

Kenneth R. Johnston, *The Hidden Wordsworth* (1998; London: Pimlico, 2000)
Corbin Scott Carnell, *Bright Shadow of Reality: Spiritual Longing in C. S. Lewis* (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1974)
Michael Paffard, *Inglorious Wordsworths: A Study of Some Transcendental Experiences in Childhood and Adolescence* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1973)
Glyn Jones, *The Dragon has Two Tongues: Essays on Anglo-Welsh Writers and Writing* (1968; rev. Tony Brown, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001)
Jeremy Hooker, *Imagining Wales: A View of Modern Welsh Writing in English* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), ch. 1
Tony Conran, *Frontiers in Anglo-Welsh Poetry* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997)

Leila Prelec is in her first-year as a DPhil student in English Literature at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, supervised by Professor Valentine Cunningham. In her previous life, she worked as a religion reporter. On-site assignments included coverage of the Catholic-Orthodox conflicts in Ukraine and the last Synod on Evangelization in the Vatican, where the churches of East and West reunited for the first time since the fall of the former Soviet Union.

In her novel in verse about Christian-Muslim warfare in medieval Spain, George Eliot resumes a persistent theme: the human relation to God as a radical hospitality to the other that results in the violent fracturing of identity, the breakup of the boundaries of the subject – what Jacques Derrida calls ‘the deconstruction of the at-home’, where host becomes hostage. Can we speak of a divine violence in the text? And how is the violence of God distinguishable from human violence? Among many questions raised by George Eliot’s appropriation of the Biblical saying that the condition of being strangers and slaves in the land of Egypt brings humans close to their neighbours, we will discuss the usefulness of contemporary religious theory in illuminating a nineteenth-century text.

Selected Reading

George Eliot, *The Spanish Gypsy*
Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar
(Focus on Derrida’s essays ‘Hostipitality’ and ‘Force of Law’)

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DAY CONFERENCE

Epithets of War: The Vision of Wordsworth and George Eliot

Saturday 2 November 2002

The Seminar Room
Corpus Christi College
Merton Street
Oxford
OX1 4JF
Tel. (lodge) 01865 276700

Programme

- 10.00 Arrivals and coffee
Introductions
- 10.45 **J R Watson**
Wordsworth, Christianity and War
- 12.00 **Stephen Logan**
Intimations of Affinity: Wordsworth, Wales and Spiritual Yearning
- 1.15 Lunch
- 2.15 **Leila Prelec**
Hospitality and War in George Eliot's The Spanish Gypsy
- 3.15 Tea
Work in progress
Plans
Prayer

J R Watson is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Durham. His publications include *Wordsworth's Vital Soul* (1982), *English Poetry of the Romantic Period, 1789-1830* (1985, 1992), *The English Hymn* (1997) and *An Annotated Anthology of Hymns* (2002). He is currently working on a book on 'Romanticism and War', and on a new Dictionary of Hymnology, for which he has been awarded a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship for 2002.

His paper will discuss the development of Wordsworth's interest in Christianity as it relates to war, and especially the war against France from 1793 to 1815. It will deal with questions relating to the doctrine of the Just War, to Wordsworth's changing sense of political and social evil, and to the idea, forcefully expressed in the *Thanksgiving Odes* of 1816, that God was on the side of the allies against Napoleon. When Wordsworth wrote (referring to God and Waterloo) that 'Carnage is thy daughter', he was ridiculed by

Byron, Landor and Shelley (among others). This paper will see this as one of several questions which need to be addressed. Particular reference will be made to the sonnets, to the *Thanksgiving Odes*, and to the tract *On the Convention of Cintra*.

Selected Reading

Simon Bainbridge, *Napoleon and the English Romantics*, Cambridge UP, 1997
Betty T Bennett, *British War Poetry in the Age of Romanticism 1793-1815*, Garland Press, 1976
Michael Gelven, *War and Existence, A Philosophical Enquiry*, Pennsylvania State UP, 1994
Mary Moorman, *William Wordsworth, the Later Years*, Clarendon Press, 1965
Gordon Kent Thomas, *Wordsworth's Dirge and Promise. Napoleon and the Convention of Cintra*, U Nebraska P, 1971.

Stephen Logan is Lecturer in English at Magdalene College, Cambridge. He has edited Wordsworth's poems (Everyman, 1998), and has written a critical study, *The Estrangement of Wordsworth* and a book of his own poems, *Heartlands*. He is currently at work on an introduction to reading poetry, *Making Sense of Poems* as well as writing literary journalism and new poems and singing in the rock band, 'Free Again.'

His paper will explore the proposition that we are most interested in those writers with whom we have some sense of affinity: a sense, that is, of enough similarity between a writer and ourselves to make it possible for us to benefit from the differences. This is true, in turn, for writers, in their relations to other writers and the cultures which those writers represent. Wordsworth, despite some tinges of condescension, would appear to have had such a sense of affinity with Wales. This is expressed most obviously in his friendship with Robert Jones, his 1791 walking tour of Wales and in the related fact that two of his supreme achievements in poetry concern the Welsh landscape (Tintern Abbey and Snowdonia). What was it in Wales and Welsh culture that Wordsworth found so congenial and poetically enabling? This paper will suggest that the basis of the affinity is spiritual. Wordsworth found in Wales an instigation to the development of his deepest spiritual impulses and desires. It is as if Wales gave approval to Wordsworth's unorthodox variety of Christian experience: a sanction which Wordsworth now confers on (for example) Edward Thomas, Dylan Thomas, R. S. Thomas and Idris Davies.

Selected Reading

C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (London: Bles, 1955), ch. 1

Booking Form

CLSG Conference 2 November 2002

Please return to The CLSG Secretary, 10 Dene Road, Northwood Middlesex HA6 2AA by 25 October 2002.

I enclose my fee for the conference (includes refreshments and sandwich lunch in college):

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