose politics, can be at times problematical questions, though ones that alert us to the extra-subjective nature of emotional and political discourse in periodicals. The collection opens up extended and varied accounts of emotion-talk and the emotional registers of political

discourse in the complicated spaces constituted by Romantic periodicals. In doing so, it not only demonstrates the need to study this widely read form of Romantic public media, but also shows how vital periodicals were to the intermingling of politics and emotions, which was such a feature of British print culture in the era prior to the rise of liberalism.

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