

by her, as the three volumes were published in 1817 and there would not have been a prior owner. There are other examples, the two volumes of Brady's 'Analysis of the Calender', no. 181, were published in 1812, another recent purchase. Mrs Piozzi died in 1821. When one is invited to 'v. MS. note' in no. 165, 'Lady Luxborough's Letters to Shenstone... 1801', with its citation of 'Herschel's View of the Moon', the MS. note is surely hers, given her admiration for Herschel's 'Telescope, and its Object the Moon', as expressed in *Thraliana* (688). Number 63, one of the nineteen volumes of -ana, nos. 62–80, has 'St. Evremontiana, MS. notes by Mrs. P.' (1701). Virtually all the other -ana have MS. notes, unattributed to her, with, however, the last of these bearing the note, already quoted above (5), to the effect that the works were 'replete, with the well known humour and information of the writer'. Not, of course, of the 'writers'. With the possible exception of MS. notes in works of much earlier dates, and with external evidence, one must assume that the MS. notes are all by Mrs. Piozzi.²⁴

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²⁴ Number 593 is 'Tracts of Powis [read Powys]—a curious collection, a few copies only privately printed by the late much respected Antiquary, Phillip Yorke, Esq. of Erthig, Denbighshire'. The British Library corroborates, noting that only seventy copies were printed.

COLERIDGE'S SLAVE TRADE ODE AND BOWLES'S 'THE AFRICAN'

DURING the night of Monday, 2 April 1792, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, then a freshman at Jesus College, Cambridge, penned a letter to his elder brother George, a master at Newcome's Academy, a fashionable private school in Hackney. He apologized for being a poor correspondent, explaining that he had been furiously busy 'writing for *all* the prizes—namely—the Greek Ode, the Latin Ode, and the Epigrams'.¹

¹ *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. E. L. Griggs, 6 vols (Oxford, 1956–71), I, 34 (cited hereafter as *Letters*).

The 19-year-old student had been at work for just over two months on entries for the three Browne Gold Medals.² These belonged to a constellation of prestigious Classics prizes—including the Craven Scholarships for undergraduates and the Chancellor's Medals and Members' Prizes for graduates—which opened up avenues to fellowships and bishoprics and for which the young men fought like gladiators.³

That year's Browne Medal subject for 'the best Greek Ode in imitation of Sappho' and 'the best Latin Ode in imitation of Horace', chosen by the vice-chancellor, Dr Thomas Postlethwaite, and announced on 27 January, centred on the slave trade: 'sors misera servorum in insulis Indiae occidentalis' ('the wretched lot of the slaves in the islands of the West Indies').⁴

The theme was hardly novel. By the early 1790s the sufferings of the 35,000-odd slaves then being annually transported by British

² Sir William Browne (1692–1774), an alumnus of Peterhouse, was a wealthy landowner and a president of the Royal College of Physicians. His will made provision for a 'Classic Scholarship' and two 'Physic Fellowships' at his old college in addition to the three Gold Medals. First awarded in 1775, the medals were £5 in value and depicted Sir William on the obverse and, on the reverse, Apollo holding a lyre and crowning a kneeling scholar with a laurel wreath. A notable eccentric and a devotee of Classical learning, Sir William requested that his 'Pocket-Elzivir-Horace comes viae vitaeque dulcis et utilis, worn out with, and by me' be placed on his coffin, 'when in the Grave'. See John Willis Clark, *Endowments of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1904), 98–103.

³ In Coleridge's day winning one of these prizes was crucial for any non-mathematical Classicist hoping for a fellowship and a Church career because a Classical Tripos had not yet been established. The academic regime in late eighteenth-century Cambridge was built around the Mathematical Tripos—a veritable theatre of suffering for the many unwilling students of Euclid and Newton who agreed with Coleridge that the 'Owl MATHESIS' piped a 'loathsome strain' ('Fragment Found in a Mathematical Lecture Room', *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, XVI: *Poetical Works*, ed. J. C. C. Mays, 3 vols (Princeton, NJ, 2001), I, i, 69 (cited hereafter as *Poetical Works*); *Letters*, I, 34). For details of all the prizes and the history of the Tripos system see J. R. Tanner (ed.), *The Historical Register of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1917), 289–342, 348–57.

⁴ The 1792 theme for the third Browne Medal, awarded for 'the best Greek Epigramm, after the Model of Anthologia, and the best Latin Epigramm, after the Model of Martial', was taken from Juvenal, *Satires*, vii, 135–6: 'Purpura vendit/Causidicum' ('It is the purple robe which gets the lawyer custom'). (Clark, 101; *The Cambridge Chronicle and Journal*, 28 January 1792, 1527, 3, col. 2.)

ships from the West African coast to the sugar estates of the West Indies and the cotton and tobacco plantations of North America had become, according to *The Times*, 'a topic of general conversation'.⁵ The London Committee of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, established in May 1787 under the chairmanship of Granville Sharp, had set in motion a powerful propaganda machine pumping out thousands of copies of abolitionist tracts and poems, digests of Commons select committee evidence on the evils of the slave trade and pamphlets urging consumers to abstain from slave products, such as sugar and rum.⁶ The committee also orchestrated a petition campaign while Coleridge was preparing his Browne assault in early 1792: by the beginning of April 519 had been laid on the Commons table, bearing an estimated 390,000 adult male signatures from every corner of Britain.⁷

On 2 April, while Coleridge was informing his brother of his Browne assault, MPs were engaged in an impassioned all-night debate

on William Wilberforce's third abolition motion, which culminated in a 230:85 vote for gradual termination of the trade; on 27 April they voted 151:132 for abolition in 1796—only to meet with obstruction in the House of Lords.⁸

Cambridge had been in the vanguard of the abolition movement. Both town and university had voted petitions in 1788 and again in 1792.⁹ Thomas Jones, an influential senior tutor at Trinity and moderator in 1786 and 1787, had inserted the 'Slave Trade' into the list of disputation themes and had made William Paley's *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* a set book for the Senate House Examination: a chapter on 'Slavery' denounced 'this abominable tyranny' and urged 'gradual' emancipation.¹⁰ Political opposites united against the 'diabolical traffic': a Dissenting figure like Peter Peckard, Master of Magdalene and friend of Olaudah Equiano, the former slave who represented London's 'black poor', could concur on abolition with a Tory Evangelical like Isaac Milner, the Jacobin-hunting President of Queen's and mentor of Wilberforce—however much they might disagree on its association with democratic 'levelling'.¹¹

To what extent was Coleridge aware of the abolition campaign as he prepared his ode entries? Only six letters survive from the

⁵ *The Times*, 12 March 1792, 2252, 2, col. 4. British and colonial ships exported 306,800 African slaves during the 1780s and 349,500 during the 1790s—over one-third of them to Jamaica. Between 1662 and 1807 (the year MPs voted to end British participation in the trade) some 11,000 British Empire vessels embarked roughly 3.4 million Africans—one-third of them from the Bight of Biafra: of this total about 450,000 perished, either on the cramped and fetid slaver decks during the 'Middle Passage' or during the brutal 'seasoning' on the plantations. (David Richardson, 'The British Empire and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1660–1807', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, 5 vols, II, *The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P. J. Marshall (Oxford and New York, 1998), 442, Table 20.1.)

⁶ The abolitionist Thomas Clarkson—later dubbed by Coleridge 'the Moral Steam-Engine, or the Giant with one idea'—calculated that, primarily as a result of William Fox's *An address to the people of Great Britain, on the propriety of abstaining from West India sugar and rum* (Birmingham, 1791), 'no fewer than three hundred thousand persons had abandoned the use of sugar' and government revenues had been depleted by £200,000 in one quarter (*Letters*, III, 179; Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament*, 2 vols (London, 1808), II, 349–50; letter to Josiah Wedgwood, 9 January 1792, *Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood, 1781–1794* (London, 1906), 183–6).

⁷ Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery: British mobilization in comparative perspective* (Basingstoke and London, 1986), 82.

⁸ *The Parliamentary History of England from the earliest period to the year 1803* (London, 1807), xxix, 2 April 1792, 1055–1158; 27 April 1792, 1293.

⁹ *Annals of Cambridge*, ed. C. H. Cooper, 5 vols (Cambridge, 1852), IV, 426, 427, 442.

¹⁰ Christopher Wordsworth, *Scholae Academicæ: some account of studies at the English universities in the eighteenth century* (Cambridge, 1877), 376; William Paley, *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (London, 1785), 197, 198. *Principles* remained on the Cambridge syllabus until the 1830s, going through 15 editions in Paley's own lifetime.

¹¹ When Peckard became vice-chancellor he made slavery the theme for the two Senior Bachelors' Latin essay prizes for 1785: 'Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare?' ('Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?'). Thomas Clarkson, then a BA at St John's, won the first prize; the following year he arranged for James Phillips, a Quaker publisher, to print an English translation of his composition as *An essay on the slavery and commerce of the human species*.

composition period:¹² nowhere in them is there a reference to slaves or sugar abstention or petitions.¹³ One potential conduit of information on these issues was William Frend, the formidable algebraist and Unitarian who was one of Jesus's sixteen fellows and developed into Coleridge's mentor.¹⁴ Three days before the publication of the Browne themes Coleridge had felt the need to assure his Trinitarian brother George that 'Mr Frend's company is by no means invidious' and that even the Master, Dr Pearce, was 'very intimate with him'.¹⁵ Although Frend did sign out his earliest library borrowings he carried out this duty for a number of undergraduates: it is unlikely that the freshman was sufficiently close to him yet to broach the slave trade question—over a year before his involvement in the May 1793 trial before the vice-chancellor's court which ended in Frend's banishment.¹⁶ The surviving letters suggest that at this fledgling stage of his time at Cambridge Coleridge saw victory in the Browne competition less in terms of opposition

to slavery and more in terms of it representing a huge stepping-stone to a fellowship and a career in the Church.

By the time of his 2 April letter to his brother Coleridge had yet to start on his Latin ode submission and solicited suggestions from George—who had honed his own composition skills in the more densely Classical curriculum at Oxford. But it seems he had completed a draft at least of his Greek ode and pinned his hopes of success on it: 'My Greek Ode is, I think, my chef d'oeuvre in poetical composition.'¹⁷

The judges picked their medal winners in early June. In spite of his certainty that he would be beaten to the tape by 'Bobus' (Robert Percy) Smith, 'a man of immense Genius' who had won the previous year's Latin ode medal, Coleridge learned that he had indeed won the 1792 Browne Medal for the Greek ode.¹⁸ In accordance with Sir William Browne's will, on 3 July, Commencement Day, he entered a dated copy of his 25-stanza

¹² Five of the six letters were sent in a single bundle to Mrs Evans and her two daughters, Mary and Anne, on 22 February; there is then a void of almost six weeks until the sixth letter on 2 April to his brother George describing his ode labours (*Letters*, I, 21–36).

¹³ Coleridge complains that 'Sugar is very dear' in a November 1791 letter to George in which he vows to 'try hard for the Brown's Prize ode' (*Letters*, I, 16, 17). But he makes no attempt to link the high price of sugar with the Browne theme or the abstention campaign or the slave rebellion in the French sugar colony of Saint-Domingue—news of which had reached the British public in late October.

¹⁴ Frend had been stripped of his tutorship in 1788 for attacking Trinitarianism and subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles but continued to be very active in the performance of his college duties. He had been in regular contact with the Abolition Society, visiting the London Committee's Old Jewry office to pay in a 'liberal' subscription from 'the Gentlemen' of the university and distributing 'a vast number of books' on the slave trade around Cambridge. (British Library Add. MSS 21,254–6, *Proceedings of the committee for the abolition of the slave trade, 1787–1819, Fair Minute Books*, 3 vols, I (22 May 1787–26 February 1788), fo 24^v–25^r; William Frend, *An account of the proceedings in the University of Cambridge, against William Frend, M. A.* (Cambridge, 1793), 110).

¹⁵ *Letters*, I, 20.

¹⁶ J. C. C. Mays, 'Coleridge's borrowings from Jesus College Library, 1791–4', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 1985, viii (5), 564, 566–7.

¹⁷ *Letters*, I, 34. Two passages in the finished ode suggest that Coleridge fixed on the final version after 2 April: in the first he refers to the 'golden gladness' of Wilberforce's 'words'—almost certainly an allusion to his 2 April 1792 abolition motion rather than the two earlier motions of 1789 and 1791; in the second passage he writes that 'The Day of Slavery has already been too much prolonged'—which seems to be a reference either to the 3 April vote in favour of the amendment moved by Henry Dundas, the Home Secretary, requiring the insertion of 'gradually' into Wilberforce's original motion, or to the 27 April vote for abolition of the trade in 1796 (*Poetical Works*, I, i, 77, ll. 63–4, 79–80).

¹⁸ *Letters*, I, 34. Samuel Butler (St John's) won the Latin ode medal; the following year he was to beat Coleridge to a Craven Scholarship. John Belcher (Clare) secured the Epigrams medal. While still at Eton 'Bobus' Smith (King's) had collaborated with George Canning and John Hookham Frere on the publication of *The Microcosm*, a satirical periodical which was to go through five editions in book format. He excelled at Latin composition, winning not only the 1791 Browne Latin ode medal but also the first Middle Bachelors' essay prize for 1794 and the first Senior Bachelors' prize for 1795. Charles Valentine Le Grice, Coleridge's rival and fellow Grecian at Christ's Hospital, later reminisced that Smith's successful 1791 ode, 'Mare Liberum', was one of two which Coleridge 'used to repeat... with incessant rapture'—the other being another Browne Medal-winning Greek ode on Gibraltar by Richard Ramsden (Trinity). (Clement Carlyon, *Early Years and Late Reflections*, 4 vols (London, 1836–58), II, 283.)

composition into the 'Browne Medals' register, calligraphed in a 19-year-old's bold hand, and recited it to the assembled Senate.¹⁹

The ode is built around three principal themes: first, when 'Death' visits 'a Race yoked to Misery', it will be received not with 'lacerations of Cheeks, nor with funereal Ululation—but with circling Dances and the joy of Songs' because its 'dark pinions' will bear the slaves back to their native Africa;²⁰ secondly, none of those involved in the slave trade—'feeders on the groans of the wretched, insolent sons of Excess, shedders of own brothers' blood—can escape from the

¹⁹ Sir William's will stipulated that the winning Browne Medal entries should be 'fairly written, dated, and subscribed by the Authors in a Book, to be laid on the Register's Table, for public Inspection, at the Commencement' (Clark, 101). Coleridge's transcript of his winning Greek ode, signed 'Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Coll. Jes. Scholaris.' and dated 'In maximis Comitibus Jul. 3. 1792.', is now preserved in the Cambridge University Library Archives, Charters 1.4, in the second of three folio *Browne Medals: Odes and Epigrams* volumes: *Vol. II 1788–1808*, 230–3. There is a second autograph copy, signed 'S. T. Coleridge June 16 1792' and differing somewhat from the Cambridge version, which Coleridge sent to his brother George. (See *Poetical Works*, II, i, 67–8.)

²⁰ The rendering here follows Coleridge's own 'literal translation' of the first four stanzas which he appended to a note inserted into a 1795 contribution to Robert Southey's 'Joan of Arc', explaining that 'The Slaves in the West-India Islands consider Death as a passport to their native Country' (*Poetical Works*, I, i, 222).

²¹ *Poetical Works*, I, i, 77, II. 45–56, 61–80. Another recent translation of the ode, by Stephen Marsh, appears in *Amazing Grace—an anthology of poems about slavery, 1660–1810*, ed. James G. Basker (New Haven & London, 2002), 446–9.

²² For a discussion of Coleridge's handling of the Aeolic dialect see: Anthea Morrison, 'Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Greek Prize Ode on the Slave Trade', in J. R. Watson (ed.), *An Infinite Complexity: Essays in Romanticism* (Edinburgh, 1983), 147; James Diggle, 'Coleridge's Greek Ode on the Slave Trade', *N&Q*, xlix (2002), 31–5. Coleridge himself later stated that he regarded the 'Ideas' in the ode as 'better than the Language or Metre, in which they are conveyed' ('Joan of Arc', Book 2, l. 428 n; *Poetical Works*, I, i, 222; 'or Metre' was dropped in later reprintings of this note). Diggle, however, finds Coleridge's use of the Aeolic dialect creditworthy, given the unavailability of Aeolic material in his day, and finds no basis for John Wilson's celebrated claim that he had witnessed Richard Porson, appointed Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge in the year of Coleridge's victory, offering 'to shew in it, to a gentleman who was praising this Ode, 134 examples of bad Greek' (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, ii (1817), 12 n, reprinted in J. R. de J. Jackson (ed.), *Coleridge: The Critical Heritage* (London, 1970), 340).

'fire-breathing reprisal' threatened by 'Nemesis' and portended by hurricanes and earthquakes; and thirdly, the advent of 'a Herald of Pity' (Wilberforce) means that 'The Day of Slavery', 'already... too much prolonged', will finally come to an end—'No longer will the charmless Charm of Gold oppress the African shores.'²¹

Coleridge had had to construct the ode 'in imitation of Sappho', meaning that he needed to grapple with the rules of the Aeolic rather than the Attic dialect—such as psilosis (smooth breathing) and recessive accentuation.²² Where did he find his sources? According to George Bellas Greenough, the scientist who introduced him to geology during his 1799 tour of Germany, 'when Coleridge wrote his Greek ode, he first conceived the idea and afterwards hunted thro' the several poets for words in which to cloth[e] those ideas.'²³

Aeschylus was one of those 'several poets', as scholars have already demonstrated.²⁴ The 'Boy Mariner' who had transfixed passers-by in the Christ's Hospital cloisters with recitations of 'the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus' had embarked on his Cambridge career in October 1791 in a state of Classical fury—reading Pindar, 'composing Greek verse, like a mad dog' and even giving up his 'Leisure hours' to translations of the *Anacreontea*.²⁵ On 12 December he visited the ancient Jesus library and borrowed Thomas Stanley's magnificent 1663 folio edition of Aeschylus's tragedies,

²³ Edith. J. Morley, 'Coleridge in Germany (1799)', in E. L. Griggs (ed.), *Coleridge and Wordsworth: Studies in honor of George McLean Harper* (Princeton, 1939), 231. Norman Fruman makes the unsupported assumption that Greenough's 'Greek ode' referred to Coleridge's unsuccessful entry for the 1793 Browne Medal on the theme of astronomy (*Coleridge, The Damaged Archangel* (New York, 1971), 526, n 15). He did describe his 'L'aus Astronomiae' ode as 'sublime' but it was the victorious 1792 ode which his contemporaries remembered years afterwards (*Letters*, I, 80). For example, an October 1808 entry in the diary kept by Joseph Farington, the landscape painter, reads: 'Coleridge spoken of—known by Satterthwaite [James; a Cambridge contemporary, later a fellow of Jesus] got gold medal for Greek ode' (*The Diary of Joseph Farington*, ed. Kathryn Cave, 16 vols (New Haven & London, 1982), IX, 3373).

²⁴ Morrison, 147–8, 159–60; *Poetical Works*, I, i, 74, 78–84; Diggle, 32.

²⁵ Charles Lamb, 'Christ's Hospital five and thirty years ago', in *ELIA. Essays which have appeared under that signature in the London Magazine* (London, 1823), 48; *Letters*, I, 17.

along with Thomas Morell's two-volume *Thesaurus Graecae Poeseos* (1762), renewing them on 16 January—eleven days before the announcement of the Browne Medal themes.²⁶

Another of the 'several poets' was William Lisle Bowles. At this early stage of his poetical development Coleridge worshipped Bowles and his combination of 'natural thoughts with natural diction': the second edition of his *Sonnets* (1789) had rescued him at Christ's Hospital from adolescent bewilderment 'in metaphysics, and in theological controversy'; unable to afford extra copies, he made 'within less than a year and an half, more than forty transcriptions' of the twenty-one poems in the volume for presentation as gifts.²⁷

In October 1791—when Coleridge had just arrived at Cambridge—Bowles published *Monody, Written at Matlock*, a 20-page volume containing three poems: the 'Monody' of the title, 'The African' and 'On leaving a Place of Residence'. In the sixty-eight lines of 'The African' the companions of a dying slave gather around him: they rejoice because they know that his spirit will return to his native Africa and that they themselves will

follow him when they die. As Anthea Morrison has observed, this is the very theme which opens Coleridge's Greek ode. She has also shown that several stanzas in the ode employ language reflecting passages in 'The African'.²⁸ In other words, Coleridge seems to have borrowed from Bowles both Greenough's 'idea' and some verbal clothing.²⁹

We can give Morrison's observations an empirical grounding by showing that Coleridge must indeed have read 'The African' while he was preparing his Greek ode. At the end of a love-struck and dazzling 2,000-word letter to Mary Evans, his sweetheart, written seventeen days after publication of the Browne themes, Coleridge promises to compensate her for including three of his own 'written rhymes' in the letter by sending 'some delicious poetry lately published by the exquisite Bowles' in his next missive.³⁰

On 22 February he delivered on his pledge: 'I have sent the poem[s] of Bowles, which I mentioned in a former sheet.'³¹ These 'poem[s]' were not, however, the *Sonnets* but *Monody Written at Matlock*—that is, the volume containing 'The African'.³² We know this because Coleridge draws Mary's attention to certain 'beauties' in its twenty pages: 'the exquisite description of HOPE in the third page, and of Fortitude in the sixth—but the poem on leaving a place of residence appears to me to be almost superior to any of Bowles' compositions.'³³ Indeed, when we turn to pages 3 and 6 of the first poem in the *Monody* volume—that of the title, a 182-line meditation on transience centred on Matlock High Tor—we encounter 'young Hope, a golden-tressed boy' and 'Fortitude, a mailed warrior old'; 'On leaving a Place of Residence', a 28-line reflection on the poet's sorrow at leaving his father's cottage, is the third and last poem in the volume.

However, Coleridge breathes not one word to Mary about the second poem, 'The African'—in spite of his obvious debt to it.

²⁶ *Letters*, I, 29.

²⁷ *Letters*, I, 32.

²⁸ See Tomoya Oda, 'The book of Bowles's poems that Coleridge sent to Mary Evans', *N&Q*, xli (1994), 329. Oda identifies the 'poem[s]' as the *Monody* volume but does not mention 'The African'.

²⁹ *Letters*, I, 32.

²⁶ Mays, 566–7.

²⁷ *Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions (1817), The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VII, ed. James Engell and W. Jackson Bate, 2 vols (Princeton, 1983), I, 25, 15.

²⁸ Morrison, 158–9. For example, where Bowles has his dying slave 'in the embow'ring orange grove/ Tell to thy long-forsaken love,/ The wounds, the agony severe/ Thy patient spirit suffer'd here!', Coleridge has his African lovers 'by the side of fountains beneath citron groves. . . tell to their beloved what kind of horrors, being men, they had endured from men' (William Lisle Bowles, *Monody, Written at Matlock* (London & Bath, 1791), 'The African', 16, ll. 39–42; *Poetical Works*, I, i, 76, ll. 13–16).

²⁹ The sources available to Bowles and Coleridge for the 'joyful return to Africa' theme included the following: Hans Sloane, *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica* . . . , 2 vols (London, 1707), I, xlviii; Captain William Snelgrave, *A new account of some parts of Guinea, and the slave-trade* (London, 1734), 184; Charles Leslie, *A new history of Jamaica* . . . (London, 1740), 307–9; Bryan Edwards, 'The Negro's dying speech. . .', *The Universal Magazine*, lxi (1777), 270–1 (the first two volumes of Edwards's *The history, civil and commercial, of the British colonies in the West Indies* (London, 1793–4), in which the theme appears in II, 85–8, were published after Coleridge's Browne victory—he borrowed the second volume from the Bristol Library Society three years later); Thomas Clarkson, *An essay on the slavery and commerce of the human species, particularly the African* . . . (London, 1786), 233–5.

Nor is there any mention of the slave trade—even though he had now been labouring on ‘the wretched lot’ of the West Indian slaves for almost four weeks. We can speculate that just as Coleridge had been anxious to reassure his brother George over his association with the Unitarian Friend, so now he was not keen for the Evans family to link him with dying Africans or the slave trade; he would rather have them think of him as he signed himself in one letter: ‘Reverend in the future tense, and Scholar of Jesus College in the present.’³⁴

For the 19-year-old Coleridge then ‘sors misera servorum in insulis Indiae occidentalis’ seems to have remained a vehicle for his passionate pursuit of Classical distinction. Sixteen years later he himself was to claim more for it: shortly after the ending of the British trade in 1807, while preparing a review of Thomas Clarkson’s famous *History* of the abolition process, Coleridge told the crusader that his ‘Greek Ode against the Slave Trade, for which I had a Gold Medal, & which I spoke publicly in the Senate House’ represented his ‘first public Effort’ against slavery; the institution was to be the focus of lifelong concern.³⁵

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³⁴ *Letters*, I, 33.

³⁵ *Letters*, III, 78.

Reviews

JOHN LYLY, *The Woman in the Moon*, ed. LEAH SCRAGG. Pp. xiv + 142 (The Revels Plays). Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006. Hardback (ISBN 0 7190 7244 1).

LEAH SCRAGG’s handsome new edition of *The Woman in the Moon* is the last but one item in Manchester University Press’s invaluable Revels Plays series of the plays of John Lyly. Students of English Renaissance drama should be particularly grateful to editor and press for this latest volume, which, one trusts,

will revive the critical fortunes of this very interesting play. Theatrically, it has not done so badly. Scragg lists a recent revival by the remarkable Poculi Ludique Societas at Toronto in 2000, a tantalisingly underdocumented production by the London University Dramatic Society in 1953, and a performance in 1928 at Bryn Mawr, with the young Katharine Hepburn taking the demanding lead role of Pandora—quite literally ‘starring’ in the case of this astronomical drama. But the play has not been read as much as it should be, and it is to be hoped that Scragg’s new edition will at last provide students with the sort of text that will provoke and inform a more widespread and enthusiastic response than has hitherto been the case.

Scragg’s substantial introduction is especially good on its treatment of dramaturgy and staging. In fact, her comments should now be regarded as the place from which further discussion of these aspects of *The Woman in the Moon* should start, superseding all earlier criticism and scholarship. She is very sharp on the ‘double time scheme’ (p. 19) of Lyly’s play—a new perception, I think, and one which might usefully be applied to some of his earlier work, especially *Galatea*. Scragg argues that Lyly intends the action of the play to be experienced as occurring during the course of a single day, and this idea certainly helps to make sense of how the drama keeps a clear sense of direction despite its farce-like pace and complications. She is also very good on stage business and properties (pp. 36–7), and future directors of the play would do well to read her comments here with care.

But the most important point she makes with regard to staging deals with the fact that *The Woman in the Moon* treats the stage as a ‘fluid, largely unlocalized arena’ (p. 37), as opposed to the dramaturgy of the earlier plays, in which certain areas of the stage were given more or less stable local identity as notional spaces or even as physical structures (‘houses’) whose symbolic relationship to one another was indicated by their physical arrangement on the stage. In this later play, however, we only need ‘some species of scaffold, a workshop, a bower, and a cave’ (p. 38). Perhaps we do not even need the