

THE PRIVILEGES OF PATRIOTISM: NATIONAL IDENTITY, NATIONALISM AND
FEMINISM IN THE *ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW OF SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL
QUESTIONS*, 1880-1889

by

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Abstract

Historians have recently begun to recognise the importance of gender and other ideologies in the formation of national identities. The "masculine" nature of national identity in nineteenth century England obstructs attempts by historians to describe a female nationalism; however, women did experience themselves as nationals despite the apparent conflict between national identity and "femininity." The *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions* was a feminist periodical published by women who were articulate both about nationality and gender. Here, the 1880s issues of the *Review* are interrogated for their understandings first of "Englishness"; then of "womanhood"; and then of their description of "Englishwomen." The women represented in the *Review* had a powerful national identity which was constructed by a knitting together of their understandings of Englishness and womanhood. Women's activities were viewed in terms of their national significance, and concepts of nation and nationality were articulated in a language of "feminine" interests. These understandings constituted significant departures from "dominant" discourses of femininity and the state. At the same time, the discourse of Englishwomanhood produced in the *Review* was conservative, inasmuch as it reproduced most of the "dominant" notions of Englishness current among the urban middle class. These liberal values had a considerable impact on the feminism recorded in the *Review*; this kind of feminism was (and is) profoundly shaped by its alliance to "Englishness."

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Introduction: Women and National Identity in Late Nineteenth Century England

In one of the flagship journals of nineteenth century English feminism, the reviewer of a book on Balkan politics suggested that "Apart from [the book's] literary interest, our attention is specially directed to the devotion and patriotism of the Greek women in the deliverance of their country from the intolerable tyranny of Turkey...it is worthy of consideration how, in the most enslaved, as well as in the freest countries, the sentiment of patriotism is shared by both sexes alike, though, even among free nations the privileges of patriotism may be reserved for one sex alone."¹ Even in the remotest corner of its January 1887 issue, the *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions* picked out women's relationship to national identity and nationalism as one of its central concerns. It posed a question worthy of our consideration still, less in the specific context of women's demands for the privileges of citizenship (e.g. the vote), but because the relationship between gender and nationality which piqued the writers and readers of the *Review* is still little explored.

The producers of the *Review* were centrally concerned with women's active relationships with the state and with the social body known as the nation. Powerful loyalties to the state and the nation significantly shaped the feminist movement represented in the *Review*; yet little if any of this female nationalism has been recognized in the literature on nineteenth century British national identity, even by writers who are peculiarly concerned with the role constructed for and by women within it. When Raphael Samuel wrote in his preface to

¹Review of the book titled *The Growth of Freedom in the Balkan Peninsular*, *The Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions*, V. 18, p. 30. Citations from this publication will hereafter include volume and page number only; all others will be otherwise identified.

Patriotism that "Ideologically, [women] were the objects rather than the subjects of patriotism: those for whom wars were fought; those whom legislation protected; those whom 'the nation' honoured precisely because of their exclusion from the public sphere,"² he neatly summed up the role accorded to women, both by contemporaries and many historians, in nineteenth century British nationalism.

Women's absence from representations of nineteenth century British national identity is the result of constraints placed both on historical actors and historians by conflicts between nineteenth century discourses of femininity and nationalism. Femininity and national identity in the nineteenth century appear to be mutually exclusive identifications, the characteristics attributed to one marginalizing the characteristics of the other. Within the discourse of nineteenth century nationalism, women had a very limited role; conversely, within the nineteenth century discourse of femininity, the public and social life of the "nation" was excluded. As ideology, femininity and nationality rarely if ever met. Attempts to represent the "Englishwoman" of the nineteenth century have been defeated in part by authors past and present seeking her out only in one or the other of the two discursive fields.

The reproduction of nineteenth century gender ideology in twentieth century historiography has constructed a history of national identity from which women are largely absent. A common way of characterising the thinking about gender roles in the nineteenth century has been (and was) to describe it as a world of "separate spheres," in which social functions were ascribed by virtue of sex. Men

²Raphael Samuel, Preface to *Patriotism: the Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, Volume I, (London and New York: Routledge, 1989): xiv.

were believed to be best at, and therefore have a duty to fulfil, one set of duties, women another. Women's abilities were believed to lie in the domestic, personal or "private" sphere. Their charge was to furnish the home and hearth for the comfort of the men and children who also resided there. Any activities conducted in the "public" sphere or relating to the common interest, including government, wage work, and even "private" business and legal matters, were considered to be the rightful preserve of men. The divide between "public" and "private," however, was not nearly so neat as the ideal of "separate spheres" made it out to be, and women were significantly involved in many matters of "public" importance, as men were involved in the "private." Women's participation in public life was constrained though by the desire or necessity of their interests appearing to be confined to family matters.³

Contemporaries who held the doctrine of "separate spheres" frequently professed a belief that the two spheres were equally valuable. However, charging women only with "domestic" duties excluded women from participating officially and fully in the important public institutions. The official absence of women from public life in Britain during the nineteenth century had important consequences for the nature and formation of national identities during that period. The nation is a peculiarly public entity, and developing a national identity depends upon engaging in public life and understanding oneself as part of a "national" community. Gender ideology, which proscribed women's participation in public life, worked to exclude women - or at least femininity - from the discourse of national identity.

³see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

National identity in the nineteenth century thus appears to be a male prerogative, produced and reproduced within a strictly male culture. Maleness was equated with the personal qualities which, Linda Colley writes in *Britons*, were thought to characterize British culture,⁴ and established which persons might effectively engage in public life and national institutions. It was through national institutions, particularly Parliament, the Anglican church, and Oxford and Cambridge, that English national identity was produced and reproduced in the late nineteenth century.⁵ Those institutions enforced the doctrine of separate spheres, by admitting and serving the interests of a male constituency, and by reproducing a national identity which was associated with "male" qualities and abilities. Linda Mackay and Pat Thane, in their article on the Englishwoman 1880-1920, observe that "one of the distinctions between male and female was that the concept of nationality was almost always on the male side of the divide."⁶ It is particularly within nineteenth century English national identity, which was constructed in masculine institutions and traditions, that nationality appears to be a male prerogative.

National identity was then very much shaped by gender, specifically by notions of masculinity. This makes women's national identity a problematic topic. Historians representing women's national identity have sought to record the ways in which women might have perceived themselves as English mostly through their own gendered roles, in essence have tried to establish a feminine version of

⁴Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707 - 1837*. (New Haven and London, Yale U. P. , 1992): 252.

⁵Philip Dodd, "Englishness and the Political Culture," Robert Colls and Philip Dodd, eds. *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880 - 1920*. (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986): 1-28.

⁶Jane Mackay and Pat Thane, "The Englishwoman", *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880 - 1920*: 191.

a masculine ideology. Much of the writing around Englishwomen's national identity has focussed on women's gendered responsibilities in the moral and familial spheres, particularly as mothers.⁷ While these representations are successful within their scope, their efforts to insert the "private" ideology of femininity into the "public" masculine ideology of nationality have generally resulted in the construction of women as being outside or marginal to the process of producing and reproducing an English national identity.

Because the masculine attributes of nationality tended to elide the discourse of femininity, the possibilities for putting a feminine face on national identity are (and were) limited. Linda Mackay and Pat Thane find that the Englishwoman of the 1880s-1920s "...remains a more shadowy figure than the Englishman."⁸ With a few exceptions, such as the construction of motherhood as a national institution, and the Queen Caroline affair in the eighteenth century that drew women into the "public" sphere,⁹ the discourse of the feminine excluded women from the public life in which a national identity was produced. Furthermore, peculiarly feminine characteristics were thought to be shared by women in all nations, and were therefore no foundation upon which to build a national identity. The absence of a public role, the supposed transnational or essential nature of femininity, and the attribution of nationality as a form of patrimony, all worked to exclude women from participating in national discourse. Mackay and Thane find the conflict between the discourses of femininity and nationality so

⁷see Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood", *History Workshop Journal*, 1978(5): 9-65; Mackay and Thane; and Linda Colley. Linda Colley's is the most considerate handling of the issue of women's gender and nationality; she does find however that women exercised their public presence largely on 'moral' issues.

⁸Mackay and Thane: 191.

⁹Linda Colley: 265-268.

powerful that they draw the conclusion that women were prevented from establishing any significant national identity. Within the nineteenth century discourse of femininity, women's national identity could only be insignificant and unfixed.

The discourse of nationality elided the discourse of femininity, leaving the Englishwoman a "shadowy figure." This historiographical reading is, however, less a result of women's lack of experience of a national identity than it is the consequence of women's national identity being difficult to recognize. Because gender was so central to national discourse, women's national identity was certainly different from men's; thoughtful exploration of how women's gender affected their national identity is required to describe its difference. The dilemma bears considerable resemblance to the problem of assessing women's role in colonialism, and demands similar strategies for its resolution. Sara Mills describes the problem in her study of nineteenth century European women's travel literature: "[women] cannot be said to speak from outside colonial discourse, but their relation to the dominant discourse is problematic because of its conflict with the discourses of 'femininity', which were operating on them in equal, and sometimes stronger, measure."¹⁰ The discourse of femininity likewise operated on women's national identity, and vice versa; the two fields converged to form a different discourse that incorporated elements of both, and challenged both.

The convergence of two competing discourses did not produce an absence, a "shadowy figure," but an Englishwoman who lived a sometimes contradictory experience of her femininity and her nationality. While nineteenth century

¹⁰Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1991): 63.

femininity and national identity were not compatible as ideologies, as experiences they could be united within a single subject. Denise Riley's insight that gendered or even sexed identities are not experienced by individuals in a continuous or stable manner¹¹ provides an important reminder that even women who conformed to contemporary notions of femininity could have experiences that opposed their femininity. Recognizing that competing identities might be alternatively or simultaneously adopted by individuals and communities allows the historian a means of understanding nineteenth century national identity outside of the terms of its own gendered discourse.

Denise Riley has drawn attention to the temporal instability of gender identities within individuals and communities. National identities are understood by some of its students in much the same way. Certainly the historical processes by which national identities are built are complex. Where earlier periods of scholarship on nationalism have attempted to construct a single feature - language, race, ethnicity, etc. - as the central feature of all nationalisms, none of these attempts are now considered successful. The characteristics by which an individual might be recognized as a "national" are not historically stable, since a national identity is continually under reconstruction to allow for the adoption of new individuals under new circumstances: that is, national identity is constantly in the process of composing and recomposing itself.¹² The variety of points at which an individual can insert herself into the narrative of the nation are various - the individual citizen has different relationships to the state, and perceives different relationships

¹¹Denise Riley, *Am I That Name? Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988): 96-114.

¹²Bhaba, Homi K. Introduction to *Narrating the Nation*, ed. HKBhaba; William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990): 71.

with her "nation," depending on her physical location, her class, her gender and her sexuality. Above all, national identity is understood as an unstable ideology.

After Benedict Anderson,¹³ the national community is now commonly thought of as an imagined community, one whose boundaries are not easily mapped. The nature and contents of national identity - or, more precisely, national identities - are intimately bound up with a wide variety of historical circumstances, and offer up a wonderfully bewildering array of faces if we are prepared to recognize them.¹⁴ Locating women's national identity in the nineteenth century requires attention not only to the discourses of femininity and nationality, but to how they interacted with and informed each other, where they met, converged, and resisted one another. To discover women's national identity we must seek out sites where the two discourses converged and were negotiated, where the instability of both allowed them to be reconciled, and where that reconciliation is articulated. One of those sites is the 1880s editions of the feminist periodical publication the *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions*.

The 1880s in England was a period of particular instability with respect both to gender and national identities. In the latter decades of the nineteenth century

¹³Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. (New York: Verso, 1991).

¹⁴The problem of scholarship of 'subjectivity' in nationalism is fraught with the same difficulties as the study of the subject in other areas. William Bloom, in *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* uses social psychology's identification theory to explore the identification of individual with state, but adopting this practice is subject to the general criticism that psychological theories are historically specific and inappropriate for historical analysis. In general I have been guided by Regenia Gagnier's introductory chapter to *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Great Britain*. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), which asserts that subjectivity is historically specific, and subjects are formed according to the discourses working to identify them at any particular moment.

the English state was reconstructing itself to accommodate the "New Imperialism" and pressures towards collectivization.¹⁵ The Reform Bills of 1832, 1867 and 1884 had created an electorate novel both in its numbers and its kind, and parliamentary politics were readjusting themselves to accommodate new voters by aligning party politics to class politics.¹⁶ A variety of pressures were at work on the state that caused politicians, beginning in the 1880s, to reconstitute parliament's relationship to, and construction of, the "social," a reconstruction that ultimately resulted in the welfare state legislation of the early twentieth century. As such, the 1880s are regarded as a significant formative period in the history of English national identities, the echoes of which are being heard still.¹⁷

Part of the destabilisation and restabilization of the 1880s-1920s involved changes in women's roles, as lived and as perceived. In the 1880s women began openly to defy separate spheres ideology and marched prominently into the public sphere, as shoppers, workers, and political activists.¹⁸ The result of a changing economy, as well as demographic and other social pressures, women's participation in these arenas issued a direct challenge to the construction of femininity, and caused considerable tension. Increased female participation in

¹⁵Stuart Hall and Bill Schwarz. "State and Society, 1880 - 1930", *Crises in the British State 1880 - 1930*, Eds. Mary Langan and Bill Schwarz, (London and Dover: Hutchinson, in Association with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 1985): 7-32; Robert Calls, "Englishness and the Political Culture," *Englishness* : 29-61.

¹⁶John Belchem, *Class, Party and the Political System in Britain, 1867 - 1914*. (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

¹⁷Editor's Preface to *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880 - 1920*:

¹⁸Dorothy Thompson, "Women, Work and Politics in Nineteenth-Century England: The Problem of Authority", Jane Rendall, Editor. *Equal or Different: Women's Politics 1800-1914*. (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987): 57-249; Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*. Women in Culture and Society, Series Editor Catharine R. Stimpson. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women*. (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

"public" life occasioned a variety of responses within English culture, including the production of notions of sexual danger for women in the city¹⁹ and the creation of a generally disparaging stereotype of the "new" woman.²⁰ These new images resisted changes in women's roles by ridiculing or threatening women in the public sphere, but also accommodated those women by acknowledging their presence. The attributes of "femininity" were in the process of being renegotiated.

Some women actively and publicly campaigned for changes to women's roles, women whom historians now commonly identify as "feminists." Dorothy Thompson notes that one form of feminism was spawned by the process of professionalisation, which, as it proceeded through the nineteenth century, excluded women from areas of activity that had previously been their domain.²¹ Some women launched campaigns to retrieve offices that had customarily been a female preserve, and became active in campaigning for women's participation in various levels of government, educational institutions, employment, and for limited kinds of social change from the 1850s on. Among the most prominent of these nineteenth century feminists were those of the Langham Place Circle, a group of women friends who established offices at Langham Place in 1859, and who played a significant role in liberal nineteenth century feminism.

The premises in Langham Place, from which the Langham Place Circle derived its name, eventually housed a variety of enterprises for the assistance of women,

¹⁹Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*.

²⁰See for example Patricia Marks, *Bicycles, Bangs and Bloomers: The New Woman in the Popular Press*. (Lexington: the University Press of Kentucky, 1990).

²¹Dorothy Thompson, "Women, Work and Politics in Nineteenth-Century England: The Problem of Authority."

including a reading room and the offices of the Society for the Promotion of the Employment of Women. The original hub of the Langham Place wheel was the *Englishwoman's Journal*, a publication founded in 1858 by the (soon-to-be) Langhamites under the editorship of Bessie Rayner Parkes and Matilda Hays. A review-type monthly journal, it published articles on women's work, and women's social and political campaigns. The *Englishwoman's Journal* published only until 1864, when it was incorporated into the *Alexandra Magazine*, which itself failed in 1865. The true heir and longest lasting successor to the *Journal* was the *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions*, a quarterly established in 1866 by Langhamite Jessie Boucherett. The *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions* (hereafter also called the *Review*) recorded, in a bare bones manner dictated by its always precarious financial situation, the events, the trials, the successes and failures of English feminism from 1866 until 1910.²²

The *Review* articulated new roles for women and produced a discourse of femininity that was significantly, though not entirely, different from the one coded in the ideal of separate spheres. The *Review's* representation of women was, like much of the contested representations of feminine roles during the 1880s, particularly concerned with women's role in public life. The *Review* represented women in philanthropic, employment, and public administration roles: as public beings making contributions to public life. Feminists' concern with women's relationship to public life is evident in the most famous feminist

²²A good brief history and general description of the *Englishwoman's Journal* and *Englishwoman's Review* can be found in Janet Horowitz Murray and Myra Stark's Introduction to the *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions: An Index* compiled by Murray and Anna K. Clark. See also Jane Rendall, "A Moral Engine? Feminism, Liberalism and the English Woman's Journal", *Equal or Different*, and Sheila Herstein, "The Langham Place Circle and Feminist Periodicals of the 1860s," *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 1993 26(1): 24-27.

interests of the 1880s, the Campaign to Repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts and the more general drive for public morality that followed the *Pall Mall Gazette's* series on London's prostitution industry. These efforts were particularly concerned with women's status in community life, and how it was regulated by public institutions. In raising these issues, activist women and women's lives were called into the forbidden public sphere.

Making women's lives and roles a matter of "public" interest required a destabilisation of the discourse of the "feminine." To accomplish this revision the *Review* frequently utilised the language of patriotism, or national identity. Whether the *Review* adopted the language of patriotism to support the aims of their feminism, or their feminism produced a self-consciousness of their political citizenship,²³ it is clear that the apparently incompatible discourses of nationality and femininity were merged in its pages. The use of this language to discuss women's lives required the disruption and renegotiation both of notions of femininity and of citizenship. This negotiation, its trials, contradictions and its product - a discourse of public femininity - are recorded in the *Review*. Because it used the language of patriotism as well as the language of femininity to represent women, the *Review* is a site of conjunction, competition and reconciliation of nineteenth century discourses of femininity and Englishness.

Knitting together these two incompatible notions was not without its complications and contradictions. In her study of British national identity in the late eighteenth century, Linda Colley notes that finding a suitable language for

²³Eric Hobsbawm suggests that "...the acquisition of national consciousness cannot be separated from the acquisition of other forms of social and political consciousness during this period: they all go together." *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. (Cambridge: U.P., 1990): 130.

the representation of women's engagement in the modern state was a virtually impossible challenge, one which resulted in a relatively powerless version of 'citizenship' for women.²⁴ The 1880s issues of the *Review* were considerably more successful in reconciling female and national identities, although neither might be easily recognizable as such within the discourses of femininity/nationality which were used to produce it. Ultimately the boundaries a specifically female English national identity can be mapped in (or on) the pages of the *Review*, a bright and shining substitute for the "shadowy" figure apparently produced by the nineteenth century discourses of the feminine and the national.

A composite of the variety of identities held by the producers of the publication, the *Review* was one site where a representation of female Englishness was produced and recorded. Because the *Review* was more or less the official voice of nineteenth century liberal feminism, recording in detail the achievements of the movement and publishing articles by many of its more prominent figures, the description of Englishness in the *Review* can be considered as representative of the range of national identities amongst the supporters and activists who formed this arm of the English feminist movement. We may also suppose that the *Review* conveyed a national identity to its readership,²⁵ which, though small, may have occasionally extended outside the circle of those who would have described themselves as "for the woman's cause." As a site of production, the influence of the *Review* on notions of national identity may have been limited, but as a historical record it may represent a broader experience.

²⁴Colley, 266ff.

²⁵Berridge, Virginia. "Content Analysis and Historical Research on Newspapers", *The Press and English Society from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*. Michael Harris and Alan Lee, eds., (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986), pp. 201-228.

The *Review's* Englishwoman was, after all, produced out of a more widely held ideology, and may have been similarly produced in other sites. The women who published the *Review* were unique in nineteenth century culture inasmuch as they took a position from which to articulate political principles and ideology, including a national identity. Similar experiences of conflict and reconciliation between the discourses of femininity and nationality may have taken place within individuals and communities who have left other records or perhaps no records at all. Linda Colley describes the breadth of women who took opportunities to express their patriotism in the years of the American and French wars, and suggests that female patriotism was limited more by lack of opportunity to express the feeling than a lack of feeling itself. Women, even those whose lives were literally confined to hearth and home, had many experiences of public life and public administration with which to develop a sense of national identity. In order to grasp the full range of those identities, it is necessary to transcend our tradition of defining the nation-state and everyday life as ontologically separate domains.²⁶ In the late nineteenth century, feminism and the *Review* provided women just one opportunity to articulate a national identity; as such, it is probably only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

The *Review's* representation of the Englishwoman is traced here in an effort to reveal not only the specific nature of female Englishness in the 1880s, but some of the more general properties and functions of national identities. "Englishness" was an identity which the producers and readers of the *Review* sought out, and

²⁶John Borneman, *Belonging in the Two Berlins: Kin, State, Nation*. Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology, eds. Ernest Gellner et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 29.

which strongly informed their own identities and the ideals of their feminist movement. But as well as being articulate about what constituted the Englishwoman, the women who produced the *Review* were articulate about the difficulties they had in establishing that identity, and in the process produced some trenchant critiques of Englishness itself. The ways that national identity functioned within a movement for social change in the nineteenth century are explored here in an effort to provide some direction for the analysis of its role in present social movements.

The attributes of "Englishness" as they were described in the *Review*, predominantly those of the free-born liberal Englishman, are the subject of the first chapter. The second chapter explores the discourse of femininity or womanhood that was produced in the *Review*, and how that discourse, which was founded on sexual rather than national difference, rubbed against the grain of national identities. The third chapter considers how the two competing identities of femininity and Englishness were knitted together to characterize the "Englishwoman": the woman is represented with a supposedly masculine talent for public administration, and the 'public' is constructed as a domain for feminine talents, in need of 'national housekeeping'. The conclusion considers the relative significance of national discourse to the objectives of the *Review* as a feminist journal, and finds that it had a considerable impact on this branch of nineteenth century feminism and female identity.

The nature and function of national identities is of particular significance in this moment of national disintegration, regeneration, and reformation. The nation-state is under attack from a variety of political forces that are operating in most parts of the late-twentieth century world, and its intellectual foundations are

likewise being examined and pressured. The ways that nationalisms are illiberal or repressive has been the substance of many of the critiques of nations and nationalisms; but some authors wish also to recognise the positive or dignifying effects of an elusive and perhaps illusory ideal of citizenship.²⁷ The double edged sword of national identity, which both embraces and excludes, is evident in the efforts of the women who produced the *Review* to claim their national identity.

²⁷For examples of this considered idealism see Michael Ignatieff, "A Cosmopolitan Among the True Believers", *Harper's*, March 1988, 288(1726): 17-21; Julia Kristeva, *Nations and Nationalism*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. European Perspectives, A Series in Social Philosophy and Cultural Criticism, Lawrence D. Kritzman and Richard Wolin, Eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Leah Greenfield, "Transcending the Nation's Worth" *Reconstructing Nations and States*. The Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (*Daedalus*) 1991 122(3): 47-62.

Chapter 1: Englishness

For a woman's magazine of its period, *The Englishwoman's Review* is a grave publication. Where its contemporary, the *Girls Own Paper*, was heavily illustrated and published both fiction and non-fiction pieces in simple vocabulary and in a narrative form,²⁸ the *Review* was unornamental in its style and content. It recorded in its unrelieved, unadorned text articles like "The Legal Status of Women in England at the Present Time," which seem purposely designed not to inspire any excesses of emotional enthusiasm. The *Review's* stately expository essays addressed topics on politics, government, and the economy, giving considered opinion on points of general interest, and, it would have, significance. It was earnest, rational, and devoted to the discussion and illumination of "public" issues. By the standards of its time the *Review* was eminently "English."

The style and substance of the *Review* was developed in the context of a culture of "Englishness" that dominated amongst the urban middle-class in the 1880s. The women who supported, wrote and edited the *Review* were members of this community and political activists within it; the publication that they produced was largely shaped by its ideals. The *Review* both inscribed and responded to the notions of "Englishness" that were current amongst its producers and readers. The form and the content of the *Review* were built around a discourse of English traditions of freedom, justice, and representative government, a conception of national life that demanded and supported the aims of the liberal feminists who produced the publication. It is this national identity

²⁸The weekly *Women's Penny Paper* used the same strategy in a different format, publishing pro-female, pro-suffrage articles in the standard style of illustrated newspapers.

that the *Review* subscribed to, and used to construct both itself and its readers as “English.”

As a site for negotiating and administering the public or common interest, the state was particularly significant in the national identity expressed in the *Review*. The state had two important functions within the discourse of national identity constructed in the *Review*: one was to create the identity itself, i.e. to define the borders of Englishness; the other was to work as a focal point for that identity. It was primarily through government institutions, rather than religion, language or other aspects of culture, that the *Review* conceived the social collective named English. Other cultural discourses entered into the scope of Englishness as well, but at its centre was the “free” parliamentary tradition.

This should not be an enormous surprise. Most studies of national identity propose that nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round.²⁹ In other words, no one had a national identity until states existed. For most Europeans a national identity followed the creation of a modern nation and concept of citizenship, generally in the late eighteenth century. European uses of the word nation did not begin to absorb the connotations of cultural collective until the nineteenth century.³⁰ Clearly, the English state had a formative influence on Englishwomen’s sense of themselves inasmuch as it posed them as Englishwomen. Citizenship, however limited in privilege and persistence (supposing it was lost upon marriage) was the necessary and given first element of the *Review*’s imagination of an Englishwoman.

²⁹See for example Eric Hobsbawm: 14-45.

³⁰Hobsbawm: 14-20.

While at the core of *Review's* understanding of national identity, English citizenship was not necessarily contiguous with the borders of Englishness. The physical boundaries of the English nation were, in the 1880s various: they could be strictly English, encompass Great Britain only, include the English speaking colonies or the entire Empire. This inconsistency of state boundaries was reflected in the *Review*. Depending on the context, the *Review* wrote in an inclusive way about England, the separate nations of Great Britain, Great Britain in general, and Greater Britain, which included the colonies. The British colonies, which were often given a section in the *Foreign Notes and News* part of the magazine, were of especial interest to the *Review*, but were not constructed as "English" or "British". For instance, the colonies were included in an article titled "A Decade of Progress" which reported on the woman-positive events during the last decade in all the countries of Great Britain and the Empire. While all the nations of the Empire were included, the words India, Canada and Australia were, unlike the words England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, denoted in italics.³¹ Cultural distinctions, ultimately constructed as national distinctions, were made between Great Britain and the Empire, but not between the nations of Great Britain.

Englishness then was cultural, rather than political, and was understood by the *Review* to permeate all the nations of Great Britain. The *Review* was forced to make distinctions between the nations of Great Britain because they were governed by different laws, customs and agencies, but this was not necessarily considered to be a suitable state of affairs: writing about "Inequality of the Law for Women in Ireland," the author suggests that "...surely all these petty

³¹ V. 19: 337.

differences between the status of women in one part of the kingdom to that which they occupy in another are anomalous.”³² Although the producers of the *Review* represented the nations of Great Britain as a legitimate unity, administrative variations necessitated a distinction between England and other nations in Great Britain.³³ As a result, this London-centred enterprise identified itself and its readers as English through its very title, and article titles and topics assume an English rather than a British perspective unless otherwise specified.

Though flexible, Englishness was not arbitrary. Englishness *per se* was likely retained by the *Review* over the more encompassing identities because the publication’s greatest concern was with legislation made by English Parliament. During the 1880s the *Review* continually examined the relationships that women had with national law and public administration, as the objects of and participants in government. The range of legislation which they felt was of concern to women was wide, encompassing women in their roles as workers, parents, and citizens. Early in the 1880s they were particularly concerned with legislation that protected wives from physical and financial abuse by husbands,³⁴ and the discussion became more wide ranging as the decade progressed. In 1886 the *Review*’s list of legislative acts which were beneficial to women included the Guardianship of Infants Acts, the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, the Married Women’s Maintenance Act, the Shop Hours Regulation Act and the

³²V. 20: 208. See also V. 15: 49, “The Occupations of Women in England”, followed on p. 91 by “The Occupations of Women in Ireland,” which explains the results for Ireland and Wales are given separately because published separately.

³³How administrative acts produce nationals is the subject of Benedict Anderson’s chapter titled “Map, Museum, Census,” *Imagined Communities* : 163-186.

³⁴“The Amenities of Married Life: Some Police Cases,” V. 11: 326-329;

“Rights of Married Women,” V. 11: 520; “Monthly Digest of Decisions on Points of Law Affecting Women,” V. 12: 229.

Women's Suffrage Bill.³⁵ The *Review* recognised the significance of state regulation to a wide range of women's concerns in both their social and working lives.

This interest is a register of the *Review's* conviction that the relationship between women and the state was not accidental. These articles articulate a positive connection between women and the government under which they lived. This conviction was made explicit through their demands for the state to continue to protect women who married other nationals.³⁶ In a number of articles the *Review* demanded that English women continue to be protected by English laws despite the nationality of their spouses, a position which clearly indicates that they did not believe their nationality to be arbitrary or unfixed. Despite their continued official exclusion from parliament, and the obstacles they faced in acquiring a place in local administration, women felt some kind of significant attachment to their national government.

This attachment meant that the *Review's* attention to the legislative regulation of women's lives was not simply a recognition that women were passively affected by the state; through the 1880s discussion of national government was also a call to action on behalf of women, and in their interests as citizens. "The mothers of England, Scotland and Ireland, after ages of oppression and degradation, have asked no more than the recognition by law of their natural rights arising out of their natural relation to their own children."³⁷ This call to action was not limited to requests for legislation recognising women's "natural

³⁵"The Chronicle of a Fruitful Year," V.17: 528.

³⁶See V.11: 256; V.11:397; V. 16: 352.

³⁷"The Infants Bill," V.15:147.

rights," but also included demands for participation in the processes and institutions of the state, including elected local and national government as well as institutions like universities³⁸ which were not explicitly part of the state apparatus. The *Review* was unfailing in representing women as belonging to the nation and as having a place in its administration.

The *Review* constructed women's official exclusion from national government as an unjust denial of an already established identity. A neglected constituency, women were "half the nation that needs to be heard."³⁹ Women were not absent from national life, but their role went unrecognized because of their disenfranchised status. In "Ladies to the Rescue"⁴⁰, an article on the elections of 1885, readers were exhorted to use whatever secondary influence on the results as was possible. The *Review* tried to draw attention to the work that women did do in elections, either independently or as part of one of the political associations for women that were formed beginning in 1884.⁴¹ In 1880 the *Review* wrote that women's participation in the general election "has indubitably proved one thing; that women now look upon themselves as rightfully members of the body politic, as much as, or more than, the still disenfranchised working men in the counties

³⁸The *Review* took a great deal of interest in women's educational opportunities, and in the Record of Events section regularly reported exam results and the activities of women's colleges.

³⁹ See "Women's Suffrage - A Liberal View of the Situation," V. 15: 347-359; "The General Election", V. 11: 145; V. 11: 345; V. 15: 350; and "The Eleventh Parliament of Queen Victoria", V. 17: 3.

⁴⁰"Ladies to the Rescue," V. 16: 481.

⁴¹The Primrose League, an arm of the Conservative party, was founded in 1884. It was initially intended for men only but rapidly developed a women's organisation. The Women's Liberal Federation was founded in 1887. For a discussion of feminists' relationships to political parties, see Constance Rover, *Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain, 1866-1914*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967) pp. 106-67.

do.”⁴² The language of the *Review* not only reveals a female identification with the nation state, but also insists upon women’s place within its structures.

It was largely in discussion of national government that the *Review* constructed the social body to which its producers and readers belonged. The female producers of the *Review* asserted their right to participate in national government, despite their long and vehement exclusion from it, because they imagined themselves to be part of the community which it represented. The *Review* placed significant emphasis on elections as an expression of the “national will,”⁴³ and it is clear that these women considered participation in elected government, the freedom to join in the expression of a national will, an essential entitlement of the citizenship in which they they shared. Participation in, and representation by, a national parliamentary system government was clearly part of their conception of an English “national culture,” a culture which they insisted was in the possession of the Englishwoman as well as the Englishman.

The state, narrowly defined, is significant in the *Review* because it was understood to represent the community within which the producers of the *Review* formed an important (national) identity. Approaching national identity as a simple relationship between the individual and the state apparatus neglects the wider range of foundations upon which the “imagined community” of the nation exists. “Imagined community” is a description used by Benedict Anderson to emphasize the role of individual self-identification with nation, and suggest the importance of perceptions of shared culture in the formation of national identity. National identity embraces not only the individual’s relationship to the state, but

⁴²V. 11: 148.

⁴³ “The General Election,” V. 11: 145.

also her relationship to other nationals, relationships that might be based on religion, race, and other elements of "culture." It is because the citizens of a nation have things in common (or not) that they regard their relationships with government as legitimate (or not), and it is in relation to other nationals that the standards of citizenship are defined. It is upon identifications with other nationals that "official nationalisms" - those constructed by governments - are built.⁴⁴ Because these personal relationships exist at the foundations of national identity, citizenship has been able to transcend its status as a bureaucratic designation and become an object of human sentiment.

By the 1880s feminist campaigns for enfranchisement were focussed on the national franchise, the municipal having already been granted to qualified female householders. The centrality of the national franchise to liberal feminism was in part a recognition of the power located in parliament, but more a consequence of middle class valuation of that form of political power. The national identity constructed in the *Review* owes a great deal to more widely held notions of Englishness which were centred on ideals of English justice and freedom as they were expressed in representative government. Adopting established notions of Englishness was probably in part a politically motivated move, made in an effort to keep charges of radicalism at bay. But it was surely also sincere, and represented the values held by the women who produced the *Review* and their families.⁴⁵ Except in its feminism the politics of the *Review* were extremely

⁴⁴See Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*: 83-112; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalisms*: 46-79.

⁴⁵For the effects of class among the Langhamites see Jane Rendall's "A Moral Engine? Feminism, Liberalism and the English Woman's Journal."

mainstream, and what are normally characterised as middle class understandings of class and nation are reproduced in its pages.

In earlier periods English national (and other) identities were constructed through comparison with another national culture. In *The Rise of English Nationalism*,⁴⁶ Gerard Newman suggests that English nationalism underwent a powerful shift during the time of the French Revolution, when revolutionary Frenchness became the counterpoint to Englishness. Focussing instead on a religious rather than political thread, Linda Colley notes that Protestantism, by contrast with continental catholicism, was understood as a central feature of Englishness during the period of her study in *Britons*.⁴⁷ In both cases, Englishness was defined in opposition to aspects of French culture. While the *Review* printed its fair share of disparaging remarks about the French,⁴⁸ in this much later period of the 1880s the *Review* defined Englishness less through comparison with a geographic "other" than through comparison to a temporal "other:" the nation was understood to be a product not of geography but of history. References to a continuous shared historical past provided a rationale for asserting shared values and culture, as well as an ideal for the nation's organisation. This ideal was constructed through notions of political tradition and historical progress, culminating in Parliament.

In the *Review*, Englishness was drawn in terms of a Saxon tradition. There is a consistent and emphatic interest in the Northern European nations, as well as

⁴⁶Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987).

⁴⁷Linda Colley, *Britons*.

⁴⁸See, for example, "Compulsion," V. 13: 451; and "Disabilities of Married Women in France," V. 14: 205.

Iceland. This may have been editor Caroline C.A. Bigg's particular fetish: her obituary notes that she travelled to Northern Europe frequently in the summers,⁴⁹ but this may have been either cause or effect of the *Review's* alliance with Northern Europe. In any case for readers the connection drawn was unquestionable, and must have been sufficiently coherent with other notions of Englishness to be tenable. These are represented as "sister nations" to England inasmuch as they were described as descended from the same ancestry as the English.

Iceland is the sole modern representation of our own ancestors...England, Norway, and Denmark have since that time modified their language, acquired wealth and civilisation, and have changed their customs; but Iceland remains in customs, in tradition, and, above all, in language, unchanged; showing us ourselves not as we now are, but as we once were.⁵⁰

Descriptions like these established a sense of 'national tradition' in the *Review*. The family tree was established in Scandinavia, reached its apogee in Great Britain, and then branched out to the United States. Owing to a co-operative but also vaguely competitive spirit between English and American feminist movements the family relationship between England and the United States is described even more emphatically than those between England and any of its colonies. It is however the Saxon and Nordic *origins* that were constructed as significant to Englishness.

The family relationship drawn between the nations of Northern Europe, England, and the United States entrenched Englishness in a particular cultural heritage, ascribing to it a unified and continuous historical background which served to distinguish Englishness in two ways. One result of this association

⁴⁹V. 20: 385.

⁵⁰"Proposed High School for Girls in Reykjavik," V. 15: 289.

between Englishness and a Saxon ancestry is that Englishness in the *Review* was entrenched in a physical appearance, the look of native Northern Europeans: white skinned, blond haired, blue eyed. We might perhaps include straight haired, as the *Review* in one article adopted the metaphor "black and curly" to describe emigrants who had lost their "Englishness."⁵¹ The inclusion of a "racial" quality in a description of Englishness had the not unimportant effect of definitively excluding from the legitimate nation anyone without this look, and consequently focussing attention on national sexuality and the reproduction of the white English "race." This attention to race had an enormous impact on women's lives later in the nineteenth and through the twentieth century.⁵² The importance of whiteness to Englishness is suggested by the *Review's* occasional lapse into adopting teutonic as well as Scandinavian traditions;⁵³ in the period under study however, race was not constructed as a central influence on character or civilisation. The Australian bushwoman and bushman were written about as examples of a white, British descended, bad characters.⁵⁴

A more significant use of the concept of the "historical nation" during the 1880s was its role in the construction of a national culture or ethos. The historical nation helped to constitute the rationale for the English nation, unique, independent of other states and legitimate in its government. It was the historically developed and developing culture which was understood to have traditions, particularly political traditions, that the *Review* held up as an ideal to be

⁵¹V. 15: 108/09.

⁵²See Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood"; George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*. (New York: Howard Fertig, 1985); Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, Doris Sommer and Patricia Yaeger, eds. *Nationalisms and Sexualities*. (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

⁵³V. 18: 242.

⁵⁴V. 20: 472.

met, a tradition to be honoured: "It is no slight praise to the English people that at all times in their history they have retained their Teutonic or Scandinavian traditions, and recognised that sex forms no bar to royal rights of inheritance."⁵⁵ It was particularly an inherited political culture which served to distinguish Englishness and an ideal of national life in the *Review* and elsewhere.

The conception of an English political tradition rooted in pre-Norman rule had been established during the revolution of the seventeenth century. Claims to self-government in the seventeenth century were based on a demand for the overthrow of the 'Norman Yoke,' supposedly imposed by the French-descended aristocracy after 1066.⁵⁶ It had become significant again in the politics of the nineteenth century, particularly because it buttressed middle class or non-landed claims to political power. Nineteenth century liberalism was founded on the construction of the free (Saxon) English. Robert Colls writes of this period that "[t]he peculiarities of this 'English' mind, or this 'Anglo-Saxon mind', centred on the idea of the English as a free people....Specific freedoms - free subjects, free speech, free ideas, free religion, free contracts, free enterprise, free markets, free trade - were the *historic* Liberal inducements of an *ideal* Englishness...The major site of that freeing process was Parliament."⁵⁷ The *Review* reproduced this construction of English society, describing its advance through history towards a perfected liberal state.

⁵⁵v. 18: 242

⁵⁶See Christopher Hill, "The Norman Yoke," *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century*, (London: Mercury Books, 1958): 50-122; Robert Colls, "Englishness and the Political Culture," *Englishness* : 29-61.

⁵⁷Colls, "Englishness and the Political Culture," *Englishness*: 31.

The producers of the *Review* explicitly subscribed to the gamut of freedoms enrolled by the nineteenth century English/Anglo-Saxon mind. The following passage touches upon nearly all of them:

Centuries passed before the wisdom of leaving people alone to manage their own business became at all understood even in England. About fifty years ago it did appear, however, that mankind was getting wiser in this respect. The old monopolies and trade restrictions were gradually removed; the ministers of religion had discovered that penalties and prosecutions obscured instead of brightening her sacred flame. The Press became freer, the right of public meeting became established, the Universities were thrown open unencumbered by tests. On all sides it seemed as if Englishmen were beginning to understand the philosophy of letting everybody being [sic] healthy, happy or wise after his own fashion.⁵⁸

Not only was freedom from “compulsion” - the article’s title - in community or public life an ideal, it was an ideal toward which England in particular was moving. These were middle-class ambitions, and the *Review* represented liberty as a middle-class achievement: “about fifty years ago” was concurrent with the Reform Bill of 1832 which began to enfranchise the middle class.

The *Review*’s allegiance to middle-class political values is particularly evident in their discussions of political economy. Asserting that “Free labour is as essential an item to national prosperity as free trade,”⁵⁹ they advocated Englishwomen’s, as well as Englishmen’s, right to sell their labour. The *Review* was so favourable to free trade that they made a strange exception to their rigorously held pro-suffrage position in memorializing M.P. and original Manchester Man John Bright, in whose obituary they wrote that “One thing is certain, no Englishwoman loved or revered John Bright any less because he could not see his way to joining her to

⁵⁸V. 13: 451/52.

⁵⁹V. 11: 9 and 104/05; “Pitwomen’s Right of Labour,” V. 17: 49.

ask for her freedom.”⁶⁰ If anything, the *Review*’s commitment to feminism was subordinate to its liberal economics. The *Review*’s understanding of the national economy had a strong influence on its conception of the nation: one of the significant ways they represented the nation was as an economic unit, and they were particularly concerned to represent women as part of that unit.⁶¹

In all contexts, the *Review* adopted a solidly liberal stance. As Colls noted of Englishness in the 1880s, parliament was the central site of that English liberal freedom. The *Review* asserted that Englishwomen, no less than Englishmen, had a right to participate in parliament, and they mobilised the historical English freedoms argument in favour of the female franchise. Almost annually the *Review* published an article which detailed women’s historical roles in English politics.⁶² These articles were an attempt to rewrite English political history of virtually every century to include women, and used historical claims to support present ones: “the claim for a share in the sovereign power of the vote is in harmony with the noblest traditions of the past and with the spirit which is multiplying the energies of the present, and with the hope for the permanence and security of the social well being of the future.”⁶³ The *Review* capitalized on existing political ideology about historical English freedoms in order to establish their own claims to power. As it inserted women into the dominant political

⁶⁰ V. 20: 154.

⁶¹This will be discussed further below. The significance of the construct of a national economy in national discourse has been sadly neglected, although Eric Hobsbawm and more particularly Ernest Gellner, in *Nations and Nationalism*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), assert the significance of modern industrialized economies in the making of nation states.

⁶²See “Offices Held By Englishwomen,” V. 11: 10; “Women’s Rights in 1739,” V.12: 337-355; “The Legal Status of Women in England at the Present Time,” V. 14: 15; V. 16: 108; “Women’s Work in George III’s Reign,” V. 18: 108; and “An Association for the Study of Local Government,” V. 18: 343.

⁶³“The Legal Status of Women in England at the Present Time,” V. 14: 15.

discourse, the *Review* reproduced that discourse, and aligned itself with classical liberalism.

The ideal of English historical freedoms was at the centre of virtually every position the *Review* advanced, but it was mobilised most frequently in discussions of national life.

We believe that the long apprenticeship that women have gone through before their just rights have been conceded to them will make them value those rights too much to part willingly with them again, and that they will feel it a duty incumbent on them to transmit to their children a *national* life even more free and healthful than they have themselves inherited. It would be a fatal day for *England* when women as well as men adopted the dogma, that if voluntary effort be good, compulsion must be better.⁶⁴ (my emphasis)

Particular freedoms were constructed as the foundation and necessity of a *national* life, not just personal lives. It was upon these supposedly historical principles of English freedoms that a national identity was built in the *Review*, and at every possible opportunity, women were included in it.

The producers of the *Review* established their own allegiance to a middle-class national identity and politics through their unqualified support of liberalism. They also sought to establish women's eligibility for recognition in the public sphere through negative associations, by drawing attention to the class distinctions between women and certain enfranchised men. The lament usually went along the lines of the complaint that women were "unfit to be classed as fellow citizens with miners, navvies, or ploughmen."⁶⁵ In reporting a story of a young woman who defeated a prison break, the *Review* reminded readers that "[a]ll these men

⁶⁴from "Compulsion," V. 13: 451.

⁶⁵V. 16: 482.

have been, and most of them will soon again be, voters. But the woman who guarded the jail is disenfranchised.”⁶⁶ These kinds of outspoken remarks served to dissociate “women” from the ranks of those whom middle-class readers would consider undesirable voters or unworthy citizens.

I have placed “women” in quotation marks to draw attention to the unusual use of the term in its context. I have read it above to emphasize the dissociation of middle-class women from the run of unworthy citizens, but in practice the writers for the *Review* did not self-consciously distinguish themselves as middle-class. Even in an obviously class-conscious and class-interested publication, the term “women” was intended to imply all women, and the *Review* maintained a position of solidarity with women of different classes, and even of different races or nations. This solidarity did not necessarily imply equality: the *Review* wrote of a women’s trades hall that it would give the “most legitimate form of help for the struggling members of a class which must always command our sympathy, for it will teach and enable them to help themselves, and to find strength and self-reliance in their own union.”⁶⁷ Whilst class difference remained significant in the *Review*, it was superseded by sexual solidarity. The construction of women as a class created some difficulties for the producers of the *Review* in reproducing middle-class nationalist discourse. However strong their allegiance to their economic or social class and its nationalist rhetoric, the producers of the *Review* had adopted another potent identity: that of “women.”

In the *Review*, as in other sites of cultural production in England in the 1880s, the use of the term “women” remained an important identifier of difference,

⁶⁶V. 17: 48.

⁶⁷V. 18: 293.

loaded with connotations of the physical and social which were used to exclude women from the political and public.⁶⁸ Clearly, the *Review* refused the discourse of femininity which relegated women to “private” actions and allegiances only, and placed itself square in the centre of the discourse on “public” life. But it did not refuse all discourses of femininity. The writing in the *Review* did insist on the legitimacy of “women” as a category, and the importance of maintaining female solidarity.⁶⁹ This discourse of femininity (or, more accurately, of womanhood) interrupted a strictly national identification. Far from being able simply to step in and share the dominant English identity which they understood, supported, and reproduced, the writing in the *Review* negotiated between women’s claims to Englishness and their identity as women.

⁶⁸See Denise Riley, *Am I That Name?*.

⁶⁹Sandra Stanley Holton, *Feminism and Democracy: Women’s Suffrage and Reform Politics in Britain, 1900 - 1918*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986): 21.

Chapter 2: Women

If the design, interests and style of the *Englishwoman's Review* were adopted in an effort to construct the publication and its readers as English, much of its contents worked in relation to its role as a women's magazine. The *Review's* articles were entirely devoted to accounts of women's activities, or to feminist analysis. Its pages were filled with information about women's lives; about women's roles in philanthropic, government, and business enterprises; and with advice to women seeking those positions. Not limited to English topics, a significant portion of the *Review* was devoted to writing about women outside Great Britain. Each issue contained two or three feature articles which regularly took women of other nations as topics. Some of these were very extensive examinations of the situation of women in individual countries.⁷⁰ Feature articles also covered the lives of individual women, and foreign women were sometimes the subject of these, as well as of shorter biographies and obituaries.⁷¹ Every issue contained a section titled the "Record of Events" for domestic news items, as well as a section on "Foreign Notes and News" which sometimes ran for several pages. This internationalist interest in women constructed the publication and its readers in the context of a community of women, a community which transcended national boundaries.

Denise Riley writes that by the nineteenth century women's physical differences from men were understood to make them very different beings.⁷² If

⁷⁰For example see "The Position of Women in Iceland," V. 13: 317; "Swedish Laws for Women," V. 11: 117; and "The Position of Women in America," V. 14: 289-299.

⁷¹ See "Princess Dora Dilstria," V.11: 201; "Carla Serena," V.15: 421; "Maria Weston Chapman," V. 16: 399; "Olympia Morata," V. 17:398; "In Memoriam, Madame Trelat," V. 18: 60.

⁷²Denise Riley, *Am I That Name?*:18-43.

nineteenth century English feminists did not accept a hierarchical ordering of the sexes, or a strict segregation of their labour, they certainly did accept that gender difference was biologically determined.⁷³ Women of all nations and classes were thus understood to have something essential in common: the *Review* asserted in 1886 that "we have reason to believe that also here as in Sweden, firmness of purpose and independence of character, and a higher ideal of aims among women, will raise a noble standard of domestic as of national life, and perfect instead of diminishing "true womanhood."⁷⁴ As a biological condition, "womanhood" transcended socially constructed identities, including national identity.

Women, regardless of nationality, race or class were understood by the *Review* to share in certain qualities and ways of life. These attributes were understood to be present, although sometimes undeveloped, in all women, regardless of race, religion or nation. The article on the Australian Bushwomen, which despaired of their life and manner, concluded with hopeful remarks about the progress of their daughters in achieving a more advanced condition.⁷⁵ A few articles made comparisons between women based on general personality or outlook, such as the one which explored the common ground between the Russian and English "Jolly Girl." The comparison was vague: "they both have their origin in a common idea, they are both children of their age, they have both...the same end in view."⁷⁶ These assertions lacked substance, but described mutual interests through which an essentially female character was constructed.

⁷³Sandra Stanley Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*: 13.

⁷⁴V. 15: 317.

⁷⁵V. 20: 473.

⁷⁶V.13: 247.

The discourse of womanhood in the *Review* drew on dominant notions of femininity in some respects, and challenged them in others. Contemporary discourses of femininity represented women as caregivers and able to understand and sympathise with “other” people;⁷⁷ this principle both shaped the *Review*’s representation of women’s characters, and fostered its understanding of women as a transnational community. The *Review*’s representation of womanhood was particularly focussed on caregiving in various forms; however, it was as caregivers outside the family, as co-ordinators or administrators, that most interested the *Review*.

The *Review* departed from conventional notions of femininity in its concentration on women’s functions outside the family. It was in their roles as waged or salaried workers in the money economy, and as volunteer labourers in the social economy, that women were represented in the *Review*. Always hardworking, women exerted themselves in all occupations, whether waged labour, unpaid domestic employment or elite philanthropic work. In an article titled “Not What I have but What I do is my Kingdom,” Harriet Stanton Blatch expressed what seems to have been a generally held editorial opinion, remarking that “we women suffer, like our brothers, from innate laziness,” but “The woman who sits with folded hands should blush to receive the least of things.”⁷⁸ This idealization of labour and occupation seems to have had its roots in middle-class

⁷⁷Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference*: 96/97. Patrick Williams, in “Colonial Literature and the Notion of Britishness”, *Literature, Teaching, Politics* 5 (1986):94, identifies this kind of thinking as part of imperial discourse.

⁷⁸V. 16: 200.

religious self-discipline, but was held up in the *Review* as an ideal for all labours and all women.

The Langham Place offices housed, among other enterprises, the Society for Promoting the Employment for Women, an organisation which was formed in 1859 to find paid employment for middle-class women. Women's paid employment remained a significant preoccupation of the women's movement through the 1880s.⁷⁹ The *Review* regularly published articles on potential paid employments for women, which ranged from work as tourist guides to fruit farmers to library assistants. The *Review* even claimed that "dairy-work is rising to higher level of skilled work, and a new value and dignity accruing to the ancient occupation of dairymaid."⁸⁰ One article even used historical examples from Mayan to Roman cultures to argue that women had an "instinct" for manufacture, and to suggest that women "join together and raise their amusement to the dignity of a manufacture, confessing occupation and disposing of their goods."⁸¹ Most of these occupations were suggested as possible paid employments for women living in genteel poverty, a condition whose misery is not to be underestimated, and one which the Society for the Promotion of the Employment of Women and the *Review* genuinely sought to ameliorate.

But the *Review* also accorded legitimacy to the occupations and work of what they termed the "labouring classes." While nineteenth century feminists did not

⁷⁹A. James Hammerton, "Feminism and Female Emigration", *A Widening Sphere*, Ed. Martha Vicinus, (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1977), pp. 52-71.

⁸⁰"Dairy Schools," V. 20: 546.

⁸¹"Women As Manufacturers," V. 20: 352.

necessarily engage in the kind of political advocacy that women of the working classes would have benefitted from the most, liberal feminists did respect working class women's employment and were advocates for women's rights to waged work. The *Review's* reports of census findings always included women working in waged and labouring occupations, and an article titled "The Work of Women in London's East End" detailed at length the occupations, wages, and working conditions of those women. In Ireland as in England, the *Review* noted, women's economic contributions were not recognized, "the great bulk of the beautiful work for which Irish girls are so justly famous being probably made by the classes styled [in the census] *non-productive*, which here as in the English census include all the married women and daughters living at home."⁸²

Because wage earning was a central concern of English feminists, as feminists and as members of English families involved in business, the *Review* took considerable interest in the work of women in other nations. Women's inventions and manufacturing work from around the world (but particularly from the United States) were noted as evidence of economic accomplishment, and set as models for Englishwomen. An article on the Women's Industries Exhibition in Bristol claimed that "we are convinced that this collection of women's work will result in its steady development...English women only need to be shown the way to produce profitably many articles manufactured in foreign countries."⁸³ This interest extended to women's employment in the professions, particularly in the United States where women worked more frequently as lawyers and physicians. While there is no suggestion of a women's international economy, the *Review*

⁸²"Occupations of Women in Ireland," V. 15: 98.

⁸³See V. 16: 104/05 and "Recent Inventions of Women," V. 16: 9-11.

certainly was prepared to draw comparisons between women's work activities across national borders.

The *Review* had a related interest in women's philanthropic movements. Philanthropic activity was one of the few kinds of labour in which middle-class English women were encouraged to participate, and women's abilities and activities in philanthropic work was central to the *Review's* construction of women. From the Sanitary Commission that was active in medical work during the American Civil War to the "Liberées of St. Lazare" (French prison superintendents) the *Review* reported on the philanthropic work being performed by women in other nations, as well as by women in its own. Similar to its reportage on waged work, the *Review's* investigation of these industries was often used to encourage the work of Englishwomen in similar areas: it was suggested of prison work that it was "a post which needs the patience, tact and Christianity of women extremely, and which they ought to undertake."⁸⁴ Whether English, French or American, women had, by virtue of their womanhood, an interest in and competence for philanthropy.

Like privately organized philanthropic work, public administration was regarded as a suitable outlet for womanly impulses to caregiving. In "Help for the Children," the post of Poor Law Guardian was claimed to be the "most womanly of all duties."⁸⁵ In a later volume, the *Review* asked its readers to "bear in mind that the larger part of poor-law administration consists in [what is] rightly considered to be specially women's work."⁸⁶ What was sometimes constructed

⁸⁴V.15: 109-11.

⁸⁵"Help for the Children," V. 12: 154.

⁸⁶"Women as Poor Law Guardians," V. 15: 113.

as “women’s abilities” and sometimes as “women’s experience” was regarded by the *Review* as special qualification for certain kinds of public administration, and involvement in political culture. The *Review* noted that, as in England, women in other nations were politically active. “In medieval and still more in modern life, women take an active part in all political agitations, and represent every phase of political opinion. Absolutist or Nihilist in Russia, Democrat or Republican in America, Bonapartist or Legitimist in France, Conservative or Liberal in England.”⁸⁷ These various positions were constructed as comparable by generalizing them under the rubric of women engaging in politics. It was regularly pointed out in the *Review* that women throughout the world were engaging in movements to participate more fully in government and education.

It was those women, English or otherwise, who worked for the public benefit that exemplified what was best in the female character. The *Review* reported that the history of the American Sanitary Commission, which organised hospital and other care during the American Civil War, afforded “the strongest possible proof of the organising, i.e. the political faculty possessed by women, and in which we have no reason to suppose English women are inferior to American.”⁸⁸ Women’s work for the public interest was also central in the *Review*’s descriptions of individual women: Madame Trelat was recorded as “an enlightened and devoted worker for the best interests of women, and possessed of great administrative ability”;⁸⁹ of Miss Willard (of the Women’s Sanitary Association) it wrote “how deep a debt, not only the U.S. but all English-speaking nations, owe to Miss Willard, for her unparalleled self-devotion, her tireless energy, her happy

⁸⁷V.12: 130.

⁸⁸“Records of the Sanitary Commission,” V. 16: 487.

⁸⁹V. 18: 60.

inspirations and her rare talent for government.”⁹⁰ Many of these descriptions include some reference to or assertion of the ways that the work of individuals benefitted women across national boundaries.

In its role as a woman’s publication, *The Review* located difference in gender, not nationality. This served to disrupt national groupings by alienating women from men within national communities.⁹¹ As well as a “natural” condition, womanhood was understood in the *Review* as a political category: a rationale for the marginalisation of women by men, and, for feminists, a category for rehabilitation. Like womanhood as a “natural” condition, womanhood as a political condition was understood by the *Review* to transcend nationality: it insisted that women’s marginalisation crossed political, cultural and national boundaries. Solutions to women’s political marginalisation were also understood to be found in international action. This construction of women’s role challenged a national identity by emphasising inequality between men and women within nations, and set women in opposition to men despite any common heritage. The discourse of womanhood in the *Review* not only dismantled old borders, but created new ones.

In its numerous articles on “The Position of Women in (A Country),” the *Review* was particularly interested in comparing the political and social status of women in England to those of women in other nations. This comparison developed into a description of “women’s conditions” which did not observe national difference. Women in the “civilised” nations of Northern Europe and the

⁹⁰V.17: 398.

⁹¹See Sandra Stanley Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*: 21.

United States had lives most similar to those of women in England,⁹² but wherever they looked, the *Review* found women politically, economically, and socially subordinated to men. Making these comparisons allowed the *Review* to assert, for example, that "...most countries [have] limited or assigned by preference the office of ruler to men,"⁹³ or that "...the working women of Italy ...are to the full as badly paid and even more overworked than their London sisters."⁹⁴ The *Review's* reportage encouraged its readers to understand that a marginalised "women's condition" was a transnational, rather than a nationally particular, phenomenon.

The comparisons that the *Review* was able to draw between women's lives and roles across national borders fuelled the liberal feminist conviction that their political campaign benefitted from internationalism. The impulse to philanthropy was understood to apply especially to cases where women in one country could help those in another, and the campaign to train women physicians to practice in India received fervent praise.⁹⁵ Insisting that "Woman's cause is always woman's cause, in whatsoever country,"⁹⁶ the *Review* reported on women's movements in other nations as significant for their own work. It generally included advances in women's status in other countries as well as

⁹²see "Our Scandinavian Sisters," V. 17: 150-157 or the review of American author M. Livermore's *What Shall We Do With Our Daughters*, which constructs American and English women's problems as similar, V. 15: 213 .

⁹³V. 17: 391.

⁹⁴V. 15: 155.

⁹⁵See a "Foreign Notes and News" report on American women establishing women physicians in China, V. 16: 96, and "Medical women for India," V. 16: 145-58.

⁹⁶V. 11: 484.

England in its annual December reviews of the year's events.⁹⁷ During the 1880s several feature articles on women's movements in other nations appeared.⁹⁸ The occasional international meetings of feminists and women's organisations received extensive reportage, especially the International Women's Council held in the United States in 1888.⁹⁹ The *Review* wrote: "[s]uch interchanges of thought and knowledge between women of different nationalities are... eminently calculated to strengthen the position of women as the servants of Humanity, and to raise their social and political status throughout the world."¹⁰⁰ All of these articles worked to identify the "cause" of "women" as a common one, one which transcended national boundaries.

This discourse of womanhood in the *Review* obstructed its discourse of nationality inasmuch as it constructed women in different nations as having to confront the same barriers. "We may all cordially agree ...That woman has not enjoyed the protection in the laws, not accorded the full measure of her just rights, in any land, not excepting even this free England of ours."¹⁰¹ The political and economic subordination of women was not understood as peculiar to any particular national culture: these were problems faced by women of all nations. Not only did the *Review* understand all women to be facing these barriers by

⁹⁷See for example "A Christmas Carol for 1882," V.13: 529-537; or "Looking Back on 1884," V. 15: 539/540.

⁹⁸See for example "History of the Women's Movement in France," V. 15: 198; "Norwegian Woman's Union," V. 16:7-9; "The Present Condition of the Women's Movement in Finland," V. 18: 481; and "A New Society for Women in Denmark," V. 16: 346-49.

⁹⁹In V. 19 (1888) The International Women's Council received a lot of reportage: on p. 96 in "Foreign Notes and News"; p. 137 gives the Programme of the Council; pp. 193-209 make a long report, of the proceedings. See also "The Congress of Women's Societies at Paris," V. 20: 240.

¹⁰⁰V. 20: 242.

¹⁰¹V. 11: 399.

virtue of their womanhood, but they also understood that it was through collective action as women, despite national difference, that women's marginalisation was to be opposed. While national culture might make a difference in the degrees of women's position, all over the world women's lives were lived in a particular manner because they were women. Womanhood as a condition transcended nationality as a condition, and the *Review* constituted women as a political community that had no national boundaries.

Ultimately, however, the *Review's* discussions of an essential community of women were influenced by discourses of cultural difference. This was expressed mainly in terms of a difference based on "national character." Given the care with which the producers of the *Review* developed their own national identity, it makes sense that their understanding of national identity and national character plays a role in their discussions of women and the women's movement. The possibility of a general discussion of "women" was implicitly or explicitly assumed, but the generality of the discussion was always undermined by a national notation: the women of France, the women of Iceland, etc. These national identifiers were understood to imply cultural or traditional difference in the same way that "English" implied, for the *Review*, a certain set of political, moral, and social conventions. English women, as represented in the *Review*, were expected to live in ways that conformed to "English" conventions, and women in other nations were expected to live in ways that conformed to theirs. These differences, which shaped women's character's as well as men's, in turn disrupted the discourse of an essential identity for women.

The *Review* apparently greatly admired the American woman's movement, but differences between American and English political culture and social

organisation, were often pointed up in their reportage. In an article that enthusiastically praised the American women's movement the *Review* noted that "We have no reason to be discontented with our more exclusive methods of action here, which possibly may be better suited to our national temperament...which is subject to the greater complexities of divisions of rank in education and occupation."¹⁰² This distinction sometimes became competitive, and on more than one occasion the *Review* was at some pains to demonstrate the superiority of English political culture, suggesting that while "Much has been written to discredit the English government of our colonies... we may perhaps, take some credit to ourselves by reflecting that under it American women, at all events, possessed a larger share of constitutional privileges than they have since been accorded by their own countrymen."¹⁰³ This competitiveness was perhaps a reaction to the rash of praise for American feminists that had appeared in the *Review*, but demonstrates a real self-consciousness of national difference.

France received similar treatment in the *Review*, although reportage on its women and women's movement was less extensive. The *Review* was careful to note differences between French and English political culture: "There are many points in English law in which the position of women is vastly superior to that of Frenchwomen... on the other hand there are some in which we might take useful hints from them."¹⁰⁴ The distinction was usually made in a friendly way, but as with America the *Review* sometimes turned competitive with France. Its article on "The Recent Decision Upon Municipal Suffrage in France" found that "The terms of the decision afford proof first, of the inferior degree of liberty which women

¹⁰²"A Woman's Organisation," V. 17: 391-398.

¹⁰³"The Early History of Women Voters In America," V. 20: 14 -17 p. 15;

¹⁰⁴V. 20: 242.

enjoy under a definite code, such as the Code Napoleon, as compared with the possible freedom under the more elastic nature of our common law.”¹⁰⁵ Despite the similarities the *Review* constructed between “women,” their circumstances were recognized to vary considerably.

The *Review*’s comments on the U.S. and France emphasised the differences between national culture, rather than differences between women. But the *Review* was more personal in cases where the national other was also a racial or religious “other”: a lengthy article on “Women’s Condition in Egypt,”¹⁰⁶ which specifically addressed the question of whether life was better for English or Egyptian women, commented in considerable detail both on the religion and race of the Egyptians, and found them definitely distinct from English race and religion. As a result, the women were likewise described as different: the article characterises Egyptian women as “usually vain, selfish, and empty-minded, and with cold affections.” The reader was certainly left with a poor impression both of Egyptian women and Egyptian society, which were, by the *Review*’s standards of womanhood, wanting.

But if Egyptian women were found to be wanting, it was not because they were personally deficient. “The grand difference between the English and the Egyptian woman,” the author concludes, “is that in England woman is an acknowledged helpmeet to man as the Almighty intended and in Egypt she is not.”¹⁰⁷ This statement displaces the burden of responsibility for Egyptian women’s inadequacies from the women themselves onto their national culture. The

¹⁰⁵V. 16: 107.

¹⁰⁶V. 15: 395-412.

¹⁰⁷V. 15: 411.

producers of the *Review* seem to have been asserting that although women themselves might be similar beings world-wide, their lives did not necessarily reflect that similarity because of the national cultures in which they lived. The attention paid by the *Review* to the social and political "position of women" in regulating women's lives and personalities, suggests how significant they believed national culture to be in shaping the lives of citizens, despite any inherent biological characteristics they possessed.

The author who wrote "In whatever form oppression appears, the same principles lead us to resist it. Our field is now a wider one, unlimited as to country, race or colour"¹⁰⁸ was probably expressing a genuinely held conviction. But this conviction was interrupted by a sincere and potent sense of national identity. The *Review's* discussion of the "women" was constantly undercut by references to nationality and the qualities which were understood to compose it. Some of these references were necessitated by context, for instance in articles which required explanation of national laws or legal practices (especially in writing about women from the various nations of Great Britain). Other references to national culture were made because the *Review* wanted to identify what they considered a substantial difference in character between the women of various nations, which were attributed to the influence of national custom. In all cases, the identification of women as part of a nationality worked to defeat the notion of a transnational class of "women," and referred the readers of the *Review* back to the Englishwoman's Englishness.

¹⁰⁸From an article titled the "Ladies Negro Friend Society," V. 11: 348.

Chapter 3: The Englishwoman

The *Review* was decidedly a women's publication, reporting almost exclusively on women's lives and interests for a female audience. It chose to do so, however, in a format that rubbed against the grain of contemporary feminine culture. The *Englishwoman's Review* was only one of tens of reviews circulating in the 1880s. While review magazines had begun in the 1830s by publishing actual book reviews, by the 1850s they were almost completely composed of learned expository essays on current topics. Reviews had the role of instructing a small but significant and intellectually uncertain audience - the recently enfranchised classes - in current affairs.¹⁰⁹ Reviews often took a blatantly sectarian position, and the *Englishwoman's Review* was clearly meant to offer a feminist interpretation of current affairs just as the *Westminster Review* offered utilitarian ones. As such, the reviews were part of the public sphere of rational discourse on politics and public affairs. Bringing women's topics and feminist perspectives into this community constituted a significant challenge to contemporary discourses of the public and of femininity.

The women who produced the *Review* were specifically seeking to have issues central to women's lives addressed in the arena of public discourse. Publishing a review magazine, (which the Langham place circle persisted in more or less continuously from 1855 to 1910 despite constant financial problems) was an effective way of pressing into an arena that had hitherto been closed to women. But it also limited the ways that the *Review* could represent women's lives. The

¹⁰⁹See Walter E. Houghton, "Periodical Literature and the Articulate Classes" Shattock, Joanne and Michael Wolff, eds. *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings*. (Leicester and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987): 3-27.

Review format allowed for a narrow range of learned, non-fictional writing which allowed the writers and editors of the *Review* very few opportunities to represent women in roles or with characters they did not already possess in civil life. On the rare occasions when an issue included fiction genres, women were represented in ways that departed considerably both from women's "real" lives and those normally represented in the *Review*. The poem "Men's Rights"¹¹⁰ had a female parliament debating and defeating a motion to include the men in the legislative process. The choice of a *Review* as a vehicle to publicise the aims and activities of feminists, while it accorded the movement a degree of cultural legitimacy, also limited the ways that the producers could imagine and represent women's lives and contributions.

On the other hand, writing about individuals opened a space in which the *Review* could construct the "Englishwoman." The very meanings of the two parts of the word - English and woman - were mutually exclusive and difficult in the conceptual currency of the time to rework into a coherent and meaningful union. In life, however, one individual could adopt either identity, could live both those experiences through time. A woman could display her Englishness in one activity or period, her womanliness in another, and sometimes enact both identities simultaneously. The various forms of biography in the *Review* provided models both for an ideal lived experience, and an opportunity for creating a coherent conceptualization of an image which was otherwise very nearly nonsensical.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰V. 16: 477. This poem was reprinted from an American feminist journal.

¹¹¹Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger is a Lacanian psychoanalyst attempting to theorize a space in which the division between "self" and "other" is incomplete, and the two are interdependent and coherent. In her article, "Matrix and Metamorphosis", *Differences*, 1992 4(3): 176-208, she works with image of the pregnant female and the foetus to represent the non-competitive co-existence of mutually exclusive identities. It seems to me that the *Review* was attempting the same kind of conceptual feat in establishing a meaningful notion of the "Englishwoman." The

There is a great deal of writing about women as a group in the *Review*, but in the end its writers tended (like historians) to resort to specific examples for their illustrations of the "Englishwoman's" virtue.

Constructing an image of an "Englishwoman" required careful negotiation between the discourses of womanhood and Englishness that were mobilized in the *Review*. The *Review* found its way through the contradictions between these two identities - public speaker and private caregiver - by moving the role of women as it was constructed within the family into the sphere of public administration. The *Review* asserted that "[t]he task of keeping her house sweet and clean devolves upon a woman." Then it asked, "why should she not be equally capable of rendering the same services to her district?"¹¹² Constructing the "Englishwoman" necessitated eliciting compromises from each of the two terms involved: the "Englishwoman" was she who exercised "private" virtues in the "public" sphere. This had the effect not only of shifting the discourse of femininity to the "public," but of shifting the discourse of the "public" into the sphere of the feminine.

It was on this middle ground that the "Englishwoman" stood. Although the *Review* made attempts to acknowledge difference among Englishwomen, in certain contexts it becomes clear that the *Review* believed that "Englishwoman" was a reliable categorization. In an article on Emigration the *Review* suggested

reliance of the *Review* (and the similar publication, *The Women's Penny Paper*) on biography to create a coherent identity from two contradictory ones suggests that pursuing Denise Riley's insight that the identity woman is temporally inconsistent, occurring in individuals and groups at only at particular moments, might prove fruitful in understanding how new more satisfactory identities which reconcile alienation are produced. Like a baby, a new identity might be born of the passage of time.

¹¹²V. 19: 387.

that a limited number of occupations in foreign lands might be suitable for Englishwomen.¹¹³ Compared to each other the publication was willing to recognize limited variation among Englishwomen; compared to the women of other nations Englishwomen fell into a "type." This Englishwoman was definitely a heroic figure, hardworking, knowledgeable, and a participant in public life. Her perceived role in the national context as a moral and social guardian was clarified and developed throughout the 1880s, and ultimately became the plank upon which feminist claims for women's political and social privilege rested.

The figure of the Englishwoman in the *Review* was not completely monolithic, but the range of possibilities was not extensive. In very few instances did the *Review* even acknowledge the existence of Englishwomen who did not conform to its construction of English race, ethnicity, or politics. Variations in women's characters and lives were recognized in a few contexts: class difference was recognized, and women were acknowledged to have different kinds of occupational skills and aptitudes. Articles on household work almost always included a sentence or two declaring that some women "have no real liking for domestic details,"¹¹⁴ making unhappy and unsuitable wives and mothers. The *Review* recognised that women were occupied in diverse ways, as happy wives and mothers, as criminals,¹¹⁵ (though this was regarded as reprehensible) as spinsters and wage labourers. The *Review* did claim that women should be at

¹¹³V. 11: 493-95.

¹¹⁴"How to Provide for Our Daughters," V. 19: 55; see also "Normal or Abnormal," V. 20: 533 - 538.

¹¹⁵See V. 11: 192 on women debtors and V. 14: 204, "A Woman Stealing from Her Husband." These articles were included as evidence for the necessity of reforming married women's legal status to that they could become legal proprietors, property owners, and able to contract their own debts.

least as free from stereotyping as men, and the paper's rejection of stereotyping to some extent tempers their generalisations about Englishwomen.

This recognition of the variety of lives that Englishwomen led provided its own challenge to the "dominant" discourse of femininity, which was extremely limited in its scope. The more important challenge was made by the *Review* in their consistent representation of women's lives as having public, rather than private, significance. The discourse of femininity in the *Review* revolved almost exclusively around women's role in the public arena: as workers in the national economy, as philanthropists, as public servants, and (oddly enough) as heroes. This construction of femininity was a result of *Review's* idealization of middle-class urban "Englishness." Within that discourse of Englishness, purely private virtue had little place: it was in politics, parliament and public administration that a virtuous national life was conducted and focussed. An *English* woman did not give up her womanly cares and virtues, rather she displayed them in the public, the national sphere.

One of the most striking revisions to the feminine ideal made by the the *Review* was in its preoccupation with women's physically heroic deeds. It was "A Heroine" who managed a convict station in the Nicobar Islands whilst her husband was absent. A rare piece of published correspondence reported to the *Review's* readers news of the death of a young woman who was gored by a bull as she saved a boy from the same fate. A poem commemorated the death of Alice Ayers, who died at the tender age of seventeen rescuing three children from a house fire.¹¹⁶ By emphasizing the bravery and self-sacrificing nature of these

¹¹⁶ "A Heroine" V. 15: 390; V. 17: 48 in Paragraphs - the story of a young woman, daughter of a jailkeeper, who defeated a prison break .

acts, the *Review* instituted a civil equivalent to martial service. Reference was often made to the argument that women could not fully be citizens because they did not serve in the military,¹¹⁷ and the creation of a domestic or peacetime martial hero was a creative rebuttal. Similar articles heralded women's direct participation in military efforts in other nations.¹¹⁸ Englishwomen, who hadn't experienced military activity on their own home ground, were limited to civil heroics, but the *Review* asserted that "...we do not believe Englishwomen would fall one whit behind their American sisters in self-devotion, were their country in peril."¹¹⁹ Drawing attention to women's physical bravery and self-sacrifice demonstrated women's patriotism.

The representation of women in a public context is a recurrent theme in the *Review's* discourse of femininity. An important part of the *Review's* representation of women was as workers in the context of a national economy. The *Review* had as an object "to show how large a part of the social economy is filled by the sex who the bustling capitalists would persuade us are not the breadwinners."¹²⁰ The *Review* did not expend a great deal of ink on women's work as mothers and wives, but when they did it was with the intent of forcing recognition for the public importance of that work in national economic productivity, to debunk the myth that a "married woman is a hanger on, a supported member of the commonwealth, as little children are."¹²¹ Articles on unpaid women's work

¹¹⁷"The Unfitness of Women," V. 14: 339; see also V. 17 p. 211.

¹¹⁸See "Madame Cahen, A French Chevaliere," V. 20: 60-62; "Mademoiselle Lix," V. 15: 357-359; "A Woman's Story Of the War," V. 20: 102-116; "Some Historical Women of Poland," V. 20: 297-302.

¹¹⁹V. 20: 116.

¹²⁰V. 16: 105.

¹²¹"Are Wives Supported?" V. 14: 486.

covered the contributions of unmarried daughters,¹²² wives and mothers,¹²³ and even of single women philanthropists.¹²⁴ These articles almost always used the language of state and nation in their demands for the recognition women's productive activities, describing the "enormous share that women contribute to the productive wealth of the nation."¹²⁵ Women were represented consistently as workers in the *Review* in order to construct them as a crucial part of the national economy.

It was upon the strength of women's participation in public duties, whether in official or unofficial capacities, that the *Review* built the identity of the Englishwoman, and defined the nature of female citizenship. The focus on public applications of the maternal role was considerable, and was used both more frequently and more emphatically as the 1880s progressed. The manipulation of the discourse of femininity to rationalize public work with private virtues has been noted by its historians as a characteristic feature of nineteenth century feminism. This trend had a tendency to marginalise arguments for female equality that were based on other themes; but it was how the *Review* put the "English" in the "Englishwoman."

One of the areas in which the *Review's* "maternalism" is evident is in the attention it paid to women physicians and women's medical training. While lawyering, teaching, and even nursing are nearly invisible as occupations promoted for women by the *Review*, medical women received regular, emphatic

¹²²"Pin Money," V. 15: 55.

¹²³V. 13: 481.

¹²⁴"Single Women and the State," V. 16: 159.

¹²⁵"Industries of Women," V. 19: 253.

and praiseful attention. The *Review* regularly published lists of practicing women physicians and reported on the progress, or lack thereof, in the campaign to educate women physicians.¹²⁶ Susan Kingsley Kent suggests that the feminist campaign for women doctors was motivated by a conviction that male physicians tended to exploit women patients sexually,¹²⁷ but the context of the *Review's* emphasis on women's employment and women's caring abilities suggests that the medical women campaign may also have been motivated by the more mundane desire to establish women in a paid occupation that was completely dominated by men, despite its dependence on "womanly" virtues.

The effort to encourage feminine intervention in public work is especially evident in the *Review's* promotion of female candidacy for public office. In a report on her own work as a Poor Law Guardian, E.G. Wilson wrote that serving was "a privilege not to be despised by any woman who wishes to 'serve her own generation by the will of God.'"¹²⁸ Readers of the *Review* were prepared for such service through many means. Women's personal accounts of tenures of service, as well as more general articles, gave readers insight into the duties of elected public office and provided "noble examples" for women considering running.¹²⁹ The *Review* also gave instruction on obtaining office, educating readers in the electoral process, describing the process for establishing nominees, and giving

¹²⁶V. 16 p. 65 Lists of registered medical women appeared in V. 12: 167; V. 15: 87; V. 17: 62; V. 20: 65-68.

¹²⁷Susan Kingsley Kent, *Sex and Suffrage in Britain, 1860-1914*. (Princeton: Princeton U. P. , 1987).

¹²⁸V. 17: 289.

¹²⁹See "Women Members of School Boards," V. 19: 145; "Eight Years as A Guardian," V. 20: 201; "Suggestions for Women Guardians," V. 18: 385-396; and "Women as Poor Law Guardians," V. 15: 113.

campaigning tips.¹³⁰ Whenever women's work in the fields of public health, morality, education, and social well-being were discussed, the *Review's* writers underlined its significance to the nation. The nation was constructed as an expanded home, in which women took the role of public guardians of what had been viewed as private concerns. Throughout the 1880s, women's role in what was increasingly defined as 'public housekeeping' was emphasized and used as the basis of a national identity for women.

In a lengthy two part article titled "Public Housekeeping," the *Review* exhorted its readers as follows: "Again we repeat that what the mother of a family does at home, the women of the nation are bound to do for the greater family."¹³¹ This particular article explicitly related areas of government responsibility to areas of personal responsibility, literally comparing, for example, schools and (notably) poorhouses to the domestic nursery. The notion that women bore a special responsibility to participate in municipal government and other kinds of public office was increasingly used by the *Review*, which by 1887 was regularly suggesting that "women have an especial obligation to look well into the affairs of the Municipality, for Municipal government is housekeeping on a large scale."¹³² Finding a "deplorable want in that department of the work of our public bodies which we should call the domestic department", the *Review* increasingly depicted women's citizenship and national role in these terms, constructing women as the social and moral guardians of the national community.

¹³⁰See "Local Elections," V. 18: 159; "The Approaching Poor Law Elections," V. 19: 107; "The Importance of Municipal Elections to Women," V. 16: 433; and "The Duty of Municipal Electors," V. 17: 433.

¹³¹V.19: 436.

¹³²V. 18: 433.

This description of the Englishwoman combined the essential characteristics of both the discourses of nationality and the discourses of womanhood that were produced in the *Review*. Women remained firmly in the social, continuing to care for interests that had devolved on them within the private family: the care of children, the sick and elderly, the management of hearth and home, the protection of domestic peace. But the *Review* insisted that those activities be taken outside the bounds of the family home:

Granted that it is the natural and happiest division of labour for the women - where it is possible - to look after home and children...yet a woman has an entity of her own, she is not man's wife merely, and though, like charity, her duties begin at home, they do not end there: she has duties to her neighbours and fellow citizens which ought not be neglected.¹³³

Working within what was women's "more special charge in our social economy,"¹³⁴ the *Review* asked its readers to "well consider the importance of the service we undertake for the benefit of the social life of our country [as Poor Law Guardians], by carrying out its laws, and helping to interpret them in the most just and merciful manner, in the interests of all classes, both rich and poor, who are affected by wide-reaching operation of our Poor Laws."¹³⁵ Not private duties, but public responsibilities to the national community, were the sphere of the Englishwoman.

It was Englishwomen, heirs to the great English tradition of public participation and administration, who took femininity into the public sphere. Not content to confine their talents for government to the family home, they constructed the

¹³³V. 16: 384.

¹³⁴V. 18: 145.

¹³⁵V. 18: 396.

nation as a site of social, as well as political, relations.¹³⁶ To assert that government was something like a 'national housekeeping' was a significant disruption of dominant constructions of the nation: parliament and other institutions of public administration which were rigorously preserved as the domain of the public male demanded womanly expertise. "Pure water, air and light for homes and schools can *only be secured by parliamentary action*, and these are matters which come home to women very keenly, and on which their influence would be very salutary."¹³⁷ (my emphasis) The feminization of the public sphere was less an act of womanliness than of Englishness, a response ordained by the traditions of English parliamentary government to which the producers of the *Review* were so intensely allied.

Anna Davin has written that "mothers of the nation" emerged as a "dominant" description of women's role in the late nineteenth century and remained pre-eminent until after the Second World War. A compelling construction of women's citizenship, it was apparently much more successful than attempts to legitimate women's public role on their economic or historical contributions. The *Review* attempted to foreground these aspects of women's citizenship in the earlier 1880s, but they remained hidden, at least from scholarly view, until the 1980s. Although the *Review* continued to include waged labour, private mothering, and more customary political activities in their depictions of the Englishwoman, the most powerful element in their account of female citizenship was the role of public guardian. Of women as municipal electors it was written that "the temperance and uprightness of the young, the moral elevation and education of the community, the amenities and harmonies of life, are her peculiar

¹³⁶Sandra Stanley Holton, *Feminism and Democracy*: 15.

¹³⁷*V*. 11: 448.

responsibility and if she neglects them, and shuts herself up in selfish indifference or thoughtless ignorance, our national character must steadily deteriorate.”¹³⁸ The nation was constructed as a moral and social community, with women at its helm.

By involving femininity in the public sphere the *Review* not only made alterations in the representation of women. It also altered the representation of the public, to include elements of the social and moral for which women were seen as peculiarly responsible. These revisions included representing public administration as “housekeeping,” which was a simple but resonant name change. The *Review* inserted a moral element into the conception of the nation. Responding to arguments against women’s public abilities, the author of “The Unfitness of Women” wrote that “The moral unfitness [of women] is the most unlooked for count in the indictment; in all times of the world’s history we have been so accustomed to hear of our mental inferiority, that some few of us were half persuaded to believe there might be something in it; but we did think, we did hope that in goodness we at least excelled.”¹³⁹ Women’s goodness, their moral uprightness, was understood to be their peculiar strength. The *Review*, along with various other feminist movements, worked very hard to make morality an attribute of public life, thereby giving women an entrée into the nation.

The “national will” that was supposedly exercised in parliament was constructed by the *Review* as the product of a shared morality. Religious faith and institutions were, like official political institutions, perceived as part of national life, particularly in England which was defined in part by its unique and

¹³⁸V. 17: 433.

¹³⁹“The Unfitness of Women,” V. 14: 339.

official state faith.¹⁴⁰ Church allegiances were less important within the Langham Place Group than in other communities because the women who composed it had varying faiths;¹⁴¹ it was Christianity in general which was associated in the *Review* with England and "civilised" nations.¹⁴² Christian principles were sometimes argued to be the basis for liberal constitutional government,¹⁴³ and it was on those principles that the *Review* articulated a "national mores."

The concept of national conscience or morality appears in the *Review* particularly after the publication of the *Pall Mall Gazette's* "Maiden Tribute" articles in 1885, which, as Judith Walkowitz has written, provided an effective and widely known narrative of the "woman as victim" on the basis of which feminists could argue for reform.¹⁴⁴ The "Maiden Tribute" was referred to in the *Review* by a second generation euphemism, a "deep national sin."¹⁴⁵ The *Review* used similarly religious language to refer to the Contagious Diseases Acts, of which it was written that "the awakened conscience of the nation could not for honour's sake, for principle, or for religion, tolerate the evil in its midst any longer." This

¹⁴⁰ See Linda Colley in particular. Religious life was so identified with national character in the *Review* that a sentence that began with a question about different countries was ended with answers about different religions. The question was "how to provide for our daughters?" The answer: "The Catholic Church used to answer, 'by endowing convents where unmarried women can be sheltered', in Utah, the answer would be 'by marrying them to elders.'" V. 19: 55.

¹⁴¹ Catholicism, because of its institutionalised corporate women's bodies, was attractive to many nineteenth century feminists in an age when women accommodated population and social pressures by living communally. See Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women*. (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1985). See also Jane Rendall, "A Moral Engine?."

¹⁴² there were exceptions: neither Mormons nor copts were considered on the same level as European christians. See V. 17: 109/110, and V. 15: 403.

¹⁴³ See "The Importance of Municipal Elections," V. 16: 442, and "The Political Duties of Christian Women," V. 15: 546-564.

¹⁴⁴ Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*: 132-34.

¹⁴⁵ V. 16: 493.

particular article concluded with thanks to God for the victory of the repeal of the CD Acts.¹⁴⁶ The nation, in addition to being a political community was increasingly constructed by the *Review* as a (Christian) moral community.

Just as the *Review* revised the discourse of femininity to attribute women and their lives with a public character, it altered the discourse of the nation. In the *Review*, the nation is not solely a political entity, but was constructed as a social and moral body as well. This was a significant revision to understandings of the nation, and may have provided the original political pressures that resulted later in the welfare state. This construction of the nation, and women's role within it, was the product of the *Review's* recombination of "dominant" discourses of femininity and of the state. Far from allowing their identities as women to dispel or overshadow their national identities, the producers of the *Review* kept it at the centre of their consciousness. Free press, free government, free labour, and free trade were the ideals the *Review* adopted for women, and which forced womanly virtues into the world of parliament, public administration, and philanthropy. In the *Review*, virtuous womanhood was met in the exercise of English virtues. Although they were by no means prepared to disregard their identities as women, the producers and readers of the *Review* were perhaps less feminists, than nationalists.

¹⁴⁶V. 17: 145-48. "Now glory to the Lord of Hosts to whom all glories are." is the subtitle of the article.

Conclusion: Feminism and Nationalism

Far from leaving a national identity and culture behind in favour of organising themselves in the context of a strictly feminist activity, the producers of the *Review*, had, by the 1880s, placed Englishness at the centre of their identity. So significant was the *Review's* sense of English liberalism, and the role that they constructed for themselves within it, that their depiction of women both within and without the English nation was shaped by it. National identification was central not only to their own identities, but also to their campaign for women's rights. The arguments made for the recognition and promotion of women's public role depended to a large extent on a language of nation and nationalism. If, as Katherine Verdery has argued, "Nationalism...is the political utilization of the symbol nation through discourse and political activity, as well as the sentiment that draws people into responding to this symbol's use,"¹⁴⁷ then the feminism recorded in the *Review* was by the 1880s a nationalist movement.

The mobilisation of national feeling was essential to the feminist campaign for inclusion in national and state institutions. An increasing level of public participation by women was hailed by at least one writer as the means of their civic education: "With new powers in women's hands new responsibilities have arisen, bringing with them a keen feeling of interest in the world which they are now capable and active citizens. They are drawn nearer to other people's lives, losing the narrow exclusiveness which was both cause and effect of their weakness and isolation."¹⁴⁸ The construction of Englishwomen as productive,

¹⁴⁷Katharine Verdery, "Whither Nation and Nationalism", *Daedalus* : 38.

¹⁴⁸*Y.* 18: 11.

tax-paying¹⁴⁹ citizens and as Christians (in accordance with the national morality) was the foundation of arguments for women's political participation, especially as the representation of women as "national housekeepers" was developed through the late 1880s.

While appeals for participation were made on the grounds of women's skills and efforts, they were also made in more general patriotic terms that utilised the discourse of Englishness produced in the *Review*: pride in the English "traditions" of democratic government. In the year end review for 1888, the *Review* suggested that "It would have been hard if, in this tercentary of England's deliverance from a great peril, and this bicentenary of the establishment of her freedom, Englishwomen had not had some reason to congratulate themselves on steady progress towards freedom and intellectual power."¹⁵⁰ Although the *Review* found itself having to work very hard in order to establish or restore a tradition of public participation for women, its producers could at least argue that "the claim for a share in the sovereign power of the vote is in harmony with the noblest traditions of the past."¹⁵¹

The use of the language of patriotism in the *Review* sometimes tended to purplish prose: it was cited as a "proof of a want of patriotism to declare against women doctors."¹⁵² In a particularly creative moment the *Review* capitalized not

¹⁴⁹See Vol. 11: 2; also the section on The Account Books in "Public Housekeeping:" "[Women] are (we are speaking of the average woman) more careful in the little things than men, more timid in expenditure, because they have had less money as rule to spend." The author argues that if for no other reason, women are more cautious of the public purse because as small householders they bear taxation more heavily. V. 19: 438.

¹⁵⁰V. 19: 529.

¹⁵¹V. 14: 15.

¹⁵²V. 15: 394.

only on English patriotism but derision for England's traditional "other" when it cited Frenchwoman (and Communard) Louise Michel's praise of the English government for allowing women to participate in its institutions. Incredibly, it quoted Michel making the following comment: "no wonder you love your monarchy and do not wish to change it."¹⁵³ Pulling on the heartstrings of free-trade liberalism, the *Review* opened its biography of Matilda Chaplin Ayrton, M.D. with the touching recollection that "In the year 1846 when the great principle of Free Trade was recognised in England by the repeal of the Corn Laws, there was born at Honfleur on the north coast of France a girl, who during her short life did much to sweep away some of the injurious monopolies which have so long out-lived commercial protection in our country."¹⁵⁴ These and a few other instances of outlandish liberties with the customs of straight reportage are rare in the pages of the *Review*, and were invariably taken in the context of asserting the patriotism of women and feminism.

The language of patriotism, so liberally employed in the pages of the *Review*, had by the 1880s become a government prerogative and an essentially conservative position. But patriotism had only recently been converted to conservatism, having enjoyed a long history as a language of protest, employed most recently by the Chartists.¹⁵⁵ Although the producers of the *Review* did use the language of patriotism in ways that supported "dominant" ideology and state institutions (including imperialism),¹⁵⁶ as women they could not use it

¹⁵³V. 14: 92.

¹⁵⁴V. 14: 343.

¹⁵⁵Hugh Cunningham, "The Language of Patriotism," in *Patriotism*: 57-89.

¹⁵⁶See for example "Present Condition and Future Prospects of Medical Women in India," V. 19: 481-488. For a discussion of nineteenth century English feminists role in imperialism, see Antoinette M. Burton, "The White Woman's Burden: British Feminists and the Indian Woman, 1865-1915", *Women's Studies International Forum*, 1990 13(4): 295-308.

completely uncritically. The adoption of a separate identity as women alienated the producers and readers of *Review* not so much from their nationality as from Englishmen, and they used the language of nationalism to express that alienation. Employing a kind of reverse nationalism to argue for change, the *Review* also deployed the language of patriotism in a radical context which was severely critical of the existing state and its institutions.

While women's contributions to public life were counted as a national gain, the *Review* conversely counted the efforts that women were required to expend in their campaigns for civic representation and participation as a national loss. "Proud of its power to outstrip other nations in the race of life, [the English nation] has hitherto contentedly hampered itself, and taken away half its running force, by shutting women out of the course."¹⁵⁷ The loss was expressed in very material terms when the *Review* used a political economy metaphor to describe the social economy which was deprived of the labour of half the nation. "[W]omen have had to create their own machinery, and make the roads they were to travel upon. Every success that has been gained has cost far more to flesh and blood and nerves and brain, than any similar success gained by men. What a waste is here!"¹⁵⁸ These appeals to the national economy, which figured so large in middle-class Englishness, were intended to cut deeply.

Resistance to women's public participation was not simply counted as a loss. The *Review* counted the "position of women" in England against its claims to being a civilised nation. Whatever role women held in public life was constructed as a product of national culture, specifically of historical precedent, social,

¹⁵⁷"Increase in National Strength," V.12: 290.

¹⁵⁸V. 15: p. 353.

economic, and legal practices, and sometimes geographical circumstances. In judging their own culture the producers of the *Review* frequently resorted to one standard: the public role of women. As feminists, the producers of the *Review* conceived of "civilisation" as including a standard for the participation of women in public life.¹⁵⁹ In 1886 the *Review* wrote:

It is in the equal co-operation of women with men in public as in private life, in the cultivation of the universal intelligence, not of half the intellect only, of a nation, and in the utilisation of all the force, spiritual and mental as well as material, of a people for the service of the common good that its well-being and civilisation necessarily consist.¹⁶⁰

English practices and institutions were obviously found wanting in their utilisation of female resources, and the *Review* rarely failed to point this out.

Conversely, the *Review* was willing to ascribe a high degree of "civilisation" to peoples who met their criteria for the treatment of women, notwithstanding their degree of conformity to other standards. It is not uncommon to find racial "others" held up, albeit ironically, as models of "civilisation" in this respect, and in one case the *Review* made a specific claim against their own "Aryan" race as peculiarly guilty of depriving "women of every shred of real power, whilst professing to treat her with chivalrous deference."¹⁶¹ Some of the indictments used the language of race in a gentle way: "Without wishing to draw too dark a picture of the condition of women in civilised countries, it is impossible to deny that as far as law extended there were startling similarities between the status of

¹⁵⁹Like many others deployed by the *Review*, this was not an uncommon argument; it was used by J.S. Mill, among others. See Stefan Collini's Introduction to "The Subjection of Women," *On Liberty and Other Writings*, ed. Stefan Collini, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989): xx. 160V. 17: 210/11.

¹⁶¹"Status of Women Among Uncivilised Nations," V. 13: 48.

the Negro and of women.”¹⁶² Other references were more condemning: “The practice of some Eastern peoples is more consistent when they kill off those of their female children whom they do not want. So long as these unjust laws [on custody] prevail our civilisation stands arraigned.”¹⁶³ It is in these contexts that the significance of whiteness to Englishness is most evident, and the comparison of non-white races was clearly intended as a cutting blow.

Although this critical attack on Englishness appears to be produced from an allegiance to womanhood, it was in fact constructed by national ideals. The intention in any of the attacks on the nation was to draw attention to the absence of “English” freedoms in women’s lives. The demands of the *Review*’s liberal feminism were ultimately demands to participate fully in the national culture of free election, free labour, free press, free worship, and free trade. These aims were not, in the first instance, demands for equality or justice for women, but for Englishwomen. This orientation considerably limited the objectives and the possible achievements of the feminism represented in the *Review*.

English nationalism impaired the noble sentiments of an internationalist women’s movement. By designing a limited range of goals for women’s equality, the *Review* produced a very limited ideal of womanhood, which was exemplified by *Englishwomanhood*. The depiction of “women” in the *Review*, even though it was a picture drawn with feelings of sympathy and solidarity, is extremely ethnocentric. Relatively like the English in culture and interests, American women were praised in the *Review*, whereas Egyptian women, culturally distant “sisters,” were not. Not only did Englishwomen excel as women, but as world

¹⁶²V. 11: 345.

¹⁶³V. 15: 497.

leaders it was left to Englishwomen to "retain the courage and high principle, of which this year so many thousands have given proof, [so that] they may form an invincible army, to spread the blessings of pure domestic life over the whole world."¹⁶⁴ The result of constructing womanhood inside English national culture was to make feminism imperialistic, in the worst sense of the word.

Moreover, liberal feminism's very Englishness may have worked to defeat it. A movement so closely allied with the political culture of mid-nineteenth century England was doomed to die with that political culture. The ideal of parliament as a locus of public debate and administration faded with the progress of class politics, a development in English national politics that was already underway in the 1880s. The "strange death of liberal England" also meant the stillbirth of a feminism that evolved within it. When the *Review* ceased to publish in 1910 it was probably because it no longer had a culture - the culture of the monthly *Reviews*, of rational public debate - within which to operate.

This should be a cautionary tale for twentieth century feminists. It seems wise to examine the nature of our goals to try to determine in what ways feminisms revolve around their own national political context, and whether it may be beneficial to attempt to detach them from that culture. Certainly we must expect to feel pressures for change to our feminisms as local political cultures, and especially nationalisms, are being disrupted and rebuilt. Evidently the nation-state has had a powerful influence on feminism: as nationalism changes in response to late-twentieth century political developments, feminism may need to be reinvented.

¹⁶⁴V. 14: 531.

We might also wish to reflect on the significance of our national identities to our identities as women, men, and our other affiliations. It has been thought, by historians and contemporaries, that women's national identity in nineteenth century England was insignificant. Though national identity seemed not to relate to women and the culture of the feminine, it is clearly written in the pages of the *Englishwoman's Review of Social and Industrial Questions* that national culture had a powerful resonance and influence on the lives and ambitions of the women who produced it. The process of resolving different or contradictory identities can result in nearly unrecognizable progeny; the moral matron would at first glance appear to be completely at odds with the tradition of the free liberal Englishman. But they were of a pair. The Englishwoman of the *Review* was hardly shadowy; in fact she overshadowed other women, other feminists, who were not sufficiently "English."

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