of Robinson's text is that it cannot stand up to the surfeit of biographical evidence to the contrary: his opposition to Catholic emancipation being the principal problem (as detailed by Philip Shaw in his recent review). More broadly, readers may question the acuity of Robinson's preference to focus solely and with a deal of critical experimentalism – recounting his own walks around Dove Cottage; reworking passages of Wordsworth's poetry; the inclusion of speculative assertions and lines of thought – in order to make a historical argument in the first place. That is to say, regardless of the validity of Robinson's claims about the relation of 91^{v}–92^{r} to the poet's late politics, it is hard to avoid the suspicion that his method is out of step with the kinds of conclusion he seeks to draw.

Robinson approvingly cites (though does not provide a reference for) Giorgio Agamben: 'a genuine reading takes place only at the point at which the work's living unity, first present in the original draft, is once again recomposed'.[2] In some ways, Robinson's practice is more Agamben than Agamben: he attempts to reanimate not only the composition of its draft, but also the status of the manuscript with the literary ecology of Dove Cottage. In a note on his methodology, Robinson also cites Jerome McGann's concept of 'critical [. . .] deformance'. For McGann, as for Robinson, critical intervention is always also a form of remediation and alteration. *Poetic Innovation* takes this assessment, with Agamben's, as a green light towards its methodological inventiveness, which involves graphic reconfigurations of 91^{v}–92^{r} in order to highlight certain of its elements – a feat achieved in collaboration with the graphic designer and professor Karen Jacobs. At the end of the text, for example, Robinson composes his own 'Poem on the letter "A" (from "The Triad")' by taking words from Wordsworth's poem containing the first letter of the alphabet. The literary merits of the poem are to be assessed in their own right by readers, but it is not immediately clear what is to be gained from it in the understanding of Wordsworth's late poetics. In general, the illuminating sparks of Robinson's perceptions about DC MS 89 are best received as autotelic: the analyses themselves are often a joy to read, and it is ultimately a testament to Robinson as a reader of Wordsworth's poetry that *Poetic Innovation* remains a valuable act of interpretation despite its questionable historical conclusions.

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NOTES

1. Jerome Christensen, *Romanticism at the End of History* (Baltimore and London, 2000), 2.
2. Giorgio Agamben, *The End of the Poem: Studies in Poetics* (Stanford, 1999), 43.

LIZ BELLAMY, *The Language of Fruit: Literature and Horticulture in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019). 256pp. £56.00 hardback. 9780812250831.

Fruit imagery has had a long and enduring presence in literature and within the cultural imagination. In this scrupulously researched and richly illustrated new book Liz Bellamy offers a fascinating analysis of the changing meanings and associations of fruit and fruit trees within British literature from the Restoration to the Romantic period. The genre-specific and chronological approach presented within the main body of the text allows Bellamy to identify nuances and shifts of meaning within a given timeframe and genre, but also to establish more significant developments in the handling of fruit symbolism throughout the long eighteenth century. Both localised shifts in meaning and major developments are carefully demonstrated through meticulous textual readings and are predicated on an impressively detailed account of the factors affecting perceptions of fruit within this crucial period, not least the rapid changes in horticultural practice and the rise of a consumer society.

In the Introduction Bellamy identifies some of the theoretical frameworks that underpin the analysis, including ecocriticism, 'postcolonial ecocriticism' and the 'discipline of food history' (10), and this is followed by a chapter which examines earlier cultural developments and uses of fruit symbolism. An analysis of fruit stories from the Bible and classical literature establishes the 'recurrent tropes, images, and characters' (11) furnished by these two traditions. A further set of underpinning ideas are then developed in Chapter 2 through consideration of the ways in which fruit and fruit trees are represented in gardening manuals from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, during a period of 'steady expansion' (47) of cultivated plant varieties. Here Bellamy draws attention to the way in which horticultural discourses 'deployed and appropriated' an 'inherited tradition of imagery' (41), and also shows how changing production techniques, such as the practice of growing tropical fruit in heated

greenhouses, stimulated new associations and ideas or nuanced existing symbolic associations.

Four further chapters within the book go on to explore how fruit is represented within seventeenth-century poetry, Restoration drama, eighteenth-century georgic, and the Romantic period novel respectively; in all cases canonical and less well-known texts are investigated so that a pleasingly diverse literary canvas is explored. In Chapter 3 the literary versatility of fruit as symbol begins to emerge as Bellamy identifies a range of meanings and functions of fruit symbolism within seventeenth-century verse, from coded references to female sexuality and fruit as 'desirable, available, and seductive' (102), to representations of fruits which are produced by new horticultural practices and which are depicted as 'comically tyrannous' and 'unnatural' (103).

In the following chapter, attention turns to Restoration drama and the shift in terms of not just period but also genre helps to draw attention to the way in which specific genre conventions also shape the handling of fruit. The type of fruit identified by Bellamy as dominant within this context is the orange, forever connected in the popular imagination to the theatre of the period by the figure of Nell Gwyn, 'orange wench in Drury Lane' and later 'mistress of Charles II' (106). As well as making frequent appearances within the dialogue on stage, the orange also becomes at this time the 'playhouse snack of choice' (105). This dual act of consumption results in one of the more significant developments in the meaning of fruit here, which Bellamy argues is now no longer perceived as part of a 'natural landscape' but a 'commodity in an economic system' (106); within this context, the 'feminization of fruit' (134) often in evidence within the stage discourse also helps reinforce the 'identification of women as objects, not just of the male gaze but of male consumption' (135).

Chapter 5 focuses on the eighteenth-century georgic and again the significance of genre conventions on the handling of fruit is apparent, though here fruit meanings are so closely tied up with the ideas of honest husbandry or the celebration of the demands and virtues of agricultural labour, which are defining features of the genre, as to be more obviously pre-determined. Within this context we therefore see a shift in focus from the 'tender fruits of the walled garden or tropical paradise' of the seventeenth century and from the 'commodified citrus' of the Restoration drama, to the 'hardy English apple, symbolized by and symbolizing an independent peasantry and yeoman militia' (155). There are again though some interesting developments of meaning in relation to the gendering of fruit symbolism, and Bellamy suggests that while the husbandry involved in producing an English fruit harvest 'denotes masculinity and national identity', other fruits are seen in a negative light as being both 'feminized and foreign' (155).

The final chapter turns to the 'emerging genre of the novel' (156) and begins with consideration of novels from the earlier part of the eighteenth century before moving into the Romantic period. As in the earlier chapters, a good range of material is explored, including a number of texts by the women novelists who dominated the fiction market at this time. Bellamy notes that 'From the 1790s, there is a marked increase in the significance of fruit within fiction' (170) and argues that while the preceding periods were dominated by apples and the orange, 'the preeminent fruit of the eighteenth-century novel is increasingly the pineapple', a fruit which 'develops a central role in narratives anatomizing luxurious and artificial adult society' (158). Bellamy usefully connects developments in fruit symbolism to the rise of consumerism in the period, the 'discourse of luxury', and colonial ventures, with the exotic fruits and fruits raised out of season carrying a 'range of signifiers' within these texts (187). The exotic fruit, and in particular the pineapple, is read as a 'symbol of slavery and a product of slavery both at home and overseas' while fruits out of season represent 'various forms of disruption of the natural order, whether social promiscuity and upward mobility, tyranny and slavery, or challenges to traditional gender roles' (187). The chapter reveals how, within these texts, fruit effectively becomes a powerful expression of the social relations which underpin the manner of its production and acquisition, so that these foods come to be connected with 'distasteful luxury and the perpetuation of injustice and inequality' (174). These associations are picked up in the Conclusion in relation to the nineteenth century via a brief excursion into *Jane Eyre*. Here Bellamy suggests that Brontë complicates these meanings further, undermining the previous opposition between the healthy English orchard and the slavery symbolised by exotic fruit by exposing 'the extent of the links that bind' the 'English aristocracy and the West Indian plantocracy' (190).

Bellamy's survey is commendably detailed and thorough, and the argument as a whole is well grounded in analysis of an impressive range of primary texts. It also clearly and effectively builds on and develops existing scholarship, though there were a couple of slightly unexpected omissions in this respect. Given the stated influence of scholarship relating to food history as well as the critical thread within the argument which explores the gendered meanings of fruit, it was perhaps surprising that there was no mention of Carol Adams' seminal feminist study of the politics of diet, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory* (1990), which – for example – shows that a vegetable/fruit diet had historically been associated with women. Also, while careful attention is given to key cultural studies of diet in the Renaissance period (Albala, Appelbaum, and Fitzpatrick are all listed and given due attention), there is little or no engagement with similar studies relating to some of the later literary contexts, such as *Cultures of Taste/Theories of Appetite: Eating Romanticism* edited by Timothy Morton (2004) which rehearses some of the connections identified here between luxury, consumerism and diet within literature of the Romantic period.

Nonetheless, Bellamy's range and attention to detail are commendable, and many important insights are developed within the book. Considering the treatment of fruits across a range of genres from Restoration to the Romantic period reveals a number of key findings, not least the 'fundamental role of genre' (198) in shaping the textual handling of fruit, as well as the complex ways in which changing horticultural practices interact with other social and economic contexts in determining the development of this symbol. As Bellamy suggests, the book offers what might be thought of as a 'case study in the history of representation, exposing the relationships among practical, economic change, the inherited symbolic repertoire, and genre conventions' (198). What this case study reveals first and foremost about the symbol of fruit is its flexibility and versatility. Fruit emerges from this study as endlessly various and mutable in its symbolic associations, and always in the process of evolution, development and change. As a literary and cultural symbol, fruit's meanings and possibilities are as divergent as its external and internal variety might suggest.

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WILL BOWERS, *The Italian Idea: Anglo-Italian Radical Literary Culture, 1815–1823* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). xix + 269pp. £75.00 hardback. 9781108491969.

This impressively wide-ranging and yet precisely focused study concentrates on 'the second of three waves of Anglo-Italianism' in British culture between 1780 and 1860. The first wave came in the poetry of the Della Cruscans, the third accompanied the build-up to Italian unification. The second, for Bowers, began in 1815, with peace in Europe and 'a renewed fervour in the radical voice against the state' in Britain combining to lead a generation of British writers to the discovery, in Italian literature, of a 'new cultural perspective from which to scrutinise', 'question' and challenge 'state-promoted forms, genres, themes, and even the nation itself'. The wave ended, Bowers suggests, in 1823, with Foscolo's 'growing seclusion' and Byron's departure from Italy to Greece 'a year after the death of Shelley' – that is with the departure of the 'key proponents of radical Italian ideas from [British] literary culture'. Across these eight years, Bowers charts a 'short but brilliant transit of radical Italian ideas across Romantic literary culture'. Chapters focus on particular 'juncture[s] in Anglo-Italian cultural relations' at which writers use 'Italian poetry past and present, and the philosophy of Alfieri and Machiavelli' to stage 'a deliberate challenge' to the British cultural 'hegemony' by strategically 'flouting' literary 'conventions and customs' seen in 'national terms' with importations of 'corrupting' foreignness.

Chapter 1, 'Italians and the "Public Mind" before 1815', looks back at 'British ideas' about Italy and Italians among the 'generation before Waterloo', for whom Italy was 'two very different things': the Italies of Rome and the Renaissance, and modern Italy. The former were having 'something of a resurgence' in and through popular histories of Italy by Gibbon, Roscoe, Ginguené and Sismondi. However, eighteenth-century 'travelogues and novels', print caricatures and plays 'display the contempt' many Britons had for 'modern Italians', their religion, morality, 'fashions, accents', 'sexual habits' and 'literary and musical traditions'. Encouraged by the debates surrounding the Aliens Bill of 1793, an increasingly 'prominent migrant community' of 'real Italians' were depicted as malnourished, unclean animals. Beneath this contempt was a sense of 'cultural danger'. This danger consisted firstly of a