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155

CHAPTER 15

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Ernest De Clerck | University of Leuven

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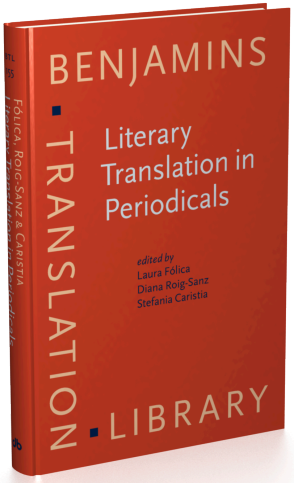

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CHAPTER 15

Eternal problems

The study of Stendhal in translation in British late-romantic periodicals

Ernest De Clerck
University of Leuven

This chapter contends that literatures cannot solely be considered within national frameworks. This is illustrated by a case study of the transnational dimensions of Stendhal's work in British Late-Romantic literary magazines. The Late-Romantic period is often seen as an insular, self-reflexive period within British Romanticism. Evidence shows, however, that it was a truly international period with literature continually crossing the channel in different forms. Three of the major literary magazines of the period played an important role in this transnational literary exchange: *The New Monthly Magazine,* the *London Magazine,* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.* This article focuses on the polemical, competitive, and ideological struggles between the three magazines, exemplified in the way they treated the French author Stendhal, through translation and reception.

Keywords: transnationalism, Stendhal, British Romanticism, Late Romanticism, translation, periodicals, literary magazines, reception, periodicals

In studies on British Romanticism the influence and movement of foreign literatures has long been overlooked. Despite an intense dialogue between local and "foreign" literatures, academia has tended to envisage the period as "intensely local, indeed insular" (Saglia 2019:front flap). However, this article contends that literature cannot be confined to the nation. That, as Wai Chee Dimock writes, "we need to stop assuming a one-to-one correspondence between the geographic origins of a text and its evolving radius of literary action" (2001: 175). This idea is not new. It informs the works of many great scholars such as Damrosch (2003), Apter (2002), Cohen and Dever (2002), and, more recently, Meylaerts and Roig-Sanz (2018), and many more. Yet in the field of Romantic periodicals, the study of translation and reception has mostly failed to be more than a footnote.

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To begin with, the study of such popular media as literary magazines was never a big subject within romanticism. In the late eighties Jon Klancher was the first to engage with these periodicals, this "wide range of writings for diverse audiences, many of them unread since the early nineteenth century" (Klancher 1987: ix). He found that they "range much further, in every conceivable cultural direction, than the limited canon of 'Romantic' prose would lead one to expect" (Klancher 1987: ix). It is only after Klancher's seminal study that romanticists started to turn to "the neglected question of the role of literary magazines in literary history" (Parker 2000: 52) and, indeed, acknowledged literary magazines as "the preeminent literary form of the 1820s and 1830s in Britain" (Parker 2000: 1). However, none of the studies on Romantic literary magazines actively engaged with the national border-crossing dynamics of the medium.

Already in 1990, J. H. Alexander noted in an article entitled "Learning from Europe: Continental Literature in the *Edinburgh Review* and *Blackwood's Magazine* 1802–1825" that this field should be redeemed "from the aura of mildewed sterility which, however wrongly, it exudes" (Alexander 1990: 118). But to no avail at first. When Peter France published his article "Looking Abroad: Two Edinburgh Journals in the Early Nineteenth Century" in 2009 he still referred to the field as "yet to be fully explored" (France 2009: 2). He described "British culture, although increasingly insular in many ways, [as] also increasingly aware of a wide spread of world literature" (France 2009: 2). Of major importance in this process were the literary magazines, for "this was the great age of the periodical, and the new periodicals played an essential role in opening British eyes to foreign culture" (France 2009: 3).

However, the new millennium saw more and more scholars of British Romanticism turn their gaze beyond Britain's borders to the world around it. Nanora Sweet (2002), Diego Saglia (2002; 2019), and Joselyn Almeida (2006) paved the way for articles like the present one to be able to look at translation and reception in Romantic literary magazines. France, Alexander, Sweet, Saglia, and Almeida have shown that a history of British Romantic literature that does not pay attention to the dynamics of transnational exchange is simply not worth the title. Because, as Saglia states, "national literatures are indebted to other traditions for their very subsistence" (Saglia 2019: 1).

Thanks to these scholars the British Romantic corpus that is the material basis for this article can be explicitly transnational. Transnational, here, "refers to cultural processes and products transcending national borders", namely products that can no longer be seen as national products alone (Saglia 2019: viii). This article looks at bits and pieces in literary magazines that do not make much sense in a nationalistic conception of literature. It looks for texts that are "foreign" to "British" literary history; or that are at least considered foreign by the receiving end after having permeated the boundaries of national literature through reception and

translation. This article contends that literature is not simply the property of a nation. On the contrary, it problematizes the idea of the nation at the same time that it is an accessory to the creation of a nation's identity. In a sense, this article contends that literature is always a trans-national affair.

The transnational dimension, then, is construed, as Emily Apter has it, as "preserv[ing] the nation" (Apter 2002: 287). However, the notion of transnationalism complicates nationality, nationalism, and national identity. The transnationalist approach tries to open up traditional literary history to account for what it has ignored and cast away for want of fitting the national(ist) agenda of history's authors.

Andringa and Levie write that, so far, "[f]oreign literatures are principally not considered to be part of national literatures, even if there is a long history of translation or reading in foreign languages, or if foreign works have clearly set the standard for national works" (Andringa and Levie 2009: 232). This paper argues with, among others, Mus, Meylaerts, Vandemeulebroucke and D'hulst, that "the interaction with other literary systems is constitutive for the workings of one's own literary system" (Mus et al. 2010: 32. My translation). It argues that it can be fruitful to consider transnational texts as being part of the national literary system. As is to be expected, however, this approach complicates a few matters methodologically, and that will be developed in the third part of the paper.

The specific corpus for this article is limited to the *New Monthly Magazine, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and the *London Magazine* spanning the period from 1814, when the *New Monthly Magazine* was founded, to 1829, when Henry Colburn, owner of the *New Monthly Magazine*, purchased the *London* and merged it with the former. At the time, these three were the most important literary magazines in the British field and ferociously competitive towards each other, to the point of fighting a duel at gunpoint.[1] By the early 1820s *Blackwood's Magazine* was the most popular of the three, printing "between three and eight thousand" copies per month (Jones 1970: 18). The *New Monthly* followed with five thousand copies, leaving behind the *London Magazine* with its monthly print run of two thousand (St Clair 2004: 574).

The immediate historical context is post-Waterloo Britain. Napoleon was finally beaten and, after two decades of war between the British and the French and nearly a decade of the Continental System, the British were gasping for some foreign culture. As Suddaby and Yarrow observe in a book on Lady Morgan in France, "[t]he continent of Europe, which had been closed to the British since

1. John Scott, editor of the *London* between 1820 and 1821 died following a duel with a defender of *Blackwood's*. For more information on the tragic demise of John Scott I refer to Jones, Leonidas M. 1971. "The Scott-Christie Duel". *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 12, no. 4 (Winter): 605–629.

1803, was again open to travellers" (Suddaby and Yarrow 1971: 11). This is reflected in the literature. First there were travel books, for example John Scott's *A Visit to Paris in 1814*, or Lady Morgan's *France* (1817). But this interest in the continent (and specifically in France) would evolve into a real transnational exchange. And that can be witnessed specifically in the literary magazines. It is therefore significant that John Scott would later become editor of the *London Magazine* while Lady Morgan would become a popular contributor to the *New Monthly*. As Mus et al. have pointedly observed, "the periodical is the pre-eminent medium in and through which literary (ex)change occurs" (Mus et al. 2010: 32. My translation). That change, in Late-Romantic Britain, is an exchange of literatures across borders that confirm as well as complicate the notion of the nation.

Stendhal straddled

To illustrate how these transnational dynamics work in periodicals, more specifically in Late-Romantic literary magazines, let us turn to a particular case, namely that of Stendhal, or Marie-Henri Beyle, or Grimm's Grandson, Y.I, or Monsieur Bombet, in English.[2] The writer of *Le Rouge et le Noir* and *La Chartreuse de Parme* was, before he became an accomplished French novelist, a correspondent for British literary magazines. Between 1822 and 1829 he wrote around 300 articles for British journals, mainly for the *New Monthly Magazine* and the *London Magazine*. Apart from reviews and articles on Italian art, he would write recurring series like "Sketches from Parisian Society", "Letters from Rome" (in the *New Monthly*) and "Letters from Paris" (in the *London*).

Some scholars have asked questions as to why, and how and how many, when and what Stendhal published in the British magazines. Yet so far, all the research on this corpus has been one-sided: It takes the perspective of the Frenchman sending his texts to Britain. It only looks at the budding writer who was popular abroad before becoming one of France's greatest novelists, not at why the texts were asked for in the first place by the English magazines. Nor at what function these texts performed in the magazines. Nor has it been asked how and in what way these texts were translated and what this says about Late-Romantic British society. Indeed, so far, the research mostly speaks of Stendhal, not of what he wrote.

It may sound bold, but one might even say that the texts written by Stendhal for the British magazines were appropriated by French literary history. These texts were originally written in French at the request of the editors in London.

2. This is still an incomplete list of the pseudonyms Marie-Henri Beyle used to sign his contributions to the British periodical press with.

They were translated and published every month in English. Afterwards, many of the original French texts were lost. In the 1930s Robert Vigneron and Henri Martineau were among the first French scholars to turn to this particular part of Stendhal's work. Surfing the wave of comparative literature they located their author in *l'Outre-Manche* and brought him back home. Martineau retranslated all the texts that were certainly Stendhal's into French, compiled them and labelled the result *Courrier Anglais*. Filed under "S" for Stendhal in his bookshop Le Divan.

To leave it at that would have been a satisfying and easy solution for French literary history but looking back from a current perspective one must admit that the story has to be complicated. These texts are obviously not simply, as part of Stendhal's oeuvre, French literature. They were written at the request of British editors, were specifically addressed to a British audience, and had never been published in France until long after having been written. Are they then part of British literature rather than of French? This article contends that they are both and neither at the same time. Stendhal's texts are border-crossing entities, impossible to confine to either the one or the other end of the spectrum. They balance in between. They are transnational in nature. They are a product of the literary channel Cohen and Dever have traced in their co-edited *The Literary Channel* and as such they have a great deal to tell us. In what follows, we shall trace some of the possible lines of enquiry these texts offer us.

An transnational affair

The literary magazines of the early nineteenth century were competitive by nature. It is impossible to think of the genesis of one magazine without the existence of the other. When the *New Monthly Magazine* was launched in 1814 it was called "new" because its reason of existence was, next to economic motives, to counter the revolutionary spirit of the *Monthly Magazine*. Three years later, in 1817, *Blackwood's* saw the light of day for two similar reasons. On the one hand, owner William Blackwood "sought the means of putting himself on a competitive footing with his [*Edinburgh Review*] rival Archibald Constable", and on the other hand he wanted to counter the review's whiggish influence (Parker 2000: 107). That, in turn, provoked "the founding of the *London Magazine*" ("History of Publishing." 2017:n.p.).

As the actions and reactions of the magazines (their publishers and editors) were driven by a mix of polemics and economic and ideological competition, it is not surprising that the attitude of the respective magazines towards Stendhal's texts tells us a great deal about each magazine's position in the field. He was a regu-

lar contributor to the more liberal magazines like the *New Monthly Magazine* and the *London* but the conservative *Blackwood's* was repulsed by him.[3]

Stendhal's influence in the magazines grew steadily. His task was to "report on French and foreign literature in the English periodicals" (Martineau 1951: 251. My translation). In the beginning, this mainly consisted of writing small reviews of French literature in the less important section of the "Historical register" of the *New Monthly Magazine*. Slowly he came more to the fore. A turning point is the beginning of the "Letters from Paris" in the *London Magazine* in January 1825. That first letter begins as such: "Yes, my friend, I will give you an account every month of the state of French literature" (Stendhal [1825] 1988: 32). What follows is an idiosyncratic account of the state of French literature that could easily be believed to have come straight out of the salons of Paris. In his first report Stendhal criticizes a French journal called *Le Globe*, organized around philosopher Victor Cousin. He compares the "disciples of M. Cousin […] to the *Roundheads* of Charles I. and II." (Stendhal [1825] 1988: 34). They "are grave, haters of mirth, pedantic a little; often obscure in their reasonings" (Ibid.: 34).

Interestingly, within a couple of days *Le Globe*, from Paris, reacts. In an article signed by a certain "W." *Le Globe* presents a letter that fulfills exactly the same function as Stendhal's letter, but the other way around. It reports on British literature for a French audience. The author is a competitor of Stendhal's, the Irishman Eyre Evans Crowe. He was an ambitious young journalist who used to write for *Blackwood's* and had already found himself overtaken by Stendhal once or twice.[4] Crowe's report on what Stendhal wrote on *Le Globe* reads as the account of a child telling on someone. Moreover, it is followed by a note from the editor of the journal, in which Stendhal's judgements are made fun of and called "légers" and nothing but a careless mistake ("Note du Rédacteur" 1825: 294).

The altercation might seem unimportant at first, but there is a side to the story that easily escapes scrutiny. The authors, and the translators, act as spokesperson between cultures. For example, if we look at the "literal" translation of Stendhal's argument by Crowe we cannot but notice the many changes and reductions he allows. The original English version (which is the one Crowe would have read) reads as follows:

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3. Although they did publish, unknowingly, an article by him on Rossini that was first published in the *Paris Monthly Review* (Stendhal 1980: 9). Reverend Crowly offered it to the magazine on behalf of his "foreign friend" (Strout 1959: 101).

4. Crowe had also sent articles on Rossini to *Blackwood's* but had found the spot already taken by Stendhal's piece (Stendhal 1980: 9). Cyrus Redding, editor of the *New Monthly Magazine* had also asked him to write on French literature, another job Stendhal ended up getting (9). I am not saying this explains Crowe's attack on Stendhal, but it is interesting to consider these facts next to the literary altercation at hand.

> They are, in general, young men who are sincere in search of the truth, but unluckily have got weak heads and warm hearts; or, in other words, have no great powers of reasoning and very excitable imaginations. They are fanatic adherents of the spiritual philosophy of Plato, and every year change their creed. The people of the *Globe* are, as has been said, grave and deliberate; you would suppose that gaiety would insult them – there is something puritanical in their look; which forms a striking contrast to the impertinent liveliness of the party of Jouy and Etienne.[5] (Stendhal [1825] 1988: 34)

What is more, is that the English version is already a translation from French. However, since the original French version was lost, we can only base ourselves on second-hand accounts of Stendhal's dissatisfaction with the translations of his letters.[6] If one looks closely at Crowe's retranslation of the English text into French, it is not hard to imagine translation can lead to frustration:

> Les bonnes gens du *Globe*, dit-il, ont une gravité qu'on pourrait appeler *puritaine*. Ce sont des sectateurs fanatiques de la philosophie spiritualiste de Platon, etc., tandis que les autres sont *voltairiens* et n'ont d'autre dieu que le sarcasme. (W. 1825: 293)

Crowe's translation is more like an abbreviation of the argument in French. In the article, the entire sentence is given as a quote from the piece in the *London* and appropriately wears quotation marks. Note, however, the "dit-il" which clearly indicates the presence of the narrator of W's letter in what is presented as a direct quotation from Stendhal.

The same translation dynamics can be witnessed, later in 1825, in another transnational altercation between a British magazine and *Le Globe*. Yet again, Stendhal is a central figure. As stated earlier, for those readers who favoured either the *New Monthly* or the *London*, in mid-1820s Britain, Stendhal's periodical writings were an important source of French culture. Not so in *Blackwood's*. There, as Peter France has noted, France "is notable by its very discreet presence" (France 2009: 8). Nevertheless, *Blackwood's* employed William Maginn for an article in December 1825 on "French Literature of the Day". At the time, Maginn was the Paris correspondent for *The Representative*, an English daily (Latané 2004: n.p.). He reports on what the "gay, sprightly, tasteful, light-minded French have been

5. Judging from a letter by Crowe he was able to write (and translate) in (and to) French (see Stendhal 1980: 24 n. 25). Should it not have been Crowe who translated this particular letter it would be of no consequence for it is not about who translated but about how the text was translated.

6. For more on Stendhal and his frustrations concerning the translation of his letters into English cf. Jones 1970: 151–154.

talking of for the last six months" (Maginn 1825: 715). The article is more a description of everything around literature than of what the French have actually been writing, and in that way, it is very much like Stendhal's "Letters from Paris".

Maginn also refers to the French journal *Le Globe*. In contrast to Stendhal, he speaks in positive terms. It "deserves our gratitude and admiration", he writes (Maginn 1825: 716). He qualifies the journal as "proof of the serious character, in which the proverbial gaiety, the ancient mercuriality and lightness of the French people, is merging fast" (Maginn 1825: 717). Strangely, *Le Globe* publishes an article in answer to that on December 20 entitled "Sur un article du Blackwood-Magazine". In it they complain of mainly one thing:

> la légèreté des correspondances entretenues avec la France […]. C'est un veritable commerce de scandale: un trafic de noms et d'anecdotes. Jamais les ouvrages ne sont analysés ni jugés: ce sont toujours les hommes que l'on produit.
>
> ("Sur un article" 1825: 1040)

The article refers derisively to "correspondence" with France. This seems to point rather at Stendhal's work for the *London* than at this one article in *Blackwood's*. Moreover, it seems strange that *Le Globe* should be so vicious towards *Blackwood's* while Maginn's text is only laudatory about the journal.

Not surprisingly, in the next issue, two days later, *Le Globe* nuances its remarks, and writes that "[a]ujourd'hui que nous avont lu l'article avec attention" they see that they were wrong and assume they will be easily forgiven. In fact, they add, "nos expressions attaquent seulement en général les jugements des écrivains de la Grande-Bretagne sur notre littérature et ne jettent qu'une insinuation vague sur le *Blackwood Magazine*" ("France" 1825: 1042). Considering the title of the earlier piece this is, obviously, a lie. *Le Globe* now claims that *Blackwood's* is a good journal albeit that their judgements of literary works are "sommaire et un peu personelles, selon la manière de nos voisins" (Ibid.: 1042).

But to no avail, at first. "Punished shall the Globe be! It is decided upon", reads a piece in the next issue of *Blackwood's* ("The French Globe" 1826: 206). The article is entitled "The French Globe and Blackwood's Magazine" and both McWatters and the Wellesley Index attribute it to that same William Maginn (McWatters 1980: 10; Houghton n.d.:n.p.). *Le Globe*'s article is discussed in detail and almost entirely translated into English and incorporated in the article.

> why should we bother our readers with French? Here, therefore, we overset it in English for the benefit of the Cockneys, who write under the signature of French Viscounts, and discuss the literature of France.[7]
>
> ("The French Globe" 1826: 206–207)

7. Note that by this time Stendhal already used the pseudonym "Count Stendhal". Cf. the article "Lord Byron and Count Stendhal" in *Kaleidoscope* from 1824: "It is from the pen of M. Beyle,

When we look at that translation of the *Globe's* article by Maginn we notice that "la légèreté des correspondences entretenues avec la France" becomes "the trifling nature of their correspondence with France" and Maginn adds between brackets that "[*This refers of course to the correspondence of Beyle, and other such raff, with the Magazines of Cocagne*]" (Ibid.: 206). And that is where Stendhal enters explicitly, and with him the *New Monthly* and the *London*, *Blackwood's* immediate rivals. Taking into account that *Le Globe* apologized for its first article, a short notice by *Blackwood's* might have sufficed. They could also have ignored the overseas journal. Yet the editors devote six pages of their magazine to it, including two entire pages in French from an article in *Le Globe* which they add as a sample of the quality of the latter journal's work. What then, could be the reason for so much fuss?

The answer lies within the competitive nature of the British literary magazines. Ultimately this entire polemic is but a way for *Blackwood's* to criticize its competitors and position itself in the periodical field. And that depends on how it treats foreign literatures, here exemplified by the figure of Stendhal. To *Blackwood's* Beyle's writing is the best example of how a literary magazine should not engage with foreign literature. The correspondent for the *London* and the *New Monthly* delivers only literary salon-like sketches of society through familiar letters. The "trifling nature" of his correspondence does not leave room for any real criticism of foreign literature. All you get is "the stinking Swiss of the press – the vomit of Cockneyland" ("The French Globe" 1826: 207).[8]

Blackwood's finally concludes its article with an explicit sneer at its rivals and their foreign politics: "we beg leave to ask, what foreign periodical has ever mentioned the New Monthly Magazine, written, as many of its articles are, by folks who have their own reasons for living abroad, and who, of course, fish for foreign panegyric? Or who has ever mentioned the London, except to say that it was fallen into the hands of the *Cockneys*?" ("The French Globe" 1826: 207–208).

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better known by his pseudonym Count Stendhal" (Beyle 1824: 182). What is interesting is that "Count", according to the *OED*, stands "[i]n certain countries of continental Europe [for] a high-ranking nobleman, corresponding to the English earl" ("count, n.2." 2018. *OED Online.* Oxford University Press, accessed December 10, 2018.). In a British context it foregrounds foreignness because it is a title that does not exist in Britain, but merely corresponds to the rank of Earl. Viscount, however, is an active word in British English that denominates the person "acting as the deputy or representative of a count or earl in the administration of a district; in English use spec. a sheriff or high sheriff" ("viscount, n." 2018. *OED Online.* Oxford University Press, accessed December 10, 2018).

8. The "Cockney School of Poetry" was a derisive term coined in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* to insult a certain group of poets, including Keats, Hazlitt and Hunt. "Cockneyland" referred to London, where both the *London* and the *New Monthly Magazine* were based.

While the *New Monthly* and the *London* publish articles by Stendhal every month, *Blackwood's* only refers to him as "raff", "cockney", and one "fish[ing] for foreign panegyric". So, not only do the British magazines react to each other nationally in their attitudes towards French literature, but the polemic spreads to the continent and activates a French magazine, which in turn extracts a reaction from *Blackwood's*. This shows that these Late-Romantic British magazines not only operate in a national space, but also in a transnational space.

Yet this transnational space is of a particular nature. Though the countries engage with each other culturally, and in this particular case on the basis of literature, most of the literary criticism is never more than a comparison between French and British morals and manners. Indeed, when Maginn speaks of the French drama it is only to say that it has "not much spirit, and with us would perhaps be insipid; but for France, they are audaciously original" (Maginn 1825: 718). Similarly, when he discusses the work of French historians he finds that "[w]ith us, who have been now a long time wearied with the middle ages, and all that relates to them, such a work would not have the smallest chance of being read" (Maginn 1825: 718). To these statements Stendhal would merely reply that "[m]any Englishmen fancy they understand the French language and French manners, who have not the slightest idea of either" (Stendhal [1825] 1988: 78). If the literary magazines reported on French literature it was more often than not a way to say something about British literature. A strange mirror performance, where the projection of the other merely serves to enhance one's self-image.

Literary production and identity are inseparable in the Late-Romantic literary magazines. When *Le Globe* accuses the British of being "personelles", namely writing criticism that is "aimed at a particular person, and usually disparaging or offensive in nature", it is saying more about how it (and with it its projection of France) wants to be perceived than about Britain and British literature (Mole 2013: 89). Likewise, when the British describe the French (including French literature) as gay and light-minded, the same is here again. Compare the sarcastic opening lines of Stendhal's third letter to the *London*: "I am very much afraid, my dear friend, that you grave Englishmen may have thought my last letter too light and frivolous. To expiate my offence I am going to give you the history of the progress of good sense in France" (Stendhal [1825] 1988: 88). Apter has described the "fluid space of the Channel [as] a metaphor for a zone of mutual refraction where Britain defines itself through its incongruent reflection of Frenchness, and vice versa" (Apter 2002: 286).

It is important to realize that the readers of these magazines bought them because "people buy journals that reflect their interests or articulate beliefs they already have" (Gaull 1988: 17). This new readership, the middle class, made possible by the industrial revolution, was willing "to pay handsomely for books and

periodicals" (Jones 1970: 17). Henry Colburn, owner of the *New Monthly* was quick in understanding that and "established the policy of 'humoring the public taste'" (Ibid.: 17). By selecting and framing what the audiences read the editors had great power. It is not surprising, therefore, that the middle-class audience's literary "taste was formed by reviewers, not poets" (Gaull 1988: 315).

Classics versus Romantics

Literature and identity creation are difficult to separate, then. And when, at times, the literary magazines, in writing about the culture of other nations, actually functioned as a tool for the creation of British identity, that same process of reciprocal refraction is at work. It is as Thiesse writes in *La Création des identités nationales*: "Rien de plus international que la formation des identités nationales" (Thiesse 2001: 11). One may take a look at *la querelle des classiques et romantiques*, for example, in which Stendhal also plays a part. In early nineteenth-century France the "Ancients vs. Moderns" debate held within the seventeenth century *Académie Française* resurfaced in the form of a "war of words" between the "classic and romantic" schools (Redding 1823: 522). British literary magazines reported on it to their readers. To Cyrus Redding, editor of the *New Monthly Magazine* and author of an article entitled "The Classics and Romantics", this debate would, "in the end, produce an important change for the better in the literature of the [French] nation" (Ibid.: 522). The Academy, in Redding's eyes, had now "nearly become inert […] by the rising of a regenerated school of literature, more in harmony with modern civilization and congenial to national feeling, as is the case in England" (Ibid.: 522).

What is striking, however, is that this new school is considered to be one with nationalism. The romantic school, Redding writes, "has every where been the child […] of patriotism and liberty. The French are beginning now to feel this, as the English and the Germans have long felt before them" (Ibid.: 523). Moreover, there is a constant emphasis on the fact that "England" is France's precursor in this matter. These romantics have formed what might be called a "republic of letters, amenable only to the general opinion of the nation" (Ibid.: 524). This republic is paving the way towards "literary emancipation" (Ibid.: 524). On what does Cyrus Redding base his judgements? On the belief that the "translation and rapid sale of translations of the German and English dramatists clearly prove[s]" this (Ibid.: 524). In Redding's understanding, the classics adhere only to imitation of the ancients, while the romantics portray "national truth" (Ibid.: 526). Strangely, this national truth is "penned with a fidelity adapted to the *universal feeling of truth in every age and nation*" (Ibid.: 527. Italics mine). What the French wish, he writes, is

> to have a tragedy which shall be neither Greek nor Roman, but French; in short they desire pictures of nature on the model of Shakespeare, and not of something neither ancient nor modern, a gallico-latin medley, to preserve the servility of which originality and nature must be sacrificed". (Ibid.: 527)

According to Redding it is a universal truth that every age and nation has a national truth. To begin with, in his view the existence of the nation is an absolute given. Moreover, the model for an original, romantic literature is English drama, Shakespeare, namely. One of the exemplary authors Redding mentions is Stendhal, who was in the early stages of contributing articles to the *New Monthly Magazine* (Ibid.: 528).

In an article called "The Concept of 'Romanticism'" René Wellek writes that Stendhal "seems to have been the first Frenchman who called himself a romantic" (Wellek 1949: 10). Moreover, that same Stendhal became an important voice in the debate of the classics against the romantics. His *Racine et Shakespeare* from 1823 was a fiery pamphlet in favour of romanticism that stirred quite some anger, inciting Louis-Simon Auger, *de l'Académie Française*, to write a reply entitled "Discours sur le Romantisme". Lady Morgan, in her travel account *France*, from 1817, had compared Racine to Shakespeare, which may have lead Stendhal, who had read the book, to use the two in disjunction six years later.[9]

It should be clear that one cannot refer to national literatures as clear-cut, separate entities. The few transnational arguments between literary magazines show as much. The British Late-Romantic magazines use French (and other foreign)[10] literatures as a way to gain readers and position themselves in the competitive field of periodicals. While doing so they performatively contribute to the construction of the identity of their nation. These magazines claim to criticize each other's literatures but in fact merely define their own national (literary) identities through the differences they discern in the other. French literary criticism in Britain was mostly British identity-creation.

Methods straddled

Within the context of this book it is pertinent to include a part on methodology. During the research for what became this text some methodological problems occurred. One is what Franco Moretti, in *Graphs, Maps, Trees* calls the "eternal

9. Cf. Alciatore, Jules C. 1959. "Lady Morgan et De l'Amour". *Modern Language Notes* 74, no. 4 (Spring): 326–327. DOI: 10.2307/3040073.

10. Among which Spanish, German, and Italian. For more information I refer to Saglia (2019).

problematic" of the literary historian (Moretti 2007: 2). Eternal and therefore unsolvable. Namely, there is too much material to analyze. To take everything into account is impossible. Yet, the other option, studying only a small part, is also problematic. Moretti writes that he "no longer believe[s] that a single explanatory framework may account for the many levels of literary production and their multiple links with the larger social system" (Moretti 2007: 92). While he might be referring strictly to his three "artificial constructs", I do think that our effort, as scholars, cannot be anything but collaborative (Moretti 2007: 1). And even then, the eternal problematic will still be eternal, and problematic.

For instance, my own project started out as ranging from 1814 to 1829. The plan was to chart the ideological dynamics of the translation and reception policies of the three magazines during those fifteen years. By reception policies I mean the different ways in which foreign literatures are discussed, translated, and presented to the British reading audiences. Typical questions would be: what foreign books are published in Britain and included in the lists of "foreign works imported" that would figure in the magazines? How are these books reviewed? How are they presented in the magazines? Do the reviews and essays on foreign literary works contain excerpts and are they translated? How are they translated? Why are certain works discussed and others not? What are the ideological dynamics governing these editorial practices? The method would be close-reading three magazines that published 120 pages every month, or 64.800 double-columned pages in total. Not surprisingly, a lot of the first year of my PhD was spent finding out that I would have to limit my corpus. Moretti writes that "a field this large cannot be understood by stitching together separate bits of knowledge about individual cases, because it *isn't* a sum of individual cases: it's a collective system, that should be grasped as such, as a whole" (Moretti 2007: 4).

In the field of Late-Romantic literary periodicals many scholars have done just the opposite, understandably so. Mark Parker, for instance, in his seminal *Literary Magazines and British Romanticism*, chopped up the time span of the period under investigation into *runs* of five series from one to four years.

Similarly, Linda Bunnell Jones, in the introduction to her dissertation, states that "[a] review of the entire run of the *New Monthly* would have been valuable, but this dissertation has been limited to an examination of the magazine from 1821 to 1830" (Jones 1970: 1).[11] While the "most important source for this study is, of course, the *New Monthly* itself", she confesses to have read "only" "completely one number of every six" (Jones 1970: 5). That is two per year of publication. Whether this is sufficient, I leave up to the reader, what is true without a doubt is that Jones'

11. The entire run of the *New Monthly* ranges from 1814 to 1884.

dissertation is a valuable source of information on the *New Monthly Magazine*, and still one of the only sources out there.

It will be clear that sheer amount of material is one limitation. Another limitation is language. Since we don't want our work to "suffer" from translation, it is only proper to have at least an apt knowledge of both the source language and the target language.[12] Which makes the only in-depth translation analysis that I will be able to carry out in this corpus that of French and Dutch into English, *if* the source language texts were preserved.

Moreover, the stuff our dissertations are made on has changed radically over the years. Where it used to be fragile paper (in my case 200 years old), it is now a binary file in a digital database, hosted by *British Periodicals Online*. I no longer have to travel to the United Kingdom to read the magazines. Yet the process of digitizing the magazines article by article has made them lose their unity. Mark Parker speaks of the "subtle editorial practices" John Scott of the *London* employed to encourage the "conversational aspects" of the essays sent to him by his contributors (Parker 2000: 65). Yet, recognizing the echoes between different contributions becomes difficult in a chopped-up, compartmentalized, digital environment. Pages no longer follow each other (an order that was scrupulously decided upon by editors), front pages are missing, and page numbers of different volumes differ from the original issues, making it sometimes impossible to locate the original articles referred to in older scholarly publications.

Now, optical character recognition (OCR) might be of help here, and yes, *British Periodicals Online* gives you the possibility to search for specific words in the database, but once you download the file, the OCR is gone. Moreover, the half-effaced, double-columned pages that were digitized makes OCR difficult and we must assume many transcription errors. For every hit on a search string, we must assume, at least, some unrecognized or faulty ones.

These two problems, on the one hand the division of the magazines into articles, and on the other hand, the badly-functioning OCR, are a poor influence on our research. They fragment one's attention until the literary magazines are no longer "an object of study in their own right" (Parker 2000: 1). And that is tragic. These texts were, before Klancher and Parker, as said before, "unread since the early nineteenth century" and if we want to read them now, we should do so with respect for the material conditions of their original publication (Klancher 1987:x). This does not mean that the texts should not be digitized, on the contrary, but that they should be digitized in such a way that the unity of the magazine is undisturbed while reliable in-text searches are possible.

12. Taken from Paine's introduction to the English edition of the *Rights of Man*: "everything suffers from translation" (Paine [1791] 2017: 11).

Lastly, I would like to nuance this idea of grasping, in Moretti's words, "the whole". When we look at the object of study from a distance we see other things than from up close. To incorporate everything is not possible. We need to acknowledge the impossibility of adding everything to the equation and all the while never give up trying to be as exhaustive as possible. We must be informed by a healthy skepticism of completeness. Because no corpus is ever complete. At best, and this is what we should strive for, I think, distant and close reading should cooperate. Quite similar to how David Damrosch describes the study of world literature:

> [it] is not an immense body of material that must somehow, impossibly, be mastered; it is a mode of reading that can be experienced *intensively* with a few works just as effectively as it can be explored *extensively* with a large number. (Damrosch 2003: 299)

Perhaps we must work in projects and divide the labour. It is not a question of either/or, but a conjunction. Here I would like to refer to a chapter on close reading in Barbara Herrnstein Smith's recent book *Practicing Relativism in the Anthropocene*. "Where big data is pertinent and computational processing would be useful", she writes, "literary scholars should take advantage of both" (Smith 2018: 77). "But", she adds, "there is no research imperative built into the size of some potential data set" (Smith 2018: 77). Distant reading does not render close reading meaningless. The way forward is a balanced methodology that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods. This was beautifully demonstrated in the project described by Mus et al. I referred to earlier, or in Cohen's and Dever's *The Literary Channel*. Perhaps it will also work out in a similar way in the projects Melanie Hacke and I are working on. In the meantime, I will continue to complement my basic distant and statistical readings with "this exemplary method […] out of respect for both literary history and mathematics" (Todd 1976: 7).

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