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History as Heuristic in *The Wanderer*

TARA GHOSHAL WALLACE

Rescued in the nick of time from the clutches of her monstrous French husband, Juliet Granville is carried off by Sir Jaspar Harrington to Wilton House (for centuries the seat of the Earls of Pembroke) so that she can "while away the interval of waiting … in viewing the finest works of art, displayed in a temple consecrated to their service" (Burney, *Wanderer* 758). But Juliet, traumatized by what she has suffered, overwhelmed by grief and confusion, has become estranged from the aesthetically sensitive self "who never saw excellence without emotion" (759), has become, in fact, "one to whom every thing was indifferent; whose discernment was gone, whose eyes were dimmed, whose powers of perception were asleep, and whose spirit of enjoyment was annihilated" (759–60). Oblivious to the artistic glories around her, a Juliet alienated from her own aesthetic sensibility walks numbly through the magnificent Double Cube room until finally stirred, "even in this nearly torpid state" (760), when her eye lights upon Van Dyck's portrait of the children of Charles I; unexpectedly, in a striking and revealing moment, "the extraordinary attraction of that fascinating picture ⌈excites⌉, unconsciously, some pleasure" (760). What is it about this portrait that penetrates the fog in Juliet's mind, a fog impervious to the beauties of classical sculpture, Rembrandt's paintings, and Van Dyck's own enormous canvas depicting the Earl of Pembroke's family? I propose here that it is not aesthetic value, but rather the trace of history that awakens Juliet from the torpor induced by her personal circumstances. Confronted by this memorial of the grand sweep of political and national history, Juliet's personal history momentarily relinquishes its hold on the heroine. Juliet's involuntary awakening into consciousness of political history signals, I suggest, Burney's complex and innovative narratological project—to show individual histories as part of, or even subordinate to, massive historical events. The micro-moment replicates in miniature the historical

disruptions in national and personal narratives triggered by the English Civil War and the French Revolution, disruptions that Burney makes central to her novelistic agenda and methodology. As Burney notes in her Dedication to Dr. Burney, "to attempt to delineate … any picture of actual human life, without reference to the French Revolution, would be as little possible, as to give an idea of the English government, without reference to our own" (6).[1]

For readers familiar with post-Burney developments of the novel, the episode might evoke a powerful moment in Walter Scott's *Woodstock* (1826) when Oliver Cromwell, in triumphant possession of Windsor Castle and in full flow of self-congratulatory rhetoric about his almost limitless power, is stopped dead in his tracks when he inadvertently uncovers Van Dyck's portrait of Charles I. The painting unleashes in Cromwell what Scott describes as a "spontaneous unburthening of his own bosom, swelling under recollection of the past and anticipation of the future" (94).[2] Forcing himself to gaze steadfastly at the portrait, Cromwell says, "That Flemish painter…what a power was his! Steel may mutilate, worms may waste and destroy—still the King stands uninjured by time; and our grandchildren, while they read his history, may look on his image, and compare the melancholy features with the woful [sic] tale." And since history might indeed repeat itself as farce, readers may also recall the dilemma of Dickens's Mr. Dick, whose "Memorial about his own history" keeps getting derailed by the head of Charles I (193). His plaintive question to David Copperfield—"if it was so long ago, how could the people about him have made that mistake of putting some of the trouble out of *his* head, after it was taken off, into *mine*?" (190)—is answered by Betsy Trotwood: "He connects his illness with great disturbance and agitation … and that's the figure, or the simile, or whatever it's called, which he chooses to use" (Dickens 193). For Juliet, for Cromwell, and for Mr. Dick, the violent history of the English Civil War both disrupts and represents present and personal narratives of trauma. For Burney in *The Wanderer*, the violence of the French Revolution has to be historicized in order to provide a suitable heuristic for understanding the "great disturbance and

agitation" which constitute the context for her narrative of "female difficulties."[3]

The Wanderer occupies two unstable and interlocking theoretical spaces. In literary history, it situates itself somewhere between narratives of contemporary society articulated through personal history, like *Clarissa: or the History of a Young Lady* (1748–49) or *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749) or, indeed, *Evelina, or The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), and the explicitly historical novels of Walter Scott. The personal history, as Patrick Parrinder observes, was so ubiquitous in the eighteenth century that when Thackeray's Becky Sharpe deflects Mr. Pitt Crawley's criticism of novel-reading by misrepresenting *Humphry Clinker* as a history by Smollett, she "has managed to pick one of the few mid-eighteenth-century novels that did not contain the word 'history' in its title" (82). Drawing a distinction between those eighteenth-century novels and his own subject, Georg Lukács famously claimed that the "real" historical novel originates with Walter Scott because "What is lacking in the so-called historical novel before Sir Walter Scott is precisely the specifically historical, that is, derivation of the individuality of characters from the historical peculiarity of their age" (19). Against that bright line, Margaret Anne Doody has argued that, in fact, Scott's work is an outgrowth of earlier novels by Charlotte Smith, Jane West, and Elizabeth Hamilton, among others: "The modern historical novel, as Scott was to develop it, is really an offspring of those novels of the French Revolution and of the Revolutionary era" (318).[4] In *The Wanderer*, Burney locates not only the travails of her heroine but also the individuality of characters like Elinor Joddrell and Mr. Riley and young Gooch within the particular historical context of the French Revolution and England's response to it. In doing so, Burney navigates what Roland Barthes calls the "conflict of two time spans: the time of the speech-act and the time of the material stated" (129). The compression of time in *The Wanderer*—less than two decades between event and narrative—results in the kind of "paragrammatism" ("double writings which contain a dialogue of the text with other texts") (129), which

characterizes, according to Barthes, history written close to the historian's own time.

Even as it animates the intersection of two literary paradigms, *The Wanderer* enacts the tension between two types of historiography as described by Michel de Certeau: "One type of history ponders what is comprehensible and what are the conditions of understanding; the other claims to reencounter lived experience, exhumed by virtue of a knowledge of the past" (35). In both cases, "history is played along the margins which join a society with its past and with the very act of separating itself from that past.... It presupposes the rupture that changes a tradition into a past object, in the manner in which the history of the ancient régime implies the Revolution" (37; 45). As a text conceived during the height of the excesses of the French Revolution and completed during the final years of Napoleon's reign, *The Wanderer* both inhabits the margin of, and constructs a rupture with, the past; as a historical novel, it participates in both the "staging of the past" and the "circumscribed area" which for de Certeau marks the difference between fiction and historiography (9).[5]

Nowhere is Burney's uneasy suturing of rupture and re-animation as evident as in the complex (even convoluted) articulation of her project in the novel's Dedication to Dr. Burney, in which Burney productively mines her own autobiographical rupture-within-continuity.[6] Indeed, the doubled self explicitly asserted, as well as the evasions and suppressions too easily uncovered, attest to Burney's own sense of negotiating an absolute break with the past (that "circumscribed area") and the understanding that, like historians who try to analyze the otherness of the past, "[t]he discourse destined to express what is *other* remains *their* discourse" (de Certeau 36). Look, for example, at Burney's representation of her authorial identity as both separate from, and continuous with, the creator of *Evelina*. The youthful novelist, though she dedicated her first work to the same beloved father, "did not dare then pronounce" his name, but now, with "grateful delight," she can acknowledge not only Dr. Burney with all his honors, but, implicitly, herself as an established, *famous*

novelist (3). Her former anonymity and timidity belong in the pre-Revolutionary, pre-celebrity past, replaced by a fully inhabited authorial self. Yet evolution is not obliteration, so this self deposits her new manuscript "at the same revered feet where I prostrated that first essay" (3), reminding him of "how many apprehensions would be hushed, might I hope that they would revive in your feelings the partial pleasure with which you cherished their predecessors" (10).

In a similar play of rupture and continuity, Burney insists on the consistency of her life-long novelistic agenda, warning readers who look for "political controversy" that they will encounter instead "what the Authour has thrice sought to present to them already, a composition upon general life, manners, and characters" (4); politics, she says, remains as ever outside her sphere. But, notably, the rationale she provides for political neutrality (not indifference) in this latest work arises out of a sea-change in her personal circumstances; unlike the young woman who wrote *Evelina*, she is now not just a daughter in a line of filial continuity, but a woman who has made a bold marital decision, and is thus "united, alike by choice and by duty, to a member of a foreign nation, yet adhering, with primæval enthusiasm, to the country of my birth" (5). The schism within her own déraciné identity, the unrootedness barely masked by the language of coherence and integration—"united to," "member of," "adhering to"—marks the historical pressures that have registered on her life and her authorial praxis as much as on the political trajectory of two nations. Unlike Juliet Granville's enforced and traumatizing marriage to a ghastly Revolutionary husband, Burney's personal historicity is productive as well as disruptive: historical distance has enabled her to analyze a past made coherent by hindsight, to deploy, as Barthes puts it, "the operation by which one assigns to a set of confused or even contradictory appearances a unitary structure, a deep meaning, a 'veritable' explanation" (154).[7]

In other portions of Burney's prefatory remarks, we see how she makes the materiality of the book itself an object of, and subject to, historical forces, writing a revisionist, even fictionalized,

narrative about getting her manuscript out of Napoleonic France. It was, she claims, "suffered to pass, without demur, comment, or the smallest examination" (4). As the editors of the Oxford edition point out, this account contradicts her journal of summer 1812, in which she describes, in vivid detail, the rantings, the sputterings "at the Mouth" and the stampings "with his feet" of the police officer at the Customs House in Dunkirk (xii), constructing in its place a narrative of amity illustrative of "the honour and liberality of both nations" (4). We should note, however, that Burney has not manufactured out of whole cloth a fictional episode about a high-souled French official; she has, rather, replaced the "fire & fury" of the Customs officer with the magnanimity of M. de Saulnier, the Secretary General of the Police who allowed M. d'Arblay to send the papers out of Paris "without demanding to examine, or even to see them." In fact, it is M. de Saulnier's imprimatur, together with the intervention of the English merchant Mr. Gregory, which ultimately assuages the violent suspicions of the Customs officer, who had remained unmoved either by good nature or by Burney's urgent pleas (*Journals and Letters* 6: 716–17). By re-casting her own journal, Burney can separate the historically constituted aberrations produced by revolutionary excesses from the urbane and generous nation that she asserts will once again re-inhabit its "real" self, much as Juliet will regain her natural aesthetic sensibility once she is free of the trauma induced by the Revolution. Indeed, the journal's account of the furious Customs officer so closely resembles the novel's description of Juliet's husband, who responds to his arrest by "storming, raging, and swearing, his face distorted with fury … and his mouth foaming" (734), that abusive and paranoid Napoleonic functionaries simply drop out of the narrative, displaced by violent products of the French Revolution, which, as Harleigh says, "has not operated more wonderfully upon the fate and fortune, than upon the minds and characters of those individuals who have borne in it any share" (869).

Burney's prefatory remarks echo Harleigh's assessment of the effects of the French Revolution, but with a significant variation. While Harleigh sorrowfully witnesses the horrifying

distortions caused by Revolutionary principles—"into what a chaos of errour and crime have these fatal new systems bewildered thee!" (184), he tells Elinor—Burney occupies and asserts a position of retroactive (and reassuring) comprehension. Writing twenty years after her novel's historical moment, the narrator of the Dedication insists on the absolute rupture between event and narrative. While she concedes that no "intellectual survey of the present times" can omit reference to the Revolution, Burney maintains that "those days, though still so recent, are over," "completely past," "already historical," leaving only "traces, that handed down, even but traditionally, will be sought with curiosity" (6), much as Scott's Cromwell predicts that the story of Charles I will outlast the political disruption that ended his reign and his life. *The Wanderer* is like Hayden White's historical narrative, which "reveals to us a world that is putatively 'finished,' done with, over, and yet not dissolved, not falling apart" (21). In Barthes' terms, Burney's novel "aims at 'filling' the meaning of History" (*Rustling* 137), engaging in an "*imaginary* elaboration" of a referent outside the text (138), and, by placing its narrative firmly in a time "already historical" (139), enabling a closure "informed not only by moral awareness but specifically by the moral authority of the narrator" (White 21).

The author of *The Wanderer* accrues moral authority in part from her own privileged position as a witness to the realities of the Revolution and in part from historical distance. She has, as she points out, resided in post-revolutionary France for "ten eventful years," which provided, paradoxically, a decade free from "all personal disturbances" (6), and which confers on her the authority of familiarity on the ground as well as historical insight. If, as Doody has argued, she hopes "to unite the unfortunately hostile countries" (317), she can do so because her sojourn in Paris lifts her above ordinary English citizens, who are "complacent, politically obtuse, and xenophobic … thinking that they have happily avoided history" (326).[8] Burney, as historiographer *and* novelist, distinguishes herself from the Gooches, the Stubbses, and the Scopses of English society, who believe that "all the French are actors or dancers, except just them that go to the

wars" and who speculate inanely about the motivations of "Mr. Robert-Spierre" (268–69). But, along with the authority of contemporaneous witnessing, the distinction she claims comes also from the operations of time. Unlike characters who, in the 1790s, display both isolationist prejudice and absurd fantasies about Revolutionary France, Burney has the advantage of looking back at a completed historical event and, thus, to quote de Certeau again, of "recapitulating the past as a form of knowledge" (5).[9] She can thus skewer the "self-dubbed … deep politician" Scopes for announcing, "in the most sententious manner," that in Robespierre's France, "A man's wife and daughters belong to any man who has a taste to them" (79), or Farmer Gooch for adhering to his conviction that France "be as poor a place as ye might wish to set eyes on, all overrun with weeds, and frogs, and the like" (467).

Muddled and partial knowledge of the realities of revolution regularly provides one of the comic paradoxes in the novel; the same provincialism that construes France as a country of ragged savages produces an avidity for French fashions and goods. Whether as the "newest steps and method" of the cotillion (83) or "any particularly delicate paste for the hands" (406), "there's nothing the mode," as the grocer Mr. Tedman says, "like coming from France. It makes any thing go down" (260).[10] Indeed, Juliet's primary value to her employer Miss Matson derives from the milliner's ability to circulate the news "that one of her young ladies was just come from France … [and] had brought over specimens of all the French *costume*" (429). The confusions and contradictions evident in English attitudes about revolutionary France must await the clarity enabled (or imposed) by historical knowledge, not only of what happened during those tumultuous years, but also of how distorted were the views of those who lived them.[11] As a historiographer attuned to both rupture and continuity, Burney exposes the limitation of synchronic readings-to-the-moment in favour of the diachrony of informed retrospection. As Louis Mink puts it, stories about the past are repeated "because they aim at producing and strengthening the act of understanding in which actions and events, although represented as occurring in the order

of time, can be surveyed as it were in a single glance as bound together in an order of significance" (132–33).

That totality of understanding cannot, however, be available without historical reflection. In *The Wanderer*, actual sojourns in France confer no authority; in fact, the text reserves its greatest scorn, or its most pointed punishments, for those who are historical tourists, entering the great sweep of global history for their own selfish or trivial purposes. Excluded from the domestic idyll established by Juliet and Harleigh at the end of the novel are those who travel to the center of seismic events for frivolous reasons: the Iretons, who seem to have included revolutionary France as part of an exercise in male coquetry (54); Riley, who crosses the channel because "I was agog to know what those famous Mounseers were about; and whether there were any Revolution really going forward amongst them" (257); and of course Elinor, who, astonishingly, ventures into a France under the Reign of Terror "to try a change of climate" for her "repeated colds" (54), an undertaking matched only by the determination of M. St. Aubert in *Mysteries of Udolpho* to embark on an arduous journey across the Pyrenees in order to recover from ill health brought on by the death of his wife. Despite being thrown into prison by Robespierre and escaping only through "enormous bribes, successful stratagems, and humane, though concealed assistance from some compassionate inhabitants of the town" (54), these English visitors (always excepting Harleigh) take no deeper knowledge of historical forces back with them. Without the benefit of chronological distance, their sense of events across the Channel remains fragmentary, shallow, and self-centered.

Of course, characters in *The Wanderer* don't know that they inhabit a historical novel.[12] Their very definition of history retrogressively focuses on those personal histories so common in eighteenth-century novels. Indeed, Juliet is tormented by constant exhortations to tell her history, from the extortionate demands of Mrs. Ireton, who "resolved to allow no recompense for her attendance, but in consideration of what she would communicate of her history" (47), to Sir Jaspar's infatuated probing, to Harleigh's gentler but still importunate urging: "Will you not let me know

something of your history,—your situation,—your family" (203). They cannot grasp, as Burney does in *The Wanderer*, that personal history encompasses far more than status and family, and that, in fact, all three elements intersect with public history.[13] Obviously, the plot of Juliet's life history and that of Gabriella are inextricably connected to the French Revolution, and perhaps the most explicit articulation of the convergence comes in the account of Gabriella, "not alone bowed down by the general evils of revolutionary events; punished for plans in which she had borne no part, and for crimes of which she had not even any knowledge" (390).

But Burney's experimentation with what Lukács calls "the portrayal of the broad living basis of historical events in their … manifold interaction with acting individuals" (43) reaches beyond the specific effects of the French Revolution to a larger theory of the heuristic purposes of history. Her theoretical agenda manifests itself, indirectly and startlingly, when Sir Jaspar tells Juliet the personal history of the detestable Mrs. Ireton, whose "story … envelopes the memoirs of a Beauty, in her four stages of existence," from indulgent childhood to adored youth to overlooked maturity to her current state, "dreaded by the gay, despised by the wise, pitied by the good, and shunned by all" (542–43). Here, indeed, we see an emphasis on the narrative arc of an individual existence, but what needs to be stressed is Burney's unexpected contextualization of that story; the explanation of Mrs. Ireton's repulsive nature is provided within the precincts of Arundel Castle, itself a vestige of past glories, damaged by the ravages of the English Civil War. In Sir Jaspar's unexpectedly sympathetic narrative about one of the most repulsive characters in the novel, transmitted within the material remnants of a violent English past, we see Burney's sense of the relationship between historical analysis and sympathy. If knowledge of Mrs. Ireton's past is essential to understanding "this pale, withered, stiff, meagre hag, so odious, so tyrannical, so irascible" (542), just as knowledge of the English Civil War explains the state of "what remains of the venerable old castle" (537), then knowledge of the "already historical" events surrounding the French Revolution must help readers understand

Burney's agenda in *The Wanderer*, a novel which celebrates both disruption and reconstitution in a subtle and complex rendering of narrative-as-and-within history.

Contemporary depreciators, like William Hazlitt and John Wilson Croker, who dismissed *The Wanderer*'s cultural belatedness, failed to detect the historiographic and literary innovation Burney undertakes in the novel. Even Walter Scott, writing in 1821 to Constable about the status of copyrights on a proposed series of reprinted novels, says "Miss Burneys [sic] must be all out but the last which is scarce worth including" (*Letters* 7: 15).[14] Perhaps they too unquestioningly accepted Burney's swerve away from history at the end of her prefatory remarks, where she proclaims that "historic truth" has nothing to do with "the universally acknowledged superiority" of classical epics, which achieve preeminence solely on the basis of aesthetic and moral considerations, and claims a "seeming approximation of the compositions which stand foremost, with those [i.e., novels] which are sunk lowest in literary estimation" (7). Echoing Dr. Johnson's *Rambler* 4 and Austen's defense of the novel in *Northanger Abbey*, Burney says of the genre: "It holds … in its hands our best affections; it exercises our imaginations; it points out the path of honour; and gives to juvenile credulity knowledge of the world, without ruin, or repentance; and the lessons of experience, without its tears" (7). *The Wanderer*, in distancing its narrative from the events it depicts, and in deploying historical interpretation with theoretical self-consciousness, provides that knowledge of the world and those lessons of experience while also arguing that aesthetic pleasures and "powers of perception" in this narrative of the French Revolution, are awakened, as they are for Juliet at Wilton, by the traces of history.

NOTES

[1] Many critics comment on *The Wanderer's* exploration of the intersection of private and political histories. See, for example, Kate Chisholm: "*The Wanderer*…will not be a polemical tome but rather an illustration of the impact of such extraordinary political change on the lives of ordinary men and women" (230). See also Margaret Anne Doody: "*The Wanderer* … is determined not to evade history…. [Juliet] has a fate determined by historical events and conditions" (319). Julia Epstein, on the other hand, argues that Burney is "asking us to accept her protagonist on faith as a woman without a history…. The French Revolution with its upheaval of roles and identities serves as a distant but unavoidable and all-pervasive backdrop" (176). And Claudia Johnson finds that *The Wanderer* fails in its "ambition … to bring the heroine's tribulation into conjunction with the upheaval of the French Revolution and its aftermath in England" (166).

[2] The power of the painting compels Cromwell to justify his actions, to aggressively resist "the reproaches of that cold, calm face, that proud yet complaining eye" (94).

[3] Brian Hamnett observes that "the theme of identity, whether of individuals, social groups, or peoples, appeared frequently in this early period of the historical novel" (5); the uncertainty produced by decades of revolution and war "provided the opening for the historical novel, with the focus on individual and group dilemmas concerning the nature of events often beyond their control" (10).

[4] Francesca Saggini makes an even stronger claim for *The Wanderer*: "Because of its historical setting, the novel can be considered a female version of Walter Scott's *Waverley*, published the same year" (211).

[5] Jennie Batchelor attributes the "oddly hybrid" character of *The Wanderer* to these two poles of composition (75).

[6] Karen R. Lawrence remarks on the complexity of the Dedication: "Because of her disavowals, Burney's preface reads like Freudian denegation, her very metaphors … returning us to the

scene of political danger that opens her novel" (61). Janice Farrar Thaddeus makes the rather odd assertion that "The preface, even as it attempts to explain the book's purpose and genre, becomes so personal and roundabout that it simply cuts out a reader…. Instead of inviting her public into her novel, she is shutting them out" (178).

[7] According to Barthes, "The prestige of this happened has a truly historical importance and scope. Our entire civilization has a taste for the reality effect, attested to by the development of specific genres such as the realistic novel, the private diary, documentary literature" (139).

[8] Maria Jerinic argues that *The Wanderer* delivers "a stinging critique of that component of English society which relies on a sense of 'essential Englishness' in order to derive a sense of national superiority" (64).

[9] Louis Mink notes that the disciplinary move from philosophy to history included a shift "from the concept of explanation, defined in terms of a formal model, to the concept of understanding, perhaps indefinable but clarified by reflection on the experiences in which it has been achieved" (124).

[10] In their idolizing of French fashions, these characters in *The Wanderer* seem almost anachronistic, echoing the language of Henry Fielding's Bellarmine, who wears only French clothing and assures Leonora, "You can't conceive what an addition a French dress would be to your beauty" (*Joseph Andrews* 93). Andrea Henderson ascribes the rise of commodity fetishism to a particular historical moment. After the French Revolution, she argues, the charisma of social status "transferred to the economic realm, where, embodied in the commodity, it gave rise to a pleasurable but masochistic reverence" (2).

[11] Barthes, writing of the contemporaneous media coverage of the Paris uprisings in 1968, points to the conflation of event and narrative: "The (reporter's) informative word was so closely involved with the event, with the very opacity of its present, as to become its immediate and consubstantial meaning, its way of acceding to an instantaneous intelligibility" (149). David Carr,

arguing against Barthes and Hayden White, asserts that everyday life is in fact analytical, and "[a]ction is then a kind of oscillation between two points of view … [and] narrative activity … is practical before it becomes cognitive or aesthetic in history and fiction" (145–46). In the same volume, Andrew P. Norman takes issue with White's notion of "interpretive violence" because "the past as we experience it in memory often does have unity, coherence, and intelligibility. Even where our initial, inarticulate experience of the past does not exhibit this coherence, the process of constructing a coherent story about it need not, and often does not, have the violent character of an imposition. Quite simply, it often has the unobjectionable character of a disclosure" (166).

[12] I'm reminded here of Ian Duncan's recent (11 March 2014) posting on the Walter Scott listserv (SCOTT-L@listserv.tamu.edu): "Don't go into the Highlands, Waverley, you fool! Don't you realize it's 1745?"

[13] Joanne Cutting-Gray argues that "[t]he demand to know Juliet's name is actually a desire on the part of society to hear the communal narrative that her name would represent. To tell her 'story,' that is, to make coherent and intelligible the mystery of her entry as a 'newcomer' into their world, Juliet does not, as they believe, need a material or economic denomination to designate her" (89).

[14] Mascha Gemmeke says that "Burney's praise of French dignity and propriety right after the Napoleonic Wars would not have pleased her contemporaries, certainly not in a novel set to take place in 1794" (194). Johnson, who, like Doody, aligns *The Wanderer* with the novels of Wollstonecraft, Hays, Opie, West, and Hamilton, finds it fatally dated: it is "a belated novel, striving to have the last word on controversies no one cared about" (167). Pam Perkins disagrees with those who find the novel old-fashioned, noting that "[i]t is a striking irony that *The Wanderer* was attacked for looking backwards to what, to the post-war generation of 1814, looked like the follies of the 1790s" because Burney in fact "argues with, rather than ignores, emerging cultural ideas" (81). In a wide-ranging and illuminating discussion of nostalgia and nation-building, Tamara S.

Wagner observes that *The Wanderer* "reacts critically to the radical sensibility of the 1790s, and even more pointedly, to new nationalist discourses" (30).

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