


explanatory notes, which provide historical context, further nuggets of information regarding Wheatley Peter's composition and publication practices, and biographical information concerning those Wheatley Peters writes about and to.

Building on the scholarship of the editions that have come before, including his own, Carretta has created a considered, authoritative, and exciting collection of Wheatley Peters' work. Through the original research into 'new' Wheatley Peters variants, and Carretta's thorough notes, *The Writings of Phillis Wheatley* is truly remarkable in its content and scope and will successfully take its rightful place as a key teaching tool, alongside becoming the new standard text for those interested in Wheatley Peters' work. As interest in Wheatley Peters and her writings continues to increase, it will be interesting to observe whether new manuscript variants, or even her lost second collection will come to light in archives worldwide. If that is the case, I look forward to further work on Wheatley, and future editions of her work, which will undoubtedly build on Carretta's excellent volume. 

## NOTES

1. As a side note, it is Jeffers who has stated the case that Wheatley should be referred to as Wheatley Peters. This is because she appears to have chosen to use her husband John Peters' surname, whilst her other names were given to her as a condition of her enslavement; for example, she was named after 'The Phillis' slave ship on which she was transported to America. I have chosen to refer to Wheatley Peters as such for this review.

Amy Wilcockson

*University of Nottingham*

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**Manu Samriti Chander, *Brown Romantics: Poetry and Nationalism in the Global Nineteenth Century* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2017), xvi + 179pp. ISBN 978-1-61148-821-0; \$100 (hb).**

ONE OF THE SATISFACTIONS of undertaking a 'late' review—four years after first publication—is the opportunity to look back at a work widely reviewed at its appearance and now finding its place in a rapidly developing field. The arresting title of *Brown Romantics* signals Chander's intention to ground his analysis on the opposition of colonial literatures to the canonical works of the Romantic 'imperial centre'. This is achieved by means of three case studies, focusing on the work of H. L. V. Derozio, the 'East Indian' poet of colonial Calcutta; the Afro-Guianese Egbert Martin; and the Australian writer Henry Lawson.

These colonial literatures are more complex than at first might appear, and here both words of the main title repay further investigation. On the epithet 'brown', Chander sets out to 'ironize what might, at face value, be taken as a rather crude descriptor of racial difference', aiming 'by thus calling attention to racial identity, [to] challenge that basis for considering their poetry as a simple expression of it' (p. 3). He advances, therefore, a maximalist, transcultural understanding of marginalisation, which allows him to propose a commonality between his three main exemplars. Derozio, Martin and Lawson are not to be thought of as 'marginalized because they are brown' but "'brown" because they are marginalized' (p. 3). The weight of the burden borne by marginality is exemplified by the case of Lawson, son of a Norwegian–Australian father and an Australian mother, whose initial 'anti-British sentiment' was replaced by a virulent 'antipathy toward the Empire's cultural others' (p. 81). Despite this, Lawson becomes for Chander evidence that it was possible to 'be white and still not be white enough to escape the mark of difference' (p. 91).

The 'Romantics' element of the title similarly is not quite what it first appears to be. The timespan of *Brown Romantics* begins in the latter years of the Romantic period as usually conceived, with Derozio's short life (1809–31), and stretches through Martin's work in the 1880s to end with Lawson in the early decades of the twentieth century. Temporally as well as globally expansive, Chander's approach posits 'Romanticism' as 'a nineteenth-century development but one that happens as dynamic public spheres emerge in other places and define themselves in a fraught relation to the English republic of letters' (p. 12).

This Romanticism, in both its 'English' and its colonial varieties, is male-centred and male-dominated. While current scholarship tends to focus on a broad array of 'Romantic-period' texts and writers, Chander reinscribes the Romantic as the preserve of six male poets, four of whom—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley—provide the book's four epigraphs, as familiar as they are evocative, on the role of the poet (p. 1). Derozio is described as asserting 'the right of a Brown poet to speak as a man within an imagined community founded on cosmopolitan ideals' (p. 9), but Felicia Hemans and Letitia Landon hover awkwardly at the edges of this imagined community, each meriting two brief entries each in the index. While locating the Brown Romantics alongside the 'women and working-class writers of the nineteenth century' in a common exclusion from the central category of Romantic poet, Chander briefly entertains the parallels between them:


The aspiring national poet, compulsory native informant and conflicted cosmopolitan are arguably positions that authors such as Felicia Hemans and Anna Laetitia Barbauld assume, even though the role of the nation's literary 'ambassador' [...] was almost invariably figured as that of a man [...] (p. 13)

A degree further out—a shade browner, perhaps—the women of the wider Empire are doubly silenced, as Chander acknowledges when he chooses the figure

of the ‘Dominican poet and educator Salomé Ureña’ to serve as ‘a synecdoche of all the poets necessarily excluded from this study’ (p. 13).

The ‘positional symmetry’ of the relationship between ‘the Brown Romantic and his English counterpart—the White Romantic’ (p. 3) is achieved at the cost of oversimplifying other complexities. Chander notes Derozio’s participation ‘in a cosmopolitan conversation with such men as Moore, Shelley, and Byron’ (p. 30). He does not dwell on the fact that Derozio also participated in other cosmopolitan conversations: with Landon, for instance, whose ‘Improvisatrice’ (1824)—as Chander points out—takes up the theme of *sati*; and also with Emma Roberts, Landon’s contemporary and correspondent, whose own *sati* poem written in India, ‘The Rajah’s Obsequies’ (1830), was seen through the press by Derozio. As Mary Ellis Gibson has argued, Derozio’s *Fakeer of Jungheera* (1828) had a shaping impact on Roberts’s poem, which ‘deliberately triangulates British, Indian, and Anglo-Indian political concerns’.<sup>1</sup> The triangularity of this exchange offers a different kind of symmetry, where the weight of literary influence is more evenly distributed between two points no longer uncomplicatedly to be figured as centre and periphery.

Similarly, while Thomas Moore is lined up alongside Shelley and Byron, recent work such as McCleave and Caraher’s edited collection *Thomas Moore and Romantic Inspiration* (2018) reminds us that his multifaceted output in several genres does not fit easily into any one category. The author of *Lalla Rookh* (1817) was also the writer of *Irish Melodies* and *National Airs*; and the poet whose Irish persona in ‘Corruption’ (1808) might also find a place among the ‘Brown Romantics’: ‘We hear you talk of Britain’s glorious rights, | As weeping slaves, that under hatches lie, | Hear those on deck extol the sun and sky!’<sup>21</sup> By the time Chander’s Conclusion invokes a ‘Brown Keats’, the categories of brownness and whiteness, centre and margin, Britain (or ‘England’) and the colonies, have become unstable.

This instability could well be described as a strength rather than a weakness of Chander’s work, highlighted by the unexpectedly personal Afterword tracing how the book took shape in the context of its author’s development as a scholar of Romanticism. Among its takeaways for current scholarship is the impulse to re-examine Romantic values, perhaps even the key Romantic value of originality: as Chander writes, ‘the formal characteristics of Brown Romanticism that initially struck the critics as derivative and imitative actually served to expose the Eurocentric racism informing the very tradition in which they wrote’ (p. 91). Above all, though, *Brown Romantics* reminds us of the imperative to read outwards, valuing the cosmopolitan and the hybrid, and seeking ‘new constellations of poets’ to trouble both canonicity and what Chander terms the ‘fantasy of coherent national identity’ (p. 112). 

## NOTES

1. Mary Ellis Gibson, *Indian Angles: English Verse in Colonial India from Jones to Tagore* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2011), p. 92.

2. Thomas Moore, *Corruption and Intolerance: Two Poems, with Notes, Addressed to an Englishman by an Irishman* (London: Carpenter, 1808), p. 2.

Máire Ní Fhlathúin

University of Nottingham

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Linda Colley, *The Gun, the Ship, and the Pen: Warfare, Constitutions, and the Making of the Modern World* (London: Profile Books, 2021), 512pp. ISBN 978-1-8466-8498-2; £10.99 (pb).

HISTORIAN LINDA COLLEY'S SWEEPING NEW BOOK *The Gun, the Ship, and the Pen: Warfare, Constitutions, and the Making of the Modern World* is over four hundred pages, covers almost four hundred years and spans the globe to show how developments in warfare drove the act of writing constitutions around the world. Colley tells her story at a page-turning pace. She writes that the spread of constitutions from the eighteenth century onwards 'has generally been put down to the impact of revolutions, not war' (p. 4). This orthodox approach, Colley argues, is 'unduly narrowing and mislead[ing]'. She argues instead that changes in warfare led to the writing of constitutions. As Colley anchors this process in war instead of revolution, she divorces constitutions from democracy; some constitutions and democracy go in hand in hand, but it is not taken for granted—by Colley or by the writers of constitutions themselves—that they do. The wide geographic swath and long timeframe of *The Gun, the Ship, and the Pen* are essential to Colley's narrative of the central role of war in the creation of political documents that are widely assumed to be based in revolutionary contexts and democratic impulses, but need not be.

Colley scans the globe as she chronicles how war makes constitutions. She first sets her scene in Corsica where she finds Pasquale Paoli 'drafting a ten-page constitution, a term (*costituzione*) he explicitly employed' (p. 18). In Haiti, she locates a political revolution that was 'remarkable' both because it brought about 'a Black-ruled polity equipped with a constitution' and acted as a 'confirmation of trends and developments [of maritime reach] [...] in other regions of the world' (p. 44). Moving to Russia, Colley shows that Catherine the Great was deeply invested in writing a constitution, her *Nakaz*, as a woman monarch determined to secure her own authority amidst the 'shocks and trails of escalating levels of war' (p. 68). In South America, Colley identifies states that were not only writing constitutions, but self-consciously using print and the printing of constitutions as part of their political projects. Colley also locates meaningful constitutional