

Kelvin Everest, Carlene Adamson, Will Bowers, Jack Donovan, Cian Duffy, Geoffrey Matthews, Mathelinda Nabugodi, Ralph Pite and Michael Rossington, eds, *Shelley: Selected Poems*. London and New York: Routledge, 2023. Pp. 900 (pb). £36.99. ISBN 9781405858199.

Routledge's new volume of selected poems by Percy Bysshe Shelley identifies the poet as author of 'some of the finest lyric poetry in the English Language' (i). It should come as no surprise, then, that editor Kelvin Everest has selected from the six-volume Longman Annotated edition of Shelley's work almost exclusively lyric poetry. Dramas like *The Cenci* and epics like *The Revolt of Islam* are omitted in order to make room for as much of Shelley's lyric poetry as possible. There are practical reasons for this, as including longer works—together with extensive headnotes and footnotes—would quickly fill the pages of a book that already stretches the limits of what can fit in a single volume. Even works like *Hellas*, so instrumental to understanding Shelley's engagement with philhellenism, just cannot get space.

However, there is more to Everest's singling out of lyric poetry than simple practicality. After all, the volume gives about 177 pages to *Prometheus Unbound*, complete with the author's preface and a lengthy critical discussion of the piece. Unlike Shelley's other dramas, though, *Prometheus Unbound* is far more engaged with lyric poetry than the conventions of comedy or tragedy, and in fact Shelley subtitled the work 'A Lyrical Drama in Four Acts' (106). For better or worse, Shelley is known today primarily as a writer of lyric poetry, and this volume solidifies his association with that genre. Specialists might guffaw over *Swellfoot the Tyrant* or be amused by the satire of William Wordsworth in *Peter Bell the Third*, but those works are omitted here, as this volume gives us the Shelley familiar to a more general audience.

Nonetheless, the extensive notes and annotations make this volume valuable to specialists as well, even though Routledge claims the book is 'an ideal anthology for students' (i). My own experience suggests this volume is far more suitable for graduate students than undergrads, as the notes and annotations—extensive as they are—still assume a level of knowledge beyond the general reader of today. As one example, the headnote to 'O! there are spirits of the air' refers to Hippolytus as being banished due to 'his mother's false accusation of rape' (4). More advanced students will know that Phaedra was the *stepmother* of Hippolytus, making the alleged crime not quite as incestuous as it first appears. Given that the headnote and footnotes already exceed the length of the poem, it's understandable the editors did not feel the need to elaborate more on Greek myth, but the note might be a bit misleading to a less informed reader.

The editors have also provided plenty of opportunities for readers to compare poems. This volume includes different versions of 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty' and 'Mont Blanc' for instance, and reprints in its entirety the sonnet by Horace Smith that might have influenced 'Ozymandias' (along with the description by Diodorus Siculus that provided a source for the poem's topic). When citing a poem in another language, the book provides the original and an English version, when possible a translation that Shelley himself might have read. When referencing a passage by Dante alluded to in 'Julian and Maddalo', for instance, the footnote gives a translation by Shelley's contemporary H.F. Cary (288). These small details help to place Romantic poetry in its historical context.

Headnotes are quite extensive, and typically give information about extant manuscripts, dates of composition, publication history, poetic form and structure, sources and influences, biographical context, and general criticism. While the depth and breadth of this information might overwhelm some students, it can be quite helpful at times. In introducing 'Ode to the West Wind', the headnote recognizes how the manuscript 'suggests that composition was carried on at different moments and in different circumstances, though not necessarily over a

long period of time' (353). This might be important for students as they navigate the speaker's profound shifts in mood from one section of the poem to another. Such notes are particularly helpful for some of Shelley's more difficult poems, such as 'The Triumph of Life', which is accompanied by an abundance of material (nearly 83 pages in all) to help readers tackle this ambiguous and unfinished late work.

Routledge has done a great service in providing poetic highlights from the extensive scholarship of the Longman edition in a single volume at a reasonable price. At £36.99 (\$49.99 in the U.S.), the book is hardly cheap, but well worth its price for a serious student of Shelley's lyric poetry.

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