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Completing the Union? The Irish Novel and the Moment of the Union

According to Walter Scott, writing in 1829 in the General Preface to his works, the fictions of Maria Edgeworth 'may be truly said to have done more towards completing the Union, than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up'.[1] This essay examines the role played by fiction in lending shape and meaning to Ireland's post-1801 relationship with Britain and offers a new reading of the relationship between the Act of Union and novels usually thought to impart its political message and even attempt its 'completion'. Focussing on emblematic moments in key post-Union fictions and steering a course between literature and history, I argue that early nineteenth-century Irish fiction affords an immediate and sometimes dizzyingly close-up perspective on the political spectacle of Union, and that this near-focus on the event itself has been ignored by critics eager to take the long view of its effects.

1829: Between History and Literature

The 'legislative enactments' which Scott sees as falling short of fiction in their efforts to complete the trajectory of the 1801 legislation were most likely the Roman Catholic Relief Acts of 1828 and 1829. These government measures saw the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts which had secured Protestant dominance in public life. Rather than aiming at completion of the Union, however, it is more likely that Emancipation was approved because of the immediate threat of an Irish Catholic being elected into parliament; a response to what Thomas Bartlett describes as Daniel O'Connell's realisation that '[e]mancipation would never be granted: it could only be taken'.[2] The victory of Henry Villiers Stuart, a liberal Protestant who stood in the Catholic interest, in the 1826 general election sounded the warning bell, and was soon followed up by O'Connell's own victory in the Clare by-election of 1828. Seen through government eyes, and understood as a political gesture in its own moment, emancipation took pointed aim against mass political mobilisation in Ireland.

Scott was unlikely to oppose the policies of the ruling Tory party with whom he was closely allied, but his preference for Edgeworth's novels over Wellington and Peel's parliamentary measures probably reflects a personal and even instinctive distrust of those who practised the faith: according to Scott's son-in-law John Gibson Lockhart, 'no man disapproved of Romanism as a system of faith and practice than Sir Walter always did'.[3] Lockhart further reports how Scott

> on all occasions expressed manfully his belief, that the best thing for Ireland would have been never to relax the strictly political enactments of the penal laws, however harsh these might appear. Had they been kept in vigour for another half century, it was his conviction that Popery would have been all but extinguished in Ireland.[4]

The problems of Popery aside, 1829 marks what Peter Garside has recently called 'a watershed in the production of fiction in Britain'.[5] It saw 'the first clear realization of an extensive middle-class market',[6] as well as being remembered in literary history as the moment at which Walter Scott ('the Great Unknown' for much of the preceding decades) put aside the pseudonym of the 'Author of Waverley' and revealed himself to the public in the 'General Preface' to Magnum Opus edition of his novels. Scott assembled in the process the rudiments of a theory of historical fiction. This fictional philosophy, in which appeasement and accommodation form central planks, provides an important context within which to read his praise of Edgeworth. Ina Ferris has shown how Scott's 1829 championing of Edgeworth sounds quite a different note to his earlier praise of her writing. In the final chapter to Waverley itself, published in 1814 (entitled 'A Postscript, which should have Been a Preface'), Scott recounts how reading 'the admirable Irish portraits drawn by Miss Edgeworth' help shape his own decision to write historical fiction.[7] Ferris elaborates on the difference between these two, on the face it equally respectful and admiring, takes on Edgeworth, arguing that '[w]here the novel itself had stressed her innovative role in undermining standard modes of cultural representation, the late preface sets her up as the model of the politics of conciliation that always attracted Scott.'[8]

Unfinished Business: Novels and the Union

Scott's analysis of Edgeworth draws on a widespread contemporary tendency to describe the Union between Great Britain and Ireland as incomplete, in need of some supplementary or auxiliary measures. The resumption of the war with France and the resurfacing of the United Irish threat in the shape of Emmet's rebellion of 1803 sharpened this sense of insufficiency. By the 1820s by the efforts of the Catholic Association and later the Repeal movement gave concrete shape and form to the many expressions of discontent as to the shortcomings of the 1801 settlement. Although the efforts of the

Catholic Association may not have given rise to the Repeal movement in quite as smooth a transfer of political energies as once was thought, there were nonetheless key connections between the two campaigns, which have to be explained by something more than the driving force of Daniel O'Connell's personality. The twin movements for emancipation and Repeal reawakened old grievances and acted as fresh irritants on injuries still raw from a sense of the Union as violation and betrayal. In leaving open the Catholic question, the 1801 act had exposed, or perhaps inflicted, a gaping wound on the very British body politic it had helped, in part, to invent.

The anonymous author of an 1805 pro-Catholic pamphlet describes the frustrations of early nineteenth-century Irish Catholics, insisting that the Union would stand or fall on the basis of its insinuated promises:

> There was an implied stipulation, if there were not an express one, to harmonise the country, and render the Union the basis of a settlement, else it was a dangerous and unprofitable intrigue, and the vast detail of its expences and compensations, incurred without any adequate benefit.[9]

In other words, the failure of the Union to deliver on its unwritten promises means it is inherently unable to supply what the same pamphleteer calls 'resources for attachment'. Instead it comes to resemble a crude piece of state machinery, too clumsy and creaking to be effective. One of the mock playbills circulated as part of the anti-Union campaign invited onlookers to 'the royal circus near College Green', there to witness 'a grand display of the new Political Steam Engine; or, Civilising Machine, For Britainizing the Wild Irish. After which there will be a harsh Concert of Woeful and Detrimental Music.'[10] Thomas Moore supplies a further metaphor, describing the Union legislation as not only maladroit but monstrous, 'like Frankenstein's ghastly patch-work'.[11]

Literary Unionism

Yet to demonstrate that 'the politics of conciliation' were temperamentally Scott's rather than Edgeworth's, or to show how appeasement was always haunted by the ghosts of past history, is not to deny the influence of his observation, or the extent to which a version of it still dominates

contemporary critical debates. Scott's judgement on Edgeworth has been lifted out of its particular context and recycled as a judgement on early nineteenth-century Irish writing in English more generally, leading to a view of Ireland as recalcitrant, resistant to some narrative modes and only diagnosable within what Seamus Deane (referring here to W.B. Yeats) memorably described as 'the pathology of literary unionism'.[12]

In the General Introduction to the Field Day Anthology, Deane turns to 'reconciliation' as a 'key term' in Irish debates from the end of the eighteenth century. He locates Charlotte Brooke's 1789 Reliques of Irish Poetry as a turning point in Irish writing, after which '[c]ultural reconciliation appeared to be a necessary prelude to political reconciliation'. The Act of Union, then, was to be implemented via the good offices of culture, in the form of acts of translation like Brooke's; to be followed up by aesthetic projects which attempted to create a union of hearts and minds between Ireland and Britain. 'However', Deane continues, cultural reconciliation was not to be: 'a series of catastrophic political developments — the French revolution, the rise of the United Irishmen, the 1798 rebellion and the Act of Union in 1800 — deferred the realisation of this ambition.'[13]

Against this image of culture as striving to catch up with the Union, its efforts repeatedly and disastrously wrecked by stormy events, this essay poses an alternative picture. I seek to replace such a distinction between creaky unionist plots and the irrepressible, organic forces of cultural nationalism. What follows is an argument for reading Irish fiction in tandem with the kind of detailed historical exploration of the Union now underway. Rather than see novels as 'completing' the Union, I propose instead an attempt to engage with Irish fiction in all its shadowy complexity: there are Union novels, but they take their place alongside 1798 novels, Repeal novels and fictions of Catholic emancipation. Rather than depicting the Union as a substantial and undisputed fact sitting on the horizon of early nineteenth-century Irish expectations, I wish show how the fictional focus often falls on the Act, rather than the fact of Union.

It is or course near impossible to strip away accretions of hindsight — the consequences of the Union have seen to that — but it is at least possible to try to read the Union as an event in its own moment. Discussing Maria Edgeworth's The Absentee (1812), W.J. McCormack has observed how the text can be described as a Union novel in two distinct ways. As a novel which depicts 'Ireland under the Union', The Absentee testifies to the Union's status as longue durée or enduring fact of history. But The Absentee is also a 'post-Union' fiction in the sense it was published in 1812, a few years after the

Act had passed.[14] It is this latter, stricter and more materialist, sense of Union which I wish employ in this essay, in the belief that the relationship between politics and culture must sometimes be sought for in specific public content rather than reduced to pre-ordained notions of political tendencies.

The novel, as 'a "syncretic" or "problem-solving" genre',[15] is generally thought to carry the imaginative and ideological weight of Union, proposing specific narrative solutions to the early nineteenth-century political puzzle of Anglo-Irish relations. In literary history, Irish novelists are forever arguing and apologising; defending, explaining, rationalizing and resolving, treating of Ireland and in the process transforming the country into an object of knowledge to be surveyed by the 'British', or perhaps English, reader. The national tale in particular, with its intertwined plots of travel and love, is seen as a conduit for a harmonising impulse in Anglo-Irish relations. To put this differently: early nineteenth-century Irish novels are thought to participate in a liberal vision of Ireland which can be understood as 'the history of a consolidated effort, frustrated by prejudice but implacable in its direction, to recruit Irish Catholics into the Union with the help of the Irish Catholic Church while appeasing the endless fears and bigotries of Irish Protestants'.[16] The best that can be hoped for in this account is increased understanding and tolerance between two countries which are inevitably connected.

For Deane, again the most authoritative and convincing spokesperson for this view, this metanarrative manifests itself in literature as allegory, which does little more than to lend formal structure and some of the tricks of the novelist's trade to a set of stereotypical assumptions about Irish national character. This is a persuasive argument. It is difficult, for example, to counter Deane's analysis of the retrograde ideology of national character or to disagree with him about its dismayingly long hold on the imperial imagination. And he does allow for the dialogic form of literature, which transforms the Burkean narrative of increasing tolerance into 'a rational account that is constantly threatened by the competition of irrational energies'.[17]

This last observation in particular stands as an apposite summary of the current critical consensus on Maria Edgeworth's Castle Rackrent, a text now usually thought of in terms of just such a 'competition' between a rational frame of reference (the notes and glossary) and an energetic, even insurgent, peasant voice (the first person narrative of family steward Thady Quirke). But in Deane's account even this dialogic contest becomes stultifying, at best formulaic and at worst (again in the case

of Edgeworth) masquerading as analysis when 'its real achievement was to have produced an analgesic version of the question of Anglo-Irish relations.'[18]

As the example of Castle Rackrent should suggest, however, the 'competition' of voices which is indeed characteristic of post-Union Irish fiction does not occur within a sealed-off, smooth and secure literary space. The form of the novel is itself shaken up by the internal dialogic contests taking place, and this dialogism has external as well as internal effects: the novel cannot withstand such a battering from within without showing some bumps and bruises on its exterior. Such formal innovations as Castle Rackrent's mixture of narrative frames, experiments with epistolary form and its relation third person narratives, the interpolated manuscripts of many national tales, and indeed the national tale itself, are evidence of fiction registering political conflict at the level of genre. What follows is an attempt to introduce a focus on genre into the study of Irish fiction and its relation to the Union.

The shadow of the Union

Whether it numbed the pain of that event or not, fiction was indeed present as the Union was born. The pamphlet war which preceded and sustained the parliamentary debates relied on an armoury of fictional methods and techniques.[19] There is no denying either that the form of the Irish novel itself marshalled fresh energy and momentum about this time, and many describe Castle Rackrent as the first truly Irish novel. The years immediately after the Union saw a marked rise in the production of Irish fiction, and, despite much of it being published in London, it is possible to identify a distinct body of novels which take Ireland as their theme, or which prominently feature Irish politics, landscape, dialect or characters.[20] Joep Leerssen captures the confluence of political event and fictional form well, when he describes the novel as 'a genre which was adopted by Irish authors under the very shadow of the union'.[21]

In the context of an interpretation such as mine, situated at it is between the formal rigours of literary criticism and the demands of historical detail, what does it means for a particular genre to be espoused 'under the shadow' of an historical event? Can history be captured in silhouette? Literary critics must surely concede that while novels can capture strong shapes or the outline of historical events, they may not prove faithful to the dim flickers of detail. From a literary point of view, however,

it is possible to show how history's long shadow can obscure or even eclipse the specificity of fictional forms, and it is to this aspect of the Irish novel I now wish to turn.

In 1800 the novel was a relatively new (or novel) cultural form, with little by way of cultural prestige attached to it. The eighteenth-century achievements of Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding and Frances Burney had yet to celebrated as high culture. The novel's reputation was certainly not secure until at least the 1830s, a development closely linked to the elevation of Walter Scott to the ranks of literary heavyweight. Moreover, the close association of novels with Jacobinism and such 1790s radicals Mary Wolllstonecraft and William Godwin saw the genre 'struggling to regain respectability'[22] in the early years of the nineteenth century, potentially stranded in the receding tide of revolution.

From the eighteenth century onwards the novel itself seemed to have the power to adumbrate or shadow forth new futures. This generic pliancy and even plasticity undoubtedly made the form appealing to cultural outsiders of all sorts: women writers, who for a brief but heady moment dominated fiction writing between the 1790s and 1820;[23] as well as those seeking out modes of giving expression to non-metropolitan political identities, notably the case in Ireland, Scotland, and, to a lesser extent, Wales. It is helpful here to turn to Katie Trumpener's account of the development of the novel across the British Empire in the period of romanticism. Surveying these years Trumpener notices the new prominence of the national tale, which she describes as 'a genre developed in Ireland, primarily by women writers, over the decade preceding the publication of Waverley.'[24] Where Joep Leerssen has Irish writers 'adopting' the novel genre, Trumpener assigns them a more dynamic role, in developing and expanding a new and ultimately influential literary form. Trumpener signals the special importance of women writers in this process, paying particular attention to Maria Edgeworth and Sydney Owenson, but also to their often neglected forebear, the Waterford-born popular Gothic novelist Regina Maria Roche.

Mapping Leerssen and Trumpener's observations onto one another underlines the importance of plotting political, cultural and literary events side by side as the defining co-ordinates of nineteenth-century Irish fiction. The Irish novel should be read in relation to the Act of Union with Great Britain (1801), certainly, but also in the light of the uneven nature of generic development, the contemporary dominance of women writers, especially the reputation of Maria Edgeworth, and the impact of Walter Scott's Waverley (1814) which caught onto and redirected many of the trends initiated by Edgeworth and Owenson. There are inevitably some rough edges in this layering of interpretative frames, but such

a critical quadrant has the advantage of making visible the interpenetration between cultural and political modes of apprehending Ireland's entry into the Union. Reading literary production and political debate as interwoven in this way itself underpins a picture of nineteenth-century Ireland as the scene of competition between cultural and political acts of imagination, a tension which can be read as both specifically Irish and as belonging more generally to a contest between Romantic and Enlightenment modes of thought.

Distinguishing between possible approaches to reading relations between fiction and politics from the eighteenth-century onwards, William B. Warner argues against the kind of narrow literary history which 'turns the strife of history into a repertoire of forms'. Warner's strictures remind us that the novel is not static, and that form as well as content takes shape according to the pressure of events. Warner is suspicious of 'the way in which antagonistic historical strife becomes sedimented in one complex, ambivalent cultural object: "the novel"', and is keen to avoid the kind of critical practice which treats the institution of the novel as somehow self-evident and transparent.[25] As Harriet Guest argues, eighteenth and early nineteenth-century novels 'themselves participate in debates that cut across genres; they assume readers who are also immersed in periodical literature, in poetry, in histories, readers who discuss plays and parliamentary debates, who perform music, and peer into the windows of print shops'.[26]

Post-Union Ireland and Britain provides ample evidence that readers may have matters other than fictional on their minds, and testifies too to these 'debates that cut across genres'. George III is said to have read Castle Rackrent with relish, observing on completing it 'What, what — now I know something of my Irish subjects'. It is tempting to speculate on what part reading Castle Rackrent might have played in forming the King's opinions on the undesirability of Catholic emancipation — perhaps his decision to impose a royal veto at the last moment is evidence that the danger posed by the Quirkes was felt to be a real one, and George III was an early proponent of the text's postcolonial tendencies. While the King was thus engaged, his Prime Minister was said to favour Sydney Owenson's fictions, and especially her novel of religious intolerance The Novice of Saint Dominick: the critic John Wilson Croker records his outrage at hearing a rumour "That the late Mr. PITT occupied the last hours of his life in reading Miss Owenson's admirable novel of "'The Novice of Saint Dominick'".[27] Meanwhile Lord Castlereagh not only read Owenson's novels but 'had been favoured with hearing some of the MS [of The Missionary] read aloud' to him by the author herself, whom he had met at the home of her

patrons, the Abercorns. So impressed was Castlereagh, that he 'offered to take Miss Owenson to town in his chariot, and to give a rendezvous to her publisher in his own study'. Her Memoirs record how Stockdale, the publisher in question,

> was naturally impressed by the environments, which gave him a higher opinion of Miss Owenson's genius than he had felt before. The opportunity to make a good bargain was improved by Miss Owenson, Lord Castlereagh himself standing by whilst the agreement was signed.[28]

As the examples above suggest, the interpenetration between politics and culture could be playful, diverting and often enigmatic. Consider one exemplary instances of the part played by the Union debates in early nineteenth-century Irish culture, a short satirical notice which appeared in the Dublin Evening Post of December 21 1807, detailing the Private Theatricals 'in preparation at the houses of the following Noblility and Gentry' for Christmas of that year. The newspaper sedately reports on the latest trend in home entertainment: 'Private Theatricals, we understand, by fashionable report, will be the leading feature of the approaching festivities'. The tone is mock-serious and soon gives way to gossipy and malicious examples of these supposed 'theatricals'.[29] Among the fashionable homes listed is that of the recently widowed Lady Clare where, reportedly, a performance entitled 'Cease your Funning' is to be presented alongside 'The Ephesian Matron' and 'The Irish Widow'. The name of Lady Clare's late husband, John FitzGibbon Earl of Clare, would have inevitably brought the Union to mind, but the allusion here is more pointed. 'Cease Your Funning' is, of course, a reference to the earliest anti-Union pamphlet, published in 1799 as a riposte to the government-sponsored Arguments for and against an Union. Both The Ephesian Matron (by Isaac Bickerstaffe) and The Irish Widow (by David Garrick) were eighteenth-century plays revolving around merry widow figures, hinting, perhaps, at Lady Clare's less than secluded widowhood and earlier rumours of her adulteries.[30] Maria Edgeworth described her as 'a painted — made up — vulgar thoroughgoing woman of the world', [31] and the circuit of reference is completed by William Drennan, who speculated in a letter to his sister Martha McTier that the character of the racy and rouged-up Lady Delacour in Edgeworth's novel of fashionable life Belinda may have been based on the glamorous Anne FitzGibbon.[32]

Belinda, published in 1801, returns us to the moment of Union. Yet as a novel set entirely in England and with only one marginal and incidental Irish character, it is usually read in terms of femininity and the private world of courtship and marriage, an aspect of Edgeworth's interests difficult to relate to her Irish experiences. Different kinds of objections have been raised to reading her Patronage (1814) in Irish terms, but it is useful here to consult the most recent edition of the text which reminds us that Edgeworth introduces Irish lawyer Charles Kendal Bushe into the fiction in the form of an idealised Lord Chief Justice. Bushe was the probable author of the above-mentioned Cease Your Funning, and as such forms part of the web of reference and allusion which reconnects Edgeworth's 'English' fictions to Castle Rackrent, a text included by W.J McCormack alongside such pamphlets Cease Your Funning in his bibliography of the debate on the Union.

Just as Drennan's suggestion opens up Belinda to the Union, a later novel of fashionable life, Edgeworth's Manoeuvring (1812) can also be seen to relate to the same political moment. In its original version (as a draft called first 'Mrs Beaumont' and then 'Plain Sailing'), Manoeuvring featured a rough and ready naval officer whom family members immediately recognised as Admiral Thomas Pakenham, an uncle of Lord Longford. The similarities were so visible and the depiction so close to caricature that Edgeworth accepted family counsel and cut the character altogether for fear of offending the Longfords, neighbours of the Edgeworths on the Longford/Westmeath border.

The most recognisable aspect of the presentation related to the Union, specifically to Pakenham's bullying and press ganging of voters in the Irish House of Commons, which Richard Lovell Edgeworth had witnessed and abhorred.[33] Admiral Pakenham's house is, like Lady Clare's, featured in the Dublin Evening Post skit on private theatricals; there the entertainment is to consist of 'The Tars Progress, Neptune Deposed and Brittania Victorious'.

The above examples suggest just how porous at its boundaries the novel was, the result perhaps of its relative generic openness and lack of cultural prestige. Further evidence of this generic receptiveness to immediate political context may be adduced from contemporary correspondence between Lady Granard and Denys Scully. In 1799 Lady Granard wrote to her friend Scully, acknowledging receipt of two recent anti-Union pamphlets he had sent her. The daughter of the social leader of the Irish Whigs, Lady Moira, Lady Granard belonged to a liberal Protestant circle which was loosely united in opposition to the Union. She reported to Scully that was she 'infinitely pleased & gratified' by what she read but in doing so was cautious as to how she identified the pamphlets. The

letter in fact does not explicitly mention the Union debates, but instead refers covertly to 'the two novels you sent me': 'If you can get copies of them do get two more, for a friend of mine in England who loves foolish books as well as I do — & keep them 'till you hear again from me which shall be very soon.'[34] In a postscript to a letter to Scully written the next day (and presumably conveyed to him by more secure means) Lady Granard explains how 'I wrote you a few lines by post to acknowledge the receipt of the pamphlets by post, stiling them novels'.[35]

In a culture where Union pamphlets could, even if only rhetorically, assume the guise of novels, is hardly surprising that novels themselves did not scruple to offer an analysis of the Union. John Banim's novel, The Anglo-Irish of the Nineteenth Century (1828) attempts to define what Terry Eagleton has glossed as 'the grammar of Anglo-Irish relations'.[36] During a set-piece conversation witnessed by the novel's protagonist Gerald Blount, the leading political figures of the 1820s discuss 'the present unhappy state of Ireland'. Present in this roman-à-clef are 'the Secretary', a thinly disguised John Wilson Croker, Mr Grady, who according to John Kelly is based on George Croly, editor of The Guardian, and a range of fictional figures whom Kelly connects to William Magee, Thomas Crofton Croker and the Rev. Richard Pope.[37] Mr Grady sets out his political views, and is countered by the antagonistic Croker:

> 'The first point is this,' remarked Mr. Grady, 'composing a leader — 'what is the cause of the unhappy state of Ireland? why is she the only uncivilized portion of the three kingdoms? After more than seven hundred years of identity with this country —'
>
> 'Not identity, Grady; that almost makes you speak a paradox,' said the Secretary.
>
> 'Connexion, Sir?'
>
> 'No.'
>
> 'Then, Sir, conjunction?'
>
> 'Not even that, unless you mean our grammatical anomaly, a disjunctive conjunction'[38]

Grady's views, tagged here as the threadbare and clichéd stuff of popular journalism ('composing a leader'), meet the cutting cynicism of Croker's more nuanced linguistic analysis. In the same novel Gerald, in the context of an argument with a thinly disguised Lord Castlereagh character, insists that an

implicit promise of Catholic Emancipation had been part of the 1801 settlement but is warned by the cool statesman that the words of the Act of Union 'may seem to imply many meanings'.

Maria Edgeworth and her father Richard Lovell Edgeworth remarked on how the 'passion and prejudice' of politics press down on language in Ireland. Their Essay on Irish Bulls (1802) observes how, in the immediate aftermath of 1798, not only the resources of the law but those of language itself had been abused: 'many cant terms have been brought into use, which are not yet to be reckoned amongst the acknowledged terms of the country'.[39] Alongside examples of these 'party barbarisms in language'[40] the Edgeworths present the reported conversation of Phelim O'Mooney, 'the Irish Incognito' who, in the disguise of 'John Bull', sets off to England in search of a rich wife. Fortified by a bet with his brother and boasting no obvious 'brogue', he feels sure he can avoid the (in this case entirely correct) English suspicion of Irish fortune-hunters. As John Bull, O'Mooney tries to avoid discovery by eschewing such recognisably Irish habits as offering hospitality, evincing enthusiasm and having eggs for breakfast.

Arriving in Deal, he goes to the custom house where he sees, and more importantly hears, a 'red hot-countryman of his own' in loud dispute over some Irish poplin. When caught with contraband goods, 'the Hibernian fell immediately upon the Union, which he swore was Disunion, as the custom-house officers managed it'.[41] Sir John Bull observes these dispute with a cool disinterest which initially serves to cover over his nationality: 'from his quiet appearance and deportment, the custom-house officers took it for granted that he was an Englishman'. The Edgeworths present John Bull/O'Mooney's reaction in free indirect style, a discursive resource they deploy in order to investigate the psychic strains incurred in acting like an Englishman:

> He was in no hurry, he begged that gentleman's business might be settled first; he would wait the officer's leisure, and as he spoke he played so dextrously with half-a-guinea as to make it visible only where he wished. The custom-house officer was his humble servant immediately; but the Hibernian would have been his enemy, had he not conciliated him by observing, 'that even Englishmen must allow there was something very like a bull in professing to make a complete identification of the two kingdoms, whilst, at the same time, certain regulations continued in full force to divide the countries by art, even more than the British channel does by nature.'[42]

Phelim O'Mooney/John Bull is invoved here in a delicate balancing act, a reflection perhaps on the possibility of the 'British' identity which Ireland under the Union might be expected to achieve. His reference to the legal articles regarding trade remind us that the Union was after all a measure designed to regulate parliamentary representation and commercial exchange, rather than a manifesto for cultural change. The example, however, shows how difficult it is (and perhaps was) to distinguish between the limited legislative intent of Act itself and the rhetoric which accompanied it, which bore much larger questions of identity, sameness and difference along in its tide. The suggestion here is that these contradictory impulses result in a Union which is a species of Irish bull: there is 'something very like a bull in professing to make a complete identification of the two kingdoms, whilst, at the same time, certain regulations continued in full force to divide the countries'.

Significantly, Britishness here is the product of disguise, a linguistic costume which proves all too easy to penetrate. Phelim O'Mooney/John Bull continues to speak 'plausibly' and 'candidly and coolly on Irish and English politics', only to give him himself away in a manner which belongs precisely to the moment of the Union debates. The characters present begin to discuss John Foster, the last speaker of the Irish House of Commons and a leader of the anti-Unionists. In joining in the general praise of 'a distinguished patriot of his country' and his conduct during the Union, Phelim (for it is he who speaks now), 'in the height of his enthusiasm, inadvertently called him the Speaker.' He repeats 'the Speaker — our Speaker!'. Patrick Geoghean records how William Wilberforce had 'mockingly referred to Foster as "Mr. Spaker"',[43] and it seems safe to assume the Edgeworths are signalling both a vowel sound and a fondness for Foster (an old school friend of Richard Lovell Edgeworth) that instantly divulge O'Mooney's nationality.

'What a Picture!': the Spectacle of the Union

Early nineteenth-century Irish novelists have frequent resource to disguise as a plot device, regularly using it to screen the potentially offensive Englishness of travellers newly arrived in Ireland. Their true identity is made visible in other ways, however, often ironically evinced in an attitude toward Ireland which involuntarily treats the country as a picturesque sight: 'What a picture!', sighs the young English hero of Lady Morgan's The Wild Irish Girl on first glimpsing Connemara and the Castle of Inismore.[44]

Ireland here is presented in explicitly picturesque terms, in the eighteenth-century sense of framing a sight as a picture. A scene early in Morgan's novel Florence Macarthy (1818) frames the passing of the Union as itself part of a scene which catches the curiosity of two travellers newly arrived in Dublin. As with The Wild Irish Girl, the travellers of this later novel conceal their true backgrounds and go under assumed names. The younger of the two is in fact Lord Fitzadelm, an absentee returning to his estates and travelling under the name Mr De Vere. He has taken passage on a ship captained by 'the Commodore' who, as General Fitzwalter, is returning from leading a brigade in the South American wars against the Spanish, and who is discovered at the end of four volumes to be the rightful heir to Fitzadelm's estate. Walking in the direction of their hotel in Sackville Street under the direction of a Dublin guide, two men pass 'through that line of the Irish metropolis, which brings within the compass of a coup d'oeil some of the noblest public edifices and spacious streets to be found in the most leading cities of Europe.'[45] The narrative explicitly frames the cityscape as an image, caught within the 'compass of a coup d'oeil'. The scene's painterly aspect is underlined by its being static: 'All, however, was still, silent, and void.'[46]

This first sight of the Parliament House and Trinity College is framed, the visual experience directed and managed by their Irish guide. As the men view the sights, their tour guide watches them, 'his eye furtively glancing on them'; while his mind darts ahead, scheming so as to set up their next vantage point, and contriving to make the sudden onset of architectural grandeur seem effortless:

> and when they reached that imposing area, which includes so much of the architectural elegance and social bustle of Dublin, the area flanked by its silent senate-house, and commanded by its venerable university, he paused, as if from weariness, leaned his burthen against the college ballustrade, and drew upon the attention of the strangers (who also volunarily halted to look around them, by observing, as he pointed to the right, 'That's the ould parliament-house, Sir.'[47]

Thus manoeuvred to confront this spectacle, the travellers respond in highly conventional manners. Their field of vision is structured not only by the efforts of their guide, but is also organised according to visual codes provided by the travellers' own expectations and education. The younger of the two men, De Vere, is a practised picturesque tourist, in search of visual novelty (the conclusion to the novel

sees him departing for a tour of the North Pole) and above all committed to a self-conscious and highly staged practice of looking. In the novel's opening scenes, as their ship sails into Dublin Bay, De Vere searches through his copy of Spenser's View of the Present State of Ireland for the famous description of Ireland's natural fecundity; challenged by his companion to put by his book and look around him, he nonchalantly responds that prefers to see places through the 'prismatic hues' of books.[48]

Thus, his reaction to the former Parliament building is to immediately aestheticize and apostrophize it:

> It is a beautiful thing of its kind … Beautiful, even now, entire and perfect in all its parts, what will it be centuries hence, touched by the consecrating hand of time, when its columns shall lie prostrate, its pediments and architraves broken and moss-grown, when all around shall be silence and desolation?[49]

His companion, freshly returned from the South American wars of liberation, indulges in prolepsis of a more directly political kind. He prefers to think of how 'some American freeman',

> the descendant of some Irish exile, may voluntarily seek the bright green shores of his fathers, and, in this mouldering structure, behold the monument of their former degradation.[50]

The references here to exile and to Ireland's 'bright green shores' contain echoes of United Irish discourse, and remind readers that the aesthetic vision of ruin, silence and desolation conjured up by the two men might have material meanings.

The novel as a whole endorses a political diagnosis, providing several set pieces in the opening Dublin scenes which go to show the grisly effects of the Union. A place of political decay and economic decline, Morgan's fictional Dublin closely resembles the highly coloured images conjured up by anti-Union propagandists and politicians, and fulfils dire predictions like the following, commonly found in song sheets and speeches: 'British Gentlemen, providores of Amusement, and eminent for the exhibition of Wild-beasts, Raree Shows, &c., &c … may occasionally condescend to visit the mouldring remnant of the Irish Metropolis, to divert the melancholy of its desponding inhabitants.'[51]

Picking up on the anti-Union discourse in the novel, one British reviewer asked incredulously whether Lady Morgan really 'should seriously suppose that the rebellion in ninety-eight was promoted by Mr. Pitt to bring about the Union, or that the Union itself is the cause of the typhus fever which has raged in Ireland ever since the failure of the crops in 1816'.[52] The same Anti-Jacobin reviewer quotes as evidence of Morgan's excesses the following speech made by Lady Clancare, the heroine of the novel:

> Repeal the act which banished our landlords, and exhausts the country of its revenue and resources, and then disease will disappear, with the want that fosters it. People will die, to be sure, and of typhus fever sometimes; but it will no longer be to Ireland what the yellow fever is to the West Indies, or the plague to Constantinople.[53]

Commenting on these scenes, the reviewer for the Edinburgh Monthly Review complains that Morgan's depiction of Dublin life would be 'unrivalled', if only

> she had not resolved to make all her pictures subservient to the development of political opinions; an endeavour by which she not only continually destroys the illusions of her descriptions, but adds to the vexation of the reader, by shewing her distrust of his ability to draw those inferences from her statements which she intends to convey.[54]

Part of the problem here is Lady Clancare herself: a writer of national tales who in the novel wages a successful war against a thinly-veiled John Wilson Croker (appearing in the novel as Counsellor Con Crawley), the character is a composite of opinions and experiences which would have been instantly recognisable as Morgan's own. If the authorial self-portrait is in part responsible for breaking the rules of graceful fictional illusion, however, it may well be the Union itself which 'continually destroys the illusions' of naturalistic description and vexes the reader. Associated with ruin and decay, the Union is cast in terms which place it on the side of non-naturalistic representation, or that which challenges smooth aesthetic categorisation.

It is useful here to return briefly to The Wild Irish Girl, and its earlier deployment of a traveller's first reaction to the striking features of Dublin's 'splendid and beautiful public structures'.[55] Set in the 1790s (but written post-Union) the College Green area is described as small but perfectly formed, a miniature London with no nearby gin shops or poor houses to distract the eye from the harmoniously grouped public buildings. Soon after taking in this scene, from which only the surrounding 'vice, poverty, idleness, and filth' distract, the hero of The Wild Irish Girl crosses a bog in Connemara, 'whose burning surface, heated by a vertical sun, gave me no inadequate idea of Arabia Deserta'.[56] It is possible to see how the terms of these twin accounts are transformed into the Dublin of Florence Macarthy where the city is both splendid and deserted, its grandeur now an effect of rather than a distraction from the prevaling emptiness: 'All, however, was still, silent, and void.'

Such accounts of College Green, the Parliament and Trinity College are of course the stuff of travel literature, and the descriptions of Dublin as a deposed capital seems almost instantly clichéd. Just as travellers both fictional and real repeatedly record the beauties of Dublin bay, so the ill effects of the Union are systematically noted in novels from 1801 on. The fact that these two tropes can sit side by side in the same novel (as they do, for example, in The Absentee and in Florence Macarthy itself) suggests how the discourses of prestige and poverty are related: Ireland's natural beauties and its economic decay compete for narrative space in the novels of the immediate post-Union period, as if no one were quite sure yet which was the more compelling.

To return to Morgan's travellers, their sightseeing tour into the imaginary architectural future specifically evokes a drawing by James Malton, the famous recorder of images of eighteenth-century Dublin. Morgan's methods approximate in narrative terms the visual strategies of James Malton's one of Malton's capricci, 'An Imaginary view of the Parliament House, Dublin, in Decay'. In 1801 Malton produced twin drawings depicting the Parliament building in College Green as it was and will be after the Union. The first shows the immense pillars of the building's portico overlooking tiny figures, who are busy, peaceful and apparently prosperous. In the second drawing, a mirror image of the first, ragged men make their way among crumbling masonry and mossy pillars, and a broken pediment looms ominously overhead.

Unlike Malton's more familiar images of classical order, the clutter and disarray of this second drawing encode a proto-romanticism which is very similar to Morgan's own project. Ruins

operate as an index of cultural value here, encoding an appeal to some future appreciation of a once great civilization: the glory that was Dublin.

In Florence Macarthy too, the depiction of Parliament's picturesque decay encodes a claim to cultural authority even as it charts the erosion of political power. Its political charge is intensified via a reference to Constantin François de Volney's Ruins of Empire and what Kevin Whelan calls its 'resolutely anti-colonial politics'.[57] De Vere imagines

> Some future Volney of the Ohio of Susquehannah upon the shores of this little Palmyra, when he may surmise and wonder, may dream his theories, and calculate his probabilities; and, bending over these ruins, may see the future in the past, and apostrophize the inevitable fate of existing empires.[58]

In evoking the ubiquitous eighteenth-century spectacle of the decline of empires, Morgan connects the travellers' perspective of Dublin not only to Volney, but perhaps even more powerfully to Edward Gibbon's The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Gibbon presents Rome's fall as 'the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness'; a failure consequent on its earlier successes:

> Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; and as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial supports, the stupendous fabric yielded to the pressure of its own weight.[59]

Read alongside Gibbon, Morgan can be seen to predict the ruin not so much of Dublin as of Britain, or rather the British empire into which Ireland had been incorporated with the Union.

This rather lofty cultural analysis is not however the one dominant in the novel itself, which prompts a different kind of reading, one which takes shape not via the travellers and their premonitions, but rather in the margins of their vision and in the hands of their Dublin guide. Having framed this scene for the men's viewing pleasure, his voice guides readers away from their self-important suggestions as to the distant future and towards a reading of the Union as proximate political event. His reaction to the buildings is at once less self-conscious and more ironic than theirs: telling the travellers

that the Parliament building is now a bank, he comments darkly that 'it cost a power of money to make it what it is.' The Union itself is presented as an event occurring within very recent memory, and he gleefully points out the lamp post from which he had pelted stones at the pro-Union MPs ('the thieves that sould us fairly', he calls them) on 'the night of the UNION'.

In deflating what Katie Trumpener describes as the 'aesthethiquarian' aspect of the discussions,[60] the Irish man brings the spectacle of 'the ould parliament-house' and the grand warnings as to the corruption of empires to bear on immediate Irish realities. With what looks like a high degree of narrative design, he entirely misunderstands their talk of ruins and assumes they are referring to the Union and the kind of 'decline-speak' widely associated with its passing into law:

> 'Why, then, long life to your honours,' added the guide, who, with the subtlety incidental to his class and country, drew ingenious, and sometimes exact conclusions, from very scanty premises, and who believed that the strangers were predicting the ruin of Ireland from the event of the Union (an event execrated by all the lower orders of the country). 'Why, then, long life to your honors, it's true for you; and was said long ago, that after the Union, the grass would grow high in Dublin streets; and would this day, plaze God, only in respect of the paving board, that be's rippin' up the streets, and layin' down the streets, from June to August, just for the job, by Jagurs.'[61]

In interpreting this talk of ruins in strictly materialist terms, the corruption is revealed to be that of Dublin Corporation, notorious for in this period for its 'jobbing' ways, and the mouldering structures become legible as poorly paved city streets. The Dublin guide pricks the bubble of the travellers' inflated language and bears witness to the rawness of recent history.

A Great Beast

To describe the Union in these terms, Pain
Move between elevated, distant and proximate distress

The heroine of Charles Robert Maturin's novel, Women, published in the same year as Florence Macarthy, walks these same Dublin streets in search of a wretchedness which would match her own

misery. Returning to her native city in a spirit of deep despair, Zaira, an Irish woman turned continental actress, finds Dublin eerily elegant, beautiful but barren:

> it is the lifeless beauty of a cor[p]se; and the magnificent architecture of its public buildings seems like the skeleton of some gigantic frame, which the inhabiting spirit has deserted; like the vast structure of the bones of the Behemoth, which has ceased to live for ages, and round whose remains modern gazers fearfully creep and stare. We can bear the ruins of a city long deserted by human inhabitants, but it is awful to observe the inhabitants stealing from a city whose grandeur they can no longer support.[62]

Maturin collapses the temporal distance between the political and aesthetic meanings of ruin, and depicts Dublin as the wreckage of a living city. Absenteeism ('the inhabitants stealing from a city') here assumes a quasi-supernatural air. Women ends in a whirl of death and destruction, with only Zaira herself surviving 'the tempest of grief'.[63] In her image of Dublin as monstrous skeleton, a sublime spectacle of prehistoric might and monstrosity is depicted as hollowed out

As a 'sight', picturesque or otherwise, the Union exists primarily as an absence rather than a presence. The novels of early nineteenth-century Ireland repeatedly inscribe this absence, depicting the skeletal emptiness of post-Union Ireland. In the process, however, they begin to fill in this hollowed out space, mustering a new and potent sense of cultural purpose amidst the political ruins. These past-oriented cultural politics are now more commonly associated with rural rather than urban wastelands, but in the years immediately after the passing of the Union, city and country both seemed enticingly empty, deserted and yet rich in possibility.

After the union there is a newly introspective interest in definitions of Irishness. This interest draws on eighteenth-century antiquarianism, made newly available as it is cited in novels like The Wild Irish Girl, Florence Macarthy and The Absentee, themselves soon satirised by Thomas Moore in his Captain Rock). Antiquarianism encodes a claims to cultural value via the discourse of origins; In more strictly narrative terms, antiquarianism delivers the ability to dissolve time frames and fracture teleology, bringing in found manuscripts, annalistic accounts. As is the case in Florence Macarthy itself, where the character of the antiquarian schoolteacher, Terence Oge O'Leary licenses lengthy excursions into ancient history. O'Briens and the O'Flaherties

They transform what I have been describing as the 'Decline-speak' of numerous anti-Union speeches and pamphlets into

For the hero of John Banim's The Anglo-Irish of the Nineteenth Century, however, undertaking what is by now a familiar novelistic walk around these same city streets, Dublin's public buildings 'group together, and make pictures together' in the most pleasing way. '"Very beautiful, Dublin," quoth Gerald; "very beautiful, I admit."[64] In the context of a novel published on the eve of Catholic emancipation featuring a hero who is lovingly educated into the necessity for Catholic suffrage, this claim

Andrew Blair Carmichael, a lawyer and associate of the Irish Whigs, wrote a long satirical poem about the Union entitled 'The Seven Thieves' which, in a long note asks readers to 'reflect on the miserable change in our golden prospects since this CURSE, like Lear's, has blasted our beautiful City —

"Into her womb convey'd sterility,

" And dried up in her the Organs of Increase?"[65]

By reading Dublin as Shakespeare's blasted heath, even in such resolutely negative terms, Carmichael participates in this wider remaking of the meanings of Ireland's political ruin. But it is worth remembering that the poem takes more specific aim against the day-to-day management of Irish life, especially the government's fondness for 'trundling out the military on every occasion': '"Heaven help us!", he writes, 'They order those matters in England without them.'[66] In the poem, a present and immediate sense of the Union as a crime committed in broad daylight co-exists and competes with the new 'decline-speak'; with both making their contribution to a new language in which the incompleteness of the Union could be diagnosed and discussed.

A glance at my footnotes will indicate my indebtedness to recent work by Jacqueline Belanger and Peter Garside. As colleagues they have not stinted in giving advice, and, along with David Skilton, have helped make Cardiff a very good place to ask questions about nineteenth-century fiction.

[1] Walter Scott, 'General Preface' [1829], Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since [1814] (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 352.

[2] Thomas Bartlett, The Fall and Rise of the Irish Nation: the Catholic Question, 1690-1830 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992) p. 334.

[3] J.G. Lockhart, The Life of Sir Walter Scott (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1937), p. 477.

[4] Lockhart, The Life of Sir Walter Scott, p. 477. Lockhart argues however that once measures for Catholic Relief had been passed, Scott lent them his support: 'he thought that, after admitting Romanists to the elective franchise, it was a vain notion that they could be permanently or advantageously debarred from using that franchise in favour of those of their own persuasion' (p. 477). The context for these observations is a visit paid by Scott to Ireland. While there he met with warm welcome almost everywhere but in Kerry and Lockhart recounts

> the refusal of a Roman Catholic gentleman, named O'Connell, who kept stag-hounds near Killarney, to allow of a hunt on the upper lake, the day he visited that beautiful scenery. This he did, as we were told, because he considered it as a notorious fact, that Sir Walter Scott was an enemy to the Roman Catholic claims for admission to seats in Parliament. (pp. 476-477)

[5] Peter Garside, 'The English Novel in the Romantic Era', in Peter Garside and Rainer Schöwerling (eds), The English Novel 1770-1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles, Vol II: 1800-1829 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 102.

[6] Garside, 'The English Novel in the Romantic Era', p. 102.

[7] Scott, Waverley, p. 341.

[8] Ina Ferris, The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History and the Waverley Novels (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 107.

[9] An Abstract of the Arguments on the Catholic Question (London, 1805), pp. 14-15.

[10] Playbill advertising 'At the Royal Circus near College-Green for the Benefit of Mrs Britain on Wednesday February 5 will be performed a Grand Serio-Comic Pastichio called the Rape or Ierne, or Fidelity Betrayed' [Dublin, 1800]. Cambridge University Library: Hib.o.800.1.

[11] [Thomas Moore], Memoirs of Captain Rock, the Celebrated Irish Chieftain, with Some Account of his Ancestors, written by himself (London, 1824), pp. 321-2.

[12] Seamus Deane, 'Heroic Styles: the Tradition of an Idea', Ireland's Field Day, Field Day Theatre Company (London: Hutchinson, 1985), pp. 45-58, p. 50.

[13] Seamus Deane, General Introduction, The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing, ed. by Seamus Deane, 3 vols (Derry: Field Day, 1991), I, xix-xxvi (p. xxvi).

[14] 'The Edgeworths and the Union'. Paper presented at the Conference of Irish Historians in Britain, Sussex University, April 2000.

[15] Ros Ballaster, 'Women and the Rise of the Novel: Sexual Prescripts', in Women and Literature in Britain, 1700-1800 ed. by Vivien Jones, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.197-216 (p. 200).

[16] Seamus Deane, Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1790 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 20.

[17] Deane, Strange Country, p. 20.

[18] Deane, Strange Country, p. 30.

[19] See Claire Connolly, 'Writing the Union', in Dáire Keogh and Kevin Whelan (eds), Acts of Union (Four Courts Press, forthcoming).

[20] For a listing, see Jacqueline Belanger, 'Some Preliminary Remarks on the Production and Reception of Fiction Relating to Ireland, 1800-1829', Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text, 4 (May 2000). Online: http://www.cf.ac.uk/encap/corvey/articles/cc04_n02.html. Date accessed: 14/12/00.

[21] Joep Leerssen, Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century (Cork: Cork University Press), pp. 38-9.

[22] Garside, 'The English Novel in the Romantic Era', p. 40.

[23] For statistical evidence see Garside, 'The English Novel in the Romantic Era', p. 74.

[24] Katie Trumpener, Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 131.

[25] William B. Warner, Licensing Entertainment: the Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684—1750 (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: U of California P, 1998), p. 40.

[26] Harriet Guest, Introduction, Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 15.

[27] Freeman's Journal January 17 1807. For an analysis of this claim, see Claire Connolly, ' "I accuse Miss Owenson": The Wild Irish Girl as Media Event', in Anne Fogarty (ed.), Colby Quarterly, special issue on 'Irish Women Novelists, 1800-1940', Vol. XXXVI, No. 2 (June 2000), pp. 98-115.

[28] Lady Morgan's Memoirs: Autobiography, Diaries and Correspondence, ed. William Hepworth Dixon, 2 vols (London: W.H. Allen and Co, 1863), I, 424.

[29] Dublin Evening Post, December 21 (1807), p. 2.

[30] See Ann C. Kavanaugh, John FitzGibbon, Earl of Clare: Protestant Reaction and English Authority in Late Eighteenth-Century Ireland (Dublin: Irish Academic Press), p. 203.

[31] Quoted in Kavanaugh, John FitzGibbon, Earl of Clare, p. 392.

[32] William Drennan to Martha McTier, Belfast, 11 November 1801; quoted in Jean Agnew (ed.), The Drennan—McTier Letters II, 1794—1801 (Dublin: The Women's History Project in Association with the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1999), II, 737. Drennan writes:

> By the bye, we began a novel yesterday called Belinda by Miss Edgeworth in which there are portraits drawn with a masterly hand, as far as we have gone — Lady Delacour (perhaps Lady Clare) is done in high style. This Miss Edgeworth is a genius, and if she wrote Castle Rackrent and this novel, few in the present day can surpass her.

[33] Marilyn Butler and Claire Connolly, 'Introductory Note', Maria Edgeworth, Manoeuvring and Vivian, The Novels and Selected Works of Maria Edgeworth, 12 vols (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), IV, xix.

[34] Lady Granard to Suffolk Street, 7 February 1799;]; quoted in Brian MacDermot (ed.), The Catholic Question in Ireland and England, 1798—1822: The Papers of Denys Scully (Dublin: Irish Acadmenic Press, 19**), p. 26

[35] The Papers of Denys Scully, p. 27.

[36] Terry Eagleton, Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture (London and New York: Verso, 1995), p. 125.

[37] John Kelly, Introduction to John Banim, The Anglo-Irish of the Nineteenth Century, 3 vols [1828] (Oxford: Woodstock Books), I, 150.

[38] [Banim], The Anglo-Irish of the Nineteenth Century, I, 150.

[39] Maria Edgeworth and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, An Essay on Irish Bulls, The Novels and Selected Works of Maria Edgeworth, 12 vols (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1999), I, 84.

[40] Edgeworth and Edgeworth, An Essay on Irish Bulls, I, 85.

[41] Edgeworth and Edgeworth, An Essay on Irish Bulls, I, 138.

[42] Edgeworth and Edgeworth, An Essay on Irish Bulls, I, 138.

[43] Patrick Geoghean, The Irish Act of Union (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999), p. 45.

[44] Sydney Owenson [Lady Morgan], The Wild Irish Girl [1806], ed. Claire Connolly and Stephen Copley, 3 vols (London: Pickering, 2000), p. 48.

[45] Lady Morgan, Florence Macarthy: An Irish Tale, 4 vols [1818] (New York and London: Garland, 1979), I, 46.

[46] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 46.

[47] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 46-7.

[48] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 14.

[49] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 49.

[50] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 50.

[51] 'The Union, a Lyric Canto appointed to be Sung or Said in all Meeting Houses' [Dublin, 1798]. British Library: 1325.g.15(8).

[52] Review of Florence Macarthy, Anti-Jacobin Review, 55 (1819), pp. 509-521 (p. 517).

[53] Morgan, Florence Macarthy,

[54] Review of Florence Macarthy, Edinburgh Monthly Review, 1 June (1819), pp. 655-662 (p. 656). Jacqueline Belanger argues that reviews of Florence Macarthy constitute a turning point in the British critical reception of Irish writing, registering (even as they criticise) an inescapably political dimension. See Jacqueline Belanger, 'Educating the Reading Public: British Critical Reception of the Works of Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Kent, 1999, p. 197.

[55] Owenson, The Wild Irish Girl, p. 15.

[56] Owenson, The Wild Irish Girl, p. 22.

[57] Kevin Whelan, 'Foreword: Writing Ireland, Reading England', in Owenson [Lady Morgan], The Wild Irish Girl, ed. Connolly and Copley, pp. ix-xxiv (p. xviii).

[58] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 49-50.

[59] Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire [1776—1778], ed. David Wormsley, 4 vols (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1995), III, 509.

[60] Trumpener, Bardic Nationalism, p. 144.

[61] Morgan, Florence Macarthy, I, 50-1.

[62] Charles Robert Maturin, Women; or Pour et Contre, 3 vols [1818] (New York and London: Garland, 1979), III, 295.

[63] Maturin, Women, III, 407.

[64] [Banim], The Anglo-Irish of the Nineteenth Century, II, 178.

[65] [Andrew Blair Carmichael], The Seven Thieves, in Six Books, by the Author of The Metropolis (Dublin, 1807), pp. 72-3n

[66] [Carmichael], The Seven Thieves, p. vi, viii.