Romantic Textualities

LITERATURE AND PRINT CULTURE, 1780–1840

◆ SPECIAL ISSUE : THE MINERVA PRESS AND THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE ◆

www.romtext.org.uk

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY PRIFYSGOL CAERDYD   Cardiff University Press
                                       Gwasg Prifysgol Caerdydd

Aims and Scope: Formerly *Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text* (1997–2005), *Romantic
Textualities: Literature and Print Culture, 1780–1840* is an online journal that is committed to fore-
grounding innovative Romantic-studies research into bibliography, book history, intertextuality and
textual studies. To this end, we publish material in a number of formats: among them, peer-reviewed
articles, reports on individual/group research projects, bibliographical checklists and biographical
profiles of overlooked Romantic writers. *Romantic Textualities* also carries reviews of books that re-
flect the growing academic interest in the fields of book history, print culture, intertextuality and cul-
tural materialism, as they relate to Romantic studies.

Editorial

Anthony Mandal
Maximiliaan van Woudenberg

❧

We are delighted to present the latest issue of *Romantic Textualities*, after an extended hiatus of some three years. This is also the biggest issue we have published in the history of the journal, running to over 300 pages of essays, reviews and a report. Living in the midst of the covid-19 outbreak, we have witnessed the many challenges and disruptions caused by the pandemic—and its impact on the usual business of academic research cannot be ignored. To that end, we sincerely hope that the present publication, prepared during these complicated times, offers some small relief in the reading.

Despite the hiatus in its publication of serialised issues, *Romantic Textualities* has nonetheless remained active online, presenting content on our blog, most notably through our 'Teaching Romanticism' series, edited by Daniel Cook. The past few years have seen a number of changes in the editorial team: last issue, we welcomed Maximiliaan van Woudenberg as journal co-editor; this issue, we are delighted to introduce Barbara Hughes-Moore as our new Reviews Editor. Barbara recently completed an interdisciplinary doctoral project at Cardiff University, which looked at problems of proof in *mens rea* through the literary figure of the double in gothic fiction. As part of our continuing plans to expand our online activities, we hope to expand our team further by appointing an Associate Editor and Social Media Editor in the coming months.

Returning to the present, we are pleased to publish a special issue on *The Minerva Press and the Literary Marketplace*, guest edited by Elizabeth Neiman and Christina Morin. *Romantic Textualities* has enjoyed a long, fruitful association with research into William Lane's Minerva Press, whose heyday spanned the 1780s to the 1820s. Many of the journal's early issues shared bibliographical research that emerged from collaborative projects between Cardiff and Paderborn Universities. These partnerships resulted in the publication of two bibliographies (*The English Novel, 1770–1829* [2000] and *1830–1836* [2003]) and a database (*British Fiction, 1800–1829* [2004]). As the most prolific publisher of fiction during the Romantic period, Minerva figured substantially in our research, demonstrating that the early history of the novel was very much the history of the Lane's press. Our bibliographic updates were supplemented in *Romantic Textualities* by standalone essays and reports on the Minerva Press, but such items tended to be occasional pieces. So, it is with much satisfaction that we now present readers with an entire issue dedicated to Minerva and its contribution to the Romantic literary marketplace (see pp. 11–184).

The ongoing work of this issue's guest editors has examined the Minerva Press and popular fiction during the Romantic era. As well as having published essays on women's writing and Minerva in journals and book collections, Elizabeth has most recently published *Minerva's Gothics: The Politics and Poetics of Romantic Exchange, 1780–1820* (University of Wales Press, 2020). Tina's research interests centre on Romantic-era Irish gothic literature, book history and Irish women's writing. She is the author of *Charles Maturin and the Haunting of Irish Romantic Fiction* (2011) and *The Gothic Novel in Ireland, c. 1760–1829* (2018), both of which were published by Manchester University Press. The current collection of essays on the Minerva Press extends their work in this area, and was specially commissioned for *Romantic Textualities*, with a call for papers issued in late 2017. For a fuller discussion of the Minerva Press and the essays, see Elizabeth and Tina's introduction to the special issue on pp. 11–20.

In addition to the ten Minerva essays, Issue 23 includes four standalone articles. Angela Aliff's 'The "Dying Tale" as Epistemic Strategy in Hemans's *Records of Woman*' (pp. 185–199) addresses ways in which a study of early modern female writers of history can inform Felicia Hemans scholarship, particularly by drawing on Megan Matchinske's work on the 'dying-tale' in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613). Aliff argues that Hemans similarly promotes the necessity of women acting to ensure successful political and personal endurance in her *Records of Woman* (1828), drawing on a multi-sensory approach to communication that relies especially on the auditory. Michael Falk's 'Sad Realities: The Romantic Tragedies of Charles Harpur' (pp. 200–217) considers Australian poet Charles Harpur's contribution to the development of Romantic tragedy, particularly through *The Bushrangers* (1835/53) and *King Saul* (c. 1838). Falk suggests that although Harper sought to distinguish his literary productions from more popular fare, while experiencing alienation from the popular theatre by a colonial context marked by censorship, snobbery and British cultural imports. In 'The Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer in the Nineteenth Century: Social Influences on Editorial Practices' (pp. 218–236), Simone Celine Marshall compares features of the 1807 edition of Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* with its predecessors. Marshall proposes that *The Book of the Duchess* offers a revealing case study of Georgian textual scholarship of a significant poem in Chaucer's *oeuvre*, the authority of which has never been questioned. The final essay, Amy Milka's 'Political Animals: Dogs and the Discourse of Rights in Late Eighteenth-Century Print Culture' (pp. 237–256) argues that during the political upheaval of the 1790s, the discourse of rights was mobilised to discuss the social, legal and political status of animals and humans. With dogs (in this case) being used as cyphers for their human owners, a variety of literary productions demonstrated the methods of social, legal and political resistance available to their readers.

The second section of this issue provides Update 7 (pp. 257–278) to two linked bibliographical projects, both of which share their origins with *Romantic Textualities* at Cardiff University's Centre for Editorial and Intertextual Re-

search, as mentioned earlier: the second volume of *The English Novel, 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles* (OUP, 2000) and its online companion *The English Novel, 1830–1836: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in Britain and Ireland* (Cardiff and Paderborn Universities, 2003). The entries concern updated authorship attributions; the addition of new novels subsequently identified as suitable for inclusion in the bibliographical record; new information on surviving copies where none were previously located; as well as additional information about existing entries and more complex issues. The present report covers a period of over ten years since Update 6, spanning 2009 to 2020. It is hoped in the near future to provide a composite Update 8 incorporating material from all previous Updates, and marking the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the printed bibliography.

The final section of this issue comprises reviews of sixteen books on Romanticism, literature and print culture published between 2014 and 2018 (pp. 279–315). The titles examined cover a range of subjects, ranging from literature and science, to political radicalism and Welsh hymnody, from travel and topography to the popular reception of Austen to the contemporary networks traversed by Coleridge and Wordsworth.

Much is already in motion for our forthcoming issues. Issue 24 (Winter 2020) will focus on 'Romantic Novels 1817 and 1818', guest edited by Susan Civale and Claire Sheridan, and inspired by the Romantic Bicentenary seminar series that they co-hosted at the University of Greenwich in 2018–19. Following this, the theme of the Spring 2021 issue will be 'Romanticism Goes to University', emerging from a successful two-day symposium organised by Issue 25 editor, Andrew McInnes, at Edge Hill University in May 2018. In the longer term, we are also planning a special issue that looks at the theme of Romantic cosmopolitan networks, to be edited by Christopher Stampone, and a call for papers will shortly be issued for this. More generally, we welcome submissions: please visit our see our Instructions for Authors (pp. 325–326) for more information. ◈