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*Migration and Modernities: The State of Being Stateless,
1750-1850* ed. by JoEllen DeLucia and Juliet Shields
(review)

Omar F. Miranda

Eighteenth-Century Fiction, Volume 33, Number 2, Winter 2021, pp. 277-280
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Published by University of Toronto Press

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“The work of literary form is just to worry, tweak, and pose the relation between the physical and the phenomenal” so that it is even possible to posit “the idea that perception is the very wonder of the physical, not its transcendence” (151). Narrative prose fiction or all literature, in other words, exists to recast the enigmatic relation between the material world and the experience of consciousness of being in that world—an uneven terrain of objects that changes as I move, that I perceive imperfectly through my species-specific organs of sense, that I navigate sometimes with success and often with failure. Glossing Robinson’s essay on fiction, “Freedom of Thought” (published in her 2012 collection *When I Was a Child I Read Books*), Kramnick writes, “Science should remember that the physical (whether conceived at the scale of particles or of neurons) includes sentience, and fiction should recognize the felt property of mind in physical matter” (151). In the designation of these tasks for science and for fiction—one to remember and the other to recognize—we hear an appeal that belies the accommodating spirit of “ontological pluralism,” which characterizes the earlier essays. Robinson in “Freedom of Thought” lays out “two questions I can’t really answer about fiction”: “(1) where it comes from, and (2) why we need it” (7). Insofar as *Paper Minds* tells a story about the novel’s co-emergence with paradigms of mind and matter, it picks up and tries to answer those questions.

Wendy Anne Lee teaches in the English Department at New York University. She is the author of *Failures of Feeling: Insensibility and the Novel* (2019) and writes largely about Enlightenment literature and philosophy.

Migration and Modernities: The State of Being Stateless, 1750–1850,
ed. JoEllen DeLucia and Juliet Shields
Edinburgh University Press, 2019. 224pp. £75. ISBN 978-1474440349.

Review by Omar F. Miranda, University of San Francisco

Accounts of literal and metaphorical, forced or voluntary, displacement have been at the heart of the human story since ancient times. Consider *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, *Ramayana*, *The Odyssey*, *The Aeneid*, Sappho’s lyrics, and Sophocles’s plays as some indicators of the predominance of exilic narratives across the globe and ages. As John Simpson argues in the introduction to *The Oxford Book of Exile*, “Each of us is an exile ... We are exiles from our mother’s womb, from our childhood, from private happiness, from peace ... The feeling of looking back for the last time, of setting our face to a new and possibly hostile world is one we all know” ([Oxford University Press, 1995], vii). But something about this universal truth changed during the eighteenth century and the age of revolution, in particular. The introduction of the free market system, the industrialization of urban

spaces, the emergence of the modern nation-state, and the growth and decline of empires are among the many phenomena that contributed to an unprecedented rise in migratory patterns across the world and a subsequent transformation of our modern consciousness.

Even though the global movements of the period caused major upheavals and population shifts, scholarship on this subject has been largely neglected. High praise is thus merited for the present volume, which has responded to this scholarly need through an interdisciplinary approach that brings together the fine work of both European and American scholars. Recovering and revising (literary) histories of mobility, these essays explore the “patterns, conditions, and experience of migration at a moment that we might characterize as the beginnings of modernity” (1). *Migration and Modernities* argues as a whole that the mass migrations and dislocations of the eighteenth century indelibly transformed our modern subjectivity; it addresses the sense of rootlessness and estrangement that came to classify these decades. Tracking the effects of war, imperialism, technological advancements, and uneven development across cultures and emphasizing the experience of the “arrival and departure of migrants,” including that experienced by “itinerant laborers, vagrants, sailors, and soldiers” (5, 6), the volume focuses on the ruptures and removals from the comforts of place and the logic of the local, that is, one’s culture, community, and nation. The essays also explore the ironic relationship between the consolidation of political, ethnic borders and the politics and aesthetics of occlusion and exile. And for these scholars, such analysis is crucial to both individual and collective identity formations, including the construction and consolidation of the modern nation-state.

What makes *Migration and Modernities* impressive is that it fittingly introduces its subject matter on mobility, belonging, rights, and citizenship through a comparative and global framework. In the service of piecing together a “global literary history of migration” (7), it offers refreshing accounts on subjects within and well beyond Europe, from South America and Southeast Asia to South Africa. Readers are brought to chapters on Serbian and Peruvian migrations, as well as on the displacements of Native Americans, Turks, and enslaved African people. Of course, any such “global” scholarly aspiration limited to 224 pages must necessarily exclude migratory accounts from certain regions and ethnicities. Still, this collection is praiseworthy, especially when considering that in this period few records have been available for accurately charting the statistics of these migrations. As JoEllen DeLucia and Juliet Shields claim in their editors’ introduction, the eighteenth century lacked the mass print technologies of the nineteenth century that better equipped the dissemination of such knowledge and figures.

The eight essays are divided into two parts, with each half of the book resisting customary organizational methods according to nation, culture, or language; this atypical structure seems apt, given the vagaries of migrant

experience itself. The first part, “Moving Voices: Competing Perspectives on Migration,” shows the “alternatives to the domestic and realist fiction that shapes most studies of particular national traditions” (3). Highlighting the “migrants’ varying forms of mobility,” the essays examine authors such as Lord Byron, Thomas Pringle, Mary Prince, and Margaret Fuller, while drawing attention to the forced mass displacements of Africans in the Atlantic slave trade and the involuntary resettlements of Native Americans. Kenneth McNeil’s chapter on Prince and her editor, Pringle, is specifically noteworthy, as McNeil traces how a white abolitionist, who was displaced from Scotland to South Africa, came to sympathize, edit, and ultimately promote Prince’s autobiography. The essay is emblematic of how the entire section treats hybrid narratives of exiles, expatriates, and refugees across racial, ethnic, gender, and class lines.

The second part, “Migrants as Cultural Mediators: Epistemes and Aesthetics of Mobility,” extends the ambitious first half of the book by analyzing a particular form of knowledge production—what DeLucia and Shields call autoethnography, “the study of one’s own culture as if from an outsider’s perspective” (8). The section begins with Patricia Cove’s keen exploration of gender and national identity in Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer* (1814); this is followed by Dragana Grbić’s investigation of the relations between Serbian cultural identity and the experience of migration in the autobiography *The Life and Adventures of Dimitrije Obradović* (1783). Olivera Jokić’s essay then offers a compelling reading of letters from agents of the East India company, drawing attention unexpectedly to the vulnerability rather than the progress of the British imperial state. Echoing Dominic La Capra’s ideas about historiography, Jokić notes the distinctiveness of this “history of work done by migrants—a history in transit” (170). The section ends with Claire Gallien’s “first extensive exploration” of Ishmael Bashaw’s *The Turkish Refugee* (1797), an adapted Christian conversion and slave narrative (202). These essays convincingly demonstrate the porousness of “culture” and collective identity, as they tease out the tensions between being at home and abroad. They demonstrate how otherness is constructed and experienced from either a native or foreign position.

If one *had* to be critical of a volume that elicits much admiration from the present author, I would offer two minor suggestions for improvement. Betsy Bolton’s reading of “touring and forced migration” in Byron’s *Don Juan* as well as M. Soledad Caballero’s account of “Transatlantic” South American revolutionaries would have benefitted from direct engagement with the life of the Venezuelan exile Francisco de Miranda (1750–1816). In exile for thirty-three years and a resident in London for fourteen of them, Miranda served as an important precursor not only to Simón Bolívar and his continent-wide independence movements in the Americas, but also to Byron’s celebrity of exile, as I have argued elsewhere

(Miranda, “The Celebrity of Exilic Romance: Francisco de Miranda and Lord Byron,” *European Romantic Review* 27, no. 2 [2016]: 207–31). *Don Juan* is, in fact, a testament to Byron’s South American celebrity predecessor. The second recommendation is perhaps more obvious: Why include a chapter on Byron (even if Bolton’s essay is unquestionably excellent) when the extra space could be devoted to the unexplored and unrepresented peoples and cultures of Asia, Africa, and the Pacific? And I say this—uneasily—as a Byron scholar.

These minor criticisms aside, this volume persuasively traces one of the most critical moments and subjects of modern history. *Migration and Modernities* radically reimagines the boundaries of our discipline and canon by boldly repositioning global narratives of mobility at the heart of modernity. If this cross-cultural work is a sign of what is to come in our field, the future of writing about the history of movements and displacements in eighteenth-century studies looks most promising.

Omar F. Miranda is an Assistant Professor at the University of San Francisco. His research focuses on exile, celebrity culture, and performance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

A History of British Working Class Literature, ed. John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan

Cambridge University Press, 2017. 496pp. \$114.95. ISBN 978-1107190405.

Review by Thora Brylowe, University of Colorado Boulder

As John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan remind us in the introduction, “working class literature is rarely received in other than partial or contingent ways,” subject to flattened (and flattening) assumptions about what it means to *be* working class and what it means to claim for a work the status of literature (3). This ambitious collection spans the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, and even makes a brief foray into the twenty-first century, albeit in an essay by Cole Crawford, who writes in his capacity as eighteenth-century expert on digital collections, many of which will interest *ECF* readers. This is a substantial book. Of its twenty-five essays, twelve are devoted to the eighteenth century and Romantic period, a number that swells to fourteen if we count Crawford’s and a brief afterword by Brian Maidment. Given space and the readership of *ECF*, this review attends to (roughly) the first half of the collection.

The book starts strong, with Jennie Batchelor’s closely argued call to expand the limits of working-class literature to include genres that are often dismissed as valuable merely in the register of sociological representation. She warns that in demanding of working people “good” writing, we throw in our lot with the elite category of the aesthetic and risk