



# NINETEENTH-CENTURY GENDER STUDIES

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## Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan) and Walter Scott's Worn-Out Inexpressibles

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<1> “I have amused myself occasionally very pleasantly during the last few days,” wrote Walter Scott in his *Journal* for March 14, 1826, “by reading over Lady Morgan’s novel of *O’Donnel* which has some striking and beautiful passages of situation and description and in the comic part is very rich and entertaining.”<sup>(1)</sup> He was not so obliging about the Irish author, Sydney Owenson, however, when he named one of the pet donkeys belonging to his daughter, Sophia, “Lady Morgan,”<sup>(2)</sup> or when he credited Maria Edgeworth over Owenson in his well-known 1829 postscript to *Waverley* (1814). Paying tribute to Edgeworth, Scott remarked how her “Irish characters have gone so far to make the English familiar with the character of their gay and kind-hearted neighbours of Ireland, that she may truly said to have done more towards completing the Union, than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up.” Literary scholars such as Robert Colby, Ina Ferris, Peter Garside, and Robert Tracy have done much to uncover Scott’s debt to contemporary women’s writing, in particular his unacknowledged debt to Owenson in her establishing the National Tale.<sup>(3)</sup> Yet, as Katie Trumpener has pointed out, “the psychodynamics of Scott’s relationship to his peers needs sustained rethinking.”<sup>(4)</sup>

<2> As a contribution to this rethinking, I would like to discuss some of the implications of Owenson’s commonplace books and journals as they pertain to what she said and thought about her relationship to Sir Walter Scott. Owenson’s papers, which are housed in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, comprise journals she began in 1826. They are particularly interesting, since they look very much like a scrapbook. In between passages of her notoriously appalling handwriting (which the famous society portraitist, Sir Thomas Lawrence, described as “a happy insolence of scrawl I never yet saw equaled”),<sup>(5)</sup> Owenson pinned various tidbits that she found noteworthy. Included in this pastiche are newspaper cuttings devoted to Walter Scott, who is the only author Owenson singles out for this kind of treatment. A closer scrutiny of these newspaper clippings about her Scottish rival reveals the complex relationship between the two authors, which this essay seeks to (at least partially) unravel.

<3> Several of the newspaper cuttings Owenson kept detail and parody Scott’s literary celebrity. One report from *The Morning Chronicle* for example, recounts how an ardent admirer who wanted to see the “Lion of the North” went uninvited to Scott’s house, where Scott was hospitable, probably, as the report surmises, because the individual was pretending to be a simpleton. The *Chronicle* continues to describe the lengths to which some Scott fans will go: “We understand that one of these lion-worshippers surreptitiously, and with ‘malice prepense,’ did lately cut off a portion of his coat-tail, to preserve as a memento of so extraordinary a *rara avis* as a rich poet; and that another purchased of an old clothes-man, at a great price, a pair of his worn-out inexpressibles, to be, doubtless, treasured up like the angel-stitched breeches of Saint Huntington.”<sup>(6)</sup> Another cutting, from an 1826 edition of the *Edinburgh Observer*, describes the sensation of Walter Scott’s visit to Galignani’s Reading Room in Paris. People seem to be following him around quite enraptured—holding on to his every word—all gaga and in fan-club states of stupefaction. The *Observer* comically reports how Scott pointed out common sights such as the River Seine and a bust of Moliere to his daughter Anne, and as he did this everyone looked as impressed as if Scott himself had just discovered them. The report concludes with a choice detail to warm the heart of any celebrity stalker: “This morning Sir Walter Scott was observed shaving at the bedroom window of his hotel.”<sup>(7)</sup>

<4> Why did Owenson covet these cuttings about Scott? Most obviously, they are amusing, and would have provided her with material to chuckle about or gloat over. More significantly however, is the way in which the cuttings evince that by the mid 1820s, Owenson’s take on Scott was, to borrow a word from the breeches cutting I cited earlier, inexpressible—inexpressible except through an almost post-modern collage that she keeps in her journal-cum-scrapbook, where Scott is super-imposed on other material. It is a visualized version of their relationship,

distinctive because Owenson offers no commentary on Scott, even though she was noted for her feats of verbal excess, and she has a habit of making notes in the margins of many newspaper clippings she has kept. It is as if the materiality of these pieces of newspaper takes up space where her life should be, an intrusive presence, yet the only opportunity whereby Owenson can literally pin Scott down. Owenson's pastiche is dated 1826, the same date as Scott's complimentary journal entry about her, with which I opened this essay. Yet whereas Scott's entry is traditional, composed and controlled, Owenson seems to be trying to escape her own language in her journal, preferring to extrapolate meaning from mediated sources. Scott—at least at this stage in Owenson's career—has, it seems, become ineffable.

<5> Although the clippings about Scott do not directly intersect with Owenson's hand-written journal entries that surround them, there are other newspaper cuttings interleaved in directly preceding and subsequent pages that perhaps help situate Owenson's attitude. A report from Dublin's *Morning Chronicle* concerns Lord Archibald Hamilton (1740-1819), Member of Parliament for Lanarkshire, who is described as a "true patriot," genuinely bound up in Scottish independence. Owenson adds a note next to the cutting: "I met him frequently at the Duchess of —." She has also inserted a report of a public dinner at which the guest speaker was Henry Villiers Stuart (1803-74), who was elected to Parliament in 1826 in the cause of Catholic Emancipation. The reported speech recounts Villiers-Stuart's argument that Scotland was allowed an established Presbyterian church, so why force the Irish to be beholden to a church not of the majority. Owenson also has a newspaper cutting advertising the forthcoming publication of her 1827 novel, *The O'Briens and the O'Flahertys*. The piece describes how "material has been gathered with great care and industry, from sources not accessible to ordinary writers," and that Morgan's work "will be in the very first rank of the products of a season in which the creative powers of a Scott...are in the fullest activity."<sup>(8)</sup>

<6> These cuttings provide evidence of maneuverings Owenson deploys to put Scott in some kind of perspective—to frame a figure that seems to overwhelm her. Regarding the piece about Lord Archibald Hamilton, Owenson iterates that she has mixed with Scottish aristocracy, with someone who exceeds Walter Scott in both rank and national importance—which serves as a rejoinder to the fact that insultingly, Walter Scott (and his Scottish set) do not appear particularly interested in her. The Villiers-Stuart report notes a political alignment between Scotland and Ireland, an alignment that plays out interestingly in Owenson and Scott's work, since both authors became unerringly identified with national issues. Finally, with the advertisement for *The O'Briens and the O'Flahertys*, Owenson explicitly puts herself in the same rank as Scott, although—for once—she lets someone else do the talking.

<7> That Scott had little interest in meeting Owenson is evinced in his visit to Ireland in July and August of 1824, during which he overlooked her entirely, even though when he landed in Dublin, Scott was not far from Morgan's home in Kildare Street, where she regularly held salons of note. "There she was not only the undisputed queen of the literary set," as Morgan's biographer, Mary Campbell, has written, "but also an important political hostess."<sup>(9)</sup> Scott was more interested in kissing the Blarney Stone, and visiting Glendalough, Killarney, and meeting *his* undisputed queen, Maria Edgeworth, at Edgeworthstown. Edgeworth paid a reciprocal visit to Scott, meeting him in Edinburgh and at Abbotsford in August 1823, and they corresponded until 1830. John Gibson Lockhart gave the following description of Edgeworth's visit to Abbotsford: "The next month—August 1823—was one of the happiest in Scott's life. Never did I see a brighter day at Abbotsford than that on which Miss Edgeworth first arrived there—never can I forget her look and accent when she was received by him at his archway, and exclaimed, 'Everything about you is exactly what one ought to have wit enough to dream.'"<sup>(10)</sup>

<8> Peter Garside has pointed out various reasons why Scott may have been anxious to avoid Owenson: "To orthodox Tories, where Edgeworth was sound, Owenson was anathema: a Whig zealot who trod a dangerous line on Catholic emancipation, and a female exhibitionist to boot."<sup>(11)</sup> Owenson's exhibitionism was probably made more vivid by Scott's correspondence with Lady Abercorn, a patron common to both Scott and Owenson—for Lady Abercorn tended to portray Owenson as a thorough egotist. "She is too vain," Lady Abercorn wrote of Owenson in one letter to Scott for example, "or she would be a great acquisition, for she can be very entertaining in one way, when she 'takes off' the Irish."<sup>(12)</sup> It was Lady Abercorn who adopted Owenson as a sort of artist in residence-cum-aristocrat's pet, so that she could be on hand to be charmingly "Irish" to order. Accordingly, Owenson lingered in luxurious thrall at Lady Abercorn's splendid homes, doing party turns as she appeared as Glorvina, the heroine from her enormously successful 1806 novel *The Wild Irish Girl*. As she colluded in the spin-off effect of

her writing, Owenson donned the mantles and bodkins that her literary heroine had worn, and which had become fashionable accessories for upper-class women wanting to “go native” in the Celtic vein. Perhaps it was all too much for the self-deprecating persona of Walter Scott.

<9> One can compare Scott’s attitude to that he exhibited towards Morgan’s friend and countryman, Thomas Moore. Scott begins his *Journal* with reminiscences of his trip to Ireland and of Moore, whom he writes of most affectionately; in fact, he notes that he would be delighted if Moore had a cottage within two miles of him at Abbotsford. This is despite their differences, “Moore having lived so much in the gay world,” as Scott observes, “I in the country and with people of business and sometimes with politicians, Moore a scholar—I none—He a musician and artist—I without knowledge of a note—He a democrat—I an aristocrat—with many other points of difference besides his being an Irishman, I a Scotchman, and both tolerably national.” The differences are not unlike the differences between Owenson and Scott, but Scott remarks that what really pulls him and Moore together is their downplaying of their “dignity as Lions.” Their good humored self-deprecation, he claims, disapproves of “the imaginary consequence of literary people who walk with their noses in the air and remind me always of the fellow whom Johnson met in an ale-house and who called himself ‘the great Twalmly, inventor of the flood-gate iron for smoothing linen.’”<sup>(13)</sup>

<10> Owenson was hardly one of those literary types with their noses in the air Scott describes. However, Scott’s quip about linen is interesting, for it was probably Owenson’s penchant for costume and provocative self-fashioning at which Scott balked. Yet this was the man who kitted out George IV in tartan for his visit to Edinburgh in 1822, not above orchestrating the elaborate stage-production that accompanied it. Owenson may well have promoted a kind of Celtic chic, as Anglo-Irish ladies dressed up in Glorvina bodkins and mantles as per her literary heroine in *The Wild Irish Girl*. But Scott also had an eye for the way fashion could serve as a form of propaganda. Ironically, even though Morgan was a more flamboyant style-setter, in some ways Scott’s manipulation of the tartan look in what Hugh Trevor-Roper has called the “invention of tradition,”<sup>(14)</sup> has proved more durable in the ever-changing arena of fashion. The eponymous figure of the Victorian period was well-known for her love of all things tartan, and in our own era, Prince Charles invariably sports a kilt at Balmorral (making his sons pose for photographs with him wearing kilts too). Tartan, arguably, has a resonance in the fashion world more than any Irish look for which Owenson may have been responsible. Vivienne Westwood, the ground-breaking designer, for example, famously used tartan in the punk fashions that sprung up in the 1970s, and she continued to use the fabric in her less rebellious collections in the 1990s. In fact, for her Autumn/Winter collection for 1993-94, she showed several mini-kilt tartan ensembles, and the Locharron Textile Mill in Scotland created a special tartan for Westwood called the “McAndreas” after Westwood’s second husband and co-designer, the decidedly un-Scottish sounding Andreas Kronthaler. Tartan was further embraced by the Establishment when Westwood was awarded an OBE in 1992, which was followed in 1998 by her being presented with the Queen’s Export Award for her promotion and use of British wools, tweeds, linens, and tartan.<sup>(15)</sup> In September 2006, *Vogue*, ran an advertisement for “Nine West,” the clothing line for which Westwood now designs. Tartan features prominently in the model’s mini-skirt and trendy knee-high boots. By contrast, in contemporary fashion we look in vain for vestiges of Glorvina.

<11> Walter Scott was part of the Scottish vanguard of literary heavy hitters, or “northern wolves” as Byron preferred to call them,<sup>(16)</sup> who dominated the periodical press of the early nineteenth century and became the arbiters of a constructed “literary authority” Ina Ferris has analyzed so incisively.<sup>(17)</sup> Scott fared well in this new order, which sanctioned *Waverley*, and also Maria Edgeworth’s Irish novels, but sought to suppress Owenson as an unfortunate aberration. She did not project the earnest moral education advocated by Maria Edgeworth, and would never have fit the caricature of his wife Byron portrayed in *Don Juan* (1818) for example, where Donna Inez has “Miss Edgeworth’s novels stepping from their covers” (I. XV). Neither was Owenson a devotee of Adam Smith, and so one does not find a responsible, “better” Scot in her novels, like the worthy land agent, McCleod, in *Ennui* (1809). Another problem Scotch reviewers had with Owenson, the daughter of the talented but financially-challenged actor, Robert Owenson, was the class threat she posed to the genteel persona of the man of letters that Francis Jeffrey, for example, took pains to cultivate. In this vein, the most notorious reviewer of Owenson, the *Quarterly Review*’s John Wilson Croker, dwelt on her status as a mere bookseller’s drudge, whose work “smells vilely of the shop.”<sup>(18)</sup> Owenson took revenge on the Irish Croker with a marvelous parody of him in the character of Conway Crawley, a terrible toady in her 1818 national tale, *Florence Macarthy*, and she was also gratified by the way Croker’s criticism of her work backfired, since he helped to sell Owenson’s books by increasing her notoriety. Her friends

work backfired, since he helped to sell Owenson's books by increasing her notoriety. Her friends were keen to remind her of this: after Croker had vented his spleen on her 1817 travelogue, *France*, Baron Denon wrote in a letter to Owenson, "You are abused, but purchased, in English."<sup>(19)</sup>

<12> Owenson seemed able to hit the mark with Croker, but her attack on Scott and Scottish reviewers was not as successful. Her 1822 satirical poem titled *The Mohawks*, which she co-authored with her husband, set out to critique the Scotch reviewers who pilloried her in what she describes as "bagpipe drone" (CXX). As she explained in her prefatory remarks to her readers, "I could not forbear communicating to you some imperfect information of a set of men (if you will allow them a place in that species of being), who have lately erected themselves into a fraternity." Poetry was not Owenson's forte, however, and *The Mohawks* did not enjoy the brilliant success of her novels and travelogues. Moreover, Byron had already done what she was basically trying to do quite splendidly in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809). Owenson is clearly imitating Byron in *The Mohawks*, though she adds the important component of gender to her work, and, perceiving the elaborate charade behind the Scotch reviewers image-setting, Owenson concludes, "The Quarterly can never reach gentility" (CLIII). Like *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, *The Mohawks* is in rhyming couplets, with reverential references to Pope. Owenson's parodic lines about Robert Southey, "Then, twice as lengthy, almost twice as dull, / If that were possible, his laureate strains / S—they had pour'd" (XLI), echo Byron's "Oh Southey, Southey! Cease thy varied song! / a bard may chant too often and too long" (119-20). Her comments on Scott, "Those tomes, whose sale we're told is so immense, / Indited by the fluent muse of Waverley, / Where pure description holds the place of sense, / And ghosts and warlocks visit us so neighbourly" (XLII) reflect Byron's disparaging comments about Scott, especially with regard to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and *Marmion* (1808). Both poems also single out Francis Gifford for criticism: Byron writes of "Gifford's heavy hand" (725), and Owenson calls him "detraction's fav'rite child," adding "the creature / Shall still hiss on;--it is the reptile's nature" (CLIII). Yet Scott corresponded with Byron after *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, anxious to maintain cordial relations. No such invitation was extended to Owenson, exacerbating the ineffectuality of *The Mohawks* and Scott's pointed lack of deference.

<13> Much of what Owenson could say about Scott was rendered inexpressible by a mix of outrage and admiration that stymied a generally irrepressible personality. This did not last however. In the 1846 edition of *The Wild Irish Girl*, Owenson's preface points out her innovation in establishing the National Tale, as she states that her novel "took the initiative in an experiment...founded on national grievances." She distinguished *The Wild Irish Girl* from Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* (1800), on the basis that it "did not come under the same category."<sup>(20)</sup> By 1846, Owenson may have been able to judge her contribution to the development of the nineteenth-century novel with a sharper focus than in the mid 1820s. Yet the force of her comment goes to indicate that by the mid 1820s she must have been aware of some lack of acknowledgment from Scott—not only because their work was similar in local matters—Flora from *Waverley* resembling Glorvina from *The Wild Irish Girl* for example—but also in the more far-reaching scope of how Scott, following Owenson, wrote about marginalized groups in order to bring them more to the center of literary, political, and cultural consciousness. Scott's acknowledgment that John Wilson Croker's *Stories from the History of England* (1817) inspired his *Tales of a Grandfather* (1828) presents quite a contrast to the steady indifference he displays towards Owenson.<sup>(21)</sup> "My Dear Croker," wrote Scott in a note in a copy of the first Series of the *Tales of a Grandfather*, "I have been stealing from you, and as it seems the fashion to compound felony, I send you a sample of the *swag*, by way of stopping your mouth...Always yours, W.Scott."<sup>(22)</sup>

<14> Owenson's 1846 preface to *The Wild Irish Girl* shows her back to form, claiming her rightful ground as innovator, though she does not specifically refer to Scott. By the late 1820s, Owenson had already ceased her curious silence of the mid 1820s. The 1829 entry in her *Memoirs* (1862) reads, "Sir Walter Scott's sermons. What twaddle! What logic! What common places given in the commonest pitiful platitudes! Oh genius! These are the things that bring you into disrespect."<sup>(23)</sup> Perhaps the passage of time had eased the vulnerability she felt, and she was no doubt fuelled by her constitutional bombast and the encouragement of her friends. A letter from Lady Charleville dated December 30, 1827 for example, stated that Owenson's character of Shane in *The O'Briens and the O'Flahertys*, "beats Eddie Ochiltree off the ground."<sup>(24)</sup> In her *Memoirs* for March 1829 Owenson also directly cited Scott as part of the Edinburgh old boys network that collaborated against her: "so the *Quarterly* has let loose its dogs of war again on me, under the new groom of the kennel, Mr. Lockhart, of John Scott celebrity and Walter Scott's

auspices. She adds a telling comment, seeking some form of parity with Scott's pulling power: "I have before me," she writes, "a letter from Mr. Constable offering me the same terms as Sir Walter Scott."<sup>(25)</sup> Yet there was also this tug of war between her derision for Scott and her yearning to be recognized and own, like the man who filched his inexpressibles, a piece of him. In November 1831, Owenson is still collecting mementoes of Scott, as she records a friend getting her a present of a "fine bronze medal of Walter Scott, brought me from Edinburgh."<sup>(26)</sup> And she is still keeping newspaper clippings about him. Her journals for September 1832 contain a newspaper account of Walter Scott's will—an extract from *Chambers Historical Newspaper* reprinted in *The Morning Chronicle*.<sup>(27)</sup> She has also retained a newspaper report from 1831, a narrative of Scott, the "Great Unknown," and the "World's Grand Favourite," described as getting a free passage on HMS Barham, a fifty gun frigate bound for Malta. Owenson has written next to this clipping, "Sir Walter's last puff at parting—all these puffs are by Lockhart and others--? I am told that the greater hand are dictated by himself." Owenson has also retrieved a cutting from the *Morning Chronicle* in her journal for 1830, an extract from the *Dublin Times* headed "Scott's Last Novel." The piece is a bad review of *Count Robert of Paris* (1831): "the style is negligent, pointless, and unpolished—the narrative dull, heavy, uninteresting."<sup>(28)</sup> Given the way that Scott was stoically suffering during this period, Owenson looks rather mean-minded here, but the extent of his illness may not have been known to her. Owenson had many faults, but cruelty was not one of them. In fact, her desire to be admired by Scott is quite poignantly evident in the exaggerated meaning she attaches to a meeting with Scott's son-in-law and daughter, which she records in her *Memoirs* for May 27, 1836: "I have made acquaintance with the Lockharts, the editor of the *Quarterly*, and she Sir Walter Scott's daughter; we were mutually charmed with each other, and have sworn an eternal friendship."<sup>(29)</sup> Owenson wants to be near Scott, even if it is only via a fantasy that the Lockharts are her best friends.

<15> In his excellent chapter on Edinburgh in a recent collection of essays edited by James Chandler and Kevin Gilmartin, Ian Duncan evokes the mystique of Edinburgh as the "capital of the nineteenth century."<sup>(30)</sup> Though Dublin hardly suffered a dearth of literary talent, there was something about Edinburgh, and Scott in particular, the "Wizard of the North," that seemed, at times, to overwhelm Owenson. On the wizard note, I would like to conclude with the mention of a recent article from *The Washington Post* titled "JK Rowling Conjures a Huge Crowd," which reported on a public reading the author gave in New York. Given the furor surrounding Rowling's appearance, Stephen King joked at a press conference that he and John Irving, the other two authors who were reading, were "just an opening act."<sup>(31)</sup> The Scottish connection with Rowling is that although she was born in England, after a divorce she moved with her daughter to Edinburgh, where she struggled for a while as a single parent, teaching and trying to write a book about a wizard. She then applied for, and was awarded, a grant from the Scottish Arts Council to complete her first book, a little number titled *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Edinburgh was crucial to the making of the now billionaire author, who is undoubtedly the world's current superstar on the literary circuit. Owenson would have appreciated the irony of one wizard now overshadowing another through the agency of a woman.

#### Endnotes

(1)Walter Scott, *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott* (1890), ed. W.E.K Anderson (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1998), 132. Sydney Owenson was already a famous author before she became Lady Morgan in 1812 upon her marriage to Sir Thomas Charles Morgan, a physician. As is customary with current scholarship, I will refer to the surname of "Owenson" throughout, apart from when other sources use the name "Morgan."<sup>(^)</sup>

(2)See Nicola Watson, *Revolution and the Form of the British Novel, 1790-1825: Intercepted Letters, Interrupted Seductions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 126.<sup>(^)</sup>

(3)See Richard A. Colby, *Fiction with a Purpose: Major and Minor Nineteenth-Century Novels* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 28-65, Ina Ferris, *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Scott, Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 19-34, Peter Garside, "Popular Fiction and the National Tale: The Hidden Origins of Scott's *Waverley*," *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 46.1 (1991), 30-53, and Robert Tracy, "Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan: Legality versus Legitimacy," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 40 (1985), 9.<sup>(^)</sup>

- (4)Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 323.(△)
- (5)Letter Sir Thomas Lawrence to Lady Morgan (then Sydney Owenson) dated December 21, 1810. In *Lady Morgan's Memoirs: Autobiography, Diaries, Correspondence*. 2 vols. Eds. William Hepworth Dixon and Geraldine Jewsbury (London: 1862), I: 428.(△)
- (6)National Library of Ireland, MS 878.(△)
- (7)National Library of Ireland, MS 878.(△)
- (8)Ibid.(△)
- (9)Mary Campbell, *Lady Morgan: The Life and Times of Sydney Owenson* (London: Pandora, 1988), 192.(△)
- (10)John Gibson Lockhart, *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (London: 1896), 120.(△)
- (11)Peter Garside, "Popular Fiction and the National Tale: The Hidden Origins of Scott's *Waverley*," *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 46.1 (1991), 50.(△)
- (12)Letter Lady Abercorn to Walter Scott, quoted in Lionel Stevenson, *The Wild Irish Girl: The Life of Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1969), 129.(△)
- (13)Scott, *Journal*, 9.(△)
- (14)Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 15-41. John Gibson Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1847) comically records the effect tartan had on some of Scott's fans. Recounting how he and Scott returned to Abbotsford one day, Lockhart describes Mrs. Scott quite put out about two American tourists looking for her husband. "They were rich specimens," writes Lockhart, "tall, lanky young men, both of them rigged out in new jackets and trousers of the Macgregor tartan." Mrs. Scott had presumed the tartan-clad men bore letters of introduction to her husband, and she had begun showing them around. She soon realized that they were nothing but opportunistic lion-hunters however, and they were asked to leave. Mrs. Scott was particularly upset, Lockhart writes, "that they had gone so far as to pull out their note-book, and beg an exact account, not only of [her husband's] age—but of her own" (330).(△)
- (15)See Claire Wilcox, curator of the exhibition "Vivienne Westwood: 34 Years in Fashion," Victoria & Albert Museum, London 1 April-13 July 2004. See also Wilcox's biography, *Vivienne Westwood* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004).(△)
- (16)Lord George Gordon Byron, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), (London: James Cawthorn, 1810), 423.(△)
- (17)Ina Ferris, *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 19-34. (△)
- (18)John Wilson Croker, Review of *France* (1817), *Quarterly Review*, April-July, 1817.(△)
- (19)Letter Baron Denon to Lady Morgan dated 6 June 1818, in Lady Morgan, *Passages from my Autobiography* (London: Richard Bentley, 1859), 23.(△)
- (20)Sydney Owenson, Prefatory Address to the 1846 edition of *The Wild Irish Girl*, in Sydney Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale*, ed., Claire Connolly and Stephen Copley London: Pickering & Chatto, 2000), 255.(△)
- (21)Scott, *Journal*, 350.(△)
- (22)Quoted in John Gibson Lockhart, *Life of Walter Scott* (1848; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Company, 1871), 510.(△)
- (23)Lady Morgan, *Lady Morgan's Memoirs: Autobiography, Diaries, Correspondence*. 2 vols. Eds. W. Hepworth Dixon and Geraldine Jewsbury (London: 1862), 2: 260. (△)

(24)*Memoirs*, 2.250.(△)

(25)*Memoirs*, 2.281.(△)

(26)*Memoirs*, 2.332.(△)

(27)National Library of Ireland, MS 880.(△)

(28)National Library of Ireland, MS 880(△)

(29)*Memoirs*, 2.417.(△)

(30) Ian Duncan, "Edinburgh, capital of the nineteenth century," in *Romantic Metropolis: The Urban Scene of British Culture, 1780-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 45-64.(△)

(31)David Segal, "JK Rowling Conjures A Huge Crowd," *Washington Post*, August 3, 2002. C, 3.  
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Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan has been added to your Cart. Add to Cart. Buy Now. Customer Reviews: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 rating. Brief content visible, double tap to read full content. Full content visible, double tap to read brief content. Lady Morgan (Sydney Owenson before her 1812 marriage to Sir Charles Morgan) contributed substantially to the development of Anglophone literature in the early nineteenth century, and scholars of Romanticism are most likely to associate her novels with the advent of the national tale. Morgan actively fostered the national tale as a genre, explicitly titling four of her five Irish novels as national tales: *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale* (1806), *O'Donnel: A National Tale* (1814), *Florence Macarthy: An Irish Tale* (1818), and *The Brians and the Flahertys: A National Tale* (1827).<sup>1</sup> The national tale was. This volume of the *Irish Critical Receptions Series* traces the development of the literary reputation of Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan) and the contemporary reception history of her writings. One of the most widely reviewed and commercially successful authors of her time, until recently Owenson's literary reputation was largely eclipsed by her contemporaries Maria Edgeworth and Walter Scott. It has only been in the later decades of the twentieth century that scholars have begun to re-examine Owenson as a pivotal figure in post-Union Irish literature and culture. In this work, Owenson is situated firmly in the context of her role in the development of the Irish 'national tale' and in terms of her often overlooked contribution to the genre of the Romantic-era novel. [nœ Sydney Owenson; later Lady Morgan; var. b.1783]; dg. of Robert Owenson, actor-manager and Jane [nœ Hill], and Englishwoman and a Wesleyan; b. at sea, by her own account, and prob. on Christmas Day (œWhat has a woman to do with dates?œ: *Memoirs*); family settled at Drumcondra; accompanied widowed father on theatrical tours of Ireland including theatrical venture in Kilkenny; began singing, dancing and harp-playing; ed. Sydney joins the household of Lord Lieutenant Marquis of Abercorn [John James Hamilton]; travels with Lord and Lady [Jane-Anne] Abercorn to Baron's Court (N. Ireland) and afterwards to Stanmore Priory, the Abercorns' home nr.