CHAPTER 4

Travel and Transfer

Anna Jameson and Transnational Spurs to European Reform

A study of transatlantic travel in this chapter will allow us to view British-German transfer within an even broader geographical scope; movement into the colonial contact zone provided Europeans with ideas for restructuring European society and those notions then became part of intra-European cultural transfer. The New World, imbued for Europeans with boundless possibility, promised models of social improvement, and European travelers took away impressions both positive and negative and developed ideas for reform. Ali Behdad has pointed out how travel in this period “is not just a search for the exotic and the erotic. Rather, it is an instructive activity that not only completes the traveller’s formal education, but also benefits the general public by raising awareness of the public’s own religion, government, and moral and cultural values... The more Europe learns about other cultures, the better it understands itself.” Thus travel allowed a greater definition of what was specifically European. Behdad emphasizes that such self-understanding implies “self-recognition and self-realization,” with the implication that a greater confidence attends metropolitan subjects upon surveying, knowing, and contrasting themselves with the Other. Such a contrast can, however, also demonstrate European failings and shortcomings. As Steve Clark has pointed out, while postcolonial criticism has usefully drawn attention to travel writing’s “racialist and imperialist guises,” bringing this hitherto underappreciated genre into the scholarly limelight, the purposes
of travel writing have always been multiple, and it would be an oversimplification to reduce the “cross-cultural encounter to simple relations of domination and subordination.” These certainly existed and may well have predominated with many travelers, but they were accompanied by other forms of knowledge, and it is some of these to which I turn in this chapter. More specifically, I will emphasize how a female traveler, Anna Jameson, carried to Canada utopian aspirations gleaned from Enlightenment feminist forebears and was consequently primed to cull New World ideas for reform. In particular First Nations practices concerning gender and economy, witnessed on a visit to the frontier, informed her transnational communications, shaped her political activism, and eventually inspired calls for changes in legislation. Consequently, while postcolonial scholars have probed the impact of travel and exploration on imperial expansion and the transculturation evidenced by colonial subjects, I will consider how the contact zone could furnish to Europeans ideas for social renewal, particularly to those inclined to view society from below.

1. Reform and Nonrevolutionary Britain and Germany

Britain and Germany, after the bloody Napoleonic era, were countries weary of conflict, yet the impact of the wars spurred social and economic shifts that in turn demanded moves toward sociopolitical restructuring. British unrest culminated in the notorious Peterloo Massacre of 1819, in which people who had gathered at Manchester to protest the first of several onerous Corn Laws and to demand greater parliamentary representation were attacked by the cavalry. It is estimated that fifteen or more people died; hundreds were injured. After years of protests, riots, and vociferous political debate, the first Reform Bill was finally passed in 1832; the Birmingham Political Union and the Chartist movement ensured that questions of the expansion of the franchise and representation remained in the forefront of British political discourse and activity. In Germany, French occupation had introduced reforms that were rarely realized. “Military power and bureaucratic control, not political participation and civil liberties” characterized occupied regions; there was a significant “distance between aspiration and accomplishment that can . . . be found throughout Napoleonic Germany.” After the Congress of Vienna observers such as G. W. F. Hegel lamented that “these eternally restless times of fear and hope” were likely to “go on forever”; a subsistence crisis led to protests across the land, including antisemit-
ic riots, one of which in Frankfurt led to the use of federal troops to check the turmoil. Regional protests continued throughout the 1820s. Vast demographic changes, increased bureaucratic control, combined with industrialization and the expansion of infrastructure, resulted in calls for political liberalization that crested in the revolutions of 1848. One entrepreneur in the 1840s wrote that “the locomotive is the hearse which will carry absolutism and feudalism to the graveyard.”

These countries that had avoided revolution and managed to shake off Napoleonic dominion on the Continent were threatened with internal eruption during the first half of the nineteenth century. What did external travel, especially in the New World, add to reform-oriented discussions and activities before 1848? What transfer can be registered in this direction, and how was it shared among Europeans in the early nineteenth century?

Images of the New World often inspired utopian ideas, especially among anti-Napoleonic advocates of social change. Where the French revolutionary and Napoleonic model came to be shunned by all but a small number of diehard supporters, that of the American Revolution was still able to inspire hope, despite observers’ criticisms of slavery and anxiety about the fate of Native Americans. This added significantly to the period’s interest in transatlantic travel accounts. Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* (1835, 1840), for example, emerged from this European moment; it represented the most famous attempt of a European to find in America ways to approach Old World problems. Tocqueville and his travel companion Gustave de Beaumont were on a fact-finding mission from 1831 through 1832 to seek means of improving prisons, and they did produce a report on this topic, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and Its Application in France* (1833); however, the upshot of their journey ultimately far exceeded that limited aim. Harriet Martineau traveled to the United States in 1834 because she “felt a strong curiosity to witness the actual working of republican institutions” and published *Society in America* in 1837. Although most European immigrants to the United States sought greater economic security as well as political and religious liberty for themselves and their families, some, such as Robert Owen, his son Robert Dale Owen, and Frances Wright, founded utopian communities; Wright’s biracial Nashoba community intended to ready African slaves for freedom. Whereas spiritual ends had motivated earlier immigrants such as Ann Lee, George Rapp, or Christian Metz to form experimental communities in America, the new projects of the early nineteenth century were based largely on socio-
logical principles with the goal of realizing the aims of liberty, equality, and fraternity that the French Revolution had promised but failed to deliver, and to reverse the detrimental effects of industrialization, capitalist development, and imperial expansion.⁶

By comparison South American travel accounts, according to Pratt, were dominated by the drive for economic development, with a European “capitalist vanguard” seeking to “reinvent América as backward and neglected” in order to justify exploitation and transform the continent into “a scene of industry and efficiency” that would convert its people “into wage labor and a market for metropolitan consumer goods.”⁷ However, at the same time, as Pratt shows, there were female travelers such as Flora Tristan and Maria Callcott Graham who also derived utopian images and ideas from their South American sojourns, and these in turn had significant repercussions in their writings and in Europe. Tristan’s travels in Peru, detailed in Peregrinations of a Pariah, 1833–34, transformed her into a political activist who agitated until her death in 1844 on behalf of women’s and workers’ rights in France and England and wrote travel books that critiqued the social systems of both countries; Maria Graham’s Journal of a Residence in Chile during the Year 1822 followed volumes on travels she had taken to India and to Italy. In their works Tristan and Graham offered realistic narratives, couched in non-sentimental novelistic language, to critique injustices and to celebrate the “feminotopias” promoted by the women they met in Latin America.⁸ The colonial and international context in which Europeans were embedded therefore influenced not only the production of travel narratives but also the relationships and reformist discourses that linked Europeans across national borders.

My interest in this chapter will be in probing the progressive ideological materials derived from transatlantic travel and their European implementation. Of course, despite the liberal aims of these efforts, the Old World projects initiated could redound back upon the colonies in the form of greater European control and coercion. I do not claim that the efforts to find new systems were universally beneficial or innocuous. I argue instead that by viewing areas of concern that loomed large for subordinated groups in Europe, especially women, one recognizes how such interests were translated into reform rhetoric and political activity that ultimately had lasting effects. The impressions of travel and travel narratives went beyond the simple consumption of scenes of foreign life and manners and souvenirs as a means of differentiating national and cultural identities; they contributed to the circulation of discourses and
materials—the creation of a Latourian actor-network—that addressed pressing transnational political and social issues.

Again, my focus is on Anna Jameson, whose visit to Vesuvius I discussed in the last chapter. She is by no means the most prominent figure to travel to the New World, but her apparent conformity, obscuring the deeply reformist impulses of her writings, makes her an illuminating example. Certainly the popularity of her books and articles underscores the wide interest and approbation she enjoyed. Her three-volume account, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838), which will be the main focus of my discussion here, has been appreciated by readers in Britain as well as in Germany, Canada, and the United States in over a dozen complete editions published from the book’s first appearance, as well as in numerous excerpts, abridgements, and anthologizations reprinted to this day.⁹

Surprisingly, though Jameson has received increasing critical attention, she nonetheless remains a noncanonical author. It is no longer her sex that has kept her in the second or third tier, I would argue, but the fact that she was a *transnational* writer rather than a *national* one. She spent much time out of England and she often expressed a preference for the customs and institutions of other nations. In her travel accounts, criticism, art guides, memoirs, and other nonfictional works she often critiqued rather than trumpeted British ways. Her method and her message therefore unfitted her for the national project of English studies, and she has only in the last decades been taken up by feminists and postcolonial scholars who recognize that her writings offer a telling counternarrative. Jameson is therefore an excellent subject for talking about cultural transfer.¹⁰

### 2. Anna Jameson’s Transnationality

Jameson’s transnationality appears at every period and level of her life. Born in Ireland to a Protestant Irish father and an English mother in 1794, she moved to England in 1798 because her father, Denis Brownell Murphy, an artist by trade, sought commissions for miniatures in Britain. (It has been suggested that he was associated with the United Irishmen and sought to escape repression in the year of the Rebellion, but I have found no evidence of his participation, and Anna Jameson’s own views were decidedly against the rebels, whom she called “louses.”¹¹) Murphy never earned much, however, and Anna realized early that she would
need to support her parents and younger sisters. Educated by a strict governess for a few years, she was nonetheless largely self-taught. She read widely, sneaking literature considered inappropriate for her age, like Shakespeare’s plays, which she had fully digested by the age of ten. She later wrote an important book of Shakespeare criticism that took up the question of his female figures: *Characteristics of Women: Moral, Poetical, and Historical* (1832). She was sufficiently trained in art to make accomplished sketches and watercolors during her travels, to create etchings to illustrate her publications, and to become by the 1840s one of England’s most popular art critics and historians.\(^{12}\) For over a decade in the 1810s and 1820s she worked as a governess for the Marquis of Winchester, the Rowles family (with whom she visited Italy), and the Littletons. In 1825 she married Robert Jameson, but from the start their relationship was troubled; he was sent as a legal envoy to Dominica in 1829 and to Upper Canada (what is now southern Ontario, including Toronto) in 1833, but Anna did not accompany him. Instead she traveled to Germany in 1833 and 1834–36 and met significant personages there, especially Ottilie von Goethe, the daughter-in-law of the renowned author. She visited Ottilie frequently and when apart they corresponded on average once a month for their whole lives. Jameson published *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad* (1834), which gave a detailed account of her German travels, before being called by Robert to join him in Upper Canada. He wished to be promoted to vice-chancellor, and her presence, suggesting married stability, would aid him in this endeavor. For her part, Jameson felt compelled to make the trip to Canada, either to reconcile or, if not, to finalize financial arrangements for a separation.\(^{13}\) She sailed to New York, up the Hudson, then in the cold of December crossed upstate New York to Lake Ontario and traveled by steamship from Niagara to Toronto, arriving just before the end of 1836.

*Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* makes clear just how reluctant Jameson had been to leave Germany and how much of her heart remained there. For one thing, Germany offered a way of life for women that struck her as less constricted than the British and more rational than the Canadian. In 1833 Jameson lauded what she perceived as the easy interaction between the sexes. The German system allowed women to behave in a way she called “natural,” meaning emotionally more spontaneous, socially less impeded, more at liberty, a chance for women to express their “character.” In her account of those travels, *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad*, she observed:
I thought the German women, of a certain rank, more natural than we are. The moral education of an English girl is, for the most part, negative; the whole system of duty is thus presented to the mind. It is not “this you must do;” but always “you must not do this—you must not say that—you must not think so.” . . . The idea that certain passions, powers, tempers, feelings, interwoven with our being by our almighty and all-wise Creator, are to be put down by the fiat of a governess, or the edict of fashion, is monstrous. . . . Now, in Germany the women are less educated to suit some particular fashion; the cultivation of the intellect, and the forming of the manners, do not so generally supersede the training of the moral sentiments—the affections—the impulses; the latter are not so habitually crushed or disguised; consequently the women appeared to me more natural, and to have more individual character.\textsuperscript{14}

Illustrating this idea are her observations on a boat trip up the Rhine, a telling example of how, for Jameson, women’s freedom of motion and claims to space are integral to their claim to human rights. She contrasts an English family, who put up a “fortification of tables and benches” (VS, I:4) around them to hold others away so the daughters can sketch, with carefree German girls who are traveling with an aunt and a brother. The German girls

walked up and down the deck, neither seeking nor avoiding the proximity of others. They accepted the telescopes which the gentlemen, particularly some young Englishmen, pressed on them when any distant or remarkable object came in view, and repaid the courtesy with a bright kindly smile; they were natural and easy, and did not deem it necessary to mount guard over their own dignity. Do you think I did not observe and feel the contrast? (VS, I:6)

English girls are immured and repressed where German ones can walk about and act on an intellectual and sexual par with men. True, German women are “much more engrossed by the cares of housekeeping than women of a similar rank of life in England,” but even this evidence of lesser prosperity is ultimately not problematical; Jameson decides that “more of the individual character is brought into the daily intercourse of society—more of the poetry of existence is brought to bear on the common realities of life” (VS, I:163, 162).
What mattered therefore was not transcendence of the quotidian but the opposite, an embrace of it. An idealist character would have struck Jameson as ungenerous or forced. In this orientation Jameson furthered the anti-Romanticism of the Young Germans with whom she had contact there. “I have been asked twenty times since my return to England, whether the German women are not very exaltée—very romantic? I could only answer, that they appeared to me less calculating, less the slaves of artificial manners and modes of thinking; more imaginative, more governed by natural feeling, more enthusiastic in love and religion, than with us.” To Jameson, German women’s upbringing allows them to take full advantage of both the material and metaphysical realms in their claims to freedom; there is no need for escape in lofty transcendence or exaggerated materialism. In this then she parts ways with Mary Wollstonecraft, whom she otherwise admired; transcendence appeared an undesirable and ineffective alternative to her. She would be happy to give up English luxuries “for the cheap mental and social pleasures—the easy intercourse of German life” (VS, I:174).

Jameson’s reflections on achieving human freedom via more liberal gender socialization in Germany are therefore a measure not only of the influence of German political ideologies but also of what she regards as the decline of renowned Enlightenment British liberty for women. According to conjectural histories like those of John Millar in The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks (1778), a society’s level of progress could be calculated via its treatment of women. As the community moved from savage ways to civilization, women’s development away from drudgery reflected the society’s level of refinement. Jameson was familiar with such theories, but she invoked them only to call them into question. European women’s position to her mind had both expanded and diminished since the late eighteenth century, to the extent that national roles were now reversed: Germany, despite lagging behind Britain in material wealth and industrial development, became a model for what she hoped would bring increased British women’s social freedoms and human rights. And a comparison of European females with First Nations women in Canada would go even further to complicate simplistic theories of historical progress.

3. Transnational Literary Production

Jameson arrived in Toronto in December 1836, just before Christmas, and felt cold, isolated, and miserable. She communicated her feelings
to a journal that she then turned into *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles*. The first part of the book concerns Jameson’s reading. Cooped up and sick at home, with the glass of water by her bed frozen solid each morning, Jameson studied, translated, and commented on German literature. Christa Zeller Thomas has argued that this activity served her as a way of maintaining her sense of identity as a cultivated European in the frosty, isolating wilderness. Where Canada was terra incognita, Germany was a known land to which she clung, sustained by cherished memories and relationships.\(^{16}\)

Jameson devotes much space to Johann Peter Eckermann’s account of his conversations with Goethe, which she began to translate from a prepublication copy of the book she had received in Weimar.

In this activity she was inspired by the work of Sarah Austin, a prolific translator from the German and a woman she had met in 1834 and greatly admired. The two authors shared their interest in German letters and became good friends. Austin had just published a three-volume work, *Characteristics of Goethe* (1833), which included translations of and commentaries on Goethe’s works, exactly the mode that Jameson herself came to favor. At the time of their first meeting Austin was translating Victor Cousin’s reports on Prussian public instruction, with the hope of furthering progressive approaches in Britain.\(^{17}\) It is these pages that Jameson brought to Canada and wished to introduce in order to encourage more profitable discussions on national education.

It is worth considering Jameson’s concern with educational theory, as it sheds light on her ubiquitous and enduring desires to advocate for subalterns by instructing and reforming; on her constant transnational orientation; and on her frustrations with the styles of political discourse among the people in Toronto. The primary issue that led to the 1837 unrest in Upper Canada was the inequitable appropriation of lands, and, in particular, the monopoly of the church over property revenues that “by far the most numerous” of settlers, according to Jameson, felt should be applied toward education.\(^{18}\) Jameson was astonished at the low level of discourse on the issue, “the strange, crude, ignorant, vague opinions I heard in conversation, and read in the debates and the provincial papers.” If Canadians could only read the preface of Cousin’s report on Prussian education, translated by Sarah Austin, then, Jameson thought, the settlers might come to sound conclusions:

> It struck me that if I could get the English preface to Victor Cousin’s report (of which I had a copy) printed in a cheap form, and circu-
lated with the newspapers... it might do some good—it might assist the people to some general principles on which to form opinions;—
whereas they all appeared to me astray; nothing that had been pro-
mulgated in Europe on this momentous subject had yet reached them; and the brevity and clearness of this little preface, which exhib-
its the importance of a system of national education, and some gen-
eral truths without admixture of any political or sectarian bias, would,
I thought—I hoped—obtain for it a favourable reception. But, no;
cold water was thrown upon me from every side—my interference in
any way was so visibly distasteful, that I gave my project up with many
a sigh, and I am afraid I shall always regret this. (WS, I: 35–36)

Jameson, apprised of theories that might propel the discussion, felt pow-
erless in Canada to spur sociopolitical change. The people were wary
“of the ‘authoress,’” who was “anything but popular”; her voice in this
wilderness counted for little.

Even as they displayed an aversion for a theoretically informed debate
on education, the Canadians evinced, to Jameson’s mind, a misguided
belief in the inequitable, cutthroat systems of political economy. She felt
they ignored helpful theories and embraced problematical ones. She
witnessed a fire on King Street, and some said that the blaze would be
a benefit, because a brick house would be built in place of a wooden
one. But Jameson turned consideration of this point into a discussion
about viewing things from the emotional perspective of the individual
and the individual loss rather than the calculating, utilitarian perspec-
tive of political economy: “In these days of political economy, it is too
much a fashion to consider human beings only in masses. Wondrous,
and vast, and all-important as is this wide frame of human society... is
it more important in the sight of God, more fearful, more sublime to
contemplate, than that mysterious world of powers, and affections, and
aspirations, which we call the human soul?” (WS, I: 111). As in Jameson’s
analysis of Vesuvius, the circumscribed personal picture must trump vast
sublimity in the context of disaster. Utilitarian projects and Malthusian
calculations, she felt, could lead to cruel and ultimately wrong policy
decisions.

Jameson was nonetheless aware of both the positive and negative
power of thinking in masses. On the one hand, when the intention was
to corral people unthinkingly into bloody or coercive actions such as
war, she found thinking in masses repugnant. She reports how Colonel
Fitzgibbon, a romantic youth who wanted to be a chivalrous soldier, was
shocked to find the battlefield totally unlike the image he harbored: “He then described . . . his utter astonishment and mortification on finding the mechanical slaughter of a modern field of battle so widely different from the picture in his fancy;—when he found himself one of a mass in which the individual heart and arm, however generous, however strong, went for nothing—forced to stand still, to fire only by the word of command—the chill it sent to his heart, and his emotions when he saw the comrade at his side fall a quivering corse [sic] at his feet” (WS, I:129). The new style of war represented to Jameson the clearest example of the heartlessness and irrationality of the modern system. Utilitarianism and political economy were simply other manifestations of the same tendency.

It was the absence of feminine influence, Jameson was convinced, that had brought Europe to this undesirable pass. The separation of the sexes allowed masculinity to run rampant, uninfluenced by any feminine principle. Jameson would later insist that “whatever be the system selected as the best, it should be carried out by a due admixture of female influence and management combined with the man’s government.” To be sure, Jameson appears to endorse traditional sex roles, but she was nonetheless convinced that only women’s and men’s cooperation, what she termed “the communion of labour,” would lead to “the more humane ordering” of national endeavors.

Observations on gender pervaded Jameson’s analysis of Canada. Jameson found that the Native peoples on the frontier, in facing issues over land, subsistence, and broken agreements, experienced quandaries of self-determination just as did settler and European women. In the summer months she was finally able to leave Toronto and travel west on her “Summer Rambles,” which were to inform the second part of her book. Her principal goal, she said, was to evaluate questions of gender, “to see with my own eyes the conditions of women in savage life.” What emerged was an overwhelming sense of a parallel in status and exploitation between First Nations people and European and settler women.

If, in this rapidly expanding industrial and imperial economy, changes in custom and social policy were not forthcoming, then the dilemmas faced by the Native peoples on account of the white men could speak to the long-standing issue of European women’s fates. Visiting Detroit, for example, she surveyed the situation of the Wyandots, who long had made claims concerning land. Jameson in her account lets these Hurons speak for themselves, reproducing a five-page petition and concluding, “Is there not much reason as well as eloquence in this appeal?”
II:325). She doubts whether the colonial legislature will do justice to the Native peoples, “seeing that the interests of the colonists and settlers, and those of the Indians, are brought into perpetual collision, and that the colonists can scarcely be trusted to decide in their own case. . . . The poor Indian seems hardly destined to meet with justice, either from the legislative or executive power” (WS, II:329). Consequently she understands and praises the efforts of Tecumseh and Pontiac to rally the various tribes to oppose the Europeans, and laments the futility of their “noble and fated race, to oppose, or even to delay for a time, the rolling westward of the great tide of civilization. . . . Wherever the Christian comes, he brings the Bible in one hand, disease, corruption, and the accursed fire-water, in the other; or flinging down the book of peace, he boldly and openly proclaims that might gives right, and substitutes the saber and the rifle for the slower desolation of starvation and whisky” (WS, II:240, 250).

There is tension here between Jameson’s recognition of overwhelming European power—to colonize, industrialize, and “civilize”—which she both supports and criticizes, and her estimation of its efficacy, which she laments. That is, though Jameson everywhere lauds economic development and the Europeans’ efforts to make the land west of Toronto productive, she simultaneously recognizes the terrible cost of this, and she finds its fatal consequences to the Native peoples unacceptable. They cannot be Europeanized, nor should they be. Although she assumes European superiority, and while she occasionally leans on the “noble savage” stereotype, she does not suggest that this gives a right to dominance: “In our endeavours to civilise the Indians, we have not only to convince the mind and change the habits, but to overcome a certain physical organization to which labour and constraint and confinement appear to be fatal. This cannot be done in less than three generations, if at all, in the unmixed race; and meantime—they perish!” (WS, II:274).

Jameson clearly speaks as a European, but she does not condone Europeans’ methods in the New World because she sees them departing so baldly from the ethical Christian approach that, she insists, they are called upon to employ. She eventually endorses the government plan of reserved lands for First Nations people, claiming that only in this way can they maintain independence from white people and ensure their own subsistence and survival. Although she thus furthers colonial aims and the strategy of Francis Bond Head, the lieutenant-governor, she nonetheless differs from other travel-narrators in that she comes to the conclusion after herself observing and meeting Native people; does not
assume like so many others that the First Nations people will simply die out; interviews settlers and government agents herself; and then weighs the possibilities, all of which she feels fall short. She recognizes that the Native peoples are hunters, not agriculturalists, but worries that there is no real alternative for ensuring an adequate food supply and decent living conditions. Moreover, she sees potential advantages for Native women in the change: “the first step from the hunting to the agricultural state is the first step in the emancipation of the female” (WS, III:304). To this extent, she feels—clearly viewing from a European woman’s perspective—that Native people might profit from altering their way of life. Jameson fails to contemplate any alternative to the forces of modernization, any means to check the westward expansion and development and aggression of white settlers; however, she takes an independent stance, insisting that modernization is by no means to be equated with civilization. She aims to adjust Europeans’ attitudes toward colonial as well as European practice.

This point is epitomized in an extended analysis of war, where Jameson contrasts Native and European approaches. Modern European styles of warfare are uncivilized, she argues, whereas Native people’s modes of vengeance arise from understandable, raw, but honest emotions; they result from true harm to an individual or a tribe. Jameson decries murderousness on all sides, but the Native people’s ways, focused on real feeling, can be justified in a way that modern European battles, exemplified by Napoleon’s new fashion of systematized total warfare, cannot. One discerns an echo, here, to the distinction between meaningful Romantic and unmeaningful mass death discussed by Gary Kelly (chapter 3), as Jameson writes:

I wonder if any of the recorded atrocities of Indian warfare or Indian vengeance, or all of them together, ever exceeded Massena’s retreat from Portugal,—and the French call themselves civilized. A war-party of Indians, perhaps two or three hundred, (and that is a very large number,) dance their war-dance, go out and burn a village, and bring back twenty or thirty scalps. They are savages and heathens. We Europeans fight a battle, leave fifty thousand dead or dying by inches on the field, and a hundred thousand to mourn them, desolate; but we are civilized and Christians. Then only look into the motives and causes of our bloodiest European wars as revealed in the private history of courts:—the miserable, puerile, degrading intrigues which set man against man—so horridly disproportioned to the horrid result!
And then see the Indian take up his war-hatchet in vengeance for some personal injury, or from motives that rouse all the natural feelings of the natural man within him! Really I do not see that an Indian warrior, flourishing his tomahawk, and smeared with his enemy’s blood, is so very much a greater savage than the pipe-clayed, padded, embroidered personage, who, without cause or motive, has sold himself to slay or be slain: one scalps his enemy, the other rips him open with a saber; one smashes his brains with a tomahawk, and the other blows him to atoms with a cannon-ball: and to me, femininely speaking, there is not a needle’s point difference between the one and the other. If war be unchristian and barbarous, then war as a science is more absurd, unnatural, unchristian, than war as a passion. (WS, III:194–95)

Jameson genders brutality as masculine and peace as feminine, and, consciously asserting a feminist stance—“femininely speaking,” using a sewing metaphor—she condemns scientific war as beyond the pale of civilized society. Native peoples remain on the civilized spectrum and therefore closer to the feminine side, since their conflicts arise from individual harm and the regrettable but understandable desire for individual redress. Jameson had lauded German women’s ability to express their feelings, their inmost character, in daily life as “natural,” and this is the quality that also makes Native warfare, although destructive, a fathomable phenomenon by contrast with modern European modes. Later, in *Sisters of Charity and the Communion of Labour*, Jameson applauds the feminine influence of Florence Nightingale and her female volunteers who traveled to Constantinople and worked to save soldiers’ lives in the Crimean War; it was a means of mitigating the horrifying losses of modern warfare. In that discussion of female labor Jameson fails to address the question of the justification for the Crimean War; instead, her focus is intently on future implications for women. To her mind, nursing becomes a salient example of how the “communion of labour” between women and men can have the effect of recalibrating modernization so as to bring human charity and women’s talents to bear on otherwise irrational, heartless, one-sidedly masculine endeavors. Jameson may have been criticized for seeking to relegate women to a traditional subservient role of nurse, but she saw Nightingale epitomizing a new and desirable professional training and leadership. The example demonstrates how Jameson’s deeply felt theory of gender mutuality despite gender difference could appear simultaneously progressive and conventional.
Despite the tragic failure of the First Nations’ banding together to oppose white men’s incursions, Jameson insisted that, like women, the Native peoples should be treated not paternalistically but with respect. The Wyandots above all should be allowed to make their own choices, just as women should be allowed to bear responsibility for their own bodies and their own decisions: “No measure should be adopted, even for their supposed benefit, without their acquiescence. They are quite capable of judging for themselves in every case in which their interests are concerned. The fault of our executive is, that we acknowledge the Indians our allies, yet treat them [as], as well as call them, our children” (WS, II:328). That women should not be patronized or treated as children becomes the founding assumption in *Sisters of Charity and the Communion of Labour*: “The time is come, let us hope, when men have found out what we may truly be to them, not worshipping us as saints, or apostrophizing us as angels.” She adds, “or persecuting us as witches, or crushing us as slaves,” knowing that the other side of the coin of veneration, as history has shown and the experiences of the First Nations people have confirmed, is dehumanization (SCCL, 140).

That Jameson consistently viewed gender and race issues on a continuum vis-à-vis misguided or brutal government policies becomes apparent in the story of a black man who had escaped slavery by coming to Canada but was now threatened with deportation to the United States based on an accusation of horse-stealing. Jameson focuses on the nonviolent protest initiated by black women. The day the ex-slave was to be taken away there was an unarmed riot in which “2 blacks were killed, and two or three wounded.” Jameson notes: “By all those passionate and persuasive arguments that a woman knows so well how to use, whatever be her colour, country, or class, they had prevailed on their husbands, brothers, and lovers, to use no arms, to do no illegal violence, but to lose their lives rather than see their comrade taken by force across the lines.” Jameson sees women of all races potentially and essentially as nonviolent advocates for peace and justice, and she therefore makes sure to seek out the leader among the black women. This woman had been a slave in Virginia, and when her master died she was threatened with being sold. So she ran away. Jameson asked if she was happy in Canada, and then lets the ex-slave speak for herself: “I was happy here—but now—I don’t know—I thought we were safe here—I thought nothing could touch us here, on your British ground, but it seems I was mistaken, and if so, I won’t stay here.” Jameson laments the mendacious claims of European men paternalistically to protect subalterns, only to expose and abandon
them. Despite her European loyalties and occasional stereotypes, Jamesson is in her travels remarkably free of racial prejudice and consistently acknowledges the cost to the vulnerable—be they Native peoples, African slaves and free blacks, women, or pensioners—of governmental policies (WS, III:340). Her greatest concern is for women, but she does not think in rigid categories and recognizes how even white men, the veterans or “commuted pensioners” she finds cheated of their payments, can suffer at the hands of thoughtless and prejudicial legislators.

Indeed, Jamesson was open minded and extremely interested to find out about the lives of her interlocutors. One infers from reading her books that the people she met consistently took to her; they spoke freely and treated her well, helping her at every turn. She was a good listener and must have been an astute questioner, unthreatening, pleasant, and encouraging. She appears to have relished that role and the reciprocal attraction she elicited: “Mr. Johnson tells me . . . that the Indians like me, and are gratified by my presence, and the interest I express for them, and that I am the subject of much conversation and speculation” (WS, III:134). Although occasionally complacent she was not unthinkingly patriotic; she always felt the impact of her position not only as a woman but also as a visitor and, significantly, as Irish. She frequently refers to her red hair and her “countrymen,” whom she consistently seeks out and whose lively talk she enjoys even as she regrets their poverty and unkempt state. “Poor Ireland! The worst Indian wigwam is not worse than some of her dwellings; and the most miserable of these Indians would spurn the destiny of an Irish poor-servant—for he is at least Lord o’er himself” (WS, III:254). Later, she draws a parallel between British treatment of Ireland and men’s of women: “Man’s legislation for woman has hitherto been like English legislation for Ireland: it has been without sympathy; without the recognition of equality; without a comprehension of certain innate differences, physical and moral, and therefore inadequate, useless, often unjust, and not seldom cruel.” She recognizes the cost of colonial and sexual exploitation wherever it appears and has no trouble seeing some Europeans and people of color and women as similarly positioned, even while recognizing the differences among, and the varied troubles faced by, these groups. Ethics and Christian values were at stake and mattered more than nation or race or sex; she wished above all to reveal the moral examples to be gleaned from her interlocutors and to contrast the egregious lapses of dominant Europeans. Such exempla were to be found in what her metropolitan readers likely viewed as unexpected places.
Significantly, an argument about the false position of women reverberates in Jameson’s account of her stay with the Ojibwa family she sees in Sault Ste. Marie, a visit that forms the highpoint of her Canadian narrative and clarifies for her the central concept of the “communion of labor.” Given the realities of Native life, Jameson finds women to be on a par with men; that is, both sexes are constrained to work indefatigably for the sake of subsistence. “However hard the lot of woman, she is in no false position. The two sexes are in their natural and true position relatively to the state of society, and the means of subsistence” (WS, III:303–4). Later, in an essay on “Women’s Mission and Women’s Position,” she puts it this way:

The condition of the woman in savage life has been considered as peculiarly degraded. I have seen those women—lived among them. Individually, they never appeared to me so pitiable as the women of civilized life. In those communities the degradation is positive, not relative; all fare alike—the lot of one is the lot of all; and the oppressed woman is not in fact more degraded than the brute-man.24

First Nations people represent to Jameson a version of gender mutuality though work. Although European society has developed more complex economic divisions, she argues, the communal relationship of the sexes to each other should nevertheless still hold: “there must be the communion of labour in the large human family, just as there was within the narrower precincts of home” (SCCL, 13, 14). If you compare a Native woman with an upper-rank European woman, then she may appear to live the life of a drudge, but if you compare her with a European servant maid or a factory worker, “the condition of the squaw is gracious in comparison, dignified by domestic feelings, and by equality with all around her” (WS, III:305). The Native woman’s hard work makes her equal to, even while she is different from, Native men. The conservative British and Foreign Review decried Jameson’s “resolution to represent any arrangement of the position and duties of her sex whatsoever,—even that where the Squaw is the Red Man’s drudge in field and wigwam . . . as more equitable and to be desired than that existing according to the present system of European civilization.”25

However, whereas European women might look forward to improvements due to economic development, the First Nations people can only anticipate suffering for the same reason, Jameson concludes. Capitalism and imperialism can bring women’s advances in Europe, but they
are not going to aid the North American Native peoples, who are being driven from and cheated of their land and means of supporting themselves. Jameson does not offer any solutions to this profound problem, but unlike many travelers to the region she grapples with it, honestly assesses her own interests and beliefs, discards any sentimental fantasy about noble savages, and offers thought-provoking perspectives:

God forbid that I should think to disparage the blessings of civilization! I am a woman, and to the progress of civilization alone can we women look for release from many pains and penalties and liabilities which now lie heavily upon us. Neither am I greatly in love with savage life, with all its picturesque accompaniments and lofty virtues. I see no reason why these virtues should be necessarily connected with dirt, ignorance, and barbarism. . . . But I do say, that if our advantages of intellect and refinement are not to lead on to farther moral superiority, I prefer the Indians on the score of consistency; they are what they profess to be, and we are not what we profess to be. They profess to be warriors and hunters, and are so; we profess to be Christians, and civilized—are we so? (WS, III:196)
Her rhetorical question is answered resoundingly in the negative with the many examples of exploitation and destruction she offers, and it rejects any naive notions of inevitable human progress.

European development in Canada is falling especially hard on Native women, and Jameson discusses this with discernment, as usual offering an economic analysis. Jameson recognizes that among Europeans the position of women is generally, if erroneously, viewed as an indicator of a society’s level of development; here it allows a negative evaluation of European policy in the New World. Europeans have “injured the cause of the Indian women” through corruption and “by checking the improvement of all their own peculiar manufactures.” By substituting cheap European goods for Native women’s products, Europeans have artificially created a market for European products while taking away Native women’s skills and the desire for their own manufactures. Europeans have “substituted for articles they could themselves procure or fabricate, those which we fabricate; we have taken the work out of their hands, and all motive to work, while we have created wants which they cannot supply. We have clothed them in blankets—we have not taught them to weave blankets. We have substituted guns for the bows and arrows—but they cannot make guns . . . we are making paupers of them” (WS, III:309–10). Jameson exposes the economy of empire for her bourgeois metropolitan audience, reading in Native women’s position a reversal of the process of civilization.

Jameson decides that, on the one hand, the position of women is universal and that of First Nations women therefore analogous to that of European ones. Woman’s “condition is decided by the share she takes in providing for her own subsistence and the well-being of society as a productive labourer.” If a woman is “idle and useless by privilege of sex, a divinity and an idol,” her position is “as lamentable, as false, as injurious to herself and all social progress, as where she is the drudge, slave, and possession of the man” (WS, III:312). Yet, on the other hand, economic development has meant that European women are rising out of the state of dependence just as Native women are falling further into it: “We are ourselves just emerging from a similar state, only in another form. Until of late years there was no occupation for women by which a subsistence could be gained, except servitude in some shape or other.” As women’s productive work goes, British and French women have the advantage over American and German ones since industrial and commercial development has been greater in those countries. But all these European women are in a better position than First Nations women,
who, unlike the men, cannot hunt the furs that are the Native people’s only commodity for trade, and this situation is likely to prove “fatal to any amelioration of their condition” (WS, III:311). Native women bear the brunt of the First Nations’ impoverishment. Jameson offers no solution to this dilemma beyond the proposed creation of reserved lands, but she observes keenly, analyzes and publicizes what she sees, all the while managing to insert it within an eye-opening account of her time on the frontier. Native American women can thus only offer a partial model for European women’s emancipation.

In North America Jameson thus expanded her notions about gender construction by tying them to issues of labor and economic development. Moreover, by viewing the parliamentary process and the workings of Canadian government firsthand, she recognized how legislation came to be adopted and could affect social conduct on a large scale. In the colonial context she witnessed explicit analogies between the sufferings of subjected peoples in general, whether based on race, ethnicity, sex, or class, but gave voice to individuals based on liberal ideas she favored over utilitarian notions of political economy. Though she harbored utopian hopes, these were not buttressed by any simplistic notion of historical progress or necessity; her Canadian travels had emphasized for her the need to revise prevalent ideas about historical development, which she saw as everywhere affected by either the unjust and destructive, or ethical and responsible, deeds, habits, legal constraints, and institutions of human actors. These insights were brought to bear on all of her later work.

4. Transnational Production and Practical Reform

Upon returning to Europe, Jameson concluded that she should renew attention to the instructive example of German women; a translation of plays by Princess Amelia of Saxony, *Social Life in Germany* (1840), would offer British readers models for social renewal. Jameson thus moved from critique via cultural comparison to advocating an alternate system. Even the title of her book suggests that, beyond the dramatic action itself, a reader will find interest in depictions of the customs, laws, and institutions that offer a different example of community life, one more likely to contribute to gender equality. Social, legal, and cultural reform was to follow from German examples that, she hoped, would motivate British readers to rethink and revise their statutes and habits.
If Jameson argues indirectly through dialogue in the introduction to *Social Life in Germany*, she clarifies her political aims unambiguously and in detail in the “Remarks” that precede each play. As she had in *Visits and Sketches*, she critiques “mistaken principles in the early education of women; the influence of the negative principle, the principle of fear, in which we are brought up, and made dissemblers on system” (SL, I:5). In the Remarks preceding *The Uncle* she devotes a long page in small type to the particulars of German divorce law, which is contrasted with restrictive English statutes:

In the second scene of the first act of this play, an allusion occurs which seems to require a more detailed and satisfactory explanation than can well be given in a marginal note . . . The English law admits but one plea for divorce,—the infidelity of the wife. But in Saxony the legal pleas for divorce are several; viz. 1. The proved infidelity of either party . . . 2. Bigamy on either side. 3. Desertion of home (bed and board) by either party. 4. Quasi-desertion; that is, as I understand it, when the husband and wife have agreed to be separated for life without other cause than mutual aversion, disparity of temper or character, &c.; and coercive measures have been tried, or apparently tried, without result. 5. An attempt made by either party on the life of the other. Lastly, any disgraceful crime subjecting one party to an imprisonment of not less than four years’ duration. . . . In cases of divorce on the plea of the husband’s infidelity, he forfeits all claim whatever on the property of his wife. The care of the children is adjudged to the party who, upon evidence produced, appears most likely to give them a good education:—when very young, invariably to the mother, except where the guilt of infidelity rests with her. In no case can either parent be denied all access to the children. . . . [B]efore the late revolution in the Saxon government, divorce was more difficult than at present. . . . It was from consideration for the morals of the community that the law was relaxed: all which is worthy of reflection and investigation on deeper and higher grounds than mere superficial morality and expediency. (SL, I:131–32)

Such even-handed liberal divorce laws would have intrigued a British audience that had two decades earlier followed the histrionic attempts of King George IV to divorce Queen Caroline, the granddaughter of Philippine Charlotte of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (chapter 1), and that had recently witnessed passage of the Custody Act of 1839. More to the
point, the expansive legal detail of Jameson’s “remark” underscores her feminism and her hopes that readers might cull not only an attitude but also a method from the German example. (A Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act was finally passed in 1857.)

Jameson’s “Remarks” on *The Young Ward* let her indicate the advantages to women of the Germans’ long and formal premarital engagement process: “a familiar and confidential intercourse, when not too long protracted, increases the chance of eventual happiness to both parties, and is on the whole, particularly favourable to the woman” (SL, II:7). She had written to Ottilie von Goethe asking specifically for clarifications on this point: “What are the ceremonies of a ‘Verlobung’? In what does it differ from a marriage? Answer me this particularly.” It is therefore clear that she intended to expand on yet another social practice that adjusts relationships of power and control between the sexes. In addition, the lengthy commentary on *The Princely Bride* occasions a celebration of Germany’s numerous lay-convents that allow women to avoid marriage altogether and still provide comfort and satisfaction: “their order confers a certain dignity, besides an elegant maintenance . . . one has at least the pleasant conviction that they will not be obliged to marry to secure a station in society.” She describes the accommodation of a young noblewoman she met: “She had her private apartments, consisting of three rooms, where she received her own visitors; her female attendant, and six hundred florins a year for pocket-money. There was an excellent table, a complete establishment of servants, including five liveried footmen, to attend the ladies when they walked out; there was no care, and less restraint than in the domestic home” (SL, II:159–60). To Jameson’s mind Germany has actually achieved the kind of female monastery that Mary Astell had so long ago proposed for England, something that could help to solve the imbalance of women to men in the mid-nineteenth-century British population. Jameson again applauds German women’s freedom of movement: in the small capitals of Germany “a young lady, rich, noble, and beautiful, might put on her bonnet and walk through the streets unattended, with perfect propriety.” Women’s claims to space are expanded and Jameson, an Englishwoman married and therefore able to travel alone respectably, argues that this freedom should exist for unmarried British women as well.

Given that the German model is clearly meant as an example, Jameson uses the introduction to forestall objections. *Social Life in Germany* begins, as had *Characteristics of Women* and *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad*, with an introductory dialogue between Alda, Jameson’s female
stand-in, and Medon, a male interlocutor. Using a dialogue between a man and a woman allowed not only for the unforced broaching of gender issues; it also permitted Jameson to avoid alienating readers. As Clara Thomas and Judith Johnston have made clear, Jameson was well aware that her income depended on not offending her audience, but she also saw to it that they would comprehend her reformist point.

She explains why she offers German texts to her readers, why they are dramas as opposed to another genre, and why critics should find them engaging. Her goal, she says, is “to convey a more detailed and finished picture of the actual state of society in a country which I have learned to love as my own.” And then she goads Medon to admit the English need for exposure to German culture: “You will allow that we know little of it, and do not understand what we know, and still less sympathise with what we understand?” In addition, she points out, translating famous works by more accomplished or renowned German authors would not serve her purpose: “they do not reflect, in one graceful and comprehensive picture, the actual state of manners, and the nicer shades of national and individual character: and these were what I required” (SL, I:iix, x). In this way Jameson differentiates her project from the kinds of translations undertaken by someone like Henry Crabb Robinson or Thomas Carlyle. German difference offers a boon for British women, though she is aware that her audience harbors prejudices; consequently she insists that she will simply offer this picture of German life and not force any view on her readers, who in turn must not pretend that the picture should conform to English expectations. Fortunately, English reviewers have matured:

The general tone of criticism in England is much elevated and enlarged. . . . English critics . . . were long infected with the exclusive spirit which, in its excess, we thought so ridiculous in the old French school. Whatever was foreign to our own mode of existence was misunderstood; whatever was not within the circle of our experience was worthless; whatever was beyond the customary sphere of our observation and interests, trivial or even vulgar. Has not Werter’s [sic] Charlotte cutting bread and butter served as a perpetual jest? But all this is passing away. This intolerant and exclusive spirit of criticism would now be contemned and disavowed by any newspaper reviewer. (SL, I:xiii–xiv)

And even to the prejudiced reader, she points out, Princess Amelia is actually like Jane Austen; her dramas “have, indeed, the same sort of
merit—that of delicate and refined portraiture, rather than striking incident or romantic passion” (SL, I:lxii).

Jameson’s translations thus mesh with her travel literature to act as a means of critique and social enlightenment, and while she insists that she is not telling the British how they should “behave and express themselves” (SL, I:xv), she is nonetheless drawing meaningful contrasts between national customs and policies with the intention of expanding British horizons of expectation and offering specific examples and alternative methods. Medon concludes: “It is an experiment—a hazardous one” (SL, I:xvii). The experiment did not backfire, though Social Life in Germany, while commended in the reviews, proved less popular than Jameson’s other works, and the plays, though considered for performance, were not staged.

Jameson was consciously using obscure examples of German literature (dramas by an unknown woman) in a way different from the best-known translators, Sarah Austin, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Thomas Carlyle, who rendered celebrated male authors into English and thus stoked interest in German literary productions. Judith Johnston notes that as Jameson completed this translation she attended a series of lectures by Carlyle “On the History of Literature.” He told his audience “that we are to look to Germany for the light of intellectual truth.”27 Johnston concludes that Jameson “was confronted, therefore, with a contrast of two kinds of literature, that which she was working on, and lectures on a canonized, male oeuvre of supposedly ‘higher’ literary value. . . . Carlyle [was] always gender specific, as revealed by this and his next series of lectures in 1840 ‘On Heroes and Hero-worship.’ The othering of women’s work must have been very apparent to Jameson.”28 Surely this is a warranted inference, given that the aim of Jameson’s book, in keeping with her earlier works, was to rectify, at every level, the false position of women vis-à-vis men. But she was also attempting something very practical. Carlyle’s emphasis on heroism and transcendence could not have been farther from Jameson’s quotidian gender concerns. Jameson, after visiting him and his wife Jane, wrote to Lady Byron in 1844: “the life [Jane] leads, is (for her nature) neither a healthy nor a happy life—married to a man of genius ‘with the Devil in his liver’ (to use his own words)! it must be something next worse to being married to Satan himself.” Jameson as usual sympathized with the victim of masculine ferocity, and even in her discussions with Thomas Carlyle came to the rescue of subalterns, defending black slaves and decrying Cromwell’s butchering of the Irish
in the seventeenth century—“will you believe that I had the audacity to fight him—absolutely to contradict Carlyle?”

5. Jameson’s Transnational Reception

Upon the publication of Winter Studies and Summer Rambles, Jameson’s reception in Germany was uniformly positive and respectful by contrast with that in Britain, where her liberal views were criticized in conservative journals. Amalie Winter, the German translator of Jameson’s book (titled Winterstudien und Sommerstreifereien in Canada, 1839), makes clear that the value of her work to German readers derived from its political engagement: “Through her position [as wife of the vice-chancellor of Upper Canada] she had the opportunity to get to know the Constitution and political organization of this young country, and to view its politics and party spirit more deeply than is granted other travelers. She appears to have made it her job to reveal weaknesses and abuses, and therefore there are those in her native country who have objected to and contradicted her work. In Germany, however, one will certainly know to appreciate her contribution.” She further points out that Jameson has consistently spoken on behalf of women wherever she sees them oppressed, in a false position, or suffering from prejudice.

Other German critics followed Winter’s lead. The Blätter zur Kunde der Literatur des Auslands came to Jameson’s defense in 1839 in an article on the “Literary Disparagements of Women in England” that spanned two issues. It was devoted to bringing to light unfair statements made anonymously by, presumably, male writers. The article treats the queen, Mrs. Norton, Lady Morgan, Mrs. Austin, as well as Anna Jameson, and the writer calls into question the British critic’s refusal to engage in debate. That British critic had said that good manners did not allow him to broach the issues Jameson advocated so energetically (perhaps divorce and/or women’s work), because it would require him to probe her personal reasons for doing so. Jameson’s German defender insists that the fundamental principles ought to be probed and that this can be done without getting personal. “Should considerations of issues be based on the virtues of the advocate rather than on their own merits? Until now authors of sense and truth were of the opinion that people should direct their focus solely on the arguments and facts concerning an assertion.”

Gustav Kühne, author and editor of the Zeitung für die Elegante Welt,
praised Jameson’s travel account as “historically significant” and lauded Jameson’s analysis of “the false position of the sexes to one another,” something he terms a “portentous issue for our times,” to be found even “among the so-called wild Indians.” He was particularly impressed with her explanations of the Ojibwa language, which he describes as linguistic and ethnographic work in the mode of Wilhelm von Humboldt.

The *Repertorium der gesammten Deutschen literatur* called *Winterstudien und Sommerstreifereien in Canada* “among the most interesting and enlightening works about the new world to have appeared in a long time,” and the *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* noted that Jameson’s book offered insight into the Canadian rebellions of 1837, even though these occurred after she left: “England’s flawed colonial administration was responsible for the bad situation.”

Critics have tended to view Jameson solely in the Canadian or British context, and the upshot is that she is interpreted as a spirited but ultimately conservative writer. In Germany, however, it is clear she was viewed as liberal and was applauded by liberal commentators; indeed when she was there she moved in progressive circles with connections to the Young Germany movement. She was writing the Canada journal that became *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles* to her close friend Ottilie von Goethe, who was daughter-in-law of the renowned poet, and in their correspondence Ottilie often expressed support for revolutionary ideas, especially in the years around 1848. Although Anna Jameson did not share that support on the grounds that she preferred reform, not revolution, this difference of opinion did not diminish their friendship because on other matters, especially ideas about gender, they were of one mind.

It is clear then that Jameson’s liberal views participated not only in Anglo-Canadian or transatlantic dialogue but also in pan-European progressive discourses. Gustav Kühne, who reviewed Jameson’s work, was a writer and editor of literary periodicals, and his texts on gender relationships and on Ireland apparently were influenced, directly or indirectly, by Jameson. He not only interpreted her Canadian book as belonging to new ethnographic studies he admired but he also flattered through imitation. He published *Weibliche und Männliche Charaktere* in 1838 (the German translation of Jameson’s Shakespeare book had been titled *Frauenbilder oder Charakteristik der vorzüglichsten Frauen in Shakspeare’s Dramen*, 1834) and then he composed two works about the United Irishmen and the uprising of 1798: *Die Rebellen von Irland* (1840), a novel, and a dramatic reworking, *Die Verschwörung von Dublin* (1856). Kühne was affiliated with the Young Germany movement in the 1830s and 1840s, a
group of authors who sought progressive social and judicial reforms and decried the apolitical, idealist stance of Romantic writers. In 1835 the Frankfurt parliament banned the writings of the group, which included “H. Heine,” throughout the German states; they accused the Young Germans of attempting, by literary means, “to attack the Christian religion in the boldest manner, to degrade the existing order, and to destroy decorum and morals in all classes of readers.”\textsuperscript{36} Anglicists who have emphasized Jameson’s conservatism might be surprised to find her moving in such progressive German circles.

Indeed Kühne’s two favored themes, gender and Ireland, dominate his article on “Anna Jameson.”\textsuperscript{37} The first of these themes accompanies his announcement of the arrival of this literary celebrity in Germany: he stresses Jameson’s interest in German women, and then contrasts British women’s upbringing as outlined in Jameson’s \textit{Visits and Sketches}.

Mistress Jameson . . . war einige Tage in Leipzig. . . . Überall leitete sie bei ihrer Theilnahme an deutscher Literatur und Geselligkeit ein ganz besonderes Interesse für die deutschen Frauen, in deren geistiger Bedeutsamkeit sie einen so wesentlichen Vorzug gegen das englische Gesellschaftsleben zu finden glaubt. Mit freudigem Erstaunen sieht sie in Deutschland eine freiere und tiefere Entfaltung der weiblichen Natur; Erscheinungen wie Rahel und Bettina fesseln ihre ganze Aufmerksamkeit, aber auch in den gewöhnlichen Kreisen der deutschen Gesellschaft hat sie ihr Wohlgefallen an dem geistig regen Verkehr der Frauen mit Männern. . . . Mistress Jameson wird ihren Landsleuten eine Charakteristik deutscher Frauen liefern. Sie gedenkt in Weimar, wo sie den Winter zubringt, ihre Arbeit auszuführen.\textsuperscript{38}

[Mistress Jameson . . . spent several days in Leipzig. Everywhere her participation in German literary and social affairs was guided by her intense interest in German women, whose intellectual stature she believes reveals a substantial advantage when compared with English social life. She views with delighted surprise a freer and deeper development of women’s nature in Germany; phenomena such as Rahel [Varnhagen] and Bettina [von Arnim] capture her full attention, but even in the common circles of German society she enjoys the energetic intellectual traffic between women and men. . . . Mistress Jameson is going to deliver to her compatriots a characterization of German women. She intends to complete her work in Weimar, where she will spend the winter.]
In Weimar Ottilie von Goethe enthusiastically received Jameson, who had been introduced by Lady Byron’s nephew Robert Noel.

It would appear that Kühne’s ties to Ottilie von Goethe commenced at this same period; the friendship was an intense exchange, and their correspondence lasted until Ottilie’s death in 1872, when he wrote her eulogy. Both he and Ottilie dwelt on Jameson’s Irishness; Kühne emphasizes how Jameson’s character reflects both Irish and English traits. “Ihre feingeschnitzten Gesichtszüge verrathen eben so sehr die Tochter Englands, die sie in ihrer Bildung ist, wie die lebhaften Farben ihrer Erscheinung das Kind Irlands bekunden. Die Lebhaftigkeit ihrer Rede ist irlandisch; das gehaltene Maß ihrer Bewegungen englisch.”

Kühne’s Die Rebellen von Irland (The Rebels of Ireland, 1840) must to a degree have been informed by Jameson via Ottilie von Goethe. Kühne acknowledges in print that Ottilie’s interest in Ireland influenced his work, and that she supplied him with the historical books he needed to complete his novel. But Jameson furnished many of those books to Ottilie. So Ottilie supplied Kühne with historical information, but Jameson appears to have been a crucial conduit for such materials to Ottilie, as the extant record substantiates. In a letter of 1838, for example, Jameson regretted her inability to send Irish books; then, the next year, she succeeded in mailing novels of Samuel Lover and Lady Morgan, “Rory O’More, O’Donnel, and Florence Macarthy,” as well as two other unspecified “Irish books,” not to mention “the play of the Wife” by James Sheridan Knowles. A letter from 1851 also details a big packet Ottilie received from Jameson via Robert Noel, including “1. National Education in Ireland. 2. ‘Instruct, Employ, don’t hand them’. (rare tract). 3. Industrial Reforms of Ireland. 4. Essay on Ireland and Irish Affairs (Sir Charles Napier). 5. The Saxon in Ireland (the latest work on Ireland of interest or authority). 6. Handbook on Irish Antiquities.” Jameson consistently reported to Ottilie on Irish politics in her letters; she described in detail her 1853 trip to Ireland, which she undertook to assess the suf-
tering caused by the devastating potato famine. It would seem likely that in their frequent meetings on the Continent Jameson supplied further materials and information. In Italy in 1853, for instance, Ottilie asked Jameson “if you go once more to Ireland, you must . . . make me a present of a Broche” to match “a bracelet from Irish bog oak ornamented with Irish diamonds” that she had received from the Phippses, mutual friends; moreover, “Phipps is planning to come to Florence. Now if you can find no other opportunity send me the Irish books by him.”44 Ottilie’s ongoing fascination with Ireland was cultural and aesthetic as well as intellectual and political, and her broad knowledge must have been a great help to Kühne’s literary efforts, which involved careful research. Even after his Irish novel was published he twice wrote to Ottilie “asking her to check details in Wolfe Tone’s memoirs,” and he traveled to Ireland in 1862 to find out the latest. He consulted Ottilie again for his second Irish work, the drama Die Verschwörung von Dublin (1856),45 on which Ottilie lavishes praise in her letters to Jameson: “As a Tragedy it is most excellent [sic] . . . It is a great pity, that in all probability it will not be given in many places, people are such cowards.”46 Kühne’s production met with a tepid reception thanks to a growing conservatism; the text was returned to him from a producer in Berlin “mit dem Bedauern, es sei zu politisch” (with the regret, that it was too political).47 The influence of the Young Germans dissipated after the revolutions of 1848 and tendentious political-historical works of this type lost favor.

6. Anna Jameson’s Transnational Politics and Epistemology

The positive reception of Jameson’s writings in Germany occurred because, not in spite of, her focus on women and gender politics, even as her liberal views were decried in Britain by conservative critics. Jameson’s progressive friends on the Continent continued to applaud her writings to the end of her career and in particular appreciated her last and most articulate political works: Sisters of Charity (1855) and The Communion of Labour (1856), two lectures that were later reprinted together.48 Here Jameson made specific suggestions about the labor, different in nature but equally weighty, that women and men should do in tandem or “communion.” Rejecting Romantic idealism and utilitarian approaches, she argued for a realistic grappling with the actual obstacles faced by women in everyday life. Despite the focus on the quotidian, her impulse is cosmopolitan and utopian; it is clearly not of the detached, philosophical sort.
It sounds fine to merge distinctions of sex in general high-sounding phrases; to speak of the “claims of mankind at large”—the progress of humanity—“the destinies of the world”—the “great human brotherhood”—as is the manner of philosophers and philanthropists; but it means something more real, more vital, more heart-felt and home-felt, when we speak of “men” and of “women”—not to disunite them—not implying thereby any separation of those divine and earthly interests held in common, and through which they form in the aggregate the great social community, but to bring them before us with their equal but still distinct humanity; their equal but still distinct need of divine and earthly justice and mercy; their equal but still distinct capacities and responsibilities in the great social commonwealth.49 (emphasis in original)

This passage underscores her central aim in the text to reframe the “woman-question” as a “human-question” (SCCL, xix, 78), to view people as inextricably linked regardless of sex, even while suggesting that there are essential differences—both biological and moral, she insists—between women and men.50 Jameson denies the notion of the separation of spheres, even as she distinguishes between masculinity and femininity.

Jameson chiefly addresses the issue of labor for women. She sees capitalist competition, which she calls “industrial antagonism,” increasing tension between the sexes, and she denounces “the fear that an influx of female labour will swamp the labour-market and diminish [men’s] own gains.” This fearful attitude pervades all classes and occupations; it is not limited to the working classes or to “boards of jealous poor-law guardians: it is to be found in Royal Academies of art and Royal Colleges of physicians.” Since two million women in Britain must support themselves, “a material and inevitable necessity must bring this question to its natural solution” (SCCL, xvi, xvii–xviii). Like Mary Wollstonecraft before her, Jameson enumerates the kinds of work that women should be encouraged to do in public institutions, especially those establishments requiring care of human subjects, such as workhouses, prisons, schools, and hospitals.51

Significant here is how Jameson came to her conclusions. For, as I have argued, it was during her travels in America that Jameson realized the significance of the “communion of labour,” that women and men must work in tandem, because the common notion of the separation of spheres was pernicious. Even though men and women might have dif-
ferent jobs, nonetheless there is “no more fatal, more unjust misconcep-
tion” than that the sexes should be kept apart (SCCL, xx).

I saw the effects of this kind of social separation of the sexes when I
was in America. I thought it did not act well on the happiness or the
manners of either. The men too often became coarse and material as
clay in private life, and in public life too prone to cudgels and revolv-
ers; and the effect of the women herding so much together was not to
refine them, but the contrary; to throw them into various absurd and
unfeminine exaggerations. (SCCL, xxi)

As she puts it in Winter Studies, “The two sexes are more than sufficiently
separated by different duties and pursuits; what tends to separate them
farther . . . cannot be good for either” (WS, I:232).

Jameson’s utopian impulse is likewise central to her politics. On
Jameson’s entire trip to Canada she was preoccupied with the interde-
pendent issues of sex roles, vocation, and the heartless, systematizing
effects of modernization, and she came to some significant conclusions,
expressed most explicitly in Sisters of Charity and the Communion of Labour:
first, women have human rights, especially the right to education, to “the
protection of equal laws,” and to work that they choose; second, these
rights will not be realized until men and women share evenly in the work
of the world; and third, a truly civilized modern society characterized
by this shared work, “the communion of labour,” will only be achieved
gradually through changes in mentality, legislation, and practice. She
asks rhetorically whether her goals are utopian in the negative sense,
that is, chimerical, but then emphasizes that, no,

Whatever our practice may be, let us hold fast to our theories of pos-
sible good; let us, at least, however they outrun our present powers,
keep them in sight, and then our formal lagging practice may in time
overtake them. In social morals, as well as in physical truths, “The goal
of yesterday” will be the starting point of to-morrow; and the things
before which all England now stands in admiring wonder will become
“the simple produce of the common day.” Thus we hope and believe.
(SCCL, 66)

The achievement of these interconnected goals was Jameson’s utopian
project that, following the visions of a long line of feminists beginning
as early as Christine de Pizan, was characterized by gradualism, pragmatism, an emphasis on education, and a reliance on the modification of social behavior, especially relations between the sexes. And it was shaped by the combined political and sociological information she gleaned in America. Ottelie circulated her copy of Jameson’s lectures among her circle and was inspired to suggest a communal household including Jameson, herself and her sister, and others: “You see I intended to arrange a kind of Phalanstère” (Vienna, 9 May 1855).

Jameson carried over ideas garnered within the contact zone of North America and joined these with imported German notions gleaned from travels on the Continent, and her works were then translated and sold across Europe. Her feminism was thus gathered and expressed transnationally, and her relationship with German culture, and her desires for its influence on British society, formed part of an ongoing exchange that involved repeated visits and played itself out on a personal as well as a professional level. In that sense it can be distinguished from the aims of other British importers of German ideas, but it should not therefore be viewed as culturally less significant.

Jameson’s transnationalism also ties her to earlier, less mobile bluestocking feminists such as Sarah Scott, Mary Hamilton, and Mary Wollstonecraft, who were cosmopolitan out of necessity as well as interest; gender trumped nation because feminists, alongside other progressives, felt solidarity with like-minded thinkers regardless of national origin. Sophie von La Roche, for example, expressed this not only in her travels to England but also in her journal Pomona, as she created special issues concerning the work of foreign, especially English, women. Anna Jameson followed suit by explicating for British people the practices and values of other nations, even as translations of her work introduced British thought to continental and transatlantic readers. Hers was a hybrid epistemology; she drew on all of her travels, her reading, her knowledge of art, as well as her firsthand international experience and interviews, in order to interpret what she saw before her and to draw readers from all perspectives.

A close look at the texture of her writing reveals this transnational epistemology, her constant impulse to gather in and to translate (Latin: to “carry across”). Here, a passage about a seemingly trivial subject—a confrontation with swarms of mosquitoes, experienced during her travels on Lake Huron—becomes simultaneously a meditation on human universality as well as cultural difference, and it is this understanding that she wishes to reinforce for readers so that they recognize their place
in an interconnected human community. Jameson encountered the swarms of mosquitoes on her bateau trip from Mackinaw to Sault Ste. Marie, a journey she undertook with Mrs. Schoolcraft, the half-Native wife of the American Indian agent, who brought along her children on this visit to introduce Jameson to her Native family. Jameson’s account reveals an instinctive, automatic transnationality; translation is a constitutional drive within her even when she discusses something as mundane and local as American insects.

The moment our boat touched the shore, we were enveloped in a cloud of mosquitoes. Fires were lighted instantly, six were burning in a circle at once; we were well nigh suffocated and smoke-dried—all in vain. At last we left the voyageurs to boil the kettle, and retreated to our boat, desiring them to make us fast to a tree by a long rope; then, each of us taking an oar—I only wish you could have seen us—we pushed off from the land, while the children were sweeping away the enemy with green boughs. This being done, we commenced supper, really half famished, and were too much engrossed to look about us. Suddenly we were again surrounded by our adversaries; they came upon us in swarms, in clouds, in myriads, entering our eyes, our noses, our mouths, stinging till the blood followed. . . . I had suffered from these plagues in Italy; you too, by this time, may probably know what they are in the southern countries of the old world; but ‘tis a jest, believe me, to encountering a forest full of them in these wild regions. I had heard much, and much was I forewarned, but never could have conceived the torture they can inflict, nor the impossibility of escape, defence, or endurance. Some amiable person, who took an especial interest in our future welfare, in enumerating the torments prepared for hardened sinners, assures us that they will be stung by mosquitoes all made of brass, and as large as black beetles—he was an ignoramus and a bungler; you may credit me, the brass is quite an unnecessary improvement, and the increase of size equally superfluous. Mosquitoes, as they exist in this upper world, are as pretty and perfect a plague as the most ingenious amateur sinner-tortmentor ever devised. . . . I offered an extra gratuity to the men, if they would keep to their oars without interruption, and then, fairly exhausted, lay down on my locker and blanket. But whenever I woke from uneasy, restless slumbers, there was Mrs. Schoolcraft, bending over her sleeping children, and waving off the mosquitoes, singing all the time a low, melancholy Indian song; while the northern lights
were streaming and dancing in the sky, and the fitful moaning of the wind, the gathering clouds, and chilly atmosphere, foretold a change of weather. (WS, III:166–69)

Jameson faces a New World challenge and addresses her unnamed correspondent (generally taken to be Ottilie) in order to heighten the conversational tone and the intimacy with the reader: “I only wish you could have seen us . . . you too, may probably know.” The connection strengthens both the differences and ties suggested by the new experience. First, Jameson makes gender distinctions. The “voyageurs,” the male boatmen, take a draconian approach by lighting vehement fires that not only fail to smoke out the mosquitoes but threaten to suffocate the women and children, who then separate and retreat to the boat: a plan, however, that also miscarries. Next, Jameson distinguishes between Europe and America. Lake Huron mosquitoes are contrasted with those of Italy, familiar to her readers. The comparison suggests the stunning numbers of the New World’s pests and allows Jameson to contrast the present with the past, and nature with culture. She invokes a certain humor, differentiating the vast, robust, and harsh reality of Canadian nature from the prosaic inscriptions of a European “amateur sinner-tortmentor,” someone like Hieronymus Bosch from medieval or early modern religious art, making hell appear artificial, contrived, and weak. Indeed, she links herself, her fellow travelers, and her readers together as inhabitants of the living, breathing “upper world” by contrast with the removed nether world depicted in the old-master representation. Finally, she ends the passage by referring to the indigenous and feminine response. Where she first differentiated her observations from European experience, she now identifies herself as a European in contrast with the obliging rowers’ and the Native woman’s response. Though she has dealt with much distress on her long rough trip, our narrator cannot achieve the equanimity with which Mrs. Schoolcraft copes with this plague, singing a soothing song to help her traumatized children sleep, and gently waving a bough over them to shoo away the mosquitoes. Such a picture of maternal selflessness is to Jameson both a sentimental and a universal one, linking the values of the European reader, the frontier traveler, and the Native mother, even as it distinguishes Jameson’s agitated-metropolitan, psychological distance from the placidity of the admirable indigenous woman. Mrs. Schoolcraft’s quiet song joins the northern lights and moaning of the wind to define what is truly and beautifully natural; it betokens a wet, yet plague-free tomorrow. Jameson thoroughly admires
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and identifies with but also distances herself from the Native mother. She therefore, through back-and-forth commonalities and distinctions, universal values and specific differences, simultaneously invokes both a European context and an American one, both of which do, and do not, include her. She slides fluidly back and forth and takes her reader with her. Such movement in identification and understanding defines Jameson’s method of translation; it is at the core of all of her writing, making her a trusted, transnational, and popular correspondent for her European audience.

Not only is Jameson’s work characterized by her translational approach, it is also profitably interpreted in a transnational mode, one she seeks to foreground. In *Sisters of Charity and the Communion of Labour*, Florence Nightingale becomes Jameson’s exemplar not only of how essential women can be when trained and allowed to work alongside men, but also of the productivity of British-German interchange. She notes with consternation that England has no school of nursing (SCCL, 56) and describes at length how Nightingale was trained in Germany at Kaiserswerth, a charitable hospital that had grown out of various institutions begun by the German pastor Theodor Fliedner. Nightingale’s first publication on this establishment was *The Institution of Kaiserswerth on the Rhine, for the Practical Training of Deaconesses, etc.* (1851). Jameson does not fail to emphasize, however, that Pastor Fliedner conceived of his program on his own travels to England, and particularly in consultation with a Quaker Englishwoman, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, the famous prison reformer. Jameson thus underscores the international genesis of the institution, as well as its creation by members of both sexes. Simultaneously, she berates her country-people for failing to imitate such good ideas and expresses regret that such a talented woman as Nightingale was forced to seek her training abroad (SCCL, 34). The best influences and most successful institutions, Jameson suggests, have transnational and dual-gender origins. Optimal arrangements involve linking the sexes in a “communion of labour,” just as the best ideas emerge when international practices are brought together.

Jameson’s conception of the grandeur of international collectivity and what she sees as true cosmopolitanism can best be seen in her effusions about the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, which she visited more than twenty times: “if you could see liberté, égalité, fraternité of the true kind, it is seen here.” And indeed the Exhibition epitomizes internationalist utopianism. The audience, awed into peace by the splendor of the Exhibition, exerts its art-inspired will successfully against
an authority that itself understands to react not aggressively but with restraint when the crowds cannot bear to leave on the last day.

At 5 o’clock the bell rang for all to go out as usual, but on this occasion the people would not go. I went up into the gallery of the transept to see the effect. There was no ceremony, it was left to the spontaneous feeling of the people. The bells rang louder and louder,—no one would go. The organs played God Save the Queen, the people joined their voices, then they burst into acclamations; the voices rose, died away; rose and swelled, till the shouts were deafening, then sank and rose in another direction. The Police had orders to remain quiet. Only the bells rang loud and louder, but nobody would go. The sun set in golden splendour, pouring a flood of parting light along those immense halls and avenues. The roof, the walls, were for a short time like a flame and all the objects lighted in the most extraordinary manner. But soon the shadows fell, night came on. There was a sea of human faces around me, and below me 60,000 people dimly seen, and all talking, singing, shouting with a joyous, kindly, feeling,—but nobody would go. The bells rang louder and louder, the night came darker and darker, lamps were lighted here and there, flashing on the banners and silk draperies and Gold and Silver and glass reflected in crimson and blue and here and there, while the long lines of delicate tracery were seen in most marvellous perspective, like a fairy dream, like nothing real. At last, when two hours had thus passed and the moon had risen, the Police very gently interfered to urge the people to be reasonable and move towards the doors, but they would not hurry, and at length a troop of Engineers, quite unarmed, under the direction of the head of police, formed a line holding each other’s hands and thus gradually swept the vast multitude towards the doors. There was no force, no resistance, no accident, no injury to any person, or any object. It was altogether the most sublime and picturesque spectacle I ever beheld in my life.56

Unlike on Vesuvius, Jameson is here able to keep her eyes fixed on the sublime object. The language of flames and troops and anthem-singing and bell-ringing and tens of thousands of participants describes not a battlefield but what to Jameson constituted a massive, awe-inspiring demonstration of a unified pacifist popular will. Ottilie von Goethe affirmed that Jameson was “not at all inclined to make a revolution”;57 Jameson decried revolution because of its potential for violence and destruction.
But Jameson was buoyed by how in this instance the masses, witnessing a display of international artistry and industry, singing, and experiencing a dream-like sunset could be inspired to utopian cooperation respected even by the disciplinary agents on hand, the police and the “troop of Engineers.”

This “sublime and picturesque” moment at the Crystal Palace was a rare one for Jameson. Most of her experience led her to lament human beings’ inhumane treatment of each other, and this influenced her notions about the movement of history, which, unlike those of the Whig historians of her day, were not ideas of inevitable progress. As I have indicated, Jameson refers to Scottish conjectural histories, but her focus on women suggests that such a theory is ultimately wrongheaded. In “Women’s Mission and Women’s Position” (1843) she laments that all books, prose or poetry—morals, physics, travels, history—they tell us one and all that the chief distinction between savage and civilized life, between Heathendom and Christendom, lies in the treatment and the condition of the women; that by the position of the women in the scale of society we estimate the degree of civilization of that society; that on her power to exercise her faculties and duties aright, depends the moral culture of the rising generation,—in other words, the progress of the species. . . . Such is the beautiful theory of the woman’s existence, preached to her by moralists, sung to her by poets, till it has become the world’s creed—and her own faith, even in the teeth of fact and experience!

Indeed, “the real state of things is utterly at variance” with this myth. Consequently Jameson develops a theory of history that is, by contrast, one of severely limited and gradual improvement. Women are everywhere oppressed, everywhere in a “false position,” except among the First Nations, where, however, they toil endlessly, and while she sees economic development as opening some doors for European women, as I have noted, she sees how it is closing possibilities for Native women. Change will certainly not happen inevitably or on its own.

Jameson therefore advocates reform and decries British opponents of it. Those who stand in the way of progressive change are people who constitute “that other public,”—that self-satisfied, unreasoning, cowardly, somnolent public which we repudiate” (SCCL, 43), people who lack mental mobility and are stuck in prejudice. As early as the Diary of an Ennuyée (1826) she had mocked sarcastically that particular public’s
haughty view of the Other. “How I hate the discussion of politics in Italy! . . . Let the modern Italians be what they may, what I hear them styled six times a day at least,—a dirty, demoralized, degraded, unprincipled race,—centuries behind our thrice blessed, prosperous, and comfort-loving nation in civilization and morals.” Her satirical take on fatuous British manners and morals has bite even at the beginning of her writing career, and her defense of the Italians takes much the same shape that her defense not only of the Native Americans but also of women, of blacks, of the Irish, and of commuted pensioners in Canada takes—people with limitations, to be sure, but burdened by stereotypes, British jingoism, and a heartless system. If Jameson does not undertake her project with firebrand polemics it is because she had to maintain her loyal readership in order to support her family; if she often sounds conventional to our ears she nonetheless drew vehement criticism from reactionary periodicals like the *Monthly Review* and the *British and Foreign Review*. Jameson’s friend Mrs. Procter noted those antifeminist commentaries and, as Jameson later remembered, told her not to mind, saying “a fig for reviewers”: “The men . . . are much alarmed by certain speculations about women; and . . . well they may be, for when the horse and ass begin to think and argue, adieu to riding and driving.” The vehement tone of the “other public’s” reviews offers a measure of the threat Jameson was seen to pose and indicates as well the range of British criticism circulating at this time.

7. Jameson’s Impact

Anna Jameson, perceived as a woman of the people, a lively middle-class presence on the British literary scene, became also a gauge of the penetration and reception of foreign ideas in Europe in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. At a time when nationalism, imperialism, and militarism were preoccupying many, and while they continue to dominate scholarship, we see a cosmopolitan, transnational force emerging from a surprising corner: a woman with the appearance of a stolid Victorian matron.

In this period of post-Napoleonic upheaval, women and subalterns had much to fear about potential disaster and the vulnerability of their current footing. From Olaudah Equiano’s perilous travels to Dean Mahomet’s vacillating commercial enterprises to Mary Shelley’s nightmarish *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man*, we see the profound concerns of
subalterns, slaves, people of color, and women about survival, betrayal, privation, and disaster. People who, given their social positions, might be expected to espouse radical points of view express surprisingly conservative opinions and devise end-of-the-world scenarios. Subalterns had a lot to lose, and many sought stability over upheaval. In February 1849, pondering the revolutions occurring on the Continent, Jameson wrote to Ottilie von Goethe: “England is tranquil, and we are fully resolved to have no revolutions, which like a storm or a fever fit may do some good, but not without doing harm. The beautiful part of our social policy is, that our government has within itself a principle of development which enables it to reform itself without any violent pressure from adverse and external causes; in this consists our safety while all Europe is convulsed. We shall have here alterations and reforms, but all spontaneously and quietly. The very noise and agitation of which you read in our newspapers are the proof of our safety. As long as people can talk and speak freely and make a great noise, they don’t make conspiracies and revolutions.”

Jameson’s timidity about revolutionary activity is matched by the intensity of her written arguments; at midcentury she has faith that the pen can actually serve to bring about social reform.

As Clara Thomas and Judith Johnston have pointed out, Jameson articulated arguments that became commonplace among later feminists. She called Adelaide Anne Procter, Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, Bessie Rayner Parkes, and Anna Mary Howitt her “adopted nieces”; gave advice concerning the Waverley Journal and later the English Woman’s Journal, edited by Parkes; and in general became a guiding light for the Langham Place Circle. She attended the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society’s convention in June 1840. She participated on the Married Women’s Property Committee, and the petition presented to Parliament in March 1856 went out under her name and Mary Howitt’s; she herself delivered and published the two influential lectures I have discussed, Sisters of Charity and The Communion of Labour, the culmination of her thinking on gender and labor; and she attended the meetings of the newly created National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (1857), which aimed to achieve social reform—including women’s rights and education—and which from the start included women in the organization and among its speakers.

Consequently it may well be Jameson’s quotidian and critical transnationalism that has kept her from becoming a canonized author. Her method and her message made her an unsuitable candidate to promote the glory of English studies; she has only in the last decades been taken
up by scholars who appreciate that her writings offer a telling counter-narrative. She excelled in nonfiction prose, criticism, travel accounts, and translations rather than novels or poetry; she wrote first and foremost to make money through popular publications, and her consequent choice of subjects and genres relegated her to what is often considered hackwork by the academy. She spent much time out of England, traveled frequently and criticized British ways. Moreover her very productivity and prodigiousness might have worked against her. Like Daniel Defoe, she wrote so copiously and cleverly in so many fields that she was viewed as a dilettante or simply taken for granted. The choice of a representative Jamesonian text becomes difficult when one is faced with volumes upon volumes of histories, biographies, travel guides, travel accounts, criticism, art history, and memoirs. How does one pin down the identity of this author? What, in a nutshell, can she be said to stand for? It is fortunate that a writer with transnational and translational proclivities need no longer be ignored, and that, indeed, current interest in globalization and cosmopolitanism corresponds with the ways Jameson viewed her world, allowing a new access to her varied oeuvre.