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Ingrid Horrocks, *Women Wanderers and the Writing of Mobility, 1784-1814*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017, 288 p., ISBN: 978-1-107-18223-3.

Anne Rouhette

CELIS, Université Clermont Auvergne

Published in the Cambridge Studies in Romanticism Collection, Ingrid Horrocks's *Women Wanderers and the Writing of Mobility, 1784-1814* belongs more to the field of mobility studies, in the sense defined by scholars like Tim Cresswell (*On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World*, New York: Routledge, 2006) or John Urry (*Mobilities*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), among others, than to that of travel writing *per se*, although of course travel constitutes one of the topics broached in that field as well as in this book in particular. It focuses on the representation of reluctant female travellers in the late eighteenth century, analysed from many different perspectives, historical, feminist and most importantly perhaps, poetical. This analysis is based on texts of very different natures, which represents both a strength and a weakness.

In her theoretical introduction, Horrocks convincingly differentiates between men and women travellers, notably as regards the tropes of sentimental literature found for instance in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and the workings of sympathy, as well as the always useful distinction between masculine universality and the exclusion of those (often women) who cannot generalize their stories. Horrocks then logically devotes her first chapter to several male poets (Pope, Thomson, Goldsmith) in order to consider how they deal with mobility before turning to several women authors and highlighting their different approaches. The book transitions seamlessly – its construction is overall flawless – by way of Charlotte Smith's *The Emigrants* to Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* in its second chapter, where the dialogue between the sonnets and Stothard's and Corbould's illustrations is remarkably analysed, among other strong points. It then turns to Ann Radcliffe's Gothic heroines, particularly to Emily in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and particular attention is paid to the role played by the poems included in Radcliffe's novels. These insightful pages will be of interest to any scholar of the Gothic and of feminine literature as a whole; not so the thankfully short passage on Austen (p. 130-131), which relies on a misunderstanding of that author's irony. The following chapter deals with the only actual travel narrative tackled in this book, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*, which contains some very perceptive remarks on Wollstonecraft's critique of nostalgia (p. 153) or on what Horrocks calls “the pivotal Copenhagen moment” (p. 155) in which sympathy for the inhabitants of the city becomes anguish. The last chapter is devoted, quite suitably, to Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*. It is perhaps slightly weaker than the others, probably because Horrocks can at times content herself with summing up or paraphrasing Burney's novel to make her point, although it contains a brilliant analysis of Burney's syntax (p. 178-183). This passage is only one of the instances where Horrocks brings to the study of these figures of wandering women a fine literary sensibility that accounts for some of her book's best pages. The coda of *Women Wanderers and the Writing of Mobility* returns to a male poet, Wordsworth, already evoked in the introduction, whose female vagrants are fruitfully compared to the women wandered described in the previous chapters.

To this reviewer however, and in spite of its many qualities, *Women Wanderers and the Writing of Mobility* leaves a mixed impression: meticulously researched, clearly and concisely written, Horrocks's study fails to be altogether convincing because of the heterogeneity of the texts

chosen, which do not, whatever claims the author may make, constitute “a single, if fluid genre” (p. 35). The constant back and forth between real and fictitious travels, between enforced and chosen mobility (Wollstonecraft did not have to go to Scandinavia, even though her journey was far from a happy one), as well as the very loose definition given to the term “mobility”, considered in a literal, a metaphorical or even a formal sense (the “formal mobility” of Smith’s *The Emigrants*, which lacks a clear structure, p. 79), undermine Horrocks’s otherwise tightly controlled argument and give her book a slightly “wandering” character. Like the figures it deals with, the book’s chapters remain discrete entities that fit only with difficulty into a whole, but each of them constitutes a fascinating study of the work it is concerned with.