

NINETEENTH-CENTURY MAJOR LIVES AND LETTERS



SPAIN IN BRITISH ROMANTICISM

1800-1840

EDITED BY
DIEGO SAGLIA
IAN HAYWOOD



Nineteenth-Century Major Lives and Letters

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Diego Saglia
Ian Haywood

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ABBREVIATIONS

- EAR* *Edinburgh Annual Register*
- PW* *The Poetical Works of Robert Southey, Collected by Himself*. 10 vols. London: Longman, 1837–8
- RSPW* *Robert Southey: Poetical Works, 1793–1810*. 5 vols. Gen. ed. Lynda Pratt. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004
- CLRS* *The Collected Letters of Robert Southey*. Gen. eds. Lynda Pratt, Tim Fulford and Ian Packer. *Romantic Circles*, 2009-. https://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/southey_letters
- LPW* *Robert Southey: Later Poetical Works, 1811–1838*. 4 vols. Gen. eds. Tim Fulford and Lynda Pratt. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012

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Introduction: Spain and British Romanticism

Diego Saglia and Ian Haywood

Spain in British Romanticism is based on the premise that, in British literature, Spain was largely the creation of Romanticism. Whereas other Catholic, Continental and “Latin” countries or cultures like Italy and France had been sources of literary inspiration uninterruptedly since the Middle Ages, Spain emerged prominently on to the literary map only in the Romantic period. Previously, there had been occasional outbursts of interest—in Cervantes, in baroque poetry, in picaresque fiction, in *siglo de oro* comedies. But it was only at the turn of the nineteenth century that Spanish history, culture, language and literature became the focus of intense interest and study for the British public. The catalyst for this revival was the *Guerra de la Independencia*, usually known as the Peninsular War. Rebellion against Napoleonic occupation in 1808

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set in motion a wide-ranging rediscovery and re-evaluation of Spain. Previously Britain's archenemy, the country quickly became a beacon of political and cultural renewal. Byron, who never missed an opportunity for turning out a strikingly effective apostrophe, hailed Spain as a "renown'd, romantic" country in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* I (1812) (l. 32. 1. Byron, *Complete* 2: 23). A staunch Hispanophile, Felicia Hemans invoked it in the following rousing terms in *The Abencerrage* (1819): "Fair land! of chivalry the old domain, / Land of the vine and olive, lovely Spain!" (2.1–2; *Selected* 103). Romantic-era writers in Britain (and elsewhere in Europe) engaged with Spain in profoundly new ways and made a substantial imaginative investment in Spain's past and present identity. In doing so, they forged a powerful and enduring image of the country, which cast a long shadow over both its international cultural status and self-image (Alvarez Junco).

The Peninsular War (1808–1814) and its troubled aftermath in Spain had a significant effect on contemporary British culture and politics. Napoleon's invasion of the country in 1808 precipitated three decades of unprecedented change in which Spain challenged its conservative past and experimented with both imposed and home-grown varieties of political, social and cultural liberty. The guerrilla resistance to Napoleon, the constitution of 1812, the Restoration of Bourbon absolutism in 1814, the liberal revolution of 1820 and the second French invasion of 1823 created a dramatic theatre of political change which fascinated, inspired and exasperated British observers of all shades of political opinion, including most of the major Romantic authors. Each stage in the dramatic swings of peninsular political fortunes provided a sounding board for British foreign and domestic policy, an imaginative space for the projection of political hopes and fears and more generally a space for imagining new stories, new heroes and villains, and new landscapes: in short, a new mythology of Spain.

Before this Romantic re-evaluation, eighteenth-century commentators had tended to condemn the country as a spent force, the backwater of Europe, and the antithesis of Enlightenment ideals of progress and improvement. In spite of actual signs of socio-economic change and a lively intellectual debate about modernization (and Europeanism) against traditionalism (Torrecilla), Spain was customarily dismissed as an inward-looking, retrograde and marginal country, a victim of political mismanagement by foreign dynasties (Hapsburg and Bourbon), cultural decline resulting from dependence on the bloated proceeds of imperial plunder in the Americas, and (for the British observer, the deciding factor)

religious fanaticism and intolerance. Two pronouncements stood out as particularly damning, both from French pens. Voltaire defined Spain as “a country of which we know no more than the most savage parts of Africa, and it is not worth the trouble of being known” (de Beer and Rousseau 182). In his article “Espagne” in the *Encyclopédie méthodique* (1782), Nicolas Masson de Morvilliers polemically declared that Europe owed nothing to Spain (Donato and Pérez). This widely read work sparked a lively, heated debate in Spain, which resulted in the banning of the *Encyclopédie méthodique* itself (Alvarez Junco 80–83). Morvilliers’ offensive went right to the heart of the question of Spain’s political and cultural status and its (mis)alignment with a European norm of modernity dictated by a French-dominated Enlightenment consensus culturally and politically focused on the northern part of the continent.

Indeed, this prevalent “myth of decline” (Kamen, Chap. 7) conformed to an eighteenth-century idea of Europe which Roberto Dainotto has defined as based on “French theory,” both “French and northbound” and also “expanding from north to south—privileging the former and marginalizing the latter” (49). Seemingly lacking the key features of “[p]rogress, teleology and *manifest destinies*” (51), Spain appeared a stagnant geopolitical and cultural entity, whose early modern exploits had come to nothing and whose projection into the future was a moot point. The country became a negative model, a site of anti- or non-Enlightenment, an “internal Other” of northbound Europe, and thus crucial for definitions—*a contrario*—of modernity (51). Yet, almost overnight, this moribund narrative was reversed, and Spain became a nation reborn in the crucible of military and political conflict. The Spanish “revolution” (a term used frequently by sympathetic British writers and journalists) recast Spain as a pristine example of Romantic nationalism: as Henry Kamen notes, “Spanish historians are agreed that the myth of Spain as a nation was born around 1808 or 1812” (1), dates corresponding to the first resistance to occupation (as celebrated in Goya’s famous painting *Dos de Mayo*) or the launch of the new Constitution in Cadiz. This “myth” of a restored nation catapulted Spain to the forefront of British cultural interest, but like all myths the new (or rediscovered) Spain that emerged was a blend of known facts and willful fictions. New narratives and visions either edited out, re-aligned or sidelined Spain’s notorious national faults, or found the textual means to place the positive and negative aspects of its history and national character in a productive dialogue. In confronting Romantic-era texts about Spain, we deal with, as Michael Iarocci puts it, “the story of Europe’s modernity and

of Spain's seemingly *sui generis* relationship to that grand narrative, its symbolic position throughout most of the modern era, somewhere off to the side of modern Europe" (xi).

Before this remarkable Romantic turnaround in the image of Spain, the country had been regarded as one of Britain's traditional enemies. Culturally and otherwise, relations had been generally strained and only occasionally characterized by interludes of tentative curiosity. The "black legend" of Spanish imperial cruelty—one of the most powerful creations of Protestant Europe to affect Spain—remained very much in place from the sixteenth century onwards, and was still strong in the eighteenth century, when the two countries repeatedly found themselves on opposite warring fronts (Maltby; Kamen, Chap. 5). This preexisting view of Spain was gradually challenged, though old prejudices lingered. The first breakthrough in the Romantic reappraisal of Spain was the rediscovery of its "Gothic" (strictly, Visigothic) past: this began with the reevaluation of its medieval poetry, its ballad or *romance* tradition, thanks to the contributions of Thomas Percy, who included two examples of this kind of verse in *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), and Thomas Rodd, whose translation of Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Guerras civiles de Granada* as *The Civil Wars of Granada* appeared in 1801. The idea that Spain and Britain shared heroic, "northern," Gothic roots brought the two countries closer together in the literary imagination and anticipated the major Romantic texts of Southey, Scott and others in the Peninsular War years.¹ In the late eighteenth century Spain also often appeared on the stage not only in comedic works such as Hannah Cowley's *A Bold Stroke for a Husband* (Covent Garden, 1783) and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Critic* (Drury Lane, 1779), but also in highly popular "Gothicized" entertainments—between opera and melodrama—such as John O'Keefe's *The Castle of Andalusia* (Covent Garden, 1782) or George Colman's *The Mountaineers* (Haymarket, 1793), and in (mostly unsuccessful) tragedies (Sophia Lee's *Almeyda: Queen of Granada*, Drury Lane, 1796, or William Godwin's *Antonio, or the Soldier's Return*, Drury Lane 1800). At the same time, the black legend was never far away, emerging in representations of South America that focused especially on nefarious Spanish imperial practices, as in Helen Maria Williams's epic poem *Peru* (1784) and Sheridan's play *Pizarro* (Drury Lane, 1799), which doubled as coded critiques of British national identity and imperial practice (Heinowitz; Almeida *Reimagining*). Similar images permeated figurations of Spain as a setting for Gothic fiction. This was most

notably the case in Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), which gives free rein to commonplaces of Spanish despotism, superstition, religious hypocrisy and corruption, incarceration and torture.

As these references show, the mid- to late eighteenth century saw an increasing accumulation of cultural capital around Spain, which was both variegated and contradictory, an admixture of contrasting perceptions and assessments. As Spain gradually emerged as a theme in British print culture, there began what David Howarth calls an "invention" of Spain, on account of which the "British never really knew the Peninsula on its own terms" (33). Travel writing played an important role. Though it was not part of the Grand Tour, more travelers started to venture into Spain and produced accounts that could satisfy both the public's curiosity for this little-known land and its increasing fascination with the exotic and the sublime. These texts also provided a set of tools to approach and envision Spain in more reliable and authentic ways. The Catholic Henry Swinburne, who traveled in Spain between 1775 and 1776, played a prominent role in this process, and his *Travels to Spain* (1779) greatly contributed to forging new images of the country by providing a picturesque account of its geographical and human landscape and by offering a detailed description of its Islamic antiquities. The book was reprinted many times and was cited by Edward Gibbon in the chapters about the fall of Spain and emergence of Islam in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1766–1788). Travelers to Spain were more and more numerous at the end of the eighteenth century (Guerrero), and they included not only wealthy gentlemen such as Swinburne, but also professional figures—among them merchants, diplomats and (beginning with the Peninsular War) soldiers, whose works contributed to an increasingly nuanced and multifaceted picture of the country and its culture. Travel to Spain inspired literary authors such as Robert Southey (*Letters Written during a Short Residence in Spain and Portugal*, 1797), and travel literature became a valuable resource in its own right for Spanish-themed works: Felicia Hemans, for example, drew heavily on William Jacob's *Travels in the South of Spain* (1811) and started a correspondence with the author. Once the outbreak of war in 1808 accelerated the exposure of Spain to the British public, the demand for travelers' and soldiers' accounts from the Peninsula increased (Daly). Although the support for Spain among politicians and the public saw some peaks and troughs, this oscillating ideological and political response did not interrupt cultural exchanges between Spain and Britain, nor did it hamper the process of penetration of Spain into British culture.

The major transformation during the war years was that received ideas of Spain as an imperfectly known country started to be replaced by an accumulation of increasingly accurate knowledge. This renovated knowledge, impelled by the war effort but radiating outwards into a larger reconsideration of Spanish national identity, brought about a re-engagement with older stereotypes (whether it confirmed or corrected them) as well as the creation of new imagery. Curiously, the more meticulously Spain was illustrated and explained (Saglia “Iberia”), the more insistently it was turned into a land of the imagination, an exotic location, a name to conjure imagery with—a process that once again testifies to the suggestive potential of Spain and that makes the “script” of Spain elaborated by the Romantics a highly unstable, though also an extremely capacious and productive one.² Moreover, Spain reflected and refracted a countervailing, and equally multiple, set of “scripts” about Britain. For instance, as Wordsworth stated in *The Convention of Cintra* (1809), “The Spaniards could not ultimately be benefited but by allies acting under the same impulses of honour, roused by a sense of their wrongs, and sharing their loves and hatreds—above all, their passion for justice” (*Cintra* 1915, 16). In literature, as Spain became the crucible of liberty that both confirmed the traditional status quo and rekindled the idealism and frustrated hopes of the French Revolution, it inspired important new works. The war was a central theme in such poems as Felicia Hemans’s *England and Spain* (1808), Lord Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* Canto I and John Wilson Croker’s *Battles of Talavera* (1809). The war also informed the triptych of works dedicated to the legend of the last Gothic king (Roderick), his betrayer (Julian) and his successor (Pelayo), who initiated resistance to the Islamic conquest of Spain: Walter Scott’s *The Vision of Don Roderick* (1811), Walter Savage Landor’s *Count Julian* (1812) and Robert Southey’s *Roderick, the Last of the Goths* (1814). These works are relatively well known and compose what might be called a Spanish “canon” in British Romantic-era literature, though one of the aims of *Spain in British Romanticism* is to show that the literary response to Spain was more extensive and varied than these (admittedly important) texts indicate. The war and its meaning was a constant theme in the press, including in radical titles such as the *Examiner* and William Cobbett’s *Political Register*; this reportage is valuable not only as an intertext for the Spanish canon, as it was also in the pages of periodicals that a wealth of occasional poetry about the war was published, which, together with more substantial offerings in

verse, has recently been the object of critical and anthological attention (Bainbridge; Watson; Coletes and Laspra). From this matrix of representations, Spain became both a “land of romance” (Saglia *Poetic*, 56–60) and a symbolic space on which the political future of Europe seemed to depend. Literature reflected this duality through fascinating mixtures of mythologizing and verifiable facts. Thus, if Coleridge’s tragedy *Remorse* (Drury Lane, 1813) is distinctly Gothic and contains features of contemporary “illegitimate” theatre, it is also a historical play pointedly set during the persecutions of the Moors under the reign of Philip II. Similarly indicative of this intersection between factual and fictional dimensions is Spain’s transformation, in this period, into a visual object. Almost as soon as the conflict began, Spain became prime material for political and satirical cartoons, and many of these vivid and witty compositions (particularly of Ferdinand as a monstrous despot) remain some of the best-known images from the period (Haywood *Caricature*, Chap. 6; Valladares “Illustrating Principles”). Spain also featured in high visual culture, such as the academy paintings of David Wilkie, and at a more demotic level in the portraits of rebel leaders sold in the radical press. Maps became more common during the war, especially of areas where military operations were carried out. Anna Letitia Barbauld in *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven* (1812) describes how “...some stream obscure, some uncouth name / By deeds of blood is lifted into fame”, while women “[t]o learn the fate of husband, brothers, friends” explore “the spread map with anxious eye ... / Its dotted boundaries and penciled shores” (312, 34–35; *Selected* 162). Though Goya’s masterpieces remained unknown to the British public at this time, the war inaugurated the arrival of other Spanish art, especially in the form of the selling of collections or donations from the Spanish authorities in gratitude after the conflict (Howarth; Baker).

In the same years, as part of the general curiosity about Spain, knowledge of its literature and culture began to increase. There were new translations of Cervantes’s *Don Quixote* (Mary Smirke’s in 1818) as well as abridged versions of it (the anonymous *The Spirit of Cervantes*, 1820, adorned “with superior coloured engravings”). There was interest in Spanish theatre: plays by Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca and Leandro Fernández de Moratín appeared in translation (by Fanny Holcroft) in Thomas Holcroft’s *Theatrical Recorder* (1805); Lord Holland’s volume on the *Life of Lope de Vega* published in 1806 was republished with his *Life of Guillen de Castro* in 1817; while Angel Anaya’s multi-volume *Teatro español* (1817–1821) made dramatic texts

available in the original language. Generally, periodicals provided information on Spanish literature, offering overviews of the tradition and insights into more recent productions (Saglia “Hispanism”).

A particularly crucial contribution to the diffusion of knowledge about Spain was made by the Spanish exiles living in Britain, some of whom started writing for periodicals which published their articles and essays on Spanish society, traditions and literature (Llorens *Liberales*). Among these *émigrés*, later immortalized by Thomas Carlyle in *The Life of John Sterling* (1851), one stands out: José María Blanco y Crespo, “Blanco White”. A former priest and advocate of political reform, he went into exile in Britain in 1810, befriended the leading Hispanophile Lord Holland and edited the Spanish-language periodical *El Español*. By the time the refugee wave of 1823 arrived, he was a figure of some importance in the Hispanic and Hispanophile world of London, and had connections with a wide range of writers and intellectuals, Hemans and Southey among them. Blanco emblemizes the ever-tighter links between Spanish and British culture, as well as the complications attendant on this relationship. Although an exile, he was not an advocate of revolutionary change. He had doubts about the Francophile nature of the new constitution, which he voiced in his *Letters from Spain of Don Leucadio Doblado* (1822); but at the same time he published highly nostalgic accounts of “exotic” Spain such as “The Alcazar of Seville” (1825). When the constitutional regime fell in 1823 and the *liberales* had to flee to London, he was joined by many significant intellectuals who contributed further to the diffusion of Spanish culture and literature in Britain, including José Joaquín de Mora, Antonio Alcalá Galiano, Pablo de Mendíbil and Eduardo de Gorostiza (Llorens *Liberales*). Publishing in Spanish for South American readers or in English for the British readerships, these literati occupied an intermediate position that made them the embodiments of the intercultural relations between the two countries and cultures.

Indeed, one of the contentions of *Spain in British Romanticism* is that more attention needs to be paid to this second wave of literary responses to Spain in the Romantic period. While many students of British Romanticism will be familiar with at least some of the works of the Spanish canon (Byron’s *Childe Harold* Canto I, Wordsworth’s *Cintra*, Southey’s *Roderick*), the resurgence of Spanish-themed texts in the early 1820s is much less studied. This neglect reinforces an unfortunate historiographical bias in which Spain ceases to be culturally important after

the end of the Peninsular War in 1814. In this narrative, Spain flares into significance when it inspires neo-Jacobin optimism in the first generation of Romantic poets who are about to lapse into apostasy (and whose abandonment of Spain after 1814 is a key marker of that apostasy), but fades from public view once it relapses into the benighted grip of absolutism. In fact, the Spanish “revolution” was only temporarily halted in 1814. After six years of repression, the rebellion in 1820 was celebrated by British liberals and radicals as the fulfillment of the frustrated political ambitions of the earlier conflict, but with a key difference: the uprising was now against an internal despot, and it was part of a Europe-wide resistance to the post-war settlement which had restored autocratic rule across the continent. Spain was perceived as an inspiration for further liberation struggles in Italy and Greece, though its own fate was sealed. The crushing of liberal Spain by the Holy Alliance in 1823 was interpreted by liberal observers as a rerun of 1814, but this time with France as the agent of a monstrously reactionary Europe.

With these revolutionary credentials in place, it is no surprise that the literary fascination with Spain continued unabated and that representations took an increasing variety of forms. There was a body of politically explicit and ideologically committed works that reacted directly to the events of 1820–1823, and that compose a second mini-poetic “canon” to accompany the better-known texts from the war years: works by P. B. Shelley (“Ode to Liberty”), Thomas Campbell (“Stanzas to the Memory of the Spanish Patriots”), Lord John Russell (*Don Carlos*), Thomas Moore (“The Torch of Liberty”), Lord Byron (*The Age of Bronze*) and Felicia Hemans (*The Siege of Valencia ... with Other Poems*). In addition, from the 1820s and into the 1830s, there began to appear a substantial body of less directly *engagé* works, most visibly the abundant Spanish-Moorish orientalism published by Hemans, Landon and Washington Irving. In the 1820s and 1830s, the novel also oscillated between reconstruction of earlier periods—as in Telesforo de Trueba y Cosío’s (English-language) *Gomez Arias* (1828), Mary Shelley’s *Perkin Warbeck* (1830) and Lytton Bulwer’s *Leila; or the Siege of Granada* (1838)—or narratives set in recent or contemporary times, such as Alexander Robert Charles Dallas’s *Felix Alvarez* (1818) or Valentín Llanos Gutiérrez’s *Don Esteban* (1825). In addition, Spain continued to feature as a backdrop for Gothic fiction, as in Charles Robert Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) or Thomas Redriffe’s *The Spanish Exile or the Mysterious Monk* (1820). During the decade, Spain also became a useful source of materials for the

literary annuals, both in the form of contributions scattered in the pages of an increasing number of such yearly publications, but also as the subject of entire volumes, as in *Jennings Landscape Annuals* issued between 1835 and 1838 (Saglia “Iberia”). Thus, on the one hand, the literary engagements with Spain in the 1820s and 1830s testify to its continued importance as a focus of debate about national self-determination and identity, while on the other, there was a move towards an apolitical or post-conflict, touristic gaze that packaged the country and its aura for unproblematic consumption by middle-class readers and viewers, and that lay the bases for the transformation of Spain into one of the destinations for mid-century literary escapism. In one sense, therefore, the radical Spain of the Romantic period disappeared beneath this more emollient image which had always been a component of the fascination with this Southern European country: picturesque scenery, colorful figures and unusual customs, a stereotype against which nineteenth-century Spanish writers and intellectuals would soon start reacting (Miralles 117–121).

Though it was a major theme and concern throughout the Romantic age, Spain has remained a relatively neglected topic in mainstream Romantic studies. Critical engagements have usually been limited to essays in scholarly journals, and there is an evident lack of sustained examinations in book form. Diego Saglia’s pioneering monograph *Poetic Castles in Spain* (2000) and Joselyn M. Almeida’s edited collection *Romanticism and the Anglo-Hispanic Imaginary* (2010) are the only two book-length investigations of this theme to date. Building on the ground-breaking work of these studies, *Spain in British Romanticism* aims to investigate the impact of the Peninsular conflict and its aftermath on British culture through the recovery of new texts, the inclusion of previously neglected cultural media such as the press and caricature and new interpretations of texts by canonical authors. Unlike Almeida’s collection (and her subsequent monograph, *Reimagining the Transatlantic, 1780–1890*, 2011), this volume does not venture into the Spanish colonies, as this would be worthy of a book in its own right and would shift the focus away from the reception of mainland Spain and its impact on British Romantic-era culture and politics.

Spain in British Romanticism is divided into two sections. “Spain and the Romantic Canon” and “Discovering New Texts and Contexts”. Part One contains eight essays which take a fresh look at Spanish-themed works by Southey, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Hemans and the Shelleys. The opening essay by Gary Kelly provides a rich and

compelling overview of the ways in which the British fascination with Spanish literature and culture from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries encoded a debate about European modernity which intensified exponentially in the Romantic period. For Kelly, the rediscovered “heroic” Spain of the Peninsular War texts provided a platform for a debate about nationalist politics, cultural heritage and individual liberty which resonated across Britain, Europe and the Spanish territories. The chapter concludes with an examination of some late works by Hemans, in particular *The Forest Sanctuary*, which he argues created a vacant space for an as-yet-unimagined and unfulfilled “modern” Spanish identity. Following this sweeping and impressive survey, there are two essays on Southey: this dual focus is appropriate as Southey was the best-qualified and most prolific Hispanophile Romantic writer. Yet, for all that “Romantic Spain” was one of his greatest literary achievements, it was a major component of his notorious “apostasy”, or betrayal of his earlier radical ideals. Taken together, the two essays by Lynda Pratt and Ian Packer, and by Juan Sánchez, enable us to make a balanced, informative and robust reassessment of the apostasy controversy. Both essays challenge the by-now stereotypical image of the turncoat poet laureate by drawing on Pratt’s pioneering editorial projects: the digital, online edition of Southey’s letters and the Pickering multi-volume series of Southey’s works. The essays also bring to light Southey’s lesser-known journalism for the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, in which he gave a detailed and engaged response to the Peninsular War and its changing fortunes, and his revival of a genre he first used in his Jacobin early career: the inscription. Pratt and Packer argue that Southey’s response to Spain was not straightforwardly conservative: although he supported political reforms and modernization, he believed (like many observers) that the 1812 Constitution was too radical and, as a result, alienated the bulk of the population—in other words, it was the Spanish people who were reactionary, not him. Southey’s historical epics and his unrealised series of inscriptions were opportunities to dramatize his ambivalences about the progress of the Spanish cause. For Sánchez, the key text remains *Roderick*, Southey’s longest and densest poetic response to the Spanish conflict. Sánchez makes a case for a liberal interpretation of the portrayal of Pelayo, the national liberator, who has to seek the approval of the people for his mission. Sánchez finds verbal echoes between the poem’s closing scenes and the text of the Constitution (which was published in the British press) in order to conclude that Pelayo is

constructed as a constitutional monarch supported by an armed citizenry defending their liberties: in other words, he is a Whig hero.

After this concentration on Southey, the rest of Part One contains one essay each on Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Hemans and the Shelleys. Alicia Laspra-Rodríguez de Coletes provides the first comprehensive account of Wordsworth's Spanish canon. The essay shows that the conventional focus on *Cintra* has led to the neglect of an intriguing composition entitled "Pelayo", which is normally taken to be a fragment but, as Laspra-Rodríguez de Coletes argues, is a complete text that reflects Wordsworth's change of mood from "anger" to "fascination". The latter response led, first, to *Cintra* and then to a series of sonnets which began as soon as Wordsworth became aware of the resistance to French occupation. These sonnets were eventually published as a group in the 1815 two-volume *Poems*, but in order to grasp their power, agency and intended impact it is necessary to put them back into the context of the white heat of the war years when Wordsworth followed the conflict zealously until his waning enthusiasm produced "oblivion" of Spain.

In a similar vein to Wordsworth, Coleridge engaged directly with Spain by writing *Letters on the Spaniards*, a series of articles published in *The Courier* in 1809 to 1810. The resort to journalism by Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge highlights the immediacy and urgency of the Spanish conflict for Romantic writers and contextualizes the displaced and allegorical treatment of most of their poetic responses. After 1808, therefore, the literary fascination of Romantic poets with Spain is indelibly marked by the Peninsular conflict and its troubled aftermath, even if the texts under consideration are seemingly remote from or tangential to these events. In her essay María Eugenia Perojo Arronte mines Coleridge's letters, notebooks and marginalia to argue that his enthusiasm for Spanish literature remained a source of inspiration throughout his career. He adopted St Teresa of Ávila as a model heroine in his play *Remorse*; Teresa's combination of visionary religion with a proto-Protestant suspicion of superstition and tyranny made her an attractive icon of the best aspects of Spanish culture. Moreover, as Perojo shows, Coleridge admired Calderón and Cervantes for their distinctively Spanish qualities of idealism, religiosity and wit.

The next two essays focus on the year 1823, the point at which the Spanish liberal government was overthrown by the French army of "one hundred thousand sons of St Louis". As outlined above, there was a second wave of Spanish-themed literary production in these years, and two

of the most significant poetic interventions—Byron’s *The Age of Bronze* and Hemans’s *The Siege of Valencia ... with Other Poems*—are studied by Agustín Coletes Blanco and Diego Saglia, respectively. Coletes Blanco gives the first detailed reading of the substantial Spanish component of Byron’s topical satire and makes two important qualifications to existing interpretations: the first is that Byron could only have anticipated the invasion of Spain, as the poem was published in April 1823 before any troops had crossed the border; the second new insight is that Byron was wrong to blame the Jewish banking family the Rothschilds for effectively bankrupting Spain. Despite this factual lapse, Coletes Blanco shows that the poem is to be celebrated for its lacerating invective against the Holy Alliance and a recommitment to European liberty. The latter context also informs Saglia’s essay which combines insights from book history and cultural materialism to show how the arrangement of Hemans’s volume makes it an emblem of European liberal revolution. Although most of the poems follow the pattern of displacing contemporary struggles onto previous conflicts, these topics are clustered into bands that put Spain at the centre of nationalist struggles in Southern Europe, in particular Italy and Greece.

The final essay in Part One, by Joselyn M. Almeida, shows for the first time how deeply and passionately the Shelleys responded to both the politics and literature of Spain in their letters, journalism, fiction and poetry. Significantly, Almeida finds nuanced verbal and thematic echoes between the plays of Calderón and *Prometheus Unbound*, and shows that Mary Shelley embedded translated passages from Calderón in *The Last Man* in order to promote an inter-cultural dialogue. The Shelleys’ continued interest in Spanish texts shows that the cultural legacy of the Peninsular War was both deep and durable and that its impact on Romantic engagements with otherness were multiple and far-reaching.

Part Two of *Spain in British Romanticism*, “Discovering New Texts and Contexts”, comprises five essays which attempt to broaden the Spanish canon beyond the famous Romantic writers. Angela Wright looks at a group of little-known Gothic novels which, like the well-known *The Monk* and *Melmoth the Wanderer*, use Spain as a setting for stereotypical villainy and corruption. The essay shows that *The Monk*’s anti-Catholic bias is centred on metropolitan Madrid as a hub of iniquity, whereas minor novels often move out into the regions and present a more heroic and less abject version of Spain. Wright brings back into circulation the Jewish character Nicolas Pedrosa, who figures in a 1799

chapbook *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa* and in M. Rymer's reworking *The Spaniard, or the Pride of Birth* (1806). Pedrosa's pluck and irreverence show that a new Spain was ready to emerge when the opportunity appeared in 1808. A different Spain also figures in the pages of British female novelists, the subject of Susan Valladares's essay. In the first survey of this field, Valladares investigates four women writers: Mary Hill (a first-time novelist); Susan Fraser ("An Officer's Wife"); "Mrs Meeke" (a prolific contributor to the Minerva Press); and Anna Maria Porter (sister to William, a sailor physician during the war; Robert, a celebrated painter who accompanied Sir John Moore into battle at Corunna; and Jane, an established novelist). These writers experimented with different sub-genres, including the Gothic, historical romance and travel narratives, and used stereotypically feminine themes—such as religion, the home and family—to explore masculine codes of war, politics and power. Complementing and contextualizing the essays by Wright and Valladares is Ian Haywood's chapter, which fills a gap in our knowledge of the British reception of the war by focussing on four key moments in which Spain was at the forefront of oppositional reportage. The first is the publication of the scandalous "Don Cevallos" article in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1808. The second moment is 1814, when radicals such as Leigh Hunt, William Cobbett and William Hazlitt, as well as caricaturists like George Cruikshank savaged the so-called Peace and the restoration of the "Gothic" Ferdinand. The third is 1816, when the "Cadiz Mortar" was unveiled in St James's Park. The only public monument to the Peninsular War, it was immediately lampooned by caricaturists to attack the Prince Regent. The final moment is 1819–1823, when Spain entered its second phase of revolutionary politics just as Britain faced an onslaught of Tory repression in the wake of the Peterloo massacre. Historians may continue to debate if an actual "revolution" took place in Spain, but at the time the word was a beacon.

The final two essays move even further away from the established literary canon and focus on two forgotten but important writers on Spain, one British and one Spanish. Fernando Durán López reviews the career of Alexander Robert Charles Dallas, a veteran of the Peninsular campaign who published three substantial texts on Spain: *Ramirez: A Poem* (1817), *Felix Alvarez, or Manners in Spain* (1818) and *Vargas, a Tale of Spain* (1822)—only the last text has received some critical attention, in part because until recently it was wrongly attributed to Blanco White. The essay shows how Dallas drew on his first-hand experience to

portray the brutality, romance and unorthodox heroism of the war, and how he struggled to overcome his prejudices to paint a picture of a different Spain that, like many observers, he perceived to have emerged from the war. Daniel Muñoz Sempere also takes us into the culture of Spanish exiles who were able to make a living in London as journalists and writers. In this community, as Sempere shows, there were professional rivalries, one of which was an intriguing spat between Valentín de Llanos and Blanco White over the authenticity of the former's war novel *Don Esteban*, a radical account of Spanish resistance to Napoleon which Blanco accused of Jacobin excess. This debate was coloured by the fall of the liberal government of 1820–1823, which (like Southey and Tory writers for the *Quarterly Review*) Blanco attributed to what Kamen calls the Romantic “myth” of a freedom-loving Spanish nation (Chap. 1). Blanco saw further evidence of inauthenticity in the portrayal of Spanish manners and customs which he claimed were based on an outsider's perspective, whereas Sempere points out that both authors were writing for a British audience and in that sense had a dual point of view.

Spain in British Romanticism is by no means intended to be the last word on this theme. The book will have been a success if it stimulates curiosity, debate and further investigation into the presence of Spain in Romantic-era culture. There are numerous avenues to be explored: for example, as we approach the bicentennial anniversary of the Trienio Liberal, there is the need for a more comprehensive reappraisal of revolutionary politics across the whole peninsula, including Portugal, which paralleled Spain in many ways. Indeed, the postwar history of Portugal, which was under military rule by Britain between 1814 and 1820, followed by an uprising and a constitutional government, remains almost invisible in Romantic studies. Exploring the triangular relationship between Britain, Spain and Portugal—politically, culturally and historically—is a fruitful future project. Moving into the late 1820s, more work needs to be done on Anglo-Spanish literary and cultural relations, as Spain entered another turbulent period which culminated with the onset of the Carlist wars. At this time, the image of Spain took two directions: for popular consumption, it fell under the spell of the tourist gaze in which the memory of the conflicts of the Romantic years waned; at the same time, reportage continued to convey a narrative of unrest and nation-building. Both these tendencies, which overlapped, had a visual dimension—at the popular level in caricatures and picturesque views, and at a higher level in the increasing exposure of the British public to

Spanish art. Although Spain would not have the same dramatic impact in Britain again until the 1930s, Romantic Spain left a rich and enduring legacy which warrants further study.

NOTES

1. Kamen attacks this historical myth as a liberal propagandist fantasy, citing one deputy to the Cadiz Cortes, Argüelles, as stating that the “Spaniards were in the period of the Goths a free and independent nation”. For Kamen, the liberal “illusion of national identity” had “little foundation in reality” and the embellished notion of a *patria* had “a devastating effect on Spanish public life for the next hundred years” (1–4).
2. On the geo-cultural and geo-political “script”, a “set of representations, a collection of descriptions, scenarios and attributes which are deemed relevant and appropriate to defining a place in foreign policy” or more generally “cultural politics”, see Ó Tuathail 156.

PART I

Spain and The Romantic Canon

The Matter of Spain in Romantic Britain

Gary Kelly

During the Romantic period, British representations of what could be called the “matter of Spain” responded to intensifying public interest in the fate of the Iberian Peninsula and its empires in relation to Britain’s ongoing struggle for global dominance. In this struggle, modernization and accompanying discourses of modernity were perceived as crucial to victory. “Modernity” has diverse, often contradictory uses in research, so for clarity I adapt Anthony Giddens’s exposition (*Consequences, Modernity, Transformation*). This adaptation sees modernity as a contested discourse formulated gradually by certain interests over the long eighteenth century. It centred on self-reflexive autonomous personal identity that enabled “pure” or disinterested relationships ranging from intimacy, conjugality, and domesticity through sociability, community, ethnicity, and “nation” to the “national” chronotope or time-space as persistence of a people in and shaped by a particular land over time. Such relationships in turn supposedly aided successful engagement with modernization’s intensifying relations of risk and trust, new and changing chronotopes, new and expanding abstract or faceless systems and knowledges, and the necessity for disembedding from what was perceived as an outmoded or oppressive locus and

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re-embedding in one able to accommodate the “modern” and “national” subject. For many in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century this modern location would be the constitutional nation state, variously defined and designed. Together, these tropes constituted modernity not as a lived reality but as a discourse or way of talking and writing—a vision to live by rather than in. Such discourse arguably comprised much of what came to be called “Romanticism”.

This chapter examines some uses of the “matter of Spain” in that discourse in Britain and the Atlantic world in the onset of modernity, focusing on certain salient examples.¹ “Matter” here has the now “obsolete” sense of “[t]he subject of a book, speech, etc.; a theme, a topic, a subject of exposition” (*OED*, citing last use as 1752), recently and helpfully expanded to mean literature very broadly that is “concerned to define a place and its people in relation to a heroic, even mythical, past... in (and often in response to) a context of contested definitions of political, territorial, or cultural boundaries” (Federico “Chaucer” 301). “Matter” in a similar sense was applied by the twelfth-century French writer Jean Bodel to Rome, (Arthurian) Britain, and France as represented in chivalric literature, though it could also apply to Greece and Troy, while “Spain” had such a “matter” purposely created for it in the fourteenth century by the kings of Castile and later by Charles V to promote themselves and their kingdoms/empires in the context of rival European monarchic and aristocratic cultures (Federico “Chaucer” 301–316; Federico “Writing”). Once circulating, such “matter” could be used by others, at that time or later, in Spain or elsewhere, for their own purposes, as happened in Britain’s onset of modernity.

By mid-eighteenth century Spain was perceived in Britain as a still formidable but unmodernized and hence declining world power. The Scottish Enlightenment historian William Robertson’s account of the reign of Charles V and sixteenth-century height of the Spanish empire, published soon after Spain’s ill-fated intervention against Britain in the Seven Years War of 1756–1763, attributed Spain’s decline to the inability to modernize caused by the establishment of the Inquisition. “In Spain and Portugal,” Robertson wrote, “where the tyrannical jurisdiction of the Inquisition crushed the Protestant faith as soon as it appeared, the spirit of Popery continues invariable; science has made small progress, and the character of ecclesiastics has undergone little change”. This contrasted with “those countries where the members of the two churches have mingled freely with each other, or have carried on any considerable