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Lord Byron and Discourses of Otherness: Scotland, Italy, and Femininity

by Gioia Angeletti

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Multiple forms and discourses of otherness emerge in Byron's life and writing. This book focuses on three of them – Scotland, Italy, and femininity – and on how these discourses cannot be understood outside the poet's own mobility of character and multifaceted personality. In particular, this book studies Byron's complex relationship with Italian otherness – place, culture, and people (mainly female) – and his wavering position vis-à-vis the English and Scottish Self. In Byron's life and works Scotland and Scottish literature shift from the position of the Self to that of the Other depending on where the poet locates himself in relation to his homeland. From 1816 to 1823, Byron established a complex relationship with Italian otherness: Italy is the Other opposed to the English Self, but it may also figure as a set of images onto which Byron projects his own anxiety concerning England. Byron's Italian women are the feminine Other outside his Self that he would like to assimilate. As another constant discourse of otherness in Byron's life and works, femininity is strictly connected with his sexual politics and libertarian ideology. Yet the book also shows how Byron himself can become the object of otherness through different forms of 'translation': Caroline Lamb's parodic rewriting of *Don Juan*; and Andrea Maffei's Italian translations.

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