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Charlotte Smith's "Mute Arbitress of Tides" and Cosmic Vulnerability

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<1>By 1789, Charlotte Smith's collection *Elegiac Sonnets* was enjoying enough commercial success to justify a fifth, enlarged edition. She had originally composed a slender volume of sixteen sonnets, and had delivered it to her publisher hoping to raise funds for her husband's debts. Now, five years past that crisis (though her family life was seldom uncomplicated), she offered this latest edition comprised of nearly sixty sonnets to satisfy a different demand: the hunger of an ever-growing subscription of admirers who saw Smith as the savior of a poetic form that had experienced a decline since the death of John Milton. This subscription included the young Cambridge student William Wordsworth, future Poet Laureate, who eagerly annotated his copy. Later, when Smith's fame had waned and his had risen, he would credit her as a major influence, not only on him, but on English verse entirely.(1)

<2>Smith's sonnets, as their collection's title announced, trended toward melancholy subject matter, voicing passionate sadness from a female perspective, often presumed by readers to be autobiographical. In this regard, her work summoned the spirit of its time, when emotional extravagance was in vogue, especially in the form of sentimental fiction; for good reason, the historical moment itself is sometimes styled the Age of Sensibility. Rooting her imagery in the natural world, and experimenting freely with the formal, structural traditions of the sonnet, Smith also channeled the energies of a burgeoning Romanticism that would come to define the work of the rising generation of poets. *Elegiac Sonnets* was, then, both of and ahead of its time.

<3>Among the new poems for the 1789 edition was one that would prove to be especially influential for her poetic successors: sonnet 44, "Written in the Church Yard at Middleton in Sussex."

PRESS'D by the Moon, mute arbitress of tides,
While the loud equinox its power combines,
The sea no more its swelling surge confines,
But o'er the shrinking land sublimely rides.
The wild blast, rising from the Western cave,
Drives the huge billows from their heaving bed;
Tears from their grassy tombs the village dead,
And breaks the silent sabbath of the grave!
With shells and sea-weed mingled, on the shore
Lo! their bones whiten in the frequent wave;
But vain to them the winds and waters rave;
They hear the warring elements no more:
While I am doom'd—by life's long storm opprest,
To gaze with envy, on their gloomy rest. (44)

Smith's speaker observes the waves eroding a cliffside cemetery, and the now-disinterred bones of the village dead whipped around in the wild sea's tumult; with a numb envy for the dead's indifference to it all, she laments her own oppressed state of mind.

<4>The poem's opening lines foreground celestial influence: the Moon joins orbital forces with the solar equinox (unclearly cued to spring or fall, though, tonally, the poem favors fall), and here Smith rightly knows that equinoctial tides are indeed wilder, as the sun exerts a stronger pull. From "Press'd" to "opprest," the extremity of this moment faces Smith with the existential observation that life on Earth is inevitably subject to external powers; if "rest" is a sought-for boon, then it is one granted only at the morbid transition from sensing subject to senseless object. And even then, this escape is dubious: although, mercifully, the dead cannot know it, their bones continue to bleach and shift restlessly in the Moon-driven waves, hardly a restful afterlife.

<5>The present essay centers on Smith's "mute arbitress" Moon, asking two distinct but related questions. First, what was the cultural etymology of that phrase in British literature and its classical antecedents? In other words, where did it come from, and (though I will not follow this line quite so far) where did it go after Smith? And second, what was the scientific basis, in 1789, for Smith's general notion of cosmic vulnerability, by which I mean her explicit and implicit notions of Earth's and its inhabitants' exposure to risk and influence from extraplanetary sources? These questions are related insofar as this vulnerability found dual forms of expression: *literally* as tidal forces (which were coming to be well understood by the

late eighteenth century), and *figuratively* as conceptualizations of the Moon as distant but not disinterested, sitting in judgment on human affairs or directing them as (metaphorical) tides. In exploring the topic of cosmic vulnerability, it will be necessary to situate Smith's lunar focus within a broader astronomical discourse, beyond that related to the Moon.

<6>In venturing into lunar tropes, it is worth noting that I am not interested in the well-trodden ground of *lunacy*, which was a topic already clichéd enough by the eighteenth century that—to cite one example—Thomas Paine, urging the Earl of Shelburne to accept America's inevitable independence could casually quip without annotation:

> …your lordship says, "*the sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America*."—Whereas the metaphor would have been strictly just to have left the sun wholly out of the figure, and have ascribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon. (9-10)

In a similar vein, I am not pursuing the idea of the Moon dictating or enabling criminal or recreational mischief, such as Lord Byron's weary "roving / By the light of moon" (315). Nor am I dealing with scholarship on literary astrology, or looking to build on feminist work about the Moon and (its cognate term) menstruation.(2) Finally, while this topic will require some discussion of classical mythology as a context, my interest is more in the Moon *per se*, than in lunar allegories. Where lunar mythology does arise, I will make little distinction among the often-conflated Greco-Roman figures of Artemis, Selene, Cynthia, Luna, and Diana. In keeping with most of my sources, I will generally refer to the Roman Diana, but that should be understood as an inclusive name.

The Origins and Afterlives of Smith's "Mute Arbitress"

<7>Smith's "Moon, mute arbitress" suggests a mediator in a reticent position of authority. On its own, although an uncommon word, "arbitress" does have a substantial history preceding Smith's usage, appearing in the writings of Charles Fitzgeoffrey (Campbell 140), Jonathan Swift (59), William Mason (1), and others. By the mid eighteenth century, the word might have resonated most strongly with the popular author and actress Eliza Haywood, who had become colloquially known as the "Great Arbitress of Passion" (Saxton 1). Apart from that, descriptions of the Moon as mute, quiet or silent abound in Western literature dating to antiquity.(3) But Smith's conjunction of these elements invites a more specialized phrasal genealogy.

<8>As other readers have noticed, the phrase most conspicuously nods to Milton's *Paradise Lost*: in book 1, Milton describes Satan and his rebel band shrinking themselves to inhabit their newly-constructed Pandemonium, and in the midst of an elaborate simile describing that transformation, the narrator conjures a peasant's hypothetical dream in which "the Moon / Sits Arbitress":

> They but now who seemed
> In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
> Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
> Throng numberless—like that pigmean race
> Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
> Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
> Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
> Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon
> Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth
> Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
> Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
> At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
> Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
> Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
> Though without number still, amidst the hall
> Of that infernal court. (231)

The peasant shepherd in this construction either sees or dreams that he sees the object of Milton's simile: a dancing group of elves; the Moon both illuminates the revelries and doubles the peasant's observer status as she "wheels her pale course," presumably arbitrating what is real and unreal, and whether "joy" or "fear" shall prevail.

<9>Milton is likely the originator of the Moon/arbitress word-pairing. The late-seventeenth-century commentator Patrick Hume, in annotating *Paradise Lost*, conjured a connection to Lucian, invoking the Latin phrase "*noctis arbitram*" (approximately 'judge of the night') but there is no plausible source for this claim, and it is made further dubious by the fact that Lucian wrote in Greek, not Latin, and that "*noctis arbitram*" makes little grammatical sense as a Latin formulation (Hume 51). It is here perhaps worth mentioning that Thomas Newton, who followed Hume as an early editor and biographer of Milton, complained that Hume's copious notes harbored "infinite heaps of rubbish" (iii).

<10>Earlier examples of the pairing seem to be nonexistent, though one analogue does appear in the second volume (1607) of William Camden's *Britannia*, a Latin-language topographical and historical survey of the British Isles, in which Camden cast the Moon in the guise of the mythological Cynthia as "*moderatrix*"—a governor or director (259). It would be a rather lax translation to make this into "arbitress," but in his English version of *Britannia*, Bishop Edmund Gibson did just that, parsing the phrase: "wandering Cynthia, arbitress o'the main" (287). Gibson's version arrived in 1695—too late to have influenced Milton—and in fact late enough to have been influenced by him—but we cannot rule out his rendering as an unlikely alternative source for Smith, and, although a stretch, it is not impossible to suppose that Milton too might have parsed Camden's Latin in a similar fashion prior to penning *Paradise Lost*.

<11>Hume, in his questionable sourcing of the phrase, may have conflated Lucian with Horace. In his fifth *Epode*, Horace does use an appositional phrase reminiscent of "*noctis arbitram*," though it is "*arbitra nox*," imagining night herself as a judge and witness of darkling affairs. The Moon is there too, in the form of Diana, "*quae silentium regis*": that is, she who rules over silence (119). Whether Milton had Horace in mind, one cannot know, but, either way, his "Moon / Sits Arbitress" would remain a distinctive phrase, not a derivative one, and it is Smith's most probable inspiration.

<12>The afterlives of Smith's "mute arbitress" phrase are more varied, arising almost immediately upon publication and persisting throughout the nineteenth century. Smith was, almost doubtlessly, Oscar Wilde's muse, in his 1881 "The Burden of Itys," wherein "like a blossom blown before the breeze / A white moon drifts across the shimmering sky, / Mute arbitress of all thy sad, thy rapturous threnody" (81). Wilde's invocation closes a century of such echoes and approximations; later canonical references are rare.

<13>Among others between Smith and Wilde was Henry Kirke White, whose own sonnet "To the Moon: Written in November" was first published in 1802, and then collected posthumously by Robert Southey in 1807. Kirke White's poem bears resemblance to Smith's in its imagery if not in his optimistic tone: he hails the moon as the "pale arbitress of night" whose unfailing illumination recalls to him—anticipating Percy Shelley's ode "To the West Wind" a decade later—that nature's constancy prevails, and even autumn's brisk winds bear harbingers of spring (102).

<14>Kirke's White's "pale arbitress" phrasing is less exactly Smith-ian than Wilde's "mute arbitress," but given Kirke White's imagery and the sonnet form of

his poem, he presumably had Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* in mind, and perhaps more predominantly than *Paradise Lost*, when composing it. In a serialized prose work called "Melancholy Hours," published in the same magazine (and parts of it in the very same issue) as "To the Moon," Kirke White had in fact praised Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* as "standards of excellence"; although he quibbled with some of her obsolete phrasings, he did not refrain from celebrating her versification as "unequaled in the English language" (246).

<15>There were numerous approximations of Smith's phrase in the ensuing years as well. Wordsworth, for example, would conjure the Moon as a quiet, paling feminine figure of authority, if not a Miltonic/Smithian mute arbitress *per se*. Rather, in his 1835 "To the Moon" (his second poem of the same title written that year), as a "silent Monitress" (II. 180). Monitress, suggesting a feminine overseer, mentor or adviser, was and remains an uncommon word. Before Wordsworth, it was to be found in writings by Samuel Richardson (54) and Sir Walter Scott (153), neither of them in reference to the Moon, and seldom elsewhere. Wordsworth's poem—with allusions here and there to his recently-deceased friend Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight" and to Shakespeare's sonnet 116—casts the Moon in an advisory role, the speaker praying to the Moon that we might "Receive whatever good 'tis given thee to dispense," and that we "May [whether] sage [or] simple, catch[]… The moral intimations of the sky." Wordsworth was a devoted Miltonist, but this moralizing Moon in direct, silent conversation with a receiving mind recalls Smith's sonnet (which, as mentioned, he carefully annotated) more than it does *Paradise Lost*.

<16>Kirke White, Wordsworth and Wilde are but a few points along a busy phrasal genealogy, but they are perhaps adequate to illustrate that, with some frequency after Smith's poem, the Moon was being troped as a silent but entrancing feminine figure of justice.

<17>On the one hand, we find the Moon arbitrating and monitoring the tides. The Romantic movement that followed Smith would offer many other iterations of such Moon/tide interactions, including Wordsworth's 1802 "The World Is Too Much With Us" ("The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon" [III. 18]), or various moments in Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (as helpfully explicated by Abe Delson and Thomas Owens (4)) or his Eolian-harp-like conjuring of tidal interplay in his poem "To William Wordsworth." John Keats's poetry is rife with further examples, often via the figure of Diana, as captured in several phrases from *Endymion, e.g.*: "O Moon! Far-spooming Ocean bows to thee" (108). Lord Byron's apocalyptic poem "Darkness" puts the trope *in extremis* as a gruesome

absence: “The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave, / The moon, their mistress, had expir'd before” (273).

<18>On the other hand, this trope sees the Moon arbitrating and monitoring human feelings, with their own tidal ebbs and flows. Here we might look to Helen Maria Williams’s 1791 sonnet “To the Moon,” in which the Moon’s “pensive rays” are cast as emanations of “sympathy” that guide her through suffering to “visionary thoughts” (244). Likewise, we can find Wordsworth, in another 1835 Moon poem, still exploring the notion of the “moral intimations of the sky,” offering a rebuttal to the cliched mischief and lunacy of something like Byron’s moonlight misdeeds in *Don Juan*, with an invocation:

> Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly bright
> Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,
> To fiercer mood the phrenzy-stricken brain,
> Let me a *compensating* faith maintain;
> That there's a sensitive, a tender, part
> Which thou canst touch in every human heart,
> For healing and composure. (“To the Moon,” II. 177)

<19>Lurking behind all of these references is the specter of Diana. In Charlotte Smith’s other lunar sonnets, the attribution is clear: in sonnet 4 (as with several of the other poems mentioned, entitled simply “To the Moon”), the Moon is addressed as the “Queen of the silver bow!” and Smith lays the foundation that Helen Maria Williams would build on: “in thy orb, the wretched may have rest: / The sufferers of the earth perhaps may go, / Releas'd by Death — to thy benignant sphere” (4). Similarly, in sonnet 59, which arrived in the 1792 sixth edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, the Moon appears as the stately royal of mythology: “Night’s regent” who gazes placidly upon the conflicts of earth with “unsullied dignity”—her mute arbitrations here rendered as a kind of quiet moral superiority (59).(5)

<20>Diana (doubled with the Greek Artemis) was typically figured as Apollo’s twin: the goddess of the Moon, the lovesick ensarer of the mortal Endymion, and the patroness of childbirth and the hunt, often represented with her silver bow in hand.(6) Notably, for the present discussion, she was not primarily regarded as a justice-oriented or judgmental deity, but insofar as she *was*, her judgments governed the moon’s waxing and waning and their effects on the tides, speaking to a transitory power. She could likewise determine the success or failure of a hunt, bring light to darkness or, at whim, benight the earth. There could also be vengeance in Diana’s

nature, though this was a trait more frequently found in the precursory tales of Artemis.(7)

<21>The demurring of Diana in the quoted poems—as "mute," as "silent," as "pale"—plays into the quiescence of the Moon as an object and symbol, and Diana does often feature as a quiet observer rather than a blustering force. But one cannot help sensing a disturbing theme at work here as well, especially noteworthy for a poem written in the era of Mary Wollstonecraft: the muting of female power and the silencing of women's voices.(8) If Smith allegorically negotiates female political influence through the figure of her "mute arbitress" Moon, then the Moon's regal, Diana-esque muteness may also betray Smith's (presumably unhappy) awareness of contemporary abridgements of such influence.

Cosmic Vulnerability

<22>Apart from its lexical and cultural etymology, Smith's seemingly placid but silently threatening Moon may also be emblematic of a cosmos whose volatility was becoming increasingly clear to observers in the late eighteenth century. Although nearly all of the phrasally-linked passages above point to an interplanetary relationship in which the Moon and the Earth share a connection that exceeds mere gravity or superstition, Smith escalates this relationship into the realm of outright conflict. Her Moon's mute arbitrations, after all, rip the earth apart, regurgitating grim *mementos mori* in the form of the village dead now exhumed by the tides. As with Byron's "Darkness" this is an extravagantly sublime example of gravitational destruction: Byron's was one of lunar abdication; hers a capricious tyranny. Smith, and some of those who followed her in her channeling of Milton's "arbitress" Moon, evinced an emerging cosmology in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century: one that furthered the Copernican decentering of Earth with the dire thought of Earth's own potential exposure to cosmic risk.

<23>Comets in particular were becoming a focus for such discourse.(9) The apparition of a comet had long been regarded as an evil omen; per one 1596 source, for example: "There appeared a comet according to the Greeks […] which appearing abo[v]e the horizo[n] three months, portended great mischiefes, both to Rome and Italie: For after it, insued a great plague, and after that a worse famine, and besides, the hea[v]ens so conspired against man that many were consumed by lightning" (Lodge 64). The same source documents several other (certainly questionable) instances. Likewise, among many widely-trafficked examples, the death of Julius Caesar was said to be heralded by a comet, and a popular but unsubstantiated story has it that in 1456, Pope Callixtus III had formally excommunicated a comet (the

same one whose periodicity would later be described by Edmond Halley and would bear his name) for its perceived inspirations of devilry.(10)

<24>Actual cometary impacts were becoming a less mystical and perhaps more unsettling prospect as well. Halley, in the 1680s, had suspected that such impacts were a possibility, and even pondered whether certain geological features were scars from such occurrences in the past (Chapman 180). His Swiss contemporary Jacob Bernoulli had aroused specific fears on the issue, predicting that a comet witnessed in 1680 would return in May of 1719 as an "infallible sign of the wrath of heaven": a return that did not come to pass (Proctor 236). But, much closer to Smith's moment, in May of 1773, there was a far more widespread panic, accidentally induced by a French astronomer named Joseph Lalande. Lalande merely shared the title of a forthcoming presentation for the Academy of Sciences: "Reflections on those Comets which can approach the Earth"; the dark imaginings of his contemporaries filled in the rest, revealing just how inclined they were to envision such cosmic doom. As it was later memorialized:

> [F]rom that one fact [the title of his presentation], not only were vague rumours of approaching cometic troubles spread abroad, but the statement was definitely made that on May 20 or 21, 1773, a comet would encounter the earth. So great was the fear thus excited, that, in order to calm it, Lalande inserted in the 'Gazette de France' of May 7, 1773, the following advertisement:— 'M. Lalande […] would observe that […] The next comet whose return is expected […] is not one of those which can hurt the earth.'
>
> This note had not the slightest effect in restoring peace to the minds of unscientific Frenchmen. M. Lalande's study was crowded with anxious persons who came to inquire about his memoir. Certain devout folk, 'as ignorant as they were imbecile,' says a contemporary journal, begged the Archbishop of Paris to appoint forty hours' prayer to avert the danger. (Proctor 234-35)

Voltaire was among the *more* 'scientific' Frenchmen to attempt to quell (and mock) those caught up in the comet scare of 1773, but his efforts did not stop some from fleeing the French capital in search of safety. In the end, the comet did not reappear as projected, but similar panics would ensue. One, half a century later, led the *London Times* (which had followed the original French crisis closely(11)) to invoke Lalande's still creditable name in suggesting that a projected near miss, at 13,000 leagues, in 1832 could so influence tides that "the deluge would be universal" (Anonymous 2).

<25>Such wild tides and deluges had long been a part of comet discourse, and appear to have been no less worrisome than direct impacts. In a lengthy 1696 tome entitled *A New Theory of the Earth*—its subtitle promising to show that the "Universal DELUGE […] As laid down in the Holy Scriptures [… was] perfectly agreeable to REASON and PHILOSOPHY," William Whiston proposed that the biblical flood was caused by an icy inundation "[w]hen the Earth passed clear through the *Atmosphere* and *Tail* of the Comet, in which it would remain for about 10 or 12 hours" (301).This after Whiston provided painstaking calculations in order to determine the precise date and time of the deluge. A one-time assistant to Isaac Newton, Whiston would eventually come under fire for heresy, but his thoughts about the flood outlived him.

<26>Indeed, had Charlotte Smith been so inclined, she might have attended public lectures on the matter: by the1780s, Adam Walker, who had invented the Eidouranion, a large transparent orrery, later assisted by his son William, was actively sharing his supposed findings that Jupiter had been swayed from its orbit by a passing comet. William would later embellish these talks in a book that incorporated them, offering a sensational escalation of Whiston's argument—imagining tidal forces beyond the power of any "mute arbitress":(12)

> The vestiges of the Deluge are so remarkable, both on the surface and within the bowels of the Earth, that if examined without prejudice, they prove, I think, beyond a doubt, that awful revolution to have been the work of a Comet. Not that the moisture of its tail drowned the World, as was unphilosophically suggested by Whiston; but if the attraction of the Moon be capable of raising the water of the sea above its common level, what effects might not be supposed from the near approach of a body perhaps many thousand times larger than the Moon? If a tide by such an attraction was raised three or four miles above the level of the Sea, the Earth, by turning on its axis, would have that protuberance dragged over the land, and its surface would be plowed up into those inequalities we call mountains. (unpaginated)

Attempts to hyperbolize the biblical flood did not end there. Clearly indebted to Whiston, and to Walker's vision of a gigantic comet, the English painter John Martin, in his 1826 canvas (remade on a massive scale in 1834) entitled "The Deluge," went even further, entertaining the idea of a Sun, Moon and comet tripartite collision as the cause.(13) It would appear such apocalyptic encounters were of popular taste: Byron, too, had wondered "when a comet shall approach this globe to destroy it," as he supposed had happened often before, erasing all evidence of earlier civilizations (Medwin 282).

<27>A related matter, the non-terrestrial origin of meteors was an emergent revelation in Smith's time; they were previously thought to come from volcanoes on Earth, a misconception most persuasively dismissed by German physicist Ernst Chladni in 1794 (Marvin "Erns" B8). This discovery would eventually pave the way for astronomers to understand *lunar* craters not—as Johannes Hevelius, Robert Hooke and William Herschel had(14)—as evidence of volcanoes on the Moon, which was still imagined by some to be inhabited,(15) but as impact craters on a cold and lifeless sphere. Understandably, then, the Moon's heavily pockmarked surface signaled a new source of anxiety.(16)

<28>Moreover, as with comets, meteors too were long associated with calamitous human consequences beyond the risk of physical impact. For example, by the end of the eighteenth century, Noah Webster—himself no less concerned with comets—could tally a significant list of meteor-related pandemics:

> The influenza of 1708 was preceded by a meteor or fiery globe. In 1758 was a meteor, and the measles began in America. In 1771 a meteor, and then commenced influenza and measles. In 1775 a meteor, and then the cynanche maligna prevailed. In 1783 two meteors, and then commenced measles and scarlantia anginose. In 1788 a meteor, and immediately began the measles. If these coincidences are all the work of chance, they are certainly a very singular kind of accidents. (497-98)

Reminiscent of astrological mysticism, such perceptions of celestial observations and human affairs as anything beyond coincidental suggests that even with major developments in astronomy, the notion of humankind's intertwinement with the cosmos was a stubborn one, shifting—without changing much—from the realm of spiritual interpretation to that of scientific conjecture.

<29>All of this accords with Dometa Wiegand Brothers's argument in *The Romantic Imagination and Astronomy*, that the great scientific arc of the Romantic period was one of paradigm-shifting de-centering and a multiplication of perspectives.(17) Contemporary star- and Moon-gazers were seeing the night sky in a new and unsettling context: the glories of the night sky were evolving from primarily spectacles of wonder (or mythological canvases, or sources of clockwork motion by which to reckon time and navigation) to—also—objects of apprehension, as scientists and lay observers alike began to appreciate the universe as a precarious place, and the Earth as being in a position of sublime tenuousness. To understand this is to view Smith's sonnet in a new light, her "mute arbitress" Moon figuring not only a Miltonic observer of human anxiety, but also a newly-recognized form of

cosmic contingency—that is, a relationship with a cosmos that could seem perilous, at times judgmental, and always inscrutably mute, and disconcertingly arbitrary.

The views expressed in this essay are those of the author, and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Naval Academy, Department of the Navy, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

Notes

(1)Per Wordsworth, Smith was "an author to whom "English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered" (II. 362).(^)

(2)To note only one example, Chris Bobel's monograph *New Blood: Third-Wave Feminism and the Politics of Menstruation* (Rutgers, 2010).(^)

(3)Examples are too numerous to list, but to cite perhaps the most canonical one, see Virgil's *Aeneid* II.255: "*silentia lunae*" (310).(^)

(4)See Abe Delson, "The Symbolism of the Sun and Moon in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 15.4 (1974), 707-20; also Thomas Owens, "Astronomy at Stowey: The Wordsworths and Coleridge," *The Wordsworth Circle* 43.1 (2012), 25-29.(^)

(5)Here I want to bracket off an interesting counternarrative—one that is particularly notable in Henry Derozio's poems, both in his "Sonnet: To the Moon" and his "Sonnet: To the Rising Moon" from his 1828 volume. In these, Derozio figures the moon not as the arbitress or monitress of earth or human affairs, but, rather, as the recipient of human judgment: the moon is "too near earth / Ever to witness rosy pleasure's birth" and so she is "pale with sympathy," even blushing with embarrassment (205). This is a fascinating if unsurprising hierarchical inversion in the writing of a young Indian poet in British-administered Kolkata, articulating the Moon/Earth relationship from the lunar point of view.(^)

(6)See Lempriere's *Bibliotheca Classica* (unpaginated) for a period accounting of Diana that was a profound influence for Keats, and almost certainly informed Smith as well.(^)

(7)See, for example, the tale of Iphigenia, in which Agamemnon incurs the wrath of Artemis, who requires his daughter's sacrifice in retaliation (Lucretius 29).(^)

(8)This theme warrants attention beyond the scope of the present discussion and might usefully connect with Jacqueline Labbe's work (in *Charlotte Smith: Romanticism, Poetry, and the Culture of Gender* [Manchester, 2011]) on Smith's poem *The Emigrants*. (Labbe herself briefly considers the "mute arbitress" passage too.) Moreover, for feminist appraisals of Diana, Gil Haroian-Guerin's book *The Fatal Hero* (Lang, 1996) is indispensable, tracing the symbological emergence of Diana from (indeed) muted Romantic spectacle to Victorian archetype of the so-called New Woman. Finally, in her excellent *Little Songs: Women, Silence, and the Nineteenth-Century Sonnet* (Ohio State, 2007), Amy Billone focuses on the motif and the critical practice of silencing, referring to the historical irony of Smith's own erasure from the canon when styling *Smith herself* as the "mute arbitress of grief" (13-46).(^)

(9)See Marilyn Gaull, 38.(^)

(10)See Schwarz (unpaginated).(^)

(11)See, for example, April 17, 1789, p. 3: an entry that chronicled the French panic and also commented on that of 1680.(^)

(12)Beginning with its fourteenth edition in 1800, though he did include his "Dissertation on the Probable Cause of the Deluge" in earlier editions. For more on the Walkers, see Golinski.(^)

(13)See the Paul Mellon Collection at the Yale Center for British Art: B1978.43.11. (https://collections.britishart.yale.edu/catalog/tms:5017)(^)

(14)In 1647, Hevelius published *Selenographia*, featuring lunar maps with detailed illustrations of surface craters, but he did not suppose them to be the result of anything extralunar. Hooke's 1665 *Micrographia* followed suit, explaining that, just as on earth, the "pits, or dishes of the Moon" are created by "Vulcans," animated by "subterranean fires, or heat, [and] great quantities of vapours" (244). In 1787 Herschel reported to the Royal Society that he had himself in fact directly witnessed a volcanic eruption on the moon, though his observation was, within several decades, explained away as an optical illusion recreated by subsequent observers (Holden 334). Hooke, to his credit, *had* theorized the possibility of lunar impact craters—and had even performed an experiment dropping bullets onto soft surfaces in order to test the theory—but had ultimately ruled it an improbability. Immanuel Kant, in his 1798-99 *Essays and Treatises on Moral, Political, and Various Philosophical Subjects*, had included an essay entitled "On the Volcanos in the Moon," offering

yet another possibility—primordial, nonvolcanic eruptions during Earth's chaotic, formative phase.(^)

(15)See, for example, Johann Schroeter's influential *Selenotopographische Fragmente* (1791), widely read and commented upon in England, which posited intelligent beings on the Moon.(^)

(16)This revelation did not achieve undeniability until the 1890s, with the work of Grove Karl Gilbert, but it was very much alive in discussion long before then (Marvin "Geology" 30).(^)

(17)This is the essential argument of Wiegand Brothers's book; her chapter on Coleridge and Herschel is especially relevant.(^)

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