

RESITUATING “REGULATED HATRED”: D. W. HARDING’S JANE AUSTEN

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I. THE HATRED OF “GENTLE JANE”

On Friday, 3 March 1939, before the Literary Society of Manchester University, thirty-two-year-old psychology lecturer Denys Clement Wyatt Harding, an admittedly nervous public speaker, stepped up to the podium and announced that “gentleman of an older generation” had totally misread Jane Austen. Harding, supervised at Cambridge by both I. A. Richards, the father of “practical criticism,” and F. R. Leavis, the author of *The Great Tradition* of the British novel, was not a literary critic. Nonetheless, as Nazis marched through Europe, Harding declared it wrong to consider Jane Austen’s novels as escapist fiction, as any “refuge for the sensitive when the contemporary world grew too much for them.” Austen was not “a sensitive person of culture” who “reveal[ed] with inimitable lightness of touch the comic foibles and amiable weaknesses of the people whom she lived amongst and liked.”¹ She was a regulated hater, reflecting and managing the “eruption of fear and hatred into the relationships of everyday social life” (“RH,” 350).

It would be hard to overestimate the influence of Harding’s ideas, which appeared under the title “Regulated Hatred: An Aspect of the Work of Jane Austen” in the March 1940 issue of the Cambridge polemical quarterly *Scrutiny*, almost instantly changing the current of Austen criticism. The novelist’s less congenial tendencies had been observed by earlier commentators, including Alice Meynell who dubbed her a “mistress of derision” (1894) and Reginald Farrer who described her as “the most merciless, though calmest, of iconoclasts” (1917).² While Harding failed to acknowledge such contributions, “Regulated Hatred” comprehended and intensified their readings to such an extent that their views became not only hard to ignore but almost impossible to controvert. In Harding’s view, Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice* is not just a buffoon, he is a serious evil—“real enough to Mrs. Bennet, [who] is real enough to Elizabeth to create a situation

of real misery for her when she refuses" ("RH," 353). Where others read social comedy, Harding read alarming realism.

Jane Austen, as Harding presented her that day in Manchester and one year later in the pages of *Scrutiny*, marred the portrait of "Dear Aunt Jane" popularized long before in the 1871 memoir by her nephew James Edward Austen-Leigh.³ Harding's Austen wrote for "self-preservation," a writer "desperate" to express "her critical attitudes" towards her friends and neighbors ("RH," 352, 351). Although scholars have questioned what exactly Harding considered to be Austen's "positive" achievement, historical context along with a draft version of "Regulated Hatred" clarify his argument that the novelist's tough-minded survivalism furnished a practical model for how to live now, rather than a daydream of how gentlepeople had lived before.⁴ Austen, Harding contended, should not be read "with a sense of relief but with the zest with which you turn to a formidable ally who stands with you against the things *you hate*."⁵

Harding's depiction of a critical Austen would shape discussion of the novelist in the years ahead, but his model of a profoundly political Austen—not in the sense of ideology but of *Realpolitik*—was soon lost. The intimations of World War II in Harding's speech (the sense of Austen as a tactical and not just social "ally") were considerably toned down, if not erased, in the version published in *Scrutiny* (a journal edited by F. R. Leavis and three others, including Harding). In essay form, Harding's message seemed more like a rant against nineteenth-century gentleman-Janeites than a public-service announcement about how emotionally to survive the war. Harding's pithy statement that Austen's "books are, as she meant them to be, read and enjoyed by precisely the sort of people whom she disliked" was hailed in Austen Studies and enlisted as a slogan for dividing her readership into an elite who understand the author and the commoners who do not ("RH," 347).⁶ Thus, Marvin Mudrick summoned Harding's line as an epigraph to his highly influential, highly acerbic *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* in 1952, by which time the pairing of "hatred" and "Jane Austen," once inconceivable, was no surprise.

Harding opened the door to a misanthropic Austen—not least Mudrick's own portrait of a sadistic, commitment-phobic man-hater, "a spinster without means, and which must by its nature react to feeling with an invincible antipathy."⁷ Even in D. A. Miller's more recent celebration of Austen, it is possible to trace this antisocial, anti-sexual figure, whose writing betrays "the injured utterance of a woman and spinster."⁸ However much R. W. Chapman disdained the "iconoclasm"

of “Regulated Hatred,” it ushered what Leavis could only anticipate as a “revolution” in Austen Studies.⁹ Harding’s portrait of the author as a fierce social critic barely able to manage her antipathies swept away the residual “Dear Aunt” or “Gentle Jane.” After Harding, it was hard to read Austen as a “delicate satirist,” an epithet now permanently condemned (“RH,” 347). “Regulated Hatred” installed a novelist of dark social vision, honed by an impeccable, if not pathological, linguistic control. What happened then to Harding’s “formidable ally,” the tactical Austen who could get you through an international war?

This essay revisits Harding’s landmark essay in order better to understand the history of Austen criticism and to appreciate Austen’s urgently felt importance during times of social crisis and military conflict. Where other critics have tried to contain Harding’s intervention as part of an inevitable reaction against the Victorians’ “Gentle Jane,” I propose a more expansive view that leaves us with the legacy of the novelist not as a misanthropic purist but as a political figure who generates readings not normally associated with “Regulated Hatred.”¹⁰ To this end, I reassess the essay in the context of Harding’s career as a war psychologist, one illuminated by the manuscript draft of the essay and by other works in his archive. Harding’s fame as the promoter of an antisocial Austen will prove to be a major misprision. The marginalized, embittered spinster who repressed her personal abjection (as Mudrick suggests) or sublimated it (as Miller suggests) lies far from Harding’s delineation of a writer fundamentally engaged in the political sphere. While Harding notes that Austen, like Miss Bates of *Emma*, was “neither young, handsome, rich, nor married,” he sees the novelist as no case study of celibate frustration, but rather, as a practitioner of something like diplomacy (“RH,” 350).

II. FROM PROTEST TO ABJECTION: HARDING’S LEGACY IN MUDRICK AND MILLER

Openly carrying the torch relayed by Harding, Mudrick in *Irony as Defense and Discovery* interpreted Harding’s ideas in ways that would fundamentally change the reception of “Regulated Hatred.” Most significantly, Mudrick applied Austenian regulation to the arena of sexuality rather than sociability, such that Austen’s hatred became profoundly personal instead of ethical. Mudrick’s version of Harding’s Austen may have been a distortion, but it has proved to be a highly compelling one. For the half-century of Austen Studies that has followed, *Irony as Defense* has provided a strong precedent for representing the novelist as a fiercely disappointed woman who worked out her personal

frustrations through her glittering prose. One recent and remarkable example of such a representation can be found in Miller's *Jane Austen, or The Secret of Style* (2003), which will be discussed shortly.

Mudrick's book set out as if to reconcile the famous part of "Regulated Hatred" with its awkward and rarely discussed secondary argument in which Harding discerns a fairy-tale structure in Austen's novels. In this section of the essay (probably conceived separately from the argument about "regulated hatred"), Harding grapples with the false notes of Austen's happy endings, especially in *Mansfield Park*, which elevates a heroine whom Harding long struggled to like.¹¹ To explain the forced "winding-up" of Austen's novels, Harding resorted to a weakly psychoanalytic reading of "the Cinderella theme" in her oeuvre ("RH," 358). Mudrick's *Irony as Defense* hit upon a simpler solution: extend Austen's "hatred" to her disingenuous endings and prove that Austen hated love and marriage just as much as she hated people.

Irony as Defense took Harding's subtle and politically engaged notion of regulated hatred into the realm of pure pathology. Under Mudrick, Austen is no longer a skillful social critic but a virulent anti-sex crusader who refuses to pull off a credible or remotely satisfying love scene. Where Harding describes Austen as a strategist who could criticize without alienating those she cared for, Mudrick portrays a defensive and punishing author who undermines her characters and readers out of a deep-seated perversity. Austenian irony, for Harding, is a highly flexible and ultimately charitable mode of expression, exercising a "capacity for keeping on good terms with people without too great treachery to [one]self" ("RH," 358). Irony, according to Mudrick, is Austen's equivalent to armor, a device used to protect herself from people, experiences, and feelings.

Mudrick grants an aesthetic rationale for Austen's "single life-principle" of irony in her overturning of Gothic and sentimental tropes of the novel (*I*, 178). But much more of his argument is devoted to explaining how her narrative detachment derives from a personal and compulsive rejection of "the great, unknown, adult commitment of sexual love" (*I*, 19). According to Mudrick's "irresistibly biographical" account, when the child-writer, who had burlesqued the sentimental novel with such ruthlessness, was confronted with the threat of sexuality, she hardened into a scorching ironist (*I*, 225). Austen "must keep her distance from the threat of contact, above all from the ultimate commitment of sex" (*I*, 30). Mudrick's Austen is brilliant but vicious, effective but stunted—a mutant version of Harding's regulated hater. Mudrick's critical move to entwine Austen's sparkling aesthetic pro-

duction to a defective private life is one reproduced by Miller in *The Secret of Style*.

Whereas Mudrick inherited Harding's Austen, Miller seems to have inherited Mudrick's Harding. Like *Irony as Defense*, *The Secret of Style* represents the novelist as a spinster, alienated from the hearth of personal relations and disenfranchised from the marriage plot. Both studies portray Austen as a fighter and read her fiction as symptomatically defensive, as "defiantly, pathetically compensatory" (S, 20). Where Mudrick analyzes Austen's irony as her "weapon or shield" (I, 178), Miller reads her style as a "swank Excalibur," calling on readers to watch "its brilliant surface dazzle our enemies, and its sharp point, when they persisted in attack, pierce them to the quick" (S, 3, 2). Miller retains Harding's concept of "regulation," but in Mudrick's restricted sense of sexual abnormality. Austen's novels, writes Miller, "regulated erotic desire so well that the world had judged them sexless" (S, 4). Gone is Harding's sense of a tactical insider, prescribing methods of social survival. The new "hating" Austen is a sexless outcast, "who, though solitary, though single, has made 'perfect happiness' depend on entering the condition of the couple, and is now regarding this paradise from outside its gates" (S, 55). Under Mudrick and then Miller, Harding's political theorist becomes a victim of celibacy.

Although both Mudrick and Miller focus on Austen the spinster, their valuations of this subject position sharply diverge. If Mudrick pathologizes Austen, Miller glamorizes her. Where Mudrick's Austen is angry and nasty, Miller's figure is melancholy and ashamed. Mudrick sympathizes with the victims of the author's withering irony, Miller identifies with the brandisher of such savage narration. Both critics, incidentally, see Austen as queer. Mudrick remarks the "tendency" (first detected by Edmund Wilson) that Emma Woodhouse, and probably Jane Austen, "prefers the company of women" (I, 192).¹² He even goes so far as to read explicit same-sex desire in Austen's novels, though he is quick to cauterize its significance.¹³ Miller aligns Austen's abjection with that of "the Unheterosexual." "Serving the marriage plot as its aging maid of honor," Miller's Austen is queer not because she exposes the conventions of heteronormativity but because she adheres to them so strictly (S, 25). Jane Austen the "old maid"—who is as "conjugally irrelevant" as "the homosexual"—astonishingly becomes "the general voice of heterosexuality itself" (S, 38, 36, 8, 7). Such an achievement for Miller reflects the queer's dream of non-situatedness, the claim to an unassailable universality that could replace the mark of painful particularity: "Like the Unheterosexual, the Spinster" (S, 29).

These disenchanted figures, spin-offs of Harding's "regulated hater," would be unrecognizable to Denys Harding. My claim is not that Mudrick's and Miller's analyses are not accurate or persuasive representations of Jane Austen. What I am saying is that they are not accurate reflections of Harding's Austen—a central, if not always acknowledged, source in their critical genealogy. In the passage from "Regulated Hatred" to *The Secret of Style*, Harding's Austen acquired an old maid's chip on her shoulder and lost her tactical thrust. Mudrick's intervention, which made Austen's problems personal instead of political, is the hinge from Harding to Miller. Mudrick's reinterpretation of "regulated hatred" as sexual hostility made possible a reading like Miller's that understands Austen's dominating fictions as compensation for her abjected life.

The goal of this essay is to remember how far such views were from Harding's, and how "Regulated Hatred" fosters a more expansive, more political understanding of Austen. Mudrick's and Miller's portrait of a "marginal or malformed subject" totally opposes Harding's depiction of the novelist as a model of psychological security (S, 39). Harding's Austen was not an injured, embittered woman but a confident social strategist motivated by practical insight, not personal lack. Harding read in Austen's texts not "the desolate state of the Unmarried One" but, as we will see, an answer to the desolate state of international diplomacy (S, 73). Far from the compensatory practice discerned by Mudrick and Miller (what the latter calls a "daydream" of "inhuman" power), Austen's writing represented for Harding a constructive engagement with the actual world (S, 2). Jane Austen's "world historical achievement" was not the transcendence of the stigmatizing categories of personhood but an unflinching assessment and negotiation of hard sociopolitical facts (S, 67).

While Mudrick and Miller emphasize Austen's outsider status, Harding understood the novelist as possessing the dual perspective of someone who can be "intensely critical of people to whom she also has strong emotional attachments" ("RH," 355). In that essential standpoint of outside *and* inside, Harding's regulated hater resembles the figure of the public intellectual more than she does the bitter old maid. Harding's Austen could, for example, be taken for Edward Said's portrait of an intellectual, described as "an individual endowed with a faculty for representing, embodying, articulating a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion to, as well as for, a public" but "with an edge to it" as "someone whose place it is publicly to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma."¹⁴ How different

then is Mudrick's assessment that Austen (through Emma Woodhouse) "exhibits the strong need to dominate" from Harding's sense, as I will now argue, that what Austen offered to her readers was precisely a corrective to "the impulse to dominate" (*I*, 193).

III. DOMINATION AND DIPLOMACY

Published the year after "Regulated Hatred," *The Impulse to Dominate* was a book both ill-served and perversely corroborated by the conflict it sought to understand: during the London Blitz most copies were destroyed in a warehouse fire and, because of paper rationing, it was not reprinted.¹⁵ Existing copies suggest a rich intertext for "Regulated Hatred," beginning with the dust jacket. Advertised there are two other books from Harding's publisher, *What To Do With Germany* and *German versus Hun*—good illustrations of the British attempt to characterize its enemy as a modern European nation unwilling to observe the rules of fair play.¹⁶ For the epigraph to his own book, Harding quotes the Minister of Labor and National Service: "Now is the time when thoughtful people ought to be considering the real social implications of the war."¹⁷ *The Impulse to Dominate* turned to this consideration, the urgency for social preservation in a period tending to mutual destruction. Using anthropological as well as psychological evidence, Harding tries to prove the persistence in human culture of an ethical concern for one's enemy. A "surprising feature of much social violence, including war," he writes, "is its moderation"—a synonym, I will argue, for Jane Austen's "regulation" (*ITD*, 13).

The Impulse to Dominate is, among other things, a speculation about remaking the rules of sociability at a time of fierce animosity and violence. That *Impulse* emphasizes "regulated combat" and "regulate[d] warfare" is crucial to restoring the balance to the proposal of the essay on Austen (*ITD*, 14, 16). Although critics have focused on his application of "hatred," Harding argues that a genius for "regulation" is what makes Austen an exemplar in the arena of our most casual and intimate dealings. For Harding and for the British in 1939, hatred was just a condition of living. According to *Impulse*, the deep structure of domination and submission so pervades our lives that nearly all of our interactions take the form of war: "the absence of physical combat is not enough to give us a psychologically different form of social intercourse called 'peace'" (*ITD*, 246). Animosity—far from a special diagnosis of Jane Austen—is second nature. People or countries living together inevitably disagree, and war erupts in an understood commitment to winners or losers.

Peaceful relations are even harder to attain in a zero-sum society in which one man's gain is another's loss. Harding's *Social Psychology and Individual Values* (1953) begins with a chapter called "Competition," in which he notes that "[a]ll social experience is shot through with the contrast between the liking people feel for each other and the mutual antagonism that arises from clashes of attitude and aim when they pursue their own ends." Like a country village in which there are only so many single men in possession of good fortunes to go around, Harding's world is marked by a troubled aggressiveness (think Mrs. Bennet) that strains everyone's goodwill. The individual, despite being taught as a child that selfishness was bad, finds "that society is organized competitively and that now his job is to get the better of others."¹⁸

With a model of what he calls social integration, *The Impulse to Dominate* proposes an alternative to the paradigm of dominance and submission. Under the integrative model, disagreement is both sociable and productive. Harding's integrated person—playful, malleable, and optimistic—tests her propositions against an opponent's out of a spirit of inquiry rather than competition. Where others see conflict, she sees opportunity. Where others are risk-averse and withhold their opinions, she shows her cards in hopes of change. The integrated person is governed by the desire for conversation and not by a defensive impulse to leave the table when confronted with difference (*ITD*, 20–22). She is open to development, what Harding (quoting American psychologist H. H. Anderson) describes as "a process of change . . . that results from increasingly complex relations with persons different from one's self" (*ITD*, 22).

I have re-gendered Harding's example in order to suggest that the models for the integrated person are Elizabeth Bennet, Emma Woodhouse, and Jane Austen herself—no misanthrope but a fundamentally social being.¹⁹ In his speech at Manchester, Harding described an Austen able to perceive injustice and stupidity without alienating the offenders. Of her "bald and brief" judgments, Harding argued, "it gets said, but with the minimum risk of setting people's backs up" ("RH," 348). Harding's Austen represents and handles the moral shortcomings of seriously "detestable people" with a diplomatic playfulness, in which real loathing can be taken as "mock assault" ("RH," 352). Austen's fiction, Harding wrote, was a "means of unobtrusive spiritual survival, without open conflict with the friendly people around her whose standards in simpler things she could accept and whose affection she greatly needed" ("RH," 351–2).²⁰ Austen neither remained silent

when affronted by her society nor gave offense. Through regulated hatred, she recognized what Harding understood as the need to hate people while still retaining their love—a necessarily flexible approach to a compromised world.

Austen's fiction supplied a model of antagonism rooted in social integration: "two people who find themselves differing take the opportunity to reconsider completely their original aim or opinion. They are plastic enough to do it. They are also secure enough psychologically to do it; secure enough to accept the paradox that they will still have their identity in spite of becoming different from what they were" (*ITD*, 247). Although Austen's own "regulated hatred" may seem to fall short of the transformative potential of integration, such a process is realized on the stage of her novels in which characters enter into "increasingly complex relations with persons different from one's self." Austen's major characters test their propositions, undergo development, and risk changing their minds. Unlike Mudrick's Austen, who acts out her differences, and Miller's, who transcends them, Harding's Austen confronts, regulates, and defuses dangerous social frictions. To interpret "Regulated Hatred" through Harding's psychological writing is to discern in Austen the qualities of fortitude, insight, and craftiness that critics engaged in political readings of her novels have tended to emphasize.²¹ But rather than portray her as either subversive or conservative, Jacobin or anti-Jacobin, imperialist or anti-imperialist, Harding represented Austen as more like a statesman, as someone who can negotiate protest with self-interest, repulsion with solidarity.

In the draft of "Regulated Hatred," Harding observes that while Austen has long been accused of being politically and historically unaware at best, complacent at worst, he sees someone "explicitly attempting to change the social order," not by subverting it "but in seeing it clearly for what it was" (draft *RH*, 7). Such political acumen meant Austen could assess and respond to her environment with tactical clarity. For Harding, Austenian self-regulating ambivalence is the most ethical as well as psychologically healthy disposition in a society that we at once need, and need to object to. Unlike the ironist who ridicules or the misanthrope who renounces, Harding's Austen engages in a form of opposition that preserves the dignity of her subjects without sacrificing her right of protest. Harding admired in Austen what he admired in Isaac Rosenberg, the World War I poet about whom he also wrote: a fierce adherence to a reality principle, an ability to confront and cope with deep offenses. Such an approach, he wrote of Rosenberg, could entail "without the least touch of coldness,

nevertheless a certain impersonality.” This detachment—not to be confused with “bitterness or irony”—signified only “a more complete sensitivity” to the demands of war.²²

Austen’s representations of domestic conflict suggested an affinity to Harding between the drawing room and the war room.²³ If foreign policy could be thought of as an extension of social life, then it might be possible to work out a method for handling even the grossest breaches of etiquette (*ITD*, 215). Harding understood Austen as a master of diplomacy, a vocation described by Harold Nicolson, in the same year as Harding’s Manchester speech, as requiring “trained powers of observation, long experience and sound judgment.”²⁴ Austen the diplomat—with her unflinching eye, immaculate judgment, and infinite capacity for discretion—could demonstrate not only why it is unacceptable to insult Miss Bates, but also how to pay civilities to Augusta Elton. Although Emma Woodhouse is privately convinced that Mrs. Elton is “self-important, presuming, familiar, ignorant, and ill-bred,” she measures her public pronouncements.²⁵ To Harriet’s question, “what do you think of her?” Emma replies, “Very nicely dressed, indeed; a remarkably elegant gown.”²⁶ Emma, of course, has a deeper opinion: “She did not really like her,” but she finds something nice to say, knowing it would not be wise openly to offend another resident of Highbury.²⁷ (Private, snarky conversations with intimates like Mrs. Weston and Mr. Knightley are another matter.)

Unlike romances—or novels like *Jane Eyre* and *David Copperfield*—where enemies just die, Austen’s fiction accepts the social necessity of living with one’s adversaries. Irksome as it may be, the fact is that Mrs. Elton belongs to the community. The realm of family demands even greater exertion. Musing on Mr. Darcy’s reasons for brokering marriage between Wickham and her wayward sister, Elizabeth Bennet considers and then doubts the possibility that he loves her: “to overcome a sentiment so natural as abhorrence against relationship with Wickham. Brother-in-law of Wickham! Every kind of pride must revolt from such a connection.”²⁸ Yet the connection is made and carries into perpetuity as Elizabeth, too, becomes sister-in-law of Wickham. Where family especially is concerned, Austen’s novels recognize that while it may not be preferable to integrate offensive people (read: nations) into one’s circle, the costs of cutting them off can be too high and sometimes inconceivable.

Unpleasant relations cannot be avoided. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth must accept Mr. Collins as the husband of her best friend (“Charlotte the wife of Mr. Collins, was a most humiliating picture!”)

and must herself marry into the family of the insulting Lady Catherine.²⁹ In *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine Morland must solicit the consent of an unwilling father-in-law, General Tilney, the same man who kicked her out of his house. Captain Wentworth in *Persuasion* must learn to reconcile with Lady Russell, the sole source of his past disappointment. Finally, *Sense and Sensibility* turns the practice of making your enemy your relation into a great remedy, as Lucy Steele inexplicably marries Robert Ferrars, leaving his brother and her old fiancé Edward Ferrars free to marry her once rival and now sister-in-law Elinor Dashwood. Austen's plots map what Eric Walker calls an "affective jungle," in which the lines of attachment cross, break off, and realign in dizzying configurations.³⁰

Uneasy alliances are a staple in Austen's novels, in which the family, estate, and marriage market are political and emotional minefields. Harding remarks in his essay on the difference in Austen between what he calls "submissive alliance," in which one adopts "the criterion of sound judgment and good feeling" supplied by others, and "selective alliance," in which one chooses to affiliate with only "certain aspects" of other people's characters. The distinction allows Harding to salvage political agency from a mesh of dependencies. The heroine of an Austen novel forms selective, not submissive, alliances and thus, "[t]he social world may have material power over her, enough to make her unhappy, but it hasn't the power that comes from having created or moulded her, and it can claim no credit for her being what she is. In this sense the heroine is independent of those about her and isolated from them" ("RH," 356). Here, isolation in the midst of social ties is no regrettable condition, but a form of autonomy.

Mansfield Park, a novel that represents both selective and submissive alliances, takes up the overlapping category of advantageous alliances. The story begins when a down-and-out Mrs. Price solicits a rapprochement with her well-off relations, "no longer [able] to afford or cherish pride or resentment, or to lose one connection that might possibly assist her."³¹ As in international relations, power and interest establish the dynamics of family relations. And, as in games of diplomacy, play proceeds by interpersonal maneuvering. Mrs. Price "addressed Lady Bertram in a letter which spoke so much contrition and despondence . . . as could not but dispose them all to a reconciliation." As her eldest daughter will soon learn, submission is the most effective posture to adopt with the Bertrams. Mrs. Price's self-abasing letter "re-established peace and kindness. Sir Thomas sent friendly advice and professions, Lady Bertram dispatched money and baby-

linen, and Mrs. Norris wrote the letters” (*MP*, 5). Fanny—emissary and peace offering, as well as refugee—is a token of diplomatic relations that binds the interests of the families and ensures a policy of perpetual “peace and kindness.”

Fanny’s unwillingness to cooperate in Sir Thomas’s schemes of high-stakes matchmaking defies the terms of her asylum. Sir Thomas, also known to Fanny as “[h]e who had married a daughter to Mr. Rushworth,” is a power broker in the ballroom as well as on the plantation (*MP*, 331). Family alliances represent opportunities for coalition building, and “though infinitely above scheming or contriving for any the most advantageous matrimonial establishment that could be among the apparent possibilities of any one most dear to him” (*MP*, 238), Sir Thomas pursues the annexing of men of birth and property as a self-evident good: the “one opinion,” “one wish,” “one way” of any rational player (*MP*, 329). Fanny’s outright refusal of Henry Crawford, a man with exemplary “situation in life, fortune, and character,” is, Sir Thomas tells her, “something . . . which my comprehension does not reach” (*MP*, 316).

Austen sets Fanny’s refusal to play or be played against her cousin’s sanctioned gamble. Maria Bertram enters a very selective alliance with Mr. Rushworth, in which she shuts out all but the one meritorious aspect of his character, his wealth. Sir Thomas, “happy to secure a marriage which would bring him such an addition of respectability and influence,” is also happy to whitewash what he and Maria both know to be true, that “[s]he could not, did not like” Mr. Rushworth (*MP*, 200–1). Sir Thomas, “sensible of the importance of having an ally of such weight,” cannot help but revel “in the prospect of an alliance so unquestionably advantageous” (*MP*, 186, 40). Whereas Edmund cannot “refrain from often saying to himself, in Mr. Rushworth’s company, ‘If this man had not twelve thousand a year, he would be a very stupid fellow,’” Sir Thomas—even after discerning Rushworth’s stupidity and Maria’s antipathy—cannot reconcile himself to the dissolution of so much unified power and fortune. Although he invites his daughter to share any second thoughts on the marriage, he is relieved when she disowns them. “It was an alliance which he could not have relinquished without pain” (*MP*, 201). The advantageous alliance is doomed from its inception—after all, it was Aunt Norris who “formed the connection with the Rushworths.” Self-appointed special envoy of conjugal relations, Aunt Norris takes full credit for the alliance. “‘If I had not been active,’ said she, ‘and made a point of being introduced to his mother, and then prevailed on my sister to pay the first visit, I am as certain as I sit here, that nothing would have come of it’” (*MP*, 188).

Brokering unions is a dangerous business, and in Austen's representation of such elaborate, multilateral schemes for building them and the fragility that renders some so easily broken, Harding read the situation of a fractured Europe. Austen's portrayal of the full range of alliances—from the conservative/defensive (Fanny and Edmund, Emma and Knightley) to the hostile/fiscal (Maria and Rushworth, Charlotte Lucas and Mr. Collins) to the complementary/beneficial (Elizabeth and Darcy, Wentworth and Anne Elliot)—suggested strategic organization, or “the most advantageous . . . establishment that could be among the apparent possibilities.” In demonstrating the risks and rewards of selective alliances, Austen's fiction examined interpersonal predicaments in which tensions are calibrated by how bad and how close. Certain circumstances test the limits of civil behavior. Fanny Price, who tolerates all manner of mistreatment at Mansfield Park, confronts the prospect of moving in with Aunt Norris as an insupportable evil: “I cannot like it” (*MP*, 26).

In *The Impulse to Dominate*, Harding adapted Austen's characterization of unsavory people into his account of ill-behaved nations “whose social immaturity and political crudity” threatened “a more integrative international order” (*ITD*, 216). The “detestable people” featured in “Regulated Hatred” appear in *Impulse* in a notable rundown of “the domineering, the sycophantic, the aggressive, the obsequious, the overpliant, and the dependent,” a list that could easily read, “Lady Catherine, Mr. Elton, Mrs. Elton, Mr. Collins, Harriet Smith, and Miss Bates” (*ITD*, 213). Essentially turning Austen's characters into allegories of nations, Harding argued that international politics could and should be addressed through the analysis of individuals: “political institutions can never far outrun the sentiments and habits of thought of individual citizens. . . . Political maturity cannot outrun ordinary social maturity” (*ITD*, 219). States are only as salutary (or baleful) as their constituents.

Harding's thinking about Austen's feats of diplomacy—her orchestration of the immature and the crude within good and stable societies—restored his confidence in a method of resolution clearly shaky in 1939. Where the explicit inquiry of Harding's book addressed the social and psychic impulses of war, its implicit question was why, after such a brief interval, war was happening again.³² Another European conflict meant that something had not been right during peacetime—if such a time had, in fact, ever existed. Left with the ultimate futility of such a promising idea as the League of Nations, Harding struggled to explain why diplomacy had failed. If insecurity produces domination,

he reasoned, then making countries feel more secure should have prevented an outbreak of aggression. “The sense of security which the League of Nations fostered for a time almost certainly contributed to the reluctance with which European populations entered upon war in 1939,” he wrote (*ITD*, 220). Yet why only “for a time”? Peace movements, he acknowledged, “turn out, when war draws near, to be surprisingly flimsy” (*ITD*, 221). Austen’s integrative picture of social conflict provided Harding with a more durable model of diplomacy, one that anticipated the differences between the League of Nations and the Marshall Plan. Instead of establishing a “supra-national authority which would tame the dominative principle,” Harding recommended “that we should each as far as possible relinquish our own dominative attitudes”—that is, show charity and restraint even in the fullness of our disapproval (*ITD*, 226–27).

IV. WHEN FACED WITH AUNT NORRIS

Strangely, the peace so fundamental to Harding’s model of integration may have very little to do with actual integration, or cohesion. The final emphasis in *The Impulse to Dominate* rests on a principle of judgment rather than harmony, illuminating a possible second phase of regulated hatred: not tolerance but discrimination. Harding writes, “It might be thought that a non-dominative society would involve a belief in some ‘equality’ between people. . . . This would be a complete mistake” (*ITD*, 209). *Impulse* describes how in an integrated society, people exercise their rights either to respect *or to criticize* others. “The social obligation is satisfied equally by admiration and by adverse criticism” (*ITD*, 209). Harding’s vision of integration relies less on achieving sameness than on making distinctions: “Far from denying differences, [the integrative attitude] gives the closest attention to them” (*ITD*, 208). Criticism rather than cooperation emerges as the principal value of Harding’s model. In a non-integrated environment, he argues, free and fair evaluation is not possible. When society is structured by “the impulse to dominate,” one’s right to criticize is forfeited by a compulsion to “deference,” to showing “bogus” admiration rather than real respect (*ITD*, 209). Like Mr. Collins under Lady Catherine, a submissive subject cannot assess the other without fear. The right to criticize without penalty is the prime benefit of social integration. It is also, of course, the principle of “Regulated Hatred.”

After tolerance and discrimination, there is yet another possible phase of regulated hatred, which is just hatred. Austen’s novels can

make clear that sometimes hostile people cannot be integrated into better society, cannot remain in the family circle. It may be presumed, for example, that Lady Russell—but not the irredeemable Elliots—will be intimates of Captain and Mrs. Wentworth. No character, however, is less assimilable than Aunt Norris, who is finally “shut up” abroad with the fallen Maria, where Inferno-like, “it may be reasonably supposed that their tempers became their mutual punishment.” As we have seen, not even the tender-hearted Fanny (who feels for the sufferings of Mr. Rushworth) can care about someone as poisonous as Mrs. Norris. She “was regretted by no one at Mansfield . . . not even when she was gone forever” (*MP*, 465–66).

Aunt Norris represents in *The Impulse to Dominate* the “neurotically dominative government” that effectively has to be shut down by other countries in order to secure the long-term safety of the world. Harding quotes anthropologist Ruth Benedict at length on the “arrogant and unbridled egoists” of contemporary culture who spread “suffering and frustration” but are nonetheless “entrusted with positions of great influence and importance.” He writes that “in a more integrated society such people would stand out as quite evidently diseased” (*ITD*, 212). A more integrated Europe, in other words, would not have permitted the rise of Adolf Hitler. A more deeply unified household of Sir Thomas Bertram would not have been vulnerable to the influence of Aunt Norris. Just as peace can only come to Mansfield with the expulsion of Aunt Norris, European stability can only be restored with the defeat of Germany. “[C]ompanionship, appreciation, agreement” can only be achieved when “flatterers and parasites, yes-men and noddors” are ejected from the system (*ITD*, 214).

In the final pages of *Impulse*, Harding concedes that “[w]hen social conflict assumes the acute form of war it is inevitable that the enemy should be treated as a dangerous object and his social significance allowed to fall into the background” (*ITD*, 216–17). Sometimes, integration is not possible; “at those points we must forgo any true *social* relationship,” in other words, what diplomatists call “breaking relations” (*ITD*, 208). *Impulse* appears to end where it began, with the wartime quandary of making enemies, of denying others their “social significance.” Where we have used *The Impulse to Dominate* to reflect back on “Regulated Hatred,” it may now be helpful to use “Regulated Hatred” better to understand *The Impulse to Dominate*. Interpreted through the Austen model, *Impulse*’s final notes of isolation and force no longer seem incompatible with the goal of integration but rather consistent with a complex method of achieving it.

The diplomat, like the regulated hater, can never sleep. Always alert to the dangers of other countries (other characters), the diplomat recognizes that maintaining even the barest state of cooperation requires constant vigilance and discretion. Drawing on what the narrator of *Sense and Sensibility* calls powers of “unceasing exertion,” the diplomat must contend with the volatility of all relationships, friendly and hostile.³³ Nicolson in his 1939 study identified among the historical arts of the diplomat that of “being fully informed of the ambitions, weaknesses and resources of those with whom they had to deal.” A supreme knowledge of others (what Miller sees in Austen’s authoritative, exhaustive, and “godlike” narration) is essential to “the practice of diplomacy.”³⁴ Those same skills so necessary for modern statecraft were what Harding recognized in Jane Austen and then emphasized in his model of international security. Recognition and criticism of repugnant behavior is a prerogative of freedom; the right to dissociate from a “dangerous object,” a recourse to peace. Such darker tenets do not invalidate Harding’s larger project of diplomacy, especially if we accept a more complex and more political definition of regulated hatred.

In 1939, just days before Germany broke up the state of Czechoslovakia and a policy of appeasement suddenly looked preposterous, Harding meditated on Austen’s clear sight of political reality. In an unpublished letter to *Scrutiny*, William Empson asked, “What is this revolution that [Harding] feels she might have sponsored?”³⁵ The answer is a world that values social integration but is also committed to principles of human justice. Harding felt that the novels of Jane Austen should not offer readers consolation for or transcendence of their circumstances. Instead, he presented her fiction as a survivor’s guide or strategist’s playbook for handling the most precarious and hostile situations. Austen’s regulated hatred led Harding to conceive of the possibility of real, lasting peace, but it also allowed him to come to terms with the rare necessity of war—the power to decide on policies of toleration, containment, and finally, combat.

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NOTES

I would like to thank the Emmanuel College Library, University of Cambridge for access to D. W. Harding’s papers and especially to archivist Amanda Goode and her staff for helping me to navigate them.

¹D. W. Harding, “Regulated Hatred: An Aspect of the Work of Jane Austen,” *Scrutiny* 8 (1940): 346–47 (reprinted in *Regulated Hatred and Other Essays on Jane Austen*, ed.

Monica Lawlor [London: Athlone Press, 1998], 5–25). All references to this text are to the *Scrutiny* version and are hereafter abbreviated “RH” and cited parenthetically by page number. “Regulated Hatred” appeared as the lead article in *Scrutiny*, where Harding was a coeditor from 1933 to 1947. Lawlor’s anthology assembles Harding’s published and unpublished criticism on Austen, including the well-known “Character and Caricature.” Where indicated, I also refer to a draft of “Regulated Hatred,” which is housed with Harding’s papers in the archives at Emmanuel College, University of Cambridge. The opening of the twenty-eight page typescript with pencil markings (“Not likely that I can say very much that’s new about Jane Austen after so much has been written about her”) suggests that it is a version of the Manchester lecture, probably being revised for publication. The manuscript includes a substantial amount of copy that did not make it to *Scrutiny*, despite Harding’s note to Brian Southam that “I can remember hardly anything about that Regulated Hatred essay. I can be reasonably sure that there would have been little revision of the original talk.” Harding did recall that he first submitted “Regulated Hatred” to an American quarterly and that he “felt horribly guilty in offering it for money, knowing that Leavis was always short of copy.” He wrote to Southam, “It was a relief to have it refused and be able to send it to [F. R.] Leavis, who used it at once” (3 April 1985, Box 9, “Correspondence with Publishers,” Harding Papers).

² Alice Meynell, “The Classic Novelist,” *Pall Mall Gazette*, 16 February 1894; Reginald Farrer, “Jane Austen, *ob.* July 18, 1817,” *Quarterly Review*, July 1917. Both essays are reprinted in *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, 2 vol., ed. Brian Southam (London: Routledge, 1987), 2:221, 2:254. Southam concludes his anthology deliberately in 1938, just before the appearance of “Regulated Hatred.” Although Southam credits Harding’s essay with shaping modern approaches to Austen and for “dismembering” the popular impression of her, he also faults Harding for disregarding his own critical heritage (128). “Harding supposed that *ungentle* Jane was *his* discovery and that the earlier critical literature could be safely ignored,” Southam complains (129). Citing, in particular, the contributions of George Saintsbury, Farrer, and E. M. Forster, Southam declares that the Austen criticism of Harding and of Q. D. Leavis, which also appeared in *Scrutiny*, were “not an act of revelation but of reclamation; and that a debt of acknowledgment was due” (131).

³ For an informative account of the other Victorians (Julia Kavanagh, Margaret Oliphant, Richard Simpson, Mary Ward) who departed forcefully from Austen-Leigh’s *Memoir* by focusing on Austen’s “irony, cynicism, despair, and satire,” see Joan Klingel Ray’s “Victorians versus Victorians: Understanding ‘Dear Aunt Jane,’” *Persuasions* 30 (2008): 40. See also Katie Trumpener’s account of “The Virago Jane Austen,” and the twentieth-century “counterreception [that] read her as a hardened realist” in “The Virago Jane Austen,” *Janeites: Austen’s Disciples and Devotees*, ed. Deidre Lynch (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2000), 143.

⁴ See Mary Waldron, *Jane Austen and the Fiction of Her Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999). Waldron contends that “Regulated Hatred,” while “certainly a new departure” in Austen criticism, “hardly engages in any positive way with what the novels *did* achieve” (7). Waldron considers Farrer “the first to see [Austen] as essentially an iconoclast” (6).

⁵ Harding, “Regulated Hatred: An Aspect of the Work of Jane Austen,” *Draft*, 28, underlining original. Typescript. Denys Harding Papers, Box 30. Emmanuel College Archives, University of Cambridge. Hereafter abbreviated draft *RH* and cited parenthetically by page number. The *Scrutiny* version tones down the second-person to

“those who would turn to her not for relief and escape but as a formidable ally against things and people which were to her, and still are, hateful” (“RH,” 362). The draft shows that the concluding lines (in pencil) were added later. Those lines also reveal a tentativeness not traceable in the published version: “Must stop. Ideas half-baked. Even if fully worked out would be only very lop-sided treatment of J. A. Simply tried to underline one or two aspects of her work that don’t seem to have filtered down into the popular impression of J. A. I think if they were more generally recognized a rather different kind of reader would grasp her present-day significance more readily” (draft RH, 28).

⁶The draft of this line is harsher, if also less felicitous: “[S]he is read, enjoyed, and agreed with by just the detestable people whom she denounced” (draft RH, 2).

⁷Marvin Mudrick, *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1952), 62. Hereafter abbreviated *I* and cited parenthetically by page number.

⁸D. A. Miller, *Jane Austen, or the Secret of Style* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2003), 74. Hereafter abbreviated *S* and cited parenthetically by page number.

⁹R. W. Chapman, *Jane Austen: A Critical Bibliography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 52; F. R. Leavis, “Scrutiny: A Retrospect,” *Scrutiny* 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1963), 13. Chapman confessed to being “so out of sympathy” with the viewpoint of “Regulated Hatred” that “I do not trust myself to discriminate” between Harding’s essay, Mudrick’s book, and Reuben Brower’s “The Controlling Hand: Jane Austen and *Pride and Prejudice*” (52).

¹⁰Twenty years after Harding’s essay was published, Wayne Booth observed: “It has lately been fashionable to underplay the value of tenderness and good will in Jane Austen, in reaction to an earlier generation that overdid the picture of ‘gentle Jane.’ The trend seems to have begun in earnest with D. W. Harding’s ‘Regulated Hatred’” (*The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. [Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983], 259n10).

¹¹Among Harding’s Austen papers are two pages of notes about Fanny Price, including the question, “Could [Austen] achieve the yet more complex success [than *Emma*] of making an ultimately attractive person out of someone who lacked all these things and had in counterpoise only the moral qualities that Jane Austen believed to be of fundamental importance?” (“Jane Austen” Folder, Box 30). Other critics have shared Harding’s difficulties with Fanny, including Lionel Trilling, who famously declared, “Nobody, I believe, has ever found it possible to like the heroine of *Mansfield Park*” (“Mansfield Park,” in *The Moral Obligation To Be Intelligent* [1954 New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000], 296).

¹²See Edmund Wilson’s comment that “Emma, who was relatively indifferent to men, was inclined to infatuations with women” in his “A Long Talk About Jane Austen” in *The New Yorker*, 24 June 1944, 74.

¹³Emma Woodhouse, Mudrick writes, “observes Harriet’s beauty with far more warmth than anyone else. . . . No one, it seems, is attracted by *this* pretty face except Emma” (*I*, 190–1). In *Pride and Prejudice*, he reads Elizabeth’s love for her sister Jane as “something maternal, something affectionately envious, something of the nature of a schoolgirl passion” (*I*, 104). Mudrick excludes these passions from the realm of “adult” sexuality, noting that such relations “have always been considered safe and conventional in bourgeois society, and certainly unsuggestive of the direct physical commitment of sexual love” (*I*, 30).

¹⁴Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (New York: Pantheon, 1994), 11.

¹⁵ Harding, *The Impulse to Dominate* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1941). Hereafter abbreviated *ITD* and cited parenthetically by page number.

¹⁶ *Impulse* perpetuates the metaphor of war as a breach of etiquette: “War is regressive in the same sense as it is regressive for two men to come to blows because one has usurped the other’s position in a theatre queue. Physically and mentally each may be braced by the fight, but as social beings they have fallen below the developed standards which each believed in” (*ITD*, 239).

¹⁷ The rest of the epigraph, from Mr. Ernest Bevin (dated 20 November 1940), reads: “I urge that every citizen should be directing his mind not to tiding over an immediate difficulty but to beginning the building of new foundations now.”

¹⁸ Harding, *Social Psychology and Individual Values* (London: Hutchinson’s University Library, 1953), 80.

¹⁹ Harding manages to slip Austen into *The Impulse to Dominate* in an amusingly gratuitous reference to nineteenth-century dentistry. After advocating for public psychotherapy, Harding acknowledges the skepticism that such a proposal might meet. “The present attitude towards analysis and psychotherapy in general,” he writes, “is an exaggerated form of what people felt towards dentistry about a century ago. Jane Austen expressed it in a letter to her sister in 1813[.]” Harding then quotes a half-page from Austen’s letter beginning, “The poor Girls and their Teeth!” which laments her nieces’ sufferings at the hands of Spence the dentist (*ITD*, 238).

²⁰ Austen also needed their material support. Harding’s papers reveal partial drafts of an essay called, “Strawberries and Apple Blossom,” one of the few Austen-related documents not included in Lawlor’s anthology. Written late in life (the third draft is written on the back of a notice dated 1991, the same year his wife died and less than two years before his own death), Harding takes up the “slightly patronizing little joke about Jane Austen’s apple orchard in flower” at Mr. Martin’s farm “while Mr Knightley’s guests gather ripe strawberries,” a horticultural blunder committed in *Emma* and pointed out with enjoyment by Austen’s wealthy brother, Edward Knight. According to Harding’s own research, the “cultivated apple” flowers when Austen says it does. She “may have been cutting it fine but she was not imagining an impossibility,” Harding writes. He further speculates that Austen would not have corrected her brother on what was ultimately his error. “Apart from the fact that [Austen, her mother, and her sister] were indebted to him for the house they lived in, she was far too secure psychologically to have any need to take him down a peg” (Second Draft, “JA Apple Blossom” folder, Box 30). Austen’s tact, Harding suggests, derived both from her psychological security and financial dependency.

²¹ See especially Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987); Claudia Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988), “Jane Austen and the World Wars,” *Annals of Scholarship* 14–15 (2001): 83–94, and, forthcoming, *Jane Austen’s Cults and Cultures*; and Mary Favret, *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2009).

²² Harding, “Aspects of the Poetry of Isaac Rosenberg” *Scrutiny* 3 (1935): 361, 358. Harding’s essay about Rosenberg illuminates the wartime angle of his Austen criticism. Harding writes, “What most distinguishes Isaac Rosenberg from other English poets who wrote of the last war is the intense significance he saw in the kind of living effort that the war called out, and the way in which his technique enabled him to present both this and the suffering and the waste as inseparable aspects of life in war” (358). Rosenberg’s ability to represent both the endurance demanded and the pain exacted

by war look ahead to the dual function of regulated hatred as toleration and protest. Harding's repeated distinction between Rosenberg's "detached and independent vision" and "the easier attitude" of cynicism suggests how little he might have appreciated Mudrick's version of Austen (356, 361). He writes of Rosenberg: "One sign and expression of his particular greatness consists in his being able, in spite of his sensitiveness, to do without irony" (361).

²³ Although Harding was not thinking directly about the politics of the 1790s or the Napoleonic Wars when conceiving of Austen as a wartime model, he approved of others' historicizing efforts to bring "the social background . . . so much closer to the novel as Jane Austen must have thought it would be read" (Letter to Brian Southam, 7 January 1983, Box 9 "Correspondence with Publishers," Harding Papers). For a discussion of Austen's political context inspired by Harding, see Southam's "'Regulated Hatred' Revisited" *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion: A Casebook* (London: Macmillan, 1976), 122–7.

²⁴ Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy* (1939; London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), 25–6.

²⁵ Jane Austen, *Emma*, in *The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman, 3rd ed., 6 vol. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1933), 4:281.

²⁶ Austen, *Emma*, 4:271.

²⁷ Austen, *Emma*, 4:270.

²⁸ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, in *The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, 2:326.

²⁹ Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 2:125.

³⁰ Eric C. Walker, *Reading, Writing, and Romanticism: Wordsworth and Austen after War* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2009), 161. In a study of Austen's and Wordsworth's "indifference," Walker connects warfare to conjugality in the post-war Regency period.

³¹ Austen, *Mansfield Park*, in *The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, 3:4. Hereafter abbreviated *MP* and cited parenthetically by page number.

³² Reflections about World War I and its afterlife appear throughout *The Impulse to Dominate*. "When calamities are given the title 'Great,' as the Great Plague and the Great Fire, they are at the same time given distinction. If we called the war of 1914 the Monstrous War or the Disastrous War the feeling tone would be different," he writes in a section about propaganda (*ITD*, 108).

³³ Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*, in *The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, 1:141.

³⁴ Harding, *Diplomacy*, 25.

³⁵ William Empson, *Selected Letters*, ed. John Haffenden (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006), 123.

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