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Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals of Scotland: The Creation of the Romantic Author

Dzienniki szkockie Dorothy Wordsworth:
kreacja autorki romantycznej

Abstract: The increase in popularity of the Home Tour in the 19th century and the publication of many journals, diaries, and guides of tours of Scotland by, such as, Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, led to the perception of Scotland as a literary tour destination. The tour of Scotland invariably resulted in a journal in which identities such as writer, traveller, observer, were created. The text became a location for the pursuit of a sense of place and identity. For women in particular, the text offered opportunities to be accepted as a writer and commentator. Dorothy Wordsworth made two journeys to Scotland: the first, in 1803, with William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the second, in 1822 with Joanna Hutchinson, the sister of Mary, her brother's wife. This paper considers Dorothy's identity constructed in those Scottish journals. Discussions of Dorothy Wordsworth have tended to consider her identity through familial relationship, and those of her writing by what is lacking in her work. Indeed, her work and her writing are frequently subsumed into the plural of 'the Wordsworths'. This paper considers the creation of individual self in her work, and discusses the social and spatial construction of identity in Dorothy's discourse in her journals about Scotland.

Keywords: Dorothy Wordsworth, women's travel writing, walking, identity, Scotland

Abstrakt: Wzrost popularności „Home Tour” w XIX w. i publikacje wielu dzienników, wspomnień czy przewodników turystycznych po Szkocji (np. autorstwa Samuela Johnsona i Jamesa Boswella) sprawiły, że Szkocja zaczęła być uznawana za ciekawy cel podróży literackich. Wojaże po Szkocji coraz częściej owocowały dziennikami z drogi, w których kształtowała się tożsamość pisarza, podróżnika, obserwatora czy świadka. Tekst stawał się przestrzenią dla poszukiwań sensu, miejsca i tożsamości, a dla kobiet-podróżników dodatkowo stanowił okazję, by stać się uznaną pisarką i komentatorką. Dorothy Wordsworth odbyła dwie podróże do Szkocji: pierwszą w roku 1803 z Williamem Wordsworthem i Samulem Taylorem Coleridge’em oraz drugą w 1822 r. z Joanną Hutchinson, siostrą Mary i żoną jej brata. W niniejszym tekście dokonano analizy konstrukcji tożsamości Dorothy Wordsworth zawartej w dziennikach z obu podróży. Rozważania na temat Dorothy Wordsworth najczęściej skupiają się na badaniu tożsamości autorki przez pryzmat jej relacji rodzinnych, a w krytycznych ocenach twórczości pisarki kładzie się nacisk na pewne niedostatki widoczne w jej pracach. Zazwyczaj pisarstwo i teksty Dorothy są odczytywane równoległe z twórczością jej brata, jako „dzieła Wordsworthów”; w niniejszy szkicu „rozdzielono” twórczość obojga rodzeństwa i ukazano kreację indywidualnej tożsamości Dorothy Wordsworth w kontekście społecznej i przestrzennej architektury tożsamości zaprezentowanej w jej szkockich dziennikach.

Słowa kluczowe: Dorothy Wordsworth, podróżopisarstwo kobiece, wędrówka, tożsamość, Szkocja

Dorothy Wordsworth was a Romantic author whose work was published. However, discussions of Dorothy Wordsworth have tended to consider the author, her work, and her life as relational to, and for the purpose of discussing, the work and life of her brother, the Romantic poet, William Wordsworth. Dorothy is frequently identified as ‘sister’, or her life, and her writing are subsumed into the plural of ‘the Wordsworths’, and those relational identities of the familial, and of gender, and the lower status of women’s writing, have raised to uncertainties about her autonomous identity as an author. This article considers Dorothy Wordsworth’s writing about Scotland, and considers the two texts written as reflections on her travels. She travelled to Scotland in 1803 with William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and wrote the first of her work to be published, *Recollections of a Tour of Scotland, 1803*. She returned to Scotland in 1822, travelling with her sister-in-law, Joanna Hutchinson, and wrote *Journal of My Second Tour of Scotland* (1822).

Dorothy wrote poetry, but the greater part of her work and the most significant is her journals, of which nine are published. Her journals were both a concretisation of her thoughts – that conversation with self which relates us to our environments – and a continuing conversation with William, and with her close circle of friends, the readers of her journals and the audience for whom she wrote. My focus in this article is on the features in her writing which identify and locate her a Romantic author, with “imagination for the view of poetry, nature for the view of the world, and symbol and myth for poetic style” (Wellek 1963, 326). But my attention is also on her identity as a woman writer, and with a locus relational to her brother. Her identity was created to retain her propriety in the cultural and social norms of the period.

Until her 1803 tour of Scotland, Dorothy had not considered herself to be an author, that is a writer with a public readership and a public place, but, in 1822, Samuel Rogers enquired about publishing *Recollections*. Dorothy was said to be “favourably disposed to profit by them,” if “an adequate sum could be procured” (Clayden 1889, 343–344). She was, she said, “flattered by [Roger] thinking so well of [her] Journal,” but she

“fear[ed] (...) that a work of such slight pretensions will be wholly overlooked in this writing and publishing (especially *tour*-writing and *tour* publishing) age” (Clayden 1889, 347). The first appearance of *Recollections* was in 1851 as *Tour in Scotland*, published by her nephew, Christopher Wordsworth, in *Memoirs of William Wordsworth* (1851, 207–257). In 1875, John Campbell Shairp edited *Recollections*, publishing it with Dorothy identified as the author. Shairp argued that Dorothy’s text was not meant for ‘the general reader’ but for “a small family circle gathered round the winter fire” (1981, xxxiv), and this was indeed the case. Dorothy knew her readers, and such an intimate relationship meant Dorothy had no need to explain herself in her writing. Her everyday domestic life and her character were known and understood, but that also meant the performance of identity as author, a person of singular authority, was not appropriate, and she retained her relational identity.

Dorothy’s aims were to remain the proper, domestic self her audience knew, but to draw on the imagination of the reader in her writing by showing them what she saw, without giving opinion. For example, she commands her reader to ‘conceive’:

Conceive what a busy house it was – all our wet clothes to be dried, dinner prepared and set out for us four strangers, and a second cooking for the family; add to this, two rough ‘callans,’ as they called them, boys about eight years old, were playing beside us; the poor baby was fretful all the while; the old woman sang doleful Erse songs, rocking it in its cradle the more violently the more it cried; then there were a dozen cookings of porridge, and it could never be fed without the assistance of all three (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 282).

She urges her readers to ‘conceive’, not simply to imagine the scene. She requires her readers to use their imaginations and to conceive the atmosphere. She urges them to conceive the lives of the people, which she enables by the use of detail. She lists. She points her readers to the objects and people. Her use of detail has the effect of turning the reader’s gaze away from herself. By redirecting them towards the detail, to the

objects and, to what has been described by her editors as ‘trivialities’, she deflects attention from herself as subject (Boswell 1791). This ensures her performance of place, and her retention of her female modesty. She is not the subject.

Susan Wolfson argues that “across the nineteenth century the mode of minute particulars would be identified more closely with domestic female chronicling” (2010, 196–7). M.A. Stodart has also suggested that women’s “mental faculties” consist in “closeness of observation and the power of entering into minute details” (1842, 21). The arguments which support women’s writing as a genre are not ones I support. However, women’s writing may be discussed as a critical category, as there are features of identity performance in women’s writing of the nineteenth century which are drawn upon to create and to establish a performance of the ‘proper lady’, that is, a performance of gender appropriate to the social and cultural norms of the period. There are many examples of the performance of appropriacy in Dorothy’s work. One technique which achieves this is Dorothy’s use of hyperbole. She lists and hyperbolises details. She names the objects around her and, by doing so, takes the readers’ gaze and attention to a distant focus, which diverts attention away from herself as subject and towards the scene and the people around her. Susan Levin has argued that Dorothy “often appears a mere catalogue of irrelevant detail, a person strangely fixated on the minutiae around her” (2009, 5). Levin wonders whether such fixation “may indicate a fear of being absorbed and thus annihilated” (2009, 5). The detail, I would argue, is a means of reassuring herself that she has place. Dorothy places and surrounds herself in the familiar and in locations of pleasure – in nature, in the domestic, with local people – and identifies the minutiae of place as a cumulative of tenure of that location. The detail, the lists, the descriptions are collections of objects and images which represent her place in her world. Their accumulation in lists and detail strengthen her security of place.

However, a focus on minutiae of life serves also to distance the self from its greater realities, and from existential questions. One example of this evasion can be found in the *Journal* of 1822. Dorothy and Joan-

na shelter from the rain in a house where, Joanna tells her, “There is a corpse within” (Wordsworth 1941, 2: 366). Dorothy’s gaze takes in all she sees.

A cheerful fire was in the centre of the small black apartment, and at one end lay the body of a child covered with a clean linen cloth. The mother of the child (the mistress’s sister) seated at the head of the bier. The house was very small, yet *another* woman, nursing *her* child, was of the family, and there were at least *four* belonging to the mistress herself. Cakes were baking on a girdle – a little bare-footed girl came and cowered over the smoke and flame; and the sorrowing mother, seeing no one else at liberty, suspends her last duties to the dead to turn the cakes, and goes back to her place (Wordsworth 1941, 2: 366).

Dorothy’s focus is on the detail of the woman’s domestic duty: the woman’s duty to her dead child, and “to turn the cakes.” Dorothy appears not to acknowledge the realism and seems to show little respect for the circumstances. Although she recalls being “seated by this humble fire-side, musing on poverty and peace, on death and the grave,” she deflects from life and returns to the minutiae of detail and duty and gender relational place and roles. She records, “I begged some of her warm bread and would fain have kept my seat; but the smoke was not to be endured (...) I asked for a spoon, and (...) as if to give her spoons an extra cleaning, brought me two” (Wordsworth 1941, 2: 366).

Dorothy’s focus gives her dominion over the domestic space, and interiors, but it also offers her personal distance, and she is able to retain her own privacy within her writing. She does not expose her own interiority and, although she shows her reader what might be seen, what might be felt, and what might be heard, she does not explain her feelings or provide detailed analysis or explanation of how those feelings have been reached. She states what she sees, not how she is affected. That is deflected. The sensitivities are left for Dorothy’s audience to take up in the reading of her descriptions, by means of their understanding of Dorothy’s character and her emotional engagement with her environments.

It is not necessary for Dorothy to explain her personal point of view. She illustrates the scene for the reader to ‘conceive’.

Another effect created by the focus on the detail is for Dorothy to be sutured to a subject position, and this enables her to show what she sees, yet not to give opinion. The evasion and avoidance of opinion further creates a performance of the ‘proper lady’, gender hierarchically relational to her brother and to her readers. By suturing herself to subject positions, she draws no conclusions to her observations, and leaves her readers to ‘conceive’ and to reach their own conclusions. She does not tell them what her conclusions are, or describe her emotional engagement, but because of the intimate relationship with her known readers, there is an understanding that they will share her perspective. Such “fragmentary form of the genre” (Zimmerman 1999, 136) of journal writing, enables a structure in her writing which does not require conclusions. Dorothy’s choice of genre enables a deflection from conclusions of the singular self, an authoritative self – the author.

Poovey has argued that

writing for publication (...) cultivates and calls attention to the woman as subject, as indicator of action, as person deserving notice for her own sake (...) to write is to assume the initiative of creator, to imitate the Creator; and as Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have pointed out, it is ‘to usurp the male instrument of power, the phallus that the pen may symbolize’ (1984, 35–36).

Dorothy’s journals do not feature her as an active subject.

However, Dorothy’s ability to paint pictures of scenes, and her poetic technique of foregrounding aesthetic perspective is exceptional, and there are many examples of this in *Recollections* and the *Second Tour*. The poetic nature of her work was taken up by Hyman Eigerman, who produced an edition of what he entitled *The Poetry of Dorothy Wordsworth*. He produced 84 poems of free verse from her prose by structuring it into poetic form. Eigerman argues that he has tried to fulfil the executorship of Dorothy who, in her own words, “tried to write verse – alas!” (Wordsworth 1940, ii). He claims that he did this by “lifting

out of the content those passages of her journals which have seemed to [him] to rise into poetry (...) only marshalling them within the free-verse form which was unknown to their author” (Wordsworth 1940, ii). Poem number 64 in Eigerman’s reworking is taken from *Recollections*, and is an example which illustrates Dorothy’s skill to engage observations with sensibilities. It also highlights her use of aphorism to express the truth of her own subjectivity:

The beauties of a brook or river
Must be sought,
And that pleasure is
In going in search of them.
Those of a lake
Or of the sea
Come to you of themselves
Wordsworth 1924, 207¹

Eigerman’s technique of line creation foregrounds the poetic language in Dorothy’s work by defamiliarisation of the journal form, and emphasises the poetic in her writing. The expression of truth through aphorism in this second ‘poem’ demonstrates Dorothy’s analytical depth of understanding of engagement with nature and a Romantic subjectivity.

Dorothy does not construct an authorial or authoritative identity for herself; however, there is an identity Dorothy creates throughout her writing about Scotland which, like all human identity, is relational to the people in her life and to her surroundings, and which shows she is very much aware of the social and cultural location she retains (Homans 1980, 41–103). She is aware of how her gender and her social location create her

¹The full image is: “I thought that for close confinement I should prefer the banks of a lake or the sea-side. The greatest charm of a brook or river is in the liberty to pursue it through its windings; you can then take it in whatever mood you like; silent or noisy, sportive or quiet. The beauties of a brook or river must be sought, and the pleasure is in going in search of them; those of a lake or of the sea come to you of themselves”.

subjectivity, but she does not reject it. Susan Levin argues that Dorothy's "writing exists as a positive articulation of a negative situation" (2009, 5). There is an inner Romantic eye which is rational, but which also perceives the soul of nature, and there is a writer's craft, which can provide the lightest image for the reader to share her engagement and the passions she experienced and to 'conceive' as Dorothy directs (Brownstein 1973, 48).

Dorothy's journals were written, as she claims, for her brother as her main reader. Dorothy's personal emotions are expressed in her correspondence and not in her journals. In her journals, she asks her readers to 'conceive' the feelings she suggests: she does not prescribe them. In her correspondence, she explains her feelings; in her journals, those explanations are not there. There is a difference between the self performed in the Scottish journals and the self performed in her personal correspondence. The person in her journals is the one writing about her encounters with nature, and is the one writing for her brother as part of their continuing discourse. The person in her personal correspondence refers to friends, family, and the people around her, and is the one writing about and for other relationships. It has been observed by critics that Dorothy's journals frequently demonstrated a lack of sympathy for others (Ketcham 1978, 3–16; de Selincourt 1933). In *Recollections*, her lack of expression of personal emotion is evident. One example of this can be seen in her correspondence with Lady Beaumont about her brother John's death and Dorothy's management of writing *Recollections*. *Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland* was written in three parts. The first part of the journal was written before the end of 1803, the second was resumed in February 1804, and she began the third part of the journal in April 1805, and finished, as she records, on 31 May, 1805. In a letter of 11 June 1805 to Lady Beaumont, Dorothy writes:

I have been engaged in finishing a copy of a journal of our tour in Scotland – this was at the first beginning a very painful office. I had written it for the sake of Friends who could not be with us at the time, and my brother John had been always in my thoughts, for we wished him to know everything that befell us. The task of re-copying this journal, which at first when it was

proposed to me after his death, I thought I could never do, I performed at last, and found it a tranquillizing employment (de Selincourt 1933, 193).

Dorothy's brother, Captain John Wordsworth, to whom she refers in the letter, was drowned in his ship, the *Abergavenny*, on 5th February 1805. His loss not only affected her emotions as someone deeply connected to family, but it must also have had an effect on her sense of audience for her *Recollections*, as John had been in her mind as one of her readers. In the closing pages of *Recollections*, Dorothy records a conversation with the landlady of the inn at Jedburgh, who was from Cumberland (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 268). She records "they knew Captain and Mrs Wordsworth, who had frequently been at Jedburgh, Mrs Wordsworth's sister having married a gentleman of that neighbourhood. They spoke of them with great pleasure" (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 268). This section of the *Recollections* was written only weeks after John's death, and yet her recollection shows no indication of emotion or of loss. Only his presence as someone remembered is recorded.

Dorothy's personal feelings are expressed in her correspondence, but they are not in her *Recollections*. She alludes to feelings which are her inner solitude, however. In *Recollections*, she makes the position clear, and she explains that as she, Coleridge, and William Wordsworth walked the moors to Crawfordjohn, they were "each of us alone" (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 214). Each finds their own peace of mind in the solitary landscape, but yet in the company of each other, and further, she expands, "we had always one feeling" (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 214). This expression of an inner self which experiences and which is at one with surroundings is essentially Romantic. It is the inner eye, or 'I' which perceives, and the emotions remain internal. Dorothy reflects that she, Coleridge, and William each shared the same thoughts and responses to what they encountered. But later, she writes, "I can impart little of what we felt" (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 98). As Susan Wolfson argues, the 'I' in Dorothy's work "represents a plural" (2010, 196–7). It is the 'we' of Dorothy and William, but also the 'we' of community and her circle of readers. Dorothy's writing is not an exploration of personal self in which she attempts

to address the exigencies of her life. The self of Dorothy is in the relational being in dialogue, but more especially the dialogue relational to William and Coleridge. Moreover, there is an inner self, who is not explained and who does not require to explain herself to those she knows will read her journal but whose own understanding of her engagement with nature is secure.

Anne Mellor argues that “masculine Romanticism has traditionally been identified with the assertion of a self that is unified, unique, enduring, capable of initiating activity, and above all aware of itself as a self” (1993, 145). In contrast, the female Romantic struggles to overcome ideologies, such as those of Rousseau, which defined the place of women (Rousseau 1963, 328).² The domestic location of women, outside of the public domain, suggested their gaze and their experience, and therefore the subjectivity in their writing, should be domestic. Mellor argues that Dorothy conforms to that norm and that she “systematically *domesticates* the sublime” by naming places she visited frequently in the Lakes (1993, 164). But in *Recollections* and *Second Tour*, she turns the gaze away from her self and towards all the detail, the objects which she names, and, to what has been described as ‘trivialities’ that her eye can see in order to deflect attention from herself as subject (Boswell 1791). The hyperbole of the detail and naming of the objects takes the reader’s gaze and attention, not always to a clear focus, but always away from Dorothy as subject.

However, Mellor’s arguments, like those of many critics of Dorothy Wordsworth, are based on the author’s correspondence and her journals of home, the *Alfoxden* and *Grasmere Journals*. My study of her relational self is drawn from *Recollections* and her *Journal of My Second Tour in Scotland*, when Dorothy was not at home and when she

² Rousseau argued that “a woman’s education must (...) be planned in relation to man. To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to attend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all time, and this is what she should be taught while she is young” (1963, 328).

was not her every day domestic self. The self in Scottish texts is not dependent on the virtuous self of domestic duty, those daily and seasonal labours of the female georgic in the home. In the Scottish texts, Dorothy's self is relational to the women and the domestic settings she observes and on which her gaze is focused in order to perform a self which is culturally different, socially different, and domestically virtuous and distanced from the poor she encounters. Dorothy does not "domesticate the sublime" (Mellor 1993, 164) in the Scottish texts; rather she makes the domestic sublime. Dorothy's sublime is that which is terrifying and which is not beautiful. The extent of what she sees that is horrific compared with her own domestic experience also contributes to the sense of the sublime. Her description of the Inn at Tarbert is an example:

[I]t is a melancholy place buried in larch plantations. Looking about the spot, I detected (...) mathematical papers that had been thrown out of the window; and the servant, when I enquired, told me they had had six Cambridge gentleman in the summer. Probably the papers will remain till winter's rains and snows have decayed every scrap; for nothing is redded away belonging to the Inn at Tarbert. I entered this desolate house; for the doors wide open, though no one was there. Bedrooms on the ground floor, beds unmade, bare plastered walls, damp, dirt, dust. They sweep the stairs, parlours and passages at Tarbert with little hearth brush. After breakfast the Waiter blew the dust off the table with his breath (Wordsworth 1941, 2: 357).

Dorothy writes to create the domestic as sublime. Features of the Gothic illustrate desolation and decay, isolation and abandonment, strangers unseen, bleakness of climate. The Scottish domestic is, for Dorothy, frequently *unheimlich*. The domestic domain, which to Dorothy is familiar and feminine, becomes uncanny, strange, and disturbing through the differences she perceives, and which she urges her readers to 'conceive'. Her use of detail, listing, and hyperbole exaggerate the distancing she seeks to establish between herself in her identity as the 'proper lady' of

a well-maintained domestic location, and an interior domestic scene without order, despite the many staff:

The Father has been lamed, the Mother is a whisky drinker. Everything is disorder, and children ill-managed (...). Two or three black, big-faced servant maids trail, or slash about without caps, one barefoot, another too lazy, or too careless, to tie up *her* stockings – ceilings fallen down – windows that endanger the fingers, and only to be kept open by props – and what crowds in the kitchen! all in another's way (Wordsworth 1941, 2: 357).

The hyperbole extends her horror of the scene before her. The people are physically damaged; they are lame and damaged by their own choice of drinking whisky; the 'servants' are slaves; and the accumulation of her lists creates a scene in which the people lack the care of domestic duty, care of the people on whom it is their duty to wait, care for their own appearance, and care for their own safety (Williams 1994; Whyte 2006; Devine 2011, 40–64; Williams 2016).

The domestic in both *Recollections* and the *Second Tour* is rarely a scene of comfort, and there is little that Dorothy offers her readers as familiar. The domestic is *unheimlich* and sublime, a place of extreme difference and of horror. But the *unheimlich* nature of the domestic serves to distance Dorothy and to elevate Dorothy's own sense of self-worth, as she may cast judgement on the lack of work and familial duty of women she encounters in Scotland in order to objectify them and make herself the virtuous subject.

Dorothy's conception of self emerges from her perspective that writing was a duty in as much as she also believed it was her duty to manage the household. Cooking, cleaning, sewing, mending shirts, writing out William's poetry and maintaining her own journal all feature equally in Dorothy's life. However, Dorothy's two journals of her tours in Scotland present a different self from the one in the *Alfoxden* and *Grasmere Journals*, where Dorothy was at home and in her domain of duty and virtue. That she focuses on the duties and virtuous nature of the women she meets and observes is a relational performance of her identity in alterity

to the women encountered. Her hyperbole of the dirt and of what she perceives as laziness as well as lack of care and duty of the women whom she describes serves to reduce their worth and to increase Dorothy's self-worth in relation to them.

There can be no doubt about Dorothy's ability to describe nature and to capture the moment, and Dorothy herself can have no doubt, as it is inscribed by the authority she acknowledges, her brother. In *Recollections*, however, Dorothy frequently exclaims her inability to describe, to write, to convey the moment, but, I would argue, this is an establishment of an objectivity. It is an agency of distancing self. One of the techniques which serve to perform the proper is her deferment to William, and there is evidence to argue that the performance is a conscious one. For example, at the location they had taken to be Rob Roy's grave, Dorothy writes, "You will remember the description I have given of the spot. I have nothing here to add, except the following poem which it suggested to William" (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 373). Dorothy then copies out William's poem *Rob Roy*.

Dorothy defers to what she is presenting as William's ability, as a writer and a poet, to illuminate the scene. She deflects attention away from herself, by copying in William's poem; however, she ensures that she reminds her reader, addressed directly as 'you' and so brought into her perspective in a rhetorical device, that she has already described the scene, more than adequately, as she has "nothing to add" (Wordsworth 1941, 1: 373). However, by adding William's poem, she gives him the last word. As such, she conforms not only to social norms of the period, but she also defers to the man's authority as a writer, which in propriety she may not assume. She defers to his authoritative subject position, in which he is able to have the last word, and therefore to have judgement. Further, considering Locke's arguments that rhetoric is feminine because it "insinuate[s] the wrong ideas" (Locke 1975, 508), Dorothy offers no further opinion, and in a performance of feminine duty to William, as the head of her family, she demurs. William is given subject position, agency, and the writer nominal. And yet, William's work is dialogically incorporated

into Dorothy's writing. It is her agency which enables his words to be contained within hers. Although she copies – an occupation deemed proper for a woman of her time – she is the author of her own journal, and the inclusion of William is no more than what is appropriate for a performance of the female self.

Dorothy is reticent to be the subject of her *Recollections*. Through her use of the first person plural, not singular, she deflects herself as the writing subject away from the singular 'I' to the conversation and discourse her journals extend and to the shared subject position with William. The uncertainties of herself as an independent writer are expressed in that use of the first person plural. The genre of journal and prose writing also link to subject position. Poetry would determine her to be the Romantic subject in lyric poetry and would have meant assuming a literary identity (Homans 1980, 57). But Dorothy's refusal to take up the masculine Romantic subject in her writing exemplifies "the female response to the call of Romanticism" (Alexander 1989, 12). Dorothy's subject is plural throughout *Recollections*, and there is a consciousness of that plural self in the *Second Tour*, in which she has to explain that 'we' is either Dorothy and William or Dorothy and Joanna. In *Recollections*, there is no doubt that the first person plural is Dorothy and William, whose memories and places locate them together. They are the one subject. As Lucy Newlyn has discussed, the original voice in the writing of sister and brother is hardly decipherable. The intimate dialogue is reflected in both their work. They were "all in each other" (Newlyn 2013, iii).

It was William who encouraged Dorothy to write, but her position as a writer from William's perspective is not so certain. Her observations are valued, and she is encouraged to write those observations in her journals, but her work is part of a discourse relational to and dependent on her place in William's life and her identity as a member of his household. Dorothy's identity as a writer can never be fully asserted, while her location as a woman is socially and culturally hierarchically relational.

Dorothy's subject matter and domain are nature, the feminine subject appropriate to women's visual and verbal sketches, and her gaze

is internal and domestic. She remains within the proper confines. However, in domestic settings, Dorothy uses distancing to establish objectivity to perform her own propriety. Indeed, she takes propriety to the literal and turns her gaze on dirt, establishing herself as far removed from what she observes, and, in contrast, as clean and pure. She objectifies the other women as lacking propriety and herself as the proper lady. Thus, Dorothy becomes the subject of her text, unstated and unasserted, as would be proper. However, the distancing of other, and the comments which identify the failings in propriety, create a self who is knowledgeable, who is confidently able to make judgements in her own domain, and who is rational as a result of her ability to identify what is improper and what is expected of a woman in a domestic location – her proper place.

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