

Perhaps here is one of the places where postcolonial critical concepts, like displacement and hybridity, reveal their origins in a Victorian imperial context. A bit more attention to the critical conversation between Victorian and postcolonial studies over the last decade would seem pertinent here.

Furthermore, as *All the Year Round* began publication in 1859, the changes Moore detects in some of its positions upon matters of empire may have other explanations related to its identity as a journal. We are given little introduction to *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* as distinctive mid-Victorian periodicals here: indeed, they tend to be treated almost as if they were one journal. However, Dickens made policy changes between *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* which, as John Drew has shown, affected the latter's contents and distribution. The most significant of these was the decision to abandon the leading articles on social concerns and to reserve this space for serialised fiction, resulting in a change of emphasis from its predecessor's vigorous reform agenda and perhaps helping to account for Dickens's having "had surprisingly little to say on the subject of events in Jamaica" (164) – at least in *All the Year Round*. Similarly, this journal's engagement with the Irish Question needs to be considered in the context of Dickens's efforts to secure American readers in the overseas expansion of the journal through its simultaneous publication in New York.

Notwithstanding these reservations about critical attention to the specific circumstances of Dickens's journals, the detailed consideration given to his periodical writing makes this study a valuable resource not only for Dickens scholars, but for those interested in Victorian periodicals more generally. Moving deftly between his fiction and journalism, Moore demonstrates the way in which the brief mention of empire in the Victorian novel may belie and yet depend upon the extensive discussion of issues of race and colonialism in the popular periodical press.

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***Capital Offences: Geographies of Class and Crime in Victorian London*, by Simon Joyce. Victorian Literature and Culture. Charlottesville and London: U of Virginia P, 2003. ix + 267. ISBN 0-8139-2180-5. AUS\$106.50, US\$39.50 (hardcover).**

The title of this volume, one issued, very significantly, in its publisher's Victorian Literature and Culture Series, indicates thereby to the reader both its foci and also something of its complex interplay between several investigations – those of: criminal behaviour; the lifestyles of the more identifiable zones of the great and suddenly expanding English capital city in mid- and later Victorian times; and of the

(social) patterns to be expected in them. As well it treats of various (recorded) figures, altruistic or predatory, real or fictional, who chose/would choose to visit what would soon be designated the "East End."

Since London had become Europe's first major city of the nineteenth century, an initial (and somewhat literary) focus by social science on these slums had earlier given rise to the "Newgate novels" of the 1830s and 1840s, and so this present survey text handles, in various probings: the criminal sub-cultures; the emerging policing systems; and those predator/visitor figures – now deemed to be "pathological offenders" like fiction's Dorian Gray and Dr Henry Jekyll.

Further, in the last major chapter, there is offered a form of overview of the many altruistic movements and causes which endeavoured – with varying fortunes – to ameliorate the squalid conditions of life in the "East End," particularly in the Whitechapel area. Necessarily these reflections and recordings have much to say about the role of the People's Palace, the awkward if well-intentioned philanthropists, and the various pre-1914 schemes, the purposes of which were to modify/eradicate the criminality and squalor to be found there.

The author-interpreter chooses to use various metaphors concerned with space, class and variety of population to shape his book, very much as he had done in the several long and reflective earlier essays which finally led to this present volume. Thus two of the earlier versions, as then published especially for American readers – had included in their titles such phrases as "The Condition of England in the 1850s" and "Sexual Politics and the Aesthetics of Crime: Oscar Wilde in the Nineties," both helpful shapers and foci for the central parts of the now much more developed text. For the overall (and evolving) concern now is both a post-colonial and critical one concerned with the imperial centre, the power end of London, and with the cultural representation of that "other" urban and social space. Now the emphasis is: firstly, on the place rather than on those who wrote about it, fictionally or otherwise; secondly, on the classes in the East and West ends of London, and, thirdly, how "transgression"/disorientation in the physical sense implies a like confusion in the intellectual and moral spheres, a process to be associated with the somewhat geography-derived notion of the "cognitive mapping" of London.

In passing, it is also noted in the "Introduction" that this problematic representation in the Victorian period of that "other" which seems unknown and unknowable may profitably be related to the classically post-modern experiences of urban alienation and of the related self-isolation. This last now arises directly from the present "unmapability" of the urban in terms of what is actually/personally known – or part of the lived experience – for most post-moderns in any large city. Thus Joyce argues that a similar frame of the unknown/unknowable is to be found in the early "Victorian" (1820-40) sense of shock at the considerable and completely unplanned expansion of the population then, one first noted and registered in subjective fashion by such visitors as Wordsworth and Engels. This well recorded sense of shock and grave doubt was soon followed by the new

investigative/reporting forms of urban journalism and like fiction, most notably: in the early work of Charles Dickens; in the rise of the "urban sketch"; and then by the demographic cataloguing of urban populations by Henry Mayhew, notably in his London books. The more subjective of these responses to the new mass of people had been a form of "citiphobia," a reaction of both fascinated attraction at the activity of these unfamiliar/unknowable folk and repulsion at their sheer numbers in public places. At the personal level, however, the individual reaction seems to have included feelings of terror at the almost instantaneous displacement of self.

The earlier conjoining of the City of London with that of Westminster by means of Oxford Street, and then of Soho, was rewritten/re-conceptualised as the uneasy encounter between the West and East Ends, indicating different forms of power and of expression, as well as the existence of varying social spaces. Arguably there is a residue of this in the fascination that Oxford Street has exerted for so many sections of both Victorian and subsequent societies. With this notion, the forays of the west into the east tended to be both unscrupulous and/or exploitive. This scholar-interpreter, having begun his account with much detail of Charles Dickens' relative sympathy for his (lower stratum) criminal characters, moves far beyond this in his interpretation of the upper class writers of a generation or so later. For R.L. Stevenson – with Jekyll and Hyde, Oscar Wilde, in his *Dorian Gray*, and Conan Doyle with the deceptive figure of a missing and highly respectable gentleman from Lee in Kent named Neville St. Clair who is found in an opium den, as well as the somewhat later Raffles, E.W. Hornung's creation. For all show the relatively easy movement to the "east" – the place for predatory and more violent activities – for fiction's and art's criminal figures are found to be more and more drawn from the privileged classes.

However, the escapism of detective and other "crossing over" fiction is represented as only one aspect of both life and art, and the present book spends some space on the meaning of the "Jack the Ripper" story/legend for the people of London over the next thirty to forty years. And so this early escapism – of detective and other "crossing over" fiction – is shown as only one aspect of this study of serious crime, if not always the acts of murder implied in the punning title. Indeed, the attraction in this investigation was – and is still – the desire to learn more about the lives of the urban poor, as well as to present and explore the co-existing impulses of repulsion and fascination exerted by the nearness of the "Other." Initially this had been accompanied by a somewhat ill-expressed desire to restrict the growth of London, an attitude found again and again, especially in Europe, when old and "shaped" cities suddenly expanded and multiplied in size in relatively short periods.

A related concern in the reading of such urban tales of metamorphosing – whether British or no – is probably to explore the character of neighbourhoods that are beyond one's experience, and so fascinating, specially if there is present a certain strand of the unsavoury. In the case of Victorian London, the eighteenth century's somewhat limited awareness of the Rookery had been replaced by an

insatiable curiosity as to the dubious/ probably criminal lifestyle of St. Giles, of Seven Dials, and, later, of the enigmatic Soho – all deemed to be foci of criminal behaviour, and so the obvious subjects for much literary investigation and complex societal and explicatory interpretation.

Accordingly Joyce gives much space to the increasingly ambiguous Soho, which was, very appropriately, made the home of the evil double figures in Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), and of Adolphe Verloc in Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907), about the Russian embassy's spy who, in 1884, had sought to blow up the Greenwich observatory, in order to rouse public opinion against the Anarchists and so goad the police into greater public activity. Perhaps this is the most fluent part of the whole, closely followed by the Oscar-Wilde-focused sections of the fourth long essay, "'Lords of the Street, and Terrors of the Way': The Privileged Offender in Late-Victorian Fiction."

The value of this deeply reflective book is much enhanced by its long gestation, its patterns of thought and a methodology that is much strengthened by the writer's use of concepts from history, geography and from the slowly developing adult education schemes of the great metropolis.

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***An Uncomfortable Authority: Maria Edgeworth and Her Contexts*, edited by Heidi Kaufman and Chris Fauske. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2004. 290. ISBN 87413-878-7. US\$50 (hardcover).**

Recently I searched the MLA database (my search was about *The Heart of Midlothian*) and was struck by the handy little compendium of recent critical fashions that resulted. From "Wo/Man" to "the Masculinization of Fiction," from "Frame Narrative" to "Narrating the (Gendered) Nation," from "Scott's Apparatus" to his "Portable Monuments," from the "Uneasy Marriage of London and Edinburgh" to the "End(s) of Sympathetic Britishness," it seemed that most of the touchstones had been touched, most of the milestones passed, by academic readers. Given that Walter Scott, as Edgeworth's much grander contemporary, more than once acknowledged his debt to *Castle Rackrent*, it is unsurprising to find that she occupies a similar cultural slot and attracts similar kinds of readings to Scott, to find that *An Uncomfortable Authority* stands on ground predicted by the MLA's pocket history of critical trends. This collection of essays presents Maria Edgeworth as a writer about, or inventor of, a nation, about Ireland and Irishness, above all, and mainly discusses her in terms of the Irish novels (*Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, *The Absentee*, *Ormond*). Many of the contributors also pay attention to *An Essay on Irish Bulls*, jointly authored with her father in 1802, two years after *Rackrent* appeared.