Table of Contents

Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

About This Volume

This volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis Series* includes an editor's introduction by Colin Jager, essays by Mark Canuel, Colin Jager, Paul Hamilton, and Bruce Robbins.

This volume begins to unpack the relationships among the three terms of its title. Despite its air of neutrality, "secularism" is increasingly understood to have its own interests, particularly when it comes to defining and managing the "religious." And, thanks to its constitutive relationship to modernity, romanticism is invested in secularism, not least in those moments typically coded as "spiritual" or "religious." Cosmopolitanism, too, bears a vexed relationship to a period typically associated with nationalism. Finally, secularism and cosmopolitanism are themselves related in surprising ways, both historically and conceptually. Do they pursue the same project? Do they diverge? How and when? And how does romantic writing figure such alignments? These are the questions motivating the three essays in this volume. Reaching beyond a religious-secular binary, Paul Hamilton analyzes romantic conversation as a form of the "nonsecular." Mark Canuel's essay on Coleridge shows how fear was authorized and placed within the secular institutional framework of the nation state. And Colin Jager's essay on Byron and Occidentalism dwells on the norm of reflexivity as an index of a modern, secular, reaction to religious orthodoxy. As Bruce Robbins points out in his response, all three essays attest to the Janus-faced nature of Romanticism's engagement with secularism and cosmopolitanism. Always on the verge of taking a familiar path (nationalism, spiritualization), romanticism's restless critical and institutional energies also find ways to disrupt those susceptibilities.

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About the Romantic Circles Praxis Series

The **Romantic Circles Praxis Series** is devoted to using computer technologies for the contemporary critical investigation of the languages, cultures, histories, and theories of Romanticism. Tracking the circulation of Romanticism within these interrelated domains of knowledge, **RCPS** recognizes as its conceptual terrain a world where Romanticism has, on the one hand, dissolved as a period and an idea into a plurality of discourses and, on the other, retained a vigorous, recognizable hold on the intellectual and theoretical discussions of today. **RCPS** is committed to mapping out this terrain with the best and mo st exciting critical writing of contemporary Romanticist scholarship.

About the Contributors

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Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

Introduction

Colin Jager, Rutgers University

In this introduction to the volume, Jager argues that secularism has remained an obscure topic within romantic studies. Noting that 'a genealogy of romantic secularism has yet to be written,' Jager sketches some aspects of such a genealogy by noting the persistence of romantic thinking—about the symbol, for example—in secular thinking. Cosmopolitanism, he notes, has been more widely considered alongside romanticism, but here again the relationship of secularism to 'romantic cosmopolitanism' has tended to remain invisible. Is cosmopolitanism part of a secular project? Or do the conditions of postmodernity in fact make possible a religious cosmopolitanism of a kind anticipated by some romantic texts? This essay appears in _Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

1. This volume of *Romantic Circles* is devoted to the constitutive relationships among the three words of its title. Of late "Cosmopolitanism" has gotten a certain amount of attention. Following the lead of our colleagues in Victorian Studies and elsewhere, students of the romantic era have begun to speculate about romanticism's own cosmopolitan investments and tendencies. "Romantic Cosmopolitanism," indeed, was the theme of the 2004 NASSR meeting, followed up by a special issue of *European Romantic Review* in 2005. In contrast, the various analyses of secularism originating in anthropology, political theory, sociology, and religious studies over the past decade have had little impact on romantic studies (nor, for that matter, upon literary studies in general—though that is slowly changing). Perhaps this is because secularism itself—its modes of operation, its institutional inflection, the questions it legitimates—is usually taken for granted in literary study.

2. Romanticism, moreover, may prove particularly resistant to an analysis of secularism because of the still-powerful influence of the secularization thesis—the idea that religion declines as societies modernize. Though studies of romanticism that depended centrally upon that thesis, like M. H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism* (1971), have been subjected to sustained critique, the version of secularization upon which they relied has not necessarily been abandoned. We need to distinguish analytically between secularization (the description of a historical process) and secularism (whether understood as a doctrine or as a lived ethic). At the same time, the continued influence of the former has tended to obscure the latter as an object of study.[1] One task that this volume undertakes, therefore, is to make secularism *visible* as an object of study, to call it back from the invisibility to which it aspires. Two subsequent claims follow: 1. Cosmopolitanism is itself intimately interwoven with secularism; 2. A romanticism newly attuned to this intimacy can advance our understandings of both of these interwoven terms.

3. We might begin with some words written more than a quarter-century ago now. In *The Political Unconscious,* Fredric Jameson, detailing the "corrosive and tradition-annihilating effects" of modernity, draws a line from the revolutionary era of the late eighteenth century through the advent of a market economy and the rise of nationalism and ends finally with what he calls "that great ideological rivalry between capitalism and communism, which, no less passionate and obsessive than that which, at the dawn of modern times, seethed through the wars of religion, marks the final tension of our now global village" (80).

4. What ought to strike us about that sentence now is how partial its understanding of modernity was.

This is not to deny, of course, the important influence and continuing salience of *The Political Unconscious,* which remains one of the great books of literary criticism and theory. Yet the intervening 25 years have demonstrated just how easily Jameson's "final tension" between communism and capitalism can be transformed into postmodern versions of those very "wars of religion" that his analysis relegates to the distant past. The single word "Afghanistan," in fact, tells that very story. This is an irony, indeed, for a critic and a book most readily associated with the command to "always historicize!" And that irony doubles when we recall the central place that medieval hermeneutics holds in Jameson's influential rendering of allegory in *The Political Unconscious*. Once we identify the secularizing, modernizing narrative built into Jameson's comments above, however, it is perhaps less surprising that a critic even of his acuity would assume that medieval allegory could be rewritten as historical materialism.[2]

5. The publication date of *The Political Unconscious,* 1981, is relevant here, for the early 1980s were also the years that historicism was entering the critical lexicon of romanticism, thanks in large part to a series of articles by Jerome McGann. When McGann clarified the methodological stakes on his project in *The Romantic Ideology* (1983), the reference to Marx and Engels's *German Ideology* made it clear that historicist literary studies departed markedly from the kind of spiritualized humanism associated with critics like Abrams. Where Abrams had sought in romanticism a cure for modernity, McGann revealed romanticism as a textual *and* historical moment marked by difference and ideological contestation. Rather than give us a restorative or therapeutic romanticism, McGann offered a romanticism whose connection to us came through tension, conflict, and the sheer fact of historical difference. Alienation thus extended even to the critic, who was emphatically *not* a spiritual guide. Recall, for example, the closing words of Marjorie Levinson's famous 1986 essay on "Tintern Abbey": "After all, the prolific contraries of Romantic poetry and criticism," writes Levinson, "are not our family of conflicts, which is to say, they are not prolific for us. To pretend otherwise is to forget ourselves through a facile sympathy, and to lose our enabling, alienated purchase on the poems we study" (57). It is hard to imagine a more thorough repudiation of the restoration project that Abrams had announced in his 1965 essay "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric," which also turns, in a very different way, on the notion of alienation: "The pervasive sense of estrangement, of a lost and isolated existence in an alien world," wrote Abrams then, "is not peculiar to our own age of anxiety, but was a commonplace of Romantic philosophy" (96). For Levinson, our alienation *from* romanticism is an index of our modernity and hence our critical agency; for Abrams, alienation is the very thing that links us *to* romanticism, for it identifies romanticism's relevance to our own modernity and therefore enables our critical agency.

6. McGann, Levinson, and Jameson cannot simply be equated, of course. But from our vantage-point now, what is perhaps most remarkable is that the materialist and historicizing impulse with which they are all associated arrived on the scene alongside what has turned out to be perhaps the most notable conflict of the past quarter-century. I refer to the Iranian revolution of 1979, which announced to the West, if it had not been paying attention before, that certain of its cherished pieties, such as the separation of religion and politics, were neither universally desired nor (though this was harder to see) constitutive of modernity. Arguably, we are still living with the aftershocks of that revolution.

7. In his remarkable book *Public Religions in the Modern World,* Jose Casanova remarks that "[w]hat was new and unexpected in the 1980s" was "the revitalization and the assumption of public roles by precisely those religious traditions which . . . theories of secularization . . . had assumed were becoming ever more marginal and irrelevant in the modern world." "Religious traditions throughout the world," he continues, "are refusing to accept the marginal and privatized role which theories of modernity as well as theories of secularization had reserved for them."[3] Here Casanova refers to modernization theory, more specifically what is sometimes called a "convergence theory of modernization," which proposes that other nations and cultures will modernize according to the

Western European model. The so-called "secularization thesis," meanwhile, held that religion declines as cultures modernize. Thus modernization and secularization were intimately bound together: both were inevitable, and would follow the pattern marked out by Western Europe.

8. In the past quarter-century the picture has become less clear. Western-style modernity, it turns out, is not a universal aspiration. Moreover, as writers associated with such phrases as "multiple modernities" and "alternative modernities" have helped us to see, convergence theories of modernization gave scant analytic attention to the force of local culture and its ability to take up and transform such aspects of modernity as the market society (Goankar). Finally, the limitations of modernization theory have cast doubt on the explanatory power of the secularization thesis: if modernization is a complex, dialectical, and culturally-specific affair, it seems that we need a much more nuanced and flexible notion of what secularization entails. Perhaps the concept needs to be abandoned altogether.[4]

9. These intellectual developments, of course, might have been read off from the event of Iranian revolution—and, incidentally, from Jerry Falwell's founding of the Moral Majority in the United States, which also happened in 1979—but for the most part they were not. Perhaps this is in part because of a common picture of the intellectual stance in which religion is always already surpassed by the very act of thinking itself.[5] This is what allows Jameson to acknowledge the interpretive power of medieval hermeneutics with one hand, and with the other transpose that power onto the conflict between communism and capitalism, as if religious conflict is by definition a thing of the past. In this picture, thinking becomes *critical* thinking at the moment that it leverages itself out of religion; the intellectual stance is counterposed to the religious stance, simultaneously its critic and its successor.

10. And yet, as Pierre Bourdieu has demonstrated, intellectuals are typically blind to the social determinants of their own intellectual posture (64). Although Jameson is clear-eyed about the corrosive effects of modernity, his methodology nevertheless seemed to require his allegiance to secularization and to convergence theories of modernization; moreover, the acuity and insight of the readings produced by this methodology served to justify that faith *a posteriori*. More generally, the humanistic disciplines are rooted both historically and conceptually in modernity, with its powerful yoking of human autonomy, the critique of religion, and the development of the nation-state. Can humanistic inquiry be adapted to a radically different world, whose various transformations are imperfectly captured by the catch-all term "globalization," and one moreover that has witnessed the uncoupling of modernization and secularization?

11. David Leiwei Li puts the problem quite elegantly in his introduction to a special issue of the journal *Comparative Literature* dedicated to "Globablization and the Humanities." He wonders about the fate of the humanities in contemporary culture, and poses his concerns in the form of two rhetorical questions. Here is the first: "If the humanities has evolved as historical reactions to theist orders, how does it approach that part of our humanity still steeped in a submission to religious precepts, hierarchical conceptions of social order, and resistance to secularism?" And here is the second rhetorical question: "If the humanities are social technologies that engineer autonomous individuals in modernity and sovereign subjects of the nation-state, what is its *raison d'etre* in a world where finance capital and televisual media crisscross national borders in the inculcation of global consumers?" (276-7). Here Li positions the humanities as a modern phenomenon, poised between the traditional and the postmodern, and therefore giving voice to the aspirations of a class of citizens fast disappearing. But this description also trades in a symptomatic blindness that continues to hamstring analyses of religion and secularism, for not unlike Jameson, Li pictures religion as anti-modern, as the words "submission" and "hierarchy" in his first question indicate. By contrast, Li's description of postmodern globalization in his second question abandons the discussion of religion in favor of transnational capitalism and media saturation.

12. Yet if we have learned one thing in the aftermath of 9/11, it is surely that religious traditionalism and postmodern globalization cannot be separated in this fashion: the same implicit faith in modernization theory that allows Li to position the humanities as a modern hinge between traditional religion and postmodern globalization blinds him to what scholars of religion are increasingly understanding as a globalized, mediatized, and decentered religious world, in which such postmodern structures as the "cell" and the "network" must be considered alongside the traditional hierarchies.[6] Arguably, the persistence of such thinking, particularly evident in the apparent inability to understand global fundamentalism as a thoroughly modern and even post-modern phenomenon, has proven the most serious conceptual barrier in the so-called "war on terror."

13. The genealogy of romantic secularism has yet to be written. At a minimum, such a genealogy would need to take in Kant and a variety of post-Kantian German intellectuals and artists, Coleridge and the Coleridgeans who followed in his wake, and the heavily romanticized philosophies of religion produced in the twentieth century by such thinkers as Rudolph Otto and Paul Tillich. A more comprehensive survey would also need to include the discourses of nationalism, imperial expansion, and comparative religion. Among other things, such a survey would show that Abrams's influential turn to romantic natural supernaturalism as a cure for modern anomie was part of a relatively continuous, trans-disciplinary critique of modernity as soul-destroying and alienating, a critique dedicated to finding ways to repair a damaged culture without resorting to the particularism of religion. And this is why, although Abrams's own solution (rendered largely in terms of overcoming subject/object dualism) perhaps seems dated now, the general orientation of his romanticism remains appealing.

14. Consider, as evidence for this claim, Karen Armstrong's best-selling 1993 book *A History of God*. In Armstrong's four pages on British Romanticism, which cover Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats, only one critic appears: Abrams (mis-identified as "M. R. Abrams") and only one critical concept: natural supernaturalism (347). Thus alerted, the reader notes other (unattributed) romantic threads in the book: a Blakean reading of *Paradise Lost,* for example: "it is significant that the true hero of [Milton's] masterpiece . . . is Satan rather than the God whose actions he intended to justify to man" (308). And a definition of symbol clearly indebted to Coleridge's famous description in *The Statesman's Manual*. "A symbol," writes Armstrong, "can be defined as an object or a notion that we can perceive with our senses or grasp with our minds but in which we see something other than itself. Reason alone will not enable us to perceive the special, the universal, or the eternal in a particular, temporal object" (234). This idea does a great deal of work for Armstrong, for she links it, again in a quasi-Coleridgean manner, with imagination: "The only way we can conceive of God, who remains imperceptible to the senses and to logical proof, is by means of symbols which it is the chief function of the imaginative mind to interpret" (233). In turn, this link between symbol, imagination, and God grounds the basic premise of Armstrong's study, namely that religion is a culturally specific expression of an underlying quest for meaning shared by humans across time and space. Put like that, Armstrong's book starts to look like a sophomoric extension of Abrams's own more nuanced thesis that romantic natural supernaturalism both diagnoses and overcomes the spiritual anomie of modernity. We might consider, then, what Armstrong's sales figures tell us about the continuing salience and appeal of the project of romantic idealism among western middlebrow audiences. Though her scholarship is sometimes shoddy and her analyses simplistic (or perhaps because of these things) Armstrong has the kind of audience that academics only dream about: each of her dozen books is a bestseller, she has been translated into forty languages, hosted three television series, and been a tireless speaker and commentator on religious affairs. Romanticism understood as natural supernaturalism provides intellectual ammunition for the temperament demanded by such a public role, which seeks and holds to a resolutely middle ground: it goes beyond enlightenment critique by granting religion legitimacy as an expression of what it means to be human, but manages to do this without granting any particular or exclusive ontological and metaphysical claims.[7]

15. Here I am not interested in Armstrong so much as what she represents: an approach to religion intellectual but accessible, spiritual but not doctrinaire. My claim is that this is terrain first marked out by Romanticism—which is to say, marked out by *some* aspects of *some* romantic texts and then emphasized by a critical tradition that had one eye on the romantic era and the other on its own. My second claim is that within this configuration, Romanticism's apparent spiritual affinities are precisely what make it an important, perhaps paradigmatic, instance of secularism. This claim may seem counter-intuitive: isn't a spiritualizing tendency proof that romanticism remains *too much* under the sway of religion? Many critics have thought so, to be sure. But that thought depends, once again, upon theories of modernization and secularization that assumed a single model of development toward rationality and demystification (in which romanticism appeared therefore appeared as backward-looking, anti-modern, nostalgic, and so on). In fact, secularism is best understood not as the disappearance of religion but as the *management* of religion, a way to grant it some legitimacy while also containing it in its own distinct domain. In this regard, secularism itself could be said to produce the very opposition between "the secular" and "the religious."

16. In a frequently cited article, Charles Taylor distinguishes between two models of European secularism. Modern secularism begins, in Taylor's account, with the European wars of religion, and the felt need for "a ground of coexistence for Christians of different confessional persuasions" (32). One solution to this need is what Taylor calls the "common ground strategy," which aimed to "establish a certain ethic of peaceful coexistence, which . . . was based on those doctrines which were common to all Christian sects, or even all theists" (33). Taylor cites Pufendorf, Locke, Leibniz, and deism as examples. The second strategy is to make secularism "an independent political ethic" rather than a lowest common denominator. This strategy, associated particularly with Grotius, asks us to abstract from our religious beliefs altogether in the name of identifying norms that would be binding even supposing that God did not exist. In the first strategy, secularism is what remains after warring beliefs have been removed; in the second, secularism is a space distinct from warring beliefs. Taylor goes on to observe that these different approaches to secularism lead to different understandings of the state's role in regard to religion: in the first approach, the state aims to be evenhanded in its treatment of religion, never favoring one denomination or sect over another; in the second, the state upholds no religious goods and may in fact actively police religion in the name of protecting secularism's independent ethic.

17. Each model has its problems. The common ground approach, forged among disagreeing Christians, may not be able to handle the expanded range of metaphysical commitments offered by the modern world. The independent ethic, while it may be better able to handle religious diversity, probably cannot be stretched far enough to include atheism, since for atheism, as Taylor points out, the idea that certain norms would be binding even if God did not exist is not a thought experiment but the basis of a lived ethic (36). Both models, moreover, are the products of a specifically Euro-American history: it is not clear that they travel well, as the examples of India and Turkey suggest. Faced with these difficulties, Taylor proposes a third model, based on an idea of "overlapping consensus" adapted from John Rawls. Taylor takes it as a given that there can be no overarching or shared ethic in the modern world, with its huge variety of goods. But, he writes, we can agree upon principles for different and even mutually contradictory reasons. Thus one person might support secularism because it protects religious minorities, and another because it limits religion's impact on public policy. In Taylor's understanding, then, we don't all have to agree on what the good is, just that our various and incompatible goods are best protected and enhanced by secularism. In this sense, he proposes, secularism is not a normative value in its own right.

18. This is an appealing proposal, in part because it seems less weighty than the other two models. It does not demand the arduous and largely hopeless task of identifying common ground among metaphysical commitments, nor does it place the burden of maintaining secularism entirely in the hands of the state. This last point, however, may be somewhat trickier than Taylor implies. Because his analysis

presupposes the modern nation state, one must ask whether the state can observe the kind of purely formal or adjudicatory role that Taylor imagines. It is difficult to square Taylor's vision of the state, for example, with that offered in Michel Foucault's essay "Governmentality." And we don't have to go all the way with Foucault to recognize that the state has its own interests and consequently invests its resources in the production of certain kinds of subjects. Moreover, wherever the state is involved, the threat of force is always in the background (that is what makes a state a state: a monopoly on force). And nothing tends to attract a clash between state power and subjectivity the way religion does. When the French government recently barred children from wearing religious symbols to school, for example, Muslim and Christian students experienced state power not as a formal entity but as a coercive one.

19. Of late, the anthropologists Talal Asad and Saba Mahmood have offered the most sustained analyses of the relationships among state power, religion, and secularism. Asad's 2003 book *Formations of the Secular* is centrally concerned with the power—over mind, body, and disposition—released and disabled by secularism. And Mahmood's recent discussion of a United States government program called "Muslim World Outreach" shows how secularism in its state-sanctioned form aims to "produce[] a particular kind of religious subject who is compatible with the rationality and exercise of liberal political rule" (344).[8] In these analyses, secularism is a technology of state power, and when that technology looks abroad, it becomes a driving force behind imperial expansion.

20. For the political theorist William Connolly, by contrast, secularism is not so much a sinister technology as it is an intellectually bankrupt concept. Connolly's 1999 book *Why I Am Not a Secularist* argues that modern secularism, at least as a political doctrine, ignores or disparages what he calls the "visceral register" or the "layered density of political thinking and judgment." "It does so," writes Connolly, "in the name of a public sphere in which reason, morality, and tolerance flourish. By doing so it forfeits some of the very resources needed to foster generous pluralism" (3). Connolly is here drawing in part on the critiques of liberalism made by feminists and communitarians over the past decades: that it ignores the embedded, the particular, and the embodied in the name of thin and abstract models of reason and judgment. Beyond this, however, Connolly's model of a pluralism that can legitimately admire a diversity of metaphysical perspectives (rather than simply tolerate them) looks rather like an agonistic version of Taylor's overlapping consensus. That is, while Connolly holds on to Taylor's vision of a plurality of goods and principles, he abandons the idea of overlap itself and the picture of the state as its guarantor, substituting instead a deconstructive absent center that is the result of epistemic modesty and the never-ending project of subject-formation: "The key," Connolly writes, "is to acknowledge the comparative *contestability* of the fundamental perspectives you bring into public engagements" (8; emphasis in original). This is compelling in part because it is grounded in the empirical fact of pluralism itself: even the fundamentalist, for example, must acknowledge that there are other creeds in the world. However, Connolly does not explain why the fundamentalist would wish to enter this epistemically modest space rather than, say, convert it. What is the anthropology governing Connolly's recommendation, and how could it be fostered?[9]

21. It may be here that romanticism can begin to play a part. Romantic thinking about subjectivity might provide Connolly with some resources for grounding the revisionist models of self that characterize his call for the "comparative contestability of fundamental perspectives." As attested to in recent books by Paul Hamilton and Leon Chai, romantic reflexivity seems to be experiencing a bit of a critical renaissance.[10] Hamilton's own analysis of romantic conversation in this volume expands one line of thought from his book *Metaromanticism* into the domain of what he here calls the "nonsecular." As his contribution makes clear, romanticism's historical positioning is key, for it is well-placed to take account of the legacy of enlightenment, and particularly that enlightenment form of secularism known as tolerance (Taylor's "common ground"). Mark Canuel's exploration of romantic fear, meanwhile, pushes the relationship between romanticism and tolerance, first developed in his book *Religion,*

Toleration, and British Writing, in the direction of a more specific analysis of how fear was authorized and placed within a secular institutional framework. And my own contribution on Byron and Occidentalism dwells at length on the norm of reflexivity as an index of a modern, secular reaction to religious orthodoxy. Thus all three essays attest to the Janus-faced nature of romanticism's engagement with religion. On the one hand, romanticism will always seem like a continuation of religion by other means—the secular reception and transformation of "religion" over the past 200 years have guaranteed this. On the other hand, romanticism's restless critical and institutional energies find ways to disrupt its own susceptibility to spiritualization—and in those disruptions one may read a critique of the secularism for which spiritualization is a primary way of containing the religious.

22. Secularism has always been a cosmopolitan project, as the various careers of early modern philosopher-diplomats suggest. Thus Lord Herbert of Cherbury, often credited with inventing deism, developed a "common ground" approach to secularism while ambassador to King Louis XIII of France. Herbert was trying to keep the French from jumping into the Thirty Years War on the Catholic side. He failed, but bequeathed to early modern Europe an influential formulation of religious tolerance that strove to honor both Baconian inductive reasoning and the diversity of world religions as he understood them (Ward 52-60). On the French side, Montaigne's skepticism and Descartes's dualism both seek to preserve "true religion" as a common meeting point while dispensing with such epiphenomena as doctrine and ritual. Notably, too, for Montaigne, Descartes, and—a bit later—John Locke, the idea of the Netherlands as a locus of cosmopolitan tolerance played an important role. Leibniz, meanwhile, pursued a different and rather idiosyncratic vision of the common ground: as opposed to tolerance of different denominations, Leibniz wanted to undo the Protestant Reformation and reunite the various churches around the shared principle of reason. Yet his extensive correspondence with, responses to, and disagreements with figures as various as Pierre Bayle, Samuel Clarke, Robert Boyle, Isaac Newton, and members of the house of Hanover during the years of its meteoric rise, help to round out the picture of an early modern cosmopolitan secularism that linked Paris, London, and Amsterdam through a network of courtiers, diplomats, philosophers and elite men of letters.

23. In many ways this picture remains, *mutatis mutandis,* our dominant picture of cosmopolitanism today. What Peter Berger calls a "globalized elite culture" of secular intellectuals (11) is our version of that European network of the early modern period, with the model of secularism switched from "common ground" to "independent ethic" in order to accommodate a wider array of metaphysical orientations. The advent of international human rights advocates, experts on transitional justice, and other transnational intellectual actors, for example, raises important questions about the relationship between Western human rights discourse and the indigenous, local, and often religious traditions it encounters on the ground. Perhaps the most well-known example is the active debate about the discourse of "reconciliation" in South Africa, and whether it can, or should, be abstracted from its largely Christian context and "internationalized." The cosmopolitan secularism at work in such an arena, it bears repeating, is not explicitly anti-religious; rather, it seeks both to respect religion and to sequester it.

24. According to Amanda Anderson, such exclusionary and relatively elite cosmopolitanism has historically been in tension with a more inclusive version. "In exclusionary cosmopolitanism," Anderson writes, "little to no weight is given to exploration of disparate cultures: all value lies in an abstract or 'cosmic' universalism. In inclusionary cosmopolitanism, by contrast, universalism finds expression through sympathetic imagination and intercultural exchange" (73). Most contemporary iterations of cosmopolitanism, Anderson finds, try to produce a dialectic between these poles, counting on both the normative pressure of universalism and "an emphasis on tact, sensibility, and judgment, which seems fundamental to the cosmopolitan's reconfigured relationship to universality" (80).

25. Could a move towards "inclusionary cosmopolitanism," then, serve also to de-secularize it? Anderson

herself addresses this question obliquely when she defends a picture of the intellectual life based on "ethos" or "character." Her argument aims to defend Habermasian discourse ethics against the criticism that it short-changes the embedded, situated, and affiliated aspects of identity—the places, in short, where people actually live out their daily lives. Against this criticism, Anderson argues that "intellectual and aesthetic postures are always also lived practices" (7). This bracing and persuasive account echoes other descriptions of the intellectual life; one thinks for example of Edward Said's description of intellectuals and their love of "process" and "vital exchange." Yet can the distance between theory and practice be closed so neatly? Might there not be "lived practices" that certain "intellectual postures" find antithetical? And might not religion be one such practice? When it comes to religion, in other words, the ethos of the intellectual stance that Anderson celebrates may run up against its limits. We might note, for instance, that Connolly's critique of secularism proceeds in part via a critique of Habermas, while Anderson's defense of cosmopolitanism proceeds in part via a defense of Habermas. It does seem unlikely that a Habermasian cosmopolitianism, no matter how supplemented and thickened, is going to be able to open itself to forms of ethos and character that come from religious traditions.

26. We know that cosmopolitanism and secularism are historical fellow-travelers. Anderson's argument raises the question of whether they are *theoretical* fellow travelers as well. Does criticizing secularism necessarily entail criticizing cosmopolitanism, even "inclusionary cosmopolitanism," and so falling back, however warily, upon the modes of group identity and affiliation ("tribalism," in neo-liberal parlance) that dominate the discourses of globalization?

27. We need to dwell on this point for a moment, for the question of the relationship between globalization and cosmopolitanism becomes especially live when we turn to the issue of religious globalization, and specifically the globalization of Christianity. Both cosmopolitanism and secularism bear a special relationship to Christian history in part because of the way that Christianity has spread around the globe. First, the Christian Bible after the early modern period has generally been experienced, read, and absorbed in translation. The end of the thousand-year reign of the Latin Vulgate unleashed a flood of vernacular translations of the Christian Bible that continues to this day. Second, the influence of Western European modernization is massive, deep, and ongoing. That flood of translations has made the Bible a global carrier not only of post-Reformation Christianity but also of the "values" that seem to attend it: self-determination, a market economy, instrumental rationality.

28. An understanding of the ongoing globalization of Christianity, therefore, is central for any analysis of the relationship between cosmopolitanism and secularism. In *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity,* Philip Jenkins makes this point dramatically and polemically. Considering the argument that Christianity will sink into irrelevance unless it updates its thinking about sex and gender, Jenkins comments:

> Viewed from Cambridge or Amsterdam, such pleas may make excellent sense, but in the context of global Christianity, this kind of liberalism looks distinctly dated. It would not be easy to convince a congregation in Seoul or Nairobi that Christianity is dying, when their main concern is building a worship facility big enough for the 10,000 or 20,000 members they have gained over the past few years. (9)

29. Are the churches, or church members, of the global South cosmopolitan? They are cultural hybrids, to be sure, combining indigenous traditions with Christian theology in manifold ways. And many of these churches operate outside of the usual bounds of the nation state: they perform the social services that the state cannot or will not provide, and they seem less bound by affiliations of nation than those of creed and region. Could such modes of group identity, prolifically combining the global and the local, serve as one basis for constructing a "cosmopolitanism from below"?

30. Let me here contrast two volumes of collected essays that take up precisely this question—though, symptomatically, they largely ignore global religion: *Cosmopolitics,* a 1998 volume edited by Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins and originating with the *Social Text* collective; and *Cosmopolitanism,* a 2002 volume associated with the journal *Public Culture* and the Society for Transnational Cultural Studies. Both volumes could be said to embrace the "new cosmopolitanism" in that they are critical of any cosmopolitanism content with a detached view from nowhere or a merely aesthetic appreciation of cultural difference. Both acknowledge the importance of treating cosmopolitanism in the plural, as a local, situated, practice. Yet the volumes differ in how far they wish to go in this direction, and that difference can help us see how and in what manner secularism intersects the discourse of cosmopolitanism.

31. As Bruce Robbins writes in his introduction to *Cosmopolitics,* "something has happened to cosmopolitanism. It has a new cast of characters." And he goes on to note the following shift: cosmopolitanism no longer means, or only means, a "detachment from the bonds, commitments, and affiliations that constrain ordinary nation-bound lives"; rather, it now extends "to transnational experiences that are particular rather than universal and that are unprivileged—indeed, often coerced" (1). Many of the contributors to the volume, however, are ambivalent about this development, or at any rate about what they perceive as its potential excesses—an ambivalence raised in some cases to the level of a methodology, as the volume's concluding essays by Rob Wilson and James Clifford make especially clear. Pheng Cheah, for his part, offers this skeptical account: "The world is undoubtedly interconnected, and transnational mobility is clearly on the rise. However, one should not automatically take this to imply that popular forms of cosmopolitanism already exist" (36). According to Cheah, cosmopolitanism cannot be simply folded into globalization; it remains at least in part an ideal.

32. The *Public Culture* volume, meanwhile, dispenses with such ambivalence and fully, even breathlessly, embraces a reading of cosmopolitanism as that which precisely *does* already exist. "Cosmopolitans today are often the victims of modernity, failed by capitalism's upward mobility, and bereft of those comforts and customs of national belonging," write the editors. "Refugees, peoples of the diaspora, and migrants and exiles represent the spirit of the cosmopolitical community." A "minoritarian modernity," they conclude, is "a source for contemporary cosmopolitical thinking" (7).

33. At this point we note the following distinction. The *Social Text* volume is committed, in both its theoretical articulation of cosmopolitanism and its methodological ambivalence about varieties of "new" cosmopolitanism, to moving dialectically between the poles of universal and particular, theory and practice, philosophy and anthropology. The volume strives to give voice to universalism's normative pressure and to acknowledge the importance of particularism. The *Public Culture* volume, by contrast, deliberately unmoors itself from the universalist or philosophical pole, insisting that cosmopolitanism can be understood only as a lived process. "Cosmopolitanism," write the editors, "is not just—or perhaps not at all—an idea. Cosmopolitanism is infinite ways of being" (12). For them, cosmopolitanism's normative power derives solely from what Anderson calls an "anthropological ethics" (82): that is, from the ethical claims exerted by the mere presence of the marginal and coerced. [11]

34. What does this distinction have to do with secularism? Consider how Pheng Cheah expresses his skepticism about the *Public Culture* version of cosmopolitanism: "The globality of the everyday," he writes, "does not necessarily engender an existing popular global consciousness" (31). And: "it is doubtful whether transnational migrant communities can be characterized as examples of cosmopolitanism in the robust sense. . . . It is unclear how many of these migrants feel that they belong to a world" (37). Here I wish to draw attention to Cheah's emphasis on consciousness. In order to be a cosmopolitan, a given subject has to understand herself as one. The drama here is the very modern one of self-recognition; or, to put the matter another way, the norm driving Cheah's conception of

cosmopolitanism is the norm of *reflexivity*. As such, his cosmopolitical thinking is grounded in the kind of modern subject formation that Saba Mahmood calls "normative secularity." What Mahmood identifies as the U.S. project of fostering reform movements within Islam by encouraging Muslims to read sacred texts symbolically can thus be understood, with Cheah's formulation in mind, as an effort to liberalize Islam by encouraging Muslims to understand themselves as citizens of the world. The emphasis on self-recognition and reflexivity—an ability to distance oneself from one's own formative discourses that is modeled and made possible by certain modes of "literary" reading—is what ties this vision of cosmopolitanism to secularism.

35. The *Public Culture* volume, on the other hand, seems less interested in locating a cosmopolitan consciousness and more interested in cosmopolitanism as a practice that we engage in willy-nilly, whether we choose to or not. We are always already cosmopolitans. In turn, this makes possible a more decisive break with modernity: "What the new archives, geographies, and practices of different historical cosmopolitanisms might reveal is precisely a cultural illogic for modernity that makes perfectly good nonmodern sense" (12). Cosmopolitanism within the context of globalization is not continuous with the modern project but sits decisively athwart it.[12]

36. To return, then, to my question above: are the Christian churches of the global South cosmopolitan? For the *Social Text* volume I think the answer would be "no," because those churches do not by and large recognize themselves as global actors (although in groups like the worldwide Anglican Communion this seems to be changing). For the *Public Culture* volume I think the answer would be "yes," because those churches are largely populated by people for whom the promises of global modernity have not materialized. From these different answers I draw a further conclusion. A cosmopolitanism oriented by varieties of cultural practice in a globalized world makes theoretical room for a critique of secularism, or more specifically allows us to parochialize secular theoretical assumptions, whereas a cosmopolitanism organized by a dialectic of the universal and the particular remains within a modern problematic that tends to validate secular theoretical assumptions.[13]

37. This is not to say that we should prefer one to the other. Indeed, my own response is asymmetrical: I am drawn to the critique of secularism offered for instance by Mahmood, but I find the picture of cosmopolitanism offered by the *Public Culture* volume rather breezy and analytically imprecise. When it comes to cosmopolitanism I am drawn to the dialectical model of the *Social Text* volume, but the way that collection relies on secular dramas of self-recognition strikes me as a problem for any discourse that hopes to keep up with a world situation in which religion plays an increasingly central role. If nothing else, this asymmetrical response suggests the challenge of thinking through the relationship between the secular and the cosmopolitan. For if secularism and cosmopolitanism were largely coterminous in the early modern period, when Locke and Leibniz tried to imagine how to repair a war-torn Europe, they are now discourses that diverge and converge, overlap and separate, across an expanding, global array of norms and practices.

Secularism / Cosmopolitanism / Romanticism

38. The essays collected here invoke in various ways a transnational reality, marking in turn both the production of nationalist paranoia and the possibilities of cosmopolitan mentalities. Mark Canuel's contribution provocatively takes the mobilization of fear, commonly associated with nationalist fear of the foreign, and re-writes it as a "formal accompaniment" of a newly secular disposition toward the fact of multiple and competing beliefs. My own essay on Byron's Eastern Tales plays the figure of the Islamic fundamentalist off against the reflexive capacities of the putatively modern subject, figured here by the Byronic hero and by New Critical celebrations of literary paradox. And Paul Hamilton identifies a nonsecular cosmopolitanism variously anticipated and enacted by romantic models of conversation. Yet as Bruce Robbins notes in his response to the three essays, cosmopolitanism remains

for the most part a background figure against which secularism and romanticism are variously positioned. I think that this is more than a simple register of the difficulty of keeping all three terms in play (though it is that, too). The asymmetry between secularism and cosmopolitanism runs deeper than that. Cosmopolitans have generally been happy to identify themselves as such; cosmopolitanism names a mostly honorable aspiration, however much one may quibble over details. The same cannot be said for secularism, which generally strives for invisibility, nor for secularists, who outside a few safe enclaves generally keep their mouths shut. Depending on one's perspective, this makes secularism either more tenuous or more sinister than cosmopolitanism. Despite the historical and conceptual intertwining of the cosmopolitan and the secular, then, it simply takes a lot of effort to render the latter term visible as an object of analysis. Romanticism can help in this process, but only once we understand how the traditional picture of romanticism has distorted the landscape. For curiously enough, romantic literature has too often seemed unrelated to either secularism or cosmopolitanism: it has seemed too spiritual to be properly secular, and too nationalist to be properly cosmopolitan. At the very least, I hope this volume demonstrates how much more complicated the reality is.

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Notes

1 Pecora argues that the opposite is also true; the ideal of secularism is incoherent, he writes, because we have not attended sufficiently to the history of secularization.

2 For an elegant extension of this idea see Brown. Among his many salient points: "however tempting it is to depict (that is, to transcode) the religiosity of resistance, insurgence, and attack as the sacralization of proper (economic) politics, that depiction cannot escape from becoming a parochial account that depends on an a priori distinction between religion and politics and on the separation of church and state" (747).

3 Casanova 5. For related claims see the essays in Berger.

4 For contrasting assessments, see Stark and Bruce. A less polemical account can be found in Hadden.

5 For this claim see Smith. See also Pecora, *Secularization,* and Berger, *Desecularization*.

6 On mediatization and religion see de Vries.

7 Armstrong herself is quite clear that she views religion as a cultural expression of an underlying, cross-cultural truth: "The religious experience of humanity has been remarkably unanimous. And that I find very endorsing, because instead of seeing your own tradition as one lonely little quest, idosyncratically crying in the darkness, you can see it as part of a giant, human search for meaning and value in a flawed and tragic world" (Lamb). This universalist thrust remains on display in Armstrong's most recent book, *The Great Transformation* (2006), a study of the Axial Age. The publisher's blurb calls the book "[a] revelation of humankind's early shared imperatives, yearnings and inspired solutions" (Random House).

8 See also Asad's critique of Taylor, pp. 2-8.

9 It is important to note that Asad, Mahmood, and Connolly write as non-theists and self-identified members of the cultural left. Their various critiques of secularism, then, link up intriguingly with explicitly religious critiques of secularism, such as those offered by the so-called Radical Orthodox theologians.

10 For an attempt to bring Hamilton and Connolly together, see Jager.

11 I do not mean to imply that either volume speaks in a single voice. Indeed, both speak in multiple voices; that is their point. I am calling attention, rather, to a significant *tonal* distinction between the volumes.

12 One might wonder, however, why "modernity" needs to be defined so narrowly. An appeal to "multiple modernities" might have made more sense here.

13 See "On Rooted Cosmopolitanism," Domna C. Stanton's 2005 Presidential Adress to the MLA: "I join those who would exclude religious transnationalism-Christian, Jewish, or Islamic-from cosmopolitanism, which, in my view, should strive to be secular and nondogmatic, provisional and subject to revision" (632). For a similar, though more nuanced, claim that religion and globalization are fundamentally at odds, see Derrida.

top of introduction

Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

Romantic Fear

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Reading the works of figures ranging from Bentham and Coleridge to present-day incarnations of the Gothic novel, this essay argues that the 'secular' emerged in Romantic literature less as a distinct form of belief and more as a new organization of beliefs. It claims that the crucial development for achieving that organization was the reconfiguration of penal laws, which in turn demanded a new articulation of fear among political subjects. This essay appears in _Romanticism, Secularism, and Cosmopolitanism_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

1. Dan Brown's best-selling thriller *The Da Vinci Code* contains an updated argument for secularization—a strategy that seems somehow to be both timely and out of step with current politics. At first the premise of the novel appears to involve a struggle to secure the political hegemony of one truth over another: a religious sect called the Priory guards the secret of Jesus's marriage to Mary Magdalene and their progeny, while members of the Catholic Opus Dei attempt to stop them from revealing it. Initially, that is, the novel seems to involve the search for, and possible exposure of, a specific piece of evidence—the "holy grail"—and this piece of evidence would inevitably lead to a political struggle in which Catholicism would be defeated, or at least undermined, by its religious rivals.

2. But then the novel—closely followed by the feature film based on it—turns into something different. For as the plot unfolds, several things happen that entirely defuse the force of this struggle. Once it turns out that the "grail" is actually Mary Magdalene herself, it becomes radically unclear how decoding the site of her tomb could help to ground or shake anyone's specific beliefs about her. And in fact finding the grail at last seems, from the protagonist Robert Langdon's perspective, almost irrelevant. He ends his search for the grail simply by believing in it, as he kneels in the courtyard of the Louvre in worship of the Mary Magdalene. The lesson at the end is that the grail is less important as a specific religious truth than as the focal point for one among many beliefs that people might hold and act on, peacefully and in the most public of places.

3. This logic is inseparable from the way that religious violence in the novel and film is finally understood to be a feature of the distant past rather than the present, even though initially we hear evidence of murderous plots and counterplots surrounding the grail's exposure. Present-day Catholicism disengages itself from religious extremism; Opus Dei is said to be innocent of any crimes. The Priory itself is more concerned with maintaining international and domestic peace than with exposing the secret evidence that it may or may not actually possess. The actual violence and potential for violence come not from any group of believers but from the fanatical Sir Leigh Teabing, who manipulates and plots to kill others—including members of Opus Dei—in order to obtain the secret of the grail for himself. The conclusion is not merely meant to show that Teabing might be entirely mistaken in his search for a grail that may not actually exist. Much more significantly, it is meant to show that Teabing's quest has no significant political role in the institutions or communities represented in the novel. Violence in *The Da Vinci Code* is the result, not of a religious struggle, but of a group of isolated individuals. It is not a clash of cultures, religions, or ideologies, but a local and thoroughly manageable criminal disturbance.

4. For this reason one could very easily see that *The Da Vinci Code* formulates itself as a vision of global politics in the age of "fundamentalist" terrorism. By making sectarian conflicts into crime problems, the

novel suggests that such struggles wouldn't be struggles if people and the institutions in which they moved would reconfigure the impact that beliefs are expected to have on the governance of daily life: religious wars are part of the past but not the present. A great deal of commentary on both the novel and film—ranging from Brown's own words to newspaper editorials virtuously promoting the "discussion" of controversial religious opinion—has tended to reinforce this logic, and fears that either one would foment opposition to Catholicism or Opus Dei turned out to be completely groundless (Eaton par. 19). This is because many critics had failed to see what most audiences have at some level understood all along: that the *The Da Vinci Code* completely evacuates controversy by making historically contentious religious groups look utterly harmless: only murderers look bad.

5. The sense of peaceful closure afforded by the novel and film is surely distant from the way that global politics has most recently been configured in the US and much of Western Europe as a struggle against religious fundamentalisms coupled with a concentrated political generation of fear about them. That generation of fear is the necessary extension of, and motivation for, domestic struggles over religion, which—in the US—results in a range of politically inhibiting and consolidating pressures in areas ranging from the schoolroom to the scientific laboratory. In Britain likewise, the battle against external adversaries is simultaneously conducted as the battle against enemies within: two recent acts of parliament, for instance, began requiring new citizens to declare allegiance to the monarch, to promise loyalty to the nation and its "democratic values," and to take a "Britishness" test ensuring proper integration into British society.

6. If our present moment is marked by a return to religious wars at home and abroad, some theorists might make us think that such events simply demonstrate a long-suppressed political truth about the underlying structure of liberal democracies. Stanley Fish, for instance, has repeatedly claimed that the idea of secular tolerance denies the conditions of its existence, which depend upon the exclusion of fanatics and other intolerable groups. "At some point," he writes, "capaciousness will threaten to become shapelessness, and at that point fidelity to . . . original values will demand acts of extirpation" (Fish 103). From a quite different philosophical perspective, Alain Badiou has led a continental attack on multiculturalism and the politics of difference that converges in one crucial way with Fish's. Badiou accuses the tolerant acceptance of differences of blatant hypocrisy. "Become like me and I will respect your difference," is the mantra that Badiou ascribes to all "conquering civilizations" (25). Badiou's argument differs from Fish's in that, for Badiou, the conquering civilization's demand for sameness masks an ontological condition of infinite difference, the recognition of which grounds ethical truth. Still, the urgency of Badiou's ethics arises in the first place because of his claim—like Fish's—that political urges to inclusion simply obscure a commitment to uniformity and exclusion. Even though Badiou seeks for a truth outside or beyond politics, while for Fish all truth is necessarily political, this arises only out of the deeper sense of agreement that the secular work of government is primarily about the imposition of uniformity by a politically powerful majority. Fish is simply more comfortable with this imposition than Badiou is.

7. In such arguments, the current state of religious warfare at home and abroad looks like the inevitable outcome of secular inclusion, which was never secular or inclusive in the first place. (It is unsurprising that Fish's response to terrorism is to call on supposedly uniform "lived values that unite us" in order to marshal a more effective opposition to it ["Condemnation" 1]). A book like *The Da Vinci Code*, on these terms, seems not only like a politicized attempt to reverse the ideologies and political organizations of the present, but also like a fundamental misunderstanding of the logic of secularization itself, which (as Fish says) demands acts of "extirpation" in order to avoid ideological "shapelessness." What I want to suggest, however, is that the novel is not simply mistaken about a political truth, but displays a certain kind of homage to another idea of the secular—one that is predicated on an institutional coordination of actions rather than an alignment of philosophies, ideologies, or beliefs.

8. We can move closer to defining that idea of the secular first by seeing that Brown's novel could be understood as a recent installment in the Gothic genre, taking up the overwhelming interest that Gothics in the late eighteenth century display in the confessional environments of church, monastery, and convent, in order to reinforce the contrasting advantages of more inclusive patterns of institutional action, affiliation, and organization. As I've argued elsewhere, novels like Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* demonstrate that the problem in the Gothic isn't with Catholic believers, but with the structure of the Catholic church, which Radcliffe's narrative casts as a sanctioning body for a range of illegalities, and thus as a disruption of public order (*Religion* 55-85). The opposition to Catholicism is thus likewise an opposition to the Protestant established church and to all confessional governments that value beliefs at the expense of acknowledging the visible and calculable harms and benefits of interpersonal actions. The problem with murderer-clerics, as in *The Da Vinci Code*, is not that they are clerics but that they are murderers; thus *The Italian,* resolved by a complex juridical procedure, ultimately devotes itself to recommending a tolerant yet rigorously defined legal order with clearly demarcated crimes and penalties. By shifting its attention from the elimination of heterodox belief to the prosecution of criminal harms, the Gothic's apparent anti-Catholicism arises from a commitment to reconcile itself, and tolerant political and legal institutions, to adherents of any number of different beliefs. And thus the Gothic becomes an early and influential Romantic advocate of community beyond religious communion.

9. What emerges from this political-aesthetic maneuver—and what I'm particularly interested in pursuing in this essay—is not simply peaceful coexistence. It is something on the order of what Judith Shklar calls "The Liberalism of Fear" characterizing political regimes that take the inclusion of different religious and political doctrines as their primary goal. This is not a fear generated from the constitution of society against seen or unseen religious, cultural, or ideological adversaries. Indeed, it resists that all-encompassing fear "created by arbitrary, unexpected, unnecessary, and unlicensed acts of force," while recommending "the natural and healthy fear that merely warns us of avoidable pain" (11). Shklar is probably wrong to say that fear is merely natural or healthy; the stronger connecting point I want to make with her work is that the basic notion of the secular involves an absorption and reorientation of fear within the confines of inclusive institutions, making fear—a fear that I think is completely a product of Romantic secular thinking—into the formal complement of an institutional systematization and identification of crimes and "avoidable" penal sanctions. Fear, to put it another way, is the constructed affective complement of systematized penality.[1]

10. I am already mixing the terms "tolerant" and "secular," because my fundamental premise is that one of the most historically significant notions of the secular arose from a particular turn that appeared in the English discourse of toleration in the eighteenth century. Toleration was not necessarily a set of coherent beliefs and attitudes enforcing sameness, as in Fish's and Badiou's accounts. Instead, beginning with John Locke and then elaborated in the late eighteenth century by thinkers like Joseph Priestley and Jeremy Bentham, a particular kind of toleration arose as a new disposition toward belief rather than as a new belief or set of beliefs that could be counted as tolerant. This is because the traditional apparatus of the confessional state, enforced through oaths of allegiance and religious tests, was shown to be not only oppressive but also inefficient as a means of securing social order. The problem of how to tolerate different modes of belief—some of them insular or even intolerant toward each other—is central to secularization because of the inescapable connection between toleration and a tolerating governing body. Secularization in its late eighteenth century manifestation, in other words, was not a mental phenomenon but an institutional one; it was not visible in the beliefs that people held but in the way that political, educational, and military patterns of affliliation took political inclusion, rather than ideological coherence, to be their central ambition. This is not to say that tolerant societies do not exclude various individuals and associational networks; indeed, only the most facile of arguments suggest that exclusion is a problem for toleration. As Michael Walzer has so effectively shown, certain exclusions are at the center of toleration. The exclusions do not operate—as in Fish's or

Badiou's account—in order to assure the coherence of a single doctrinal position, but instead to assist in, and enhance, the decisions and actions of individuals in a group (86).

11. Let's pause for a moment to reflect back on Fish and Badiou before moving on to the position of Romantic fear within these dynamics of toleration. By proposing a different model for the secular, I'm not simply arguing against their theoretical points of view. I'm arguing against their use of historical models as if they were moral-political truths. Fish and Badiou, I would argue, criticize the logic of the secular by appropriating two different historically specific, yet highly influential, modes of the secular from English and German traditions. Fish's account derives from his work on John Milton, for whom the exclusion of "popery" was a necessity; it also resembles a range of other enlightened empiricist accounts in England and on the continent, from Shaftesbury to Voltaire, who saw toleration as the cultivation of proper, civilized, rational beliefs.[2] David Hume's praise for "moderation" in aesthetic taste and political practice, for instance, produces an ethico-epistemological foundation for secular political subjectivity that is not far from Milton. The commitment to moderation made him hostile to religious zeal of all kinds because it only inflamed "ambition, pride, revenge, and a persecuting spirit"; clergy were tolerable only if they subscribed to other counterbalancing "virtues of humanity" (201n).

12. Badiou's revision of Hegelianism—the problem with multiculturalism is that it is a false universality—demonstrates a second powerful interpretation of the secular, which has its origins in Hegel and could also be traced in neo-pietist texts (like Friedrich Schleiermacher's *On Religion*) that postulate a constitutive connection between individuality and the spiritual "Whole" (4). Rather than a successive accumulation of beliefs, in which government is simply the product of proper cultivation, the secular is an ontological condition, constituted in Hegel's vision as the product of a "complete interdependence" among members of a community and the apparatus of the state (123). The state is the "universal" which is not so much an accumulation of customs or beliefs but a realization, by recognition, of the "actuality" of the individual's "concrete freedom" (160). The problem with that account for Badiou is that the liberal state can never be a true universal and therefore can never actualize freedom: the ethical in Badiou both aligns itself with, and corrects, Hegel's account by situating ethics as the perpetual undoing of a political closure.

13. It would be impossible to do any real justice here to these two traditions and to the important philosophical and historical work that has come out of them; I use Fish and Badiou only as convenient and striking endpoints for traditions that would include the cosmopolitan perspectives of Martha Nussbam and Amartya Sen on the one hand (since they argue for a reform of thought and manners) and the post-Marxist perspective of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri on the other (since they argue for a reconfiguration of identity within a global economic order). What is most pertinent to this essay, though, is the influence that these lines of thoughts have had on the study of Romanticism. The enlightened account of the secular is highly visible in fairly recent scholarship on Romanticism: the work of Thomas Paine, for instance, occupies a supporting role in Steven Goldsmith's study of Blake's anti-establishment poetry and politics; Martin Priestman also puts skeptical writers like Paine and Richard Payne-Knight at the center of his study on Romantic atheism. Hegel's account of the secular has dominated the study of English Romanticism at least since M.H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism,* with its view of the secular as an internalized apocalypse, a naturalizing or psychologizing of the supernatural or spiritual.

14. As valuable as these accounts have been, they are just as remarkable for the ways in which their theoretical approaches to the secular often seem inappropriate for the texts they consider. Priestman's *Romantic Atheism* makes religious belief and political affiliation blend into each other, so that atheism looks like the guarantee of political progress. Meanwhile, authors like Anna Laetitia Barbauld and Mary Robinson are said to have "stopped short of atheism" and thus look like half-way points on the way toward political liberty (rather than simply different accounts of what political liberty might look

like [Priestman 224]). Wollstonecraft's work, in which religious belief stands as a crucial motivation for an essentially secular political reform, would be too problematic for this account to give it any more than passing notice. The results of Abrams's appropriation of the Hegelian account of the secular are similarly mixed. One needn't even investigate the general theoretical merits of his views (as so many critics have done) in order to see that the paradigms it yields are in fact inadequate to describe many of the poets he discusses. The local claims that Abrams makes about the deep affinities between the account of growth in Wordsworth's *Prelude* and the growth of spirit in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* for instance, are questionable at best (236). The progressive dialectic in Hegel cannot address specific difficulties in Wordsworth's text, in which the growth of the poet's mind eludes any grand dialectical synthesis. Extending analysis to the *Phenomenology of Right* only confirms how far Hegel is in his account of subjectivity and politics from English writers of the same period. Although Jon Klancher and Forest Pyle tend to view Coleridge as engaged in a (failed) ideological project aimed at establishing a sufficient level of universality, it is not clear that this is Coleridge's aim to begin with; the relation between Church and State in his later writings provides for the effective management of contending forces rather than for a realization of a spiritual-political whole.

15. Another way of stating the problems with these two models for their descriptive value for Romantic literature is that the enlightenment argument mischaracterizes the weight of belief in politics, while the Hegelian argument mischaracterizes the relative weight of unifying structures—whether Spirit or State—on individual belief and practice. The enlightenment account makes institutional structure look like the outcome of belief, while the Hegelian account makes belief look like the outcome of institutional requirements. These modes of describing the secular need to be distinguished from the way in which it was described by a series of Romantic writers in England and beyond, whose precise influence on the history of secular institutions still hasn't been accurately measured. For these writers religious belief, rather than presenting an obstacle, becomes the focus of inclusion and redirection into the facilitating schemes of secular institutions. Joel Barlow thus defends secular government as an "artificial aid" and "artificial industry" providing political subjects of all beliefs with an "art or trade" while securing "personal protection and public happiness" (77, 134, 124); Jeremy Bentham's plans for schools and prisons are extensions of similar ambitions. Tolerant government is envisioned as a structure of belonging more capacious—and more powerful—than any single religious community. And by these means the opposition to enemy ideologies can in one sense be overcome with a commitment to the notion that inclusion increases safety: "the more political liberty [the people] have, the safer is their civil liberty," Priestley writes. The ability to include Catholic and dissenting beliefs provides the possibility for the ultimate avoidance of large-scale "civil dissentions" (33, 42).

16. The achievement of safety and order through inclusion curtails a certain kind of illiberal political fear, and thus departs from a prominent mode of political thought influenced by Thomas Hobbes. One of the constitutive tensions of *Leviathan* is to be found precisely in the way that the "Liberty" of the subject is to be found in her subjection to the "Artificial Chains" of "Civill Lawes" (264). But at the same time, the subject's "fear" is finally not simply elicited by the specific application of the law itself, but rather by the "Sovereign Power of life, and death" (264), which is itself motivated solely by the desire to eradicate any "defect" in opinion as defined by the sovereign's own understanding (337). From this arises the perfectly confessional character of Hobbes's sovereign, whose political authority is constrained only by the injunction that the sovereign cannot make the subject kill herself (269). The "enemy" in its clearest conception in Hobbes's text is therefore to be feared in the Satanic figures of "spiritual error" (628), which is in turn most clearly embodied in the spiritual error or "darknesse" (627-715) of Roman Catholicism.

17. Following from Hobbes, enlightened and Hegelian secular ideologies have their different ways of mobilizing fear. In the enlightened version, we can see even late eighteenth century writers like Richard Price opposing the toleration of Catholics, Jews, and a host of other adversaries.[3] Paine's *The*

Age of Reason associates the entire "Christian system" of belief with "superstition" and "fraud" to be avoided at all costs—what is demonized is not simply Catholicism but religion's irrationality in general (50, 51). Meanwhile, the Hegelian realization of concrete freedom seems to be so perfectly cleansed of fear that it can be located only in a failure of reconciliation caused by the subject—a "fear of dying" that would cause one to refuse one's duty to defend the cause of freedom—or caused by the ruler who governs by "caprice" and produces terror in those bending to his will (210, 167). While having no obvious role in the proper Hegelian conception of right or of the state, fear at the same time eerily accumulates into a threat that lurks in the shadows beyond the state's reach: fear paradoxically becomes, in itself, a magnified object of fear.

18. In the Romantic texts I'm interested in, fear is neither omnipresent, as in the Hobbesian state and its continuation in enlightenment secular ideologies, nor is it simply pushed to the margins in order to secure the ontological account of the state in Hegel, (although one can hear traces of that logic in the kind of reading that Geoffrey Hartman pursues in his account of William Collins's "Ode to Fear," which—in his reading—is positioned in a literary history leading to a marriage of rationalism and supernaturalism [311-36]). Fear is instead reinstalled in the arena of the moral-political: it is the register of a relation to law, designating the newly opened space of negotiation between subject and secular institutions. It is an affect solicited by the specific articulation of offenses and the penalties that arise as the result of their commission. Thus the problematic of secularization, with its basis in the expansion of tolerant institutions guaranteeing both freedom and public safety, increased inclusion and increased order, cannot be separated from the late eighteenth century opposition to the death penalty and the reform of penal law, a prominent subject in the work of virtually every Romantic writer from Blake to Byron.[4]

19. We thus find Bentham arguing against the cruelty and inefficiency of the Hobbesian sovereign when he criticizes Louis XIV's "mischief" of intervening in the religious and ethical lives of his subjects in order to assure the "conversion of heretics and the confirmation of true believers" (*Introduction* 321). And yet this mobilization of despotic terror is replaced by a new kind of relation born out of the specification of the expository and imperative elements of penal law—the specification of agents and their offenses by the "artificial body" of reformed legislation (*Introduction* 332). That new form of legislation, most clearly found in the application of lenient punishments minutely calibrated to the severity of offenses, is designed to do two things, which find their way into Bentham's numerous defenses of new legislation to replace transportation and capital punishment with humane incarceration—legislation aimed at increasing the "safe custody" of criminals while measuring the "terror" that punishment would inflict upon that criminal (*View* 10).

20. Penal structures, as they are defended in tracts like *A View of the Hard-Labour Bill* (1778), have gained particular fame from Michel Foucault's account of the internalization of discipline at the level of the individual. But they are actually less striking for imposing a uniform discipline on prisoners than for another quite different reason: for their entirely new institutional disposition toward belief.[5] This new disposition in fact solicits an inquiry into the *work* of juridical forms that Foucault's account of internalized discipline occludes. Bentham had little taste for religion himself, and his admiration for the scientific advances of his day often makes him seem like a quintessential child of the Enlightenment and thus like an enemy to all forms of irrationality and superstition. Still, he consistently supposes that an ideal plan for institutions would embrace a diverse number of believers and in fact work with and upon the dispositions held by the persons within them. Such institutions would not "be permitted to oppose the main ends of religion, innocence and peace" (19). And they do something more, which is particularly plain in Bentham's fanciful suggestion that Sunday church services in workhouses should be stretched out longer so that worship would be caught up in the punitive mechanisms of the institution, or in his equally intriguing recommendation that Catholics and Jews would have commensurate systems of punishment that would simultaneously appeal to their religious orientations.

What Bentham proposes is not that prison plans would need to be fractured according to different systems of belief, but that the same general structure could be formulated in such a way that certain kinds of religious "attention" would be "engaged" by the patterns of movement produced by the communal structure—a structure that co-opts belief within a newly choreographed set of interpersonal obligations (18).

21. Bentham shifts focus to the more precise effects this has on the moral-political subject when he turns to the secular institution as an innovative mode of fear-production. Toward that end, he modifies John Howard's prison schemes, important as they were as a source of inspiration for the *View* which was written as a defense of William Eden's prison bill, passed in 1779. Eden's Bill provided for the construction of two new prisons, overseen by Howard himself. Bentham, while supporting the bill in general, registers a sustained resistance to making prison look like the reiteration of religious prejudices: Howard's plans for dark and submerged interiors risked making confinement look like a lame attempt to reproduce conventional notions of hell. Bentham's very opposition to this dimension of the plans, in the midst of general political support, looks like the perfect instantiation of secular institutionality itself. But we must also appreciate the particular modifications of Howard that he has in mind in order to see how that commitment to inclusion is inseparable from a refined commitment to soliciting fear and distress. When Bentham meditates on how to make the "gloomy" aspect of punishments work upon the "imaginations of the bulk of men" in order to play upon their "idea of the scene of punishment in a future life," the true impact of secular reform can be seen in all of its complexity (10). For the aim of reformed government is not simply to encourage or rehearse the religious fears of an earlier age, and not simply to eliminate them, but instead to capture belief within a new framework of measured "circumstances of distress" dispensed by legislators as the sanction for each offense (11). Bentham's effort to retrieve Howard's plan, in other words, is simultaneously an attempt to retrieve yet further systematize that plan's appeal to religious terrors. Religious fears are acknowledged as a source of punishment's meaning and yet only figuratively connected to the organized distress dispensed by the institution itself.

22. It is for this reason that capital punishment appears like the enemy of reform in the work of Bentham—and in the work of those who influenced him and were influenced by him. For the custom of imagining death as the ultimate punishment appears flawed from the reformer's perspective precisely because its effects are immeasurable on the criminal (who would simply be dead) and so variable on the audience of political subjects as to seem virtually meaningless. The ability of the legislator to craft the "distress" of punishment is precisely what ratifies it in the eyes of penal reformers—a distress that works not only upon the beliefs and attitudes of prisoners themselves but also upon those of the population that might contemplate punishment without actually being able to view it. The secular thrust of punishment is aimed not at the rationality of individuals (interpreters of Bentham are always wrong when they call him a rationalist) but at the "susceptible minds of the giddy multitude" who would contemplate the "horrors" of prison in all of the ways that might be "suggested by imagination" (23). The attempt of institutions to appeal to a religious sense of a future state—in the "imagination" of political subjects generally—becomes inseparably allied with the institutional attempt to bring the work of imagination in line with the shaping of new futures within constructed schemes of cooperation.[6]

23. Perhaps my invocation of imagination within the realm of institution-building might seem to bring us into contact with the Althusserian account of "ideology." But I am pointing to that realm less as an occasion for a scene of recognition between subject and state authority (obviously in line with the Hegelian view) than as an unresolved oscillation between belief and what Richard Moran, from a philosophical perspective, identifies as the "binding" of belief into an "external form," "commitment," or "avowal" of belief (94). Imagination names, that is, the negotiation between belief and the discourses, mechanisms, and procedures in which social movements are organized. This is one of the many moments in which we can hear the decisive influence of Claude Adrien Helvétius on Bentham.

Albert O. Hirschmann is clearly right to have emphasized the massive importance of Helvétius in the history of political theory in England, but by saying that he is a philosopher of "interest," Hirschmann misses the degree to which Helvétius is a philosopher of the political solicitation and organization of passions—the paramount of which is fear (32).

24. For Helvétius in his *De L'Esprit* (1758)—a book with the distinct honor of being publicly condemned by the Sorbonne and burned by the *parlement* of Paris for seditiously attacking the religious basis for political authority—it is only the despot (like Hobbes's sovereign) who imposes his own particular judgments and prejudices on his people (294). The "intelligent prince," in contrast, does not impose his interest but organizes the disparate interests among his subjects (299). The intelligent prince's intelligence is considerable here, and it is the key to the whole text. For the work of the proper legislator is first of all to observe, close at hand, the different "passions" that motivate his subjects, of which religion is one single, highly significant but potentially disruptive, element (226). Passions are crucial in *De L'Esprit* because of the way the legislator immerses himself in them and works on them; Helvétius has impatience only for traditionalists (and rationalists) who say that the passions are frivolous.

25. Second, then, the intelligent prince studies the connection between passions and the "interests" animated by and figuratively connected to them—interests that are defined either as the achievement of pleasure or the avoidance of pain. Third, in order to cultivate public good in the form of "general interest" (119), the legislator devises rewards for interests that should be encouraged and punishments for those that should not (214). Like the poet, Helvétius says, the wise legislator's work of "imagination" (380) should concentrate on the imaginative resources of his subjects: on "kindling the passions" in appropriate ways that will connect to the interests he wishes to inspire (332).

26. Helvétius explicitly ties the poetic imagination to the observation, inspiration, and organization of the passions and all the attitudes and beliefs attending them. His work is continually devoted to emphasizing that the legislator ideally should both know and accept the different passions harbored within his subjects—while poetically, imaginatively, connecting those passions to felicitous schemes of legislation. Both great poets and great legislators must thus compose their thoughts and writings in solitude, reflecting on the affective resources that they simultaneously submit to rigorous new juridical configurations (476). While theoretically both pleasure and pain have an equal weight in the systematizing of interests, it is actually pain and the fear of it that occupy a more crucial role in the argument, primarily through a series of contrasts. The despot employs merely a "salutory fear" that supplies "the defects of government"; he must rule by sheer force that excites a constant yet mystified sense of fear in his subjects (144). Heroism is the counterpart of despotism, moreover, since it bolsters a courage that is merely a contempt for the pains of the world, "the effect of a man's not having a clear view of the danger he confronts" (345) to such an extent that the hero irrationally chooses suicide over submission to punishment, since "it is better not to be than to be unhappy" (346). The reformed legislator, in contrast, employs fear less as the unseen threat of an ever-present violent power, than as part of the syntax of institutional action, in which disparate passionate fears are encouraged and brought into line with appropriate fears of institutionally inflicted-pain or hardship, which "bind the private to the general interest" (214). While the despot imposes punishment on everyone arbitrarily, the reformed legislator submits punishments to the order of the law.

27. Helvétius's linking of fear to passion, interest, and imagination helps to reinforce a point already more or less evident in Bentham's argument in the *View* and scattered throughout his other writings. The secularization of fear—its shift from the confessional mode of Renaissance sovereignty to its new position in the lexicon in penal law—is made possible precisely through the extension of passionate belief into an imaginative legislative schema, which would link the intractable religious views of the subject to the political workings of the apparatuses of the state. Fear becomes less significant as a

mental attribute—a psychology wrenched out of the subject by the sovereign's threatening power—and more significant as a formal accompaniment to the sanctions that compose a capacious public order.

28. The position of imagination in relation to fear can lead us to reconsider a range of Romantic writings in terms of their formal commitments to the secularization of fear—a commitment that unfolds neither through a merely formal reading nor through a reading of their political "context." Consider Coleridge's poem "Fears in Solitude: Written in April 1798, During the Alarm of an Invasion" (1798) as an example. The secular move of the poem is not contrary to, but rather elaborates on, its initial premise, arising from the speaker's meditative lines on the "green and silent spot, amid the hills": namely, that the "forms of Nature" set before him confer "Religious meanings" (1, 24). Exactly what is religious about the landscape will remain to be seen, since its religiosity cannot be resolved within any conventional confessional account of religious establishment.

29. The calm sense of religious purpose is upset by the reach of the poem in the following stanza, which shifts from the lyrical to the topical. What disturbs this sense of calm is the threat of invasion from France, which is provoked to attack by the fact that England has "offended most grievously, / And been most tyrannous" (42-43). Coleridge does not simply rouse paranoia about Napoleon's preparation to cross the channel with his "Army of England." Rather, an invasion from France is close at hand because England has "offended": "passionate for war" (89), England has declared war against France and engaged in battles with Napoleon's fleets. The break in the calm, moreover, is not merely caused by the threat of physical violence echoed by the poet; it is in fact ignited by him. The poet must rouse his audience's fear, since that audience's unshaken confidence in a politically enforced religious authority has in fact foreclosed its own access to the appropriate kind of emotion. The poet urges the reader to fear in the right way.

30. The fact that the poem is explicitly directed at institutional critique becomes entirely clear in this stanza and the one following it, where Coleridge goes on to denounce, precisely in the fashion of Gothic novels and of Bentham, the "one scheme of perjury" whereby religious oaths, tests, and ceremonies produce a kind of religious consolidation of belief against an enemy. England is "tyrannous," that is, not only because it has declared war and thus threatened itself, but also because it manipulates "the sweet words of / Christian promise" as mere "falsehoods" supporting the cause of military violence (63-64, 69), and because it makes even the Bible itself into a "superstitious instrument" to support its political ambitions (71). In this quintessentially Gothic scenario, religion is both a motive and cover for violence and bloodshed. "Passionate for war," England's citizens rouse themselves against their demonized enemy with "big preamble, holy names, / And adjurations of the God in Heaven" (101-2).

31. But if religion is used here in order to consolidate belief, making a mockery of the English "justice court" (74), the cost is a conspicuous immunity to action and its consequences, which is why the poet must sound the alarm. The poet must register a sense that belief itself cannot exonerate the poem's audience from a sense of guilt for its violent action, an acknowledgment that is inseparable from—because articulated through—a fear of the impending consequences of that action. What is particularly remarkable about the articulation of fear in the poem, then, is the gradual figurative modification and consolidation of that emotion to suit the poet's reworking of retributive justice. At first the fear called upon by the poet is simply a fear already felt because it is the result of prejudice, a fear utterly removed from a sense of action. The poet's fear at first, that is, appears to be a generalized fear of the other, a fear directed towards France merely as demonic enemy. The French are an "impious foe" and a "light yet cruel race" to be opposed because of France's sheer ontological difference from the British (139). This is in keeping with the notion briefly entertained here that France may have been sent by "Providence" as a way of making Britons "feel / The desolation and the agony / Of our fierce doings" (127-29). And yet even at this moment the account of Providence and the fear it inspires give way to a new kind of fear: one that is metonymically connected to other fears, while simultaneously, relentlessly,

and persuasively sharpened into a single fear of having done wrong. After having defended itself, the speaker urges, Britons should "return / Not with a drunken triumph"—not, that is, with a confident sense that they have acted out the will of Providence. They should instead return "with fear, / Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung / So fierce a foe to frenzy!" (150-53).

32. The poem proceeds to move fear away from political theology and ultimately toward a secular account of legitimate retributive justice—in which fear is invoked as a highly specific accompaniment to the notion of deserved punishment for the "fratricide" that Britons simultaneously commit and deny (113)—and this is the condition of the poem's intelligibility.[7] Enlisted in the formation of what Helvétius terms "general interest," the poem reveals Coleridge's subterranean connection to Bentham and the *philosophes* who inspired him (even though it has been the norm since John Stuart Mill to insist on their opposition). And the shift also connects "Fears in Solitude" to Coleridge's other critiques of justice—the lenient but rigorous correction of "Oppression" with an "iron rod" in the "Monody on the Death of Chatterton," for instance, which in turn leads to the emphasis on penal reform throughout *Osorio*. In "Fears," France is to be feared not because it is impious and not even simply because it is cruel, but because it has been stung and will rightfully sting back. This is what makes the poet's fears, finally, "filial fears" (198). Filial fears are not fears reserved for British national security but for the wider scope of actions beyond what the poet can immediately see, and this is why the poem begins and ends with nature that conveys "Religious meanings." Nature isn't religious because it makes any claims upon specific beliefs, but because the poet's ability to make natural surroundings "seem like society" (218) is the utmost reach of his ability to feel as though filiation could be extended, or affiliated, anywhere—to feel as if his actions and movements have an extensive and openly acknowledged impact. In this sense, "Fears in Solitude" must also remind us of "The Nightingale" and Coleridge's other great "conversation" poems in that the speaker's thoughts leave society in order to rediscover it in a new, more profound way. Poetry, the champion of "filial fears," now spans over the smallest community of the poet—the "lowly cottage" where the speaker's child and wife live—to the largest—the "wretched" victims of slavery and Napoleon's Egyptian campaign, mentioned earlier in the poem (45)—for which the poet's thoughts finally "yearn." To yearn for people is to fear for them: not merely for the family of the speaker, and not merely for the population of Britain but for all "human kind" (232).[8]

33. I have turned to Coleridge's poem as a particularly compelling reworking of some of the basic elements of the secularization of fear that were already evident in the Gothic. What is most powerful in that reworking—and why it is even worth connecting contemporary instances of the Gothic to Coleridge—is its unparalleled engagement of the work of writing itself within the dynamics I have been discussing. More than any Gothic incarnation before or since, that is, Coleridge's writing makes it clear how vital the poet's perspective might be as a foundation and direction for all others: the poet must create the conditions of justice that would produce change. In this sense it claims an authority which the Gothic novel merely points to in its incessant attachment to monuments of culture which it takes to be the foundation for communal belonging. As constant demonstrations of that belonging, Gothic lovers always quote poetry as if it might function as a protection against the vices of oppressive religious institutions; by the same token, Brown's novel ends in the courtyard of the Louvre, now envisioned as a palace of art rather than despotism, a site of resolution rather than revolutionary conflict. The obvious shortcoming of *The Da Vinci Code* in relation to the inventive secular thinking of the Romantics is this: that the boundaries of community seem occasionally to be circumscribed—as they seldom are in Radcliffe or the poets she inspired—by a highly personalized and predetermined set of coordinates constituting a European cultural tradition, which are then submitted to rational decoding requiring an additional level of cultural competence acquired by experts. If Brown's novel risks adopting a more or less constrained cosmopolitanism—reminiscent of the way that Kwame Anthony Appiah understands cosmopolitanism as a rigorously educated personal attitude or disposition toward the world—Coleridge more thoroughly secularizes that cosmopolitan perspective. For Coleridge's writing does not simply

recommend a particular personal disposition about cultural belonging. It makes poetic "Fears" into the exalted source of that belonging. It does this by sounding urgent alarms, raising awareness, calling attention to injuries, demanding justice, yearning for others.

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Notes

1 Although my account of punishment bears some similarity to that found in Talal Asad's work, I depart from his basic view that the development of secular penal apparatuses corresponds to an essentially skeptical moral philosophy (21-66).

2 On Milton's position in this tradition, see Patterson, 62-89.

3 See, for instance Price's comments on the need for "true religion" in the concept of freedom, which in turn furthers the overthrow of "priestcraft" (6,182).

4 On Romantic opposition to the death penalty, see my *Shadow of Death*.

5 Although my account differs from Frances Ferguson's view of Bentham's rationalism, I'm very much in agreement with her arguments in a range of writings including "Coherence and Changes."

6 For an account of the history of "imagination" in relation to political interest, see Engelmann.

7 Here my account contrasts with Jerome Christensen's view that the poem risks doubling the application of power that it denounces. But I think that this reading neglects the consistent emphasis on framings readers' perceptions within a new account of actions as guilty "combatants" (89-90).

8 The last line refutes readings of the poem that characterize Coleridge's work generally as a retreat into the family or domesticity (Ellison 119, Jones 67-105, Everest 270-80).

top of essay

Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

Byron and Romantic Occidentalism

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Jager argues that occidentalism (a critique of the west) can be found alongside Byron's obvious orientalism. That occidentalism, moreover, finds a use for enchantment that goes beyond secular critiques of the concept. This essay appears in _Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

1. The title of this essay may be a surprise to some readers. We tend to associate Byron, particularly his so-called "Turkish Tales," with *orientalism*—that is, with stereotyped and licentious depictions of the "East."[1] In this essay, however, I wish to supplement this by-now familiar reading by identifying within *The Giaour* (1813) a countervailing strand of "Occidentalism." In appealing to this term I am inspired by a recent essay by Akeel Bilgrami entitled "Occidentalism, the Very Idea," which considers whether stereotypes of the West, distorting as they might be, nonetheless create a space for critical engagement. His answer is a qualified "yes," provided that "Occidentalism" names not only non-western stereotypes of the west but also a persistent response to western-style modernity *within* the west itself. As Bilgrami wants to define it, Occidentalism is not only a property of modern Islamic fundamentalism but is to be found in Gandhi, in Nietzsche, in aspects of German romanticism and eighteenth-century English deism. He aims to rescue talk of cultural difference from both the neo-conservative rhetoric of the "clash of civilizations" *and* from left-liberal translations of culture into its underlying economic and political strata. He is worth listening to on these matters because he has written intelligently about secularism before, most notably as a contributor to the landmark collection *Secularism and its Critics*.[2] In this essay I will use Byron's poem to work my way toward Bilgrami's rehabilitated Occidentalism, and then propose that the poem itself points up some of the limits of this rehabilitation.

   Paradox

2. One could do worse than read *The Giaour* as an allegory of pluralism, in which truth is determined by context and presupposition, and whose larger textual apparatus strives to bring rational order to a world of competing loyalties and dispositions. For this reason, the text can also serve as a document of pluralism's complications and exclusions.

3. The first part of the poem, set in a homogenized eastern location, presents several different voices describing what the reader eventually understands to be the murder of a slave woman named Leila for running away from her master to join her lover. The master, Hassan, has her tied up in a bag and thrown overboard. Leila's lover, the Giaour, avenges her murder by killing Hassan. The second half of the poem is the Giaour's lengthy and unrepentant confession to a nameless monk in a Christian monastery, once again in an indeterminate location. The Giaour himself is a stateless and nameless man who operates on the borderlands of cultures, traditions, and beliefs. The poem named after him, meanwhile, is a collection of fragments apparently arranged by an editor, in which different and anonymous voices take up small bits of the story before themselves disappearing from it. The same fictive editor also provides footnotes to the fragments, and these footnotes vary in tone from scholarly and pedantic to wittily informative to a few in the first person that conflate the editor with Byron himself. Taken together, these various elements place a tremendous burden upon the reader: it is difficult enough to figure out the plot, let alone who speaks, whom to trust, and whom, in the end, to

believe.

4. Against this world of interpretive complexity and incomplete attempts to organize it through textual apparatus, the poem sets two examples of orthodoxy. The first is Hassan himself; the second is the monk to whom the Giaour confesses. Both fulfill stereotypes of (Islamic and Christian) religious orthodoxy. And neither is of much interest to the editor, who goes so far as to excise a harangue that the monk delivers to the Giaour, telling us in a footnote that it will interest nobody:

> The monk's sermon is omitted. It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient, that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient to say, that it was of the customary length . . . and was delivered in the usual tone of all orthodox preachers. (204)

> Yet did he but what I had done
> Had she been false to more than one.
> Faithless to him, he gave the blow;
> But true to me, I laid him low:
> Howe'er deserved her doom might be,
> Her treachery was truth to me. (1062-67)

5. This may be simply a fantasy of liberal tolerance, but if so its act of transposition depends upon the alarming idea that Leila's fidelity to her lover meant that she deserved to die. The translation is not symmetrical: Hassan kills Leila because she is his property, but the Giaour would kill for love (that is, he would kill Leila *because* he loves her). This difference is crucial to the poem's project; by distinguishing between unfreedom (property) and freedom (love) it keeps Hassan's code and the Giaour's code from collapsing into each other. Hassan murders Leila from within his tradition; as the poem's "Advertisement" tells us, she was "thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity" (167). The Giaour, by contrast, imagines murdering Leila in the name of a love described as unique and personal and thus deliberately counterposed to all traditions. To murder in the name of love is to murder freely; as Gulnare tells Conrad in *The Corsair,* "love dwells with—with the free" (II.502). Love, or more specifically the death inevitably attached to it, is thus linked to a freedom that orthodox tyrants like Hassan cannot understand, and for which the poem's code-word is "heart:"

> To me she gave her heart, that all
> Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall. (1068-9)

6. One result of this contrast between love and orthodoxy is that love itself comes to seem like a substitute religion. This is only incidentally because the Giaour uses religious language to describe his love; primarily, love looks like religion in this poem not because it is a feeling but because it is an obsession. The Giaour spends his remaining days mourning for Leila, dedicated to her idea to the exclusion of all else, experiencing visions of her, and unable even to hear alternative creeds such as the orthodox sermon excised by the editor. The Giaour's goal, he tells the monk, is "To die—and know no second love" (1166). And he scorns inconstant men and what he calls their "varied joys" (1175). Such constancy is predicated upon the utter hopelessness of his love. Because Leila deserves to die according to a tradition that neither she nor her lover can alter, there is nothing for the Giaour to do but mourn her as the lost object whose very irrecoverability is the condition of his constancy toward her.[3]

7. Is the heart, then, in opposition to orthodoxy, or is it simply another kind of orthodoxy? More abstractly: is human love the opposite of religion or another version of it? Does the poem take love seriously, and treat religion as its foil? Or does it take religion seriously, finding in human love another image of it? The Giaour himself says both things. Or rather, he *says* that love is the opposite of orthodox tyranny, but the poem forces him to experience love as simply another and more complex

kind of orthodox tyranny: the tyranny of that very tradition which he claims cannot "enthrall" the heart but which in killing Leila has melancholically bound him more firmly to it than it ever could have were she alive. At the level of plot, moreoever, love and orthodoxy *must* be mutually exclusive—for if they weren't, Leila wouldn't have left Hassan, and so there would *be* no plot. Two paradoxes, then: the Giaour's capacity for understanding religious orthodoxy depends upon orthodoxy's power to kill those who would leave it—depends upon, that is, its intolerance; and the poem's own motivating distinction between love and religion is likewise a paradox, for if the poem is to proceed that distinction must both exist (at the level of plot) and not exist (at the level of the Giaour's subsequent experience) at the same time.

8. I deliberately use the word "paradox" to name these problems, for I mean to recall a central moment in the history of literary study. In his essay "The Language of Paradox," Cleanth Brooks undertakes a reading of Donne's poem "The Canonization," in which the paradox is precisely the one that appears in Byron's poem. Here is Brooks (at some length):

> The basic metaphor which underlies the poem (and which is reflected in the title) involves a sort of paradox. For the poet daringly treats profane love as if it were divine love. . . . . The poem then is a parody of Christian sainthood; but it is an intensely serious parody of a sort that modern man, habituated as he is to an easy yes or no, can hardly understand. He refuses to accept the paradox as a serious rhetorical device; and since he is able to accept it only as a cheap trick, he is forced into this dilemma. Either: Donne does not take love seriously; here he is merely sharpening his wit . . . . Or: Donne does not take sainthood seriously; here he is merely indulging in a cynical and bawdy parody.
>
> Neither account is true; a reading of the poem will show that Donne takes both love and religion seriously; it will show, further, that the paradox is here his inevitable instrument. But to see this plainly will require a closer reading than most of us give to poetry (11).

9. The name for that reading practice is of course largely coterminous with the New Criticism itself: close reading. Glance again at Brooks's final sentence: "But to see [paradox] plainly will require a closer reading than most of us give to poetry." The close reading of which "most of us" are incapable is a reading that begins by recognizing the highly nuanced way in which literary language gestures toward doxa rather than naming it. In this way, close reading displaces religious dispute, with its always-lurking potential for violence, into the interpretive arena. Where there was once the distinction between the orthodox and the heretical, there is now the distinction between those few who can read and the majority who cannot. Although New Critical close reading has sometimes been labeled crypto-religious, then, it is important to understand that in replacing orthodoxy with paradox, close reading is functionally congruent with a secular project that seeks to restrain religious violence by making it the proper domain of *interpretation*.[4]

10. For Brooks, reading for orthodoxy reduces a poem to doctrine: it simply extracts truths from a poem, paraphrasing it rather than attending to the movements of its language. Under the new, non-dogmatic dispensation of paradox, paraphrase becomes a deviation, literally a heresy from secular reading practices. (Readers will recall that *The Well-Wrought Urn,* which opens with a celebration of paradox, closes with an essay entitled "The Heresy of Paraphrase.") Literary language inspires endless re-reading because there is always more meaning around the bend; the heresy is to bring that process to an arbitrary stop, and so to resist heresy means constantly rescuing literature from the ravages of naïve readers who still want it to fight their cultural battles for them, who wish to flatten paradox into paraphrasable doctrine and thus re-ignite a clash of civilizations.[5] The reader must be continually re-educated in the new method, a method not content to rest on the surface, or with an easy paraphrase, but that constantly searches out that which is hidden—not in order finally to say it, but rather to show

how the text as it were doesn't say it, for the "it" here is precisely doxa itself, that which by definition goes without saying. Translated from the political to the literary arena, the clash of civilizations is thus remade into literary paradox. The final withholding of the "it" is what makes literature *literature* and not orthodoxy.[6]

11. Taken as a group, the Turkish Tales obsessively thematize the figure we know as the Byronic hero: a dark, brooding figure with some mysterious tragedy in his past; always alone, even in a crowd, he displays a world-weariness that nevertheless gathers itself into a reluctant heroism at moments of crisis. Most importantly, perhaps, he is an object of obsessive curiosity for the ignorant crowd, who speculate endlessly, and always incorrectly, about his inner nature. The Byronic hero simultaneously invites close reading and repels it: there is always more to be grasped, though it is unlikely that the reader will be up to the challenge. As Selim tells Zuleika in *The Bride of Abydos* (1813), "I am not, love! what I appear" (I.482). In *The Corsair* (1814), Conrad's face "attracted, yet perplex'd the view" (I.210). *The Giaour,* meanwhile, dwells at length on the Byronic hero as a site of interpretive complexity, in lines that strikingly anticipate Brooks's distinction between inattentive reading and close reading:

> The common crowd but see the gloom
> Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;
> The close observer can espy
> A noble soul, and lineage high. (866-9)

12. In these poems, the invitation to read closely is mounted most insistently around a characteristic *pause* that marks the Byronic hero. The pause arrives just before a moment of decisive action; it is a moment carved out of time during which the hero seems both to gather his strength and review his entire life before diving once again into the flow of human events—a lyric moment, in short, in the midst of narrative time. In *The Giaour,* the pause comes almost as soon as we meet the man himself:

> A moment check'd his wheeling steed
> A moment breathed him from his speed
> . . . . . .
> His brow was bent, his eye was glazed;
> He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
> And sternly shook his hand on high,
> As doubting to return or fly. (218-9; 240-3)

> ‘Twas but an instant he restrain'd
> That fiery barb so sternly rein'd;
> ‘Twas but a moment that he stood,
> Then sped as if by death pursued:
> But in that instant o'er his soul
> Winters of Memory seem'd to roll,
> And gather in that drop of time
> A life of pain, an age of crime.
> O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears,
> Such moment pours the grief of years:
> What felt *he* then, at once opprest
> By all that most distracts the breast?
> That pause, which ponder'd o'er his fate,
> Oh, who its dreary length shall date!
> Though in Time's record nearly nought,
> It was Eternity to Thought! (257-72)

13. If the pause characterizes close reading, it is also dangerous for the Byronic hero. For Selim, in *The Bride of Abydos,* the pause is "fatal" (II.565); Conrad, in *The Corsair,* pauses when he has unexpected forebodings about his latest adventure (I.309). Because the pause figures a richness of experience, memory, and history, it trails death in its wake—not for the reader, but for the object being read. As imaged in the Byronic hero's paradoxical, nameless spell, close reading seeks to deflect such possible violence into the interpretive realm. The close reader is thus invited to share in the experience of the hero being read, precisely on the grounds of their shared anticipation and deflection of violence. For the Byronic hero, that violence is encapsulated in the necessary but dangerous pause; for the close reader, the violence would be holding on to the pause too long, thereby freezing the hero, paraphrasing him, turning him into doctrine and pushing him back into the violence of orthodoxy.

14. This is why the close reader, the reader who pauses and searches out paradox, must be a secular reader. [8] Indeed her secularity is the necessary condition of the cosmopolitan fantasy of the Byronic hero: the fantasy of never being tied down, of never having to "represent" anything in particular but of always being more than the sum of your parts, more than either the place you are from or the place that you are at the moment, *and* of having a reader willing to come along for the ride, a reader who understands the whole business as a series of acts, gestures—parodies, to recall Brooks, of an intensely serious sort. That reader is made to recognize how simultaneously necessary and deadly the characteristic pause is: necessary, because it is the condition of close reading; deadly, because it risks mistaking the interpretive process for a fixed method, to be performed once and then endlessly, orthodoxly, reiterated. The ideal reader of the Byronic hero must be constantly alert to the temptations of orthodoxy, which the poem figures as the temptation to halt the interpretive process.

15. We are now in a position to appreciate what is at stake in the ideals of close reading (a method) and paradox (its object). Note that in *The Giaour,* the method's conditions of possibility are an asymmetrical intimacy between orthodoxy and freedom, forged over the body of a dead woman. Close reading is a secular form, both in its relationship to the orthodox reading practices known as "paraphrase" and in the way it tries to blunt and divert religious passion while still acknowledging it. But when we route a genealogy of close reading through a poem like *The Giaour,* we find that undergirding its secularism is not an exquisitely balanced paradox but a violent and asymmetrical one. Perhaps close reading doesn't divert violence but simply covers it over. The link between close reading's secularism and its possible occlusion of violence will return in the next section of the essay.

16. First, however, I turn to Akeel Bilgrami's rehabilitation of Occidentalism. His essay "Occidentalism: The Very Idea" aims to motivate cultural difference as an object of analysis in its own right without succumbing to the language of a clash of civilizations. Samuel Huntington's much-discussed essay "The Clash of Civilizations?" has been a frequent target since it appeared in *Foreign Affairs* in 1993, in part because Huntington's thesis could itself be accused of peddling Orientalist stereotypes. Bilgrami, however, notes that the essay has also been attacked on the grounds that "culture talk" is itself a distraction from the historical and geopolitical analysis necessary to understanding the current world situation. Bilgrami detects this attitude in the "tendency . . . on the part of much of the traditional Left to dismiss the cultural surround of political issues" in favor of an analysis of geopolitics, globalization, or capitalism (388). According to this analysis, to speak of cultural differences misses what is really going on, where "what is really going on" can be revealed through the act of translating culture into its "proper" geopolitical cause. Bilgrami has his doubts about such acts of translation.[9] He wants to resist the tendency to think of culture as a version of false consciousness; at the same time, he wishes to avoid succumbing to a hypostatized language of enlightenment versus enchantment, modernity versus tradition, or civilization versus civilization.

17. In order to use and acknowledge "culture talk" without resorting to Huntington's sweeping categories, Bilgrami turns to modes of dissent and ambivalence *within* enlightened modernity. The

"Enlightenment," as many have pointed out, was not a monolithic entity; rather, it experienced its own forms of internal critique almost from its inception. Bilgrami's own example is the development toward the end of the seventeenth century of a resistance to "scientific rationality:"

> The metaphysical picture that was promoted by Newton . . . and Boyle, among others, viewed matter and nature as *brute and inert*. On this view, since the material universe was brute, God was *externally* conceived as the familiar metaphoric clock winder, giving the universe a push from the *outside* to get it in motion. In the dissenting tradition . . . matter was *not* brute and inert but rather was shot through with an *inner* source of dynamism that was itself divine. God and nature were not separable as in the official metaphysical picture that was growing around the new science, and John Toland, for instance . . . openly wrote in terms he proclaimed to be pantheistic. (396; emphasis in original)

18. Bilgrami's point is that the critique of western enlightened modernity sometimes described today as "Islamic" or "fundamentalist" picks up on this thread of self-critique within the enlightenment itself. Isolation, alienation, the ravages of a largely unregulated market, the transformation or outright destruction of indigenous and local forms of solidarity—this is the disenchanted world that Toland and other dissenters anticipated, and whose effects they tried preemptively to blunt. And this critique of modernity is not confined to the contemporary non-Western world. Referring to the 2004 U.S. presidential race and the phenomenon of so called "values voters," Bilgrami notes that "in the local habitus of the West itself ordinary people have to *live in and cope with* the disenchantment of their world, seeking whatever forms of reenchantment are available to them" (407; emphasis in original).

19. The conceptual point here is that geopolitical analyses alone cannot account for those phenomena variously labeled "values" in the mainstream media. Ideology-critique or analyses of false consciousness will not suffice here. In order to do their work, such critical languages have to hold their objects steady. But the reality is that things are always moving, that cultures and historical moments differ internally from themselves and are continually spinning off counter-discourses and producing renegades. This is a "multiple modernities" thesis: the fight is not between rationality and irrationality, or modernity and tradition, but rather among different accounts of what gets to count as reason, and what gets to count as modern. Indeed, the complexity of England's own scientific revolution suggests how partial it is to dismiss critiques of western enlightened modernity as "irrational." That same epistemic generosity, Bilgrami concludes, needs to be extended to modern-day critics of the West, whether in Tehran or Topeka. Bilgrami's second and equally important point, though, is that there are still winners and losers. Thus seventeenth-century deists, Islamic fundamentalists, and opponents of evolution in Kansas are all responding, in culturally various ways, to a particular construction of what it means to be modern that has systematically marginalized their ways of being in the world.

20. Here I want to honor the attempt—no small one—to put a concept like "enchantment" to work. I also want to claim that this attempt is a romantic one. I think we can get at its romanticism by returning for a moment to the example of deism and the scientific revolution. The example is important for Bilgrami because it allows him to contrast the brute materialism of the orthodox scientific revolution with the more epistemically generous and thickly contextualized dissenting pantheism of the deists. The point I wish to make involves the congruence of this account with that commonly attributed to romanticism. On at least one traditional understanding, at any rate, romanticism is but a short step away from a freethinking deism pitched toward pantheism. Thus from Bilgrami's description of "[a] desacralized world" that "could not move us to engagement with it on *its* terms" (398) we might move to Blake's statement in "There is no Natural Religion" that "He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself only," and then on to Coleridge's claim in the *Biographia Literaria* that "all the products of the mere reflective faculty partook of death, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter," and then finally to M. H. Abrams, whose seminal 1965 essay "Structure

and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric" sums up this romantic attitude as follows:

> To the Romantic sensibility such a [dualist] universe could not be endured, and the central enterprise common to many post-Kantian German philosophers and poets, as well as to Coleridge and Wordsworth, was to join together the 'subject' and 'object' that modern intellection had put asunder, and thus to revivify a dead nature, restore its concreteness, significance, and human values, and re-domiciliate man in a world which had become alien to him. The pervasive sense of estrangement, of a lost and isolated existence in an alien world, is not peculiar to our own age of anxiety, but was a commonplace of Romanic philosophy.[10]

21. What Bilgrami calls "Occidentalism" we could thus rename "Romantic Occidentalism"—adding the codicil that it is a romanticism constructed by critics of a certain kind: left-liberal agnostic humanists whose intellectually formative years were the 1950s and 1960s, when anomie, alienation, and the Cold War seemed greater threats to human values than did religious fundamentalism. Ecuminicism was the spirit of the age: the historical contexts of Abrams's "romantic sensibility" must include the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948, the reforms of Vatican II (1962-1965), the development of mythological criticism, the growth of religious studies, and the widespread agreement among sociologists and even some theologians that if God was not dead, he was at any rate in retreat. Bilgrami's account, that is to say, is secular in the way that Abrams's romanticism is secular: not because it is anti-religious (far from it) but because of the particular *kinds* of spiritual subjectivities it authorizes. At its center is a certain ethos of spiritual generosity, able to grant legitimacy to a variety of culturally embedded orientations because it is not existentially committed to any of them but can as it were see why somebody *might* be existentially committed to them.

22. Can Romantic Occidentalism, forged in the era of ecumenicism and anti-Communism, be retrofitted for the age of fundamentalism and religious globalization? Does it retain its critical purchase on our post-1979 world? Bilgrami is apparently betting that it does. But if I am right that it is the influence of a pre-1979 romanticism that helps him to forge connections between red-state values voters and Islamic fundamentalists, then we need to ask whether and to what extent that older humanist romanticism can be updated, or whether the appropriate romanticism for our own age must be more empiricist, historicist, and ideological.[11]

23. Consider, in this regard, a document from that watershed year of 1979, an article entitled "The Truth About the World Council of Churches," published in *Foundation,* a magazine of the California-based Fundamental Evangelistic Association:

> THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE CREATION OF A NEW SOCIETY based on socialistic principles and deceitfully called "The Kingdom of God". They state: "The participation of the Church in the creation of a new society is not a secondary or derivative dimension of its existence. It begins at the very centre in the celebration of the sacraments as an anticipation of what the world is to become. . . ." Dr. Philip Potter, WCC General Secretary, quoted from a 1969 WCC Central Committee directive as follows: "We call upon the churches to move beyond charity, grants and traditional programming to relevant and sacrificial action leading to new relationships of dignity and justice among all men and to become THE AGENTS FOR THE RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF SOCIETY." . . . . Another WCC document stated: "In the developed countries it means changes in the production structure and employment policies which will ONLY BE POSSIBLE THROUGH A CERTAIN 'SOCIALIZATION' of decisions that have so far been taken autonomously on the basis of interests of the private sector." MR. BUSINESSMAN, MR. and MRS. FREEDOM-

LOVING AMERICAN—the World Council of Churches has made it abundantly clear what their goal is! Are you willing to sit idly by or even help support this effort to destroy the very foundations of our faith and freedom? (Reynolds)

24. This is a tall order. For what the passage from the Fundamental Evangelistic Association suggests is that the fundamentalist rejects the romantic's ethos of generosity outright. That is, the language that Bilgrami motivates in order to mount his ambitious argument appears to the fundamentalist as a *symptom* of the underlying problem of modernity, a symptom that is all the more dangerous precisely because it offers itself as a *solution* to that problem by promising, in the best natural supernaturalist manner, a new heaven and a new earth: "THE CREATION OF A NEW SOCIETY based on socialistic principles and deceitfully called ‘The Kingdom of God'."

25. Perhaps this face-off between the World Council of Churches and the Fundamental Evangelistic Association, engaged as the era of romantic humanism was drawing to dramatic close, can help us see how *The Giaour* plays with the counters of romanticism, Occidentalism, and fundamentalism.

26. As we have already observed, the close reading of faces and figures is central to *The Giaour*'s operation, and particularly to its production of the Byronic hero. But there is one moment in the poem when the hero, instead of being read, actually tries to do the reading. It comes after he has vanquished his fundamentalist opponent. As Hassan lies dying on the battlefield, the Giaour leans over him:

    I gazed upon him where he lay,
    And watched his spirit ebb away;
    Though pierced like Pard by hunters' steel,
    He felt not half that now I feel.
    I search'd, but vainly searched to find,
    The workings of a wounded mind;
    Each feature of that sullen corse
    Betrayed his rage, but no remorse. (1085-92)

27. The difference between the Giaour and Hassan, couched in the language of a "wounded mind," may thus be understood to be *reflexivity* itself. And so, even though the two men seem remarkably similar in their aims and in their behavior, the text insists once again that in reality we are witnessing a face-off between modernity and tradition—or perhaps more accurately, we are witnessing tradition's rage *at* modernity, with all its talk of complexity, its complicated and self-aware position-taking in relationship to its own beliefs.

28. But what the poem also documents, of course, is how the Giaour subsequently slips into his own kind of fundamentalism through his single-minded, fanatical, melancholic devotion to the dead Leila. Earlier I described this as a paradox in Brooks's sense of the term. In other words, for this poem to work it must be simultaneously true that love and religion are mutually exclusive models of fidelity *and* that love and religion model precisely the same kind of fidelity. We can now identify the moment when the Giaour reads Hassan's face as the hinge of this paradox, the point at which the Giaour begins his gradual transformation from reflexivity into fanaticism. Crucially, however, even as he slides into fanaticism he retains his wounded mind, and this makes him, as the poem obsessively demonstrates, a text worth reading precisely because it never gives up all its secrets. That, indeed, is the appeal of the Byronic hero: that he promises more than he will ever deliver, which makes him an endlessly fascinating, because ultimately unsatisfying, object of study. Such indeterminacy, though, pushes the poem's motivating paradox to the breaking point. For if we track the Giaour's development from the figure who searches Hassan's face to the figure whose face is searched by the curious monks, we see that his single-minded devotion to Leila is an effect of the very woundedness, the reflexivity, that he

celebrates. To take reflexivity as a ground-level commitment is to make certain assumptions about which one cannot reflect critically. This occlusion at the very heart of things is the engine that produces the unanalyzable, unspeakable, enchanted thing called "Byronism" itself.

29. Even though the Giaour himself is necessarily oblivious to this effect, the poems's fictive editor seems to grasp it. Thus while the editor is unable to keep his hero from coming under the spell of his own Byronism, he nevertheless arranges the raw materials of the story in such a way that the reader can observe how intimately the reflexivity at the heart of Byronism is bound up with a melancholic self-enchantment that looks more and more like the religious orthodoxy against which it supposedly sets itself. This editorial apparatus is crucial: unlike a theoretical text or a lyric poem, with their single authoritative voices, *The Giaour* offers multiple unreliable voices, and in so doing it places the reader in a meta-position considerably more reflexive than anything the Giaour himself manages. If we take that wounded mind as a figure for the reflexivity of the modern critic who searches the face of fundamentalism for a shared Occidentalism, *The Giaour* itself frames that act within the context of a literary object. By doing so, it demonstrates that there is no shared Occidentalism here: Hassan's rage cannot be rewritten as another (less sophisticated) version of the Giaour's woundedness. Moreover, the poem's complicated textuality shows what is behind the desire for such an Occidentalism: namely, "Byronism" itself, in all its powerfully attractive melancholy. And finally, if we read it, the poem offers a genealogy of that melancholy in the bonding that takes place between the Giaour and Hassan over the dead woman they each would kill. The source of Byronic melancholy is thus revealed to be the Giaour's deep need for the tradition (what the poem calls "The Musselman manner") that kills Leila. Earlier I called this a paradox, and we are now in a position to see that in this poem, the paradox at the heart of Byronism, the paradox that solicits close reading, is not the exquisitely balanced tension that Brooks loved to find in poetry, but rather a deep asymmetry between killing a woman freely (that is, for love) and killing her because she is property (that is, for tradition). It is too easy to simply point out that she dies either way. What is tougher, perhaps, to swallow is that the close reading that the poem solicits valorizes one of these killings but not the other, and valorizes it moreover as the condition of possibility for its Byronism, its nameless spell, its paradox—in short, as the condition of possibility for its secularism.

Coda: Imaginary Terrorism

30. In an interview with Bill Moyers that aired in the summer of 2006 as part of a PBS series called "Faith and Reason," the writer Mary Gordon offered a scenario that strikingly recalls Byron's:

> MARY GORDON: And also, I believe that if a writer can do her or his work, it is to try to imagine the other, not the comfortable other. I'm actually much more comfortable thinking of a suicide bomber as an other than I am of Donald Trump. Donald Trump—
>
> BILL MOYERS: The inner life of a suicide bomber—
>
> MARY GORDON: Yes.
>
> BILL MOYERS: —intrigues you more than the inner life of Donald Trump?
>
> MARY GORDON: I find it much more comprehensible.
>
> BILL MOYERS: What do you mean?
>
> MARY GORDON: I can very easily put myself in the imaginative place of believing that something is worth dying for and even worth killing for. And so, my imagination can

understand somebody who would say, this is a life or death thing. This is about the truth. I will give my life for the truth. And if I have to take lives in order to defend the truth, I will do it. . . . I think that Osama bin Laden was a person who got disgusted. And sometimes when I look, there are some things in the world that disgust me to the point of despair. So that, for example, some of the things that kids will do on the Internet now. Somebody was telling me about young girls from very good schools who will photograph each other having sex, and put it on the Internet, so that people can, you know, see them, access them having sex. Thirteen, fourteen year old girls are doing that. And I see something like that, and it makes me despair. And I think there is something so wrong with this culture that, wipe it out. Start from—start from zero. It's too corrupt. It's too far gone. There's an almost physical revulsion that I can have from some of the glut and some of the—just some of the ugliness that I see. And I believe that that's what Osama bin Laden saw in the West. That he saw a kind of disgusting corruption that made him feel very, very, very sick. Conrad gives us the example of some people who-

BILL MOYERS: Joseph Conrad.

MARY GORDON: Joseph Conrad, who was just disgusted by a kind of behavior that they found incomprehensible and so gross, that it made them want—it's as if you were in a swamp. And you were covered with stink. And you just wanted to be on a high, dry rock. And I can understand that very well.

BILL MOYERS: I am sympathetic to the angst on the Christian right towards popular culture.

MARY GORDON: Yes.

BILL MOYERS: Towards the banality.

MARY GORDON: Yes.

BILL MOYERS: The sheer ugliness of it.

MARY GORDON: Yes.

BILL MOYERS: And I share that sense with them. You obviously do too.

MARY GORDON: Yes. And I think if you can put yourself in that place and say, you know, and sort of ratchet it up, you can say, I understand Osama bin Laden. That, if I have to—I mean, this is absurd—but if I have to look at all the violence, all the stupid violence that's on TV and some of the stupid violence that teenagers seem to think is fine, and kids carrying guns. And kids shooting other kids. And eleven and twelve year olds having all sorts of sex that they can't possibly really connect to pleasure. And the greed that this, to tell you the truth, to see people driving Hummers sometimes makes me feel so sick that, you know, I want to just drive them off the road and say, okay, in the name of Christ, in the name of peace and justice, I'm just going to shoot you because you have to get out of your car now. We live in a very stupid, banal, gross, greedy and rather disgusting culture.

BILL MOYERS: But it does not lead you to do what Osama bin Laden did, to kill.

> MARY GORDON: And I think that I have to go back to a religious position, which is that if reading the Gospel means anything, if Jesus means anything, it's about seeing everybody, every human being as Jesus. That's what makes sense. That—therefore, every human being is of enormous value. Every human being is sacred. So it seems to me the only thing that stops me from going out and shooting people in Hummers is a religious belief that, even though I don't like them, they are sacred and valuable in the eyes of God. And that does stop me. Because I could really, you know, go out on quite a spree. (Gordon)

31. But if this exchange is a further example of what I have been calling Romantic Occidentalism, Gordon's final comment also contrasts that Occidentalism to an ideal of reading familiar from our discussion of Byron. For the activity that calls a halt to her imaginative over-identification with terrorism is "reading the Gospel." What that reading extracts is the paradox of the incarnation, with its message of "seeing . . . every human being as Jesus." Appropriately enough, the figure of a crucified Jesus, the thing that calls a halt to Gordon's slide into fundamentalism, here comes to stand for the very kind of reflexivity that *The Giaour* had celebrated as "wounded."

32. Perhaps counter-intuitively, then, the reading of the Gospel that Gordon performs here is a secular affair. The figure of Jesus operates as a figure of reflexive self-distancing that halts the slide into fundamentalist mindlessness and murderous rage of the sort Hassan stands for in *The Giaour*. Gordon produces her figure of Jesus through an interpretive practice ("reading") that is secular insofar as it presupposes that dramas of interpretation are at the center of a religious life—a particularly modern presupposition. For once it begins to seem at the very least tasteless, and at the most positively bloodthirsty, to continue asserting the exclusive claims of one particular religion or sect, it becomes desirable to deflect cultural conflict into the hermeneutic domain—to turn "reading the Gospel" into a plea for tolerance rather than an excuse for bloodshed. Paradox, on this understanding, offers one possible answer to the inescapable fact of pluralism. Given the co-existence of a variety of mutually exclusive truth-claims upon which apparently hang the salvation of millions and in the name of which people are willing to die and to kill, paradox offers a method of reading that replaces violence with the indirect and ultimately inarticulable *feeling* that one is in the presence of something beyond words. To read for paradox, as I am suggesting that Gordon does here, is thus to participate in a history of reading intimately bound to the transformations of religion promulgated by secularism.[14]

33. Getting here, though, requires just the sort of literary attentiveness that usually goes by the name of "close reading," with its faith in an idea of the distinctiveness, however attenuated and compromised, of the literary—most especially, as I have been pointing out throughout this essay, in the ability of the literary to deflect cultural conflict into the interpretive realm and thereby contain it. Paradox and complexity are made available to those who read texts in a certain way. The literary is both the carrier of religious transformation *and* the agent through which we come to understand the ambivalences that such transformations necessarily entail. Insofar as it is presupposed by the literary itself, that ambivalence needs to be understood, and historicized, as a product of secularism.

34. On at least some definitions of the term, *cosmopolitanism* is another name for the collection of values I have been gathering here under the headings of reflexivity, reading, and literariness. These are secular values, as I have said, in that they place the ultimately human drama of interpretation at the very center of things. They are cosmopolitan for the same reason—particularly if we think in terms of that version of the "new cosmopolitanism" that remains committed to a dialectic of universal and particular, and that takes seriously the modern drama of reflexivity and self-consciousness. In his response to Bilgrami's "Occidentalism" essay, Bruce Robbins voices a cosmopolitan suspicion of enchantment itself, particularly what he sees as a tendency in Bilgrami's interest in pantheism and deism to introduce Nature as a proxy for enchantment. Robbins worries that this will carry with it related temptations to naturalize prevailing social mores and norms. And as with Nature, so with Art: "these forms of

enchantment do not always embody politically desirable items like value, community, tolerance, and so on," Robbins writes. "This is why you can't trust the enchantments of art. It's why art needs critics. And it's why critics need rationality—though we don't always admit this, since it makes us seem traitors to our subject" (639). It seems clear that Robbins's concerns about enchantment are also worries about romanticism, specifically the way that romanticism mixes up aesthetics with politics, or smuggles in norms under the heading of facts, and thus he seems to join the ranks of those intellectuals who regard romanticism as insufficiently secular.

35. In fact, however, romantic enchantment (including the enchantment isolated by Romantic Occidentalism) is *already* secularized. This not because its content has been transformed, in the manner of natural supernaturalism, but rather because, as Talal Asad has noted repeatedly, the very notion of enchantment has remade religion into a private, spiritual, and putatively universal affair.[15] What this means is that religion can be translated into some other, "deeper," language—not into geopolitics, but simply into what Bilgrami calls "the desire of ordinary people for enchantment, for belonging, for the solidarities of community, for some control at a local level over the decisions by which their qualitative and material lives are shaped, in short, for . . . substantial democracy" (408). The Moyers-Gordon exchange makes such acts of translation more bluntly: Gordon's thought experiment writes an aesthetic and moral revulsion in the language of religiously-inspired terrorism, making it clear that her act of identification with Osama bin Laden is achieved not on religious grounds but on secular ones. A different and I believe more productively complex attempt at translation can be glimpsed in the Giaour, as he searches in vain for evidence of Hassan's reflexive woundedness. At such moments the poem offers the literary itself, and its proper reading, as that which can bring together fundamentalism and romanticism. But the poem also documents the degree to which such a notion of the literary is itself problematically tied to a secularism that seems to occlude the violence that is its condition of possibility. By thematizing reading as a form of critical engagement, a poem like *The Giaour* models an ongoing critical practice. Like the famous duck-rabbit optical illusion, we might have to trade off between literariness and critical engagement; perhaps this is the best we can do when it comes to tracking the various costs of secularism. Whether we can have it both ways—whether *The Giaour* can be both secular and a means to see around secularism's corners—has been the dilemma of this essay.

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Notes

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Praxis, and to audiences at Berkeley and Columbia.

1 See, of course, Said. As Marilyn Butler has detailed in her important essay "The Orientalism of Byron's *Giaour*," however, Byron's Orientalism was always more material and specific than that form of it analyzed by Said. "Whatever the East came afterwards to represent as an abstraction . . . in English culture of the Napoleonic war period it is also the site of a pragmatic contest among the nations for world power." It is also, as Butler's essay describes, a way for Byron to advance his ongoing literary battle with Robert Southey (Butler 306).

2 Compare Bilgrami, "Secularism, Nationalism, and Modernity" (1998). It seems to me that Bilgrami's position on modernity has shifted somewhat between this essay and his "Occidentalism" essay eight years later.

3 In putting matters this way it might seem that I have fallen into the Byronic trap of taking expressions of fidelity too seriously. Maybe the joke is on the naïve reader, who fails to see that for the Byronic hero all objects of desire are basically equivalent. For an explication of this point see Christensen. To some extent, Christensen's approach represents a challenge to my approach in this essay. What I would say briefly in response is that the Giaour's fidelity is an intensely serious parody, and so that the point of such parody is that we take fidelity seriously, and don't take it seriously, simultaneously. I hope that this is not unlike Christensen's point that to write oppositionally Byron had to write against Byronism itself.

4 For a contemporary example of just this process, see Saba Mahmood's discussion of a U.S. government program called Muslim World Outreach, which seeks to identify and support moderate, pro-democratic Islamic reformers. Mahmood writes: "The core problem from the perspective of U.S. analysts is not militancy itself but interpretation, insomuch as the interpretive act is regarded as the foundation of any religious subjectivity and therefore the key to its emancipation or secularization" (Mahmood 329).

5 Though I do not dwell here on *The Giaour* as a fragment, I find support for my reading in Marjorie Levinson's description of the work done by the Romantic Fragment Poem: "Insofar as the RFP cannot be objectified, determined, hence depleted by any one reading (including the author's), the form prevents the reader from appropriating the poet in a vulgar way, as the provider of definable goods or services. The fragment, which keeps its own inviolate retirement, conceals both the source of the poet's/poem's power to shadow forth a magnitude, and the method by which this power is implicated" (Levinson 209).

6 The link between Byron and Brooks may seem odd, given the New Criticism's hostility toward romanticism. In my judgment, the evident similarity between their models of close reading is enough to make the comparison stick; however, two other justifications may be offered. First, Brooks's celebration of paradox over orthodoxy evinces a wariness of religiously-inspired confidence, and a similar faith in the ability of literary language to re-direct its worst effects, that would shortly be taken up by romantic humanists like Abrams; the socio-historical context for both critical movements—post-war anomie, the developing cold war, religious ecumenicism—are the same. Second, it may be that Byron's amenablility to Brooksian close reading provides us with another way into the often-remarked fact that Byron is an odd sort of romantic writer. It is no coincidence, surely, that Abrams essentially leaves him out of *Natural Supernaturalism*. Taken together, these two justifications begin to suggest how Byron both is and is not romantic in the sense constructed by post-war humanism: his faith in the literary partakes of the same spirit and yet remains, somehow, *different*.

7 Christensen makes the more complicated point that this moment in *The Giaour* both invites reading and resists it in the name of a superficial, repetitive, appropriation—what Brooks, though not Christensen, might call paraphrase. See Christensen, "Perversion," 580.

8 Let me emphasize one more time that "secular" does not mean non-religious; it simply means that which

contextualizes and frames religion and thus produces "religion" as such. It is sometimes thought that New Critical close reading aims to resolve or transcend paradox, whereas I am here emphasizing that it is designed to manage it. From my perspective this is a difference that doesn't make a difference, for at the heart of the secularity I am here exploring is the idea that managing paradox *just is* to transcend it.

9 Bilgrami might agree with Bill Brown, who remarks in a related context that transcoding religious motivations into economic ones is "a parochial account that depends on an a priori distinction between religion and politics and on the separation of church and state" (747). Brown's target here is Slavoj Žižek.

10 Blake 3; Coleridge 232; Abrams 96.

11 Within romantic studies the best meditation on these issues is an underappreciated essay by Gene W. Ruoff, "Romantic Lyric and the Problem of Belief."

12 For a recent attempt to analyze the coimbrication of capitalism and religious conservatism without resorting to the language of false consciousness, see Connolly.

13 Byron's poem deliberately mixes up the reading of texts and the reading of faces; these are brought together at the moment that the Giaour commands his monastic interlocutors to read his face: "She died—I dare not tell thee how, / But look, 'tis written on my brow! / There read of Cain the curse and crime, / In characters unworn by time" (1056-59).

14 For example, the history of the secular behind the "Jesus" whom Gordon's reading produces peeks out in the process by which, in her final sentence, "reading the Gospel" transforms itself into a "religious belief."

15 See Asad, *Genealogies* 42, 201-205, and *Formations* 52. See also Jager; and Ward, 73-113.

top of essay

Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

Post-Secular Conviviality

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The article reviews the philosophical importance of conversation and its attendant virtue of conviviality for the theory of knowledge. It argues that to appreciate the crisis Romanticism encountered in trying to maintain enlightened philosophical conversation in a colonial era can usefully inform discussions of secularism in the post-colonial age. This essay appears in _Romanticism, Secularism, and Cosmopolitanism_, a volume of _Romantic Circles Praxis Series_, prepared exclusively for Romantic Circles (http://www.rc.umd.edu/), University of Maryland.

1. The equation of secularization with demystification no longer seems to work. Baldly stated, the problem is this: the cultural insult in the assumption that one culture can enlighten another overrides the idea that enlightenment is a benefit blind to cultural difference. Classic 20th-century critiques of enlightenment, such as Adorno's, uncovered Enlightenment's own inability to escape the mythologizing it criticized. Its apparently disinterested quest for justice disguised a desire to equalise differences and reduce individual differences to a controllable uniformity. Easier legislation rather than the myth of justice for all was the real programme of Enlightenment thought. But now, any notion at all of being disabused of myth appears misguided. All attempts to find common ground between different peoples have their hidden, interested agendas.

2. Recently, the British Romantic mind-set that followed the Enlightenment has been plausibly thought of as facing a comparable dilemma. This has happened in the wake of scepticism, led by new historicist criticism, of the idea that Romanticism provides any substantial critique of Enlightenment uniformitarianism at all. Sceptically viewed, Romantic ideology took the practical solutions of the Enlightenment, problematised them, and then solved them on a higher plane of imaginary compensations. Its sublimations evaded rather than confronted the Enlightenment challenge to describe the common human nature on which a cross-cultural theory of justice might be based. To say, with the Romantics, that what we have in common is imagination appears precisely to avoid answering the Enlightenment question, since our uncommon fictions become our distinguishing characteristics. But what happens, scholars have wondered, if instead we start with the acknowledgement that British Romanticism's conscious inheritance from the Enlightenment was patriotic unanimity unparalleled in Britain's history? Unanimity, in a sense, is a misnomer, because the patriotism at work "forging the nation," in Linda Colley's words, between 1707 and 1837, was largely practical, not mental.[1] Actual successes in communication across classes and their different interests and cultures came to constitute a patriotic citizenry largely un-tempted by the example of the French Revolution. This consensus, though, was strikingly corroborated by imperialist successes and the imposition of English as a global language that followed. British colonial failure in America simply delegated the task of linguistic imperialism. The nationalist consciousness not only held together hearts and minds at home, but increasingly presumed to create a loyal citizenry across the world. Colonialism began to look like social communication by other means. Its hegemony took the form of an exportable, self-confirming patriotism which could morally justify the appropriation of the national goods of others.

3. But the link between this colonialism and its sources in a practical British Enlightenment became increasingly tenuous. The interesting question then is this: did British Romanticism go along with the transformation of Enlightenment into colonialism? Or did it not, rather, recover these Enlightenment sources in ways that typically resisted the contemporary colonial thinking into which they were

dissolving? If it did, then could Romanticism be re-read so as to have already helpfully addressed our question of how to differ from someone in a non-coercive form of communication, instead of communicating so as coercively to efface difference? Does cosmopolitanism have to involve the colonization of one belief-system by another? Did Romanticism really engage with these paradoxes?

4. To start answering these admittedly broad questions, we have to look at Enlightenment theories of communication. While the questions are abstract, they need to be if, as I hope, we are to uncover the philosophical skeletons they rely on for their articulation. But in that case, we should evaluate the Enlightenment ideas of conversation, which the Romantics inherited, against models which have been subjected to stringent critique in our own time. We have to see if Romantic theory, no longer exclusively British, develops any workable symmetries between Enlightened and Modern explanations of communication in a manner revealing its need to handle an Enlightenment heritage collapsing into the colonial antagonisms it can hardly have intended. We do appear currently to be tangling with the post-colonial outcomes of this putative debate, and experiencing comparable threats of collapse or reversion to the original colonial problematic. Secularist positions are cast as sectarian; multi-culturalism is hard to defend from charges of ignoring the claims to singularity that seem necessary to the identity of its main players; language-games of different cultures multiply at the expense of their translatability into what is pejoratively described as a master-discourse. To find an historical parallel is not to find a solution, but it might help enlighten us about *ourselves* in a way which lets us decide if—ourselves suffering its power to secularize our own cherished myths—we really do want to incriminate enlightenment in revenge.

5. This, then, is a discussion of the "theories" of Enlightenment and Romanticism, rather than the achievement of individual authors representative of the literature of the period. I hope, though, that the ideas of citizenship emerging while remaining necessarily abstract are nevertheless more recognizably secular *and* non-secular than in my own earlier Habermasian proposals for Romantic stand-ins for multiculturalism which perhaps remained unclear about this.[2] On the other hand, I do believe that reactions to Habermas tend as a rule to cast him as more of an abstract rationalist than he is and to neglect the affective basis of much of his thought about communication. His renewal of the Kantian heritage has something in common with the post-Kantian tactic of delegating to non-philosophical discourses an authority no longer sustainable within the monological meta-language traditionally attributed to philosophy. Inevitably this tends to involve affect in the theoretical project. Further, it updates and finds uses for pre-reflective forms of orientation which tend to call themselves "intuitive"—including, perhaps, forms of religious intuition described for example by Schleiermacher. Our apprehension of the lifeworld, we might prefer to say, must involve non-conceptual forms of situating and positioning which philosophy may invoke, but only to defer to them. Such deferral is, no doubt, calculated, but it remains a limit to disenchantment, a boundary of demythologizing. It is a secular deferral to the non-secular, where philosophical logic represents secular understanding and aesthetic, religious, or political discourse its non-secular stand-ins. For those who cannot make sense of any institutional religious affiliation or doctrinal orthodoxy, it is, honestly, about as far as they can go.

The "exercise of self-converse"

6. Within a well-known Whig tradition deriving principally from Shaftesbury but extending to Adam Smith and beyond, sociability was a major player in sociological explanations. What is more, a ruling comparison furthered those accounts of what bound society together and made political agreement possible. If enthusiasm propagated people's incorrect relation to God, conversation crystallised people's correct relations with each other. Shaftesbury's attack on enthusiasm works through secularization: a down-to-earth redeployment that removes the privileged privacy from enthusiasm and makes it observe the logic of any other conversation.[3] In his *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm,* which became the first section of *Characteristics* (1711), it becomes apparent that enthusiasm secularized is still valuable. But,

even more than a straightforward dismissal would have done, this rebirth requires the death of enthusiasm as a form of religious experience. Furthermore, Shaftesbury's taming of enthusiasm through its demystification is completed by his domestication of enthusiasm as a driver of the dynamics of his own philosophical dialogue. We are to see the defeat and secular recycling of enthusiasm at work in the conversational, persuasive force of *Characteristics* itself.

7. Lawrence Klein's recent Cambridge edition of *Characteristics* freely admits to underplaying the typographical resources with which Shaftesbury stressed that his ideas were produced by "different speaking parties" (xxxvi). Klein has explored as much as anyone the political implications of Shaftesbury's belief that the conversational attitude pursues us to our inmost self-communings. He is less interested in parallels with contemporary philosophical sources of the self and the logical priority of discourse to consciousness, although he does compare Shaftesbury with Gadamer and Habermas. But for Shaftesbury it seems that we cannot think except through the setting up of a debate between two parties. No knowledge is immediate, all is the product of intercession. The Romantic aporias of self-consciousness are still to come. In all likelihood such aporias would have appeared to him as either a questionable unwillingness to take his point or as an unteachable sublimity. Clearly there are political constraints on the view of Shaftesbury as a theorist of communication. From Habermas to Klein, the emergence of a public sphere of philosophical debate associated with the Whig ambitions of Shaftesbury and Addison is described as regulated by a normative politeness. Addison too wished to secularize, completing Socrates' achievement of bringing "Philosophy down from Heaven to inhabit among men" by further inviting it out of the "Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and Coffee-Houses" (Addison I.44). The belletristic form to which *The Spectator* belongs is integral to implementing this future for philosophy. To be sure, studies of the Whig moment of philosophical dissemination have tended to divide between two approaches. Some investigate the specificities of its desired culture of conversation, noting its actual exclusiveness and the counter-public spheres which were strategically ignored as part of its cultural project. Others emphasize the genie let out of the bottle: the emancipatory dynamic in conversation that exceeds any polite self-regulation. I want to suggest that this happens as a matter of logic; and that one way of understanding Romanticism and its uses for us now is to see it as the consequence of this making of conversation: men speaking to men, but with their masculinist, Wordsworthian idiom de-gendered by becoming the necessary, quasi-transcendental framework for knowledge.

8. Romanticism, though, is mediated by Enlightenment. For once, rough periodization helps make clear the philosophical developments and issues in play. In the *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm,* it is philosophical conversation, inspirational or abrasive, that absorbs enthusiastic energies, and, in redeploying them argumentatively leaves enthusiasm "in some measure justified" (28). Shaftesbury begins to impose his secular turn on enthusiasm by considering the function of a Muse. The exaltation the writer gained from imagining such a divine figure can be gauged, suggests Shaftesbury, when we consider how important for the quality of communication—whether witty, dramatic, or philosophical—is the intended addressee. The quality of recognition of our purpose which we can reasonably expect affects the quality of what we have to say. The flattery intended by Shaftesbury's addressing of the present *Letter* to the Whig grandee Somers will therefore only work if his philosophy works. The quality of matter and interlocutor are mutually implicated. That Shaftesbury does not want the conceit involved in this equation to appear pompous or self-serving is evident from the virtues he ascribes to the conversation that a good conversationalist facilitates. "Gravity," we are told, "is the very soul of imposture" (8), and the conversationalist should submit his ideas to an opposite raillery, satire and critical inspection. To do this cheerfully requires "good humour" not the "melancholy" belonging to the religious enthusiast (8). A "divine" temper in Shaftesbury's modern, secular sense extends this tolerance to a public who can "partake with us" in our conception of its best interests (20). Contrary to French *gloire* (an ever-present anxiety for Shaftesbury), this good-humoured exchange observes a fundamental truth about ethical judgement: "we can have no tolerable notion of goodness, without

being tolerably good." Shaftesbury's optimism here (what of the villain who knowingly delights in his evil deeds?) is again based on a broad logic of conversation. That is, Shaftesbury assumes a good faith in the critical challenge of one's interlocutor, which, if genuine, means s/he wants to advance the process in which we are engaged. His further assumption is that such progress, logically speaking, is the most critically effective intervention she could make. Knowledge emerges from the recognition of an intention, and from a judgement on that intention's efficacy. Judgements of the goodness or badness of an action similarly only make sense as they lay claim to an integrity of their own, recognizably on the side of goodness.

9. This "conversational implicature," as we will hear it later called by Paul Grice, runs deep in Shaftesbury's thinking, connecting it up with more modern philosophical idioms. Shaftesbury links "soliloquy" with "advice," for instance. In "Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author," also collected in *Characteristics,* he in effect wonders how to revive the Renaissance role of the *consigliere* or adviser in a modern non-courtly society.[4] It turns out that "the best way and manner of advising" is a practice best learned through self-experiment (71). By now writing in a very non-empiricist, un-Lockean epistemological vein, Shaftesbury dispenses with the notion of a private language of sensations. "In reality, how specious a study, how solemn an amusement is raised from what we call "philosophical speculations," "the formation of ideas, their compositions, comparisons, agreement and disagreement" (134). Instead, Shaftesbury assumes that the language in which we conduct our introspection is always public. Already, in other words, we grasp ourselves in debate, split into two parties, one half trying suggestions on the critical responses of the other, engaged in our typical "exercise of self-converse" (75). Far from being eccentric or pathological, this "doctrine of two persons in one individual self" only articulates the logic of the Platonic and Stoic tradition of the examined life which Shaftesbury admires (83). To "recognize yourself" is "as much as to say, 'Divide yourself!' or 'Be two!'" (77). To conjure your "daimon" or consult your "genius" is comparably to enter into that dialogue which constitutes self-consciousness for Shaftesbury. Again, in contrast to enthusiasm, the model correspondent here seems to be not an inner voice nor immediate spiritual assurance, but a public body settling its differences. The result is to "make us agree with ourselves and be of a piece within" (77). A dialogue has taken place, has been resolved, and the skills and appetite for further such dialogues have been stimulated. Sociability has been inculcated at the site notionally furthest from its centre, the self-communing individual.

10. Conversation of Shaftesbury's kind creates meaning through disagreement as much as through agreement. The fact that dialogue is taking place authenticates the identities of both participants; in fact they have no other model for self-consciousness. The conversational contract, though, insists that a disagreement is only recognizable as such where it solicits an agreement to come, even if finally we agree to disagree. But this logical propriety exceeds the restrictions of propriety in its more ordinary, polite sense of what is fitting. More interestingly, it harnesses all improprieties in their usual unmannerly sense to this same logic of dialogue. No performance can be so outrageous that it avoids affirming this exchange, even while opting out of it. Something notionally escaping reciprocity and exchange, such as a gift, is, writes Shaftesbury, hard to imagine in the context of conversation. He is thinking of our natural resentment of the advisor whom we suspect of using the conversational occasion for "raising himself a character from our defects" (70). But Shaftesbury's overall argument suggests that free advice will always serve the advisor well too, because it shows conversation working. She or he has a fundamental interest in its practicability, in fact his or her own identity and degree of self-awareness depends upon it: the conversation of soliloquy is "our sovereign remedy and gymnastic method" (84). Conversation for Shaftesbury is the technique and care of the self. To see advice as *the* conversational outcome is another way of seeing that we are implicated in conversation as a fundamental good, not as a gift but as ethically given.

11. It is obvious that, depending on your point of view, religious presumption might appear heretical, and

thus socially divisive. But can't conversation still be improper in comparable ways? Moving on from my basis in Shaftesbury now, we can find arguments for replying: yes, conversation can be improper, but it is in conversation properly so called, conversation that works, that people take just stock of each other. An improper conversation offends against the logic of conversation; it doesn't offend merely by entertaining unsuitable, unmannerly, impolite topics. It is self-defeating. My question is, firstly, whether or not this proposition about conversation as such is sustainable? Secondly, if the answer is yes, can conversational success model, in a more than trivial sense, a kind of communication we need now, one which achieves an equality of exchange without compromising cultural difference?

The logic of conversation

12. What do I mean by the logic of conversation? In conversation, men and women reciprocally communicate their acknowledgement of each other's access to the subject under debate. A one-way conversation is a description of a conversation that does not take place. Like other non-conversational speech acts, it fails to grant the right of reply, or never takes off because that right is never exerted. Conversational exchange takes place in addition to the information one conversationalist imparts to another. But a persuasion of another's knowledge of the subject is what generates an equal estimate of that person with oneself, at least in respect of the particular topic under discussion. One may know more than another, but an assumption of equality lies in the idea of the conversation in which such disparities of knowledge may be overcome. Otherwise what happens is not a conversation but a lecture ("Meaning" 45).

13. Partly this describes a theory of meaning, a Gricean one perhaps, in which, as he describes it in a famous paper of 1957, natural and non-natural senses of propositions co-exist. Some things can only be meant if they are true ("natural"), others do not require this condition. Those spots only meant measles if the child actually had them. On the other hand, I may say one thing but can choose to mean a number of things by it. In both cases, however, if someone attempts to mean something, they are "inducing a belief by means of the recognition of this intention." Can't conversations be meaningless? Yes, of course, but presumably only through a failure happening within this framework, in which the belief is not induced or the intention to produce it not recognised. Otherwise, whatever is meaningless in the words exchanged does not amount to a conversation. If you didn't understand me, but recognised my failed intention to get my meaning across, this would be a conversational failure rather than a failure of some other kind. It would be a comparable conversational failure if you understood me but could not recognise my attempt to have you as my responsive audience. The first case is a failure to induce belief, the second fails rhetorically. Both cases are covered by being unsure "about how what [I] said is to be taken. ("Meaning" 48). Either you do not know what I am talking about, or else you cannot recognise my intention—literal, ironic, histrionic, expressive, performative in any number of ways. Both cases tie meaning to the possibility of conversation, the possibility of your continuing from where I left off.

14. Grice refines on the possible variations here. His 1957 article was "only intended as a model," he remarks somewhat disingenuously ("Utterer's" 59). Interestingly, his theory is not disqualified by the Derridean objection that we can never know the natural meaning because it is always framed by a non-natural plethora of possible intentions.[5] For Grice, the admission that "intensionality seems to be imbedded in the very foundations of language" doesn't preclude "extensionality." Performances themselves, we might gloss him as saying here, can be literal as well as metaphorical. The literal ones defer to the authority of facts they are trying to get us to believe in. But they are still synthetic performances, not illocutionary acts analytically dependent (as Searle argues against Grice and Strawson) on the meaning of the words they use.[6] We are not, Grice sees, anchored in a shared world by the gravitational force of linguistic presuppositions. The perlocutionary success of performance hinges, though, on the possibility of "recognition," a word undoubtedly redolent of continental philosophical contexts not usually containable by this Anglo/American approach. Setting aside these

tempting ancestral voices of Hegelian struggle and glory, we can less spectacularly still assert that this way of putting a theory of meaning hangs on the possibility of conversation. And we saw Shaftesbury earlier argue that my function as conversationalist is affected by the quality of recognition my efforts receive.

15. Grice went on, in his influential William James lectures at Harvard on "The Logic of Conversation," to talk of "conversational implicature"—a non-conventional principle of cooperation necessary for communication to work. Again this specifies an intended recognition by the audience of the utterer's intention, a process that locates meaning within the pragmatics of conversational performance.[7] Grice would, I believe, have agreed with Shaftesbury that we are here directed by a good faith integrated with the surrounding project of a well-directed life. Shaftesbury's tendency to make optimism and progressiveness a matter of logic is conspicuously cast in the Enlightenment idiom of his time. It also translates into that "moral background" that Aristotelian colleagues of Grice, like Philippa Foot, assumed to be logically required for the virtues to make sense. Grice, though, again treats such connections as synthetic rather than analytic; or at least he allows for the less "instrumental" Aristotelianism which (existentially) modulates into a more generous "description of the appropriate forms of presentation of self to others, and of the appropriate ways of responding to and recognizing others."[8] Now, "recognition," in Christopher Cordner's remark here, is again more richly freighted with significance than can be contained within one tradition, period or ethical discourse. It does, though, appear a less anachronistic option than some to think of Grice in connection with Shaftesbury's dialectic.

16. There is something of the idiom of Shaftesbury's version of Enlightenment in the fact that Grice saw himself as a serial philosophical collaborator, someone for whom "*the unity of conviviality* in philosophy" was not altogether trivial. "Philosophy," as he said, "like virtue is *entire*."[9] (Dante's *Convivio,* after all, took on the task of setting his philosophy in a total intellectual context, one primarily challenged by the reconciliation of secular Aristotelian with Christian doctrine). While Grice's colleagues and opponents concentrated on the extent to which the pragmatics of conversation might escape or fall under a formal logical theory, I am concerned with this ethical dimension and its political implications, something shared by the Whig tradition I began by sketching. Indeed, Grice's background was one of strikingly non-conformist "*dissenting rationalism*" on his culturally influential father's side (Grandy and Warner 46). In this tradition, it is thought that communication partly depends on the mutual building of a common culture of recognition rather than on taking it for granted, and that when this activity is in the service of delivering natural meanings, it can owe nothing to existing social and political maps of people's relations with each other. Conversation, in other words, requires conventional behaviour, but in order to institute its *own* convention or meeting place; and this effort takes shape by *neglecting* what is colloquially known as conventional behaviour, all the multifarious speech acts which need not at all evidence exuberant escapes from the tyranny of the "natural" but may more likely embody repressions: institutional esotericisms requiring us to speak the language of some court or other, snobberies, social exclusion orders and so on which as much as playful liberties can so complicate any claim to get to grips with natural meaning. To insist that conventional conventions always win here, that they muddy the epistemological issue, make interpretations undecideable and conversational exchange (meaning) impossible, is to be very conservative. It is to invoke that emptiness of cultural sufficiency, which Hegel saw as the other side of the coin of emancipation from the State.[10] To be conversible, on the other hand, is, as the etymology almost suggests, to relate to others, but through conversational conventions whose *meaningful* possibilities, rather than their *subversions* of meaning, make conversation potentially critical of the orthodox social prescriptions it has converted in its quest for information.

17. This, at any rate, is the dynamic of conversation which takes such attractive eighteenth-century shapes as the republic of letters, the public sphere, new forms of sociability in scientific clubs, in debating

societies and in other opinion forming forces for change—everything, in short, that tends towards the highly radical historical outcomes of Dissenting rationalism in such bodies as the Society for the Exchange of Constitutional Information and the London Corresponding Society. Let us investigate the formal rather than historical characteristics of conversational logic a bit further, though. The acceptance of someone's right to speak with authority on a particular topic displaces conventional assumptions of superiority. For conversation is potentially ubiquitous, as ubiquitous as nature, beliefs about which heuristic conversation (if we can call it that—conversation that wants to find something out) typically wishes us to recognise as its intention. Conversation can be had on whichever subject comes to hand. Described in this way, it sounds like the radical force of Enlightenment—democratic provided one has access to the skills required to participate. And from being a courtly attribute or bourgeois accomplishment, conversation becomes a name for the rational claim one person has on another. Institutionalised, the obligations of 18th-century conversation extend from the learned club to the university, bypassing the exclusiveness of legal formality or any of the proprieties restricting the swapping of information, but bypassing them in guises that never explicitly threaten them. Nevertheless, the rational universal in which conversation participates is so little a respecter of persons that the implicit threat to the conventions surrounding its own convention remains.

18. Paradoxically, in describing this openness to relevant evidence and argumentation, commentators on the phenomenon of conversation have uncovered an affective template. Habermas, in particular, found a crucial transition from opinion to politics via the intimate sphere of the (emergent bourgeois) family commemorated in epistolary novels of sentiment. This doesn't work, though, does it? What more striking scene of repression and misinformation can be imagined than the post-Freudian family? But the point remains that, in order to imagine communication free of the conventional pressures that restrict conversation at most times, theorists feel forced to transpose the scene entirely. In the process they turn society into the family and knowledge into love. Only in such a forum can that *attitude* to conversation be figured which does not require qualifications over and above that of being a member of the group by virtue of being able to *participate* in the conversation. This point, the relevant one, remains valid whatever that family structure was really like. Gender discrimination and all the other containments were, up to Burke's use of the family in his conservative polemic, constituent parts of this membership, not constraints upon it. That was its use for him: you could not sensibly want to be the inheriting son if you were actually the youngest daughter; hierarchy was for once unarguably natural. Yet this group could also model the heuristic conversation, uninhibited by the need to qualify for membership, unconstrained by conventions other than those facilitating recognition of the intention to communicate.

19. The other anti-hierarchical component built into conversation is the heuristic concession it makes to dialogue. To find out the truth conversationally one person must learn from another, or both must learn from each other. As soon as conversation acknowledges its own dramatic character, in which different people contribute to a story larger than any of them, the truth sought in this way has itself to be re-characterised as well. No longer a single object to be mastered from one point of view, truth might vary depending on the perspective from which it is viewed. Truth proper, then, would have to be an aggregate, the product of a composite inquiry. It might also be only fully graspable as the sum of its historical stages; part of its essential character might belong to its own genesis, its actual resistance to instantaneous access. In that case, post-Enlightenment theories of irony and phenomenology beckon. Maybe the final settlement of what a truth is would be political, something achieved when its different interlocutors compromised and negotiated a final agreement, a settlement depending on how far each was prepared to concede his or her own points and accept others? The point about heuristic conversation, though, holds true: the political winner would always be the one who got others to concede that from positions of equal access things looked the same to them. This politics seeks not ascendancy but results within a common franchise.

20. This franchise can be almost entirely one of technique and competence, or it can be one that is inherently negotiable, as in the case of subscribers to aesthetic or political agreement. The fact that the former kind of franchise are often difficult to qualify for—in mathematical theory for instance—does not invalidate the point being made here. Would a mathematical theorem be false if we couldn't persuade anyone that it was true? Clearly not, but one can also define the truth of such a theorem as entailing that only mathematical incompetence would foil its universal acceptance. Conversations about mathematics, in the decisive sense we have been tracing, will therefore be fewer, but not substantially different from other conversations.

Romantic dialogism

21. The truth emerging from Enlightenment conversation qualified each effective participant as an equal inquirer in the enterprise. This levelling worked through the power of conversation to establish its own conventions irrespective of any already existing ones that might socially position its members. Also, the dramatic method driving this socially unrestricted play to establish the truth privileged neither side in the debate. The negotiated outcome resulting from the dialectic was the dominant interest of both parties. Shaftesbury's theory of conversation stressed the logical presupposition of its viability, and an accompanying ethical stance of some benevolence.

22. Romantic dialogue perhaps has a different emphasis, stressing the power to accommodate difference within a conversational economy. It looks for discursive forms and genres with the elasticity required for this kind of tolerance. Taken to its logical conclusion in Romantic irony, and then in Nietzsche's perspectivism, agreements about truth did not overcome but preserved their perspectival origins. In the case of Romantic irony such as Friedrich Schlegel's, this was in order to show that agreement was possible, and that a republic could be modelled on difference. In the case of Nietzsche, the palimpsest of difference was rather intended to show what a fraud consensus was, and how it masked an inherently competitive will to power. The conversational discovery continued in Romantic dialogue, though, was that the agreement to differ signified not failure to establish the truth but the accurate recognition of its essentially composite character. Incommensurability need not entail incompatibility. An obvious need then arose for a form of writing not disabled by the need to hold competing views in focus simultaneously. Many versions of this *opera aperta* arose: from the fragments of Schlegel to the encyclopaedic *Allgemeine Brouillon* of Novalis, and the collaborative forms of the *Frühromantiker* generally: *Mischgedicht* (medley), *Symphilosophie*,*Sympoesie* and *Gespräch* (dialogue). All were outcomes of the continuous symposium of brilliant men and women informally and intermittently convened in Jena at the end of the 18th-century. Contradiction would bind rather than unravel, and enhance rather than inhibit, such discursive initiatives. Key British contributions to this post-Kantian dramatic alternative to introspection could be Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria,* with its abandonment of an introspective transcendental deduction for the discursive histrionics and critical warfare of the second volume. But the entire second generation of British Romantics are now usually read as critiquing the inwardness of their immediate predecessors, and as resisting the spread of inwardness that Hegel characterised as fatefully Romantic with that synthetic play of genres that the Jena group had championed.

23. A possible consequence of this, though, links rather than estranges Nietzsche from the conversational tradition. Truth is just that movement outdistancing individual perspectives upon it. Truth, then, does not simply enrich the individual's version of it: it embarrasses, confounds and disturbs. The dramatic containment or management of its energies is never conclusive, but always a stop-gap round which more veridical energy can pour. The dramatic character that a necessarily dialogic approach to truth requires is a needful euphemism. Conversation, dialogue, the aesthetic itself become the new masks allowing us to contemplate the truth without becoming hopelessly confounded by it. The crucial transition from Aeschylean tragedy to Platonic dialogue, via Euripides, is described by Nietzsche both

as decline from a supreme moment of human expression, and as the rescuing of that moment for modern discourses supposed to be non-dramatic. In Benjamin's re-articulation of Nietzsche's idea in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama,* the *Trauerspiel* replaces the tragic agon, in which the hero is symbolically clenched in a silence proleptic of a language still to come. The *Trauerspiel* is, by contrast, aligned with an art-form which is garrulous, allegorical, and indiscriminate in its choice of allegorical objects, thus offering the maximum number of points of entry for the reader. Benjamin's *Trauerspiel,* unlike tragedy, is hospitable to difference. It re-works Schlegel's Romantic idea of the mixed form, the philosophical conversation and the hybrid poem: "the dialogue," writes Benjamin, "contains pure dramatic language, unfragmented by its dialectic of tragic and comic" (113-118).

24. Benjamin encourages us to think of what happens to tragedy in the Nietzschean story as a parable of what happens to philosophy in ours, or the philosophy for which he failed to secure academic recognition in his own lifetime. The application of his tale to subsequent philosophical developments is easy to see, though. As the death of tragedy is the birth of dialogue, so the death of philosophy is the birth of communicative action, one version of 20th-century philosophy's famous "linguistic turn." Or, in Habermasian terms, philosophy abandons its privileged status as a meta-language pronouncing on the conditions necessary for legitimate intellectual inquiry, and becomes the convener of a dialogue between other disciplines and discourses. This post-metaphysical philosophy, in line with Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations,* becomes a therapy for its own ambition to ground everything else, an ambition which it dissolves in a healthy proficiency in the logic of different language games. Philosophy thus secularizes its theological ambitions and becomes discursively cosmopolitan in the process. More accurately, philosophy suffers a displacement of its authority comparable to the submission of a religion to secular authority. Or, perhaps even more basically, there is no other language for describing this modulation of philosophical expertise than to describe it as a version of such a secularizing process, but this time imposed on the secularizer. Standing on this common ground, perhaps there is something both secular and non-secular sides can say to each other?

25. What might these non-secular philosophical surrogates be? Whatever they are, their devotees would not be pleased to hear them described as the stand-ins for an eventual philosophical competence, as Habermas sometimes does. To satisfy the non-secularists, the handing-over of philosophical authority would have to be a bit more whole-hearted or sincere than that. There is, however, nothing unusual about such interplay. It is as easy as, say, friendship, and as mysterious. Affinities without strict analogies, as studied in the recent literature on friendship by Nancy, Blanchot, and then Derrida, testify precisely to this ability to find a common cause with someone without the resemblance being, as it were, motivated or emulative. Friendship reaches over and crosses boundaries, and to say someone is my friend, as Montaigne saw, is sufficient explanation of this breach. Equally, following Aristotle, friendship can be virtuous: it can be based on attraction to my friend's exemplary exposition of a principle of flourishing, or the aspiration to human excellence common to us both. So I am not pushing a kind of irrationalism here, because just as a society of friendship would, for Aristotle, make the institution of justice unnecessary, so the kind of transfer envisaged for philosophy above is validated by an analogous kind of displacement of one authority by another—by the power of the discourse endowed with new philosophical responsibilities to make the expected disciplinary procedures inessential.[11] Who needs Fichte or Novalis's *Fichte Studien* when reading Novalis's novels? Who needs Bergson when reading Proust, or William James when reading Henry James? Yet, undeniably, these different writings are "friendly" towards each other. Not how one text comments on the other but the fact of their conversational relationship is what is critically informative and important: the fact that it continues something to talk about one after talking about the other or when talking about the other.

26. Yet apart from talking about the surprisingness or not of their community, celebrating the illustrative likenesses and un-likenesses of its members, its differences in relationship, there is little else we can say about this connection. Precisely the way neither side could have prescribed their relationship is

what makes it friendship. The relationship itself is what matters; the fact that different speakers in a different discourse can take over the original story and carry it on in their own terms; the fact that we make a "natural" transition from one to the other in the course of interpretation, exposition or whatever. And this discursive friendship seems to replicate what we want to happen in societal cooperation. But let us retrace this journey to informality one last time, eventually addressing the specific relationship between logic and religion.

27. Arguably, then, dialogue is the forgotten destination of philosophy that is recovered in the post-Nietzschean story. The modern reading makes the *delivery* of Platonic theory its real end, rather than its world of ideal forms, its defence of justice, its scepticism of art or its political utopianism. These Platonic theories are not ignored or marginalised as a consequence. But they are regarded as plausible only as they are susceptible of convincing delivery, only as they are topics proper for conversation and dialogue. In Grice's strong sense, they must enhance the way in which philosophy is "convivial," and the drive of the line from Shaftesbury to Grice is to make the inherent feasibility of conversation a matter of logic. The affect here sticks as closely to the reasoning as any Kantian feeling of "respect" clings to the rationality of "law." Can this definitive turn in philosophical thought impinge on secularism and its discontents—or secularism's inability to sustain any longer a position outside the myths to which it supposedly was an alternative. Habermas, characteristically perhaps, sees a kind of philosophical modelling in play here, one standing in for sociological solutions. He writes that "the secular awareness that one is living in a post-secular society takes the shape of post-metaphysical thought at the philosophical level" (4). In other words, philosophy's delegation of its authority to other discourses, to dialogue, is like the translatability of secular values into non-secular discourses. One is aware that a translation is taking place, so one remains secular, but secularism has handed over its original authority as a kind of *prima philosophia* in such matters, and pragmatically accepts the consequences. For this to work, though, it must be corroborated by a willingness on the religious side to acknowledge the separate coincidence of secular values with the ones supported for religious reasons. The key word is "reasons," whose exchangeability Habermas understands as an assumption inalienable from democratic society as he understands it. This is perhaps the strength and the limitation of his argument. He makes a logical necessity out of the viability of communication; but, staying in this (neo-)neo-Kantian posture, he seems unwilling Romantically to credit communicative successes in other discourses for keeping his philosophy of a logically necessary communication viable. Yet he concedes that this is what philosophy in its interpretative function in fact shows other discourses capable of doing!

28. Habermas argues that the liberal state cannot "expect of *all* citizens that they also justify their political statements independently of their religious convictions or world views" (8). He concludes that they should "therefore be allowed to express and justify their convictions in a religious language if they cannot find secular 'translations' for them" (10). We might wonder how this could work, and search for those "reasons" common to religious and secular outlooks, by looking back into Habermas's German heritage rather than at the exigencies of the post 9/11 scene apparent around him when he wrote, and even further back than the reactions to Kant with which he usually begins.

29. Let us consider from this perspective two texts strategically anthologised in one volume of the putatively canonical *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*.[12] When Luther argues that Christians have a duty to obey the law, he manages to do so from both within and outside his faith. Christians themselves do not need laws, he thinks, since they behave morally anyway. Those who are not Christian cannot be similarly relied upon to behave properly, and need laws backed by the power of the "sword" to make them do so. However, in addition to this separation of the sheep from the goats, Luther maintains that it is the duty of his Christian to help others, and that this service can only be rendered under the rule of law. For that to be possible, evil and justice must exist out there, publicly visible and not peculiar to a private religious insight. Luther's Christian uncomplainingly suffers

injustice against himself, but does not tolerate injustice visited on another. So it is because some people are not Christian that there has to be a secular authority; and only by maintaining a secular authority can Christians be empowered to behave in a properly Christian manner towards non-Christians. To be a Christian demands faith, not works. Nevertheless it is the *duty* of a Christian freely to carry out good works. The distinction between being a Christian or a heathen is not reducible to a private / public distinction in part because the privately assured Christian grace can express itself in support for the public realm. Secular authority certainly exceeds its remit, for Luther, when it pronounces on matters of faith. But the distinction between faith and works only apparently does the work of the private / public distinction. Significantly, Luther argues that not the exertion of power but a "different sort of skill" is needed to negotiate the relation between the subject and secular authority (25, 30). Ultimately, Luther claims that it is "unfettered reason" through which the just person makes the right judgement ("in accordance with love") and can "find written in his heart that it is right" (43). It is a matter of logic ("reason") supported by affect ("love") that common values "out there" exist. But for Luther, reason is the Word, and, again, his religion articulates both Christian and secular spheres and requires the interactive separation of both.

30. By the time Calvin writes his chapter on civil government in Book IV of his *Institutio Christianae Religionis,* this Christian versatility in making secular justice a matter of Christian principle is compromised by the development of the public / private distinction. "It would be utterly pointless," we are told, "for private men, who have no right to decide how any commonwealth whatever is to be ordered, to debate what would be the best state of the commonwealth in the place where they live" (56). For privacy to be such a disqualification, it must have ceased to stand solely for the realm of Christian assurance which Calvin, like Luther, believed underwrote the political order. Privacy was now developing an interiority of its own, eventually capable of stimulating that great Romantic satire on Calvinist inwardness, James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824). When the private man presumes upon the public interest then he does so for reasons different from the common religious support that makes the public realm justifiable on its own account—the Lutheran logic. In Luther we encountered a perspectivism enjoined by virtue of being religious. Religion gives the lead to secularism in matters of "unfettered reason." Calvin, a trained lawyer, carefully argues that "rules of justice and equity," originally learned in the (public) service of God could subsequently be distinguished from that service (67-8). This separation allows him to explain how different systems of laws and penalties might be equally just and equally demanding of observance. They are individualised without being dictated by private interest. But this casuistry, as well as lying open to the distortion Hogg attacks (for private interest can be a kind of casuistry too), forfeits Luther's clear point about religious support for secularism. In the process Calvin sounds more liberal and pluralistic. But he loses the idea of the godly living among the un-godly for their benefit in the literally "convivial" way that Luther describes.

31. The salient point emerging from a consideration of these texts at this stage of a discussion like this is perhaps the reciprocal goods that both secularism and non-secularism gain from mutual translation of each other. The Lutheran is more of a Christian for his or her care for the maintenance of civil order. And previously we saw that it was possible to argue that a secular philosophy reaching its own limits could only develop further through its self-effacing, collaborative enlightenment of different discourses or interpretation of them to each other. But the model anterior to these pleasing correspondences, if we can entertain them for a minute, is one of living together in convivial conversation. The possibility certainly remains highly abstract, or what I have called a matter of logic. Practically speaking, a coach-ride in the park with Shaftesbury or a banquet (*convivio)* in Oxford with Grice could no doubt have been enjoyable, but not particularly important theoretically. But both philosophers do think it important to redeploy enthusiasm and conviviality in philosophically affective ways. In this they can be seen to try to match the non-secular, often religious care for the communal which is so much less embarrassed or logically nervous about its emotional commitment. But the new conversational possibilities are

mainly facilitated by the mutual tempering of the two sides' pretensions to absolute theological or quasi-theological authority. And, additionally, the fact that the secular is thus itself subject to a process for which "secularization" is, paradoxically, the best description, maybe shows that slightly comic difference from itself needed to begin the task of unclenching some oppositions currently hell-bent on remaining tragic.[13]

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Notes

1 British historians as opposed as Linda Colley and J.C.D. Clark have drawn attention to what had before been thought too obvious to merit explanation, but now looks precisely the thing in need of explanation—how one accounts for a coherence or underlying identity of interests from the late seventeenth century onwards, resulting in the formation of British national consciousness and a shared sense of belonging because of, rather than despite, all sorts of sectarian difficulty. Opposed interests dispute by claiming to be more patriotic. Equally revisionist American Romanticists have therefore re-characterised the British Romantic view of the nation as a subject for management rather than as a Jerusalem to be imagined. See particularly Christensen and Canuel.

2 See my *Metaromanticism,* 249-269, and for a critique, Jager 304-7.

3 See J. G. E. Pocock's typically conclusive summary: "The ideal of politeness had first appeared in the restoration, where it formed part of the latitudinarian campaign to replace prophetic by sociable religiosity. This campaign is carried on by Addison ." (236).

4 See Skinner, ch. 8.

5 For Derrida and John Searle's classic dispute, between which I am trying to float a Gricean theory of meaning between, see *Limited Inc*.

6 Searle 8-9. Contrast Strawson's concluding remarks in "Intention and Convention in Speech Acts": "For the illocutionary force of an utterance is essentially something that is intended to be understood. Once this common element in all illocutionary acts is clear, we can really acknowledge that the types of audience-directed intention involved may be very various and, also, that different types may be exemplified by one and the same utterance" (38).

7 Some philosophers have objected, though, that Grice's increasingly confident insistence that performance corroborates natural meaning (now located in formal sentence structure rather than illocutionary act) arrests the dialogic or inter-subjective direction taken by his early, more tentative theory of meaning. See Grandy and Warner. For a meticulous account of Grice's development and changing philosophical context, see Avramides, ch. 1.

8 See Cordner. Cordner is very careful to distinguish the interpretations of Aristotle from which he has learnt —MacIntyre, Casey, Gaita, and, in a more conflicted way, Williams—from the 'instrumentalist' Aristotelian who reduces ethics to what Grice would have called entirely 'natural meanings' (p. 180 n.2).

9 Grandy and Warner, pp. 48-9, 61-2, 64. Grice lists collaborations with Peter Strawson, J. L. Austin, Geoffrey Warnock, David Pears, Fritz Staal, George Myro, and Judith Baker. On the well-directed life or ethical surrounds of his theory of meaning, see Grice's "A Reply to Richards" in Grandy and Warner,

especially p. 61.

10 See Hegel's description of court "flattery" by which the Courtier preserves independence from the absolute monarch he serves. But this cultured distance from natural power becomes indistinguishable from base subservience, much as the later use of "wit," culminating in Diderot's *Le Neveu de Rameau,* identifies spiritual progress with complete disintegration (*Phenomenology,* Part VI, B).

11 See Aristotle, Book 8, p. 228

12 *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority,* ed. and translated by Harro Höpfl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

13 For comic possibilities of the secular differing from itself see Connolly 45. On the determination to be tragic, recent reactions to the Pope's lecture in Regensburg, 12 September 2006, on the rational heritage of Christianity, are instructive.

top of essay

Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

Afterword: Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism

Bruce Robbins, Columbia University

Bruce Robbins notes in his response to the three essays that cosmopolitanism remains for the most part a background figure against which secularism and romanticism are variously positioned. He counts the essays in the volume as examples of the secularizing of the secular, a position which acknowledges that secularism is newly interesting to scholars not as a term of appreciation but as an object of contestation for its tendency to look like a continuation of religion by other means..

1. Other period fields have been addressing themselves recently to the suddenly value-rich term cosmopolitanism, and it was perhaps to be expected that romantic critics would follow suit. Even on the evidence of these extraordinarily insightful and well-argued essays, however, at this point the concept of cosmopolitanism does not seem crucial to romantic interpretation. If it had been, boundary disputes might have been expected with the eighteenth century, whose claim to cosmopolitanism is better established. There ought to have been some scrutiny of what romanticism clearly did contribute to the growth of nineteenth-century nationalism, which usually figures as cosmopolitanism's antithesis. And there might have been more attention to the various cosmopolitanisms, especially the so-called "new" ones, that have sought some degree of synthesis between the two.

2. The real conceptual center of these essays is secularism. When the term cosmopolitanism does appear, it is called upon to testify in a cross-examination of the secular. To testify, in a sort of courtroom *coup de théâtre,* against it.

3. Secularism is newly interesting to scholars not as a term of appreciation but as an object of contestation. This contestation makes good sense (until recently the term has gone largely unquestioned), and it makes equal sense to convene the proceedings in the romantic period. Viewed from a distance, romanticism's break with Enlightenment's break with tradition-in-the-form-of-religion looks like a continuation of religion by other means. It polemically replaces Enlightenment with concepts like culture and literature that are equally modern (hence still part of Enlightenment) yet also religiously-tinged. In other words, romanticism is a key example of the process that is usually described as secularization, with emphasis on the term's irreducible ambiguity: is it more of a break with religion or more a continuation of it? This ambiguity informs all of these essays, and one can see why. No question could be more self-defining for critics of the period, or for critics in general.

4. By definition, the secular continuation of religion must involve at least some transformation of religion. One way to distinguish the essays gathered here is by how warmly they embrace the prospect of transformation. I will devote most of my attention to the two pieces by Colin Jager, who seems coolest toward this prospect.

5. In his brilliant and provocative introduction, Jager traces a line from M. H. Abrams to Marjorie Levinson, suggesting (plausibly, in my opinion) that something like romantic alienation is at the origin of how contemporary criticism understands what it is and what it does. For Abrams, alienation "identifies romanticism's relevance to our own modernity and therefore enables our critical agency," while "[f]or Levinson, our alienation *from* romanticism is an index of our modernity and hence our critical agency." While cancelling out Abrams's version of alienation, that is, Levinson also dialectically preserves it and carries it further—fashions it, Jager implies, into the essence of modern

critique in general. It is this persistently romantic sense of the critic's vocation that Jager, as I read him, is identifying as secular and therefore trying to undo. He does not spell out his alternative, but it seems to involve a lot less alienation.

6. Cosmopolitanism, which is usually taken as a mode of alienation, is for that reason and others usually associated with secularism. But Jager finds a clever way to invoke it on the other side of this high-stakes argument. Cosmopolitanism's perspective is planetary. From a planetary rather than a Eurocentric perspective, Jager observes, there are a lot more believers than unbelievers out there, and the number of the believers is increasing by the day. Whatever you may think about the conservatism and superstition of their beliefs (Jager uses both words), you simply can't ignore the great majority of the world's population. Doesn't this non-European majority think of secularism as an alien and hostile European intervention? And isn't it finally correct to do so? There is an acute irony, of course, in the fact that these questions can only be formulated thanks to the (still recent) cosmopolitan critique of Eurocentrism, a critique which was carried out (most famously in Edward Said's *Orientalism*) in secularism's name. It's as if secular forces had advanced too recklessly, suddenly finding themselves surrounded and outnumbered, and by those to whose cultures they had struggled (against missionary Christianity, among other forms of Eurocentric arrogance) to give equal voice. Jager prefers to attribute this new configuration of power to what he calls "the globalization of Christianity." But this causal line is just as ironic. Even Christian missionaries, once assumed to be agents of empire, are here made over into spokespersons for the world's grievances against Europe's secular rationality and its supposedly imperial designs.

7. To point out an irony is of course not to make a conclusive argument. But arguments are there to be made. For example: Christianity's globalization does not ipso facto confer honor or credibility upon Christianity any more than the globalization of capitalism obliges us to honor capitalism. (Yes, in both cases some quantity of respect does follow—but respect of the same limited and amoral sort.) One of the questions raised by Jager's jujitsu move on cosmopolitan anti-Eurocentrism concerns the respect he accords to numbers—to the numbers of the faithful, but one might also say to actuality as such. What is this numbers game? Assuming that appeals to providential history have been successfully banished from the repertoire of secular progressivism, surely the same ban must apply to the religious thought from which progressives once unconsciously and incautiously borrowed. After what we have learned of history's unending swerves, false trails, and dead ends, it seems foolish for anyone to take the latest headlines (what Jager calls "demographic trends") as decisive evidence of which way history is heading. It seems late in the day to seize upon any (perhaps evanescent) constellation of facts on the ground as if it made a strong case that the endpoint those facts, writ large, might seem to gesture toward is *desirable*.

8. It is by playing this game with "demographic trends" that Jager defines his position on cosmopolitanism. When he expresses his ambivalent approval of the brand of cosmopolitanism articulated by the journal *Public Culture,* which he judges more likely to make room for the multitudes of new Christians, it's on the grounds that this is cosmopolitanism as large numbers of people actually live it—cosmopolitanism as "lived process." It's worth pausing over the bland, almost redundant word "lived" in this phrase. If this word has been saved from the diligence of the copyeditor's pen, there must be some term to which it is implicitly contrasted. What is it? The only answer I can find in the text is: self-consciousness. What must be rejected, Jager declares, is a cosmopolitanism that rewards and demands self-recognition. And what can be embraced, he therefore implies, is life *without* self-recognition. Jager's "lived process" assumes that life is as it appears to the demographer. The demographer's "trends" do not rely on anyone's self-conscious identity. To live means never having to say who you are. This is "bare" or "naked" life, to use a currently fashionable vocabulary-life that has sunk below the threshold of reflection or ethical action. Or, to return to the lexicon of romantic criticism, you might call it uncritical life, life without alienation, immune from all normative demands.

Normative demands are presumed to be unlived or unliveable, at least by the many. Cosmopolitanism is desirable only if it can be lived by the majority of the world's population, and it can be lived by the majority of the world's population only if it refuses to look at itself from without—refuses, that is, what he calls secularism.

9. To put this issue so starkly may seem like bad faith on my part, since all critical enthusiasm for the so-called "new" cosmopolitanism, my own enthusiasm as much as Jager's, has involved some unbending toward the actual at the expense of the normative. In principle, however, this project has always tried to maintain a tension between the actual and the normative; it has not recommended that the normative dimension be allowed simply to dissolve into the actually existing. What worries me in many critics who joyfully greet the blossoming of each new diasporic cosmopolitanism is that uncomfortable demands that life be inspected and sometimes found wanting seem to have dropped out. Religion (of all things) would seem out of place hiding in this particular (non-normative) shelter. Again, the re-positioning involves a richly ironic reversal. From this angle, it is not religion but secularism that can be abruptly labeled otherworldly. Global Christianity must be accepted as cosmopolitanism, it is implied, because, unlike other versions, it demands of its believers nothing but practice. This is religion without even a pause for self-recognition. That's pretty counter-intuitive. As if trapped in the old equation of religion with the eternal sleep of tradition, Jager seems almost prepared to keep the equation while reversing its values—that is, to mobilize religion as a way of defending unselfconsciousness itself. I can't imagine that this desperately defensive understanding of faith will satisfy even those who identify themselves as post-secular.

10. Here I am self-consciously reading against the grain. Jager explicitly presents religion as part of modernity; he aligns himself not with tradition but on the contrary with "alternative modernities." But the phrase alternative modernities of course sustains the concept of modernity as a desideratum. It's unclear to me that Jager can both claim alternative modernity and endorse (as he seems to) M. H. Abrams's description of modernity as "soul-destroying and alienating." If he repudiates self-recognition as intrusive secularism, or as self-alienation by another name, what's left in the modernity Jager says he wants that he actually seems to desire? Not much. In this venue particularly, it would be interesting to reflect on "romantic anti-capitalism," a tendency shared between self-declared Marxists and social visions that are clearly not Marxist at all that makes the advent of capitalism—the commercial spirit, the dark satanic mills, and so on—into a catastrophe so totalizing in its effects that pretty much everything associated with modernity can and must be condemned together.

11. One of the problems with this apocalyptic all-or-nothing impulse is that it generates results that are nearly indistinguishable from their opposite. From this viewpoint (I would be happy to hear whether romanticists think it is mis-named "romantic"), the seriously consequential mistake that Said's concept of orientalism diagnosed in Western visions of the East can easily flip over into occidentalism, a blanket hostility to the West from within the West. Jager confesses himself intrigued by occidentalism. But a mistake is a mistake, whatever direction it's pointed in. By the same logic, disgust with modern disenchantment can flipflop into a strange sort of reassurance. Enchantment has not after all disappeared; on the contrary, it is everywhere. Indeed, there is no room in modernity for anything that is *not* religion. Jager's "Byron and Romantic Occidentalism" describes the Giaour's love for Leila as a "substitute religion." If love is a substitute religion and if love is necessary to life, then it is impossible to live without religion. Following this logic, secularism could never be a genuinely non-religious space, but only an illegitimate attempt to claim such space. Religion would be one of those interdisciplinary concepts, like language, culture, discourse, and narrative, that claim to have no outside. Turning the tables on what it sees as a hegemonic secularism, religion would thus be putting itself forward as one of the those "everything is X" terms that clearly aspire to counter-hegemony. Accordingly, we would be asked to debate not whether it is desirable to have no religion, but whether it is even possible to have no religion. If this is the question on the table, then it's clear that important

differences are being erased—and as so often, erased in the name of respect for difference.

12. It is of course not entirely unreasonable to fear that any difference from X, once allowed, will eventually turn into a claim to superiority over X. But these are risks that must be lived with (in what I might call a secular or risky sense of life) if one is to have genuine conversation (in Paul Hamilton's elegantly elaborated sense of conversation.) At any rate, it's worth saying that though Jager ambivalently exposes this troubling everything-is-religion logic, his argument is by no means shackled to it. On the contrary. The idea that the Giaour's supposed opposition to orthodoxy is just another form of orthodoxy is not presented in his essay as the truth of the poem, but as one component of a paradox. Paradox, Jager says, is a technique for avoiding religious conflict by holding two irreconcilable ideas at the same time. It is also a self-conscious shorthand for the modern concept of literature. Discussing Cleanth Brooks on Donne, love, and religion, Jager writes: "In this way, close reading displaces religious dispute." In doing this it's of course performing the primary duty usually assigned to secularism. Jager seems ambivalent to the last about this (not unprecedented) account of what literature does, but this is probably the version of secularism that comes closest to religion in its insistence on fundamental and irreducible mystery (like the paradox of the Incarnation in Donne as seen by Brooks), and it is the version he comes closest to accepting.

13. When Paul Hamilton identifies the aesthetic with the non-secular, he makes substantially the same point, though with a different emphasis. Hamilton's non-secular is pretty much what Jager means by secular. And his imagination resembles Jager's paradox: it is the ability to hold opposing views in focus simultaneously. The ability has been praised before. The significance you will attribute to it now depends on how severely you think the conditions of our world discourage it. Imagination can be conceived as part of a revolt against modernity only if modernity is conceived as a condition or world view that would always and necessarily demand a choice of one view at the expense of the other. Are we sure that this is modernity's characteristic feature? I'm not, and I don't think Hamilton is either. When he moves away from paradox, Jager on the other hand describes imagination as a shared desire for transcendence. This is a much more ambitious description. With it Jager implies—more strongly than Hamilton—that modernity is working as hard as it can to block and undermine imagination. This seems to me empirically untrue about modern capitalist society, whatever your idea of imagination. Modern capitalism has other fish to fry. But the remorseless and systematic targeting of imagination is a convenient thing for literary critics to believe. Scarcity increases the price of our stock in trade.

14. Hamilton sees the imagination, in the form of romantic dialogue, busily at work in the social world, where it teaches "the power to accommodate differences." For Mark Canuel, too, the faculty of imagination does not demand a total rejection or transcendence of modern society, but operates usefully and even comfortably to govern and perhaps change society from within. "Imagination names . . . the negotiation between belief and the discourses, mechanisms, and procedures in which social movements are organized." For Canuel, modernity appears to be secular in a relatively inoffensive sense. He points to writers in whom "religious belief, rather than presenting an obstacle, becomes the focus of inclusion and redirection into the facilitating schemes of secular institutions." Taking secularization as part of a broader transformation in the mode of sovereignty, one not aimed at oppressing religion in particular and one that includes the Foucaultian passage into internalized discipline, Canuel tracks those institutional changes that refashion religion rather than eliminating it. He retains some Foucaultian suspicion of modern governance, but the pressure to adapt that secularization imposes on religion seems on the whole more benign to him than not. As for Hamilton, secularism and imagination join forces in the common goal of the management of difference and conflict. To Canuel as well this goal seems more or less worthwhile, or perhaps simply inevitable.

15. Canuel's opening allegory of *The Da Vinci Code*, where (as he reads it) the murder mystery genre works to defuse a potentially explosive view of Opus Dei and the Catholic Church, might be

interpreted as a sign of some residual ambivalence on Canuel's part about the role of conflict management. Is the discovery of an isolated individual as murderer more of a good thing or a bad thing? This allegory might also be read as evidence of an excess in secularism, which (again like literature) never quite manages to do exactly the management it claims to do, or that is claimed for it. One of the effects of the mystery form is, by multiplying plausible suspects, to insist on the arbitrariness of the perpetrator who's eventually discovered and thus to undercut the scapegoat ritual while acting it out. This is palpable in the pleasurable confusion surrounding *The Da Vinci Code*, where the guilt of Opus Dei and the Catholic Church seems to remain impressed on the reader long after the discovery that they didn't actually do it. If you're counting on literature/secularism to manage those conflicts, it's better not to get overconfident.

16. Hamilton draws an inconclusive conclusion with which I imagine the other two authors would, in their different fashions, agree: the need to secularize secularism. This paradoxical formulation forces us to ask which two senses of the secular might be implied here, what the distinction might be between the secularism that needs the work done on it and the secularism that is considered capable of doing that work. The alternatives are worth trying to hold in one's mind simultaneously. Hamilton's imperative takes us of course outside literary history narrowly conceived. In that sense it continues the argument of his essay, which presents romantic dialogue as something we began learning how to do before romanticism and have continued to do, though always with room for improvement, within modernity. It's noticeable that Hamilton and Canuel both see their positive values as emerging in rather than against the Enlightenment. The turn to Shaftsbury in Hamilton and to Helvétius in Canuel seems indicative of a generously capacious sense of romanticism. I would want to count these turns, and indeed each of these essays, as examples of the secularizing of the secular. Not that I'm sure what that is. But these essays go a long way to help us find out.