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British Romanticism and Europe

Monte Verità, Ascona, 23-26 June 2022

Panel Abstracts

Panel A: Ideas of Europe 1 (poetry & fiction)

Anna Anselmo, 'Tackling the Continent: Reflections on Keats's Sonnet "On Peace"'

In *Postwar*, Tony Judt puts a spin on the European question: "Europe, then, is not so much about absolute geography – where a country or people actually are – as relative geography: where they sit in relation to others" (2005: 753). This double articulation of Europe – the taxonomical, on the one hand, with countries one alongside the other, and the systematic, on the other hand, that is, countries that interact and are interrelated and, therefore, constitute a (Saussurian) system – is reflected in one of John Keats's early sonnets, "On Peace". Written hot on the heels of the Peace of Paris and Napoleon's surrender in 1814, "On Peace" is strongly influenced by Leigh Hunt's Examiner commentary on the matter, while presenting at least two remarkable peculiarities. The first is numerical: "Europe" only occurs twice in Keats's poetic corpus and the first occurrence is found in the sonnet "On Peace" (the second is in Keats's verse play "Otho the Great"); the classical counterpart to "Europe", "Europa", occurs only once in the corpus, in the sonnet "On Peace". The second peculiarity concerns Keats's choice to juxtapose two designations for (seemingly) the same referent: the sonnet's irregular versification well accommodates myth and current affairs, Europa and Europe. By identifying the continent as both expressive of a mythical past and mythical boundaries, and as a political entity fraught with conflict, and of which the "triple-kingdom" (l. 4) – England, Scotland, and Ireland – is a part, Keats conceptualizes the continent both in terms of absolute and relative geography; more than that, he articulates Europe as a polysystem, (Even-Zohar 2005) a relational conglomerate of old and new geographies, old and new boundaries, old and new identities within a mythical-political framework, an approach that is at once synchronic and diachronic (Even Zohar 1979). This paper aims to investigate the complexity of Keats's political line of reasoning sketched above, and to identify the possible reverberations in some of his later works.

Zoe Beenstock, 'Europe at the Limit of Syncretism: Scott's *The Talisman* and the Failure of Sympathy in Hume's *History of England*'

This paper welcomes the invitation to examine the construction of a European Romanticism by considering chivalry as a testcase for sympathy in two Scottish Enlightenment texts: David Hume's *History of England* and Walter Scott's *The Talisman*. Hume dismisses the Crusades as "the most signal and most durable monument of human folly, that has yet appeared in any age or nation," but also considers them as a watershed in the development of a modern global culture based on sympathy – a quality deployed through chivalry. In *The Talisman*, Scott repeats Hume's construction of the crusades as ratifying common values and

his assessment of their failed endeavor. But he dismisses chivalry as their redeeming grace. Instead, he argues the case of a European solidarity which trumps Hume's transnational sympathy. Richard the Lionheart and Saladin share a taste for chivalric poetry which cuts across global boundaries and draws these antagonists into a homosocial bond. But the crusades test the notion of a shared culture, heralding a taciturn focus on cultural discreteness in its stead. Scott swerves away from Hume's syncretic global vision, endorsing a national union founded on cultural boundaries and critiquing Hume's focus on a transnational model of sympathy as naively anachronistic in its underestimation of European nationalism.

Marco Canani, 'Charlotte Dacre, between Gothic Insularity and European Otherness'

The Gothic novel has long been viewed as a genre based on a paradoxical dialogism between cosmopolitanism and insularity. By exploring the translations of Gothic novels between the 1790s and the 1830s, Hale (2002) argues that the genre rests on a process of ideological manipulation triggered by the transnational circulation of texts, whereas Miles (2002) reads in the English Gothic proto-nationalist sentiments that anticipate present-day Anti-Europeanism. Embracing Miles's claim that "the Gothic raises the other to the status of narrative principle" (2002, 84), this paper explores the works of Charlotte King (1771-1825), and particularly her novel *Zofloya; or, The Moor* (1806), with a focus on its representation of European otherness. Romantic periodicals harshly criticised the novel for its depravity and lack of delicacy, and according to Hoeveler it stands out as a highly "racist, xenophobic, and misogynistic" (1997, 185) text. However, King's representation of alterity seems to be much more complex and multilayered. The representation of the German Count Ardolph and the moor Zofloya as the source of contamination leading Laurina and her daughter Victoria to their downfall arguably rests on a Europhobic and xenophobic attitude. Yet this view should be pitted against Dacre's own Jewish background, her association with Della Cruscan poets as well as her interest in libertarian revolutions such as the recent independence of Haiti (1804). From this perspective, Dacre's work reflects the paradoxes embedded in Gothic writings, but also the tensions between domestic concerns and foreign fears typical of the early nineteenth-century.

Panel B: Women Novelists

Valérie Cossy, 'Becoming a novelist as a woman without a network: Jane Austen, Isabelle de Charrière'

I would like to question the relevance and implications of the concept in relation to the development of two significant and entirely original literary voices by women. One can easily argue, on the basis of her correspondence, that Austen (1775-1817) constructed herself as the great novelist she was to become regardless of any network: her sister Cassandra and brother Henry, indeed, were pretty much what her literary network amounted to. Although presently less known than Austen – not (yet) turned, academically, into a canonical writer – Charrière (1740-1805) shares a number of features with the author of *Sense and Sensibility*. The focus here would be on her comparable lack of a network according to the cultural and professional meaning of the word. Even though Charrière's correspondence was abundant and, one may argue, the driving force behind her fiction, her letters, nevertheless, cannot be equated with a network, depending as they do on interpersonal relationships and concerns. Even when these are about philosophical, political or literary issues, as is the case with those she exchanged at two different moments of her life with the uncle and nephew David-Louis Constant d'Hermenches and Benjamin Constant, well, these men were of little or even no

help when it came to publishing. They were certainly friends and significant intellectual partners of hers, but her literary “career” as a publishing author was very much a DIY affair. *Three Women* (1798), one of her best-known novels, resulted even from a serious estrangement from Benjamin Constant. When she finally mentioned the work to him, she famously described it as a critical reply against him and Germaine de Staël. But hers was a reply by an isolated woman living in the backwater of Colombier very far away from Paris. One should remember, thus, that the significance of *Three Women* was a matter, originally, of its author’s isolation, which was the price she had accepted to pay for her own cherished difference. This paper asks to what extent her isolation at the time can be seen as the condition liberating the critical perspective with which we have come to identify her today. Comparing Charrière with Austen enables one to consider the absence of network in a woman’s literary career between 1784 (*Letters from Neuchâtel*) and 1818 (*Persuasion*) not just as an obstacle but, maybe, as the condition for them to produce radically original forms of narrative, of which *each one* deemed herself, ultimately, the only judge.

Anne-Claire Michoux, ‘Irish gentlemen and English Bores: Ireland between British and European Romanticism’

In Sydney Owenson’s *O’Donnel; A National Tale* (1814), the continent features as a place of economic opportunity for dispossessed Irishmen as well as ‘the depository of many of the family archives of Ireland’, reflecting the role of mainland Europe in the preservation of Ireland’s past, which Owenson’s fiction demonstrates was partly eradicated by English rule. This paper will explore how Sydney Owenson and Maria Edgeworth, two writers closely associated with the national tale, position Ireland and Irish history in relation to British as well as European history and culture. While *O’Donnel* displays Owenson’s continued interest in recovering and celebrating Ireland’s Gaelic past, it also reflects, in the footnotes’ dialogue between Gaelic and modern scholarship, an attempt to reconcile a focus on history with a desire to paint a modern Ireland that is not insular but an equal participant in European culture, as the novel exposes the trap of antiquarianism, which romanticises the past and obscures contemporary plights. Edgeworth, whose *Castle Rackrent* (1800) had also used a complex paratextual apparatus to introduce English readers to Gaelic culture, claimed in *Irish Bulls* that she was ‘more interested in the fate of the present race of its inhabitants than in the historian of St. Patrick’ and, unconcerned with ‘rusty antiquaries’, celebrated contemporary figures of Irish literary history, looking to Ireland’s present and future. Focusing on *O’Donnel* (1814), *An Essay on Irish Bulls* (1802), and *Ormond* (1817), this paper will discuss how Owenson and Edgeworth negotiated antiquarian impulses in their work, attempting to reconcile a recovery of Ireland’s past while imagining a new future for Ireland within Europe. It will also consider how Owenson’s and Edgeworth’s works were circulated on the continent.

Michael Schrimper, ‘“A goddess of four years standing”: *Belinda*, Greek Mythology, and European Art’

Belinda (1801) is a novel written by a British author and set in Britain, but much of its inspiration comes from Continental Europe, namely ancient Greece and Rome. Male characters refer to a female character as the *Venus de’ Medici*, and Clarence Hervey’s relationship to Rachel-Virginia can be likened to the myth of *Pygmalion and Galatea*, in how he fashions a feminine art object as he pleases. Author Maria Edgeworth also anticipates the art of both early and late nineteenth-century French painters, including Jean-Louis Girodet (in particular his painting *Pygmalion and Galatea* from 1813-19), in her depiction of Hervey as

something of a puppet-master to a young girl. This paper, which builds on contemporary scholarship on *Belinda* and the *Venus* by Jill Heydt-Stevenson, aims to show the ways that a well-known work of British Romantic literature interacts, draws from, and is heightened by the mythology and visual art of the Continent—from the Hellenistic to that of the Napoleon era—ultimately arguing that Edgeworth compares her female characters to mythological women and art objects in order to highlight a lack of social agency among women in early nineteenth-century Britain.

Panel C: Ideas of Europe 2 (travel)

Penny Bradshaw, ‘From Europhile to Europhobe: Ann Radcliffe’s Account of her 1794 European Travels’

In the summer of 1794 the popular Gothic novelist, Ann Radcliffe, made a trip to continental Europe with her husband primarily to visit the landscapes which had featured so extensively in her fiction, but which she had not yet actually visited in person. Their immediate objective was the Swiss Alps but the couple found themselves turned back at the Swiss border. This frustration in achieving their main purpose, combined with increasing anxiety about social unrest encountered on their travels through Germany, resulted in the couple returning directly to England and setting out on an alternative tour of the English Lake District – a region described by Thomas West, author of the best known tour guide of the region, as offering a ‘miniature’ version of the Alps. Radcliffe subsequently published an account of this full two-part touring experience as *A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794... To Which are Added Observations during a Tour to the Lakes*. This text is important for many reasons, not least for what it tells us separately about Romantic constructions of both the Rhine and the English Lakes, but it is particularly so because of the way in which the reading of one location comes to inform the other. As Jeanne Moskal has argued, it is ‘rare, and perhaps unique, among Romantic-period travel books, in juxtaposing foreign with domestic travels. This paper will therefore explore the ways in which Radcliffe develops that juxtaposition during the course of the tour and will consider how, through this process, she enacts a linguistic and imaginative shift from committed Europhile to Europhobe.

Kimberley Page-Jones, ‘Social imaginaries in loyalist travelogues (1792-1796): Louise Elisa Beaumont and Rachel Charlotte Biggs’

The confrontation of various ‘social imaginaries’ is what I would like to examine in the travel narratives of two conservative women who visited France during the revolutionary war at different periods: Rachel Charlotte Biggs from 1792 to 1795 and Louise Beaumont in 1795 and 1796. Their authorial commitment is very different: one travels with her husband who is entrusted with the political analysis of the situation, while the other, who also travels with her husband, hardly ever mentions him and thus endorses the more ‘masculine’ role of socio-political commentator. If both women clearly lean on the conservative and loyalist end of the political spectrum, their narratives should not be reduced to anti-Gallican propaganda. Indeed, both women had deep personal attachments to France. By embedding the French voice of the destitute in their own travel accounts, their narratives emphasize the gradual atomisation of French society due to the new revolutionary rationale of sociality centered on the sovereignty of the people, freedom and the sustenance of self. Their narratives, I will contend, are constitutive of a Conservative Romanticism that will find other textual modes and strategies of expression in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. By discussing Rachel Charlotte Biggs and drawing from her correspondence with William Windham and Nicholas Vansittart,

I would also like to show that her first-hand experience of revolutionary France surprisingly found other channels than the textual one, enabling her political empowerment, albeit an invisible one. Rachel Charlotte Biggs is indeed the sole instigator of the first Royal Jubilee in 1809 and her private correspondence with Windham and Vansittart reveals how she made use of French revolutionary ideas of social regeneration ‘to excite a spirit of benevolence, unanimity & loyalty’ for the British nation and its King.

Enit K. Steiner, ‘Europe, Global & Cropped in *The Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan*’

This paper examines definitional criteria of Europe in the 1810 travelogue of the Indian-Persian scholar Abu Taleb Khan. Europe holds a distinct position in this narrative which sets out at Lucknow, India, and reaches the European continent via the cape of Good Hope, and the coast of Western Africa. To argue this distinction, the English translator of *Travels*, Charles Stewart, promoted Abu Taleb’s work not merely for containing insights relevant to the European readership, but for being the first commentary on the political “institutions of Europe” available in English made by an Asian savant (“Translator’s Preface”). Synecdochally siphoned by the wars resulting from the French Revolution, the geography and history of what Abu Taleb calls “Powers of Europe” intimately link the fortunes of imperial Britain with that of the European continent. This approach goes against the still influential historiography that analyses Britain and Europe separately, not least to make a case for British exceptionalism. *Travels* understands neither British nor recent Indian/Mughal historiography in the absence of the conflicts between warring European kingdoms. While such interrelatedness casts Europe’s lengthening ties across the globe, Abu Taleb’s European geo-political space seems to have a gaping hole where European territories of the Ottoman Empire used to be, a view that contrasts with the imagination of Europe produced in many British books of geography. The paper ponders this contrast to arrive at the criteria that brings and, despite bloody conflicts, holds together Abu Taleb’s version of Europe.

Panel D: Germany and Britain

Anthony Harding, ‘Romanticism, Philosophy, and the Problem of Myth: Transnational Dialogues’

In Western Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century, myth presented itself as a problem for several intersecting reasons. In philosophy, especially, the interpretation of myth and the broader question of its significance as a cultural construct became subjects of intense debate. Kant’s *Critical Philosophy* had defended the “fact” of Reason against Enlightenment scepticism, but at the cost of imposing limitations on the field within which Pure Reason could operate; and accepting that foundational beliefs of Christianity rested not on certain *knowledge*, or on metaphysical *proofs*, but on deductions about human responsibilities and needs, formed by the Practical Reason. The idea of Reason as an immutable divine gift – already complicated by G. E. Lessing in *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (1780), a work that both Coleridge and Schelling admired – was at an end.

This “Copernican revolution” in philosophy required a new account of human history, at a time when European interest in the ancient cultures of India and Asia Minor was growing. During the same period, a revival of interest in the classical world (F. Schlegel’s 1795 essay “Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie” was crucial here) impelled writers to enquire into the belief systems of Greece and Rome, beyond the sterile formulations of neoclassicism. Directed at first towards classical Greece and Rome, from the 1790s onwards

this newly-informed historicism expanded to include the beliefs of pre-Hellenic peoples, and those of ancient India. (William Jones's translations from the Upanishads appeared in 1784 and 1798; in 1801-1802, A. H. Anquetil-Duperron published a Latin version; and in 1808, F. Schlegel translated parts of the *Ramayana* and *Bhagavad Gita*.) Most important, for the theory of myth, G. F. Creuzer's six-volume *Symbolik und Mythologie der älten Volker* appeared in 1810-1812, sparking a furious debate – the “*Creuzerstreit*” – over his hypothesis that Greek myths were derived from ancient Hindu sources, through the intermediary role of pre-Hellenic peoples living around the coasts of the eastern Mediterranean. The question that hovered over these debates about “myth” – including the biblical narratives that J. G. Eichhorn and others had long considered mythical – was whether philosophy should simply supersede all religious beliefs or should learn from them in some way. If biblical narratives were *also* “mythical,” how could Christianity claim any kind of superiority over “pagan” religions? This paper will focus on the critical role played by the “problem of myth” in post-Kantian thought, and on the transnational exchanges it sparked between 1790 and the 1820s, emphasizing the interest shown by British writers in these enquiries

Jolene Mathieson, “‘Mille viae ducunt homines per saecula Romam’: The Romantic Bildgedicht in Germany, England and America’

In an intriguing anecdote in his celebrated *Italian Journey* (1786–1788), Goethe describes his encounter with a statue of Minerva in the Palazzo Giustiniani in Rome. The anecdote is quite brief and not often discussed, but is illuminating in how it maps out Goethe's sense of unease regarding the power of images and their uncanny ability to seduce viewers to engage with them as if they were alive. The conflict inherent in Goethe's anecdote is emblematic of a now obscure yet once vibrant discourse in European poetics around 1800—that of *Kunstreligion*, or ‘art as religion’. Living and thinking at a time in history often referred to as the ‘age of the museum’ and in which the Grand Tour to Italy was an essential part of their education, Romantic period philosopher-poets utilised their poetry and other forms of writing to appraise the increasing presence and quotidian nature of art images and to embed this appraisal within larger aesthetic debates on inter-art relations and the role of poetry. This paper explores how *Kunstreligion* figured into these debates and will engage in a two-fold task: 1) it will situate this and earlier attempts to elevate poetics and aesthetics to a religion (*Kunstreligion*) in relation to August Wilhelm Schlegel's interest in organic form, and 2) it will trace this discourse from its European roots to its transatlantic manifestation in the ekphrastic poetry of American painter Washington Allston, who spent a great deal of time in Europe. At the centre of this transfer is Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and although his work as a Schlegel translator has been well-documented (cf. Paley 2008), I argue that both he and Allston endorse and expand Schlegel's vision of using ekphrasis as a means to dawn a new age of poetry where poetic form is ‘worshipped’

Carmen Reisinger, ‘A Fragmentary Reception of Johann Gottfried Herder: The English Translation of Herder on Shakespeare in the Romantic period’

In the German states, Herder's highly influential essay *Shakespear* (1773) pioneered Romantic ideas of culture and has been seen as the manifesto of the *Sturm und Drang* movement. While in Germany it had been Herder's essay, in Britain it was Schlegel who provided the British audience with the basis for admiring Shakespeare without having to admit any of the ‘faults’, that were traditionally ascribed to his plays. The English translation of August Wilhelm Schlegel's *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (1809-1811) from 1815 was enthusiastically welcomed. Schlegel had used main principles of Herder's essay for his

Lectures and remained a major Shakespeare critic in England for decades to come. Herder's *Shakespear*, by contrast, was neglected for decades after its original publication. An abridged translation by William Taylor, *Fragment on Shakespear*, appeared in the *Monthly Magazine* in 1821, and was partly prompted by the impact of Schlegel's Lectures. The English version of the essay and an example of the few other traces of Herder as a reader of Shakespeare that found their way into British periodicals present the author as a sentimental Bardolater, who did not have anything substantial to add to the scholarly conversation. This paper explores the fate of the ground-breaking essay in Britain as a case study of English-German exchange on Shakespeare. An analysis of the translation of *Shakespear* and its publication context sheds light on what philosophical, religious, political and personal factors play into the dynamics of translational transfer in the period.

Panel E: Britain and Scandinavia

Cian Duffy, 'Some British Romantic Views of Copenhagen, 1801-1807'

This paper looks at some Romantic-period responses to the two British attacks on Copenhagen, in April 1801 and September 1807. It traces in those responses the tension between a 'romantic' tendency to imagine and to represent Copenhagen in particular ways and the reality of the city and its place on the complex political map of Napoleonic Europe. The paper will examine in particular two such areas of tension: the tendency of British romantic-period writing to represent Copenhagen as an altogether more northerly city than it actually is, and the attempt to use the city as the focal point for an image of shared 'northern' identity which could be motivated as a cultural and political foil to the Napoleonic 'south'.

Jorunn Joiner, 'Travelling into the past: British travel writing and the Norse world'

Travels to the North in the long eighteenth century could be both inward, sentimental journeys and more empirical studies of the outer world (Todorov, 1996). Yet whatever the emphasis, the journey North often also entailed a journey back in time. Whether sentimental or objective, travellers very often encountered a Gothic past in the Scandinavian landscapes, antiquities, and folk life, and document the intersection of past and present in the Scandinavia which they saw. My paper will consider this interaction between geographical and temporal distance in a selection of British travel writing about the North, including the works of Mary Wollstonecraft and Edward Daniel Clarke. In so doing, I examine how the various modes of travel writing reconstruct the Nordic past, through collection and transcription of Norse material found along the way, but also in the presentation of Scandinavia as a land close to the cultural memory of Gothic Europe. The paper considers how theoretical perspectives from Memory Studies can add to our understanding of the reconstructive and commemorative approaches to the Norse past found in these texts.

Lis Møller, 'Geraldine and the Erl-King's daughter – a possible source for Coleridge's "Christabel"'

Ever since its publication in 1816, Coleridge's unfinished poem "Christabel" has fascinated and puzzled its readers, and more than two hundred years of scholarship has not dissipated its mystery. One thing that scholars do seem to agree about is that "Christabel" is a richly intertextual work, drawing on a large number of source texts. In his seminal study, Donald Reuel Tuttle (1938) has demonstrated substantial borrowings from the gothic romances of the 1790s, Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis in particular. Other suggested sources include John Ferriar's 1786 lecture on East European vampire lore (Nethercot 1939), Spenser's *Fairie*

Queen (Hogle 2005), and of course Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, from which Coleridge derived the name Geraldine. This paper will propose an additional intertext for "Christabel", namely the Danish traditional ballad "Elverskud" and the literary ballad, which it famously inspired, Goethe's "Erlkönig". More exactly, I wish to suggest that Coleridge may have been inspired by Matthew Lewis's translation of the two ballads, "The Erl-King's Daughter" and "The Erl-King", printed as companion pieces in the October 1796 issue of *The Monthly Mirror* (and later included in the 1798-edition of *The Monk*). Several parallels as regards the issues of supernatural evil and sexuality may be detected between the two ballads and "Christabel". In particular, the Danish ballad features a character unknown to the ballads in Percy's collection: a sensual but lethal demonic creature, who might very well have inspired Coleridge's mysterious Geraldine.

Panel F: Mary Shelley, European

Soelve I. Curdts, ' "Reflections upon self": Rousseau in *Frankenstein*'

Allusions to Rousseau abound in *Frankenstein* ranging from overt engagements with his model of education (*Émile*) to somewhat more oblique, but prominently placed, political references such as the republic of Geneva. The monster's creation and early experiences have been read as Mary Shelley's critique of the state of nature, and hence as a critique of Rousseau among others. In this paper, I would like to read not the monster's, but Frankenstein's childhood with its Rousseauesque vistas of a domestic circle full of tenderness as a critique of originary thought. For Rousseau's accounts—be it of language (*Essai sur l'origine des langues*) or inequality (*Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité*)—are structurally predicated on a state of origin which, regardless of its ontological status, produces a narrative of thought. I read the novel's early chapters as a subversive engagement with this originary structure.

Karen Hadley, ' "Dark Tourism" in *Frankenstein* and Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written during a Short Residence*'

Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* and her daughter Mary Shelley's own travel narratives have been paired to good effect since their composition: Shelley is known to have carried a copy of her mother's *Letters* while recording her own travelogue en route through Europe with her love object Percy Shelley. In my presentation, I address Wollstonecraft's *Letters* with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* as European travel narratives, considering each as exemplar of "Dark Tourism." This phrase has become increasingly commonplace when used to characterize a species of tourism involving travel to places historically associated with death and tragedy. Wollstonecraft's *Letters* witness her pursuit of Nordic "dark" lands (cf. Walchester's "British Travellers and Dark Tourism in 18th/19th c. Scandinavian and Nordic Regions"), lands that were referred to in the same century by a member of the Royal Society as inhabited by Dragons – complete with reputed sightings. And Shelley's monster might himself serve as the ur-instance of the "dark tourist": a prime example of death and tragedy, he is fashioned of dead body tissue and treks through the novel with the purpose of murdering those in Victor's circle, whether William, Justine, Clerval, Victor's father, Elizabeth, and Victor. Such a lens provides focus for a consideration of the two works' doubled, parallel structures as narratives of pursuit or conquest.

Almudena Jimenez Virosta, 'Remapping Iberia, Rewriting England: Mary Shelley's *Literary Lives* and Miguel de Cervantes'

Mary Shelley wrote a *literary life* of Miguel de Cervantes in 1837 for a series of biographies entitled the *Lives of the Most Eminent Literary and Scientific Men of France, Italy, Spain and Portugal*. This was an enterprise she undertook between 1835 and 1839 in the framework of Dionysius Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*, which, like John Murray's *Family Library*, was one of the many educational publications emerging at the time in response to the growing demand for literacy and autodidacticism. In an era increasingly defined by utilitarian thought, this biography not only provides Shelley with a space to analyse Cervantes's oeuvre but also to romance his life. Thus, crafting a historically conscious narrative of her own, she recovers him from Golden Age Spain in order to bring him to the forefront of the condition of England question. An omnipresent figure in Enlightenment and Romantic writings, Cervantes is here used by Shelley as a medium to enable critical thinking through fostering imagination. Yet, she chooses to canonise this Romantic Cervantes, created to illuminate her English readership, in Lardner's project: a product of the Utilitarian reform whose prescriptive codes and forms of control, I argue, Shelley appropriates and subverts through this text.

Panel G: Britain and Mediterranean Europe

Diego Saglia, 'Romantic Provence and the Origins of Literary Modernity'

Starting from John Keats's invocation of the inebriating power of "Provençal song" (in "Ode to a Nightingale"), this paper aims to recover the presence and relevance of Southern French, Occitan, culture in Romantic-period Britain. If interest in Old Occitan literature and the troubadours predates the Romantic decades, yet it gained momentum and translated into theoretical and literary concerns between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Scholarly and antiquarian investments stimulated this interest that keyed to questions such as the nature of *poiesis* and lyricism, the origins of post-classical (ie, modern) European civilization, chivalry and love, and gendered identities. In this light Keats's passing invocation appears as the key to a bulky, yet hardly investigated, portion of the Romantic-period's European imaginary. In particular, here I examine how literary-critical discourse constructed 'Provence' as a fountainhead of poetic modernity: Dante was called by Shelley the 'first of the moderns', his art was ultimately rooted in troubadour culture (see Purgatory, Arnaut Daniel), and many across Europe (August Wilhelm Schlegel and Madame de Stael, eg.) identified the beginnings in troubadour verse. This attribution of an originary function to the troubadours (Maureen McLane). Then I turn to imaginative literature. In one of his most European-oriented novels, *The Talisman* (1825), Walter Scott picks up on these issues as he orchestrates a meeting between King Richard I and his *trouvère* Blondel de Nesle. The complex dialogue that ensues between them illuminates questions of poetry as craft, the transnational nature of C12 poetic scene, the origins and development of European literature – in all this the troubadour plays a pivotal role. This essay reconstructs how the Romantics constructed troubadour culture and poetry as a crucial translational/transnational dimension that, within predominantly a North-centric European culture, continues to promote the South as a foundational site of transnational, European cultural identity.

Paolo Bugliani, 'Hazlitt and Emerson's Philosophical Rambles: Italy and the epiphanic import of the Grand Tour'

My paper aims at drawing a parallel between two figures of Anglo-American Romanticism whose encounter with Italy was particularly interesting from an intellectual point of view. As William Hazlitt set sails for Italy in 1824, he had secured a commission to write a series of articles about his experience abroad, and his approach was consequently quite recognizably utilitarian, as depicted by his introductory remarks about the "Rules for Travelling Abroad". Yet Hazlitt was more than willing to let Italy and Italian landscapes stimulate his intellectual enthusiasm, managing to intersperse his pages with insightful remarks about the impact that Italian nature could have on individual minds. Reverting the traditional itinerary of the Grand Tour, Ralph Waldo Emerson arrived in Sicily in 1833, and filled three notebooks of his impressions of Italy, with no eye for publication. His Italian experience was fundamental for his later development of transcendental philosophy, as it appears very clearly from his seminal essay "Nature", written upon his return to America. Although different in scope, these two Italian travelogues can be said to possess a common philosophical undertone, with Italy depicted in many significant cases not as a mere site to describe, but more as an igniting source for philosophical musings. The undertone that I intend to highlight as a possible common framework for both Hazlitt and Emerson experiences is the "nourishing and repairing" epiphanic power of what Wordsworth would label in *The Prelude* as "spots of time". As a matter of fact, Wordsworth's image emphasises the 'placedness' of the percipient consciousness in nature, and reading both Hazlitt and Emerson one cannot fail to appreciate how they managed to get in contact with a deeper layer of their self while roaming the Peninsula.

Franca Dellarosa, 'Between Stereotype and Seditious: Romantic-era Geo-Histories of the Italian South on the London Stage'

This paper aims to explore the extent to which representations of the Italian Southern territories in British Romantic-era theatrical culture can be coherently read within the discursive flow underlying the formation of European identity, as delineated in recent scholarship. In Roberto Dainotto's challenging construal, the 'genealogy of the concept of Europe' and 'Eurocentrism' (2007: 3, 4) –drawing originally on Montesquieu's climatological/moral identification of 'Europe's north-south divide' (5) – took coherent shape and had wide circulation in Romantic-era European cultures, British included. In this respect, Britain *did* prove to belong in a (North) European identity that was forming itself against the stereotyped construction of an internal *other*, i.e. its own South. In terms of my select research area, this specifically (North) European cultural dynamics can be tested against a number of case studies that include both trans-historical representations of revolutionary Southern subjects – such as the multifarious stage history of Neapolitan revolutionary villain-hero Masaniello – and, specifically, the figuration/conflagration of the ebullient geography of Southern Italy. Etna and Vesuvius, the two most active and dangerous volcanoes in Europe, provided a formidable and theatrically spectacular objective correlative for the revolutionary undercurrents traversing post-Vienna Europe.

Panel H: Romantic Ecocriticism

Kate Rigby, 'Blake's Prophetic Eco-poetics and the "neue Mythologie"'

British Romanticism looks different if you approach it as a Germanist. The period around 1800 was one of particularly intense Anglo-German intellectual interchange, yet most of the literary history and criticism on British Romanticism that has issued from English departments in the Anglophone world has paid insufficient heed to the nuances of meaning that emerge when British texts are read in the horizon of German thought. As Marjorie Levinson has shown in the case of Wordsworth, for example, the 'pleasure' in their own existence that the poet intuits in the flora and fauna that surrounds him in 'Lines Written in Early Spring', or that 'impulse from a vernal wood' in which he discerns moral guidance in 'The Tables Turned', acquire a whole new resonance when parsed through the lens of the German Spinoza controversy. In this paper, I reconsider William Blake's prophetic eco-poetics in the horizon of three closely interrelated developments across the Channel: firstly, the emergence of modern biblical hermeneutics, according to which the Bible was, as Herder put it, a multi-authored book written 'by people for people', an anthology to which new meanings and narratives might be added; secondly, an efflorescence of religious exploration unshackled from the strictures of doctrine; and thirdly, the quest for what the authors of the 'First System Programme of German Idealism' called a 'new mythology'. In Blake's work this project issues in a mythopoetic reimagining of human interrelations with our Earth others with heightened salience in our own era of eco-catastrophe

Lily Dessau, '“That which is creative must create itself”: Rhyme as Renewal in John Keats and John Clare'

In a letter to John Hamilton Reynolds, John Keats calls Thomas Chatterton 'the purest writer in the English language'. In a separate letter to George and Georgiana Keats, written on the same day, he adds that this is because '[Chatterton's] language had existed long enough to be entirely uncorrupted of Chaucer's Gallicisms'. Here he also draws Milton into the mix, declaring *Paradise Lost* to be 'the most remarkable production of the world; a northern dialect accommodating itself to Greek and Latin inversions and intonations'. Preferring 'the native music of [Chatterton] to Milton's, cut by feet', these letters reveal some of the frustrations Keats recounts in moving from the couplet-form of *Lamia* and *Endymion*, the latter of which he describes as having 'leaped headlong into the sea' with, towards the blank verse of Milton in *Hyperion*. As Keats writes in the letter to Reynolds 'I have given up *Hyperion*—there were too many Milton inversions in it', might these letters prompt enquiry into English poetry, Latin inversions, and the importance of the couplet-form? Drawing on these comments of Keats, this paper reads the couplet-form in John Keats and John Clare as an important verse form that is generative, self-sustaining, and therefore replicates the more-than-human metabolic process of labour. Relocating Chaucerian 'riding rhyme' in the development of Romantic couplet-form, this paper seeks to think through the development of this familiar poetic mode, and its possibilities as a site of metabolic process, a form of reproductive labour through which, as Keats tells us, 'that which is creative must create itself'.

‘Fields of Conflict and Ecologies of War: Walter Scott’s *Paul’s Letters to his Kinsfolk* and the site of Waterloo’

Walter Scott visited the Field of Waterloo seven weeks after the last major battle in the Napoleonic Wars. He wrote about what he saw and imagined in *Paul’s Letters to His Kinsfolk*, a collection of sixteen “letters” by a fictional tourist, to five fictitious correspondents. *Paul’s Letters* came out in January 1816. One of many tourists who travelled to Belgium (including Henry Crabb Robinson shortly after and Charlotte Waldie even before he arrived), Scott’s visit also produced poems, personal letters, and eventually a *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*. One of his least written about published works, *Paul’s Letters* was nonetheless widely read and made a major contribution to the literature of Waterloo. Scott includes detailed descriptions of arable farmland, woodland, orchards, rivers, and other topographical features. My paper takes an ecocritical and environmental perspective to look at what *Paul’s Letters* tells us about ecologies of war, from immediately before the act of conflict to several years afterwards. I will talk about violence done to land and what lives on it after cavalry charges and artillery barrages, about slow violence that reveals itself over time, and about the exchange of economies of food production for those of war tourism. The impact of Waterloo on animals and other living things (trees and crops), and on the constituency of the soil, will be included in my exploration. With the current war in Ukraine impacting one of the world’s most important grain producing areas, I will situate Scott’s account of Waterloo in an unfolding literary and artistic history of war ecologies, looking at, as well as beyond, the initial cost in human lives.

Panel I: Romantic Drama

Jessica Daboin, ‘Burke’s Sublime and German Theories of Tragedy’

While the influence of Edmund Burke’s theory of the sublime on Continental Romanticism and aesthetics is deep and far-reaching, it is usually discussed in relation to Kant’s sublime and the aesthetic reception of natural phenomena. In this paper, however, I look at the importance of Burke for German theories of the sublime in tragedy, namely those of Schiller and Nietzsche. First, I provide an overview of Burke’s notion of “delight” as developed in his theory of the sublime. I consider how, delight, as a “relative pleasure,” implies a form of catharsis pregnant with ambiguities stemming from Burke’s insistence on the necessity of “real danger” on one hand, and aesthetic distance and spectacle on the other. This allows me to look at Schiller’s notion of the “tragic sublime.” I argue that the importance Schiller accords to the participation of the sense drive (*Stofftrieb*) through empathy and to the mediating role of the play drive (*Spieltrieb*) in the experience of artworks, allows him to attempt a reconciliation of ambivalences present in Burke’s theory of the sublime, and to thereby bypass Kant’s transcendental aesthetics by recovering elements of Burke. Third, I look at the implications of this for Nietzsche in his *Birth of Tragedy*. I argue that, while influenced by Schiller, Nietzsche is closer to Burke in his negotiation of the tensions between aesthetic distance and catharsis via his refusal to tie the sublime with morality. This allows me to consider the relevance of Burke’s theory of the sublime for Continental European aesthetics.

Sarah Burdett, ‘*Charles the Bold; or, the Siege of Nantz; or, Napoleon Bonaparte; or, the Siege of Saragossa: Cannon-Firing Heroines and the Napoleonic wars in British Romantic Theatre*’

In June 1815, Samuel Arnold’s adaptation of Guilbert de *Pixérécourt*’s melodrama *Charles le Téméraire* (1814) was staged at the Drury Lane Theatre, London. Dramatising the overthrow of the tyrannical Charles the Bold, the play was credited by reviewers as a pertinent celebration of the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. This paper will argue that alongside its interaction with Waterloo, the play provides a palpable allusion to the Siege of Saragossa of 1808: notably, to the heroic act of the Maid of Saragossa, Agustina de Aragón, who had fought off French invaders using a cannon. During a period in which England and Spain had become political allies, Agustina was mythologised in Britain on the one hand as a patriotic emblem. Yet her gender proved problematic. Arms-bearing women had been viewed in Britain in the 1790s as striking embodiments of extreme revolutionary chaos. Thus, care had to be taken to reconcile the Maid of Saragossa with acceptable models of femininity, in order to celebrate her actions without condoning unnaturally masculine feats. This paper suggests that in an epoch in which literature and theatre pertaining to the Peninsular wars becomes ubiquitous in Britain, *Charles the Bold* provides a readily recognisable personification of the Maid of Saragossa in its cannon-firing heroine Leontina, whose act of blowing Charles to pieces concludes the play’s action. Reading *Charles the Bold* in the context of visual and verbal portrayals of Agustina de Aragón offered in contemporary British print, I spotlight the parallels between Leontina and the Maid of Saragossa, and assess the intricate ways in which the threats posed by the play’s arms-bearing heroine, and the Spanish model on which she is based, are negotiated both on and off the stage.

Rachel Nisbet, ‘Staging European, Biogeochemical Power Relations in Early Melodramatic adaptations of *Frankenstein*’

If *Frankenstein* is well known as a cultural phenomenon, this has as much to do with the theatre and film reception of Mary Shelley’s novel. This narrative evolved between 1823 when it was first represented on a London stage, and 1826, when it premiered in Paris, before returning to the British capital. My paper draws on mixed methods, including narrative theory, material ecocriticism, and research on rhetorical energy to examine how the act of creating a man, which is explored from different points of view in *Frankenstein*, is progressively demonized in subsequent stage adaptations. In Achille Mbembe’s reframing of biopower as necropower, he proposes that during the French Revolution processes of self-institution and self-limitation that define the trope of sovereignty were mobilized by noble and populist sovereign powers to instrumentalize and control human existence (Foucault 1994, 184; Mbembe 2003, 13-14). His emphasis on the destruction of human bodies in this process is relevant to my analysis of these *Frankenstein* adaptations, which indicate that the theatre-makers devising these productions identified this re-appropriation of not only human but also more-than-human energies by sovereign powers: in a word, they command biogeochemical power.

Panel J: Britain and Germany

James Vigus, “‘Ambition! And the Desire to become a Millionaire!’: Mary Wollstonecraft and Hamburg Capitalism’

Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (1796) concludes with her visit to Hamburg and Altona. Hamburg was a neutral city in the revolutionary wars and thus an increasingly vital hub of international trade in the 1790s, as well as a common destination for travellers from France, Britain and America. Yet, it is the scene of the emotional nadir of the business journey Wollstonecraft undertook for Gilbert Imlay. She had hoped to be reunited with Imlay, her lover and the father of her child, in Hamburg. In Imlay's absence, she dined with another writer, Hector St John de Crèvecoeur, with whom she shared 'declamations against commerce'. Wollstonecraft's bitter denunciation of the speculations of the dominant merchant class of Hamburg and their 'thirst of gain' constitutes a central Romantic critique of capitalism. This important passage has been interpreted biographically (notably by Lyndall Gordon); as a form of anti-Burkean aesthetic discourse (by Anthony Pollock); and as paradoxically undermining the text's affirmation of the stadial progress of civilization (by Christoph Bode). My paper examines a fresh context, the one signalled by Wollstonecraft herself. I relate her critique of commerce to the manuscript autobiography of John Parish, the wealthiest merchant in Hamburg, who confesses to a dangerous addiction to speculation caused by 'Ambition! And the Desire to become a Millionaire!' Further, I compare Wollstonecraft's remarks with the contemporary controversy in the Hamburg press about the ethics of commercial pursuits. In this way, I argue that Wollstonecraft's excoriation of 'the muddy channel of business' did exactly what it appeared to: it participated in a philosophical debate that Hamburg's regional peculiarity had rendered acute.

Philipp Hunnekuhl, "The genuine Poet scorns to press the *curios[ity]* of the Reader into his Service": Crabb Robinson and Schiller's *Aesthetic Education of Man*'

Henry Crabb Robinson (1775–1867) spent the years 1800–05 in Germany, where he became the leading British disseminator of Kantian philosophy. Kant's concept of aesthetic autonomy, however, proved incompatible with Robinson's long-standing faith in the ethical relevance of literature, which Godwin had inspired. The resulting impasse prompted Robinson to experiment with post-Kantian conceptualisations of the relationship between art and morals. The present paper explores the ways in which Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795) and the Schlegel brothers' *Athenaeum* (1798–1800) informed these experiments, and how they helped Robinson to develop an independent, pioneering theory of literature. This theory subsequently came to underpin his literary transmissions between Britain and Germany, and both its intrinsic sophistication and comparatistic application place Robinson squarely at the critical vanguard of his day. According to this theory, aesthetic autonomy, or artistic disinterestedness, on the one hand and moral disinterestedness on the other are unattainable ideals alike. Yet a poet, through skilfully feigning the former, may create an imaginative dynamism of parts in her or his readers that advances the latter. Wordsworth, Robinson presciently discerned in October 1802, was the epitome of such a poet. The paper is based on my book entitled *Henry Crabb Robinson: Romantic Comparatist, 1790–1811* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020).

John Öwre, 'Wordsworth, Coleridge and the Philosophy of Sense Perception in a European Context'

The nature of sense perception was a topic that engaged Wordsworth and Coleridge throughout most of their lives. What attracted them to this deceptively prosaic-sounding

problem was its metaphysical implications: more specifically, the question of whether the mind is a co-creator in our perceptions or merely a passive receiver, as well as whether the meanings that we attach to our perceptions are subjective phenomena, or somehow objectively inherent in the perceptions or objects themselves. Whether engaging with the problem on its own terms, or with the theories proposed by philosophers such as Berkeley, Hartley, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, this topic brought the two poets in contact with a number of related philosophical problems. These include the contrast between discursive and non-discursive forms of meaning, the nature of religious experience, the nature of the symbol, and the intersection between art and philosophy. In sharp contrast to the notion of the “inward turn” posited by Isaiah Berlin and M. H. Abrams as characteristic of the Romantic era, both Wordsworth and Coleridge often show a disinclination to prioritize the inner over the outer world, and instead look for ways to reconcile empirical sensation with subjective or transcendent values. In my paper, I will discuss the ways in which Wordsworth and Coleridge engage with the aforementioned topics, with a particular focus on their place in a wider European debate. I will also reflect on what it meant for poets of the Romantic era to explore philosophical topics, and the question of what types of truth were thought to be better mediated through poetry than technical prose.

Panel K: Romantic Temporalities

Nicholas Halmi, ‘Historicization and Cliché’

This paper will address the development of what Michael Riffaterre called *cliché constitutif*, the stylistic and generic markers that distinguish literary from other kinds of writing, as an aesthetic category in the 18th and early 19th centuries, relating this category to the historicization of aesthetics, the relativization of critical standards, and critical ambivalence about popular taste in the emergent literary marketplace. Authors mentioned or discussed will include Herder, A. W. Schlegel, Mercier, Hugo, Addison, Dr Johnson, Ann Radcliffe, Austen, and Wordsworth.

Audrey Borowski, ‘Volney, Grainville and Mercier: Entangled Temporalities’

Christin Neubauer, ‘Rossetti’s “romantic architecture”’: On the Relations of Pre-Raphaelite Painting and Characteristics of Romanticism’

In 1921, when poet William Butler Yeats reflected on his former attitude towards Pre-Raphaelitism, he ascribed Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s painting *Dante’s Dream* (1871) a dramatic visual agency as he claimed that ‘its colour, its people, its romantic architecture had blotted all other pictures away’ (*Four Years*, 1921, 3). It is noteworthy that the poet labelled the image structure as a ‘romantic architecture’ and thus evoked connections between Pre-Raphaelite painting and Romantic visual language. In the art criticism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Pre-Raphaelite pictures were often described as Romantic. Oscar Wilde, for instance, defines Pre-Raphaelitism as a modern Romantic School in his lecture on *The English Renaissance of Art* in 1882, and Percy Bate also remarks in his publication *The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters* (1899) that the term ‘Pre-Raphaelite’ ‘became almost synonymous

with “Romantic” to the public. Even if the connotation of these ascriptions as Romantic cannot be clearly identified as referring to Romanticism, significant questions arise in the context of this attribution: To what extent does Pre-Raphaelite painting draw on Romantic art and ideas? Can Pre-Raphaelitism be understood as a derivative of British Romanticism? Exemplified by Rossetti’s painting *Dante’s Dream*, I will explore these questions and examine Romantic characteristics of the picture to locate the phenomenon of Pre-Raphaelitism within British Late Romanticism. Moreover, Rossetti is canonised as a British painter, but he engaged strongly with his Italian heritage. Therefore, I pursue the question of how Rossetti’s Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic draws on continental references to illustrate his involvement with Romantic ideas on a transnational level, focussing on his reception of Dante in particular.

Panel L: Percy Shelley, European

Anna Mercer, ‘The Shelleys’ Early Travels in France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland’

This paper discusses my work editing *History of a Six Weeks’ Tour* (1817) by Mary Shelley and Percy Bysshe Shelley for Oxford University Press with Cian Duffy. I begin by discussing the Shelleys’ ‘blended’ voices in this volume, Mary Shelley’s first foray into print. The book can be read as another key example of the Shelleys’ collaborative literary relationship, arguably even more significant than *Frankenstein* (1818) because it is a text that truly deserves both authors’ names on the title page. I look at *History of a Six Weeks’ Tour* with a primary focus on creative collaboration, but I will also discuss the other significant themes that arise when composing the volume’s introduction and notes. For example: the presence of Byron, and Claire Clairmont, the commentary on the customs of the locals and the occasional subsequent hostility from the narrator(s), thus connecting the work to Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written During a Short Residence*, and the text’s innovation as an ‘unpresuming [...] little volume’ by young writers entering a complex travel-book market with an anonymous publication. I will also address why it is important to read ‘Mont Blanc’ as verse published in the *History*, as well as a highly significant poem in its own right. My discussion is informed by the work of several critics, most notably Benjamin Colbert, Jeanne Moskal and Charles E. Robinson.

Amanda Blake Davis, ‘Norwegian Wood: Percy Bysshe Shelley’s Pines’

Norwegian pines appear throughout Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poetry despite the poet never having visited Scandinavia. This paper explores the curious appearance of this prominently Northern European tree in Shelley’s later works, charting literary influences from Edward Daniel Clarke’s first section on Scandinavia in *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa* (1819) to Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters written during a short residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (1796). Three distinctive ecological features of the pine, *Pinus sylvestris*, appear alongside their poetical depictions in Shelley’s works, including ‘selfing’, ‘ecological plasticity’, and their ability to thrive in ‘unusually stressful environment[s]’.¹ By analysing how these distinctive features are expressed within Shelley’s poetical depictions of pines, including ‘the gloomy pines of a Norwegian vale’ in *Laon and Cythna* (1817), ‘In isles of odoriferous pines’ (c.1820), and the pines of ‘To Jane. The Invitation’ and ‘To Jane—The Recollection’ (1822), this paper addresses two developing genres of Romantic Studies: Northern Romanticism; or, what Cian Duffy has described as the ‘diverse culture of exchange between Britain and Scandinavia during the late eighteenth century and romantic period’, and the genre of Shelley’s ‘botanical poetry’,

recently defined by Duffy as ‘poems which not only have a plant as their ostensible subject, or which develop extended plant imagery, but which also engage, either explicitly or implicitly, with contemporary botanical discourses and practices’.

Annemarie Lisko, ‘“With some other name, unclear and imperfect”: Communication, Plurality, and Poetry in Percy Shelley’s Italian-Language Drafts’

Scholarly discussion of Percy Shelley’s Italian period is broad and deep. However, while many have considered the influence of Italy on Percy Shelley’s English-language compositions, rather less attention has been given to the small but noteworthy quantity of original poetry and prose that Shelley attempted to write in Italian. This lack of discussion can be attributed to several factors: the relatively small quantity of the works, their lack of ready availability, and the interpretive difficulties posed by fragmentary and grammatically fraught compositions in a foreign language. However, I argue, this body of work merits discussion, for the insights it provides into Shelley’s understanding of Italy and Italian language(s), his perspective on notions of multilingual communication, and his insights into the challenges and triumphs of communication more generally. This paper concentrates on Shelley’s evolving relationship with the Italian language throughout his years in Italy. I analyze the ways that this linguistic experience began, upon Shelley’s 1818 arrival in Italy, with confusion, as he encountered not simply the “literary” Italian language with which he was familiar from reading Dante, but, moreover, the plurality of distinct local and regional dialects found across the peninsula during that time. On this basis, I then consider how Shelley’s perception of the Italian language(s) developed over the next several years, led to original compositions in Italian, and, ultimately, came to inform the conceptualizations of communication and poetry found in some of his late-career masterpieces including *Epipsychidion* and the *Defence of Poetry*.

Panel M: European Networks and Transfers

Elisabeth Ansel, ‘Transcultural Romanticism. Ossianic Images in the Work of Joseph Mallord William Turner and Carl Gustav Carus’

From the late 18th century onwards, the Ossianic myth spread rapidly throughout Europe through the poetry of the Scottish writer James Macpherson. In addition to impulses in literature, numerous reflections in visual art occurred around 1800, which, starting in Great Britain, found their way into continental European art. Referring to these discourses, I will use the example of landscape painting to ask what distinguishes Ossianic sceneries and to what extent do they correlate with notions of the romantic? In particular, I aim to pursue the question of why various pictorial formulas originating in Great Britain found validity in several European cultural areas within a short period. Using transcultural perspectives, I will analyse transmission mechanisms of Ossianic images in the context of a pluriform European Romanticism and explore how individual artists in their engagement with European trends reflected Ossianic-Romantic ideas in their pictures. I intend to outline how the Ossianic-Romantic ideas and their circulation among the continent and the British Isles contributed to visual notions of Europe.

Elisa Cozzi, ‘Lady Mount Cashell’s Unpublished Historical Novel *The Chieftains of Erin* and Anglo-Irish-Italian Romantic Networks’

My paper presents the first study of the unpublished historical novel *North and South; or, the Chieftains of Erin, a Historical Romance of the Days of Queen Elizabeth* by the Irish radical

writer—and former pupil of Mary Wollstonecraft—Margaret King, Lady Mount Cashell (1773-1835). Mount Cashell first started her novel (set in sixteenth-century Ireland on the cusp of the Tudor conquest) in Dublin in the turbulent 1790s, when she became involved in Irish revolutionary politics leading up to the United Irishmen Rebellion and the Act of Union. She then interrupted it and resumed it in Pisa, Italy, where she settled in voluntary exile and befriended the Shelley Circle in the 1820s. Encompassing thirty years of European history, Mount Cashell's transnational historical fiction originated at the crossroads of post-Union Ireland and pre-Unification Italy, at a crucial period in the development of the novel as a literary form. First discovered in a private Italian archive in the 1990s, the *Chieftains of Erin* manuscripts had never been examined by literary scholars. My paper will introduce this ground-breaking discovery in the field of European Romantic Studies and shed light on neglected Anglo-Irish-Italian literary works and networks in the early nineteenth century.

Ernest De Clerck, 'Letters from Anywhere: Transnational Transfer in Late-Romantic Literary Magazines'

Despite wartime Europhobia and emerging Victorian insularity, British Romantic authors intensively engaged with foreign cultures. This becomes particularly clear when one looks at British literary magazines of the 1820s, and more specifically at the genre of the 'Letters from Anywhere' in the *London Magazine*, *Blackwood's* and the *New Monthly Magazine*. Key contributors to the genre were Stendhal, Sarah Austin, José Maria Blanco White, Leigh Hunt, and Ugo Foscolo. This hitherto overlooked corpus sheds new light on the relations between British and Continental literatures. Moreover, it suggests a constitutive reciprocity between different 'national' literatures and a transnational textual site of cultural exchange. In these 'Letters' one can witness the performance of national identity through processes of translation and reception, to the extent that British Romantic magazines mirrored and refracted other perceived cultural identities in an effort to forge a British national identity and literary tradition. By projecting images of Britain's cultural 'Others', Romantic literature was capable of satisfying its audience's hunger for the foreign while defining its own national identity. This paper proposes a transnational, multidirectional approach to a neglected late-Romantic corpus in a bid to contribute to the critical repositioning of British Romanticism in a European context.

Panel N: European Gothic

Angela Wright, '*Le Tombeau, ouvrage posthume d'Anne Radcliffe* : Mobilizing and Misattributing the Gothic in Romantic Europe'

More than any other Gothic novelist, the works of Ann Radcliffe were swiftly translated, celebrated and commented upon across Europe. My paper will first excavate some of the most rapid evaluations of Radcliffe's work in Europe, before turning to consider the inspiration taken from Radcliffe's works. Besides the swift and numerous translations of her work, in 1799 a novel appeared in France entitled *Le Tombeau*, announcing itself as the 'Ouvrage Posthume d'Anne Radcliffe'. By Bizet and Hector Chaussier, *Le Tombeau* returned to *The Mysteries of Udolpho's* historical setting of the sixteenth century, and became a popular and acclaimed work. It ran swiftly to multiple editions, and was in turn translated into other languages as the work of Radcliffe. The second part of my paper will evaluate this work, and its own history of transmission as the work of Ann Radcliffe. In so doing, I aim to

offer commentary upon the Gothic's particularly prolific translation and adaptation across Europe, arguing more for a practice of emulation than plagiarism.

Michael Gamer, ' "Germania's Sons": Matthew Lewis and the Fate of English Melodrama'

Arguably no Romantic-period genre better embodies the complexities of Anglo-European literary relations than melodrama, which official arrived in London in 1802 via Thomas Holcroft's *A Tale of Mystery*, adapted from the Parisian smash-hit *Coelina* by René-Charles Gilbert de Pixérécourt. My paper thus opens by mapping melodrama's early history in England from two vantage points: 1) via what plays crossed the English Channel, from where, and to what effect; and 2) via how such crossings were portrayed in the English press, especially after melodrama rose to prominence and subsequent notoriety. As one might expect, the disjunctions can tell us much -- do the plays from these years of Matthew Lewis, who in the paper stands as an exemplum of the entangled histories I hope to unravel.

Francesca Saggini, ' "Perpetuo Desio": Polidori's Italian Progeny'

The connections between the short story *The Vampyre*, and Italy are numerous. First and foremost, of course, we have Polidori's family heritage. Born in London in 1795 to the expatriate Gaetano, John William Polidori was the eldest son in a family of intense literary activity, in which the passion for the Italian language and culture had remained very much alive. Much has been said about the complicated composition and publication history of Polidori's celebrated story, especially regarding its relationship with Lord Byron and the company at Villa Diodati. Fabio Camilletti (2020) and Nick Groom (2022) have offered crucial, and to me, conclusive, insights on the troubled genesis of Polidori's work and its even more troubled editorial history. *Perpetuo desio* proposes some reflection on the metacultural significance of *The Vampyre* and reconstruct its first Italian reception, starting from a simple observation. The numerous critics who have dealt with the European reception of Polidori's work agree in attributing a seminal role to this text, characterised by an almost biological capacity (Bortolotti & Hutcheon, 2007) of cultural adaptation. While the posthumous reception of *The Vampyre* is well documented beyond the Alps, I was surprised to see that Italy hardly appears in these comparative investigations, as if the success and influence of Polidori's text had only scathingly touched the Italian peninsula. Despite the dearth of systematised critical studies, is it conceivable, I wonder, that Italy was truly impermeable to the influence of a figure such as the vampire created by Polidori, a character that immediately became a *mythos*, a transcultural and transmedia European phenomenon, and a true seme of our own modernity? Also, how does such an 'explosive' text, in Lotman's definition (1992; Eng. vers. 2009), such as Polidori's, fit into the composite political and cultural mosaic of early nineteenth-century Italy?

Panel O: Britain and France

Laurent Folliot, ' "O! that I could find a France for my Love": Coleridge's Second Thoughts on the French Question'

Coleridge's recoil from the revolutionary cause has been widely seen as resulting in a wholesale rejection of French culture, pithily summarized in an oft-quoted 1805 notebook entry: "France is my Babylon, the Mother of Whoredoms in Morality, Philosophy, Taste". Like his fellow-Lakers, indeed, he helped turn Gallia into the black sheep of Romantic bibliopolitics, lumping ruthless Jacobin statesmen, mechanistic *philosophes* and superficial

belles-lettrists together into a single opprobrious continuum. Yet scattered remarks among his notebooks and correspondence suggest that his Francophobia was not always as absolute as is sometimes thought. From occasional expressions of loving respect for both Jansenists and quietists to grudging recognition of French improvements or late musings that France might be ‘Gothic’ after all, from his draft verse tribute to the spirit of Rabelais to his somewhat unexpected comments on the July Revolution, or his conjectures as to what a Protestant France might have been, Coleridge’s ambivalent asides on the French question hover between speculative history and faint hopes of eventual reconciliation. Ultimately, they tell as much about his fears for England and long-suppressed revolutionary sympathies, as they do about his overall views of Europe’s past evolution and modern predicament.

Elsa Caseneuve, “Visual (r)evolutions: William Wordsworth’s views of the French Revolution in books IX and X of *The Prelude*”

“*I looked for something that I could not find*” writes Wordsworth in book IX of *The Prelude*, recalling his second trip to Paris in 1791, two years after the outbreak of the French Revolution. Books IX and X of *The Prelude*, first published in 1805 under the title “Residence in France and the French Revolution”, explore the conflicting aspirations of the poet while he witnessed the drastic changes occurring in France, England and Europe itself. Indeed, in 1792, a major shift occurred in the character and direction of the Revolution: from non-violent constitutional reform to the bloodshed of the September Massacres; from peaceful co-existence to war with Austria and later with Britain after February 1793; from a limited constitutional monarchy established in September 1791 to the declaration of the republic and the execution of king Louis. “*I recoil from the bare idea of a revolution*” writes Wordsworth to his friend William Matthews in 1794. The poet’s shifting perspective on the French Revolution invites us to question the reliability of sight in books IX and X of *The Prelude*. What was young Wordsworth looking for when he went back to France in 1791? How did the “passing spectacles” of Paris, Orleans and Blois come to shape both the political and poetical vision of Wordsworth’s older self? How did deceiving or disappointing sights eventually yield to compensating insights? In order to tackle these questions, this paper will analyze how the complex representation of visual perception intertwines with the poet’s own evolution, from political to philosophical and aesthetic revolutions.

Jeremy Elprin, ‘Keats’s France (An Ode?)’

Unsurprisingly absent from the recent collection of enlightening essays on *Keats’s Places* (2018) is a chapter entitled ‘Keats’s France’. It’s not simply that Keats never travelled to France, or that his few epistolary remarks about the country and its inhabitants tend to be derogatory, but that something about France – its language and literature, as much as its gastronomy and topography – seems to have eluded the poet, or at least not engendered the keen spark of interest that it did in some of his contemporaries. On many levels, of course, ‘Keats’ and ‘France’ might be seen as congruous terms. For most of his life, Britain was at war with France. While disparaging the French language, he showed a fitful enthusiasm for the sonnets of Ronsard, and he was happy to borrow from Alain Chartier. An acquaintance with the work of the great 18th-century *philosophes* underpinned his secular-humanist outlook, in general, and the radical politics of the Hunt Circle, in particular, had much to do with the ideals of Revolutionary France. For all this, it has never been clear exactly what to make of Keats’s relationship to France. The present paper will not necessarily attempt to clarify the matter. Rather than tackling the question head on, I propose to take a more oblique approach, using, as a starting point, Keats’s creative engagement with Coleridge’s ‘France: An Ode’, a

poem which might be said to inflect and inform the younger poet's work in various ways. By revisiting Coleridge's ode as an object of Keatsian interest, and by investigating a series of resonances which stand out, in part, by virtue of the poets' being brought together in the Paris-based Galignani brothers' pirated edition of their (and Shelley's) work, I hope to shed light on at least one (indirect) way in which 'Keats' and 'France' might fruitfully be paired, if not purposefully reconciled.

Panel P: Byron and Shelley

Francesco Marchionni, ' "Look upon the kind of suffering I have": Promethean Grief in the Work of Byron, Shelley and Leopardi'

My paper addresses how Promethean grief was read and conceptualised by Byron, Shelley and Leopardi in their speculations about poetic identity that resulted from their reading of Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*. Borrowing from deconstructive theories of writing and performance, I avow that the myth of Prometheus, conceived of as divided between *hubris* and *nemesis*, supplements unmediated Romantic notions of temporality, grief and death. From a reading of 'Prometheus', I suggest that Byron further explores in *Manfred* what Nietzsche calls the "Byronic superhuman despair". Drawing from Nietzsche's 'On the Dramatic Works of Byron', I argue that Byron in *Manfred* is capable of performing, theatrically, the stormy hall of his poetic thoughts to deconstruct discourses about knowledge the world. In contrast to Byron, I suggest that Shelley's Platonic reading of Prometheus as giver of *techne* is symptomatic of the Shelleyan crisis of inspiration between creation and destruction. Addressing Shelley's meditations of writing and selfhood as divided, my reading of 'Ode to the West Wind' illuminates Shelley's conflict between the idealism of writing as a means to encourage political change and Bacchic madness that ends in self-destruction. In Leopardi's reconfiguration of Sappho as Promethean alter ego, I suggest that in *Sappho's last song* Leopardi confronts the capacity of poetry to demystify an ultra-reality of self-consumption, which finds in death its sole remedy. I, finally, argue that Leopardi's tragic affirmation reflects his apprehension of the poet as maker of deconstructing deceptive lyricism to reconstruct a tragedy of doom.

Eric Powell, 'Shelley's *Queen Mab* and the Development of European Socialism'

It has often been quoted that Karl Marx referred to Shelley's "Philosophical Poem" *Queen Mab* as the "Bible" of the Chartist Movement. Friedrich Engels began translating the poem into German in the 1840s. Much is known now about how *Queen Mab* came to occupy, through piracy, such a prominent position within early socialist and working-class movements in England. Less explored, however, is the influence that *Queen Mab* had on the development of socialist and communist thought in Europe. That is what I propose to explore in this paper. Through rampant piracy *Queen Mab* became part of the working-class literary canon in the 1820s and 1830s, influencing various radical organizations and movements, including the Spenceans, the Owenites, the National Union of Working Classes (NUWC), and the Chartists. By the 1840s, when European labor leaders such as Marx and Engels came into contact with the English working class, *Queen Mab* was firmly established as a foundational work. I propose to examine how ideas and doctrines from Shelley's poem may have migrated from the context of early British socialism and influenced the development of European Socialism (and Communism) more broadly. To do so, I proceed by way of both textual analysis—examination of foundational texts and documents—and material-cultural

analysis—examination of the spread of *Queen Mab* as a book into European countries outside of the UK. This presentation will be preliminary, of course, but I hope to offer initial results and point to directions for future research.

William Edwards, ‘Martial Metaphors and the Napoleonic Subtext in Byron’s “Waltz”’

This paper looks at Byron’s satirical poem ‘Waltz’, an anti-Prince Regent satire that takes xenophobic aim at Germany, German cultural products, and Britain’s Hanoverian royal family. Written in October 1812 and published anonymously in spring 1813, the poem is part of the Whig ‘squib warfare’ waged in the *Morning Chronicle*, as well as in broadsheets and poetry volumes, following the Prince Regent’s accession to executive power in February 1812 and subsequent ‘betrayal’ of the Whigs. That the poem has traditionally been viewed as something of an aesthetic failure – a strained imitation of Thomas Moore’s playful, ‘Horatian’ register – has led critics to overlook its troublingly eclectic imagery and tone, as well as its close engagement with events on the European continent. Martial metaphors infuse this ostensibly frivolous satire, in which ‘waltz’ is always symbolically shadowed by ‘war’. In lines such as ‘For prurient nature still will storm the breast’ an equation is made between sexual and martial conquest, with the licentious waltz (a more intimate dance than the French quadrille which had previously been in vogue) figured as a siege. More surprisingly, the violent events of Napoleon’s 1812 Russia campaign, which Byron closely followed in the battlefield dispatches featured in newspapers at the time, erupt through the text and paratext of the poem, as the ‘ill-dissembled flame[s]’ of Byron’s waltzing couples uncannily merge with fires from the Burning of Moscow in September 1812. Anti-war sentiment was a hallmark of Whiggish satire in 1812 (a year in which Britain was not only dragging out its expensive peninsular campaign, but also became ensnared in a new war with the United States). This paper illustrates Byron’s fascinating variation on this Whiggish theme in ‘Waltz’, a poem which brings the battlefields of Napoleonic Europe into the ballrooms of Carlton House in a surreal blending of iron and ormolu, cannon blaze and candlelight. By this method Byron suggests a comparison between the imperial ambitions of the Prince Regent and those of Napoleon.