Eighteenth-Century Fiction

Volume 17 | Issue 2 Article 13

1-31-2005

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Recommended Citation

Scherwatzky, Steven (2005) "Review of: Greg Clingham, *Johnson, Writing, and Memory; and Nicholas Hudson, Samuel Johnson and the Making of Modern England*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*: Vol. 17: Iss. 2, Article 13.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/ecf/vol17/iss2/13

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As this summary suggests, inns function in dramatically different ways, and to a greater or lesser extent, in the novels that McMorran examines. His introduction and conclusion could have reflected this diversity of roles more fully, rather than positioning the inn as essentially related to digressive narration. Elsewhere, his conflation of private homes and stagecoaches where digressive stories are told with inns in spite of important differences between them, as well as his admission that "interpolations determine the setting of their own narration" (122), robs the inn of the unique functions he would ascribe to it. The absence of historical and socio-cultural research on the development of the inn during the period in question also contributes to a troubling universalizing tendency.

Nevertheless, McMorran's approach offers a number of intriguing comparisons among a set of novels not hitherto considered together in a single study. It places Fielding and Sterne within a broader European context, which so many Anglocentric treatments fail to do. Most important, it usefully interrogates the ways that travel within a text reflects, influences, and subverts travel through a text.

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Greg Clingham. *Johnson, Writing, and Memory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. US60. 222pp. ISBN 0-521-81611-4.

Nicholas Hudson. *Samuel Johnson and the Making of Modern England.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. US65. 290pp. ISBN 0-521-83125-3.

Greg Clingham and Nicholas Hudson each present a compelling case for the centrality of Samuel Johnson to the English eighteenth century as well as to the concerns of today, yet they take distinctly different approaches. Clingham emphasizes how Johnson looks backward and draws upon the past as a way to construct an understanding of the present. In contrast, Hudson explores how Johnson looks forward and how he has had an impact on subsequent generations. These books also differ as much in methodology as they do in substance. Clingham adopts a more theoretical approach, exploring Johnson in relation to postmodernism and the insights of Derrida, Foucault, and Hayden White. Hudson chooses a more conventionally historicist approach, studying Johnson in relation to a wide range of eighteenth-century documents. Read together, these books provide fresh inquiries into the range of Johnson's achievement and will undoubtedly spark lively debate regarding its measure.

Clingham begins by challenging Johnson's reputation as a thoroughgoing essentialist, arguing that however much Johnson might have desired a metaphysics of presence in language, he well understood the arbitrary relationship between signs and signifiers. "Difference is a key term in Johnson's writing" (16), Clingham reminds us, and it is precisely this sense of difference, in its attention to the discrepancies between absence and presence, past and present, life and literature, that forges the dialectical tensions that structure Johnson's thought and writing. Given Johnson's sense of the impalpable and elusive nature of the present—"the present is in perpetual motion; leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by its effects which it leaves behind" (*Rambler* 41, cited in Clingham, 18)—it is memory that provides consciousness with the ability to reorganize and reimagine the past. What the memory shapes, writing preserves, despite the potentially endless deferral of meaning. Consequently, Clingham's interest lies—as does his sense of Johnson's achievement—in the places "where different discourses and temporal planes meet; where the impermanent, imperfect aspects of life are translated into the potentially permanent, remembered realm of literature" (121).

Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* provides Clingham with a fertile testing ground for his theory regarding the centrality of memory to human creativity and becomes the focus of his study. The genre of biography, as "*lieu de memoire*," requires translating absence into presence. In doing so, Johnson "develops a kind of Foucaultian archaeology that reflects on the literary history he has constructed with a consciousness of the historicity, fictiveness, of his own efforts" (163). His authority as a writer derives from a successful mediation of the particular and the universal, the known and the unknown, in a way that mirrors the practices of the best poets he memorializes. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, for example, successfully translates the particulars of his profound learning and theological vision into a narrative of universal appeal. Memory, which Clingham calls "a sophisticated engrammatological technology" (14), makes this translation possible through unifying the fragmented and fugitive aspects of thought and experience in conjunction with the creative impulse. Milton as poet cannot have direct access to the fall of man any more than Johnson can have direct access to Milton, but memory, in its power to recollect, invent, synthesize, and retain, creates a presence out of absence and the timeless out of the temporal. Clingham concludes, "Simply summarized, the *Lives* develop a critical interest in memory as a fictive paradigm by which the relationship between life and literature can be understood" (159).

Readers with a taste for critical theory and its attendant vocabulary will find *Johnson, Writing, and Memory* particularly attractive. Yet those who are less receptive will be well rewarded if they stick with Clingham as his argument unfolds. Despite the book's inherent—and perhaps unavoidable—difficulty, Clingham does a fine job of viewing Johnson through a postmodern lens. He

makes a convincing case when he cites Imlac's advice in *Rasselas* that "all judgment is comparative" (166) as emblematic of Johnson's epistemology. But what distinguishes Johnson from a Derrida or a Fish, Clingham argues, is his insistence that "the rhetorical use of language is the medium within which truth is both found and made" (37). That said, Clingham hedges when he later admits, "'truth' for Johnson is not merely equivalent to language" (88). Despite what seems a tenuous link between these claims, the epistemological questions he raises lay the groundwork for an insightful discussion of the connections between Johnson's remarks on the novel in *Rambler* 4 and on history in *Rambler* 122 to the writing of biography. In the absence of "personal memory or empirical observation," the biographer, like the historian and, indeed, the novelist, "invents, but invents truthfully" (96).

In contrast to Clingham's emphasis on memory, Hudson focuses upon Johnson as "a man of the 'future'" (27). Hudson's Johnson is a prescient thinker of extraordinary influence on the development of English national identity. While several recent studies—notably by J.C.D. Clark and Robert DeMaria—have placed Johnson firmly within neo-classical and neo-humanist paradigms, Hudson identifies what he sees as Johnson's central role in a "*process* that was changing England from a pre-modern into a modern society, finally vaulting him into the iconically English figure imagined by the Victorians and even in popular culture today" (2). Yet this is not to say that Hudson sees Johnson as a progressive or liberal thinker. On the contrary, Hudson defines Johnson as a "conservative," though not in a way that should be equated with unflinching allegiance to the upper class or with opposition to change in general. After all, much evidence can be found in Johnson's thought and writing that works to reshape traditional aspects of English society, from his faith in the benefits of social mobility and a market economy, to the education of women. In Hudson's hands, Johnson's conservatism tolerates a certain degree of change provided that requisite checks remain in place to prevent reform from going too far and from having potentially deleterious effects on social and political stability.

Hudson begins by charting what he sees as Johnson's role in helping to engineer a transition in England from a "rank" to a "class" based culture. In fact, he credits Johnson's most "significant effort" as working "to define the values and social role of what later became known as the 'middle class'" (12). Knowledge, industry, and virtue, rather than rank, connections, and privilege, enabled Johnson, the son of a Midlands bookseller, to achieve a degree of social elevation and cultural authority typically reserved for those of less humble origins. This discussion leads to an appraisal of Johnson's contribution to the advancement of women, as he successfully negotiated opposing views of the private and public roles of women with enough nuance to find support among conservative and radical women alike, from Hannah More to Mary Wollstonecraft. His ability to moderate the "potentially hostile

tendencies within the emerging ideology of English womanhood" (53) finds a parallel of sorts in Johnson's deft approach to politics, which Hudson defines as "expert at finding a peaceable middle ground of shared values and interests between Whigs and Tories" (93). Johnson's contribution to English politics, according to Hudson, provided clarity of focus to the very idea of English nationhood, including an endorsement of the imperial ambitions that would, over the next century, establish one of the most wide-ranging empires the world has known.

Hudson admits Johnson's disdain for the commercial aspects of empire but argues for his commitment to its "moral role" (218). This idea will surely rank among Hudson's more controversial claims. If there is one aspect of Johnson's hotly contested politics that scholars have agreed upon, it is his relentless opposition to grand schemes of colonial expansion. Throughout his writings, Johnson is emphatic upon this point, and Hudson is unconvincing when he repeatedly traces the origins of Johnson's alleged support of empire to a "boyish fascination" that in adulthood "still captured the imagination" (213). Hudson's psychological speculation that it is "easy to imagine Johnson's young mind racing" (200) as he first read Richard Knolles's *The Turkish History, from the Original of that Nation to the Growth of the Ottoman Empire* (1603) hardly accounts for or offsets the more overarching criticisms of and scepticism towards empire displayed throughout Johnson's mature writing, including most notably *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749), of which the title alone suggests that we are not about to read, as Hudson would have it, "one of the most forceful expressions of nascent English imperial mentality of the mid-century" (202). *Taxation No Tyranny* (1775), always Johnson's most notorious political essay and a centrepiece of Hudson's argument, hardly makes a case for empire building; instead, it offers, as Donald Greene has suggested, a legal argument that lambastes American colonists for demanding rights unavailable to most citizens in England. Much of Hudson's argument regarding empire hinges upon his (technically accurate) claim that it would be anachronistic to call Johnson "anti-imperialist" since the phrase had yet to develop its nineteenth-century meaning, yet he seems less troubled by the same problem with respect to a word like "conservative." Indeed, reader response to *Samuel Johnson and the Making of Modern England* will likely centre upon whether or not one considers the term "conservative" helpful towards understanding Samuel Johnson as well as one's level of tolerance for the kind of overstatement evident not only in Hudson's perspective on empire but, more generally, when he concludes that Johnson was "an influential creator of the ideological impressions that, in turn, would inform the way people behaved in every facet of English life" (222).

Samuel Johnson and the Making of Modern England and *Johnson, Writing, and Memory* will be required reading for all Johnsonians. Both authors are eminent scholars who are at home in Johnson's vast oeuvre and provide careful,

nuanced readings of a wide range of texts. Readers inclined towards the discussions of the novel and narratology will find Clingham fruitful, while those seeking a rich rendering of the historical particulars that defined the Age of Johnson and its impact will find much of interest in Hudson. For those who simply wonder why so much fuss continues to be made, both books provide eloquent testimony to the perennial endurance of Samuel Johnson.

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Ashley Tauchert. *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Accent of the Feminine*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002. ix+169pp. US52. ISBN 0-333-96346-6.

The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft, ed. Claudia L. Johnson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. xxi+284pp. US22. ISBN 0-521-78952-4.

The Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft, ed. Janet Todd. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. xxxiii+478pp. US49.50. ISBN 0-231-13142-9.

The appearance of these three books within a short period suggests a resurgent or perhaps an ongoing high interest in Mary Wollstonecraft since the women's movements of the 1970s. Wollstonecraft, of course, is read today not simply for her feminist views but also for her comments on education, on politics, and on the French Revolution. And she is studied not just as a philosopher but also as an essayist and reviewer, a letter and travel writer, and a novelist. It is virtually impossible to teach a course in late eighteenth-century British or Romantic literature today without including a work by the famous vindicator of the rights of woman. Since the nineteenth century, her biography has captivated readers because such notable literary and artistic figures intersected her life at various points—William Blake, William Godwin, Henry Fuseli, publisher Joseph Johnson, and Mary Hays—and because she gave birth to Mary Shelley. These three books are, in many ways, responding to the continuing appeal and market for scholarship on Wollstonecraft's life and works.

These books all attempt to capture the energy, vitality, and range of Wollstonecraft as an intellectual and as a writer. But they are very different in terms of genre, intended audience, and scholarly approach. Ashley Tauchert's monograph is an academic study that approaches Wollstonecraft's life and