

wrong ways and days in which to die. Nakai Ayako looks at the early contact between European missionaries and Japanese culture, and anticipates criticism in acknowledging that while her essay is focused primarily on the European side of this encounter, more work needs to be done from the Japanese perspective. This however, is not easy as she writes, 'there is a paucity of early Japanese primary sources, especially by Japanese Christians, because of the prohibition of Christianity that lasted approximately 250 years' (p. 106).

One of the strongest essays in the collection is Linda Woodbridge's 'Vagrants Meet Nomads: Rogues, Aborigines, and Elizabethan Subjectivity'. In this essay Woodbridge sets out a convincing argument for the alignment and exchangeability of the categories of vagrants and nomads in Elizabethan England. The nomads encountered in the New World were read in terms of domestic nomads, the vagrants on the streets of Liverpool and London that

were routinely represented as gypsies, Irish or Welsh, and said to speak what was virtually a foreign language: thieves' cant. But in fact most vagrants were English, thrown out of work by enclosures or depressions in the textile industry. (p. 117)

Woodbridge focuses on the two traits of mobility and secrecy that seemed to colour narrative encounters of such nomads and vagrants. She elegantly argues that these traits account for a large part of the anxiety of the slippage of the civilised and the savage in a period that 'insisted on the fixity and divine sanction of boundaries' (p. 36).

Jonathan Hart, in the conclusion, readdresses some of the issues foregrounded in the previous essays. 'Making', he writes, 'involves craft, construction, work, a goal while "contact" suggests a coming together, sometimes in peace, other times in friction' (p. 225). These essays all address the central theme of making contact, whether it is in positive or negative terms, and whether it is across spatial, temporal or disciplinary boundaries. The editors finally enjoin the reader to 'enjoy these essays as much as we have' (p. xvi), an experience one cannot assume to stumble upon in academic writing, but which is very easily encountered in this case where the contacts are always keenly made.

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European Gothic: A Spirited Exchange 1760–1960

Edited by AVRIL HORNER, 2002,

Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press

xii + 260 pp., 0 7190 6064 8, pb £14.99

The omnipresence of the Gothic mode in late twentieth and early twenty-first century culture has led to an intense concern with the literary Gothic on the part of academic literary criticism. Thus, for the first time in its long history the Gothic as a genre is receiving serious attention. Since the 1980s academics have developed new perspectives on classic authors such as Ann Radcliffe, Hugh

Walpole, Matthew Lewis, Mary Shelley and the Brontë sisters. Literary historians have described the rise, transformation and rehabilitation of the Gothic novel from the eighteenth century onwards. At our disposal are descriptions of Gothic novels in contemporary literature and assessments of the international significance of the genre (variants have been spotted in Scottish, Irish, German, French, American, Canadian and Australian literature). Gothic narratives are also being subdivided on the basis of gender, nation and period. Even handbooks about the genre were published recently.

Against this particular background the collection *European Gothic: A Spirited Exchange 1760–1960* (edited by Avril Horner) is a logical and welcome next step. On any national level the genesis of Gothic narratives is strongly connected to conflicts and preoccupations that relate both to the individual psyche and to the development of collective processes. However, Horner's collection does not focus on specific national histories of the genre, but highlights how the various national Gothic literary traditions are interwoven. The coherence between the various contributions demonstrates the existence of a European Gothic tradition that follows and comments upon social and political developments in Europe. From the very beginning Gothic narratives commented critically upon Modernity, that is on the pursuit of social and moral progress through rationality and its typical manifestations science and technology. Gothic narratives are not so much concerned with the celebration or the rejection of the Enlightenment project so much as with the expression of the tensions and fears that accompany the pursuit of emancipation and progress. Progress does not automatically entail a definitive reckoning with the past. The iniquity of the fathers will always be visited upon the children. Whatever is forgotten will be projected unto the present by the Gothic novel.

European Gothic traces Gothic intertexts and as such is completely consistent with the genre itself. Through the lens of Gothic narrative conventions, connections are revealed that would otherwise have remained invisible. Or, as Terry Hale argues in the opening chapter, searching for international and intertextual connections shows us 'possible histories of the Gothic in cultures where it has long been thought the gothic had no history worth telling' (p. 35). There is a lively cross-fertilisation between Anglo-Saxon and French Gothic texts and authors in particular which has largely remained invisible until now. The contributions to *European Gothic* show that it is possible to detect an interaction between Polish, Russian, Spanish and Italian literature and the Gothic narrative tradition. Thus, this study reveals a return of the repressed within the genre itself!

By tracing hidden transgressions in this way all the contributors develop remarkably fascinating and innovative analyses concerning the significance of the genre. Jerrold E. Hogle's essay 'The Gothic Crosses the Channel: Abjection and Revelation in *Le Fantome de l'Opera*' (pp. 204–29) is a beautiful example of such an analysis. Hogle returns to the novel *Le Fantome de l'Opera* (1910) by Gaston Leroux through its many film and musical adaptations. Hogle argues convincingly that the novel combines the Anglo-Saxon narrative tradition as exemplified by Poe and Stoker and the French tradition of the *conte fantastique* in order to embody the multiple and concealed underpinnings of the French bourgeoisie as well as European ideas about high culture. In his brilliant analysis Hogle connects the history of the construction of modern Paris—a city that forced the poorer and working classes to its margins and

has tried to keep them there ever since, only allowing them into its centre as workers and pedlars—to the vicissitudes of the novel's life-in-death protagonist, the spectral Erik. The prestigious Parisian Opera house was literally built on the graves of the working classes. Hogle patiently reveals that high culture carries within itself that which it wants to reject. As the embodied return of various repressed histories and transgressions, the phantom Erik crosses boundaries of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and even high and low culture and, thus reveals the new European identity as an overt attempt to construct an illusory purity. In this and other essays *European Gothic* demonstrates that reading Europe through the lens of the Gothic inevitably reveals the processes of othering that accompany the construction of a hegemonic identity. Time and again the Gothic turns out to be a container of the tensions produced by the mechanics of inclusion and exclusion.

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Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wall-Paper*: A Sourcebook and Critical Edition

Edited by CATHERINE J. GOLDEN, 2004,
Abingdon and New York: Routledge
166 pp., 0 415 26358 1, pb £14.99

Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*: A Sourcebook

Edited by JANET BEER and ELIZABETH NOLAN, 2004,
London and New York: Routledge
163 pp., 0 415 23821 8, pb £14.99

For people who love books, the temptation to write a book about a book is almost irresistible. If you write a student's companion about a famous work of American literature, as both Golden, and Beer and Nolan have done, it should fulfil two requirements: it should make students curious to learn more about both the original author and text, and it should present a clear, concise and convincing analysis of the work's position in the critical canon of American literature. In the case of both Golden's and Beer and Nolan's sourcebooks, their temptation to write a sourcebook about a book resulted in reader-friendly critical studies of two American masterpieces: Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wall-Paper* and Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. Both sourcebooks follow a clear editorial concept: they try to be a (student) guide to the original texts by embedding them in contextual frameworks of the period of original publication and by analysing the reception of the works. The editors Catherine J. Golden, professor at Skidmore College and Gilman Society executive director, and Janet Beer and Elizabeth Nolan are well known for their critical studies on North American women's writing. All three have focused their attention on a period which is the most influential in the development of women's writing and feminist writing: the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. At this period, crucial issues concerning social identity, gender and sexuality arose. The editors of both