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Marie de Flavigny, Comtesse d'Agoult: Correspondance générale. Tome III: novembre 1839-1841 (review)

Richard Bolster

French Studies: A Quarterly Review, Volume 60, Number 3, July 2006, pp. 400-401 (Review)

Published by Oxford University Press



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unfolding of events is largely concealed from the reader. In the second, there is an unhappy juxtaposition of self and history. Only with Chateaubriand do we find something radically different. In the *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* 'c'est la personne même du mémorialiste qui métaphorise le monde' (p. 36). In his contribution, Jean-Claude Berchet likewise stresses the unique character of the the *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, while drawing attention to the neglected *Études historiques*, which defined Chateaubriand's relationship to the new generation of Restoration historians. All the essays in this volume maintain a clear focus on the central problematic. We learn about Staël's treatment of Napoleon, Sand's aspiration to a prophetic form of total history and Tocqueville's analytical reflections on the formative power of events. The volume concludes with an illuminating piece on Michelet. Drawing on the *Journal*, Pettier shows how the historian linked his investigation of social divisions in France to a parallel exploration of inner reality. Understanding and mastering the darker aspects of the self enabled new ways of imagining the resolution of social conflict.

CERI CROSSLEY

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

doi:10.1093/fs/kl056

MARIE DE FLAVIGNY, COMTESSE D'AGOULT: *Correspondance générale*. Tome III: *novembre 1839–1841*. Édition établie et annotée par CHARLES F. DUPÊCHEZ. Paris, Champion, 2005. 677 pp. Hb €110.00.

This correspondance in the scholarly edition by Charles Dupêchez continues to provide valuable information about some leading figures of the Romantic era. This volume covers the difficult years when Marie d'Agoult and Liszt were living apart, amicably at first. Back in Paris with Liszt's daughters after the scandal of her elopement and liaison, the errant countess was not welcomed by her class. Undaunted, she created a salon that attracted a galaxy of stars such as Vigny, Sainte-Beuve, Hortense Allart, Eugène Sue and a number of musicians. Her old friend Delphine Gay introduced her to her husband Girardin, and the press magnate soon joined the ranks of her suitors and admirers. He published articles by her in *La Presse*, a first step that led to her future reputation for writings on art and history. Despite her attempts, Marie d'Agoult never got back to friendly relations with George Sand, who had cruelly passed on details of her love life to Balzac, who used them in *Béatrix*. Marie would always regret the end of her once passionate friendship with the leading female writer of her time, and the painter Lehmann was one of those who urged her to forgive and forget. It did not happen, and the two women would engage in a theatrical embrace when they met, but then avoid each other. Lehmann was one of the many who fell under the charm of Marie d'Agoult, and his letters express a friendship close to love. She felt that other members of the intelligentsia, even Chopin and Berlioz, failed to appreciate Liszt, and she attributed this to Parisian vanity. Liszt replied that his friends Chopin and Berlioz could not judge him because they did not really know him. Her letters to Liszt still express deep affection, and the hidden fear that she was bound to lose the struggle in which she was engaged, as the lover of an artist. The musician was condemned to a life of performance in all the cities of Europe, even Plymouth, where he had no audience because he was upstaged by the launching of a ship. Marie believed in the

historical importance of her correspondence with Liszt, a record of the love of an aristocrat and an artist, and wanted to keep it for posterity: 'Notre vie intéressera tant de gens!', she wrote in November 1939. Letters written at this time reveal the complexity of her relationship with Liszt, who was at once lover, friend and mentor. In one missive, she says that in order to gain honour in Paris he must be successful, and above all rich. This shows that she has now renounced her former idealism, when her head was quite full of Music and Love.

RICHARD BOLSTER
UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

doi:10.1093/fs/knl058

Victor Hugo et le romanesque. Textes réunis et présentés par AGNÈS SPIQUEL. (Études romanesques, 9). Paris, Caen, Lettres modernes Minard, 2005. 216 pp. Pb €30.00.

In her brief but useful opening remarks, Spiquel clarifies how the *romanesque* for Victor Hugo became not simply a thematic concern, but also a structural strategy. Hugo not only maximizes the novel's potentially ironic interaction of the story itself with the telling of that story, he also observes how that exchange between object and subject operates in other modes of writing as well. He considers how the novel, as a melting pot of various genres from the historical and the philosophical to the poetic and the fantastic, not only can be read according to those particular tones, but moreover how those types themselves can be read through their crossover in the novel form. Two introductory explorations from Anne Ubersfeld and Judith Wolf helpfully flag the major theoretical issues that are at stake in such a case study. They underpin a hybrid concept of the *romanesque* as a perpetual doubling of the general and the individual that motivates and yet thwarts the drive towards genre and interpretation. We can move beyond thematics such as mystery, adventure and romance to appreciate how, as a mode of writing, the *romanesque* is inherently bound up in questions of identity and being. The novelist's trade of description, intrigue and revelation can be structurally examined to explore how the narrative voice indicates a shifting and duplicitous form that can be traced outside novel writing. No fewer than thirteen contributions then elaborate upon how various aspects of Hugo's writing help illustrate this compelling argument. Far from being the kind of rhapsodic celebration that Hugo's 2002 bicentenary seemed to encourage, the contributors sharpen their critical edge by cutting through the Olympian reputation of their subject to serve up a substantial analysis. Although Hugo's mammoth *œuvre* is evidently too expansive to be compressed into one study, it is regrettable that, although two essays each look at a relatively little-known work like *Le Rbin*, *Les Contemplations* is strangely absent. None the less, there is a great deal of diversity on display here, from narrative works like *Quatrevingt-treize* to autobiography in *Victor Hugo raconté par un témoin de sa vie*, as well as poetry such as *Les Orientales*. Worth particular mention is Pierre Laforgue's discussion, which looks at Hugo's frantic output in 1860 to construct a cross-section of his writing. Laforgue points to the thematic and formal connections between the poetry of *La Fin de Satan*, the fiction of *Les Misérables* (the manuscript of which Hugo was returning to) and the essays towards his original preface to that novel, entitled *Philosophie. Commencement*