

# Introduction

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## 1

POPE UNDOUBTEDLY HAD a vision of the world. It was initially a vision of place, where virtually every name — whether of land, sea, river, region or city — carried its legend of antiquity or its tale of the present.<sup>1</sup> His imagination, holding past and present in mind, that city, for example where

Tyber, now no longer Roman, rolls,

produced, thus, a vision of time, ideas of the processes of the world, notions of the patterns of history, of the cycles of civilisations, within which hopes of progress, fears of decline and fall, could be urged, averted, at least understood. Through the ways of the world in history works were disseminated, sometimes relegated. As a consequence some modern minds enjoyed contact with the past, though some were impoverished for the lack of it. In so far as this was a living contact, so far was it possible for modern minds to assess their world in the light of the past. These were the conditions of Pope's view of his world, ancient and modern.

Pope may be regarded as a moralist alone, that is to say, as an author read solely, or primarily, for the content of his writings, his human wisdom. Indeed, it is the opinion of the present writer that discussion of Pope in recent decades has been chiefly concerned with his thought, his views and his judgement, and only perfunctorily or occasionally with the salient fact that his most famous works were written in verse, and usually in a particular kind of verse. If this is so, it is only part of a wider trend in Western literary culture, which is

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<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to Mr. Jonathan Pritchard, of Trinity College, Cambridge, for his discussions of the importance of place and place names in Pope.

concerned with the writings of poets, dramatists, even novelists, as if they were all essayists or didactic prose-writers. Modern critical discussion has not only been losing control of an older technical idiom which made discussions of the craft of poetry possible, but, unfortunately, has also often lost compelling ways in which to explain that an inspiring or a drastic judgement —

And wretches hang that jury-men may dine—

owes something to form as well as something to ethics, owes everything, in fact, to a moral and aesthetic mastery of poetic language which it can never finally be intelligent to separate into content and form. Peter France, however, reminds us that perhaps the most influential translation of Pope's *Works* into French was in prose and, further, that this was not at all unusual practice in eighteenth-century France when it came to translating poetic masters in verse from other languages.<sup>2</sup> It is thus worth reviewing what seems to have been the wisdom of Pope, the thought of Pope the moralist, as perceived in the later twentieth century, irrespective of the literary forms, whether in verse or prose, in which he chose to cast his thoughts. Thus it would be possible to say that, in a conciliatory and familiar mode, Pope synthesised the literary theory of Aristotle, Horace and Longinus, in *An Essay on Criticism* (1711). In *Windsor-Forest* (1713) he explored the themes of warfare, conquest, slavery in a range of senses, peace and freedom, as they seemed to arise from a survey of British history past and present. Unlike the author of any other poem on the Treaty of Utrecht, Pope confronted the practice of slavery in its literal sense and repudiated it as inconsistent with his vision of peace.<sup>3</sup> In a further conciliatory and discursive exploration, *An Essay on Man*, Pope sought to review and combine those arguments which relate the earthly to the heavenly, the physical with the metaphysical, the personal impulse with the social impulse, the passions with reason, and man's contingent state with his

<sup>2</sup>See Peter France, 'The French Pope' in Colin Nicholson, ed. *Alexander Pope: Essays for the tercentenary* (Aberdeen, 1988), pp. 117–19.

<sup>3</sup>See the first essay in the present volume, 'Pope and Slavery', pp. 27–53. It is remarkable that Pope should stand in the poetic record as an exception. If we ask why this should be, it may at least be suggested that Pope may have known Jean Bodin's *Six Livres de la République*, with its chapter opposing slavery (I. v), for Bodin is praised (albeit in a different connection) in one of Pope's favourite books, Charles Cotton's translation of Montaigne's *Essays* (Ch. 69). Montaigne himself may have swayed Pope's view of slavery in the New World: see Pope's annotations in his copy of Cotton's Montaigne as recorded in Maynard Mack, *Collected in Himself: Essays Critical, Biographical, and Bibliographical on Pope and Some of His Contemporaries* (London, 1982), p. 430.

hopes of happiness. While affirming the divine more fully than regular eighteenth-century deism, Pope's poem circled around but never mentioned the specific Christian Revelation, though the poet originally planned to open his first epistle with an address to Christ.<sup>4</sup> In *The Dunciad* and many of his satires and epistles (whether imitations of Horace or not) Pope drew on and powerfully contributed to the widespread opposition culture which in the 1720s and 1730s was being directed against the long régime of Sir Robert Walpole, and against the Hanoverian court under the first two Georges. This opposition culture was underpinned ideologically by several authors, ancient and modern; Virgil and Horace, but also Tacitus and, from the Renaissance, Machiavelli, whom Pope's friend and mentor, Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, specifically drew on to analyse the ills and fears of Britain in the 1720s and 1730s as he saw them. Above all in the potent image and concept of corruption, both moral failure and a process of historical decay, Pope's later poetry derived from Machiavelli a dominant idea which made coherent some of the most radical poetry of opposition English literature has known. More important, perhaps, than all these areas of thought and teaching in Pope, are those predominantly later poems, indebted to Horace if not formal imitations of him, in which Pope, with irony and humour, mixes personal life with public life, playing a variety of parts, as Maynard Mack has shown in one of the best essays on Pope this century.<sup>5</sup> The poet who admired Erasmus, the poet who was an early student of Montaigne, found in Horace the liberating example which encouraged him not to speak a public or an intellectual language only, but, in well-contrived autobiographical mode, a personal language too. Strange as it may seem, Pope is the most autobiographical poet in English literature up to his own time. Donne and Marvell, masters of dramatic *personae*, more so than Pope, are, so far as we can tell, less close to autobiography. By comparison with these two earlier poets, Pope more commonly mingles different *personae* within the same text, with the result that the reader begins to develop the idea of a character behind or above the various parts he plays.

It is in the context of these relations between personal, social and public that Pope's presentation of women should be seen. His poetry moves decisively away from that dichotomy according to which the

<sup>4</sup>J. M. Osborn, ed. *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1966), I. 135 (item 305).

<sup>5</sup>Maynard Mack, 'The Muse of Satire', *Yale Review*, XLI (1951-2), pp. 80-92.

woman is either mistress or saint. His prose letters to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, on an uneasy frontier between extravagant performance and ill-controlled irony, are perhaps the nearest thing we find in Pope to seventeenth-century poetry of courtship. That is supplanted by a poetry of friendship, between man and woman, also between man and man. Within the range of feeling here involved are to be found affection, amusement, ironic awareness, candour and admiration. They exist within a more equal and open relationship than that between, for example, Marvell's male lover and his Coy Mistress, or between Dryden and Anne Killigrew, easy though it is to oversimplify and undervalue those seventeenth-century poems. Some feminist criticism, more concerned to fight late twentieth-century battles than achieve an understanding of Pope, has charged him with misogyny and a merely patronising politeness towards women. On similar grounds one could charge him with a similar treatment of men. On each side this is a part, but far from the whole, truth. This is a subject prone to programmatic distortion. By contrast, Hester Jones's essay in the present collection, 'Pope's Homer: The Shadow of Friendship' discusses male and female relations in Pope with exceptional sensitivity, and brilliantly links Pope's presentation of Ulysses and Athena in *Odyssey*, Book XIII, with his address to Martha Blount at the end of his Epistle *To a Lady*.

It will be noticed that Pope's most famous early poem, *The Rape of the Lock* (1714, 1717) has not featured in this survey of Pope's 'thought'. This is because the poem is, at first sight, deceptively easy to reduce to a summary of attitudes and a moral. It seems to sum itself up, after all, in Clarissa's speech at the opening of Canto V. In fact this heroi-comical poem is harder to reduce to 'thought' than any other of Pope's major works save *The Dunciad*. Of course Pope displays the human muddle when manners cease to be morals and become mere fashions. Of course, in Clarissa's speech the reader is confronted with a sombre vision of life as a series of irresistible deprivations. This has led generations of readers to suppose that the poem advocates submission. With the sudden advent of a new feminist criticism, some twenty years ago, this was speedily transformed into the conclusion that the poem advocated the subordination of women. There was in fact a further ground for such a conclusion, for had not almost every text of *The Rape of the Lock* since Warburton's 1751 Edition of Pope's *Works* appended to Clarissa's speech the footnote: 'Clarissa / A new Character introduced in the subsequent Editions, to open more clearly the MORAL of the Poem, in a parody of the speech of Sarpedon to

Glaucus in Homer.<sup>6</sup> It is one of the most widespread misconceptions about Pope, and by no means easy to rectify from the relevant volumes of the Twickenham Edition, to think that Pope wrote the main part of this well-known footnote. He did not. All that he wrote in his lifetime was that the speech was a parody of that of Sarpedon to Glaucus. Clarissa was not a new character (see III. 127–8). In the circumstances it is highly conjectural that Warburton had Pope's authority for the 1751 footnote in which this 'moral' first appeared. It is rather part of the posthumous reception of the poem. Clarissa's speech is thus not the moral of the poem but a moral *in* the poem, to be interpreted in the light of the total poetic work. This in turn means that it is extremely difficult to generalise the 'thought' of the poem. *The Rape of the Lock* is now revealed as a finely balanced aesthetic structure in which notions of active resistance and passive obedience are kept in play, responsive to each episode of the action and each action of the poetry. The reader is kept in suspense until the poem's final, comic, move: the apotheosis of the Lock. What the reader makes of this depends on the transformations of poetic tone in the whole of the foregoing text. If it ratifies Belinda's resistance to the Baron, which I am inclined to suppose, it does so in a vulnerably comic manner. We should probably conclude that *The Rape of the Lock* is a poem which resists any but the most complex moral summary. We should conclude also that there is no way in which Pope's poem advocates the subordination of women to men, however surprising that might seem in view of the regular patterns of eighteenth-century social history.

*The Rape of the Lock* is an example which demonstrates the relative inadequacy of attempting to reduce complex aesthetic structures to statements of presumed intention, or to morals too simple to be believed. There is a case for studying poets such as Spenser, Milton, Pope or Wordsworth as moralists, as writers notable for their thought alone, but, by contrast with writers whose practice is closer than that of these poets to the ratiocinative and didactic, such as Berkeley, or Shaftesbury, such an approach is one-eyed to a circumspect, Ulyssean, poetic text. Thus it is that recent Pope criticism, concentrating as it has predominantly done, on attitude and opinion, has often failed to do justice to the subtle and circumspect knowledge of the poem.

<sup>6</sup>*The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt et al. 11 vols. (London, 1939–69), II. 199, n. 7.

## 2

These two interdependent aspects of Pope, his thought and his art, are represented by the two terms in the title of the present collection: world and word. Pope's knowledge and judgement of his world — to some extent still also our world — and his art in the choice of word in relation to available vocabulary, to situations described, to paragraph, to metre, to rhyme, to the aesthetic structure of the whole poem, afford us a critical pattern with which to review the varieties of work on Pope and his world which has been produced during the last twenty-five years. The purpose of this Introduction is to provide such a review, and to place the different contributions to the present volume in relation to foregoing work on Pope.

In his Introduction to Peter Dixon's collection of essays, *Alexander Pope* (1972), George Rousseau surveyed the then state of learning about Pope, and his significance for twentieth-century culture. The most important thing, probably, which Rousseau emphasised was the survival of Pope's poetic and other, manuscripts. The chief feature of this part of his discussion is the lost Chauncy MS of *The Dunciad*: the first edition containing Pope's own 'corrections, comments and additions in his handwriting' which seems to have been available to Elwin and Courthope, Pope's Victorian editors, but which has subsequently disappeared.<sup>7</sup> This volume has not, so far as I know, been rediscovered, but something of similar significance has since been published in facsimile by Maynard Mack: the record made at Pope's request by Jonathan Richardson the younger of passages drafted for or deleted from the 1729 *Dunciad*. This and other poetic MSS of Pope have now been published by Professor Mack, in his major collection *The Last and Greatest Art: Some Unpublished Poetical Manuscripts of Alexander Pope* (1984), which comprises the copious *Essay on Man* MSS previously published by Mack for the Roxburgh Club, and all other poetic MSS of Pope known to have survived at the time of publication save those previously published by others: *An Essay on Criticism*, ed. R. M. Schmitz (1962), *Windsor-Forest*, ed. R. M. Schmitz (1952) and the *Epistle To Bathurst*, ed. E. R. Wasserman (1962), and with the further exception of the important and significant *Homer* MSS in the British Library. With *The Last and Greatest Art*, then, the MSS of *The Pastorals* (the Preface, 'Spring', 'Summer', 'Autumn',

<sup>7</sup>G. S. Rousseau, 'On Reading Pope' in Peter Dixon, ed. *Alexander Pope, Writers and their Background* (London, 1972), pp. 1-59.

and 'Winter', but not the 'Messiah') were published; *Sapho to Phaon*; the Epistle *To Jervas*; *The Dunciad* (Richardson's collations of the first and second 'Broglia MSS'; the Epistle *To Burlington* (including the Chatsworth version and the Mapledurham Fragments); *The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace, Imitated* (To Fortescue); *An Essay on Man* (the Pierpont Morgan Library and Houghton Library MSS); and the Epistle *To Arbuthnot*. All these were in 1984 made available in facsimile and with transcripts on the facing page, Introductions and Commentaries. Subsequently David L. Vander Meulen published *Pope's Dunciad of 1728. A History and Facsimile* (1991), which contributes graphically to our understanding of how *The Dunciad* developed, since it includes a record of Pope's early drafts in annotations by Jonathan Richardson the younger. It is fair to say that critical discussion of Pope's art has barely begun to assimilate this mass of intricate but highly revealing material.<sup>8</sup> It is also true to say that the Homer MSS in the British Library demand the same attention that Maynard Mack has given the poetic manuscripts listed above. Meanwhile Dr. Julian Ferraro, whose essay 'From Text to Work: The Presentation and Representation of *Epistles to Several Persons*' is included in the present collection, is among those younger scholars who have begun to think afresh about the study of poetic manuscripts, and their particular significance in the case of Pope. The suggestion that MS versions may not represent different stages towards an ultimately desired aesthetic form, but rather different poems in themselves each responding to subtly different circumstances, is one which deserves much discussion as the study of Pope's manuscripts proceeds.

A similar concept, perhaps, dominates the second great development in Pope studies since G. S. Rousseau's essay. In 1975–6 David Foxon delivered the Lyell Lectures at the University of Oxford on the subject of Pope and the Early Eighteenth-Century Book Trade. For a decade and a half these important lectures were consulted as circulated by the generosity of the author, or as deposited in certain major research libraries, chiefly the British Library. Then in 1991 they were published, revised and edited by James McLaverty, by the Clarendon Press, Oxford.<sup>9</sup> Several salient suggestions emerge from Foxon's research, and I shall focus here on a few only. First, the copy-text

<sup>8</sup>Maynard Mack, *The Last and Greatest Art: Some Unpublished Poetical Manuscripts of Alexander Pope* (London, 1984).

<sup>9</sup>David Foxon, *Pope and the Early Eighteenth-Century Book Trade*, The Lyell Lectures, Oxford 1975–6, Rev. and ed. James McLaverty (Oxford, 1991).

philosophy promulgated by W. W. Gregg and generally followed by Fredson Bowers, produced to cope with the problems of the printed versions of Elizabethan and early Jacobean drama, is inappropriate to the printed works of Pope, who had unusual control over the printed form of his works, early and late, and seems to have changed his views on the typographical and broader visual presentation of his works as the years went by, and as particular publishing opportunities presented themselves. Foxon then tends to support that editorial method which honours the author's last considered intentions rather than the first authoritative form. Secondly, Foxon moves the whole matter of typography from the margins towards the centre of the critical discussion of a Pope text. A varying additional emphasis is effected by italics and capitals, the latter often appealing to the habit of thinking of abstract qualities as personifications —

Adieu to Virtue, if you're once a Slave . . .

Both 'Virtue' and 'Slave' refer to moral conditions, but the latter is here closer to a human figure, so that the link between the two capitalised nouns enhances the standing of the abstract noun as a human form, to whom one might have to say 'goodbye'. Foxon's argument that Pope, Gay and others moved towards the choice of a plain text as the years went by, does seem cogent in Pope's case with regard to some kinds of edition. But the work of Foxon and McLaverty has prompted more recent scholars to suggest that throughout his life Pope may have chosen different typographies for different kinds of edition of his works.<sup>10</sup> It is certainly now the case that no entirely adequate critical account of a major Pope poem can afford to overlook the 'accidentals' of its major editions during the poet's life. To mention but one often neglected aspect, the decorations which appeared with Pope's texts on some occasions deserve attention. In the quarto *Works* of 1735, for example, a decoration containing the Scottish royal motto: 'Nemo me impune lacessit' occurs three times, once after the Arguments to the Books, once after Bk. I and once after Bk. II. Scottish thistles as well as asses' heads appear in the repeated decoration. Again, in the 1735 *Works*, Pope's Epistle *To Dr. Arbuthnot* concludes with an heraldic decoration properly recording the arms of his parents' families, the Popes and the Turners. This was obviously appropriate to a poem which, in its concluding sections, paid tribute to the poet's

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, Tania Rideout, 'The Reasoning Eye: Alexander Pope's Typographic Vision in the *Essay on Man*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 55 (1992), pp. 249–62.



parents. A more salient point, perhaps, arises when one surveys the first editions of the individual poems which make up Pope's *Imitations of Horace*. Since Vol. IV of the Twickenham Edition it has been assumed that the *ideal* (if not always the most practical) way of printing the *Imitations* was to set Horace's Latin on the facing page, with the system of raised letters, and capitalised and italicised words, carrying the reader's eye backwards and forwards between the Latin and the English texts. Pope himself does set precedents for this, but it should also be noted that the first editions of some individual poems in the *Imitations of Horace* — for example, the rich and subtle Epistle *To Augustus* (Hor. *Ep.* II. i) — was not originally printed in this way. As with certain of Pope's later collected editions, the references to Horace's text was confined to quotations of paragraph beginnings in footnotes. There is room here for more than one editorial view. But it is not evident that Pope invariably required Horace's text on the facing page for all his *Imitations of Horace*.<sup>11</sup>

## 3

If we now turn from textual study of Pope's poetry to the first circle of contextual consideration, the poet's letters call for consideration. As early as G. S. Rousseau's 1972 survey, many Pope letters not in George Sherburn's 1956 *Correspondence of Alexander Pope* had been published. Most notably, the very appearance of Sherburn's five volumes had prompted the discovery in the Downshire MSS of the further letters, chiefly to Sir William Trumbull, published by Sherburn in *RES* in 1958,<sup>12</sup> while a single letter of exceptional quality and interest, to Martha Blount, Aug. 1734, the 'Netley Abbey Letter', had been published by Rousseau himself in 1966.<sup>13</sup> Forty-six further letters of Pope, previously unpublished, or unpublished in this form, were brought out by Maynard Mack in his volume, *Collected in Himself: Essays Critical, Biographical, and Bibliographical on Pope and Some of His Contemporaries* (1982), gathering together some work published

<sup>11</sup>See *The First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace, Imitated* (London, 1737) (Griffith 458/467; Foxon p. 881).

<sup>12</sup>George Sherburn, 'Letters of Alexander Pope, chiefly to Sir William Trumbull', *Review of English Studies*, 9 (1958), pp. 388–406.

<sup>13</sup>George Rousseau, 'A New Pope Letter', *Philological Quarterly*, XLV, II (April, 1966), pp. 409–418.

earlier by others, and also many letters to and about Pope of great interest. In 1985 Pat Rogers published a helpful list, 'Not in Sherburn', recording the attribution of new letters to Pope since 1956: at least one new letter of Pope has come to light and been published since.<sup>14</sup>

Much more work remains to be done on Pope's letters. In the first place, it seems probable that further work on his contemporaries will uncover further correspondence. There are, further, issues of importance which need to be reconsidered. Ever since C. W. Dilke's discovery of the Caryll transcripts of Pope's letters to John, Lord Caryll, this source has been assumed to be of rock-like primary significance. It naturally appears so because it was from these letters, in many cases, that Pope produced letters addressed to other people for his printed *Correspondence*. The transcripts certainly revealed Pope's procedure in composing his letters for publication, but one may feel less certain that they must be a complete record of what Pope originally wrote. For example, a sexually frank letter of Pope to another and younger member of the Caryll family has survived, which it is inconceivable that Lord Caryll (had he known it) would have asked a female member of his family to transcribe. One may also reflect that, if Pope ever included incautious religious or political remarks in his letters to Caryll, Caryll was too familiar with the dangers of the world in which he lived to allow them to be copied. Dilke's discovery, and its impact on Pope's Victorian editors, has had a further influence on the twentieth-century approach to Pope's letters. Attention has been diverted from the collections of Pope's correspondence printed in his lifetime, as not quite 'the real thing', as an embarrassing or dishonest contrivance on the poet's part. Leaving the ethics of re-composing letters on one side, however, it is clear that Pope's correspondence as reconstituted, selected and arranged by the poet himself, with letters grouped by the correspondents, to whom they were addressed, a very different reading experience from what we get from the chronological sequence of Sherburn, is Pope's only major work not to have been edited in the twentieth century. The one scholar who has shown interest in the correspondence Pope printed as such, Paul Hammond,<sup>15</sup> was able only to illustrate what might be done by this approach. The editing and introducing of

<sup>14</sup>This is one of Pope's (probably early) undated notes to the Earl of Burlington. It is in the Greater London Record Office (Middlesex Records), Acc. 1128/185/27, and is now published in Howard Erskine-Hill, 'Pope and Burlington', in Toby Barnard and Jane Clark, eds. *Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art and Life* (London, 1995), pp. 219–20.

<sup>15</sup>Paul Hammond, ed. *Selected Prose of Alexander Pope* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 232–89.

Pope's own version of his correspondence remains a major task for some future scholar.

## 4

The question of Pope's letters leads naturally on to biographical study. It is, I think, clear, that the most important work on Pope to appear since George Rousseau's 1972 survey, is Maynard Mack's *Alexander Pope: A Life* (1985). Before confronting this brilliant book, however, it is worth reflecting on the peculiar challenges which face the biographer of Pope. It is to say no more than the obvious if one points out that many of the most important people in Pope's biography have warranted biographical attention in their own right — or would warrant it. Thus, to take some obvious examples, Joseph Addison, Ralph Allen, John Arbuthnot, Francis Atterbury, George Berkeley, Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, John Gay, John Hervey, Baron Ickworth, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Jonathan Swift, Sir William Trumbull, William Warburton, William Wycherley, are all people whom the reader might wish — to say the least — to know something about without wishing to know about Pope. On the other hand, no balanced biography of any of these important eighteenth-century figures could be produced which did not pay attention to the relation between its subject and Pope. Pope, certainly, was a man to whom periods of retirement, solitude, lonely reflection were essential; but he was, on the other hand, a person of extraordinary social and public awareness. His genius, almost, was his responsiveness to other people. This is the formidable difficulty for the biographer of Pope, more so in Pope's case, in fact, than in that of Swift. Yet it must be said that one of the disappointments of reading the rich, extended, and well-written three-volume biography of Swift by the late Irvin Ehrenpreis (1962–83) is that it very largely extracts Swift from his pattern of relationships, even some of the salient and famous ones of his life, such as those with Bolingbroke and Pope. Archbishop William King emerges well from the pages of Ehrenpreis but, despite numerous references, Swift's other friendships are not studied in depth, at least not in the later years, so that it is difficult to see the deeper currents of his later life. This can of course be made good in the case of such figures as Pope and Bolingbroke, themselves the subjects of excellent modern

studies.<sup>16</sup> It is not the case with a significant lesser figure such as Charles Ford. Yet one may expect that this exasperating Irish friend of Swift could throw much light on the Dean if one were to study him in his own right. Such a suggestion may seem the mere counsel of despair. How can the biographer of any complex major figure possibly attend to the by-road lives of even the more personally important of his or her friends and acquaintances? But what looks like a by-road to the retrospective biographer may have looked like a main road to the subject of the biography. In any case, there is a modern form, that of multiple biography, which is well able to tackle exactly this problem: the relation between a 'major' subject and a pattern of 'minor' contemporaries.

So far as the career of Alexander Pope is concerned, the advantages of multiple biography were first demonstrated by James Lees-Milne in his study, *Earls of Creation: Five Great Patrons of Eighteenth-Century Art* (1962), not mentioned by G. S. Rousseau in his 1972 survey, though acknowledged by Pat Rogers in the same volume.<sup>17</sup> Lees-Milne may not have conceived of his ground-breaking volume as multiple biography bearing specifically on Pope, though Pope moves through the lives he recounts, influencing and influenced. The next stage in this particular development came with Howard Erskine-Hill's book, *The Social Milieu of Alexander Pope: Lives, Example and the Poetic Response* (1975). Pope was here owned as the central subject; multiple biography as the intended method. To function well, this form demands of its practitioners a dual fidelity: first, to the 'minor' lives recounted, as significant for their own sake; secondly, to the way such lives studied for their own sake can contribute to the 'major' life likely to be the organising centre of consciousness of the book. Seven chapters of this work were devoted to contemporary lives, before the final chapters attempted to draw the threads together to constitute a new portrait of Pope in the context of his time. This approach to Pope was next adopted by Valerie Rumbold in her admirable study, *Women's Place in Pope's World* (1989). Partly responding to the Popeian precedents in multiple biography, and partly to the growing interest in women's writing and women's lives, Valerie Rumbold produced a book which looked more fully and deeply than any had before at the lives and background of Edith Turner (Pope's mother), Martha and Teresa

<sup>16</sup>See H. T. Dickinson, *Bolingbroke* (London, 1970).

<sup>17</sup>Pat Rogers, 'Pope and the Social Scene', in Peter Dixon, ed. *Alexander Pope*, p. 113; see also pp. 145, 162-3.

Blount, the Duchess of Buckingham and the Duchess of Marlborough, Mary Caesar and the Countess of Suffolk (including also Lady Mary Wortley Montagu whom Robert Halsband had earlier made his specific study).<sup>18</sup> Here too was a work which acknowledged ‘the importance of individual lives’ (p. xvi) while keeping steadily in view, not only the life and literary achievement of Pope, but also the issue of gender in eighteenth-century society and literature. The value of multiple biography at the present time is far from exhausted — indeed it has but recently been demonstrated, and is likely to have exceptional potential in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the political and artistic public was, arguably, more in touch with itself than in later periods. In Pope’s case, we must look forward to the time when, for example, his friend William Fortescue, a mediator, perhaps, between the poet and Sir Robert Walpole; or the Third Earl of Burlington, or Mr. Hugh Bethel, or the Richardsons, or Anne Arbuthnot, are better known in the context of their age.

The perceptions of multiple biography are, naturally, also to be found in orthodox biography. The reader of Pope’s poems and letters might take for granted that, throughout his life, Pope had been a warm supporter of his brilliant literary friend, John Gay. David Nokes, however, the new biographer of Gay, sees the relationship from a different angle.<sup>19</sup> His essay in the present volume, ‘The Ambitious Pursuit: Pope, Gay and the Life of Writing’ cogently argues that Pope’s attitude to his friend Gay was — what wonder! — a somewhat more mixed matter. That there was rivalry within friendship, and conspiracy within homage, in the eighteenth century, need surprise no one, any more than it would if it were found, for example, within the world of Henry James or of Virginia Woolf. This kind of perception, in fact, is the hallmark of the best biographical practice. The common capaciousness of modern biography, is not, according to the best practice, used to achieve a detailed, circumstantial, identification of the reader, through the biographer, with the subject. Rather, the capaciousness of modern biography should be used to balance viewpoint with viewpoint, to poise the moral scales, and to see the ways in which the subject sometimes swam against the tides of his age — as in this volume I argue Pope did on the issue of slavery — and sometimes saw ways in

<sup>18</sup>In ‘The Jacobite Vision of Mary Caesar’, in Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman, eds. *Women, Writing, History, 1640–1740* (London, 1992), pp. 178–233, Dr. Rumbold has published a further study of the least well-known figure in *Women’s Place in Pope’s World*.

<sup>19</sup>David Nokes, *John Gay: A Profession of Friendship, A Critical Biography* (Oxford, 1995).

which those tides could yet express something of the biographical subject. As Pope put it, in a carefully fashioned autobiographical passage: he would

Sometimes a Patriot, active in debate,  
 Mix with the World, and battle for the State,  
 Sometimes, with Aristippus, or St. Paul,  
 Indulge my Candor, and grow all to all;  
 Back to my native Moderation slide,  
 And win my way by yielding to the tyde.

(*Ep.* I. i. 27–34; T. E. IV. 281)

It is with this issue above all in mind that we should approach Maynard Mack's biography, *Alexander Pope: A Life* (1985) which may in retrospect prove the most important work to have been published about Alexander Pope in the twentieth century.

Mack embarked on his critical biography of Pope towards the end of an academic career devoted to Pope, but also to Shakespeare, and as in Mack's Introduction to the Twickenham Edition of *An Essay on Man* (1950), the reader is made aware of a rich confluence of Renaissance currents, themselves bearing classical knowledge and ideas, which find expression in the attitudes and works of Pope. This has the effect of seeing Pope in a long perspective, a wide cultural space, and successfully avoids some of the more closed-in biographical approaches deriving from specialisation in the eighteenth century alone. The value of Mack's intellectual range is well illustrated by the short but immensely suggestive section in which he discusses Pope and Montaigne. Here a particular biographical fact, that Pope's copy of Cotton's translation of Montaigne has survived with Pope's annotations (c. 1706) not only demonstrates a link between Pope and Renaissance learning, but shows a shared introspective habit of mind, a trend towards self-portrayal, as that learning nourished and directed the intelligence. Connections between Pope's early reading of Montaigne and his later poetry are lightly touched in by Mack: for example, the book-burdened ass on the title-page of the 1729 *Dunciad*, and that moment in the imitation of the *First Satire of the Second Book of Horace* where Tories call Pope Whig, and Whigs a Tory, and where, indeed, Pope pays specific homage to Montaigne (ll. 51–2).<sup>20</sup>

Where a balance of judgement on Pope is concerned, Mack states the issues plainly. 'Without concealing his warts, I have consciously

<sup>20</sup>Maynard Mack, *Alexander Pope: A Life* (London, 1985), pp. 82–3.

avoided magnifying them . . . where there are extenuating circumstances to be considered . . . I have thought it proper to consider them. Pope's worst faults were grievous, but so are the faults of most of us . . . If the results of the effort in my case are dismissed as special pleading, so be it. There are few poets who cannot use an advocate' (p. viii). Warts and faults are to be revealed, but the final emphasis will be that of a counsel for the defence. These explicit statements seem to me to convey the most reasonable approach for a modern biographer. It may be put to the proof, perhaps, with the case of Pope's conspiracy to retrieve his letters from his great, and greatly admired, friend Swift. Here Pope appears at his most disingenuous and manipulative, working upon Swift through his Irish connections, while professing a noble candour to Swift himself. Here indeed may be found an unedifying episode in Pope's life, the alert, duplicitous poet conspiring, apparently, to get the better of the great, decaying, Dean. Mack does not mince words about all this. Pope left, he says, 'no stone unturned, no lie untold' to gain his end. 'Pope's conduct in this episode was discreditable by any standard' (pp. 670-1). There is then no white-washing here. Are there extenuating circumstances to be considered? Not in the way one might expect. That is to say, there is no effort to explain why Pope had become circumspect, cunning, manipulative, mendacious, in this particular affair. Such an explanation could have been mounted, and would, probably, have made some difference to our modern view, though it might also have smacked of that special pleading which Mack admits as a possible charge against himself only in the last resort. What Mack actually does in his narrative of this episode is a master stroke of biographical art. On very good empirical grounds he shows how probable it was that Swift already knew what Pope was trying to do.<sup>21</sup> Within their sincere admiration for one another, he suggests, each knew pretty well what were the aims of the other. When, in response to Pope's quite plausible representations that his letters to Swift could, were they to fall into the wrong hands, be damaging, and Swift first says that all Pope's letters to him are safe at the Deanery, but later that he has discovered a 'Chasm' in the correspondence, 1717-22 (the period leading up to the Atterbury Plot), Swift is almost certainly teasing Pope. When we remember how many friends each writer had who were considered treasonous, at some time or other, by the Hanoverian authorities, a 'Chasm' in the correspon-

<sup>21</sup>*Pope: A Life*, pp. 666-71.

dence could mean one of two things: first, that incriminating letters had somehow been obtained by the government, in which case their writer might fall into trouble not stopping short of execution; or, alternatively, the 'Chasm' could mean that a sequence of dangerous letters had already been recognised and destroyed. Swift is teasing Pope in not making clear which was the case. We may conclude that, if teasing over such an issue seems a little cruel, Pope's manipulative duplicity had earned the punishment. Beyond all this, what Mack's picture presents, is two affectionate, competitive, subtle, worldly, writers, each well-accustomed to the ways in which authors could deal with publishers, sparring with one another in a contest which each thoroughly understood. While Mack is still prepared to condemn Pope's procedure on straightforward moral grounds — and is surely right to do so — still his intelligent and well-supported hypothesis as to exactly what Swift understood in these proceedings, draws the sting out of Pope's conduct. The case made is more than an extenuation.

*Alexander Pope: A Life* appeared between the two works of multiple biography mentioned above. If the first, possibly, contributed anything positive to an *opus* long in the making, it may also have bequeathed temptations and difficulties. Mack speaks of 'fascinating material' 'jettisoned along the way in order to keep some degree of proportion . . . enough material to supply almost any number of other biographical studies' (p. viii). This is credible indeed, and it would be absurd to complain that more has not been said about many of Pope's fascinating contemporaries and friends. Indeed the scholar who manages to connect Mack's main text with its related endnotes (awkwardly separated by a bad convention of publishing) will discover hidden riches: for example, the long, tightrope-walking religious history of Pope's maternal forbears, or Blount of Blagdon's important initiative to reconcile Roman Catholic worship with the taking of an oath to the *de facto* Protestant king (pp. 3–4, 820–21; 407–9, 886).<sup>22</sup> If we turn from figures like these to those who already enjoy a prominent place in eighteenth-century history, such as Joseph Addison or Francis Atterbury, we find that we are offered full and satisfying discussions. If anything might be added, it might be something to explain Addison's surprising sense of his own vulnerability as a great Whig and Hanoverian, and also of the great Tory and Jacobite Atterbury's sense of

<sup>22</sup>These connections exemplify Mack's constant and relevant use of the work of other scholars, even when he might have been forgiven for not having been aware of the more specialised items cited.



crisis and danger after the death of Anne. Why were Addison and his circle so nervous and competitive over the Homer project of the young *parvenu*, Pope? How could that staunch Anglican, Atterbury, turn to the exiled, *de jure*, Roman Catholic, James III, to defend the established church? Each man clearly felt under a severe threat in the second decade of the century, and the explanation clearly lies within the political history of the time. It is here essential not to fix a particular political character to the time. It was not a stable, Whig, era after the death of Anne. Men like Addison and Walpole in the seventeen-teens felt their ambitious Whig project for the estate to be precarious; indeed men such as Atterbury, contemplating the restoration of Charles II, could not really believe that the *de Jure* king would not come into his own again: everything depended on how, and with what undertakings, the return was managed.

These are deep political and historical issues, but there can be little doubt that they bear on Pope's sense of his identity and role within the state. Our historical picture of the first half of the eighteenth century is changing in various ways at the present time. Mack treats the Hanover versus Stuart conflict with much knowledge and tact, but it may be that these and other political issues warrant more saliency in future eighteenth-century biography.

A final word on *Alexander Pope: A Life* should pay tribute to its illustrations. Pope himself, as an amateur painter and a man acutely sensitive to the visual arts, was an intensely visual person, who kept portraits of many of his friends on the walls of his Twickenham villa. The extraordinarily rich visual material (even to the Studio of Kneller portrait of Betterton and the copy of it executed by Pope himself) is a feature of this excellent work. The study of Pope's interest in the visual arts has continued to be a feature in the period under survey. Mack was able to draw on Morris Brownell, *Alexander Pope and the Arts of Georgian England* (Oxford, 1978), a substantial and detailed piece of research. This line of work was continued by Peter Martin, in his *Pursuing Innocent Pleasures: The Gardening World of Alexander Pope* (London, 1984).

## 5

Changes in taste, and what many will feel to be an overproduction of academic books, during the last twenty-five years, have ensured that

few critical works on Pope have become so well-known as, say, R. A. Brower's *Alexander Pope: the Poetry of Allusion* (1959), Aubrey Williams's *Pope's Dunciad: A Study of its Meaning* (1955) or Maynard Mack's *The Garden and the City: Retirement and Politics in the Later Poetry of Pope* (1969). These books have stood the test and will remain academic classics, which is not, of course to say that they may not be questioned and controverted. Later works, however, had they been published earlier in the century, would have been likely to have achieved comparable fame: D. B. Morris, *Alexander Pope: The Genius of Sense* (1984), David Fairer, *Pope's Imagination* (1984), Leopold Damrosch, Jr., *The Imaginative World of Alexander Pope* (1987) and Howard Weinbrot, *Pope and the Traditions of Formal Verse Satire* (1982). Each of these builds visibly upon its predecessors, but has its own revisionist programme, or its own selective emphasis.

A group of books has further explored the relations between Pope's poetry and the literature of Greece and Rome. A major controversy occurred about the resonances of the name 'Augustus' and the eighteenth-century meanings of 'Augustan', in which Howard Weinbrot, in his book *Augustus Caesar in 'Augustan' England* (1978), proposed the salient hypothesis that in the earlier eighteenth century the *princeps* Augustus and the era of Augustan Rome were disliked, or detested — at any rate had strongly negative associations. In fact there has been a Tacitean, anti-Augustan tradition in English writing since the end of the reign of Elizabeth I; this was certainly not forgotten, and may even have become more widely shared, in the age of Pope. On the other hand, Weinbrot pressed his half of the truth relentlessly on, quantifying instances of attitude, rather than responding to the complexities of poems. Pope emerges from his argument with the irony of his *Epistle To Augustus* abolished — since on Weinbrot's view Pope was equally hostile to Augustus and to George Augustus, George II of Great Britain. Again, on this view, Pope's *Imitations of Horace* are satires on Horace, a court poet of Augustus. The relative crudity of this analysis, emphasising the Pope who goes out on the satirical attack as indeed he often does, but neglecting the personal, autobiographical, introspective and humorous ways in which Pope responds to Horace's example, prompted the responding argument of Howard Erskine-Hill in the eighteenth-century chapters of his book, *The Augustan Idea in English Literature* (1983). This controversy was quite productive. Neither side was entirely in the right. The earlier eighteenth century may be seen to have held a debate about the Augustan Age, in so far as negative

and positive views of that classical era were certainly held by educated contemporaries, and sometimes by individual writers (though usually on different occasions and with different rhetorical ends in mind). On the other hand, the view that in the eighteenth century there was a steady move away from a monarchical, pro-Augustan, vision towards a republican, pro-Tacitean, vision, is hard to sustain. In the mind of Pope the positive vision of the Augustan Age was indispensable to his literary practice though it is also clear that he was aware of the Tacitean view.<sup>23</sup> The issue remains one of great interest, and in the discussion of what the eighteenth century meant by the word 'Augustan', word and world, or word and world-view, are in close connection.

Early in the period under survey, H. A. Mason's *To Homer through Pope: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad and Pope's Translation* (1972) explored afresh the critical and cultural issues of translation from an heroic to an unheroic era. Several themes raised here receive fuller consideration in Claude Rawson's learned and sharply critical discussions of eighteenth-century mock-heroic, including his essay in the present volume, 'Heroic Notes: Pope's Epic Idiom Revisited'. In 1983 Steven Shankman published *Pope's 'Iliad': Homer in the Age of Passion*, a precursor to the same author's edition of Pope's *Iliad* version for Penguin Books, thus supplying the late twentieth-century reader with a poem in popular form which was often published in popular form in the eighteenth century. The latest book to discuss Pope and Homer, however, is that of Carolyn D. Williams, *Pope, Homer and Manliness* (1993), which is also perhaps the best of the various gender-focused critical studies of Pope to have appeared in recent years. (I exclude from this comparison Valerie Rumbold's *Women's Place in Pope's World* which I have already mentioned under the category of biography.)

The best recent work, however, to make detailed critical comparison between poetic texts of Pope and those of a major classical predecessor is surely Frank Stack's *Pope and Horace: Studies in Imitation* (1985). Other books should be mentioned in the same connection; Jacob Fuchs, *Reading Pope's Imitations of Horace* (1989)

<sup>23</sup>Joseph Spence, *Anecdotes*, ed. J. M. Osborn, I. 229–30, on Virgil, Augustus and the Roman Republic. The balance of Pope's thought on Augustus may have been misunderstood, at least partly, because the Index to Sherburn's Edition of *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope* has a defective entry on Augustus. See, for example, II. 455 and 503 for unlisted allusions to Augustus; above all, see III. 420, a deliberated, formal, letter to Dr. Arbuthnot, printed after his death, in which Pope deploys a positive image of Augustus (also unlisted).

and J. F. C. Plowden, *Pope on Classic Ground* (1983), the latter raising a quite new literary relationship in his discussion of Manilius's *Astronomica*, Thomas Creech's verse translation of this, and Pope's borrowings from Creech.<sup>24</sup>

More attention, probably, has in recent years been devoted to the exploration of Pope's poems in relation to their own time. Pat Rogers is the first name that should be mentioned here, not only for his first book, *Grub Street: Studies in a Sub-Culture* (1972), but for numerous richly suggestive essays in *Eighteenth-Century Encounters: Studies in Literature and Society in the Age of Walpole* (1985), *Essays on Pope* (1993), and in several other collections. His work is investigative rather than argumentative: not usually pressing a particular academic programme, its disinterestedness is a form of generosity to the interests of others. Another who revealed an unexpected aspect of Pope's world, and crossed swords with Rogers in doing so, is the late E. P. Thompson, in the notable Appendix to his book, *Whigs and Hunters: The Origins of the Black Act* (1975). A well-conceived approach to Pope and his poetic contemporaries is executed by Thomas Woodman's *Politeness and Poetry in the Age of Pope* (London, 1989), which brings together social and literary issues with particular success.

In the work of Claude Rawson, the concept of 'Pope's world' is less social and topographical than in Rogers, but is ever more rangingly and richly literary. Originally known for his studies of Swift and Fielding, Rawson has maintained a valuable scepticism towards the several totalising and predatory concepts under which scholars have attempted to line up eighteenth-century writing and thought. This makes Rawson an especially well-qualified critic to encounter Augustan mock-epic, that most volatile and surprising of literary forms. In 'Heroic Notes: Pope's Epic Idiom revisited' Rawson, while fully responsive to the comic subtleties of Pope's poetic practice, finds occasion to substantiate further a larger finding, already adumbrated in his recent book, *Satire and Sentiment, 1660-1830* (1994): the 'astonishing reticence about bloodshed and war' in the 'major Augustan mock-heroics'. The mock-heroic is thus revealed as a civilian — though by no means civil — comedy of war, its roots reaching back to the Humanist comedy of Erasmus and Rabelais, and the humane ethics of Montaigne.

An aversion to over-orderly schemes, so good a feature of Rawson's work, finds some support from a book on Pope published in 1977:

<sup>24</sup>Plowden, *Pope on Classic Ground*, pp. 130, 166.

Miriam Leranbaum's *Alexander Pope's 'Opus Magnum', 1729-1744*: the narrative of a ghostly, conceptually ordered, Pope that never was, the philosophic structure into which Pope once thought of fitting his works but soon abandoned the attempt. The underlying, pragmatic, practice of the poet, which always worked against philosophical order, is well displayed by Pat Rogers in his very recent essay, 'Sequences of Reading: Pope's *Moral Essays* and *Imitations of Horace*'.<sup>25</sup>

The steady growth of interest in the politics of literature and culture has resulted in a large number of studies of Pope of a more or less political cast. Brean Hammond, in his *Pope and Bolingbroke: A Study of Friendship and Influence* (1984), having found not too much new to re-establish the old idea that Bolingbroke was the dominant intellectual influence upon *An Essay on Man*, might have taken further the question of Bolingbroke's political allegiances and their influence on Pope. Christine Gerrard has written a new study of the Hanoverian opposition during the period of Sir Robert Walpole, and its connections with contemporary writing, including that of Pope.<sup>26</sup> Colin Nicholson, in *Writing the Rise of Finance: Capital Satires of the Early Eighteenth Century* (1984), underlines Pope's significance as a moral commentator on early eighteenth-century capitalism. More ambitious, though less overtly political than these, is Howard Weinbrot's *opus magnum*, *Britain's Issue: The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (1995). It is interesting to look back at Weinbrot's earlier books, all of which involve Pope to a substantial degree, in the light of his latest and longest work. What strikes one, retrospectively, is that most of the earlier books were premised upon a model of progress. For example, the strong emphasis on the Juvenalian Pope, and the relative occlusion of the Horatian or Virgilian Pope, perhaps served the underlying desire to show British culture moving away from monarchical politics to more modern political forms and ideals. To British eyes, at least, it sometimes seems that American works of scholarship on eighteenth-century British literature and society are designed to ratify the foundational culture of their own state. David Spadafora, the recent American historian of the idea of progress in the eighteenth century, shows, not unexpectedly, the progress of the idea of progress in that period, though

<sup>25</sup>See Howard Erskine-Hill and Richard A. McCabe, eds. *Presenting Poetry: Composition, Publication, Reception* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 75-94.

<sup>26</sup>Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Party, and National Myth, 1725-42* (Oxford, 1994).

his case is open to challenge.<sup>27</sup> In the case of *Britannia's Issue* it can be argued that its cultural arguments are in line with older and with contemporary Whig history; and not only with that, but with a book of a more complex and modern kind such as Linda Colley's *Britons* (1992). Each book displays a process by which cultural diversity is formed into a new, larger-scale, nationhood. As with *Britons*, so with *Britannia's Issue*, the reader is confronted with an ambitious argument, ably supported, but not entirely proof against objection. For example, it may be said that neither book really recaptures earlier eighteenth-century views, the problems then recognised, and the solutions then envisaged. *Britannia's Issue* touches on Pope with *Windsor-Forest* and *The Rape of the Lock*. As will be seen from the next piece in the present volume, 'Pope and Slavery', the last thing the present writer wishes to do is to deny the progressive impetus of the end of *Windsor-Forest*, but it needs to be stressed that this visionary progress is strongly religious, indeed apocalyptic, with little in common with ideas of steady, secular, progress towards modern institutions. Pope did not foresee the establishment of the American Republic or (fortunately for him) the tragedy of the French Revolution. Weinbrot's discussion of *The Rape of the Lock* is also of great interest — but it is Warburton's poem rather than Pope's which supports his larger argument.

If the foundational culture of the United States has tended to encourage progressivist accounts of eighteenth-century experience, the different tradition and more uncertain modern standing of the United Kingdom may make it more easy to recapture the lost features of Pope's earlier eighteenth-century world. Not that a Whig history of the period is not still strongly entrenched in modern British research, and probably still the dominant historiographical tradition. Over the last twenty years, however, there has been something of a *démarche* in eighteenth-century historiography, which has resulted in the reclaiming of an older view of the revolution of 1688, of the strongly dynastic and monarchical mode of earlier eighteenth-century politics, and of the rediscovery of Jacobitism as a political and cultural phenomenon.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Especially, perhaps, by historians such as J. C. D. Clark who see eighteenth-century England as an *ancien régime* society. A different view is argued by the present author's study, *Poetry of Opposition and Revolution: Dryden to Wordsworth* (Oxford, 1996).

<sup>28</sup>See the work of Eveline Cruickshanks in Romney Sedgwick, ed. *The Commons, 1715–54*, *The History of Parliament*, 2 vols. (London, 1970), in her book *Political Untouchables: The Tories and the '45* (London, 1979), and the several collections of essays which she has edited:

This has revealed an alternative Britain, focused on the exiled dynasty, which, for many during Pope's lifetime, constituted the probable future. Such an altered view of the period was always bound to affect our picture of Pope more than of his main literary contemporaries, if only because of Pope's Roman Catholic origins, and his many connections with those active at some time or another in the Jacobite movement. Literary scholarship on Pope made some contribution to this new movement in historiography. *The Social Milieu of Alexander Pope* (1975) touched on some of the salient issues, as did three later essays by the same author.<sup>29</sup> On the other side of the Atlantic, John M. Aden's study, *Pope's Once and Future Kings: Satire and Politics in the Early Career* (1978), added independently to a new view of Pope's earlier years. These developments, it may be, gave a sharper Popeian focus to the work of another scholar, whose route to the earlier eighteenth century was originally from the late Frances Yates's studies in Renaissance mysticism. Douglas Brooks-Davies's *Pope's Dunciad and the Queen of Night: A Study in Emotional Jacobitism* (1985), amidst much recondite learning more applicable to the eighteenth century than one might at first suppose, suggests the helpful distinction between hard political commitment to the Jacobite cause, and a structure of feeling partly shaped by Jacobite culture. Two further books, neither devoted wholly to Pope, have recently followed up the new Jacobite lines of exploration. They are: Murray G. H. Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (1994) and Howard Erskine-Hill, *Poetry of Opposition and Revolution: Dryden to Wordsworth* (1996).

The rediscovery of Jacobitism has made a large difference to the modern study of Pope, and indeed to several of his literary contemporaries.

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*Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1609–1759* (Edinburgh, 1982), *By Force or By Default? The Revolution of 1688–1689* (Edinburgh, 1989); and, edited with Jeremy Black, *The Jacobite Challenge* (Edinburgh, 1988). Several historians have followed or independently chosen her directions. Among those whose work is most relevant to Pope are Daniel Szechi, *Jacobitism and Tory Politics, 1710–14* (Edinburgh, 1984), J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien régime* (Cambridge, 1985) and Paul Kléber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688–1788* (Cambridge, 1989).

<sup>29</sup> Alexander Pope: The Political Poet in His 'Time', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 15; 2 (Winter 1981–82), pp. 123–48; 'Literature and the Jacobite Cause: Was There a Rhetoric of Jacobitism?' in Eveline Cruickshanks, ed. *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689–1759* (1982), pp. 49–69; and 'Pope and Civil Conflict', in Eiichi Hara, Hiroshi Ozawa, and Peter Robinson, eds. *Enlightened Groves: Essays in Honour of Professor Zenzo Suzuki* (Shohakusa, Tokyo, 1996), pp. 90–114.

aries. The seam is very far from being exhausted and many young scholars, on both sides of the Atlantic, are currently working on aspects of Jacobitism relevant to the writers of Pope's time. The new development does, however, remain controversial; many historians and literary scholars remain unconvinced by its findings, while in some quarters readers have been too ready to jump to the simple conclusion that Pope 'was a Jacobite'. On that issue it may be said that the jury is still out. That as a result of the new Jacobite scholarship more is now known about Pope and the world in which he moved is a claim that may safely be made.

This is the point to mention the many interesting collections of essays on Pope, or on Pope among others, by several hands, which have been published towards the end of the period under survey. These collections well display the directions of current interests, and thus afford a perspective in which to see salient trends. These are: Maynard Mack and James A. Winn, eds. *Recent Essays on Pope* (1980); Claude Rawson, ed. *English Satire and the Satiric Tradition* (1984); Leopold Damrosch, ed. *New Eighteenth-Century Essays* (1988). The anniversary year of 1988 saw the inception of three new collections on Pope: Colin Nicholson, ed. *Alexander Pope: Essays for the Tercentenary* (1988); G. S. Rousseau and Pat Rogers, eds. *The Enduring Legacy: Alexander Pope Tercentenary Essays* (1988); and David Fairer, ed. *Pope: New Contexts* (1990). The editor of the last of these consciously hunted new approaches, so that even the original offerings of more traditional young scholars, at the original Binfield symposium on which the book was based, were firmly excluded. Taken together, the three tercentenary volumes achieved an excellent representation of recent work on Pope. Perhaps Colin Nicholson found the best balance. In 1994 the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Pope's death was marked by a Warton Lecture and a Pope Symposium in the British Academy. The present volume is the long-deferred result of that symposium. Here, too, a balance has been sought between new and established scholars.<sup>30</sup>

In the critical section of this survey, we have considered Pope in relation to his past, Pope in relation to his own world, and there remains briefly to mention Pope and his own future. Early in our period John Barnard published his invaluable edition of *Pope: The Critical Heritage* (1973). Near the end was published *Pope's Literary*

<sup>30</sup>A recent collection on one of Pope's most distinguished friends is Toby Barnard and Jane Clark, eds. *Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art and Life* (London, 1995).



*Legacy: The Book-Trade Correspondence of William Warburton and John Knapton, with other letters and documents, 1744–1780*, ed. Donald W. Nichol (1992). This significant and substantial work contributes much to that picture of Pope and publishing history which David Foxon and James McLaverty have so interestingly drawn, and which contributes so much to the critical understanding of Pope's art. Pope's critical influence on later eighteenth-century poetry — aside from the old tale of the Romantic reaction — is, surprisingly, a subject little explored. Here the final contribution of the present volume, Thomas Keymer's brilliant essay, 'Reception, and *The Rape of the Lock*, and Richardson', in its discovery of an eighteenth-century poem of exceptional interest, and in its discussion of the fascinating literary relationship between Pope the poet and Richardson the novelist, brings the present volume to a distinguished conclusion.

## 6

Almost at the beginning of the twentieth-century period of interest in Alexander Pope, Geoffrey Tillotson published his admirable monograph, *On the Poetry of Pope* (1938). It offered nearly all that the first-come to Pope required: a critical exposition of the chief formal features of his art, with one notable exception, there being a rather spare discussion only of Pope's use of rhyme. Some critics, American and British, followed up this particular topic, but Tillotson, with his second critical book, *Pope and Human Nature* (1958) executed a decisive turn, from the craft and art of Pope strictly considered, to the views and ideas of Pope, the content of his writing. The great subsequent growth of interest in Pope in his context, Pope and his world, might be traced to that decision of Tillotson, though doubtless there were other factors which affected the direction of studies on Pope at that time. The time does now seem to have come to attempt to redress the recent imbalance: not to reject the study of Pope in his world, far from it, but to attempt once more that most difficult thing of all in literary scholarship and criticism: to bring contextual knowledge to bear sharply upon verbal artistry: without relegating Pope's world to turn again to his word and art. It was with this in mind that, looking for a subject on Pope for the 1994 Warton Lecture on Poetry, I chose perhaps the greatest human issue of Pope's world, slavery, and sought to trace the word in his works from its literal meaning as Pope went out on a

limb to challenge contemporary practice, through various metaphorical usages, until it touched the poet's own career in his undergoing of the bondage and art of rhyme.