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Borders of Romanticism. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. Pp. viii,
248. $75 cloth.

This excellent collection of thirteen essays on Scottish Romanticism is admirably comprehensive. The Introduction defines the scope of the volume as a whole. Rather than perpetuating the binary opposition of English Romanticism and Scottish Enlightenment, *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism* sets out to show how Scottish Romanticism is inseparable from the Scottish Enlightenment. In the light of post-colonial theory, it undertakes to revise the view of Romanticism as merely an English phenomenon, and to counter views of Scotland as a "Romantic commodity" (1) and as a nation torn between sentimentalism and rationality, antiquarian tradition and enlightened modernity. The editors sketch the critical attitudes and practices that have encouraged binary views—from Samuel Johnson's critique of Ossian to the tendency of most contemporary critics to stay within national boundaries even when extending the canon to include writers marginalized by class and gender. From the outset, this volume seeks to understand Romanticism in broad geographical, historical, and political contexts. In doing so, it offers a rethinking of literary history with implications beyond the Romantic period.

The chapters are carefully arranged to guide the reader on a complex generic, philosophical, and historical journey. The dominating presences throughout the book are probably Wordsworth—largely responsible, in the editors' phrase, for representing "Romantic Scotland as the blank of a poet's mind" (15)—and, more positively, David Hume, named in the title of Chapter 1. Cairns Craig shows how Coleridge's Kantian theory of the transcendent imagination in *Biographia Literaria* depends on displacing Hume's subversive, skeptical theory. Reclaiming the Scottish Humean tradition of Romanticism permits, Craig claims, a fuller understanding of Romantic nationalism and of nineteenth-century British literature. In the second chapter, Ian Duncan contends that Samuel Johnson, too, avoids Humean skepticism in his distaste for the uncertainties and perceived vacuities of the "primitive" and of oral poetry. Countering the binary opposition of imagination versus material certainty, Duncan connects James Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian* with the writings of Adam Smith, who defines modern reality in relation to systems of connection and exchange. For Smith, sympathy itself is akin to reading, an imaginative decoding that connects subjectivity and propriety. Macpherson's poems negate modernity in the sense of what Ina Ferris later in the volume

calls "flat, unhaunted time" (88). They nevertheless employ a temporal logic that produces a distinctly modern version of tradition.

Susan Manning's chapter addresses the rivalry in Enlightenment Scotland between antiquarianism and philosophical history—the first taxonomic, fragmentary, and private; the second narrative, conceptually coherent, and public. Alluding to Walter Scott, the subject of the next three chapters, Manning complements Ina Ferris's related treatment of history and the novel. Ferris focuses on historical change in Scott's novels and on Scott himself as Romantic historian—a role that she compares with the role of the Poet as Wordsworth describes it in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (84). Continuing to focus on Scott, James Watt's chapter argues that Scott's Scottish-Enlightenment inheritance, at least up to William Robertson's *Historical Disquisition* (1791), was generally opposed to orientalist stereotypes. In *The Surgeon's Daughter* and *The Talisman*, Watt contends, Scott assumes the universality of human nature and looks critically at European imperialism and at the effects of contact with other cultures and races. In the last chapter that deals primarily with Scott, Jerome McGann describes his "Romantic postmodernity" as an artistry of reflexive, self-conscious, irony. McGann returns to antiquarianism—a subject of Susan Manning's earlier chapter—relating it to Scott's version of history and opposing it to the theory that led Georg Lukacs to describe Scott as anti-Romantic. Scott, McGann claims, makes the telling of the story a central subject of the fiction: "the boundaries between fiction and fact have been made as porous as possible" (120). One significant effect of this is to make the reader consider the relation of the (fictional, imaginary) past to present and future—including the present of the reader's act of reading.

John Barrell's chapter considers the strange accounts of sitting corpses and dead bodies springing upright in the writing of James Hogg, especially in *The Three Perils of Woman* (1823). Barrell argues that Hogg's "national tale[s]" (131) explore both personal and national history, and that Hogg remains ambivalent about what should be raked up and what should be allowed to rest in peace. The next three chapters focus particularly on the meaning of "place." Alyson Bardsley takes the idea of "nation" from history into locality, specifically the space of Joanna Baillie's theatre. Peter J. Manning contrasts Wordsworth's tour of Scotland in 1831 (recorded in *Poems Composed During a Tour in Scotland*) with Cobbett's tour in 1832 (recounted in *Cobbett's Tour in Scotland*), considering both in the context of the Reform Bill: Wordsworth was escaping from political events into the detachment of contemplation, she argues; Cobbett was politically engaged in promoting a consensus for reform that would go beyond national boundaries. Finally, Penny Fielding asks, "where was Romantic Scotland?" (170). Like Bardsley, she distinguishes

"place" from "space," and she concludes that Burns can be described as neither as merely local nor as narrowly national.

The last three chapters consider the reception, transmission, and performance of song and ballad. Leith Davis writes about the translation of orality into textuality in the transmission of songs, considering the music as well as the verse and arguing that Burns printed his early songs with the names of traditional tunes as a deliberate challenge to English readers with conventional textual expectations. Adriana Craciun examines the reception of the Gothic ballads of Ann Bannerman, which she compares with poems by Matthew Gregory Lewis and by Coleridge: her discussion of women's exclusion from the literary Edinburgh of the Romantic period is particularly useful. Finally, in a fascinating chapter on child murder in Scottish ballads, Ann Wierda Rowland demonstrates the extent to which the ballad revival was a formalist movement. To discuss the *content* of such a ballad as "Lamkin," in which a nurse participates in the murder of a child, would mean addressing the tension between an idealization of childhood (and of formalism, which ballad revivalists connected with a childlike, pre-cognitive state) and the possibility of terrible violence at the very source of the ballad's transmission from nurse to child.

This book is strong both in its individual chapters and in its coherence and comprehensiveness as a whole. It will certainly be of interest to scholars of the Romantic period and of Scottish studies; but its importance goes beyond the borders of national and disciplinary categories. Anyone with an interest in nineteenth-century literary history and its post-colonial revisions should find this a useful resource, both for the quality and insight of its individual chapters and for its wide-ranging notes and references.

Anne McWhir

Victor Li. *The Neo-Primitivist Turn: Critical Reflections on Alterity, Culture, and Modernity*. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 2006. Pp. x, 292. $50.00.

The primitive "Other" continues to have currency in postcolonial discourse, according to Victor Li in his book, *The Neo-Primitivist Turn: Critical Reflections on Alterity, Culture, and Modernity*. Li argues that the obstructions contributed to the field of postcolonial studies by hegemonic practice continue to perpetuate the use of imperialist language; thus postcolonial studies still assert hegemonic rule over the Other in order to achieve "the rehabilitation and