Fare thee well!

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Abstract and Keywords
Chapter 2 examines the twinning of literary and historical figures to shape voluntary and involuntary kinships within exile. Framed by the scandals of Caroline of Brunswick and Lucretia Borgia, the chapter explores the Pisan circle’s expulsion from, and rejection of, English domestic mores. Comparing the travel writing of Anna Jameson, Fanny Kemble, and Lady Blessington, the chapter discusses the way in which Italy becomes the catalyst and backdrop for a succession of English women’s realizations of marital disillusionment in 19th-century literature. The chapter examines the role of the letter and the verse epistle in exiled writing and discusses the work of Walter Savage Landor, particularly his Imaginary Conversations to explore the idea of the trans-historical community of authors in exile. The importance of the book as material object comes under scrutiny

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Exile and the Domestic
In Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Adam and Eve are banished from Eden ‘hand in hand’, but a different sort of exile is envisaged in their first serious marital dispute, in which Adam, ‘estranged in look and altered style’, wishes that he might live ‘in solitude … in some glade obscured’.¹ For most of the writers in this book (the Brownings being the obvious exception), the loss of the national home is shadowed by the severance of marital ties and the exile acquires the taint of the libertine: foreign, promiscuous, and rootless. ‘Not seeking any other society’ in Geneva in 1816, Percy Shelley, Mary Godwin, Claire Clairmont, and Byron found themselves accused of ‘the most unbridled libertinism … atheism, incest, and many other things’.² Through a series of interlinked biographical case studies, this chapter considers the domestic disarray that links Byron and Elizabeth Barrett’s generations, including some of the women writers who anticipate Barrett’s rebellious twinning of herself with Byron.³

Thomas Love Peacock’s *Nightmare Abbey* introduces Mr Cypress (Byron) on the point of leaving England as the idealistic Scythrop (Shelley) questions him on the ethics of expatriation. Scythrop sees exile as the denial of hope for political reform:

‘it seems to me that an Englishman, who, either by his station in society, or by his genius, or … by both, has the power of essentially serving his country in its arduous struggle with its domestic enemies, yet forsakes his country, which is still so rich in hope, to dwell in others which are only fertile in the ruins of memory, does what none of those antients, whose fragmentary memorials you venerate, would have done in similar circumstances.’⁴
Mr Cypress replies: “Sir, I have quarreled with my wife; and a man who has quarreled with his wife is absolved from all duty to his country. I have written an ode to tell the people as much, and they may take it as they list.”

Mr Cypress has his own conception of ‘domestic enemies’ and his remark suggests the consanguinity of national and domestic quarrels at a time when 19th-century European statecraft was still a family affair: royal marriages sealed political alliances and discarded consorts were often sent to, and became strongly identified with, other countries. Hortense de Beauharnais, the ex-queen of Holland, was one of the leaders of Roman high society when Lady Blessington was there in 1828, and like that much earlier unhappily married queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Hortense strove to establish a court in exile that would be a cultural rival to her former abode.

By 1814, even the pretense of a civil relationship between the Prince and Princess of Wales was long gone. Caroline was banished from the court, under royal command not to enter Carlton House or Warwick House. In August, she left England in an old London-Dover stagecoach that still advertised the various stopping points on its doors. Afterwards, she said that her departure was ‘at that moment, like an exile from all that I held dear’, including her daughter; Charlotte, whom she never saw again. Her small retinue included Sir William Gell, who was looking forward to the opportunity for an extended period of antiquarian research. Byron had referred to him as ‘rapid Gell’ in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (l. 1034) because of the speed at which he had produced his Topography of Troy and Ithaca, and he dispatched reports on Caroline with equal facility for several years before being recalled to England for her trial (August–November 1820). Liberal Whigs tended to regard Caroline as the victim of a corrupt ministry and the Byron-Shelley circle followed her case sympathetically while they were in Italy. Nevertheless, Mary Shelley could not resist repeating a gossipy description of Caroline on the Campo Santo, wearing ‘a black pelisse, tucked up to her knees, and exhibiting a pair of men’s boots’.
The spectacle of Caroline’s domestic rebellion provides a curious double for the literary exiles in Italy and, at some points, the two groups almost coincided: Walter Savage Landor lived briefly at Como in 1817, and was alleged to be spying on Caroline’s household. Polidori, Byron’s physician, applied for a position in Caroline’s court at the Villa d’Este, but was rejected. Hobhouse’s diary records the stories he heard about her in Milan in 1816, but he was a stalwart supporter of the Queen during her trial. Sir William Gell later joined Lady Blessington’s circle in Naples. Sexual prurience shapes the English public’s conception of Byron and the Shelleys during their time in exile. We could compare the English tourists’ use of opera glasses to look for female undergarments on the drying green at Diodati in 1816 with the scrutiny of Caroline’s bed linen instigated by the Milan Commission of 1818–20.

The metaphoric association of Italy and the figure of the fallen woman used in Mary Wollstonecraft’s Maria (1798) and Madame de Staël’s Corinne (1807) was reanimated when reports started to reach England about Princess Caroline’s public appearances with her courier, ‘Bergami’. The Prince Regent had commissioned Baron Friedrich Ompteda to report on the conduct of the Princess of Wales and the state of Italy ‘with special reference to sedition and dissenting factions’—thus equating domestic and political treason. The Bill of Pains and Penalties, which was the means by which George IV’s ministers attempted to expunge Caroline from the record in 1820, was the process traditionally used to exile subjects who had fallen out of favour with the monarch.

Caroline’s flight to Italy and her persecution by the future king and his ministers consolidated Italy’s reputation as a particularly feminized refuge. In 1847, the actress Fanny Kemble produced a record of the travels she undertook to escape the misery of her marriage to an American slave owner. Entitled A Year of Consolation by Mrs Butler, Late Fanny Kemble (she resumed her maiden name when the marriage was finally dissolved in 1863), Kemble greeted Italy as the natural refuge of the broken hearted:

Land – not of promise – but of consolation;
... in the bankrupt days when all is spent,
Bestow’d, or stolen, wasted, given away
To buy a store of bitter memories.
Kemble’s domestic upheavals and subsequent period of international roaming constituted a scandal that Elizabeth Barrett had discussed with a mixture of fascination and tart disapproval in 1845. Following Madame De Staël’s *Corinne* and Anna Jameson’s *The Diary of an Ennuyée*, Kemble’s *A Year of Consolation* was one of a series of 19th-century novels in which Italy’s rich aesthetic inheritance would stand as both backdrop and catalyst for an English woman’s realization of marital disillusionment.

The unhappy marriage serves in many ways as a rehearsal of the feelings of the exile towards the patria—married and yet separate; bound by the remnants of a disappointed loyalty; constantly aware of a moment of rupture or sundering after which life continues, but with a double awareness of the lost happier life. Exile is a scandal, in that it involves the forcible removal of the body and the violation of the home: in this way, it replicates the effects of the parting of a husband and wife. Ovid describes the pain of exile in his *Tristia* as physical deprivation, ‘a very half seemed broken from the body to which it belonged’. The break up of a marriage is also the tearing apart of what had been, in Judaeo-Christian terms, one flesh.

Together with Princess Caroline, Byron helped to make Italy synonymous with post-marital tristesse in person. Byron’s curious textual sympathy with the situation of the fallen woman suggests the kinship between different forms of sexual disgrace in the 19th century, when divorced women and homosexual men were joint victims of British social hypocrisy, and outcasts from the world and God (as Wilde describes the prisoners in *Reading Gaol*). Lady Blessington links Byron’s sensations as an exile and a separated spouse in her account of his memories in Genoa under the hostile surveillance of other English visitors:
Can I reflect on my present position without bitter feelings? Exiled from my country by a species of ostracism the most humiliating to a proud mind, when daggers and not shells were used to ballot, inflicting mental wounds more deadly and difficult to be healed than all that the body could suffer. Then the notoriety ... that follows me, precludes the privacy I desire ... I am bound, by the indissoluble ties of marriage, to one who will not live with me, and I live with one to whom I cannot give a legal right to be my companion ... It is painful (said Byron) to find oneself growing old without

That which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends.
I feel this keenly, reckless as I appear.\(^{17}\)

\(^{(p.45)}\) The quotation from *Macbeth* infuses the loss of home and peace of mind with the gaining of notoriety; the reference to the ballot of shells suggests the secret voting in ancient Athens or the practice of certain London clubs. Lady Blessington's Byron has been forced to leave England, but he is shackled to an ex-wife and an ex-public who, having ejected him, pursue him still. James Buzard notes that Byron's performance of separation allowed subsequent tourists in Rome to use his poetry as a means of 'imagining and dramatizing their saving difference from the crowd', but this did not shield Byron from the crowds for whom he supplied a lexicon of ennobling isolation.\(^{18}\) In an irony that might have been relished by Pierre Bourdieu, Byron's texts were a marker of distinction when his person had been an object of distaste.\(^{19}\)
Among the many female novelists who made sustained use of the rhetoric of Byronic selfhood was Anna Jameson, who subsequently guided the newly married Brownings to Pisa. Her first encounter with Italy was mediated through Byron’s poetry as she experimented with the identity of a ‘poor exile’. The reverberations of Lord Byron’s voice help to explain the radically split narrative voice of Diary of an Ennuyée that Dorothy Mermin attributes to the dilemma of the professional woman writer. Jameson’s 1821–2 private journal tracks the route of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage from the shores of Lake Leman, where she records ‘the reflection of Mont Blanc (60 miles off)’, quotes Byron’s sonnet on Leman, and notes, ‘The boatman who rowed us was with Lord Byron in that storm which he describes in the 3rd canto’. She visited Clarens, Tasso’s cell in Ferrara, ‘stood upon the Bridge of Sighs’, and ‘sat down on the steps of the Giant’s staircase where Marino Faliero was beheaded’.

In the Diary of an Ennuyée, Byron’s presence is less evident in the itinerary, but more apparent in the mixed tonal texture. The narrator borrows Beppo to justify the plunge into a journal: ‘as Lord Byron elegantly expresses it, “Here goes” ‗, describes herself as a ‘nameless sort of person‘, and flaunts her indifference to leaving England with a Satanic/Byronic sensation that inner hell cannot be escaped:

> When, to-day, for the first time in my life, I saw the shores of England fade away in the distance - did the conviction that I should never behold them (p.46) more, bring with it one additional pang of regret, or one consoling thought? neither the one nor the other. I leave behind me the scenes, the objects, so long associated with pain; but from pain itself I cannot fly: it has become a part of myself.
Along with the despairing Manfred-like prayer for ‘forgetfulness’, and the awareness that ‘pain is mingled with all I behold’, Jameson involves the reader in hints about the domestic circumstances that underlie the narrator’s melancholy. The Diary is marked by the artful use of asterisks to signal ‘places where one or more leaves had been torn away by the writer’ and the fictional restoration of manuscript passages ‘once supposed to be illegible and irretrievable’: these ‘chasms in the manuscript’ and elliptical allusions to ‘letters from England’ or ‘No letters from England’ prompt the reader to interpolate both the excess of emotion and its cause.

The voice behind Diary of an Ennuyée is that of an exile, rather than a traveller, outside the Eden of a happy marriage and finding Italy ‘a paradise—in ruins’. Anna Jameson borrows from an eclectic range of cultural sources to express her sense of loneliness. More often than not, these are compound male voices. In Florence, she describes hearing the tenor, Magnelli, sing in Rossini’s Othello. The part of the libretto she singles out recasts the words of Dante that Mary Shelley also quotes in Matilda: ‘Nessun maggior dolore/Che ricordarsi del tempo felice/Nella miseria!’ It might stand as the epitaph of exile, not only because it is about looking back to a past that is irrevocably closed off, but also because it is conveyed as a mixture of sounds: ‘The words, the music, and the divine pathos of the man’s voice combined, made me feel—as I thought I never could have felt.’ This is what Susan Wolfson would term ‘linguistic cross-dressing’, complicated still further by being culturally hybrid as the visceral domestic turmoil of Shakespeare’s tragedy blends with the world of Dante and the music of Rossini.

At the heart of the Ennuyée’s narrative, another male voice vouches for her cosmopolitanism: Jameson transcribes the marginal manuscript notes found in Lord Byron’s copy of D’Israeli’s Essays on the Literary Character, giving in full Byron’s annotation of D’Israeli’s comments on his exile:
Fare thee well!

(p.47) ‘The great poetical genius of our times has openly alienated himself from the land of his brothers,’ (over the word brothers Lord Byron has written Cains) ‘He has become immortal in the language of a people whom he would contemn, he accepts with ingratitude the fame he loves more than life, and he is only truly great on that spot of earth whose genius, when he is no more, will contemplate his shade in sorrow and in anger.’

Lord Byron has underlined several words in this passage and writes thus in the margin;

What was rumoured of me in that language, if true, I was unfit for England; and if false, England was un-fit for me. But ‘there is a world elsewhere.’ I have never for an instant regretted that country, but often that I ever returned to it. It is not my fault that I am obliged to write in English. If I understood any present language, Italian for instance, equally well, I would write in it:—but it will require ten years, at least, to form a style.30

Anecdotes about Byron’s conversation and the marginalia in the Diary are interrupted with asterisks, and the reader is left to make the connection between Byron’s preference for solitude and that of the author.

Using Byron’s performance to ventriloquize her own sense of displacement, Jameson takes the reader to the paradox of exile of which Byron was aware: even the denial of regret of one’s country in the language of one’s country speaks of a kind of loss. To whom does Byron address the notes in the margin? Jameson traces Byron’s accents as English reader and English writer simultaneously, and in recording the syllables of his exclusion, obliquely signals her own. The exilic consciousness of Diary of an Ennuyée is a literary construct that articulates with uncanny prescience Jameson’s banishment from marital happiness. In this work, distance from England reflects both the literal experience of travel and internal alienation from an English ideal of domestic space.
Just as reviewers had objected to Byron’s semi-fictional intermixture of himself and the Childe in *Childe Harold*, Jameson provoked resentment among readers who had invested personal sympathy in her consumptive and heartbroken character—to the extent of looking for her grave in the cemeteries around Autun—only to find the author ‘sitting on the sofa’ back in England in a ‘state of blooming plumptitude’. The discovery that the agonies of Jameson’s first-person narrator were fictionalized certainly deterred readers such as Henry Crabb Robinson, but Jameson’s brilliant enactment of the voice of the cast-off lover refines our sense of the proximity between literal and metaphorical exile.

The *Diary* was published in the year after Jameson finally committed herself to, what she appears to have understood in advance would be, an unhappy marriage. Fanny Kemble recalled a discussion with Jameson in 1831:

> We talked of marriage, and a woman’s chance of happiness in giving her life into another’s keeping. I said that if one did not expect too much one might secure a reasonably fair amount of happiness, though of course the risk one ran was immense. I never shall forget the expression of her face; it was momentary, and passed away almost immediately, but it has haunted me ever since.

Jameson’s (and Kemble’s) exclusion from domestic happiness can only be glimpsed in this moment, but it informs Jameson’s first attempt at fiction and her subsequent aesthetic research. In *Diary of an Ennuyée*, she began to develop a unique style of art appreciation, using commentary on familiar, and less well-known, works of art as a form of confession and feminist social commentary:
But Raffaelle must not make me forget the Hagar in the Brera: the affecting – the inimitable Hagar! what agony, what upbraiding, what love, what helpless desolation of heart in that countenance! I may well remember the deep pathos of this picture; for the face of Hagar has haunted me sleeping and waking ever since I beheld it. Marvellous power of art! that mere inanimate forms and colours compounded of gross materials, should thus live – thus speak – thus stand a soul-felt presence before us, and from the senseless board or canvas, breathe into our hearts a feeling, beyond what the most impasioned eloquence could ever inspire – beyond what mere words can ever render.33

With the image of Hagar (Abraham’s slave and the mother of his child) being cast out into the desert, Jameson projects herself into the role of an abandoned woman and exile. She identifies with masculine exile in the shape of the statue of the dying gladiator, dwelling (as Byron had done in the Fourth Canto) on the way that the last seconds of consciousness are rendered in his expression.34 Jameson also identifies with kindred exiles in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome:

Around the base of the pyramid lies the burying ground of strangers and heretics. Many of the monuments are elegant, and their frail materials and diminutive forms are in affecting contrast with the lofty and solid pile which towers above them. The tombs lie around in a small space ‘amicably close’ like brothers in exile, and as I gazed, I felt a kindred feeling with all; for I too am a wanderer, a stranger, and a heretic; and it is probable that my place of rest may be among them. Be it so! for methinks this earth could not afford a more lovely, a more tranquil, or more sacred spot.35

‘Amicably close’ is an allusion to ‘The Churchyard among the Mountains’ in William Wordsworth’s The Excursion.36 It is characteristic that Jameson uses this memory of a deeply rooted English locale to describe the last resting place of foreign bodies. The Diary of an Ennuyée explores the sensation of half-regretting England through a fragmentation of the English tradition she cherishes, while colliding it with the other sensory world of Italy:
Dear England! I love, like an Englishwoman, its fire-side enjoyments, and home-felt delights: and English drawing room with all its luxurious comforts – carpets and hearth rugs, curtains let down, sofas wheeled round ... but for the languid frame, and the sick heart, give me this pure elastic air ‘redolent of spring:’ this reviving sunshine and all the witchery of these deep blue skies!– "^37

The sofa wheeled round conveys the unmistakeable presence of Cowper’s *The Task*: ‘Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round’ (IV, 37), and William Wordsworth’s ‘Peter Bell’ (1819) unexpectedly appears (Peter ‘never felt/the witchery of the soft blue sky’ (Part X, lX)).^38 Jameson also borrows Dryden’s rendition of Ovid to capture the intensity of the Italian air. ‘Redolent of spring’ was a phrase that Johnson had singled out as ‘an expression that reaches the utmost limits of our language’, and Jameson is employing it to test other limits too.^39 She crams her prose with recollections of English poetry. Born in Dublin, Jameson was indeed only ‘like an Englishwoman’ in domestic tastes, but her kaleidoscope of quotations suggests the oblique manner in which the sick heart of the exile recurs to the literary tradition of home.

Jameson’s textual relief at leaving England was shared by Jane and Edward Williams, who joined the Pisan circle in 1821–2. Jane Williams had married her first husband in August 1814, but left him by the end of (p.50) 1817 and became the common-law wife of Edward Williams in 1818. She remained the legal wife of Captain John Johnson until his death in 1840. The name ‘Jane Williams’ was a fiction to screen her from the disgrace that would ensue from being seen as Edward’s partner, whether or not she was divorced from her first husband. Williams remembered the sense of release as their ship left England in 1819:

> It was a delightful moment to us, when Jane and myself looked back at the retiring cliffs of England as they vanished in the blue haze of evening, while our vessel flew over the waves that bore us towards Dieppe. We seemed as it were to be flying from ourselves, – from a life which promised nothing in the perspective but misery, to one of peace and the enjoyment of our days."^40
They headed for Italy and arrived in Pisa, which, in January 1821, was home to many more misfits than just Percy Shelley. In May 1820, Claire Clairmont gave a brief account of ‘the odd English at present in Pisa’:

Walter Savage Landor who will not see a single English person says he is glad the country produces people of worth but he will have nothing to do with them. Shelley who walks about (w) reading a great quarto Encyclopedia with another volume under his arm. (Mr) Tatty who sets potatoes in Pots, & a Mr. Dolby who is rejoicing that he has escaped from England at last although he is 70 some say 80 yrs of age - he is short & thick & goes about with his pockets stuffed out with books, singing.  

Like the Shelleys, the Williams family had to adjust to a set of social customs that heightened their awareness of being outcasts. Claire’s journal of daily life in Pisa in 1820 mentions that she and Mary ‘Drink tea at Madame Mason who tells us some very amusing stories of English Prudery. Of a Lady who “mounts her Chastity and rides over us all”. Mrs Mason was the name adopted by the former Lady Mountcashell, who had left her husband and was living as the common-law wife of Mr Tighe (or ‘Tatty’). Domestic rupture bound them together and ensured their pariah status.
The inimical English public in Italy instilled a phobia towards English crowds in Byron and Shelley: ‘I do not see an Englishman in half a year, and, when I do, I turn my horse’s head the other way’, Byron told Moore; Trelawny observed of Mary Shelley after Percy’s death that the English at Genoa ‘will not receive her; they are most bitter against her’. But Italian (p.51) crowds and salons offered more inclusive modes of civil society and Mary’s letters show how her sense of being part of a larger whole changes during her years in Italy. In Bagni di Lucca in June 1818 she pleads with the Gisbornes to visit and not to ‘exile us from your presence so long ... we see no one’. The next month, she expressed her loathing of ‘the English that are crowded here to the almost entire exclusion {of} Italians ... We see none but English, we hear nothing but English spoken—The walks are filled with ... dashing staring English-women’. The ‘staring’ of English tourists at English exiles was, as we have seen, Byron’s main reason for avoiding fashionable spots in Italy. In August 1818, Mary wrote again to Maria Gisborne, ‘Still we know no one; we speak to one or two people at the Casino and that is all—We live in our studious way going on with Tasso whom I like’. Books formed their primary community until the Shelleys moved to Pisa in the spring of 1820: ‘We see no society it is true except one or two English who are friends & not acquaintances—we might if we pleased but it is so much trouble to begin ... however in the summer or next winter we shall I think mix a little with the Italians.’

Even allowing for her pregnancy, it seems extraordinary that Mary Shelley can see a whole year stretching ahead, in which she thinks they might only ‘mix a little’. Her reference to ‘so much trouble to begin’ indicates the elaborate English custom of card-leaving and paying visits, which continued even while the English were abroad: when Mary and Claire see Amelia Curran in the Borghese Gardens in April 1819, they ‘Leave a Card’ the next day; three days later, ‘Miss Curran calls’ and accompanies them to the German exhibition, calling in at her lodging afterwards and ‘chat[ting] there two hours’. English etiquette was deployed with more aplomb by the Blessingtons during their first call on Byron in Genoa, when they were alleged to have selected a rainy day and an open carriage so that Byron would have to speed through the formal preliminaries and invite them inside.
Compared with stilted English protocol, the open house custom of evenings in Leghorn was recounted by Mary with great enthusiasm:

the English complain that they do not know what to do when they come in for there is no appearance of receiving visits - for the company instead of assembling altogether are dispersed in parties about the room. They told us (p.52) that whenever you call at an Italian house the servant always puts her head out of window and demands chi è whatever time of day or night it may be - The proper answer to this question is amici but those people {who} do no{t} know the proper reply are terribly puzzled.50

Ordinary English visitors, it appears, were not very good at adapting to Italian forms of sociality. In Rome in 1819, Claire’s journal records: ‘In the Evening go to the (Con) Conversazione of the Signora Marianna Diogini where there is a Cardinal and many unfortunate Englishmen who after having crossed their legs & said nothing the whole Evening, rose all up at once, made their bows & filed off’. Like a flock of birds who have landed in the wrong feeding ground, the Englishmen depart en masse, empty, unsatisfied, and faintly ridiculous.

While laughing at the inadequacy of English tourists, the Pisan circle was keen to initiate favoured friends into the delights of Italian exchange: in 1822, Maria Gisborne wrote to advise Mary Shelley about Leigh Hunt’s inexperience:

Hunt is prepared to like Italy; he is well acquainted with the style of the country in theory; but yet it will be a new world to him. I hope you intend to teach him quanto prima on his arrival the useful conversazione lesson which Williams has not the fleamma to learn.51
The seasoning of discourse with Italian words is a badge of membership or, as Chloe Chard expresses it, a guarantee that the travel writer ‘has managed to grasp the topography in its full alterity’. With different levels of flemma (calm or coolness), the Shellesys, Hunts, Byrons, Medwines, Trelawns, and the Williamses created an artistic coterie that was intensely productive, but also (like all artistic groups) prone to watchful internecine jealousy. Mary Shelley described their circle to Maria Gisborne as a ‘nest of singing birds’, borrowing Samuel Johnson’s description of Pembroke College, where he and a number of poetic contemporaries were reared. Mary clearly envisaged a ‘college’ of poets that, unlike 19th-century Oxford, would admit women. It was not collegial for long. Percy rode to Ravenna in August 1821 to try to steer Byron towards Pisa, but less than a year later he complained to John Gisborne that ‘Lord Byron is the nucleus of all that is hateful and tiresome’ in society. Byron’s ‘canker’ of English aristocracy always threatened to reinstate the social torpor that Shelley saw as a barrier to reform.

Despite their congenital differences, the Pisan Confederacy (as it was called by the hostile Scottish press) collaborated on a wide range of projects, including a production of Othello in February 1822, the continuing campaign against Southey, the editing of the Liberal, and the dramatic collaboration between Percy Shelley and Edward Williams on The Promise. The months in Pisa saw the composition and revision of Don Juan Cantos VI, VII, VIII, and IX; Byron’s mystery plays; Shelley’s Adonais, ‘Epipsychidion’, Hellas, and The Triumph of Life; Leigh Hunt’s ‘Letters from Abroad’, and his review of Adonais; the correspondence, journals, and translation work of Williams, Mary Shelley, and Claire Clairmont; Medwin’s Conversations; and Trelawny’s Recollections. The experience of exile is imprinted on all of these texts in different ways, but I want to focus on the aspect of communal exile recorded when Lady Blessington’s arrival in Genoa allowed Byron to reflect on his detachment from English society through conversation with a woman who had also forfeited secure domestic life.
Lady Blessington was a leader of London salon culture, but she shared with Byron the taint of sexual scandal that meant that many English ladies would not visit her, or receive her in their houses. Born into a Catholic family in 1789, she had been married when she was 14 years old to a captain in the foot regiment stationed near the family home in County Tipperary, but he was a violent man and she returned to her father’s house after three months. At the age of 20, she moved to England under the protection of a different officer in the light dragoons, and subsequently met the newly created Earl of Blessington. Her first husband died in 1816 after a drunken fall from a window in the King’s Bench prison and Margaret Jenkins reinvented herself as Marguerite, Lady Blessington of St James’s Square. But she was never wholly accepted by conservative English society because she was accused, as Walter Savage Landor put it, ‘of some incorrectness in early life’, and if that were not enough, the Blessingtons were rumoured to be living in a ménage à trois with Lady Blessington’s stepson-in-law, Count D’Orsay. It was, therefore, a socially tarnished coterie that met in the rain at Byron’s house at Albaro in April 1823.

Byron was enchanted by the French artist, Count D’Orsay, who had given up his commission in the garde du corps to accompany the Blessingtons. From his time in London in 1821, he kept a journal ‘in which he (p.54) dealt freely with the follies of [London] society’. Byron asked to read this manuscript and was impressed by D’Orsay’s satirical acumen and the way he had ‘penetrated ... the mystery of the English Ennui at two and twenty’. Referring to the English Cantos of Don Juan, Byron assured Lord Blessington that these had been written before looking at the D’Orsay manuscript and he wrote to D’Orsay:

Though I love my Country – I do not love my Country-men – at least such as they now are – and beside the seduction of talent and wit in your work – I fear that to me – there was the attraction of Vengeance – I have seen and felt much of what you have described so well – I have known the persons and the reunions so described ... it is no treason, – for my mother was Scotch and my name and my family are both Norman – and as for myself I am of no Country.
Far from prompting nostalgia about English life and the Years of Fame, Byron’s encounter with the Blessingtons seems to have reinforced a sense of distance and separation. Byron writes that ‘Il faut être Français’ to describe the circles of English society as well as D’Orsay has done, and he apologises to the Count for ‘our barbarous language—which you understand and write ... much better than it deserves’, before making his bid to be Scottish and French, rather than English.

Richard Cronin suggests that Lady Blessington’s Conversations recreates Byron as a Regency dandy: ‘Like Trelawny, her renderings of Byron’s conversation become more persuasive with practice’, Cronin observes, ‘at the beginning of her account, she relies far too heavily on having Byron sprinkle his conversation with French phrases to establish him as a denizen of the beau monde’. This is shrewdly noticed, though as his letter about D’Orsay indicates, Byron demonstrated a heightened appreciation of the elegance of the French language while he enjoyed their company, and it is possible that he seasoned his conversation with more French words in half-conscious sympathy (or less gallant irony). In another letter to Lord Blessington, Byron described D’Orsay as possessing the air of ‘Cupidon déchaîné’.

Lady Blessington’s account of the Albaro gathering, as Cronin suggests, emphasizes Byron’s resentment at the ‘social ostracism’ he suffered in the (p.55) wake of the separation scandal and reveals a ‘radical self-identification’ with Byron. Lady Blessington’s twinning of herself with the Byronic exile is delicately nuanced—exile must involve a degree of compulsion and Lady Blessington presents her time in Italy as more of a grand tour. Nevertheless, she clearly felt a degree of kinship both with Byron and with the other adamant outcast, Walter Savage Landor, to whom she sent her Conversations of Lord Byron in 1835.

The conversational inflection that is vital to the appeal of Blessington’s memoir reveals her sensitivity to social tone and tenor. We can detect this cultural fine-tuning in her account of an evening when the Blessingtons were sitting with Byron on the balcony after tea:
it commands a fine view, and we had one of those moonlight nights that are seen only in this country. Every object was tinged with its silvery lustre. In front were crowded an unaccountable number of ships from every country, with their various flags waving in the breeze, which bore to us the sounds of the as various languages of the crews. In the distance we enjoyed a more expanded view of the sea, which reminded Byron of his friend Moore’s description, which he quoted:

The sea is like a silv’ry lake.

The fanal casting its golden blaze into this silv’ry lake, and throwing a red lurid reflection on the sails of the vessels that passed near it; the fishermen, with their small boats, each having a fire held in a sort of grate fastened at the end of the boat, which burns brilliantly, and by which they not only see the fish that approach, but attract them; their scarlet caps, which all the Genoese sailors and fishermen wear, adding much to their picturesque appearance ... one feels that such nights are never to be forgotten, and while the senses dwell on each, and all, a delicious melancholy steals over the mind, as it reflects that, the destinies of each conducting to far distant regions, a time will arrive when all now before the eye will appear but as a dream.  

Lady Blessington makes a picturesque assemblage of diverse elements: the silver light of the moon embraces the ‘unaccountable’ number of ships, just as the breeze carries and unifies the ‘various languages’ of the sailors. The detail of the braziers and the sailors’ red caps serves as local colour and to enrich the aesthetic properties of what becomes a theatrical back-drop to the Blessington/Byron soliloquy. She sets a scene that both anticipates and assimilates Byron’s quotation from Moore. Moore’s poem ‘To (p.56) Lord Viscount Strangford. Aboard the Phaeton Frigate, Off the Azores, by Moonlight’ addresses an absent friend and invites an imaginary company to appreciate the scene: ‘Oh! Such a blessed night as this,/I often think, if friends were near,/How we should feel, and gaze with bliss/Upon the moon-bright scenery here!’  

Blessington’s meditation on what ‘one feels’ again pre-empts Byron’s speech:
This was felt by all the party; and after a silence of many minutes, it was broken by Byron, who remarked, ‘What an evening, and what a view! Should we ever meet in the dense atmosphere of London, shall we not recall this evening, and the scenery now before us? But, no! most probably there we should not feel as we do here; we should fall into the same heartless, loveless apathy that distinguish one half of our dear compatriots, or the bustling, impertinent importance to be considered supreme bon ton that marks the other.’

Byron spoke with bitterness, but it was the bitterness of a fine nature soured by having been touched too closely by those who had lost their better feelings through a contact with the world.66

Lady Blessington shadows Byron’s sense of the contagion of ‘touch’ and ‘contact’ with the social world: like Milton’s fallen angels, the exile must sit ‘apart removed’. Since the ‘bustling’ and ‘apathetic’ social worlds are equally contaminated, the elevated, serene, and detached gaze of the party of exiles, looking down on the ‘forest of masts … from … remote parts of the world’, becomes a cosmopolitan vantage point. Lest the perspective appear too remote, Lady Blessington introduces an anecdotal embellishment in which Byron owns his country:

While he was yet speaking, sounds of vocal music arose; national hymns and barcaroles were sung in turns by the different crews, and when they had ceased, ‘God save the King’ was sung by the crews of some English merchantmen lying close to the pier. This was a surprise to us all, and its effect on our feelings was magnetic. Byron was no less touched than the rest; each felt at the moment that tie of country which unites all when they meet on a far distant shore.67
In *The Diary of an Invalid*, based on his travels in 1817–19, Henry Matthews recounts the tradition that at Leghorn, every ship was welcomed by a boat full of musicians who would play ‘the national airs of the country’ to which the vessel belonged. It seems unlikely that in 1822, the singing of the English national anthem in the port of Genoa would be seen as anything other than provocative, given Castlereagh’s recent selling of Genoese independence to Sardinia (a piece of double-dealing to which Byron refers in the Dedication to *Don Juan*). Lady Blessington is oblivious to any international tension, but uses the lyricism of the moment to portray a nostalgic Byron who shares the sentiments of ‘all’:

> When the song ceased, Byron, with a melancholy smile, observed, ‘Why, positively, we are all quite sentimental this evening, and I – I who have sworn against sentimentality, find the old leaven still in my nature, and quite ready to make a fool of me. ‘Tell it not in Gath,’ that is to say, breathe it not in London, or to English ears polite, or never again shall I be able to *enact* the stoic philosopher. Come, come, this will never do, we must foreswear moonlight, fine views, and above all, hearing national airs sung. Little does his gracious Majesty Big Ben, as Moore calls him, imagine what loyal subjects he has at Genoa, and least of all that I am among their number.’

‘Tell it not in Gath’ borrows a Biblical, proverbial phrase that Byron had recently read in the Preface to *Ivanhoe*, and Lady Blessington may have been aware that Byron never moved house without taking Scott’s novels with him. ‘Ears polite’ has a Byronic ring (Byron invokes them sarcastically in *Don Juan*, when he shields English readers from Juan’s language to the Cossacks as he rescues Leila). Byron’s inconsistency means that it is possible he could describe himself to Lord Blessington as of ‘no country’, and then within a matter of days number himself amongst the ‘loyal subjects’ of George IV, but one suspects the last statement was laced with irony.
Byron often reported his own susceptibility to music, but his partiality for national airs usually relates to Moore’s *Irish Melodies* or remembered snatches of Scottish songs. Byron’s play with the English national anthem in *Don Juan* is, of course, famously satirical, whether he is describing the Southey-like laureate in Canto III, who ‘gave the different nations something national’ (III, 85), or, more darkly, the prophecy of national patience wearing thin in the middle of the siege cantos: ‘But never mind;—“God save the king!” and kings!/For if he don’t, I doubt if men will longer’ (VIII, 50). While it is possible to imagine Byron being moved by the sound of men singing in chorus and then mocking the human tendency to be moved in such a way, we might doubt Lady Blessington’s inference of any strong monarchical sentiment.

The Genoa vignette is interesting for what it tells us of a new kind of cosmopolitanism in Byron, to which Blessington herself was probably impervious, and also of Blessington’s construction of herself as Byron—a *roaming citizen of the world who yet remains loyal to the patria and patriarch*. On another occasion, she writes of Byron rebuking her for ‘always thinking and reasoning on the English’, from which we might infer that his first point of reference is now Italian behaviour. She insists on her own ‘partiality to England and all that is English’, and her temporary exile is woven around trust in an eventual return, whereas Byron sees that Eden either irrevocably in the past or a figment of the imagination from the start.

When Lady Blessington described the same scene five years later for her travelogue, *The Idler in Italy* (1839–40), under the date 12 May, we find a much more bullish account of English naval supremacy and that the author is less susceptible to the music of different languages or the sight of Genoese fishermen:
A number of vessels from various countries are always in the port, presenting a forest of masts from which the flags of almost every European nation are seen floating in the air; and as many dialects as Babel owned strike on the ear. It is interesting to examine the endless variety in the forms of the ships of different countries; and highly gratifying to an English eye, to witness the great superiority of ours over all the others. Cold must be the heart that does not throb with a quicker pulsation, when the banner of its country is seen waving in a foreign land; that banner which may well be named the ensign of valour. It brings with it a thousand national feelings; mingled with that yearning for home, which all experience when long absent from it. The sentiment, so natural to the natives of every country, is most warmly experienced by those of England; to whom the sight of a ship is as a remembrancer of glorious victories.  

In the *Idler in Italy*, Blessington’s account of the night with Byron is diffused over a series of entries; the record of the fishermen is dated 8 May, and this time, she looks back to Genoa from the sea, rather than from a vantage point above the bay:

The town appears to peculiar advantage when beheld from the sea; and particularly at night, when it looks like a vast amphitheatre, brilliantly illuminated, the illuminations vividly reflected in the sea. We were much amused by seeing the fishermen of Genoa plying their art in catching the finny tribes, in which they display no inconsiderable skill and dexterity. At the stern of each boat an iron pole is fastened, to which a basket of the same metal is attached, containing a fire, which emits a bright flame, and throws a red glare on the countenances and figures of the fishermen; one of whom stands at the stern with a long iron fork, with which he strikes the fish ... The boatmen were nearly all singing barcaroles, some in choruses, which sounded well; and the whole scene resembled a fine Canaletti picture.
In this version of the illuminated fishing scene, the lights of the city outshine the silvery lustre of the moon and the fishermen are now industrious workers, as much a ‘tribe’ as the fish, rather than part of a distant son et lumière. Instead of the harmonious mixture of national voices, the singing simply imparts local flavour, although it is the wrong local flavour, as the fishermen seem to be depicted as Venetian gondolieri, an impression which is further enhanced by the reference to Canaletto. Rather than being a moment of exiled pathos, this is now a scene of ‘amusement’. The tone here is very different from her journal of 1828, when, passing through Genoa, Lady Blessington returned to Byron’s villa and retraced the footsteps of the poet who was now dead. Her writing on this occasion reaches for all the tropes of exiled consciousness—empty furniture, empty rooms, and, as she looks back on Byron’s looking forward, a sense of the gulf between past and present:

I sat on the chair where I had formerly been seated next to him; looked from the window whence he had pointed out a beautiful view; and listened to Mr Barry’s graphic description of the scene, when, becalmed in the Gulf of Genoa, the day he sailed for Greece, he returned and walked through the rooms of his deserted dwelling, filled with melancholy forebodings.75

Back in England, the perspective of The Idler is more securely British, but Blessington’s patriotism in that text is foreshadowed by the way in which she was never as fully deracinated as Byron, even in Italy. While she had been with him, Lady Blessington tended to think through Byron, but in subsequent years that exiled community is superseded by other relationships and her associations are overlaid by what is more recently lost.76 In The Idler, she describes the way in which one can be jolted back to England by the sight of an English postmark:
Letters from home – What a yearning of the heart does the word home excite! When distance divides us from our native land, we cease to recollect its dense fogs, chilly atmosphere, gloomy skies, and uncertain climate; and remember only the many nameless blessings and comforts to be found in home, and in home only. Perhaps, however paradoxical the supposition may appear, some portion of the charm of home may be derived from the severity and uncertainty of our climate. With what pleasure do we enjoy the genial warmth of a blazing fire, a well-lighted apartment, and the luxurious comfort of an easy chair or well-stuffed sofa; after having the physical feelings chilled, and the mental ones rendered gloomy, by the cold, cheerless atmosphere, to which in England we are so continually exposed! It is certain that we most frequently think of home, as associated with the comforts we draw around us in a winter’s evening.77

We could compare this with Anna Jameson’s earlier reflections on the English hearth to see the different degrees of separation between two Irish women and the conception of an English home: Jameson invokes the images of the sofa and the fireside, only to supplant them with the jouissance of life out of doors under Italian skies; Blessington suggests that the cloudy English climate accentuates the comforts of sofa and hearth. Correspondence is part of being an ‘idler’ in Italy for Blessington, whereas The Diary of an Ennuyée is written around what does not arrive in the post; but both books speak of the highly charged significance of the letter.

Letters, Imaginary Conversations, and Things in Exile
Letter writing was a vital resource in exile, facilitated by one of the most important technologies of the British Empire, the postal service. Receiving a letter from England, therefore, was always a reminder of post-Napoleonic borders. As Janet Altman points out in her structuralist analysis of epistolary fiction, the letter’s role as a connector between two distant points means that the epistolary author ‘can choose to emphasize either the distance or the bridge.’78 Nineteenth-century exiles in Italy chose to emphasize both. One of the most moving testimonies to the letter’s associative power is Mary Shelley’s journal entry when her missing writing-desk from Marlow arrived in Genoa. She re-reads her correspondence with Percy from 1817 and records:
What a scene to recur to! My William, Clara, Allegra are all talked of – They lived then – They breathed this air & their voices struck on my sense, their feet trod the earth beside me – & their hands were warm with blood & life when clasped in mine. Where are they all? 

(p.61) Paper that has been held and written upon by another retains the physical touch of that person. As a form of imaginary conversation, epistolary writing is one of the most significant products of exile, bringing into urgent focus the exile’s relationship with people and things back in England. The materiality of the letter could be, and often was, reinscribed in verse. As a composition ‘between manuscript and print’, to borrow David Fairer’s telling phrase, the verse epistle recollects the contingent circumstances of its production. Percy Shelley’s ‘Letter to Maria Gisborne’ shapes a litany in couplets out of the material oddity of being in exile and the heightened awareness of everyday things, such as another person’s writing table: 

A heap of rosin, a queer broken glass
With ink in it, a china cup that was
...
Near that a dusty paint box, some odd hooks,
A half-burnt match, an ivory block, three books
Where conic sections, spherics, logarithms,
To great Laplace, from Saunderson and Sims,
Lie heaped in their harmonious disarray
Of figures – disentangle who may.
Baron de Tott’s Memoirs beside them lie,
And some odd volumes of old chemistry.
Near those a most inexplicable thing,
With lead in the middle. (ll. 84–6, 92-101)
Timothy Webb has recently re-examined the ‘apparently quotidian’ nature of this poem and draws attention to the way in which the poem creates a shifting ‘we’: ‘There is’, he says, ‘something inexplicable and teasing about the whole scene.’

Webb’s perceptive identification of the way in which the speaker of the poem shifts between having a separate identity and being part of a group alerts us to the exile’s problem of determining how disjointed parts relate to a whole. Shelley’s sense of being a misfit himself is displaced onto his repeated use of the word ‘odd’, whereby the clutter of someone else’s untidy desk domesticates ‘The jarring and inexplicable frame/ Of this wrong world’ (ll. 159–60). In rhyme, the poem holds together a community of exiles and their expatriate rituals, such as ‘tea and toast’ (l. 303). The mention of comestibles here for once puts Shelley on the same wavelength as Byron, who speaks in the final unfinished English Canto of *Don Juan* of ‘breakfast, tea and toast,/Of which most men partake, but no one sings’ (XVII, 13): exile reminds the poet that he is excluded from what ‘most men partake’; it makes even Shelley sing of the everyday.

The invitation to ‘talk’, ‘thought-entangled descant’, and ‘friendly philosophic revel’ (ll. 310, 312, 319) is linked with a time of shared book-reading in ‘Spanish, Italian, Greek’ (l. 298). Shelley closes the distance between him and his addressee through rhyme and also through the poignant allusive gesture—a ‘bitter-sweet’ moment, according to Webb—that ends the poem: ‘Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew—/“Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new” ’ (ll. 322–3).

By seizing just the last line of Milton’s *Lycidas*, Shelley overleaps the space of bereavement and alights on the consolation. It is a conversational gambit, but it dramatizes the exiled disjunction between past and present. The closing quotation lays hands on Milton in a graphic way, as a textual clutching at remnants of home, a reminder of what is shared and what remains a link between poet and addressee in absence.

Epistolary conversation was a verse experiment to which Percy Shelley did not return after 1820, but another version of it formed the core work of the republican English poet who was also in Pisa in the same year, but who refused to meet the Shelley party because he strongly disapproved of the abandonment of Harriet Shelley.
Walter Savage Landor had left England in 1814 after a quarrel with his wife, Julia. When Landor first contemplated exile, Robert Southey counselled him against it, telling him to go abroad temporarily if he must, but ‘not as an emigrant’. Landor, however, seemed born for exile: his ‘unconciliating manners’, as he called them, resulted in many expulsions throughout his life: from Oxford University, from the family estate in Wales, and from Tuscany in 1829, as recounted by Charles Brown (friend of Keats and Hunt, who was then living in Maiano):

Down he sat and wrote an expostulatory letter to the Grand Duke, beginning in this way, – ‘Highness! I know not how to write a petition; and if I did, I would rather die than write one.’ The letter was very clever and very (p.63) manly. He fulfilled the awful sentence of the law by taking a trip to Lucca and Massa; when ‘Highness’ ordered the sentence to be annulled, and he returned to Florence roaring with laughter.

Julia rejoined Landor in 1815 and they lived together in Italy for 20 years, but the terrible quarrel of 1814 was never forgotten: ‘Certainly I shall never be so happy as I was before; that is beyond all question’, Landor predicted in 1814, and for the remainder of his married life, he turned his marriage into a personal version of the Fall, using epigrams to vent connubial spleen:

An angel from his Paradise drove Adam;
From mine a devil drove me – Thank you, Madam.
Nations by violence are espous’d to kings,
And men are hammer’d into wedding-rings.
There are two miseries in human life;
To live without a friend, and with a wife.

Leigh Hunt, who was a neighbour in Maiano, regarded Julia as a wife ‘who would have made Ovid’s loneliness quite another thing, with her face radiant with good-humour’, but like Byron, Landor used anniversaries, such as his birthday on 1841, to speak of the woe that is marriage:

What, of house and home bereft,
For my birthday what is left?
...
What is left me after all?
What, beside my funeral?
Bid it wait a little while,
Just to let one thoughtful smile
Its accustom’d time abide:
There are left two boons beside..
Health, and eyes that yet can see
Eyes not coldly turn’d from me. (III, 243, ll. 1–2, 11–18)

The last line has a Thomas Hardy-like twist of bitterness in the
double negative, where it is the absence of hostile eyes that
the poet counts as a blessing. (p.64) Dating from before and
after his marriage, Landor’s ‘Ianthe’ lyrics circle around an
involuntary separation from a mysterious female figure who
has either married someone else or died: ‘And now thy hand
hath slipt away from mine./And the cold marble cramps it’. 88
Unlike all the other writers in this book, Landor prized the
isolation from everyone else that exile brought: ‘Never were
my spirits better than in my [20th] year,’ he claimed, ‘when I
wrote “Gebir,”’ and did not exchange twelve sentences with
men. I lived among woods, which are now killed with copper
works, and took my walk over sandy sea-coast deserts, then
covered with low roses, and thousands of nameless flowers
and plants’. 89 Cast as ‘Verses, Written near the Sea, in
Wales’ (1800), this memory achieves an even greater self-
containment:

I.
I wander o’er the sandy heath
Where the white rush waves high;
Where adders close before me wreath
And tawny kites to sail screaming by.

II.
Alone I wander! I alone
Could love to wander there!
‘But wherefor?’ – let my church-yard stone
Look toward Tawey and declare.

This is an extreme Philoctetes version of exile, evoking a
sensibility that is closer to nature than other humans. The
chiastic ‘Alone I ... I alone’ stretches the line to measure the
full unlikeness of Landor’s poetic identity. Landor’s later lyrics
are often addressed not to an absent lover, but to the space
around himself: a lone casement, a solitary room, a wall
beneath an orange tree. Repeatedly, Landor cherishes the
distance between him and any other person:

Here can I sit or roam at will;
Few trouble me, few wish me ill,
In 1835, the Landors had another major row and Walter left Fiesole to return to England alone. Like Mary Shelley, he now regarded Tuscany as the place from which he had been exiled, but in ‘My Homes’ (1858) he carefully erased the mother of his children from his memories:

(p.65) Here, by the lake, Boccaccio’s *Fair Brigade*  
Beguiled the hours and tale for tale repaid.  
How happy! O how happy! Had I been  
With friends and children in this quiet scene!  
Its quiet was not destined to be mine;  
’Twas hard to keep, ’twas harder to resign. (ll. 23–8)

In Landor’s poetry, domestic happiness can only be hypothetical and qualified by conditional tenses. Boccaccio’s ‘fair brigade’ is an imaginary community, but Landor treats it on the same plane of reality as his friends and children. Leigh Hunt is driven to make books into surrogate companions while he is in Italy; Landor always prefers the company of books or the situation of Galileo, who ‘with the stars conversed’ (not the silent communion of Coleridge in ‘Frost at Midnight’, but an almost audible scientific dialogue).

Landor’s *Imaginary Conversations* make a substantial, though rarely discussed, contribution to the evolution of conversable forms in the Romantic period, the first five volumes appearing between 1824 and 1829, with later additions such as the *Imaginary Conversation ... on the Affairs and Prospects of Italy* (1848) and *Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans* (1853). With the help of Lady Blessington, whom he had met in 1825, Landor became a semi-detached figure in London literary life, contributing regularly to Blessington’s anthology, *The Book of Beauty*, until another libel case forced him to return to Italy in 1858 where, assisted by the Brownings, he settled in Florence, apart from his remaining family.
Elizabeth Barrett recognized his essential unlikeness in the 1840s: ‘He has received no apparent influence from any one of his contemporaries; nor have they or the public received any apparent influence from him.’ If he was slightly at odds with the English tradition, Landor was at one with the classical world: Barrett saw him as an author ‘in whose hands the ashes of antiquity burn again’. Lady Blessington recognized that Landor ‘reads of the ancients, thinks, lives with, and dreams of them’, and she praised his ability to make her ‘forget the lapse of ages, and create new sympathies with those who have for years been numbered with the dead.’ He remained fiercely partisan and independent, writing ‘as Englishmen wrote before literary men courted the vulgar or gentlemen were the hirelings of booksellers.’ Landor’s acerbic reputation, as well as his penchant for writing verses (p.66) in Latin, was seen as a major obstacle by potential publishers; when John Taylor finally agreed to publish Imaginary Conversations, Southey (who had reviewed Gebir favourably) was asked to check that there was nothing inflammatory in the text.

Imaginary conversation is, perhaps, the literary form of exile par excellence: a familiar form beyond letter writing that creates sociality out of thin air. In her essay on Landor in A New Spirit of the Age, Elizabeth Barrett noticed that many of his characters are totally without material or definite form; appear to live nowhere, and upon nothing, and to be very independent agents, to whom practical action seldom or never occurs. ‘They think therefore they are.’ They feel and know, (they are apt too often to know as much as their author,) therefore, they are characters. But they are usually without bodily substance; and such form as they seem to have, is an abstraction which plays round them, but might go off in air at any time.

Landor’s characters might ‘go off’, in the sense that their conversation holds an explosive potential. He imagines affable conversations with contemporaries like Southey, but most pairings are more waspish encounters between favourite authors such as Marvell and Milton, or Milton and Galileo, or Samuel Johnson and John Horne Tooke. These disembodied voices are Landor’s chosen society.

Leigh Hunt was struck by Landor’s self-sufficiency:
With a library, the smallness of which surprised me, and which he must furnish out, when he writes in English subjects, by the help of a rich memory ... The exile, in which he chooses to continue at present, is as different from that of his friend Ovid, as his Tristia would have been, had he thought proper to write any.\textsuperscript{96}

Landor's library may have been small, but as we can see from the records of the books he inscribed for Robert and Pen Browning, it contained several treasures, including a copy of Boccaccio's \textit{Decameron}, a 1648 edition of Machiavelli's \textit{The Prince}, a 1561 edition of the prose of Pietro Bembo, Edmund Burke's copy of \textit{De rebus gestis Alexandri Magni} (1620), a 1550 edition of Vasari, and a 1640 edition of Catullus with the inscription: 'W S Landor gave this book to the kindest of his friends Robert Browning June 16. 60. It is the first book W Landor ever bought'.\textsuperscript{97}

\textbf{(p.67)} Books acquire a special significance in exile: they are tangible links with a cultural milieu that is now distant; they are a repository for memory and they represent (more than usual) the remnants of survival. In exile, therefore, books are the opposite of the 'emissaries' that they become in the later Victorian period for Asa Briggs.\textsuperscript{98} The difficulty of obtaining English books abroad, or receiving book parcels sent from home, is a recurrent topic of exiled correspondence and it exaggerates the pleasure and the disappointment of new literature when it finally arrives in Italy. One of the ways in which books preserve and convey the English poetic tradition for English exiles abroad is evident in Landor's art of making books talk, as he did when he began the \textit{Imaginary Conversations} in Florence in 1821, making them his society for the next 40 years.

On 19 October 1841, Landor addressed Lady Blessington from Bath:

Yesterday being rainy, I spent the whole of it in writing a long Imaginary Conversation between Vittoria Colonna and Michel-angelo. Formerly I wrote between her and Pescara.---It was little better than a long disquisition on glory. I thought it---not indeed pedantic, but scholastic, and too like other men's Dialogues, who carry them in small particles on the two tips of a (forked) bifurcated tongue. This is better.\textsuperscript{99}
What Landor dismisses about ‘other men’s Dialogues’ seems to be an even-handed distribution of scholarly points between two voices, a simple division of the author’s selfhood in half. Landor goes much further in his creation of opposing voices. Jon Mee has recently discussed the different conversational modes of Hazlitt and Hunt, pointing out that Hazlitt prefers a more combative, masculine arena, while Hunt adopts a hearthside domestic ambiance. Mee does not consider the multiple volumes of Imaginary Conversations Landor produced between 1824 and 1853, but Landor offers a distinctively different voice from both Hazlitt and Hunt. His attention to the domestic sphere does not preclude a contest between opposed intellectual and political points of view.

In Landor’s Conversations, the grain of the voice and the philosophical heft of the conversation matter much more than in ‘Mr Northcote’s Conversations’ or ‘Persons one would wish to have seen’. Landor’s shards of speech allow us to hear the voices of older writers as a living library. The vital noise of the tradition is evident in ‘A Satire on Satirists’, which also functions as an ‘admonition to detractors’ who cannot appreciate ‘very coarse and very bitter bread’:

Dryden’s rich numbers rattle terse and round,
Profuse, and nothing plattery in the sound.
...
Churchmen have chaunted satire, and the pews
Heard good sound doctrine from the sable Muse.
Frost-bitten and lumbaginous, when Donne,
With verses gnarl’d and knotted, hobbled on.

Landor’s sensitivity to the texture of verse satire is more aural and tactile than the traditional literary historical characterization of the form based on religious or monarchical colouring. ‘Lumbaginous’ is a 17th-century word; ‘plattery’ is Landor’s own coinage. After sampling the ancient voices of English satire, Landor’s poem leaps to recent history:

Byron was not all Byron; one small part
Bore the impression of a human heart.
Guided by no clear love-star’s panting light
Thro’ the sharp surges of a northern night,
In Satire’s narrow strait he swam the best,
Scattering the foam that hist about his breast.
He, who might else have been more tender, first
From Scottish saltiness caught his rabid thirst.
Praise Keats . .
‘I think I’ve heard of him.’
‘With you
Shelly stands foremost.’
. . . And his lip was blue.
‘I hear with pleasure any one commend
So good a soul; for Shelly is my friend.’
One leaf from Southey’s laurel made explode
All his combustibles . .
‘An ass! By God!’
I lagged; he call’d me; urgent to prolong
My matin chirpings into mellower song.
Mournfuller tones came then . .
...
From eve to morn, from morn to parting night,
Father and daughter stood before my sight.
I felt the looks they gave, the words they said.
(III, 384–5)

(p.69) This poem deals in the cut and thrust of conversation, and the subsequent transition makes it sound as if Landor had visited Byron in 1819, when Allegra was staying with him. The suggestion of a moment almost out of time is enhanced by the echo of Milton’s Satan falling: ‘from Morn/To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,/A Summers day’. The anecdote could have come from Moore or Hunt, but it could also be a reworking of Lady Blessington’s Conversations: in May 1823, she records: ‘he and I nearly quarrelled to-day because I defended poor Keats. You should have known Shelley said Byron.’ 102 If it is from her, Landor has retained the clipped quality of the judgements, but added salt and colour (the ‘blue’ lip means that Byron was biting it, presumably), under the controlling metaphor drawn from Byron’s physical prowess as a swimmer of the Hellespont.

Landor’s prose Imaginary Conversations and his shorter verse Hellenics are unlike Browning’s dramatic monologues, although he admired these, in that Landor is less concerned with the gradual disclosure of character and more with the sound of two intellectual positions in debate: he rated the revelatory potential of disagreement more highly than soliloquy. As with the portrait of ruined Europe in T. S. Eliot’s The Waste Land, Landor often locates cultural crisis in a scene between an estranged couple. One of the most tawdry is the verse dialogue ‘Menelaus and Helen at Troy’ (1846), when, on the steps of the burning palace, Menelaus catches up with his ex-wife:
Fare thee well!

Turn, vilest of vile slaves! Turn, paramour
Of what all other women hate, of cowards,
Turn, lest this hand wrench back thy head, and
toss
It and its odours to the dust and flames. (ll. 10–13)

His desire for recrimination is, however, weakened by Helen’s sentimental claim to be a mother to their daughter, whereupon Menelaus is overcome by homesickness:

(aside) Can she think of home?
Hers once, mine yet, and sweet Hermione’s!
Is there one spark that cheer’d my hearth, one
left,
For thee, my last of love! (ll. 41–4)

His infatuation with her face returns, even as he remembers the ill-omened blush that overspread it when she tripped on the step at the gate of his palace as a bride.

Menelaus exemplifies the frailty of nostalgia; swooningly forgetful of the ‘dead on dead’ (l. 21), with which he taunted Helen at first, his last (p.70) words trail into the blithe hope of a good return trip: ‘The wind, I hope, is fair for Sparta’ (l. 96). His ability to slip back into his old life appears as much of a betrayal as Helen’s infidelity. We see the same treacherous human instability in the dramatic episode Landor produced, in which a boorish Henry VIII hears Anne Boleyn’s death knell while out hunting, but shows more curiosity about a girl watching the chase (who turns out to be the young Katherine Parr) than his ex-wife or his next wife. Recurrently, Landor makes domestic life the pivot of national events, as his characters discuss the operation of government while pausing by a window or dealing with the personal effects of a dead soldier after a battle.
Landor’s attention to domestic life brings us to one of the most important things that all the writers in this book valued in exile—things themselves. Landor’s own cedar-wood writing-desk functions in this context as an ark, holding the relics of his past life. Landor sent it back from Italy in 1863, when he knew he was dying, but its contents were not examined in any detail until the 1890s, when they were catalogued by Landor’s editor, Stephen Wheeler. In the desk, Landor had stored ‘miniatures, an old pocket-book, a purse, a pen-wiper, some spectacles and eye glasses ... flower seeds ... some pieces of ribbon, linked coat-buttons ... a small paper packet containing a lock of hair of a light amber tint’, which was labelled in Landor’s hand writing, ‘Rose Aylmer’s hair’ and, apparently, a tuft of hair from Pomero, his big poodle.103

The list of personal effects consists of daily props like pen-wipers and keepsakes, such as the flower seeds from home and the hair that was once caressed on living humans and animals. Exiles hoard books, things from home, and pet animals. The pets are not often discussed, but Landor’s dogs, Elizabeth Barrett’s dog, Mary Shelley’s guinea pigs, Byron’s menagerie, and the Gisborne’s dog, Oscar—who kept scratching at the Shelles’ door after they had left—were essential companions during exiled life in Italy, performing the role that the wild animals on Lemnos did for Philoctetes. The peculiar heightening of the everyday that we accept as a trope of Romantic poetry has its roots in the longer, deeper, *ubi sunt* traditions of poetry of exile, and Landor’s box of things serves as an inventory of a talismanic, intensely associative process.

When she returned to Italy in the 1840s, Mary Shelley was apprehensive about the associations that would be set in train by the sight of a formerly familiar landscape:

(p.71) Those who are enduring mental or corporeal agony are strangely alive to immediate external objects, and their imagination even exercises its wild power over them ... the particular shape of a room – the progress of shadows on a wall – the peculiar flickering of trees – the exact succession of objects on a journey – have been indelibly engraved in my memory, as marked in, and associated with, hours and minutes when the nerves were strung to their utmost tension.104
Mary Shelley’s dashes convey the same nervy, strung-out attention and the surreal clarity of the images that have been impressed with physical or mental anguish. We have seen a version of this in Lady Blessington’s revisiting of Byron’s old villa at Albaro, and Percy Shelley’s letters were full of admonitions about the way ‘we prize what we despised when present! So the ghosts of our dead associations rise & haunt us’. A poetic correlative for Mary’s thoughts on memory and association occurs in Percy’s ‘Letter to Maria Gisborne’, where the verse evokes the absence of a person through the presence of household things:

You are not here ... the quaint witch Memory sees
In vacant chairs your absent images,
And points where once you sat, and now should be
But are not. (ll. 132–5)

The fine ambiguity in the word ‘points’ denotes both the pointing finger of the personified witch, Memory, and a more abstract noun after ‘chairs’, giving the mathematical grid reference of what has disappeared. The experience of empty furniture is not, of course, exclusively linked to exile abroad—Thomas Gray writes to Charles Bonstetten after his departure in 1770, ‘My life now is but a perpetual conversation with your shadow ... There on the corner of the fender you are standing, or tinkling on the Pianoforte, or stretch’d at length on the sofa’; John Clare projects his own isolation onto an exposed corner chair in ‘The Flitting’.

If one of the techniques of Romantic poetry is to purge off the film of familiarity, exile intensifies the new searing awareness of things by placing objects in an alien context or within the frame of the irretrievable. Italian houses are strange in terms of architecture and furnishings, but (p.72) also because they are being perceived through a scarred consciousness that cannot go back.
Repeatedly in exiled writing, we can see raw nerves being touched as the recollection of a word or phrase floods a scene with significance from the lost home. An associative process accounts for the peculiar ‘English’ temper that Richard Holmes identifies in Percy Shelley’s Pisan poems of 1820–1. In ‘Evening. Ponte a Mare, Pisa’, editors have puzzled over a sudden shift of tense when, after the panoramic view of Pisa in a present restless moment, line 14 falls into the past: ‘The wrinkled image of the city lay’. Absence and inconstancy are the prevailing associations of the opening scene, with ‘not one ripple’ (l. 6), ‘no dew … Nor damp’ (ll. 7–8), and evening’s breath ‘wandering here and there’ (l. 4), an ‘intermitting wind’, and dust and straws … driven up and down’ (ll. 9–11). The inconstant wind recurs as a motif of Shelley’s exile: in Pompeii, he hears the autumn leaves ‘shiver & rustle in the stream of the inconstant wind … like the step of ghosts’, and Pisa is haunted with the same lack of fixity and repose—the false, turning, changing wind of Shakespeare’s Troilus and Cressida.

Thomas Peacock had noticed the way that Shelley’s letters oscillate between investment in Italy and England: ‘I am glad that your thoughts revert to the Thames with so much kind remembrance even from the poetical Arno.’ Looking at Pisa’s reflection in the river, Shelley is drawn into memories of a different river. The past tense falls just as Shelley’s language draws heavily on William Wordsworth’s Elegiac Stanzas, and possibly his famous depictions of the city ‘lying still’ in ‘Lines Composed Upon Westminster Bridge’. Shelley looks at Pisa through Wordsworth’s looking at the reflections of Peele Castle and London, and the image of Pisa is filtered or ‘wrinkled’ through other memories. This oblique angle of vision admits familiar motifs of exile: a ‘chasm’ that is shut (l. 19), ‘barriers’ of cloud (l. 20), mountains in a ‘crowd’ (l. 22), ‘And over it a space of watery blue’ (l. 23). All these images of distance, chasms, gulfs, and exclusion recur in the post-1816 and post-1818 writing of the Byron-Shelley circle.
The void of space and time is the metaphoric vision of exile; holding on to things is the material experience of exile. When, in the ‘Letter to John Murray Esqre.’, Byron imagines a natural disaster overwhelming Great Britain and predicts that the surviving world ‘would snatch Pope from the Wreck’, he dilates personal catastrophe and suggests that the world will hang on to the same relic of civilization that he has shored against his ruin. Pope is snatched as a comforting thing (a solid book) and metonymically as a poet who understands the beauty of artificial things. The final section of this chapter is a study of another one of those things.

All that remains of thee—Lucretia Borgia and the Relics of Exile
Touring Milan in October 1816, Byron wrote to tell Augusta that he was (as usual) underwhelmed by the picture galleries, but ‘What has delighted me most is a manuscript collection (preserved in the Ambrosian library), of original love-letters and verses of Lucretia de Borgia & Cardinal Bembo; and a lock of hair—so long—and fair & beautiful—and the letters so pretty & so loving that it makes one wretched not to have been born sooner to have at least seen her’. Byron pored over the hair and the correspondence, made the librarian promise to make a copy of some of the letters, and resolved to ‘get some of the hair if I can’. Byron’s determined cultural pilfering in this case (he was, after all, rather critical of Elgin) is testimony to the urgency that exile imparts to correspondence, the fabric of the past, and human things.
Lucretia Borgia was an attractive figure to the Byron-Hunt circle, being associated with an incest scandal in her early life (Byron refers to ‘a story … which some people don’t believe—& others do’) and then sent from palace to palace in Spain and Italy for marriages that advanced her father’s political ambition.\footnote{113} She therefore combined the winning attributes (for Byron, Hunt, and Shelley) of being a beautiful sexual outlaw and a victim of despotism. Hunt praised Roscoe for his gallant entry into the critical field ‘to run a tilt for her … The greatest scandal in the world’, Hunt wrote, ‘is the readiness of the world to believe scandal’.\footnote{114} As Duchess of Ferrara, Lucretia established a literary court in which Lodovico Ariosto was a devoted follower, and readings of Petrarch’s \emph{Rima} and dancing were regular pastimes. Pietro Bembo was a classical scholar and an expert in the works of Petrarch and Boccaccio. He hosted a soirée for Lucretia’s company in the autumn of 1502 and then joined her courtly circle. The Ambrosiana Library letters and poems detail an intensely literary love affair between 1503 and 1505, after which the correspondence (and the relationship, presumably) dwindles into commonplace courtesy.\footnote{115}

The lock of hair, out of which Byron drew his souvenir, was allegedly Bembo’s love token. At some point, Byron showed his prize to Lady Blessington, before giving it to Leigh Hunt, who added it to his collection of famous tresses and displayed it to Landor and Hazlitt when they were both in Italy.\footnote{116} Landor saluted the hair with a characteristically terse quatrain:

\begin{quote}
Borgia, thou once wert almost too august,  
And high for adoration;—now thou’rt dust!  
All that remains of thee these plaits infold –  
Calm hair, meand’ring with pellucid gold.\footnote{117}
\end{quote}
The stressed description of the hair as ‘calm’ heightens an implied contrast with Lucretia’s more turbulent life, just as ‘almost’ in the first line cannily withholds the sense that she was untouchable. The waywardness of the curls is the last trace of her unruliness, and even that is now transfigured in the shining transparency of ‘pellucid’ gold. Lucretia is passed between men in death as in life, and we might find Byron’s chortling determination to ‘get’ some of her hair, and Hunt’s fetishistic response to the same trophy, equally disturbing. The frisson around the rape of the lock of Lucretia Borgia reveals the strange sanctification and dismemberment of domestic life in exile.

Hunt’s ‘Criticism on Female Beauty’ in the London Journal decrees that ‘Hair is to the human aspect, what foliage is to the landscape. Its look of fertility is so striking that it has been compared to flowers, and even to fruit’. After a fascinating defence of the aesthetic merit of artificial ringlets, Hunt passes to a discussion of how Ovid and Anacreon preferred the beauty of auburn to golden hair and then to ‘a memorandum in my possession, worth a thousand treatises of the learned’:

This is a solitary hair of the famous Lucretia Borgia, whom Ariosto has so praised for her virtues, and whom the rest of the world is so contented to call a wretch. It was given me by a wild acquaintance, who stole it from a lock of her hair preserved in the Ambrosian library at Milan. On the envelope he put a happy motto:

‘And Beauty draws us with a single hair.’

If ever hair was golden, it is this. It is not red, it is not yellow, it is not auburn: it is golden and nothing else; and though natural-looking too, must have had a surprising appearance in the mass. Lucretia, beautiful in every respect, must have looked like a vision in a picture, an angel from the sun. Everybody who sees it, cries out, and pronounces it a real thing ... Wat Sylvan, a man of genius whom I became acquainted with over it, as other acquaintances commence over a bottle, was inspired on the occasion with the following verses:́
Hunt goes on to quote a version of Landor’s epigram. In his writing we can hear Leigh Hunt’s quest for human contact, the desire for a charm that might stand in lieu of relationship in uncertain times. ‘Hair’, he concludes his discussion,

is at once the most delicate and lasting of our materials; and survives us, like love. It is so light, so gentle, so escaping from the idea of death, that with a lock of hair belonging to a child or a friend, we may almost look up to heaven, and compare notes with the angelic nature; may almost say, ‘I have a piece of thee here, not unworthy of thy being now.’

In his first ‘Wishing Cap Essay’ for *Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine* in 1833, Hunt revisits his earlier article to claim ‘personal acquaintance’ with Lucretia Borgia through ‘possession’ of a hair: ‘as we have touched the hair, we have touched the person’. After rhapsodizing over the gold colour again, Hunt teases his readers with a thread of connection:

Envy us, then reader, that we have touched the hair of the divine Lucretia; the very same, perhaps, that caught the sunshine on her head when Ariosto was talking to her, and that was beheld by his diviner eyes.

Happy Italy! That preservest in thy Ambrosian Libraries the hairs of beauties and the loveletters of cardinals! And happy he who ‘obtained’ one of the hairs! And happy, and thrice happy we who possess it: not shut up with official indifference in some formal department of a room, ‘No. 14,’ (p.76) and seen only on holydays, but at hand, and ever forthcoming: kept like a love-lock; petted as if we had it from her yesterday; a treasure not to be bought; a constant source of delight and amazement to the eyes of ingenuous friends.
Hair does not just connect us with the dead; Hunt’s essays make clear that touching the hair of Lucretia Borgia forms a bond between men, the alliance of a cultural elite, an echo of Lucretia’s court in Este which treasured Petrarchan conversation while the Duke of Ferrara’s wars raged around Tuscany. The hair of Lucretia Borgia is passed around as an aesthetic totem that confirms the civilization of the company and a culture, like that of courtly love, that stands apart from the standards of bourgeois morality. During the Caroline trial of 1820, Hunt wrote to tell the Shelleys how ‘disgusting stories of her coarseness’ were being ‘trumped up … Lucrezia Borgia was hardly worse, according to their account. You may look upon the British public, at present, as constantly occupied in reading trials for adultery.’122 As Hunt and Shelley debated the relationship between libertinism and liberalism in Byron, Caroline’s treatment made ‘questions of justice respecting the intercourse of the sexes’ a key political issue.123

Jon Mee recognizes that there is a gap in ‘cockney conversability’ in the years Hunt spent with Shelley and Byron in Italy and implies that this period impairs Hunt’s ability to ‘reproduce the idea of culture as a form of amiable exchange in which readers could easily join’.124 It seems likely that Hunt’s loss of touch is the result of his distance from London, which places too much pressure on the medium of conversational exchange. In exile, the forms of print and everyday things that Hunt usually took for granted become freighted with almost unbearable emotional weight. Although Byron, Hunt, and Landor are not exactly rivals with Pietro Bembo for Lucretia, there is a suggestion of an erotic triangle between Lucretia, Byron, and Hunt, and Lucretia, Landor, and Hunt, in which Hunt’s desire for intimacy with Lord Byron and Walter Savage Landor is sublimated in his worship of ‘the divine Lucretia’. This relationship, I would suggest, gains additional urgency in the situation of exile as Sedgwick’s ‘play of desire and identification by which individuals negotiate with their societies for empowerment’ is more exigent when individuals (p.77) have been removed or ostracized from their former societies.125 What Hunt lacks in Italy is the secure and, therefore, playful sense of ‘national character’ that Mee saw as vital in his textual relationship with English readers.126
Hunt’s almost hallucinatory, detailed depictions of London life from abroad reveal how he missed the particulars of English existence: ‘even among thy olives and vines, Boccaccio! I not only missed “the town” in Italy; I missed my old trees,—oaks and elms’.\textsuperscript{127} Going against the grain of most Italian travel writing, Hunt describes Italian fecundity in terms of lack:

there are no meadows, no proper green lanes ... no paths leading over field and style, no hay-fields in June, nothing of that luxurious combination of green and russet, of grass, wild flowers, and woods, over which a lover of Nature can stroll for hours ... In short, (saving a little more settled weather,) we have the best part of Italy in books, be it what it may; and this we can enjoy in England.\textsuperscript{128}

Maria Gisborne was right when she suggested that Hunt was only prepared to like Italy ‘in theory’ and that he lacked the capacity to relish the difference of life in a new locality. That list of things missed about England is the pastoral poem of a man whose homesickness is a sort of lovesickness.\textsuperscript{129} Hunt’s dealings with fellow Englishmen in Italy rendered him vulnerable: he craved company, but envied the cosmopolitan versatility of Landor and Charles Brown, whose study in the former convent of St. Baldassare was ‘filled with the humanities of modern literature’, and where Hunt fantasized that they ‘discoursed of love and wine in the apartments of the Lady Abbess’.\textsuperscript{130} By adopting the persona of Boccaccio and colonizing a Catholic sanctuary, Hunt attempts to create a shared nisus of exile with his male companions, but he articulates his marginality through the figure of Lucretia Borgia.
Lucretia is the archetypal lonely consort in exile. She was more mysteriously criminal than Caroline, but she was similarly forced into the role of moral outcast by her husband and by state policy. In the eyes of her (p.78) narcissistic male 19th-century admirers, she is a cipher for their own enigmatic status, and she outfaces the disgrace of her broken marriage and the shattered bond with her locale and language. Living in the shadow of her past, Lucretia is nevertheless recognized as one who managed to build a new circle in each of the courts to which she was transplanted; she was a cast-off wife who endured the uncertain rank of exile, but still succeeded in shaping an alternative cultural and emotional life. Between the awareness of what is gone forever and the determination to make a go of things, we can chart the Italian experience of the writers in this study.

Notes:


(2) PBSL II, 328.


(7) A. Aspinall (ed.), *The Correspondence of George, Prince of Wales, 1770–1812*, 8 vols (London: Cassell, 1963–71), VI

(8) John H. Adolphus, *The Royal Exile; or Memoirs of the Public and Private Life of her Majesty, Caroline, Queen Consort of Great Britain*, 2 vols (London: Jones & Co., 1821), II


(10) MWSL I, 156.
Fare thee well!

(11) See 19 October 1816 under ‘Milan’ in: (http://petercochran.wordpress.com/hobhouses-diary/).


(14) Fanny Kemble, A Year of Consolation, 2 vols (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1847), I

(15) BC X, 8–9; XI, 186, 214, 224.

(16) Ovid, Tristia, p. 25.


(22) Erskine (ed.), Letters and Friendships, pp. 36


(25) Jameson, The Diary of an Ennuyée, pp. 146, 170

(26) Jameson, The Diary of an Ennuyée, pp. xi


Fare thee well!

(29) Susan Wolfson, “‘Their She Condition’: Cross-Dressing and the Politics of Gender in Don Juan’, English Literary History 54 (1987): 585–617

(30) Diary of an Ennuyée, p. 78. For a discussion of the background and a full transcription of the marginalia, see CMP, pp. 219–21 and 546–9. Textual differences between D’Israeli’s Essays (1822) and the note transcribed in the Diary suggest that the Rowles party saw Byron’s original marginal annotation in the copy he gave to Captain Fyler.


(33) Jameson, The Diary of an Ennuyée, p. 50.


(41) Stocking (ed.), The Journals of Claire Clairmont, p. 146.

(42) Stocking (ed.), The Journals of Claire Clairmont, p. 120.

Fare thee well!

(44) MWSL I, 73.

(45) MWSL I, 74.


(47) MWSL I, 77.

(48) MWSL I, 136.


(50) MWSL I, 67.


(52) Chard, Pleasure and Guilt, p. 4.


(54) PBSL II, 434.


(56) Enquiries were made in Notes and Queries early in the 20th century about the journal’s whereabouts, most recently by E. Beresford Chancellor in 1927, but although letters of D’Orsay survive dispersed across several archives, his journal appears to have been lost.

(57) BLJ X, 139.

(58) BLJ X, 156.

(59) BLJ X, 139, 156.


(61) BLJ X, 136.

Fare thee well!


(64) Lovell (ed.), *Lady Blessington’s Conversations*, p. 45.


(67) Lovell (ed.), *Lady Blessington’s Conversations*, p. 46.


(70) *BLJ* IX, 87.

(71) Lovell (ed.), *Lady Blessington’s Conversations*, p. 177.

(72) Lovell (ed.), *Lady Blessington’s Conversations*, p. 178.


(74) Blessington, *The Idler in Italy*, p. 194.


(76) Lady Blessington’s recollections of evenings with Walter Savage Landor echo her memories of Byron at Genoa: ‘Do you remember our calm evenings on the terrace of the Casa Pelosi, where, by the light of the moon, we looked on the smooth and glassy Arno, and talked of past ages? Those were happy times, and I frequently revert to them’. Madden, *Literary Life*, II, 106.

(77) Blessington, *The Idler in Italy*, p. 390.


(79) *MWSJ*, 435.
Fare thee well!


(83) Shelley uses the same allusion to break off a letter to Peacock; see PBSL II, 52. We hear it in quieter form when Byron shifts the mood in the first canto of *Don Juan* and returns to the story through a mention of mountains with a white cape ‘on their mantles blue’ (I, 134).


(89) Madden, *Literary Life*, I, 133.

(90) ‘To Joseph Ablett’ in Landor, *Works*, II, 674. These lines were added in 1846. See Wheeler (ed.), *Poetical Works*, III, 8–10, 468.
Fare thee well!


(92) *BC III*, 217.


(95) Horne (ed.), *A New Spirit of the Age*, p. 104.

(96) Hunt, *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries*, II


(99) Mariani, *The Letters of Walter Savage Landor to Marguerite Countess of Blessington*, p. 357.


(102) Lovell (ed.), *Lady Blessington’s Conversations*, p. 52.

(103) Stephen Wheeler, (ed.), *Letters and Other Unpublished Writings of Walter Savage Landor* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1897), pp. 8


(105) *PBSL* II, 114.
Fare thee well!


(108) PBSL II, 74.


(112) BLJ V, 114–15. Cheeke lists Lucretia’s hair among Byron’s attraction to other relics and souvenirs in *Byron and Place*, p. 81.

(113) BLJ V, 114.


(116) In ‘Conversation the Twelfth’ of *Mr Northcote’s Conversations*, Hazlitt reports that ‘I had not long ago seen the hair of Lucretia Borgia, of Milton, Buonaparte, and Dr Johnson, all folded up in the same paper. It had belonged to Lord Byron’ (Howe [ed.], *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, XI, 255).


Fare thee well!

(120) Hunt, ‘Criticism of Female Beauty’, p. 123.


(123) Thornton Hunt (ed.), Correspondence of Leigh Hunt, I, 156.

(124) Mee, Conversable Worlds, p. 248.


(126) Mee, Conversable Worlds, p. 247.

(127) Hunt, Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries, II

(128) Hunt, Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries, II, 384.


(130) Hunt, Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries, II, 374–5.

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