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SCOTTISH PERIODICAL ENLIGHTENMENT

William Christie

Australian National University

OVER twenty years ago now, David Riede suggested that the first quarter of the nineteenth century, generally referred to as the ‘Romantic Period’, could as easily and should perhaps more accurately be entitled the ‘Age of Reviews’.¹ Picking up on Riede’s revisionary suggestion, and because Ian Duncan’s notion of a ‘post-Enlightenment’ by its very name plays down the powerful continuities between the thinkers of the Scottish Enlightenment and some of their literal and metaphorical pupils in the nineteenth,² I want to suggest calling it the ‘Periodical Enlightenment’.

My choice of title is ironic, of course, not to say provocative, given that the Reviews are generally understood to have been deeply antipathetic to Romanticism. If the general reader knows anything at all about the early nineteenth century Reviews they know about their ‘relentless politicization of discourse’, to quote Kim Wheatley, ‘their reliance on (and abuse of) anonymity, their indulgence in so-called “personality” or personal attacks and, last but not least, their sway over public opinion’.³

What interests me in this lecture (and my reason for suggesting we rename the period) is this last: the ‘sway over public opinion’ assumed and enforced by the big Reviews—by the *Edinburgh Review* (begun in 1802) and the *Quarterly Review* (1809)—insofar as this sway confirmed their role in the culture of knowledge in early nineteenth-century Britain. My own research concentrates on the *Edinburgh Review*, on its multi-disciplinary approach to the organization and publication of knowledge and on the way it functioned in the knowledge economy of the period relative to other institutions and enterprises: relative to the universities and academies and lecturing institutions and what historians of science call

¹ David G. Riede, *Oracles and Hierophants: Constructions of Romantic Authority* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 262.

² Ian Duncan, *Scott’s Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 23ff.

³ Kim Wheatley (ed.), *Romantic Periodicals and Print Culture* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003), p. 3.

‘invisible colleges’;⁴ relative to the professional, intellectual, and learned societies and clubs; relative to the public and circulating libraries and commercial publishing houses.

The Edinburgh Review; or, Critical Journal was launched in October 1802 to realise both the intellectual *and* the political potential of reviewing books at the height of the publishing revolution of the late eighteenth century. Some clever, scathing, but well-informed and well-argued reviews saw the *Edinburgh* erupt into the intellectual life of early nineteenth-century Britain. Before the end of its first year, Francis Jeffrey had been installed as editor and the Review was on its way to becoming both a successful commercial publishing venture and a cultural phenomenon. Behind the *Edinburgh* lay an elite of professional intellectuals.

Francis Jeffrey (1773–1850) lawyer

Thomas Thomson (1768–1852) lawyer

Henry Brougham (1778–1868) lawyer

Francis Horner (1778–1817) lawyer

John Archibald Murray (1779–1859) lawyer

John Allen (1771–1843) physician

Alexander Hamilton (1757–1824) businessman and orientalist

Thomas Brown (1778–1820) academic philosopher

John Thomson (1765–1846) physician and surgeon

Sydney Smith (1771–1845) Anglican priest

Far from being the ‘free-floating intelligentsia’ envisaged by Karl Mannheim,⁵ the intellectuals who devised and drove its agenda were self-consciously professional, most of them engaged and implicated in vocationally specific, as well as more broadly civic, institutions and activities—lawyers, in the first instance, but also doctors, academic philosophers, ministers of religion (less often), and what we would call scientists. ‘It may even turn out that the paradigm of the “modern” author is not independence in the sense of having no occupation other than writing for publication’, writes Richard Sher, ‘but rather independence in the sense of integration into appropriate

⁴ ‘Informal Scholarly Communities Spanning Different Countries’, Joel Mokyr, *The Gifts of Athena: Historical Origins of the Knowledge Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 56.

⁵ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Kegan Paul, Routledge, 1936), pp. 137–8.

professions and professional institutions'.⁶ Any such characterization of the modern intellectual would necessarily privilege the Scottish writers of both the Enlightenment and Periodical Enlightenment.

In 1799, the 'idea broke in upon' Francis Horner, one of the original *Edinburgh* reviewers and a strong moral and intellectual force behind the enterprise, that 'with respect to diffusion among the community at large, knowledge may be considered in the light of a commodity, prepared by a separate profession, and consumed and enjoyed by the community as a luxury'.⁷ This was not startlingly new, as it happens, for not only had Adam Smith got there before him, but 'The idea of knowledge as property (*possessio*)', to quote Peter Burke, had been 'formulated by Cicero'.⁸ For our purposes, the significance of Horner's epiphanic moment is that it occurs in the lead up to his collaboration on the *Edinburgh Review*: 'For Jeffrey and Horner', writes Mark Schoenfield, 'the interpenetration between economic and intellectual value was a primary justification for the *Review* and its commitment to Horner's ideals of an analytic organization of knowledge'.⁹ Ideas, information, and opinions—which is to say, *knowledge*—was, as I said, the social currency of the expanding eighteenth-century public sphere. Knowledge was in demand and the demand was being amply supplied, not least by the big Reviews.

From the start, thanks to Sydney Smith, the *Edinburgh Review* paid well—astonishingly high payment compared with the rate being offered in the eighteenth century—a fact that very soon became part of its reputation and central to its status and role in the knowledge economy. 'Constable', writes Ian Duncan, 'was able to reclaim the tradition of a professional rather than merely commercial class of men of letters by paying unprecedentedly high fees to his editor and

⁶ Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America* (Chicago IL: Chicago University Press, 2006), pp. 10–11.

⁷ Leonard Horner (ed.), Francis Horner, *Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Horner, M.P.*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1843), pp. 1:96.

⁸ R. H. Campbell, A. S. Skinner, and W. B. Todd (eds), Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 1:21–1; Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge*, p. 150.

⁹ Mark Schoenfield, *British Periodicals and Romantic Identity: The 'Literary Lower Empire'* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 67.

contributors: an investment that saved their status as gentlemen'.¹⁰ With comparative independence and a dramatic increase in financial remuneration came a dramatic rise in the status of the reviewer. 'Gentility itself', to quote James Secord, 'was to be redefined around notions of intellectual leadership. The major quarterlies, especially the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*, played a crucial part in defining this new role for the author'.¹¹

Financial reward and a new sense of self-importance also encouraged a natural inflation in book reviewing itself—though it should be said that Sydney Smith, in a letter to Lady Holland in 1819, put the inflation down to a characteristically Scottish historical expansiveness and verbosity: 'The Scotch, whatever other talents they may have, can never condense; they always begin a few days before the flood, and come gradually down to the reign of George the third, forgetful of nothing but the shortness of human life, and the volatility of human attention'.¹² Whatever the cause, reviews were soon running to twenty or thirty, even as much as fifty and sixty pages.

More to the point, however, the priorities of book reviewing changed, as the reviewer and his ideas on the topic in question took more and more precedence over the publication under review, which often became merely the occasion for a reflective article or essay. The *review essay*, as it now became, saw its responsibility as one of offering an intellectual and historical context for the work under review, and discussion of the text had to await generalizations that, when not openly argumentative, were often unapologetically didactic, with the reviewer affecting a kind of omniscience and assuming greater authority than both the author and the reader: 'he establishes his own claims in an elaborate inaugural dissertation *de omni scibile et quibusdam aliis* ["about every knowable thing, and even certain other things"]', wrote William Hazlitt, 'before he deigns to bring forward the pretensions of the original candidate for praise'.¹³

¹⁰ Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, p. 25.

¹¹ In the introduction to his edition of Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology* (London: Penguin, 1997), p. xii.

¹² Nowell C. Smith (ed.), *The Letters of Sydney Smith*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), vol. 1, p. 327.

¹³ Duncan Wu (ed.), *Selected Writings of William Hazlitt*, 9 vols (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1998), vol. 6, p. 192.

Every knowable thing. To get a sense of what Hazlitt had in mind, witness the advice Jeffrey asked John Allen to pass on to the Italian exile, Ugo Foscolo, ‘in reviewing the literature of Italy’:

it would certainly be desirable that he showed so much acquaintance with that of other countries—as to give his judgment authority with their natives—He should recollect in short that he is writing to foreigners whose habits and prejudices must be attended to even when he undertakes to correct them of error—The more he mixes too of philosophy and *general* speculation the better—the more he can connect peculiarities of taste with peculiarities in the history and governments of different nations—or trace back the operation of these great causes that are the common sources of whatever distinguishes one people from another—I conceive in short that such a discourse on Italian literature as might do for an Academy in that country would not be fit for the *Edinburgh*—and that Mr F. will do most justice to his own talents and principles in going as often as he can beyond the narrow boundaries of mere literature.¹⁴

An introduction or digression might aspire to being a self-contained, miniature essay, harking back to the more formal essays of Hume or Johnson, or the French *Encyclopédistes*. The high status and role of the Reviews was bound up with their self-elected cultural function as the observers and decoders of historical signs, masters of interpretative techniques and purveyors of ‘the knowledge’.

All the changes introduced by the *Edinburgh*—its selectivity and generous remuneration; its extended treatments, Olympian historicity, and intellectual arrogance—joined with the critical severity for which it was renowned to establish a rhetorical attitude of ‘superior cultural authority’.¹⁵ The sustained, argumentative review would become a staple of the nineteenth century. The decision by the *Edinburgh* friends to express themselves collectively in a Review set a precedent for the collaboration of the universities, professions, and learned societies, on the one hand, and journalism on the other. The same interpenetration would prove crucial to the creation and legitimation of ‘higher journalism’ in the Victorian period and to the evolution of a British intellectual caste. To this day, what we might call the culture of knowledge (universities, scholarly research) and

¹⁴ Jeffrey to John Allen, 15 June 1817, British Library Add. MS 52,181, f. 98.

¹⁵ Judith Newton, ‘Sex and Political Economy in the *Edinburgh Review*’, in Judith Newton (ed.), *Starting Over: Feminism and the Politics of Cultural Critique* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994) pp. 97–123, at p. 97.

the culture of informed opinion (journalism) remain in an uneasy, if parallel, overlapping, and inextricable relationship. ‘It would be hard to exaggerate the part played by Scotsmen in the development of the English periodical press’, as Eric Gross has said; not only did they help to create both the big Reviews (Walter Scott and a second generation Scot, the publisher John Murray, were behind the *Quarterly*), ‘but the weeklies as well: the first editors of the *Spectator*, the *Economist*, and the *Saturday Review*, for example, were all Scotsmen. And right through the nineteenth century critics and essayists made their way south across the border’.¹⁶

Remember, the word ‘literature’ still meant letters—writing—and did not privilege creative works in the way that the more specialised discipline of ‘English’ that was only then coming into being would eventually do. Any adequate understanding of the criticism of the *Edinburgh* requires an understanding of the context of the whole enterprise, and brings us back to its role in the knowledge economy. In line with the production and consumption of knowledge taking place in Britain’s lecture and print culture, the *Edinburgh* conceived of itself as ‘among the legitimate means by which the English public both instructs and expresses itself’¹⁷—and, it should be said, *entertains* itself, because ideas and information bring with them a gratification that is also and simultaneously sensual: the pleasure of thinking and understanding, or simply of knowing something one did not know before.

The *Edinburgh* fulfilled the function prescribed for periodicals by Dugald Stewart in his propædeutic *Outlines of Moral Philosophy* (1793), adapting to ‘the rapid, and often capricious changes of general curiosity’ and communicating, ‘even to the indolent and dissipated, some imperfect knowledge of the course of political events, and of the progress of scientific improvement’.¹⁸ Accordingly, the *Edinburgh* mapped traditional disciplines, like philosophy and classical literature, even while it kept pace with various emerging knowledges: the latest ‘sciences’ (as they would soon be called), historiography, anthropology, sociology, foreign policy, education,

¹⁶ Eric Gross, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: English Literary Life since 1800* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), pp. 19–20.

¹⁷ *Edinburgh Review* 23 (April 1814), p. 39.

¹⁸ Dugald Stewart, *Outlines of Moral Philosophy* (Edinburgh: William Creech, 1793), p. 61.

political economy. ‘The distinctive character of the *Edinburgh Review*, as an intellectual enterprise’, writes Biancamaria Fontana, ‘was exactly that of a popular encyclopaedia of both natural and moral sciences, a principled digest of philosophical and scientific opinions for the consumption of the educated middle classes’.¹⁹

Before it is objected that an encyclopedia has a less tendentious function than the *Edinburgh Review* with regard to the organization of knowledge, it is worth calling to mind the *Encyclopédie* and reminding ourselves that ‘Encyclopaedias have in truth long been convenient vehicles for unpopular or advanced opinions and ideas’.²⁰ Closer to home, there are striking similarities between the *Edinburgh* and some of the formal practices of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The *Britannica*, notoriously, did not carry the chart or tree or ‘View of Knowledge’ that had become conventional by 1768 when it began. What it offered instead, in the interests of coherence, was a ‘new plan’: ‘larger treatises on major subjects, although still in alphabetical order, and short entries as satellites to the treatises’.²¹ From the 1790s onwards, flourishing under the editorship of Macvey Napier (1813–1847), these treatises (called ‘systems’) fulfilled the promise of the second edition to synthesize and contextualise, covering the ‘History, Theory, Practice’ of each of the different sciences or disciplines in a way Sydney Smith would have identified as characteristically Scottish—and in a way that, as we saw, was expected of an *Edinburgh* reviewer.²²

Not surprisingly, then, many of the *Edinburgh* reviewers went on to develop their reviews into articles for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. John Playfair contributed a two-part ‘Dissertation on the Progress of Mathematical and Physical Science since the Revival of Letters in Europe’ to the *Supplement* to the fourth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in 1816. For the *Supplement* to the fourth, fifth, and sixth editions in 1824, Walter Scott contributed ‘An Essay

¹⁹ Biancamaria Fontana, *Rethinking the Politics of Commercial Society: The ‘Edinburgh Review’ 1802–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 94–5.

²⁰ Robert Collison, *Encyclopaedias: Their History throughout the Ages* (New York and London: Hafner, 1964), p. 4.

²¹ Richard Yeo, *Encyclopaedic Visions: Scientific Dictionaries and Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 179.

²² Yeo, *Encyclopaedic Visions*, p. 186.

on Romance', which had begun its life in 1803 as a review of two translations of *Amadis de Gaul*, and Francis Jeffrey's essay on 'Beauty' in the same *Supplement* was an adaptation of his 1811 review of Archibald Alison's *On the Nature and Principles of Taste*.²³ The cross-fertilization between Reviews and encyclopedias was extensive, and it would not be unreasonable to add Reviews to the 'flood' of compendia—the almanacs and companions and dictionaries and encyclopedias—that comprised the database of the flourishing knowledge economy of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, 'when information came of age', in the words of one intellectual historian.²⁴ Not only did the *Edinburgh* and the *Britannica* share a publisher from 1812, but on Jeffrey's retirement in 1829 the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* would be taken over by the editor of the *Britannica*, Macvey Napier, who would edit both of them simultaneously until his death in 1847.

Taking just one issue of the *Edinburgh Review* by way of example, we get some intimation of the spread of liberal and useful knowledge, as well as of the *Edinburgh's* extraordinarily cosmopolitan literary resources:

Edinburgh Review, vol. 11, no 22 (January 1808)

1. La Place's *Traité de Mécanique Céleste*.
[John Playfair] mathematical astronomy
2. Lord Byron's *Hours of Idleness*
[Henry Brougham] poetry
3. John Barrow's *Life of Lord Macartney*.
[Brougham] biography/travel
4. Françoise Huber on bees.
[Francis Jeffrey] natural history
5. Robert Ingram on the increase of Methodism
[Sydney Smith] religion
6. Charles Hoyle's *Exodus: An Epic Poem*
[Thomas Campbell] poetry
7. Southey's mock-Spanish *Letters from England*.
[Jeffrey] social history
8. Humphry Davy's Bakerian lecture on electricity.
[Brougham] chemistry

²³ *Edinburgh Review* 3 (October 1803), 109–36; 18 (August 1811), pp. 1–46.

²⁴ Daniel R. Headrick, *When Information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution 1700–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 143.

9. William Lisle Bowles's edition of Pope.
[Jeffrey] poetry
10. *Works of Sallust*, trans. Henry Steuart.
[Joseph Phillimore] classical history
11. William Spence's *Britain Independent of Commerce*.
[Thomas Malthus] political economy
12. Sophie Cottin's *Elisabeth, ou les Exilés de Sibérie*
[John Playfair] fiction
13. on Wellesley and the Carnatic Question.
[?Robert Grant/Horner] colonial affairs
14. The Orders in Council and war with America.
[Brougham] foreign policy

Individually and collectively, the big Reviews aspired to authority across as broad a range of disciplines as possible, seeking, like George Eliot's auctioneer, Mr Borthrop Trumbull, to bring 'the universe under [their] hammer'²⁵ (or, more accurately, under their gavel). We may identify 'the universe' that the *Edinburgh* reviewed as both intellectually and ideologically circumscribed, and we may deplore the its unapologetic elitism and arrogance as it controlled and modified knowledge in the act of selecting, criticizing, and diffusing it, but its aspiration to disciplinary comprehension and coherence was nonetheless genuine.

This aspiration to encyclopedism also affects the way we read—or should affect the way we read—individual contributions. Too often, the *Edinburgh*'s review essays have been discussed in disciplinary isolation as contributions to a specific area of knowledge, sacrificing the encyclopedic aspirations and ideological coherence of individual volumes, let alone of the enterprise as a whole. Conceptual and ideological meaning can be seen to evolve out of the *relationship* obtaining between the many and various disciplines covered by the Review—the *Edinburgh*'s defence of the French school of algebra and of female mathematicians, of James Hutton's geology and Joseph Lancaster's monitorial education system, for example, is of a piece with its attacks on Oxford, on what it sees as the anti-social poetry of the Lake poets, and on the Chinese resistance to foreign access and free trade.

The aspiration of the *Edinburgh* to generality and coherence was not necessarily characteristic of all its individual reviewers, it should be said. The *Edinburgh* numbered amongst its contributors a host of

²⁵ George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Penguin, 1994), p. 604.

original writers whom we could argue were already specialist practitioners in their chosen areas of knowledge. Indeed, the congregation and orchestration of experts was part of the Review's success (just as it had become a part of the success of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* under Napier).²⁶ Walter Scott and Thomas Moore and William Hazlitt reviewed imaginative literature and, for politics, there was James Mackintosh, James Mill, Lord John Russell and occasionally Lord Grey. Henry Hallam, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Thomas Carlyle, and Francis Palgrave reviewed culture and history, Peter Elmsley and Charles Blomfield classical literature, Alexander Hamilton matters oriental, and Thomas Malthus and J. R. MacCulloch political economics. For mathematics and science, the *Edinburgh* could boast John Playfair and John Leslie—both teaching at the University—Humphry Davy of the Royal Institution, Leonard Horner and (before his premature death) Gregory Watt. Derek Roper is keen to point out that this expertise had been true of reviewing from its beginnings in the eighteenth century.²⁷

It is worth reminding ourselves, however, that the modern meaning of the word 'expert' only dates from 1825. Along with specialization went generalization, and it was the combination that ensured the *Edinburgh*'s success as a knowledge enterprise. Many of its reviewers, and certainly those who helped distinguish and lend the *Edinburgh* coherence, were 'gens de lettres' as characterized by the *Encyclopédie*: 'capable of entering these different fields even if they could not cultivate them all'.²⁸ The bulk of the reviewing was carried out by professional intellectuals who were not expert *practitioners* in the areas in which they reviewed so much as expert *readers* and expert *critics*.

Certain reviewers stand out as especially polymathic—or, at the very least, as polygraphic. Between them, Henry Brougham, Francis Jeffrey, and Sydney Smith account for over forty per cent of the *Edinburgh* in the early years. As well as the articles on Scott and Swift and Burns and Wordsworth and Baillie and Southey and Byron and Crabbe and Edgeworth and Moore and Hemans for which he is known to literary scholars, for example, Jeffrey writes on the

²⁶ Yeo, *Encyclopaedic Visions*, p. 250.

²⁷ Derek Roper, *Reviewing before the Edinburgh 1788–1802* (London: Methuen, 1978), pp. 21–2.

²⁸ As quoted in Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge*, p. 28.

influence of the *philosophes* on the French Revolution, on associationist aesthetics, on geological vulcanism *versus* neptunism, on the economic and political state of the British nation, on China and Chinese penal laws, on the impotence of metaphysical speculation, on travels in Egypt and Africa and Russia and South America, on slavery and on Quakerism and on slavery *and* Quakerism, on Elizabethan and Jacobean drama and changes in literary culture since the Elizabethan period—and so on, and so on: 230 review articles in about 5,000 pages. ‘Jeffry [sic] is an extremely clever little man who will write de omni Scibili’—that expression again: ‘on every knowable thing’—declared Sydney Smith in the letter he wrote to James Mackintosh foreshadowing the Review and inviting members of the King of Clubs ‘to barbicue a poet or two or strangle a metaphysician’.²⁹

Smith, too, could turn his hand to most topics—writing hilariously and controversially on the Methodists, Catholic Emancipation, missionary activity in India, public schools, prisons, chimney-sweepers, the proceedings of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, the Game Laws, and Botany Bay—and Brougham, more prolific even than Jeffrey, was no less various, hammering away on fluxions, foreign affairs, glaciers, optics since Newton, the slave trade and slavery, oxymuriatic acid (chlorine), Britain’s trade policy, liberty of the press, the Mechanics’ Institutes, English criminal law in articles characterized by Smith as ‘long yet vigorous like the penis of a jackass’.³⁰ The sheer extent and variety of the intellectual interests and professional commitments of these men militated against an expertise in any one area. Their reviews attest to an argumentative competence in an impressive range of pursuits, but it is precisely this, and not an expertise in any one specific area, that represents their critical strength.

The *Edinburgh*’s financial success and cultural authority, the paradigmatic function it performed in nineteenth-century intellectual journalism, and its direct contribution to current intellectual debate across a variety of disciplines, all reflect its engagement with and influence on the knowledge economy. The university culture out of which the *Edinburgh* reviewers emerged is the most relevant source

²⁹ See Alan Bell, ‘Sydney Smith’s Letter to James Mackintosh, 13 January 1802’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 9 April 1970, p. 888.

³⁰ *The Letters of Sydney Smith*, vol. 1, p. 178.

of this engagement: ‘*The Review* benefited considerably from its becoming in effect a mouthpiece of the Scottish Educational system’, according to Joan Milne and Willie Smith.³¹ Their intellectual and ideological debts to the conjectural historians, moral philosophers, and political economists of the Scottish Enlightenment and, in the cases of Horner and Brougham, their discipleship to Dugald Stewart (Jeffrey’s formative tertiary experience took place at Glasgow under George Jardine) have been well documented and discussed by Henry Cockburn, in the first instance, then by a host of twentieth-century and more recent commentators.³²

It should come as no surprise, then, as I suggest in my study of the *Edinburgh* in the literary culture of Romantic Britain, that Scotland’s most influential literary forms—from the histories and other essays in civil society of Adam Ferguson, David Hume, John Millar, and William Robertson, Adam Smith’s *Enquiry into the Wealth of Nations* and Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* through Ephraim Chambers’ *Cyclopædia* and the *Encyclopædia Britannica* to the novels of Walter Scott and the *Edinburgh*

³¹ Joan Milne and Willie Smith, ‘Reviews and Magazines: Criticism and Polemic’, in Douglas Gifford (ed.), *The History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 3, *The Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), p. 190.

³² See, for example, John Clive, *Scotch Reviewers: The ‘Edinburgh Review’, 1802–1815* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957); Philip Flynn, *Francis Jeffrey* (Newark and London: University of Delaware Press and Associated Universities Press, 1978); Stefan Collini, Donald Winch, and John Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); J. W. Burrow, *Whigs and Liberals: Continuity and Change in English Political Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Fontana, *Rethinking the Politics of Commercial Society*; Kenneth Bourne and William Banks Taylor (eds), *The Horner Papers: Selections from the Letters and Miscellaneous Writings of Francis Horner, M. P. 1795–1817* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994); Joanne Shattock, ‘Reviews and Monthlies’, in Bill Bell (ed.), *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland*, vol. 3, *Ambition and Industry 1800–1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 343–57; Barton Swaim, *Scottish Men of Letters and the New Public Sphere, 1802–1834* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2009).

Review—‘comprise a collective national enterprise of historical and cultural *review*’.³³

As it happens, by the time the big Reviews were under way, the educated public implied in early nineteenth-century periodical discourse was already breaking down into distinct areas of amateur and academic specialization, each initiating its own dedicated organ of enquiry or instruction.³⁴ The *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review* were dominating ideas and information at a time when (to quote Jon Klancher) ‘critical “men of letters” were gradually [being] displaced from command of the whole field of modern educated discourse formerly designated by the category of “literature” and “being clearly distinguished from “men of science” and “scholars”’.³⁵ The periodical Enlightenment marked a late moment before the educated public would cede the custodianship of knowledge to specialists both inside and outside the academy, ‘under the new cognitive and social regime of specialisation and professionalisation of the nineteenth century’.³⁶

³³ Christie, *The Edinburgh Review in the Literary Culture of Romantic Britain*, p. 50.

³⁴ Dawson, Noakes, and Topham, *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical*, p. 11.

³⁵ Jon Klancher, ‘The Vocation of Criticism and the Crisis of the Republic of Letters’, in Marshall Brown (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 5, *Romanticism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 312.

³⁶ Charles W. J. Withers and Paul Wood, ‘Science, Medicine, and the Scottish Enlightenment: An Historiographical Overview’, in Charles W. J. Withers and Paul Wood (eds), *Science and Medicine in the Scottish Enlightenment* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002), p. 9.

