"For the sake of illustrating principles": Wordsworth, the Convention of Cintra, and Satirical Prints

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Abstract

Wordsworth's pamphlet Concerning the Relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other, and to the common enemy; at this crisis, and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra *(1809) is, arguably, one of Romanticism's most nuanced examples of political prose. Written to capture the political excitement occasioned by a contentious armistice and the complex ideological issues raised by Britain's military involvement in the Iberian Peninsula, it was composed over seven, long, exhausting months. During this time, Wordsworth worked assiduously to keep abreast of the latest developments both at home and abroad. But while his pamphlet's poetic and philosophical inflections have received excellent treatment, its more journalistic qualities have tended to be overlooked. This article argues that satirical print culture – at once popular, topical and ideologically nuanced – can significantly supplement our understanding of the newsworthiness associated with some of* Cintra*'s most salient themes. Satirical prints – hitherto an untapped resource for* Cintra *scholars – constituted important vehicles for political debate during the Peninsular War: they are here adduced in order to open up a new interpretative framework for Wordsworth's pamphlet and its involved publication history.*

Wordsworth's pamphlet *Concerning the Relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other, and to the common enemy; at this crisis, and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra* (1809) is a text rich in literary allusion and effect.[1] Distinguished by its long, complex sentences, manifold Miltonic inversions and sustained poetic density, *Cintra*, Richard Gravil suggests, is "perhaps best read less as journalism than as a prose poem in celebration of human nature and human possibility" (Gravil 27). Wordsworth's pamphlet was, indeed, largely lost upon its contemporary audience.[2] Delays in editing and printing meant that by the time of its

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first appearance, on 27 May 1809, the Convention of Cintra was old, already exhausted news; to the effect that, in 1811, with 178 of its 500 copies still unsold (Gill 277), the work which for so long had "occupie[d] all [Wordsworth's] thoughts" (*Letters* 283) was relegated to wastepaper.[3] This article argues that *Cintra*'s involved composition history should not, however, detract from the fact that in November 1808 Wordsworth eagerly embarked upon a work he expressly envisaged for publication in *The Courier* – "one of the most impartial and extensively circulated journals of the time" (*Cintra* 94)[4] – and that he remained acutely aware of his contemporary moment throughout the writing process.

During *Cintra*'s seven, arduous months of preparation Wordsworth was committed to keeping abreast of the latest developments in the Peninsula. He procured official dispatches and articles from the London papers, and as late as March 1809, responded to the publication of Sir John Moore's inflammatory correspondence from Spain by making urgent entreaties for De Quincey to add a postscript to his pamphlet. These concerted efforts to preserve *Cintra*'s topicality suggest that its status as a work approximate to "journalism" should not be readily side-lined. This article adduces contemporary prints by James Gillray, Thomas Rowlandson, Charles Williams and George and Isaac Cruikshank, in order to recover the political climate that affected *Cintra*'s composition and to which Wordsworth freely refers in his own writing. With their eye-catching combination of graphic outline, color, and punchy statements, satirical prints provided an effective vehicle for political commentary, and enjoyed, as Diana Donald and others have shown, broad appeal during the Romantic period (Donald vii; 2). While it is true that their market was relatively exclusive – rental fees could amount to as much as half a crown per night (in addition to the obligatory deposit), or two shillings per colored print for an actual purchase (Hunt 8)

– these political "cartoons," handled by the middle and upper classes,[5] were at least within sight of audiences whose purchasing powers were much less ambitious.[6] The satirical prints published between the autumn of 1808 and following spring thereby constitute important sources for identifying how the Cintra controversy and its related concerns were popularized – and sensationalized – in the minds of Wordsworth and his readers. The prints referred to in this article attest to the popularity of *Cintra*'s political subject and help spotlight its existence as a pamphlet written of – and for – its time. They also allow us to measure the effectiveness of Wordsworth's rhetorical strategies, and to better understand the difficulties of address the poet encountered during the writing of his pamphlet.

The first section of this article begins to underscore the sense of urgency that defined Wordsworth's commitment to his task by offering a brief overview of the political climate leading up to September 1808, when the Convention of Cintra was first reported in the English press. With the aim of identifying both the similarities and differences between Wordsworth's pamphlet and contemporary satirical prints, the article is then divided into four sections – each of which uses a specific print as a lens through which to examine Wordsworth's ethical and political objections to the military treaty. These sections draw particular attention to *Cintra*'s delayed publication (including the anxieties, but also advantages, that this posed) and Wordsworth's acute awareness, from the outset, of the uncertainties attendant not only upon the "Spanish question" but British patriotism. The final section considers the political climate in May 1809, when the publication of *Cintra* permitted Wordsworth's pamphlet to inhabit a discursive political space shared, in no small part, by the very prints with whose rhetorical strategies he had long been in conversation.

"Painted in History"

In the summer of 1807, Napoleon turned his attention to the Iberian Peninsula with the aim of enforcing his Continental Blockade by prohibiting Britain's trade with one of its oldest allies, Portugal. He exploited political instability in the region as an excuse for sending military troops: French soldiers, led by Jean-Andoche Junot, made their approach to Lisbon in November 1807. They missed the Portuguese Royal Family – who, under a British naval escort, had already begun to escape to Brazil with 15,000 members of its court – by only a few short days.[7] In Spain, meanwhile, a spate of riots confirmed to the Spanish King Charles IV that his unpopular main advisor, Manuel de Godoy (ironically known as the Prince of Peace), had rendered his reign untenable. But when Charles IV abdicated in favour of his son Ferdinand, the well-liked Prince of Asturias, Napoleon exerted pressure on the son to resign his claim to the throne. He would appoint, instead, his brother Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain. These forceful measures, poorly disguised by Napoleon as diplomatic gestures, were quick to excite popular disaffect, and in the famous "dos de mayo" revolt (2 May 1808) Madrid's civilians took to the streets, armed with only stones and items of household furniture to use as weapons against the French army. Similar uprisings occurred in other Spanish provinces as news of the capital's rebellion – and its violent suppression – spread across the country.

The British press was quick to report these tales of localized heroic exertion; tales that stirred the hearts of a readership whose hopes for the Continent had been at an all-time low after the Treaty of Tilsit.[8] This included Wordsworth, who would later describe the French army's ruthless suppression of the "dos de mayo" rebellion as an "open ac[t] of massacre" that left the streets of Madrid "drenched with the blood of two thousand of her bravest citizens" (*Cintra* 152). When delegates from the Spanish

province of Asturias arrived in England with a formal appeal for British succour they received, therefore, a rapturous welcome from both government ministers and the public, who applauded their arrival with a series of fêtes, celebratory dinners, and trips to the theatres, all organized in commemoration of the Spainiards' noble resistance to the French yoke.[9] Taking full advantage of this popular fascination for "all things Spanish," on 15 June 1808 (a week after the Asturians' arrival) Richard Brinsley Sheridan initiated the official political debate on Spain in the House of Commons. Before the end of the summer, a new Anglo-Spanish alliance had been ratified, all Spanish prisoners of war freed from British captivity, and the government committed to sending arms, equipment, and manpower to Spain and Portugal.

A British expedition (headed by Arthur Wellesley) landed at Mondego Bay on 1 August 1808. By 21 August the first significant battle between English and French troops had occurred at Vimeiro. This battle ended with Junot's forced withdrawal and the French appeal for an armistice, later known as the Convention of Cintra, which was swiftly negotiated in the final week of August. It was not, however, until 15 September that the firing of the Tower Guns first made the Convention public knowledge in England. The details of the armistice were then printed in the next day's edition of the *London Gazette*.

News of a French armistice, especially at such an early stage of the military campaign, was initially received with jubilation. But when the terms of the treaty were divulged, it soon became clear that the British generals in Portugal (Wellesley, Dalrymple, and Burrard) had seriously underestimated their success at Vimeiro, and agreed to a suspension of arms that seemed to only squander their military advantage. Among the Convention's several surprising concessions were guarantees of a British escort for the safe evacuation of vanquished troops, permission for the French to

depart with all their stolen booty, and, remarkably, even a clause that enabled French soldiers, who were not to be considered prisoners of war, to re-enlist upon their return to France. These articles, revealing "the gross body of the transaction" (*Cintra* 127), would be clearly and carefully adumbrated in Wordsworth's pamphlet.

Contemporary caricaturists also wasted no time in responding to the political commotion ignited by the Convention's controversial terms. In "Extraordinary News" (September 1808, BM Satires 11034) Charles Williams captures the moment when the public's earnest hopes for Cintra were displaced by indignant disbelief at its concessions. Williams splits his image into two frames: the first depicts John Bull at home with his wife, in ebullient celebration after hearing the firing of the Tower Guns; the second registers his anger and frustration the following day when, outside Lloyd's with a group of other businessmen, Bull learns of the details of the Convention (as printed in the *London Gazette*). A gentleman in the group, wearing spectacles symbolic of his authority as a reader,[10] relays Article IV's concession that the French army should "carry with it all its Artillery of French calibre, with the Horses belonging to it, and the tumbrils supplied, with sixty rounds per gun." In measure of the emotional distance between the two frames, Bull now exclaims: "D – m me if I ever believe the *Tower Guns* again!!!" It is significant that Williams chose to dramatize this public scene outside of Lloyd's. By 1808, Lloyd's was less a coffee shop than a centre for speculation and investment, which, since 1803, had provided a Patriotic Fund for the support of ex-servicemen and their families. Bull denounces Article IV as nothing more than brazen injustice: "What! carry away Sixty Pounds a Man! why that ought to have been in the pockets of our brave fellows!" His recognition of the ways in which the Convention has cruelly short-changed "brave" British soldiers is accentuated by his setting, and draws attention to the even subtler

irony implied by Williams's inclusion of a portrait of the Duke of Cumberland in the print's first frame. The Duke of Cumberland, also nicknamed "the Butcher of Culloden," was renowned for his decisive repression of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. His portrait could thus be seen to feature, in the first instance, as a pictorial echo of the Bulls' hopes for renewed national security. Williams's second frame asks, however, that the viewer revise this early interpretation by recalling the Duke's disgraced reputation after his negotiation of the Convention of Klosterzeven (during the Seven Years' War). The suggestion that Cintra, however outrageous, was not without its precedents, allows Williams to powerfully underwrite the putatively straightforward juxtaposition of the private and public spheres established by his print's two frames.

Wordsworth also conflates the public and private domains when he insists, in *Cintra*, that no blame be ascribed to the man who "speaks publickly" "though his station be in private life" (138). These are times, he claims:

> in which the conduct of military men concerns us, perhaps, more intimately than any other class; when the business of arms comes unhappily too near the fire side; when the character and duties of a soldier ought to be understood by every one who values liberty, and bears in mind how soon he may have to fight for it. (138)

This was a striking statement to be made by the author who, in the early 1790s, had chosen to keep his most radical documents – namely the *Salisbury Plain* poems and *A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff* – safe from the glare of public scrutiny. Why, then, did Wordsworth not only allow his views on the Convention to feature in print, but deliberately dramatize his decision to do so?

With his reputation secure as the author of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798; 1800; 1802; 1805) and the critically unpopular but widely reviewed *Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807), Wordsworth's concludes his "Advertisement" to *Cintra* with the affirmation:

"I have deemed it right to prefix my name to these pages, in order that this last testimony of a sincere mind might not be wanting" (95). This statement, which would have struck a chord with the great majority of the British public, went decidedly against the grain of government policy. Wordsworth was acutely aware of this: his understanding of the dangerous implications of assuming authorial responsibility for the pamphlet frequently surfaces in his private correspondence (as discussed below) and within the tract itself, wherein the repeated blurring of private and public roles (notably underlined by the pamphlet's concluding Petrarchan anecdote) seems too studied to be accepted without question. We need, however, only look to Williams's print in order to understand Wordsworth's decision to publish *Cintra*. "Extraordinary News" offers not only a dramatic representation of the public's enraged response to the Convention, but anticipates (most notably in its detailing of the Duke of Cumberland's portrait) the questions of accountability, blame and reputation that would dominate succeeding discussions of Cintra. Wordsworth's decision to sign his political tract may have been a difficult one, but Williams's print reminds us that this assumption of authorship amounted to a symbolic gesture of opposition against the generals who had signed the controversial treaty but renounced their responsibilities as signatories.

"To bring to justice and condign punishment"

On 29 September 1808, a mere fortnight after the articles of the Convention were first printed, S.W. Fores published George Cruikshank's print "Whitlock [*sic*] the Second or another Tarnish of British Valor" (BM Satires 11035). The cartoon depicts Junot seated haughtily on a chair with one hand on his hip as the other strokes his chin. He wears military uniform, accessorized by a sizeable bicorne hat and disproportionately large boots, complete with menacing spurs. Behind him are several articles of gold,

including a golden mitre, marked "Private Property," while various bags of coin lie at his feet (estimations of their value clearly written upon them). Three British generals kneel before Junot, in sycophantic supplication to his "Highness['s]" "Noble Will." The group includes Dalrymple, who presents Junot with a scroll that reaches as far as his feet. The terms of the Convention of Cintra are just about legible upon it, with the most offensive articles of the treaty emphasized in bolder font. This includes Article V of the Convention, which permitted the routed army to "evacuate Portugal with their arms and baggage." This article is frequently cited in Wordsworth's pamphlet as "that memorable condition" (143); it is dramatized, also, in Thomas Rowlandson's print "Junot disgorging his booty" (1808, BM Satires 11046) wherein John Bull, dressed as an English sailor, forces Junot to vomit the vast plunder the Convention had allowed him to carry off, and in Charles Williams's "A Portuguese Catch for Three Voices" (1808, BM Satires 11042), which, akin to "Extraordinary News," includes another tell-tale painting, this time transparently labeled " A Correct representation of the French Plunderers quitting Portugal for France – under a British escort."

The military and diplomatic criticisms glossed in "Whitlock the Second" feature prominently in Wordsworth's pamphlet. In his cartoon, Cruikshank ridicules the British generals who pandered to Junot's assumed authority. Wordsworth, for his part, draws attention in *Cintra* to Wellesley's lack of diplomatic tact when, in his official dispatches, he referred to Junot as the "Duc d'Abrantes." The *Courier* had been scathing on this point, denouncing Wellesley's acknowledgement of Junot's title as "a most singular imprudence!"

> At the very time we were reconquering the Country for its legitimate Sovereign, from the Usurper of his authority, we recognise as legal an act of that Usurper against the legitimate Sovereign – we recognise JUNOT as the

> rightful possessor of a Portuguese title and territory, bestowed … from BONAPARTE, who had no right to grant it.[11]

Wordsworth's tone is less inflammatory than this, proposing, at first, that it would be absurd to consider the address as anything more than an oversight. "But the capability of such an oversight," he ultimately contends, "affords too strong suspicion of a deadness to the moral interests of the cause to which he [Wellesley] was engaged" (125). Wordsworth consequently considers Wellesley's behaviour as proof "of a want of sympathy… as could exist only in a mind narrowed by exclusive and overweening attention to the *military* character, led astray by vanity, or hardened by general habits of contemptuousness" (125). This personal attack on Wellesley reads interestingly in relation to Cruikshank's print, wherein the second signatory of the Convention, Sir Charles Cotton (kneeling, appropriately, with his hands in a prayer, upon a cushion labeled "Cotton"), receives the brunt of the attack instead of Wellesley. Wordsworth's particular impatience with Wellesley is likely to have been attributable to the latter's warm reception at Court upon his return from the Peninsula, and the Votes of Thanks he received from the House of Lords (23 January 1809) and House of Commons (25 January 1809).[12] Cruikshank could not, of course, have anticipated this in September 1808, but for Wordsworth, whose lengthy period of composition necessarily entailed a careful deliberation of the latest developments in Spain and Portugal, the government's celebration of Wellesley as a national hero had added serious insult to injury.

If, however, on the one hand, Wordsworth could capitalize upon implications of the Convention that were unavailable to Cruikshank in September 1808; on the other, he was painfully aware that *Cintra*'s delayed publication could only be detrimental to his protests and exhortations.[13] Fearful that by the time of its printing, his readers would have succumbed to varying degrees of political amnesia,

Wordsworth offers in his pamphlet repeated reminders of the terms of the Convention, and even re-prints the Suspension of Arms as an Appendix. The controversy surrounding Article V thus exemplifies an important aspect of not only the topical debate, but also Wordsworth's rhetorical technique.

Shortly after his attack on Wellesley, Wordsworth complains that the treaty had effectively reduced "the British Lion into a beast of burthen, to carry a vanquished enemy, with his load of iniquities when and whither it had pleased him" (126). It is a point to which he returns later in the tract, when he once again quotes the treaty's terms directly in explanation of how Article XVII allowed the *afrancesados* (i.e. locals who had supported the French) to receive safeguards for their property (148-9). By problematizing what his readers might have understood by "the vanquished enemy," at this point of the pamphlet Wordsworth begins to pick apart the very language of the Convention. This includes a detailed analysis of the meanings attached to the terms "private" and "immoveable," as they appeared in Articles V and XVII of the treaty (143-145; 151) – linguistic quibbles which made it clear that no matter how long it had been since the Articles of the Convention were first known, the passage of time offered no excuse for readerly complacency.

Keeping history alive was, likewise, a crucial concern for Cruikshank, whose print depicts a Portuguese gentleman stepping forward from the partition behind Junot's assumed throne. Horrified at the British generals' obvious submission to the French, the Portuguese accuses them of betraying of his trust:

> Why I thought you came as my friends to protect us & drive out these Thieves, but it seems you intend to protect them with their stolen goods – is this British Honor is this British Valor [*sic*]?

His reference to "British Valor" echoes the print's full title, – "Whitlock [*sic*] the Second or another tarnish on British Valor" – likening the Convention of Cintra to General Whitelocke's shameful surrender at Buenos Aires at the end of 1807.

Whitelocke's narrative was readily available to popular audiences insofar as his court martial was not only within recent memory, but had been widely reported in the British press. Whitelocke's trial had started on 28 January 1808. Facing charges of poor diplomacy, military incompetence and agreement to a shameful surrender, Whitelocke was subjected to seven gruelling weeks of evidence before he was found guilty and sentenced to cashiering. The general's name, since synonymous with incompetence and disgrace, functions in Cruikshank's print as a damning denunciation of the British campaign in Portugal, which, he presents, in turn, as another failed expedition.[14] The print's associative link between Cintra and the British military's earlier blunders in South America recurs in Wordsworth's pamphlet, wherein the poet provides a damning tripartite citation of the "transactions at Buenos Ayres, at Cintra, and in the result of the Board of Inquiry" as "successive proofs" that "the British Army swarms with those who are incompetent" (192).

When Cruikshank's print was published in September 1808, its allusions to Whitelocke's trial served as an implicit endorsement for the instigation of an official inquiry into Cintra. It seems that initially, at least, Wordsworth had similarly intended this kind of protest be the extent of his involvement in the Cintra furore.[15] But when his efforts to canvas support for a Westmoreland petition were hampered by Lord Lonsdale's refusal to lend his assistance, Wordsworth decided to write *Cintra* instead.[16] Comparable frustrations were felt across the country, as demonstrated in Charles Williams's "A Hint to Ministers, or a gracious answer to grievous petitions" (1808, BM Satires 11051). Williams's print registers the impasse caused by the king's

avoidance of the various petitions against the Convention and confirms that political clamour had been quick to spread from the capital to the nation at large. As such, while the foremost petition in the print belongs to "the dutiful Citizens of London," Williams also includes petitions from "the Hamshire [*sic*] Hogs," "the Essex calves," "Lincolnshire Geese" and "Welch [*sic*] goats." This comic depiction of the geographically pervasive nature of opposition works ambiguously to both make fun of the petitioners and proudly assert the fact that several British counties had already protested for a redress of grievances. The localized nature of political protests remained important to Wordsworth, whose conclusion to *Cintra* privileges the perspective of those who "withdr[a]w from the too busy world … for wider compass of insight" (221). Its significance was also acknowledged by Coleridge, whose "Letters on the Spaniards" (1809-1810), which appeared in the *Courier* as an "appendix" to Wordsworth's tract, were each signed and dated from "Grassmere" [*sic*].

In "Patriotic Petitions on the Convention" (1808, BM Satires 11048) James Gillray makes a similar point about Cintra's political purchase. The four frames of his print are labeled as follows:

1) The Cockney Petition! – Enter – Mr Noodle & Mr Doodle
2) The Westminster Petition – a kick-out from Wimbleton [*sic*]
3) The Chelmsford Petition – Broad-Bottom Patriots addressing the Essex Calves!
4) The Middlesex Petition! – Hackney Orators inspiring the Independent Blue & Buff Intent

As in Williams's print, each petition, regardless of its provenance, is either deferred or rejected. Intriguingly, both artists adopted a similar strategy of fashioning carefully oblique portraits of George III: in Williams's print, a large pillar blocks the king from view; while in Gillray's, he is seen from behind, seated on his throne, grasping the royal staff in one hand while holding out his other with the clear intention of cutting

short his petitioners. Confronted by an outraged citizenry demanding that an Inquiry be held on the Convention, the king and his ministers had warned the public against "prejudging" the case. Gillray thus delights in depicting Middlesex petitioners who clamour for "Instant justice!" and propose to "– cut off their heads & try them afterwards!" Williams's "A Hint to Ministers" also represents the City of London petition as a demand for the British generals' "condemnation" by referring specifically to the Address and Petition presented to the king by the City on 12 October:

> … praying his Majesty to institute such an Enquiry into this dishonourable and unprecedented transaction, as will lead to the discovery and punishment of those by whose misconduct and incapacity the Cause of the Country and its Allies have been so shamefully sacrificed.[17]

This Address was printed in full in the *Courier*, which informed its readers of the king's reply that it was "inconsistent with the principles of British justice to pronounce judgement without previous investigation."[18]

In *Cintra* Wordsworth tackles this issue head on by insisting that "if there ever was a case which could not, in any rational sense of the word, be prejudged, this is one (137)."[19] Gillray's and Williams's prints serve as useful reminders of why, in *Cintra*, Wordsworth dedicates so much of his rhetorical energy to refuting the ministerial argument of prejudgment. In line with his interest in the human sympathies sparked by political events, the early sections of *Cintra* see Wordsworth devote himself to a refutation of the government's supposedly unimpassioned reasoning. He does so by drawing attention, for instance, to the important, but often overlooked, distinction between "*positive*" and "*negative*" (163) forms of expressing one's opinions. Quoting from the ministerial papers published in Cintra's aftermath, Wordsworth cites the king's own admission of personal disapprobation for the treaty as proof of the impossibility of cold impartiality. He makes little attempt to disguise

his obvious pleasure in the ironies of the case:

> For these same ministers who had called upon the people of Great Britain to rejoice over the Armistice and Convention, and who reproved and discountenanced and suppressed to the utmost of their power every attempt at petitioning for redress for the injury caused by those treaties, have now made publick [*sic*] a document from which it appears that, "when the instruments were first laid before his Majesty, the king felt himself compelled *at once*" (i.e. previously to all investigation) "to express his disapprobation of those articles, in which stipulations were made directly affecting the interests or feelings of the Spanish or Portugueze [*sic*] nations." (163)

The embedding of a parenthetical break within this long quotation serves to underscore Wordsworth's point with persuasive force. His argument also marks a clear departure from the caricaturists who, in the immediate aftermath of the event, were uncertain of how to portray the king's involvement in the Cintra furore. The official papers cited in Wordsworth's tract only appeared in January 1809, when evidence of the king's opinions was printed in the *Courier* and other papers. This allowed him to assert that the petitioners were "not only clear of all blame; but … entitled to high praise" (162). Wordsworth may have lacked the advantages conferred to the satirical print by its quick production rate, but his prolonged investigation into the Cintra controversy gave him privileged insight into the wider implications of the public debate; "we have seen whither the doctrines lead," he adds, in justification of the petitioners' claims (162). In 1809, Wordsworth was thus able to make an even stronger case for English liberties, which aligned both public and royal disapproval of the treaty into a convincing statement against all arguments of prejudgment.[20]

The investigation into the conduct of the British generals at Cintra was held at the Royal College at Chelsea between 14 November and 27 December 1808. When the Court of Inquiry closed, it exonerated all three generals from any guilt. This result would, of course, only have exacerbated Wordsworth's anger against the infamous Convention. Whereas Cruikshank had clearly intended for "Whitlock the Second" to

capitalize upon its eponymous general's misconduct and trial as evidence of the public's ability to initiate a successful investigation into military responsibility and accountability, the Board of Inquiry's decision to absolve the generals at Cintra brought a check to any such hopes. Leaving Wordsworth with what could only have seemed irrefutable proofs of incompetence, British self-interest, and injustice, the Board of Inquiry helped determine the decidedly *moral* tenor of his subsequent argument.

"The old Yell of Jacobinism"

In late December 1808, the Board of Inquiry's dead-end conclusions fulfilled the prophecies of several political commentators who had seen it as a means of buying time in order to shield the government from any blame. One of the Inquiry's most virulent opponents had been William Cobbett, whose *Political Register* appears in the second frame of Gillray's print "Patriotic Petitions on the Convention" (BM Satires 11048) and its staging of the dramatic expulsion of the Westminster petitioners from Horne Tooke's bedroom. On the floor by Tooke's bed lie discarded newspapers labeled "The Times," "Morning Chronicle: Convention of Cintra" and "Fodder." In the commotion of his escape, Tooke drops "Cobbett's Political Register," which settles on the commode by his bed (symbolically decorated with a bayonet rouge). At the far right of the frame an angry Francis Burdett, brandishing a misshapen "Club of Reform," forcibly expels Sheridan and two other politicians. The frame functions as a biting representation of the Opposition's response to Cintra; but also provides an important context by which to understand Wordsworth's anxieties for his pamphlet's public reception.

Wordsworth's denunciation of the case against prejudging was not, after all, very far from Cobbett's contentious and often parodied attempts in the *Political*

Register to deconstruct ministerial arguments. In November 1808, Cobbett had argued, for instance, that the deliberations held at Chelsea were, in fact, illegal. With the Court of Inquiry composed solely by ministerial appointment, Cobbett refused to believe that its resolutions could be unbiased. "Is not a packed court as odious and revolting as a packed jury, to the feelings of Englishmen?" Cobbett posed, assuring his readers that any charges of "prejudging" could be swiftly deflected unto its accusers (with the same kind of ironic flourish, notably, that would characterize Wordsworth's response to the king's disapproval). [21]

Cobbett, quick to decry against the French army's "most atrocious robberies," had been vehemently opposed to the Convention from the outset, and was so famous for his acerbic anti-ministerial attacks that he featured as the main subject of Gillray's "The Loyal Address – or – the Procession of the Hampshire Hogs, from Botley to St James's – Vide Cobbett's Weekly Register October 4 1808" (BM Satires 11047).[22] In this print, Gillray portrays Cobbett in an improvised carriage driven by four hogs (the "Political Hog Trough"). Burdett, ready to strike the hogs with a long whip, is also pictured prominently. Waving tricolors and sporting caps of liberty, cheering crowds have enacted mock-effigies of "Sir Hugh [Dalrymple]," "Sir Arthur [Wellesley]," and "Sir Harry [Burrard]," in realization of the demand in Cobbett's "Loyal Petition" (also included in the print) that "the Three damn'd Convention-Signers ought to be Hanged Drawn & Quartered without Judge or Jury." The inflammatory rhetoric contained in Cobbett's *Political Register* is further emphasized by the titles given to its various issues: "Ignorance of the Ministry," "Ignorance of the Admiralty," "Letter to the Duke of York" and "State of the Army & Navy," while trampled by the wheels of Cobbett's carriage lies his "Letter to Sir Rd Phillips." By these means, Gillray shows how public disaffect for Cintra – exacerbated by Cobbett's successful fomentation of

the crowds – unleashed the radical energies associated with the violent excesses of the French Revolution. This cognitive link, equating the protests against Cintra with the extreme radicalism of the early 1790s, helps explain Wordsworth's anxious confidence to Francis Wrangham that *Cintra* "will create me a world of enemies, and call forth the old yell of Jacobinism" (*Letters* 312).

Wordsworth knew that having added his name to *Cintra*'s title page, his political thinking and authorial stance would be open to government censorship and attack.[23] Indeed, so acute was Wordsworth's preoccupation of exciting ministerial wrath, that as late as May 1809, he made frantic entreaties to both Daniel Stuart (editor of the *Courier*) and De Quincey (whom he had by then recruited as an additional editor of his pamphlet) to purge *Cintra* of any potentially libellous content. The poet's sense of disquietude is rendered almost palpable in his opening pages, wherein Wordsworth offers several significant qualifications to his otherwise audacious vindication of the war's early opponents:

> This just and necessary war, as we have been accustomed to hear it styled from the beginning of the contest in the year 1793, had, some time before the Treaty of Amiens, viz. after the subjugation of Switzerland, and not till then, begun to be regarded by the body of the people, as indeed both just and necessary; and this justice and necessity were by none more clearly perceived, or more feelingly bewailed, than by those who had most eagerly opposed the war in its commencement, and who continued most bitterly to regret that this nation had ever borne a part in it. Their conduct was herein consistent; they proved that they kept their eyes steadily fixed upon principles ... (98)

The most noticeable qualification here is provided by Wordsworth's use of the distancing third person pronoun – a necessary strategy for one whose continued engagement with the ideology of the French Revolution was difficult to disguise. In *Biographia Literaria* (1817) Coleridge would also use the third person to invoke "the youthful enthusiasts" who, like himself, had once been "flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution" and now supported the Spanish cause (*Biographia*

190). Although the distancing effects of time made Coleridge more uneasy than Wordsworth about the means available for relating his political allegiances, it is significant that he too sought to establish a narrative of continuity: "Sobered by increase of years," those who had once "made a boast of *expatriating* their hopes and fears" had been taught a new need "to prize and honour the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute pre-requisite and necessary basis of popular rights" (190). Gillray's "Loyal Address" is only one example of the complex but close proximity perceived between the radical politics of the 1790s and support for the Peninsular War. In her analysis of Wordsworth's *Cintra* Deirdre Coleman powerfully describes the Peninsular Cause as "the French Revolution '*redivivus*'" (Coleman 149). What Wordsworth's pamphlet, Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, and contemporary satirical prints make clear, is that while the conflict in the Peninsula certainly brought back the personal and political urgencies of the French Revolution, it had also, crucially, refigured them.

"Whither friend or foe"

The Peninsular War is often seen as a conflict that helped Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and other early supporters of the French Revolution, get back on side by supporting a national cause, "and so to close, at last, the schism that had been opened by the outbreak of the war in 1793" (Bainbridge 97). This opportunity to revise political allegiances was aided by the fact that British involvement in the Peninsula was dependent upon the successful establishment of an alliance that united otherwise inveterate enemies. Until the Anglo-Spanish alliance of 1808, Spain had been almost as much a bugbear as France herself; so much so, in fact, that following the collapse of the Peace of Amiens in 1803, the historic defeat of the Spanish Armada was used as the symbolic rallying call for British resistance to renewed fears of a French

invasion. In his speech to the House of Commons in June 1808, George Canning, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, took care, therefore, to affirm that "any nation of Europe that starts up with a determination to oppose a Power which … is the common enemy of all nations, becomes instantly our essential Ally" (Hansard 886).

Canning's speech, which anticipated the official declaration of peace between England and Spain (5 July), is re-imagined by Isaac Cruikshank in his print "The Noble Spaniards; or, Britannia assisting the cause of freedom all over the world, whither friend or foe" (July 1808, BM Satires 11003). Cruikshank's print depicts a well-dressed British commander leading a half-spirited, ill-prepared Spanish army, whose soldiers wear feathered hats and ruffs harking back to their country's sixteenth-century golden age, but ridiculously anachronistic to the needs of the present war. The Spanish army merges with a band of locals in the background, including armed monks and a woman. In the upper-left corner, overlooking this pseudo-heroic assembly, is the figure of Britannia, seated on a cloud from which munitions shower down unto the Spanish countryside (defined by the print's mountainous backdrop). It is Britannia, presumably, who has provided the monks with their muskets and musket-balls, and now presents them with the cannon and gunpowder requisite to early nineteenth-century warfare. Although celebrating Britain's involvement in the Peninsular campaign, the print suggests that despite Canning's imperative, Cruikshank and his audiences remained uncertain about placing their trust in the Spaniards themselves.

Charles Williams's print, "Iohn [*sic*] Bull amongst the Spaniards, or Boney decently provided for" (BM Satires 11005) was also published in July 1808. It depicts John Bull pointing to the barrel upon which he stands, labeled "British Spirits," and another labeled "Razor Blades." He looks down at the men who have gathered around

him. To his left, there are two undertakers dressed in black and another man, shovel in-hand, with a small coffin by his feet; the others are Spaniards, in colorful, Elizabethan-style dress, complete with slashed doublets, capes, and decorative feathers. The foremost Spaniard (to the left of the print) stands proudly, placing his hands upon his hips. He looks up at John Bull with arch eyebrows and an incipient frown that suggest hostile skepticism to the Englishman's address:

> My Good Friends here I am amongst you – you must know I am not over fond of any kind of Foreign-neers – but as you mean to dish Boney – out of pure love and charity – I have brought you something to help you on – here is a cask of British Spirits…another of Razor Blades – Two Undertakers – a Grave Digger, and a little Coffin, what can you wish for more?

John Bull here lists the various forms of assistance the Englishman proposes to offer the Spaniards, in comic emphasis of a fact widely acknowledged at the start of the campaign; namely, that the Spaniards, however courageous their resistance, were poorly equipped for the struggle against Napoleon. But nowhere in Williams's print, do we see representation of the arms, ammunitions, and money, which the Asturian delegates had actually requested, and which Cruikshank includes in "The Noble Spaniards."

Williams's print may be very clear in its anti-French rhetoric, but it makes, at best, only a half-hearted attempt to shake its English audiences' inherited prejudices. Despite his best efforts at statesmanship, John Bull cannot, in the end, quite resist the dual concession and reminder that he is "not over fond of Foreign-neers." Even the barrel of "British Spirits," which stands as a valuable pun on that popular enthusiasm for "all things Spanish," brings disturbing implications of "political intoxication." John Bull's gift of "Razor Blades" also lends itself to a play on words and imagery. The Spanish guerrillas' celebrated determination to "luchar al cuchillo," or "fight to the knife," was a war-cry seen to capture the fierce resolution of the men, women and

children prepared for hand-to-hand combat with the French enemy.[24] The razor's primary use for shaving replaces this image of close fighting with a bathetic redirection of the threat of violence unto the Spaniards themselves, whose characteristic "mustachios" contrast with the clean-shaven English characters of John Bull, the undertakers and grave-digger. This quite literally undercuts Bull's straightforward message that the Anglo-Spanish alliance will be the death of the French Emperor by suggesting that even the most patriotic of agendas could be circumscribed by the British public's lingering suspicions against the Spaniards. Contemporary audiences are unlikely to have missed the aggressive lilt with which John Bull concludes his offer of help: "what can you wish for more?"

In *Cintra*, Wordsworth combats the xenophobic feeling recorded in contemporary satirical prints by revising this tradition of negative Spanish stereotypes. He knew that the Black Legend, which painted Spain as a superstitious, backward, cruel, and avaricious imperial power, was a narrative all too-familiar to his Protestant readers. The gruesome woodcuts of Foxe's viciously anti-Catholic *Book of Martyrs* (1563) were, as Diego Saglia reminds us, still popular in England in the late eighteenth century (Saglia 42). In order to secure support for the Spanish cause, it was critical for Wordsworth, and other supporters of the Peninsular War, to replace this debilitating legacy with the image of what Coleridge termed a "regenerated Spain" (*Essays* 237). In *Cintra*, Wordsworth creates several opportunities in which to realize this aim. He translates, for instance, "whatever mixture of superstition there might be in the religious faith or devotional practices of the Spaniards" into a "fervent hope" for liberation, arguing that:

> The chains of bigotry, which enthralled the mind, must have been turned into armour to defend and weapons to annoy. Wherever the heaving and effort of freedom was spread, purification must have followed it. And the types and ancient instruments of error, where emancipated men shewed their foreheads to

the day, must have become a language and ceremony of imagination … (169)

To underline this point, Wordsworth relates the story of the Boy of Saragossa who, despite his young age, acted the part of an "unripe Hero," winning a standard from the field of battle which he then placed upon the Altar of the Virgin Mary in his church.[25] Wordsworth's anecdote is exemplary of his desire to surprise his readers into new ways of thinking by describing a boy, putatively "too tender of age," "too immature in growth and unconfirmed in strength," who fights with "sinew and courage" beyond his years (169). By this description, Wordsworth sought to expand his readers' horizons with the suggestion that Spanish fanaticism could be re-conceptualized as a measure of moral fortitude.[26] By repeating the modal verb "must," Wordsworth brings to his historical account both the imaginative force and rhetorical conviction that enable him to equate the Spaniard's religious devotion with not only admirable courage, but a wondrous capacity for reform. The "Boy of Saragossa" is at once romance and truth; proof, to Wordsworth, that the exigencies of war had indeed broken the "chains of bigotry" and liberated Spaniards from an oppression that was external as well as internal.

At other points in the pamphlet, Wordsworth responds to the Black Legend by describing the French, rather than the Spaniards, as its villainous perpetrators. Deploring the ignorance of the Convention-makers, Wordsworth explains how the sight of the French army, returning home with their treasures "would rouze [*sic*] men, like the dreams imported from the new world when the first discoverers and adventurers returned, with their ingots and their gold dust – their stories and their promises, to inflame and madden the avarice of old" (148). This technique of associating the French with the spirit of the sixteenth-century conquistadores would re-appear in Wordsworth's letter to General Pasley (28 March 1811):

> The spirit of Buonaparte's government is, and must continue to be, like that of the first conquerors of the new world [*sic*] who went raving about for gold – gold! and for whose rapacious appetites the slow but mighty and sure returns of any other produce could have no charm. (*Letters* 476)

Wordsworth sees the French invasion as having awakened the Spaniards to a sort of moral enlightenment (and redemption). Bonaparte's aggression, by contrast, is seen to represent nothing less than a regression to the darkest years of Spain's imperial legacy.

Throughout *Cintra*, Wordsworth thus plays with his readers' limited knowledge of Spanish history and culture in order to justify his personal but informed conviction of the righteousness of the war in Iberia. He often takes advantage of the general tendency to associate Spain with the birthplace of romance:

> The Spaniards are a people with imagination: and the paradoxical reveries of Rousseau, and the flippancies of Voltaire, are plants which will not naturalise in the countries of Calderon and Cervantes. (211)

By citing the radical French writers Rousseau and Voltaire, Wordsworth's attempt to revise anti-Spanish feeling here emerges, significantly, as a crucial adjunct to his argument that the Spanish revolution would not follow the course of the French. In re-defining the Spanish character, Wordsworth was re-writing his own political reputation.

Yet, despite taking care in his pamphlet to challenge many of the assumptions related to national stereotypes, Wordsworth's prose is littered with inaccurate conflations of the Portuguese and the Spaniards. To Gordon Kent Thomas this provides sufficient grounds for questioning whether Wordsworth's designs for *Cintra* were primarily historical or philosophical. According to Thomas, the slip offers suggestive evidence of Wordsworth's deficiencies as a narrator of historical fact (Thomas 60):

> I have indeed spoken rather of the Spaniards than of the Portuguese; but what

> has been said, will be understood as applying in the main to the whole Peninsula. The wrongs of the two nations have been equal, and their cause is the same: they must stand or fall together. (*Cintra* 102)

Thomas is surely correct to cite the passage as an example of Wordsworth's larger philosophical concerns (especially those related to the powers of the imagination), but it seems curious that in a tract which strongly privileges "*language*," Wordsworth should have been so readily dismissive of his repeated references to Spain when it was the immoral subjugation of Portugal that he had set out to discuss. The situation, as Wordsworth himself explains, may indeed have applied "in the main," but to claim that "the wrongs of the two nations have been equal" seems, at this point, to go against the entire logic of Wordsworth's political discourse; or, at least, until he subtly, but decisively, corrects himself. I suggest that one way of making sense of this is to consider how Wordsworth's conflations were largely conditioned by his own anxieties about what it meant to be a British patriot in 1808-1809.

Wordsworth's retraction occurs with the observation that "Lisbon and Portugal, as city and soil, were chiefly prized by us as a *language*; but our Generals mistook the counters of the game for the stake played for" (136). This emphasis on Portugal's symbolic importance to the British military campaign causes Wordsworth to apply the moral lessons of Cintra to his own prose, and to re-write his earlier generalization of Peninsular politics by highlighting, instead, the uniqueness of the political situation in Portugal:

> But the Portugueze [*sic*] *had* a government; they had a lawful prince in Brazil; and a regency, appointed by him, at home; and generals at the head of considerable bodies of troops, appointed also by the regency or the prince. (142)

Whereas the feud within the Spanish royal family had created a political vacuum into which Napoleon maneuvered his brother Joseph, the Portuguese royal family had relocated to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This permitted Wordsworth to argue that by

signing the Convention with the French, the British generals forewent the still lawful authority of the Portuguese monarchy. Cruikshank makes the same point in "Whitlock [*sic*] the Second," wherein the Portuguese gentleman tellingly emerges from "behind the scenes" to challenge the British generals for failing to act as his nation's "friend" and "protect[or]." In *Cintra*, Wordsworth spares no punches, including this specific detail so as to denounce the British signatories of the Convention as political usurpers in their own right.

Between his early conflation of the Iberian nations and later acknowledgment of the distinguishing characteristics of the Spanish and Portuguese governments, Wordsworth provides his readers with a significant, if surprising, insight into his process of composition: "It was not my intention," he confesses, "that the subject should at present have been pursued so far" (110). The question of authorial agency is here complicated by his larger concern with political authority, and acquires even greater charge when the author, clearly moved by his subject, approaches his conclusion by describing how "the pen, which I am guiding, has stopped in my hand; and I have scarcely power to proceed" (218). These two instances of meta-narrative are paramount to understanding Wordsworth's personal investment in his tract. Like all narratives, *Cintra* is critically concerned with how stories are told, how action is framed. Wordsworth's concession that he lacked full control of a narrative that continues to elude him – "I have scarcely power to proceed" – testifies to an author still in search of his political identity, and not yet wholly confident he has found it. In *Cintra*, as Coleman explains, "Wordsworth holds fast to earlier beliefs while positioning them within a Burkean framework" (Coleman 146): it is not surprising that he should have struggled to articulate a clear sense of patriotic belonging.

Occurring where it does in the narrative, Wordsworth's self-acknowledged

tendency to amalgamate Spain and Portugal can be said to hint, therefore, toward his particular anxieties about what it meant to be a British patriot during the Peninsular War. These anxieties featured prominently in Wordsworth's letter to Daniel Stuart (5 February 1809) wherein the author claimed that "Never did any public event cause in my mind so much sorrow as the Convention of Cintra, both on account of the Spaniards and Portuguese, and on our own – " (*Letters* 288). Wordsworth's use of the long dash emphatically underscores "our own" as referring to both himself, and the British nation more generally. In *Cintra*, he re-figures these victims of political chicanery as historical agents working within a triangular dependency that places Britain at the apex, guiding – but also looking to – Spain and Portugal for all-important philosophical lessons.[27]

Wordsworth's acknowledged tendency to elide the Portuguese and the Spaniards should not, therefore, be confused with contemporary caricaturists' limited shorthand for national stereotypes (which invariably pictured both the Spaniards and Portuguese in generic sixteenth-century costume).[28] Interestingly, Wordsworth's failure to ascribe to the Portuguese their relevant markers of distinction may be traced, instead, to his larger political interest in the union of nation states:

> Who does not rejoice that former partitions have disappeared, – and that England, Scotland, and Wales, are under one legislative and executive authority; and that Ireland (would that she had been more justly dealt with!) follows the same destiny? The large and numerous Fiefs, which interfered injuriously with the grand demarcation assigned by nature to France, have long since been united and consolidated … the two nations of the Peninsula should be united in friendship and strict alliance; and, as soon as it may be effected without injustice, form one independent and indissoluble sovereignty. (200-201)

This makes it possible to explain Wordsworth's tendency to approach the Peninsula in general terms with the poet's self-conscious desire to promote a legislative union in Iberia similar to that of the four nations of the United Kingdom.[29] Coleridge and

Southey shared comparable ambitions. In his second essay on the Battle of Albuera (*Courier*, 5 June 1811) Coleridge anticipates:

> ... a day of joy and confident hope for Europe will that day be, on which we should behold the English Rose, the Thistle, and the Shamrock, interwoven into the Garland of Camomile, which has hitherto adorned the brows of Spanish heroism. (*Essays* 186)

In Coleridge's article, the Scottish thistle, Irish shamrock, and English rose serve as synecdoches for Great Britain, while the camomile flower (native to Spain) represents the Iberian kingdom. The association made between the "garland of camomile" and "Spanish heroism" has its origins in *1 Henry IV*, wherein Falstaff explains to Hal that "the camomile, the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows" (2.4.440). The simile was an obvious choice for Coleridge, who passionately argued that the Spaniards, "abandoned, betrayed, without government, without treasures, without unity of impulse, have suffered more, done more, made greater resistance to the common scourge, than all the disciplined armies of Continental Europe put together!" (*Essays* 183). Representing strength and resilience in the face of adversity, the Shakespearean chamomile also doubles as a shorthand for Coleridge's political interest in a united Britain. *1 Henry IV* opens with the English victory over the Scots at Homildon Hill; the play includes the Welsh revolt led by Owen Glendower, and the beginnings of Prince Hal's transition from reckless youth into the heroic Henry V, who would secure England's victory over France with the end of the Hundred Years War. The famously insolent Prince of Wales was, as Jonathan Bate explains, frequently caricatured as Shakespeare's Prince Hal (Bate 76-84). By electing a well-known symbol from Shakespeare's "Henriad," Coleridge encourages his audiences to complete the nexus by connecting support for the Spanish campaign with domestic reform of the Regency government, a belief in the "greatness" of Britain, and the army's ultimate defeat of France.

Likewise, previous to even the uproar caused by the Convention of Cintra, Southey had written to John May, convinced that "on every account it is desirable that the whole peninsula should be united" (*Selections* 77). In his letter, Southey imagines a federal government as the best means of achieving a proposed union respective of "local loyalties." His sensitivity to Iberian traditions of governance serves as a useful reminder that Spain itself was a plural nation made up of distinct states, and that a Spaniard's allegiance was, first and foremost, to his native town and province. Southey's, Coleridge's, and Wordsworth's mutual fascination for this quasi-feudal mentality suggests that the Peninsula offered an especially attractive test case for narratives of citizenship and nationhood. As already mentioned, Wordsworth's loyalty to "local attachments" was crucial to the meaning of *Cintra*. In a pamphlet which affirms that local patriotism was not necessarily a conservative idea, Wordsworth asserts that in 1808 provinces such as Westmoreland (and patriots like himself) had an important role to play in controlling the hegemonic tendencies of the political center.

"The pressure of public business"

In the new year of 1809, Wordsworth was horrified to discover that, to all appearances, news related to Cintra had reached its "sell-by date." This not only reduced the demand for Wordsworth's writings, but also starved him of his only source of information on Iberian events – reports from the British press:

> As I found the public mind so completely engrossed with the Duke of York and his Doxy, I thought it better to avail myself of that opportunity to add general matter to the Pamphlet, concerning the hopes of the Spaniards and principles of the contest; so that, from the proportion of space which it occupied in the work, the Convention of Cintra might fairly appear, what in truth it is in mind, an action dwelt upon only for the sake of illustrating principles, with a view to promote liberty and good policy; in a manner in which an anatomist illustrates the laws of organic life from a human subject placed before him and his audience. (*Letters* 296)

It is impossible to miss Wordsworth's criticism of a reading nation that has indulged

in the wrong kind of "feeling" and replaced the larger narrative of war with a salacious desire for royal gossip. The scandal in question related to accusations that the Duke of York, then Commander-in-Chief of the British army, had been involved in the illicit sale of army commissions and promotions by his former mistress, Mary Anne Clarke. Wordsworth's contemptuous use of the term "doxy" to describe Mrs Clarke forcefully underlines his sense of moral disgust. In the conclusion to *Cintra* he recognizes a clear link between examples of amoral politics at home and abroad: "But let us look to ourselves. Our offences are unexpiated: and, wanting light, we want strength" (221). The failure to atone would, it appears, result in readers little better than the British generals who, in signing the Convention, "mistook the counters of the game for the stake played for" (136).

The public's outcry over the Duke of York scandal was fuelled in no small part by the numerous satirical prints published on the theme, and which helped put pressure on the Duke to resign from his post.[30] James Gillray's "Overthrow of the Republican – Babel" (BM Satires 11327) was published 1 May 1809 and offers a good visual description of the political climate Wordsworth' s pamphlet would face when it was published later that month. Its eponymous "Tower of Babel" consists of an extensive pile of parliamentary papers, tied together by tricolor ribbons and arranged in a precariously balanced stack. These bundles are individually inscribed with reference to a host of Opposition issues parodied as: "Jacobin Principles," "Liberty of the Press – without controul [*sic*]!", "Motion against the Ministry for assisting the Spanish Patriots, & thereby giving great offence to BUONAPARTE," "Incontestable proofs that the Victory at Vimera [*sic*] was a defeat" and, at the very top of the collapsing tower, "Abuses on the Army department incontestably proved on ye word of a Prostitute and her Paramour." Mary Anne Clarke and Colonel Wardle

fall from the right side of the Tower – as do Lord Folkenstone and Whitbread (beneath them), and Burdett (from the right, wearing a green coat).[31] At the top of the print, the Speaker of the House appears from the clouds. He lifts a golden mace and carries a long scroll which reads: "Justice Triumphant: Decisions of the Rt Honourable House of Commons – Majority against the Evidence of a Prostitute – Majority against the Machinations of Republicans & Levellers." Gillray's ridicule of the Opposition is aggressive – its insubstantial tower (erected upon the "Sands of Opposition") easily toppling as a result of the Commons' decision to acquit the Duke. The cause of reform, as variously represented in Gillray's print, has, it seemed, received its fatal blow. At this point, it is useful to recall the full title of Wordsworth's pamphlet, which places emphasis on "*this* crisis" [italics mine] as one that includes Cintra without being exclusive to it.[32] By 1809, Wordsworth's concerns extended to the management of the Spanish campaign, colonialism, British arms, the domestic economy, and public morality. Indeed, "the present disaster" mentioned in *Cintra*'s opening pages refers, significantly, not to the Convention per se, but the British army's retreat from Corunna in January 1809.

Corunna was, in short, an indirect consequence of Cintra. When Wellesley and Dalyrmple returned to England to face the Board of Inquiry, British troops in Portugal were left under the command of Sir John Moore, who was entrusted to lead the army into northern Spain. He was, however, bitterly disappointed by the lack of Spanish military assistance and shortage of funds received. Pursued by a superior French force, Moore and his exhausted troops arrived at Corunna on 11 January 1809, where he arranged for his army to be evacuated. The French troops began their assault while the embarkation was still underway. Moore organized a brave counter-attack but was fatally wounded. His heroism would be lauded in Charles Wolfe's eulogistic poem

"The Burial of Sir John Moore after Corunna" (1816), but during the war itself the commander's reputation was much more controversial. Public opinion was torn between Moore's supporters, who saw him as a valiant hero, and his detractors, who painted the battle of Corunna as an embarrassing retreat and military failure.[33] Members of the Opposition, as Gillray's print suggests, took the latter view – adding Corunna to the catalogue of Britain's failed expeditions.

Moore's letters from Spain were laid before the Commons in March 1809 and appeared in the *Courier* from 24 March. Throughout *Cintra* Wordsworth testifies to his uneasy awareness of the fragility of the Anglo-Spanish alliance, despite his personal enthusiasm. He was quick to recognize, therefore, that Moore's letters – pointing to the jealousies of the Spaniards and a lack of co-operation that stalled British efforts – would render the military alliance even more volatile. In a letter to De Quincey, dated 29 March 1809, Wordsworth recounts an awkward conversation with his landlord, Mr Crump:

> As soon as he had heard the dismal tale of the chimneys and the cellars, he began to crow; and over what, think you? The inert, the lazy, the helpless, the worthless Spaniards, clapping his wings at the same time in honour of Buonaparte – this was the truth, though he perhaps was not aware how his wings were employed. Mr Crump introduced the subject and his words were: "Well, Mr. W., is there no good to come of this? What do you say to rooting out the Friars – abolishing the Inquisition – sweeping away the feudal tenures –" in short, though he did not mean to defend Buonaparte, "Oh no, on no account! yet certainly he would be a great Benefactor to the Spaniards: they were such vile slaves." (*Letters* 306)

While the anecdote is punctuated by the writer's self-conscious efforts to amuse, it smacks, nevertheless, of despair. Wordsworth, describing Mr Crump as one who "crows" and "clap[s] his wings," ridicules the landlord whose anti-Spanish prejudices harboured unconscious pro-Napoleonic sentiments (notwithstanding his landlord's vigorous assertions to the contrary). Wordsworth's use of depersonification soon gives way, however, to a different kind of comedy when he summarizes: "In short, I

found this good and excellent man (I do believe as kind a hearted attorney as breathes) completely saturated with Roscoism" (*Letters* 306). The Unitarian William Roscoe had stood as an independent candidate in the Liverpool elections of 1806 with a manifesto distinguished by his staunch opposition to the slave trade, calls for peace with France, and the instigation of parliamentary reform; in short, the kind of political thinking satirized in Gillray's 1809 print as Napoleonic Whig activism. Gillray satirizes this stance with reference to the Opposition papers labeled "Nods & Winks at Buonaparte" and "Motion against the Ministry for assisting the Spanish Patriots, & thereby giving great offence to BUONAPARTE." Wordsworth, however, is prompted to think more carefully of "causes." He explains to De Quincey that "[Mr Crump] quoted, as proofs of the miserable state of public spirit upon the Pininsula [*sic*], the Letters of Sir J. Moore recently published by Government": the publication of Moore's letters had, Wordsworth realized, "made a great impression, to the prejudice of the Spaniards, both upon his mind and the minds of those with whom he associates" (*Letters* 306).

The letter to De Quincey essentially transfers *Cintra*'s didacticism to Wordsworth's private correspondence. More than merely an entertaining story, Wordsworth's anecdote lends itself to a reflective discussion of his own impressions of Sir John Moore, and a request that De Quincey (now entrusted with his pamphlet's publication) supplement *Cintra* with a postscript on Moore's letters.[34] The conversation with his landlord had convinced Wordsworth of the need to "obviate the unfavourable impression" exacerbated by the letters' public appearance. His distance from London made him wary, however, of assuming the duty himself: with *Cintra* finally "passing through the press," Wordsworth could ill afford any delays occasioned by the vagaries of the provincial post. His decision to delegate the

responsibility to De Quincey was, nonetheless, a difficult one. Although his own knowledge of Moore was gleaned, he admits, from the four letters recently printed in the *Courier*, Wordsworth insisted that his opinion was already "completely made up": Moore was "a sober, steady-minded man, but without any comprehensiveness or originality of mind, and totally unfit for so arduous a situation" (*Letters* 307). Concluding with an impatient acknowledgement that Moore's death-in -battle was likely to make the public "cowardly," Wordsworth's instructions for De Quincey's postscript were riddled by the ironies that characterized his pamphlet.

Cintra is, consequently, a crucial document for literary historians interested in the development of Wordsworth's political thought and evolving sense of identity – as both poet and patriot.[35] The prints by Cruikshank, Gillray, Rowlandson, and Williams analysed in this article have provided important evidence of the public mood affecting Wordsworth during the composition and publication of his pamphlet. But these prints have also offered much more than just a record of public opinion. As political weapons in their own right, satirical prints were used not only to recount contemporary events, but to influence and persuade diverse audiences. Produced in response to the same political scandals as Wordsworth's *Cintra*, this article has contended that satirical prints can – and should – be read alongside the historical arguments and rhetorical techniques employed by Wordsworth in his pamphlet.

The development of the satirical print ran "parallel to the extension of political information, debate and assertiveness in ever widening circles of British society" (Donald 1). In implicit acknowledgement of this overlap between the artistic and political, Wordsworth, akin to many contemporary caricaturists, made the courageous decision to print his name on his work's title page. But while there were certainly several points of contact between the two media, this article has also underscored

their differences by highlighting, for instance, how Wordsworth was acutely preoccupied with charges of libel, in contrast to visual artists, who enjoyed relative freedom from censorship.[36] George Cruikshank's "Whitlock [*sic*] the Second or another Tarnish of British Valor" and Charles Williams's "Iohn [*sic*] Bull amongst the Spaniards, or Boney decently provided for" have also been read in counterpoint to *Cintra* insofar as they exhibit the very stereotypes of the Spanish character that Wordsworth necessarily sought to revise in his own writing. By the same token, Gillray's prints "The Loyal Address – or – the Procession of the Hampshire Hogs" and "Patriotic Petitions on the Convention" serve as reminders of the anti-Jacobin threats the author desperately tried to avoid. All, however, are useful for carving out a context for *Cintra*, including Gillray's "Overthrow of the Republican – Babel," which gives an indication of the public's preoccupations in May 1809 when Wordsworth's pamphlet finally made it to the press. Differences can thus be as illuminating as similarities: the profusion of prints produced in response to the Convention of Cintra, mismanagement of the Peninsular War and Duke of York scandal offer, in short, a colorful representation of the narratives of political corruption, error, immorality and radicalism, which defined Wordsworth's pamphlet and determined its vexed publication history.

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Notes

[1] All references to *Cintra* in this article are to the edition prepared by Richard Gravil and W.J.B. Owen. Citations using the short title *Cintra* will be used hereafter parenthetically within the text.

[2] By contrast, Simon Bainbridge, David Bromwich, Deirdre Coleman, Stephen Gill, Timothy Fulford, and Gordon Kent Thomas have produced impressive modern studies of the political, philosophical, and personal importance Wordsworth attached to his longest prose work.
[3] Only the *British Critic*, *London Review*, and *Eclectic Review* published reviews of Wordsworth's *Cintra*. There was general agreement that *Cintra* deserved qualified praise; the harshest response was from the *British Critic*, on account of Wordsworth's political views.
[4] See also Wordsworth's letter to Francis Wrangham (3 Dec 1808: *Letters* 278).
[5] Significantly, satirical prints were sold not only in specialist printshops, but often as single sheets in bookshops (Donald 2) where, in 1809, Wordsworth's pamphlet could also be purchased.
[6] This is memorably captured by the popular anecdote that Hannah Humphrey's window displays were so enticing that iron railings had to be erected outside her printshop in order to prevent the crush of enthusiastic onlookers.
[7] For an iconographic depiction of the departure of the Portuguese court to Brazil see Isaac Cruikhsank's "Boney stark mad or more ships colonies & commerce" (1808) (BM Satires 10960).
[8] The Treaty of Tilsit, signed in July 1807, saw Russia form an alliance with France against Britain, effectively securing Napoleon's supremacy in Europe, by leaving only Britain, Sweden and Portugal to oppose him (Fremont-Barnes 35).
[9] The revolt in Asturias began on 24 May 1808. By 30 May, the neighbouring province of Galicia was also in open rebellion (see *Cintra* 106).
[10] Cf. Isaac Cruikshank's "Iohn Bull pursuing the exraordinary [*sic*] gazette!!" (October 1808, BM Satires 11045), wherein a newsboy urges John Bull to "put on [his] large spectacles" and read the *Gazette* (headed "Convention between Sir hew Dalyrmple & the French General Junot").
[11] *Courier*, 27 September 1808.
[12] In early May 1809 Wordsworth wrote to Coleridge on Wellesley's promotion to General in Chief of Portugal as proof of the need to keep "as close a connection as possible in the minds of men between disapprobation or hatred of vice and of the vitious [*sic*] person, of crime and of the criminal" (5 May 1809: *Letters* 333).
[13] Dorothy Wordsworth was acutely aware of the disadvantages entailed by *Cintra*'s delayed publication: "What a pity that it did not come out sooner! It would have been then much plainer to all Readers (very few of whom will bear in mind *the time* at which the Tract was written) what a true prophet he has been" (15 June 1809: *Letters* 356-7).
[14] Walcheren and Talavera would soon be added to the British army's list of comparable military embarrassments.
[15] See Southey's letter to Humphrey Senhouse dated 19 October 1808 (*New Letters* 484).
[16] Wordsworth sent a copy of his pamphlet to Lord Lonsdale soon after publication (15 May 1809: *Letters* 346). On *Cintra*'s complex implications for Wordsworth's relationship with Lonsdale see Burke, 519-529.
[17] *Courier*, 5 October 1808.
[18] *Courier*, 13 October 1808.
[19] This is reflected in Wordsworth's original title for his pamphlet: *The Convention of Cintra brought to the Test of Principles; and the People of Great Britain vindicated from the Charge of having prejudged it*. See Wordsworth's letter to Francis Wrangham (3 December 1808: *Letters* 278); and *Cintra* 122.
[20] The generals' defenders had argued that "prejudging" amounted to a violation of English liberties. In refutation, Wordsworth claims that even the ministers were liable to charges of prejudging, "by ordering that tidings should be communicated with rejoicings" (*Cintra* 163).
[21] *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 26 November 1808.
[22] *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 24 September 1808.
[23] For Wordsworth's anxious desire to prevent a libel case on *Cintra*, see his letters to De Quincey, written in early May 1809 (*Letters* 329; 340).
[24] See Wordsworth's poems "The French and the Spanish Guerrillas" (composed c.1810), and "Spanish Guerrillas" (dated 1811) (Ketcham 72-3).
[25] See *Courier*, 7 January 1809.
[26] Religion features prominently in Wordsworth's pamphlet, with the Spaniards' Catholicism lauded as "one of the best hopes of the cause." See *Cintra*, 215-216.
[27] On Spain as a "counter-text" for Britain, see Saglia 66.
[28] This kind of generalization was not unusual. See, for instance, Walter Scott's *The Vision of Don Roderick* (1811), a poem ostensibly written to provide "relief for the Portugueze Sufferers" but predicated upon an exclusively Spanish theme.

[29] For Wordsworth's desire to see "Spain, Italy, France, Germany, formed into independent nations," see his letter to Capt. Pasley (28 March 1811: *Letters* 480).
[30] E.g. Isaac Cruikshank's "A Standing Toast in the Army" (BM Satires 11259) and Thomas Rowlandson's "The Road of Preferment through Clarke's Passage" (BM Satires 11239) both published in 1809. N.B. In 1812, the Duke of York was re-instated to his post.
[31] Writing to Daniel Stuart, Wordsworth affirmed his support for "temperate reform," vented his frustration that the *Courier* had both screened Castlereagh (who, as Secretary of War, had sent Wellesley back to the Peninsula as Commander-in-Chief) and assumed a tone of such "extreme bitterness … against all those who have countenanced, in connection with Burdett, the attempt at reform" (25 May 1809: *Letters* 344-345). For Wordsworth's strong opposition to Wellesley's re-deployment, see his letter to Stuart dated 3 May 1809 (*Letters* 328).
[32] In a letter to Francis Wrangham Wordsworth jokes that his title is akin to "a Table of Contents" (end March 1809: *Letters* 312).
[33] N.B. Walter Scott notably fails to include Moore in the catalogue of Scottish military heroes celebrated in *The Vision of Don Roderick*.
[34] Wordsworth's decision to include the postscript was further informed by his belief that Moore had been a supporter of the Convention of Cintra. See his letters to Stuart and De Quincey (5 February 1809: *Letters* 289; 24 May 1809: *Letters* 342 respectively).
[35] Wordsworth's decision to defer the publication of his "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty" is likely, at least in part, to have been occasioned by *Cintra*'s poor sales. By December 1810, Wordsworth was, reportedly, "so disgusted with critics, Readers, newspaper-Readers – and the talking public" that even Dorothy and Mary Wordsworth's best entreaties for publication proved fruitless (*Letters* 460). Wordsworth's sonnets, which give poetic form to many of the political hopes expressed for Spain in his *Cintra* pamphlet, would only appear in print at the end of the war, in 1815.
[36] N.B. Coleridge also signed his name to "Letters on the Spaniards," a decision Dorothy Wordsworth remarks upon in her letter to Lady Beaumont (28 December 1809: *Letters* 380).

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