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Sentiments of travel: Madame de Staël on Sweden

Madame de Staël, likt en strålande meteor, passerade över Nordens horisont.

"Madame de Staël, like a radiant meteor, passed over the Nordic horizon." Thus wrote the Uppsalian Romantic poet Vilhelm Fredrik Palmblad of Germaine de Staël's sojourn in Sweden in the winter of 1812-13.¹ Staël's impact on Sweden could indeed be likened to that of a meteor – or a bomb as the French *chargé d'affaires* Cabre put it² – and although her stay was short, it was not soon forgotten. Staël was immortalized in Swedish history books for the excitement she brought to Stockholm courtly society, for her small role in Sweden's decision to join the Fourth Coalition against Napoleon, and for her campaign to put the Swedish Crown Prince Bernadotte on the French throne.³ Staël's place in Swedish history was further secured by the Swedes' perception of her as an oddity: her detractors wrote that she could not restrain herself from offering the Crown Prince unsolicited advice, while the journals of more sympathetic observers show that Bernadotte sought her out and consulted her at all hours. Regardless of one's impression of Staël, she played a most untraditional role for a woman.

In addition to Staël's renown as a novelist, essayist, and political agitator is the often ignored but noteworthy fact that she contributed to the development of Swedish Romantic literature. The earliest expression of this literature was embodied by the Uppsala Romantics, otherwise known as the *fosforister*, or Phosphorists, named after their literary journal *Phosphoros*.⁴ Although most of their inspiration issued from Germany, as a proponent of the Germanic school and having authored *Corinne ou l'Italie* (1807), Germaine de Staël was their sibyl. In fact the Phosphorists revered her so highly that most of them were frightened to meet the great lady, and forfeited their chance when she traveled through Uppsala.⁵

Staël is best known today for *De l'Allemagne* (1813), first presented in 1810, which helped usher in Romanticism to early nineteenth-century France. This historical and cultural study brought to light the social and literary merits of Germany, and invited French intellectuals to look at the many achievements of their eastern neighbors. Staël mistakenly believed that if Napoleon would only read her manuscript, he would see that she had France's best interest in mind, but she was severely disillusioned. It is difficult to imagine how she could have so wrongly predicted the book's effect during an era in which ideological challenge was suppressed and most official interest in foreign cultures was limited to military campaigns.⁶ The effect of

her book on the Emperor was quite the opposite to what she expected, and only concretized his contempt for her. Her reward for *De l'Allemagne* was an order of exile.

From 1795, Staël had at different times suffered various degrees of exile.⁷ This time she was confined to her Swiss estate Coppet, and threatened with imprisonment should she try to leave. One after the other, the friends who came to visit her at Coppet were proscribed. On May 23, 1812, Staël ordered dinner as she did on any ordinary day, boarded her carriage with a fan in her hand as if she were going for a short drive, but never returned for the meal that awaited her. She had set out on tortuous escape route instead, one which would take her through Russia, Finland, and Sweden on her way to England. Staël arrived in Stockholm in September, and stayed there for nine months before setting sail for England.

There were a host of reasons behind Staël's extended sojourn in Sweden. Most obvious was her claim by marriage to Swedish nationality; also important was the fact that Bernadotte, whom she considered the ideal mixture of North, South, republicanism and monarchy, was now Crown Prince. Another pressing issue was the future of her children, for her own political activity had all but ruined their chances for diplomatic or military careers in France or Switzerland. During the winter of 1812-13, Staël's 15 year old daughter Albertine was presented at court, and her sons were given a respectful start. Auguste, 22, was placed in the diplomatic corps, and Albert, 20, was made officer in the hussars of the royal guard.⁸ Staël herself began *Considérations sur la Révolution française* (1818), collaborated with others on more up-to-the-minute European problems,⁹ and finished *Réflexions sur le suicide* (1812), an apology for an earlier stance in defence of suicide.¹⁰ The tone of her *salon* was more political than ever. In January 1813, Bernadotte met with the Prussian Minister von Tarrach at Mme de Staël's house to discuss the possibility of Prussia's entry into the Coalition. In February she held a formal dinner to which all the ministers in Stockholm were invited, regardless of whether they had joined the Coalition. She also continued to work on a book on her years in exile and considered the idea of a travel piece on Sweden.

Because so many of her extensive experiences of travel and exile find their way into her work, a good proportion of Staël's œuvre, fiction as well as non-fiction, fits the travel subgenre. All of her travel literature can be considered autobiographical, or at least semiautobiographical, because it is a representation of her personal experiences abroad. *De l'Allemagne*, for example, although an essentially historical and sociological study, becomes both travel writing and autobiography through Staël's recounting of her adventures in Germany; *Corinne*, published in 1807, is the story of a young Italian poetess who, unhappy with her stepmother in England, forsakes everything to return to Italy, and is a transposition into fictional mode of Staël's struggle to come into her own as a writer despite her parents' censure.

The parallels between Corinne's and Staël's experience of cultural and social exile are nothing less than transparently autobiographical.

In many ways, travel was a vocation for Staël, for it took on an extremely selfless dimension when she set about instructing the reader about a given culture or working to reinforce friendly ties between different countries. It is clear, if only from the risks she took in publishing *De l'Allemagne*, that her sense of moral duty outweighed any instinct for self-preservation. Because it allowed her to investigate, demystify and promote interest in places traditionally perceived as uninteresting or even threatening, the travel genre was well-suited to Staël's ideological agenda.

But travel writing also had a more personal function. In her desire to write down the circumstances of her life, Staël discovered in this mode a powerful instrument with which to color the reader's reaction and to charge the description of places, things and people with her own emotional mood. To do so she made skillful use of scenery and people to reflect her affective life and to give a voice to her suffering. Her travel writings on Sweden and the North in *De l'Allemagne, Dix années d'exil* (1818), and in the *Carnets de voyage* underline this important function of her literature, which was not only to serve as a chronicle for her voyages, but also to serve as a vehicle for her emotional experiences, both positive and negative.

As she explored the North, Staël's grey surroundings were caught up in her quest for self-expression; every landmark and monument was a possible representation of her sentiments, and Staëlian feelings of travel were given new depth as her travel description echoed her emotional state. «Tout est eau et glaces dans le nord. Les frimas du mois d'août. Chante triste des oiseaux [...] Nature qui se meurt et qui cependant tourmente.»¹¹

Staël's vision by metaphor was such that the prison she passed in the Gulf of Bothnia could be interpreted as the symbol of her house arrest at Coppet, just as the treacherous sea from which she viewed it might be the emblem of her escape. The proximity of forest to water in Stockholm made possible her description of the illusion of boats floating among the trees, underlining the strangeness she found in this new land, and the feeling of having reached the edge of the earth. Each of Staël's descriptions offers a unique interpretation, and lends a perhaps otherwise absent significance to the landmarks she passed in her travels.

Yet Stendhal complained that there was insufficient description in Staël's works: "Not enough color," he jotted in the margin of his copy of *De l'Allemagne*.¹² In fact, Staël's descriptions of the landscape were not merely gratuitous, but served a specific, narrow purpose. Nature in itself was not valuable; what Staël coveted instead was its symbolic potential to describe the interior state.¹³ It was not until the generation of the French Romantic poets who followed her that extensive description of destinations and landscapes became common currency.

C.W. Thompson and others have argued that the French Romantics, es-

pecially in the pieces we term travel literature, were engaged in a search for energy. Whether that energy was moral, political, creative, geological, or other, the desired outcome of harnessing it was the power of creativity and renewal.¹⁴ Staël's texts embody a similar quest, but what exactly she sought is not manifest. Was it the physical energy Hugo sought? Moral energy like Stendhal? Perhaps a bit of both, but more important was Staël's autobiographical quest. Tired of the hazards of the road, yet forced into exile, Staël found in her writing a reason to continue. Not only was the text a form of private salvation, but presented to the public, it was tangible, textual evidence of her sorrow. Through her written works she was able to create atmosphere out of numbness, render life and history romantic, and thereby made her life in exile worthwhile. Writing of what she saw in the North was her way of creating a story in the minds of her readers where she feared there might otherwise have been none, for beyond Staël's self-doubt and internal crisis was the very real fact that she often wrote from places remote to Paris, the only place she felt she had truly "lived". Her letters from abroad – especially those written in Sweden – consistently point to her fear of being forgotten. By writing a text which could symbolically reconstitute her fear and suffering, she found a way to re-establish herself in the minds of those she left behind. Instead of succumbing to her sadness, she was able instead to make it fruitful. By writing of her travels and of her exile, she could express her experiences and her pain and engaged in a Romantic search for self, voice, and vision.

Thus Staël's notebooks were much more than simply works on the logistical, physical and social process of the voyage; they contained not only descriptive observations, but equally powerful sentimental ones as well. Indeed the *emotional* experience of a border crossing was as rich as the one which took place at a more "rational", or descriptive level. By incorporating the feelings of travel into her writings, Staëlian travel description was both the echo of her torment and the expression of her joy and hope. If she once wrote, «Voyager est le plus triste plaisir de la vie [...]»,¹⁵ she nonetheless managed to find traces of joy in her displacements, for she thrived on full emotional experience, something she felt deprived of when confined in Switzerland to Coppet.

True to the Romantic tradition which she was helping to forge, sensations and intuitions were at least as important as empirical observation. In the South, where «on [...] sent qu'on vit»,¹⁶ one also experienced «une sensation du midi.»¹⁷ As she was leaving Italy for England, Staël's heroine Corinne wrote, «Je m'avancais vers le nord; sensation triste et sombre que j'éprouvais, sans en concevoir bien clairement la cause.»¹⁸ In her travel journals, Staël's feelings unleashed an enthusiastic imagination: «Je sentais ce menaçant hiver qui se cachait derrière les nuages – comme si la main glacée du Nord eût été déjà prête à la saisir.»¹⁹ And when it came to her conception of distances, her awareness was more visceral and imaginative

than intellectual. From Switzerland she wrote to a friend in Sweden: «Vous qui je sens si loin de moi [...]»,²⁰ and on the way to Petersburg she wrote, «On sent en Russie à la porte d'une autre terre [...]».²¹

Years before she ever imagined an extended sojourn in exile in Sweden, Staël dreamed of a mystical, majestic North. In *De la littérature* (1800) and *De l'Allemagne* she covered the mythological, literary, and social aspects of this distant territory, using imagery of a strange and eerie register. References to harsh cold and images of death in the North abounded in Staël's writing, and in their totality constituted a particular system which I term here an "aesthetics of doom". The sense of gloom and impending doom ever-present in her texts was no Staëlian invention, but a characteristic feature of much of the German Romantic literature which deeply marked her. Staël's palette of sentiments helped create a mood of titillating darkness and proximity to death, important elements of the Romantic aesthetic, but it was the addition of her unmistakable *enthousiasme* to this aesthetic which set her writing apart.²² *De l'Allemagne* bears witness to her horrified fascination for a dark, unknown North, whose mystery grew in proportion to the distance traveled towards the pole. This brand of northern exoticism is a fundamental part of the Staëlian aesthetics of doom, which discovered beauty in looming tragedy, evoked *frissons* at the specter of death in nature, and took perverse comfort in the dark, cold emptiness of winter. The tension peaked when Staël focused her imagery on the spring-winter, life-death, boredom-danger opponent concepts. Berthier shows that the Staëlian North is not simply the opposite of the South, but is the photographic negative, its hollow imprint.²³ The effect of her mystical and lyrical descriptions of this vast, undiscovered land was not very different from our modern thrill and fear of outer space:

Nous connaissons à peine le Nord qui touche aux confins de la terre vivante; les longues nuits des contrées septentrionales, pendant lesquelles le reflet de la neige sert seule de lumière à la terre: ces ténèbres qui bordent l'horizon dans le lointain lors même que la voûte des cieux est éclairée par les étoiles, tout semble donner l'idée d'un espace inconnu, d'un univers nocturne dont notre monde est environné [...] tout porte, dans ces contrées nébuleuses, un caractère de grandeur et de tristesse.²⁴

This description, written years before her sojourn in Sweden, transmitted her excitement at the idea of the North. Before 1812 her ideas on Scandinavia were a purely speculative extension of what she had experienced in Germany, but once her tortuous journey to England took her as far north as Russia, Finland, and Sweden, she was able to compare her pre-departure readings and notions to the reality she found there.

When Staël arrived in Stockholm in September of 1812, her enthusiasm was still running high. She had been there barely three weeks when she wrote to a friend: «Je vais écrire sur le Nord, comme je l'ai fait sur le Midi, je crois que cela sera curieux comme Europe et comme Asie.»²⁵ As is evi-

denced by her subsequent personal correspondence, however, many of her predictions proved untrue, and her enthusiasm for Swedish society did not survive her stay in Stockholm. Her plan to write on "The Kingdoms of the North" never went beyond the barest sketches, although she never abandoned the project altogether. Unfortunately, her lack of interest was apparent, and her meager jottings lacked the vigor of her earlier writings. She wrote next to nothing of her social transactions and her personal experiences, and most of the notes she did take were ideas scribbled down as she perused the writings of earlier French travelers to Scandinavia. Although Staël's own thoughts revealed her respect for Swedish society, they hardly did justice to the exciting sketches she had drawn in the pre-departure works. The following typifies the sort of notes she took:

En rien, de l'ostentation [...] Indifférence des Suédois pour le gain [...] Paisibilité de la société en ne disant rien sur rien [...] Bienfaisance en Suède. Peu d'industrie [...] Justice très bien administrée en Suède [...] Presque point de crimes en Suède [...] Manque d'émulation [...] Peu d'idées des plaisirs que l'argent peut donner.²⁶

In her most intimate writings, letters to her friends, she revealed considerable dissatisfaction and profound boredom with Sweden. While in her pre-departure writings the Nordic climate evoked images of ghosts from an earlier era, now it was no more than dull, grey, depressing, and a menace to good health. The Swedes themselves fared no better in her opinion: hospitable but calm, silent, and lacking originality, their company quickly became tedious to her. Perhaps the effect of the long, dark winter on her mood could explain the drop in interest. In a letter to her friend Juliette Récamier, she wrote:

C'est un pays triste que celui que j'habite [...] le ciel et la terre y sont bien gris [...] Ma santé [...] est fort éprouvée par ce climat.²⁷

These were the impressions conveyed over and over again in her letters.²⁸

Staël found her life in Sweden entirely devoid of *enthousiasme*, the same phenomenon that Mary Wollstonecraft, while traveling through Sweden, described as "that tender melancholy which, sublimating the imagination, exalts rather than depresses the mind."²⁹ Indeed Staël's failure to continue writing on Sweden may be every bit as important as what she did manage to write. Staël's period of forced inactivity at Coppet had seemed death-like to her, and now her travels across Europe filled her with a new sensation of life.³⁰ Throughout most of the body of Staëlian travel literature, there is proof that Staël experienced borders, landscapes, passages, and distances with the intensity of feeling that was so absent during her time of constriction at Coppet. Clearly this was not the case in Sweden. She required a high register of emotion in order to thrive, and was disappointed in Stockholm when she found her existence there only slightly more exciting than the monotonous life she

had led at her Swiss estate. She discovered that her idea of the North was only a myth which, replaced by reality, could barely hold her interest.

Beyond this simple explanation of Staël's boredom and disinterest as a reason for her failure to write more is a perhaps more complicated one which looks to the interplay between observer and observed. We have seen that Staël's ideas were fuelled by the landscapes and the cultures she encountered. But the inverse was true as well, for the landscape she chose to portray was invariably charged by her own emotional experience. Staël's grey portrayal of Sweden can be at least partially explained by what might be called an exteriorization of the sentiments. Béatrice Le Gall showed that by linking natural surroundings and sentimental experience in *Corinne*, the novel contained both an interiorization of the landscape and an exteriorization of the inner, emotional state. By extracting the character of the various regions of Italy and attributing to each a psychological value to fit the plot, she created a complicated relationship between hero, action and nature. Certainly this novelistic technique applied to Staël's travel writings as well.

It seems likely that the dark Swedish winter and monotonous cold dampened her mood and informed some of the bleakness of her writings. But Staël's responsibility for the character of her output cannot be ignored either. She was let down by this Sweden which in no way matched her expectations about the savage, noble North, and her disappointment found its expression in her colorless, paltry literary efforts. Once again a comparison of Staël's novel with her Swedish travel writing is useful. Vallois shows that the title *Corinne ou l'Italie* represents an important underlying theme of the novel: the substitution of the toponymic for the patronymic; in other words, place signifying, perhaps even replacing, person. Was Corinne not the spiritual and physical representation of Italy, and was Oswald not terminally ill-suited to Corinne by his *Englishness* alone? Corinne and Oswald were, after all, the metaphorical doubles of the cultures they represented. And that is precisely how this model explains why Mme de Staël wrote no more on Stockholm and Scandinavia: she refused Sweden as the metaphorical double of herself.

In her semi-autobiographical novel *Illusionerna* (1836), or *Illusions*, the Baroness von Knorring recounted the suspicions with which Staël was first received in Stockholm. She cited the whispered observations of one of Staël's Stockholm adversaries that from the start Staël had been gathering materials for her supposed next novel *Maja Lisa ou la Suède*. But what her detractor meant as satire was not as amusing as he thought, for it is clear that Staël had indeed once harbored an interest in writing on Sweden. Furthermore, the travel journal cum novel had already proved a smashing success in 1807 with *Corinne*. But could Staël really have written another *Corinne ou l'Italie* – a northern version like *Maja Lisa ou la Suède*?

In *De l'Allemagne*, she wrote that the entire universe symbolized the emotions of the soul³¹ and showed that every part of the universe was a mirror in which all of creation is represented. In Italy she discovered a part of herself

she liked and admired; in Sweden she found a dark, depressing region of sentiments, a tension with no satisfying resolution.³² Staël quickly wore out all possibilities for the exteriorization of her sentiments in the North, and she so feared the interiorization of this part of the universe that she shut it out entirely. Years earlier when she had first conceived of *Corinne* she wrote to a friend:

J'écrirai une espèce de roman qui servira de cadre au voyage d'Italie et je crois que beaucoup de pensées et de sentiments trouveront leur place là.³³

She could not do this with Sweden, however, for her experience there provided her with emptiness and sorrow, feelings which on their own did not a novel make. If she had at one time hoped to carry out a similar project on the North, once she was "on site" she discovered that to write on Sweden, to *become* that country and to make its culture absorb part of her very being lacked all the pleasure of her Italian or German experiences. To write on Sweden was painful, both because of the absence of sentiments and by the black nature, well beyond melancholy, of the few feelings she did have.

Staël was motivated by a sense of duty, and perhaps her greatest contribution was that of piquing French interest in other cultures.³⁴ Her commitment to the task was evident from the deep personal investment she made. Early on she exhibited the same marks of personal involvement as she had with Italy and Germany and Russia, but once in Sweden, her writing on the country dropped off altogether. Although it may appear that in Sweden Staël's sense of duty took a back seat to her own particular desires for the first time, a consideration of the link between her writings and her inner life provides a more complete explanation. Without *enthousiasme*, the incense that linked heaven and earth, she was speechless. During the Scandinavian winter she found little to ignite that ephemeral ingredient, and thus lost her chance to interpret and explain the Northern destination which at one time had so fascinated her.

Staël's admirers can hardly mourn her silence on Sweden, however, for it was in Stockholm that she came closest to the political glory of her distant dreams. For the first time she had a voice that was officially recognized, for the first time she was allowed to play a direct, albeit small, political role. It was through her relations with Sweden that Staël was allowed to make a great step for womankind in an era of little opportunity.

Notes

¹ Palmblad was a prominent Uppsala Romantic and the editor of the journal of the Uppsala Romantic school, *Phosphoros*. Johannes Wickman quotes him in *Mme de Staël och Sverige*, Lund 1811, p. IV.

² King, 26.

³ By promoting Sweden's entry into the war, she played a decisive role in Napoleon's defeat.

⁴ *Phosphoros* was founded in 1810 by Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom and was published until 1813.

⁵ Palmblad wrote to Hammarsköld even before Staël had arrived in Sweden: "A.W. Schlegel och mad. Staël äro bland de, dem jag mest längtar att se, jag vill ej säga känna, ty jag dyrkar dem som gudar. Hvad du är lycklig, som sannolikt får tala med dem." (A.W. Schlegel and Mme de Staël are among those people I would most like to see. I don't want to say know, for I worship them like gods. How fortunate you are, you who will probably get to talk to them.) Quoted in Ljunggren, 418. Worthy of consideration is the fact that the Uppsala Romantics didn't speak French. Furthermore, they were aware that Staël had been friendly with the classicists in Stockholm, and that she frequently received Pehr Adam Wallmark (1777-1858), the King's librarian, well known for his *Journalen* and adherent of the classicist tradition.

⁶ Perhaps the best example of Napoleon's cultural narrow vision was the Imperial University, his overarching attempt to give the state control over all education, and to forbid instruction in subjects such as history and geography for fear that they promote subversive thinking.

⁷ Formerly a moderate in favor of a constitutional monarchy, in 1795 she expressed her faith in a Republic. Still, she was regarded with mistrust and was sent into exile after the abortive royalist coup. In 1803 Germaine de Staël was forced to leave Paris. In 1806 she was ordered to stay 40 leagues from the capital, and in 1812 she was confined to her Swiss estate.

⁸ Albertine, born 8 June 1798; Auguste, born 31 August 1790; and Albert, 20 November 1792 to 12 July 1813. Albert was killed in a duel in Dobran over a gambling debt on 12 July 1813, not long after his mother arrived in England.

⁹ The German philosopher A.W. Schlegel, who had been tutor to Staël's children, traveled with Staël to Sweden, where he published *Sur le Système Continental* (1813). When it was first published, it was widely believed that Staël herself had written it because of the ideas and vocabulary it contained, and even by its style. Although Staël insisted that she had no part in it and attributed it entirely to Schlegel, it is not at all improbable that she played some role in the creation of the text.

¹⁰ A stance made clear in both *De l'influence des passions* (1796) and in *Delphine* (1803).

¹¹ Taken from unpublished notes found among Staël's writings on the North. (48ème mémento) Many thanks to Simone Balayé for providing transcriptions of Staël's travel notes not included in the *Carnets de voyage*.

¹² Carlo Cordié, "Marginalia inedite di Stendhal su opere della Staël e del Berchet", *Convivium*, 1952, t.I, p. 70. Quoted in Béatrice Le Gall, «Le Paysage chez Madame de Staël», *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* jan-mars 1966, 1, p. 38-51.

¹³ Le Gall, 47.

¹⁴ Thompson, 307-19.

¹⁵ Quoted by Simone Balayé in *Carnets de voyage*, p. 9.

¹⁶ *Corinne ou l'Italie* 369.

¹⁷ *Carnets de voyage* 258. See also Mary Wollstonecraft's "solitary birds, which began to feel, rather than see, the advancing day." Letter 5, *Letters Written During A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*. London, 1796.

¹⁸ *Corinne ou l'Italie* 362.

¹⁹ *Dix années d'exil* 203.

²⁰ In an unpublished letter to Friederike Brun, 10 January 1811.

²¹ *Dix années d'exil* 29.

²² For more on the Staëlian idea of *enthousiasme*, see Anne Amend, «Le système de l'enthousiasme d'après Mme de Staël». *Actes du V^e Colloque Coppet*, Tübingen, 8-10 juillet 1993. Paris: Touzot 1994, p. 269.

²³ Berthier, Philippe. «L'orange d'Islande: Stendhal et le mythe du Nord». *Romantisme*, 1977, 205-227, p. 207.

²⁴ *De l'Allemagne* II, 15.

²⁵ Unpublished letter to Hochet, 19 October 1812, kindly supplied by Simone Balayé.

²⁶ *Carnets de voyage* 343-44.

²⁷ Letter to Juliette Récamier, 18 October 1812, printed in Emmanuel beau de Loménie, ed., *Lettres de Madame de Staël à Madame de Récamier*. Paris: Domat 1952, p. 239.

²⁸ Many scribblings in her travel journal that recall her pre-departure excitement were not her own, but instead were inspired by the thoughts of others. Simone Balayé shows that as Staël read La Tournay, she wrote of the Nordic God Odin: «L'enfer d'Odin est de glace; un froid d'enfer». From La Tournay, *Promenades d'un Français en Suède*, Brunswick, 1801, quoted in *Carnets de voyage* (343). Balayé also shows that Staël copied the Scythians' alleged words to Alexander the Great as rendered in *Histoire de Suède* by the Baron Pufendorf: «Quand même vous auriez dompté l'Orient et l'Occident, vous auriez encore envie de conquérir les pays septentrionaux où le soleil se cache en certain temps».

²⁹ Wollstonecraft, letter 5, *op.cit.*

³⁰ Her heroine Corinne said that she could easily pass for dead in England, that place where life was but a restless sleep. (*Corinne* 383).

³¹ *De l'Allemagne* II, 118, quoted by Le Gall, p. 50.

³² *De l'Allemagne* IV, 248; quoted by Le Gall, p. 51.

³³ Letter to Suard, 4 novembre 1802, in R. de Luppé, *Mme de Staël et J.B. Suard. Correspondance inédite 1786-1817* (Genève: Droz, 1970).

³⁴ Her approach to all literature reflected the Enlightenment ideal. She wrote repeatedly that literature played an important social role and should render its readers more civilized, open, virtuous and reasonable.

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