

of 'style' is often thematically or affectively driven (examples of 'style' range from 'satire' to 'poignancy'). But by emphasizing style as 'convention', Van Dam provides new ways of appreciating how Trollope's late work carefully renegotiates a wide range of forms that are familiar from the earlier novels. Of course, any book dealing with Trollope's vast oeuvre will prompt objections about what is underscored or excluded, and in this case, one wonders why Van Dam chose not to analyse 1879's *Thackeray*, an example of 'late style' that itself takes style as its subject matter. Moreover, the notion of 'lateness' that lies at the heart of the book could bear further theoretical unfolding. But, on the whole, Van Dam's book is remarkably inclusive, quoting liberally from Trollope's works and a wide range of critics and often containing lengthy footnotes that function as miniature scholarly essays. In this way, Van Dam's own style—early and not late, at least in the chronological sense, given that this is his first book—reveals the sociable and egalitarian instincts that he attributes to the later Trollope.

Indeed, in contrast to the 'dark' Trollope usually associated with the later works, the Trollope that emerges here is guardedly optimistic, even genial about social relations. The fascinating question prompted by this book, then, is not whether the later Trollope is a 'conservative' or curmudgeonly liberal, but whether, given his increasingly communitarian commitments, he ought to be considered liberal at all.

MATTHEW SUSSMAN *The University of Sydney*
doi:10.1093/res/hgw081

Advance Access published on 8 July 2016

BARRY SHEILS. *W. B. Yeats and World Literature: The Subject of Poetry*. Pp. x + 200. Farnham & Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2015. Hardback. £60.

Barry Sheils's book on W. B. Yeats arrives after several projects by various scholars to place Yeats's *oeuvre* in the context of postcolonial, literary studies. Edward Said identified Yeats and other Irish writers as attempting to react against cultural imperialism (1993), while Marjorie Howes sought to define the plurality of Yeats's national expression (1998). Declan Kiberd inevitably included Yeats among those writers whom he identified as fabricating a new Irish culture against the background of emergence from what is deemed 'colonial' rule (1996).

Sheils's work is more broadly framed over a cultural materialist basis that places Yeats's invention of a national Irish literature firmly upon the footing of world literature and the exchanges between cultures, and which takes into account the poet's subject position as recipient of the global artefacts brought to the West by global capitalism; his access through translation and mass print media to an eclectic variety of exotic literatures; interest in Irish folklore against a plethora of European, local folklores in the nineteenth century; and the changing nature of female representation as nation in Yeats's poetry and plays.

In the first chapter, Sheils attends to how Yeats can be understood as partaking of world literature, when he appears to have turned his back on French symbolism in the late 1890s in search of a wholly Irish cultural identity. He also asks whether the poet can be seen as embracing the technology and forms of electronic transmission which filtered a nascent, global culture, when his project for an Irish national literature condemned materialism and industrialization so forcefully. Sheils notices the use of various transmission motifs in poems like 'The Collar-Bone of a Hare' and 'Ancestral Houses', equating the image of the shell from the fountain with a telephone (p. 41), to argue that there are self-conscious representations of transmission in Yeats's work which indicate his commitment to transnational communication. These motifs can further be aligned with the technological programme of modernism, and indicate the incorporation of world elements in Yeats's literature.

Likewise, he argues that Yeats's attempt to create a national literature upon local elements, having turned away from the cosmopolitanism of Paris, still involved 'modern heterogeneity' (p. 62), and thus was still thoroughly rooted in the international.

In his second chapter, Sheils turns his attention to Yeats's work as folklorist, arguing for the essentially dialogical relationship between the folklorists and their object, indicated by their use of notes and other framing techniques, although understands this as meaning that the modern folkloric text, purporting to collect the wisdom and expressions of an earlier culture, is necessarily one which embraces 'stereographism' (p. 72). Sheils quietly rebukes Seamus Deane's complaint that in embracing folklore and cultural nationalism Yeats was simply repeating Edmund Burke's similar refutation of the French revolution's theory of the modern state in favour of a return to tradition, by declaring that Romantic folklorism—by virtue of its stereographic nature—is necessarily theoretical (p. 80). While Yeats himself may have condemned the more intellectual and 'framing' folklorists through insisting upon the primacy of the 'moods' of a more antique culture, Sheils notes the necessarily 'heteroglossic' (p. 97) quality of Yeats's own transformations of folklore to a more modern language in *The Celtic Twilight*, coupled with his use of explanatory notes, and thus the necessarily political commentary and analysis in such a stereographic text. This chapter certainly reads relatively clearly, and makes its points through very original use of the ideas on folklore and on language of the eighteenth-century German thinker Johann Gottfried Herder (pp. 85–8). Nevertheless, one cannot help feeling that an opportunity to measure this heteroglossia in relation to Sir Walter Scott's own portrayal of folkloric literature as the 'Marvelous' in 'On the Supernatural in Fictitious Composition' (1827), and the further relation of such stereographic texts to the progressive temporal structure embedded in Scott's own historical novels (which Lukács noted as being unconsciously Hegelian), would have provided a clearer political theory against which to formulate the theoretical nature of stereographic folklore texts, and to prove further the falsity of Deane's position.

In the third chapter, Sheils moves onto a discussion of Yeats's own 'Hiberno-English' (p. 126), as being itself a form of translation, contending that Yeats's incorporation of different registers in both poems and prose represents the attempt to create a 'world English' (p. 103). He centres in particular upon Yeats's friendship with Rabindranath Tagore and appropriation of Noh theatre into his work (pp. 109–11), arguing that this assimilation of Eastern images and language by a Western poet copies the process of colonial commodification throughout the era of high imperialism, and reinforces this view with a reading of 'The Statues' as the assembly of a group of colonially acquired artefacts (p. 117). This novel approach might have been tempered with a closer understanding of Yeats's use of civilization theories in *A Vision* (1937), gleaned from the likes of Spengler and Frobenius, which explained the relations between East and West through history as constant reversals in power. Furthermore, Sheils does not make reference to a single translation theory, despite the burgeoning nature of that field and the relevance of theorists like Venuti (*The Translator's Invisibility* [1995]), Vermeer (Skopos theory), and Hale ('Translation in Distress' [2004]) to the broad, cultural transformations and hybridities which Sheils himself discerns in Yeats's processes.

Sheils next moves to the concept of nation itself in Yeats's portrayal of Ireland, arguing that the nation in his work realizes itself in female form, but notes the changes between Cathleen ni Houlihan as a revolutionary ideal in 1902, and the materiality of Crazy Jane in the 1930s, once the Irish Free State had been created (p. 156). This fourth chapter contains an original and convincing reading of 'Easter, 1916' as presenting martyrdom as being a form of investment, following Nietzsche's understanding of Christ's crucifixion constituting the erasure of a spiritual and moral debt in *A New Genealogy of Morals*

(pp. 147–148). The fifth, and shortest, chapter interprets Yeats's stance in his later poetry as a form of subjective 'fanaticism' entirely at odds with the ideology of the new Irish Free State.

Sheils is at his best when describing and interpreting Yeats's forms of prosody, imagery and prose, with particular regard for the poet's shifts between registers and incorporation of heterogeneous words to forge his style. Many of his interpretations, such as reading 'An Irish Airman Foresees his Death' as an allegory for Ireland's unresolved state during World War I, are striking and novel. However, the book takes on too much material, and one leaves it feeling as though the last two chapters have little relationship with the first three. Indeed, sometimes the length of the chapters and the amount of material involved make it difficult for the reader to connect all strands of Sheil's argument. Nevertheless, the book makes important contributions to our understanding of both Yeats's own nationalism, and of his *oeuvre's* relationship with world literature as a whole.

MATTHEW GIBSON *University of Macau*
doi:10.1093/res/hgw052
Advance Access published on 28 April 2016

CLARA JONES. **Virginia Woolf: Ambivalent Activist.** Pp. ix + 246. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016. Hardback, £75.

Sometimes it really helps to read a book backwards. And such is the case with Clara Jones' *Virginia Woolf: Ambivalent Activist*, whose contribution to Woolf Studies begins with its foregrounding of little known or rarely published work by Woolf—'The Morley Sketch' and 'The Cook Sketch'—found in the appendices, which Jones skilfully uses to craft an argument that Woolf's relationship to activism was, as the subtitle claims, 'Ambivalent'. I was initially put off by the word 'ambivalent', half expecting another reactionary portrait of Woolf as a politically out of touch snob and Bloomsbury elitist, and by the alliterative bounce of the subtitle, so coveted by editors and directors of marketing and distribution.

But I was wrong. What follows, instead, is a startlingly fresh, nuanced, and detailed investigation, based on overlooked or frequently dismissed archival evidence, into Woolf's political engagement across the trajectory of her writing life, some 45 years. Focusing on her encounters with Morley College, People's Suffrage Federation, Women's Co-operative Guild, and Women's Institute of Rodmell, Jones explores the neglected histories of these organizations as she brings to bear an incisive re-consideration of Woolf's politics, her fiction, and the multivalent nature of ambivalence, itself, as 'a necessary accompaniment to [...] activism' (p. 95). Jones is also especially good at re-assessing and re-examining 'seemingly throwaway references' (p. 65) in Woolf's correspondence and diaries, placing these moments in context not only within the letter or diary entry, but also within the broader spectrum of Woolf's actual experiences and activities.

Re-familiarizing myself with 'The Morley Sketch' first encountered in Quentin Bell's biography on Woolf as 'Report on Teaching at Morley College' and reading 'The Cook Sketch' for the first time in the back of the book allowed me to formulate my own thoughts on the archival materials before being invited in to Jones' argument and the detailed connections she makes between them and the larger frame of Woolf's relationship to political activism.

In the opening chapter, we are reminded of a young, 23-year-old, Virginia Stephen being inspired to give teaching a try at Morley College, in late December 1904, and beginning her stint there in January 1905, until deciding to leave in 1907. Although Jones rightly links this initial encounter to key figures, Mary Sheepshanks, Violet Dickinson, and Dickinson's friend, Ella Crum, Virginia Stephen, in 1904, had also met for the first time and was