The Journal of Samuel Rogers: An Alternative Version of *Italy*

Timothy Webb

Nowadays Samuel Rogers is best known as the author of *Italy*, yet precisely what is meant by that title is often far from clear. The publication history of this poem, or more correctly this book, is unexpectedly complicated since over a number of years it appeared in several, rather different, versions with the result that it now has more than one bibliographical identity. The first volume appeared in 1822; the second, after three revised versions of the first, in 1828; and the justifiably celebrated illustrated edition in 1830. Yet Rogers and his publishers introduced changes (such as full-page illustrations of a farewell to Italy) at least as late as 1838 and 1839. Although Rogers liked to insist on the authenticity of *Italy* and its closeness to original experience, there was from the first a striking gap between the events which it chronicles and the record of the poem itself. Even the first volume had been published, anonymously if identifiably, some years after his first visit to a country which deeply impressed him and answered comfortably to many of his poetic and cultural preconceptions. This first volume does not include several poems which later formed part of the larger whole (specifically, 'Meillerie', 'St Maurice', 'The Brothers' and 'Bologna'); most significantly, perhaps, its earliest version contains none of the seven prose essays which at first disgruntled at least one critic but eventually constituted a generic counterpoint within the volume itself and allowed Rogers to include passages of historical narrative (in effect, short stories with a tendency towards the sentimental and the moralistic) and brief essays on subjects such as foreign travel and national prejudices. One of these essays allows Rogers to pay unspecified

homage to *A Sentimental Journey* ('I threw down my pen in triumph'); while another finds room for an autobiographical admission ('I dine very often with the good old Cardinal'). Neither sentence would have been admitted into a text which was exclusively poetic and rigorously avoided any personal revelations. In one of his notes, Rogers claims that this mixture of prose and verse was intended to capture the dual nature of the Italian legacy; previous travel writers had concentrated on the Italian past, while more recent manifestations had 'escaped observation.' In consequence, he had made a resolution: 'If I cannot supply the deficiency, I will not follow their example; and happy shall I be if by an intermixture of verse and prose I have furnished my countrymen on their travels with a pocket-companion.'

This seemingly happy outcome was not easily achieved. In spite of revisionary efforts and the growing freight of annotation, and the fact of his apparent celebrity and poetic popularity, neither the first part of Rogers's poem nor the second succeeded with the reading public, so that he decided to withdraw them both. As John Hale records: 'But no more notice was taken of part two than of part one, and as soon as this was clear, Rogers bought up all the remaining copies of either—some two thousand—and destroyed them'[1] in a bonfire. This calculated burning of the books explains why copies of the earlier editions are now in such severely limited supply and the full history of *Italy* is difficult or even impossible to reconstruct. Not every unsuccessful poet would have been sufficiently affluent or so unsentimentally decisive; yet, with or without the convenience of money, the failure of the two editions could not be disguised. Perhaps Rogers was unfortunate since both volumes appeared at a time when Romantic poetry and its influence were at their most powerful; if compared to that of his most notable contemporaries, Rogers's engagement with his subject-matter (whatever its intrinsic interest) may have seemed unfortunately out of date or, at least, out of fashion in its handling of the Italian dimension. In particular, the appeal of *Italy* may have been temporarily blunted, and even delayed, by the publication of the Fourth (or 'Italian') Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* in 1818. Readers cannot have been unaware that Rogers's *Foscari* was compromised by the existence of Byron's play

1. J.R. Hale, *The Italian Journal of Samuel Rogers*, London, Faber and Faber, 1956, p. 110. Throughout this essay, I cite passages from this edition by means of a page number in brackets. It is an indispensable book for students of Rogers and its long and knowledgeable introduction ensures that it is also indispensable for students of Italy in the Romantic period. I am greatly in its debt.

on the subject, which Rogers claimed was written within a few days of his own poem in November 1821 (though Byron's play was actually published on 19th December); Byron himself and his servants feature at length and identifiably in the poem on Bologna (not included in the first edition), though Rogers is careful not to identify them by name. Percy Bysshe Shelley, whom he first met at Pisa in Byron's company in 1822, would probably not have been known to Rogers as author of the unfinished 'Ginevra' though the brief prose essay on Caius Cestius appeared after the publication of *Adonais* in 1821. Readers of Rogers will not have encountered Wordsworth's *Prelude* since it was not published in full till 1850 (and the 1805 version only appeared in 1926); but, especially after reading 'The Brothers' or finding 'A human figure / Sitting on a stone' in the previous poem, they may have felt that, unlike the principal and now prominent author of *Lyrical Ballads*, the poet of the once highly successful *Pleasures of Memory* (1792) essentially belonged to an earlier period of literature.

Yet Rogers was not silenced in the face of these seemingly absolute rejections by an unenthusiastic reading-public which had once celebrated his poetry. In 1830 he transferred his allegiance to young Edward Moxon, whose career as an independent publisher he had supported with a loan of £500 and, at great personal expense, organized the publication of a large and handsome edition which, unlike the previous two volumes, both of which only contained poetic text, was richly illustrated by steel engravings (a medium only recently originated), and finally appeared under the joint imprint of Thomas Cadell and Moxon. Rogers arranged to publish his poem in two editions, one of which was less expensive than the other (though both were luxurious and very far beyond the reach of an ordinary reader on average wages). As Maureen McCue has persuasively argued, the success of the 1830 version was partly due to its inclusive and miscellaneous nature, which accorded it both variety and an unmistakable authority: 'It is at once a travelogue and a historical guide to Italy; it positions scholarly information on little-known art works next to gothic vignettes of young female captives; and its picturesque descriptions are complemented by lavish illustrations.' This attraction, suggests McCue, was the result of a carefully calculated policy: 'This miscellany of narratives and subjects was one way in which Rogers's text appealed to a variety of readers, and, as such, was an important tool in creating his own authorial persona. Throughout *Italy*, the narrator plays a variety of roles: cicerone, antiquarian, historian, picturesque guide,

and poet.'[2] Apart from its obvious luxury, the overwhelming effect of this 1830 version is that of knowledgeability and apparent inclusiveness. The growing body of endnotes seems to confirm the authority of *Italy* as its poetic enterprises are supported not only by evocative illustrations which suggest the poem's foundations in a real world but also by its knowledgeable references (supplemented by explanatory footnotes) to a wide range of history and literature. Whatever its poetic virtues, *Italy* had now been transformed into much more than one man's reactions to his travels in a foreign country. Where the 1822 text of the first volume had 18 poems and 47 rather minimal notes and the 1823 version (published by John Murray) had 21 sections and 96 endnotes, the edition of 1830 included a preface and both parts of the poem and had expanded to 50 sections and 185 endnotes (a figure which, by 1842, had expanded again to 240).[3] The 1830 edition was also generically more innovative since it printed 6 of the 7 prose essays which were ultimately included (though 'Montorio' was not added till 1834).

In 1830 Rogers also refers to his second thoughts when he explains his practice in a brief Preface: 'He has since revised it throughout, and added many stories from the old Chroniclers and many Notes illustrative of the manners, customs, and superstitions there.' Yet, although he confesses to revisionary practice, there is still a residuary reticence since it was only in the 1834 edition that, immediately after 'since', he inserted the phrase 'on a second visit' (which took place in 1821–1822). The notes which were gathered at the end of the book now came to be much more than merely explanatory or illustrative since Rogers frequently used them to print earlier versions of the text, or in the case of 15 lines on Mont Blanc to include a passage 'written on the spot' but excluded from the printed poem. Later editions of *Italy* consequently acquired a compendious dimension, by quietly introducing a gentle kind of textual simultaneity and allowing Rogers to remind his readers that the finalized text before them was the product not only of personal observation but of that detailed process of revision to which the Preface explicitly refers.

2. Maureen McCue, 'Reverse Pygmalionism: Art and Samuel Rogers's *Italy*', *Romantic Textualities: Literary and Print Culture, 1780–1840*, 21 (Winter 2013), pp. 110, 116. See also, Chapter 4 ('Samuel Rogers's *Italy*') of Maureen McCue, *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793–1840*, Farnham and Burlington, Vt., Ashgate, 2014, pp. 127–158.

3. For the importance of the notes and the attentiveness with which Rogers prepared them, see *Journal*, p. 49. Hale records: 'He lavished great care on them, revising and re-casting them as thoroughly as ever he puzzled at his verse. On one he spent a whole month.'

In both the more expensive and the cheaper versions, poems and illustrations appeared on the same page. This practice may now seem unexceptional but contemporary readers must have recognized that it formed a break with tradition. Artists involved in this innovatory and expensive enterprise were essentially two: the fashionable and productive Thomas Stothard featured a variety of figures and seems to have concentrated on lighter subjects; while the more effective illustrator was J.M.W. Turner, whose twenty-five more solemn and evocative images constituted a remarkable coup both for Rogers and for Cadell and Moxon and must have been largely responsible for the extraordinary success of the publication. Turner, who was central to the identity of the new publication and had himself visited Italy in 1819, produced not less than forty-five watercolours which provided him with a rich resource both for the illustration of Rogers's book and for his own work as an artist.[4]

The term 'illustration' might easily be misunderstood since it cannot have been the intention of Stothard and especially of Turner to adopt a subordinate role in the production; though, as proofs suggest, both artists may have been prepared to take instructions from the demanding but knowledgeable poet, the result was an amalgam of art and poetry which might be said to embody a state of aesthetic equality. Meredith Gamer shows a shrewd understanding of how such pictures were intended to work and the nature of their function as 'illustrations': 'it was well understood that the purpose of the vignette was to evoke the idea and feeling, rather than the exact appearance of a given place.'[5] Or again:

> The reader can gaze at leisure upon the shimmering lake of Como or the ruin-strewn Campagna while reading the author's historical musings about the ancient philosophers and warriors who once were there. In this way, the vignettes tend to complement, rather than illustrate, Rogers's text.[6]

4. See Cecilia Powell, 'Turner's Vignettes and the Making of Rogers's *Italy*', *Turner Studies*, 3.1 (1983), pp. 2–13 (including material on the evolution of the text) and, on reprint; Jan Pigott, 'Turner's Vignettes', exhibition catalogue, London, Tate Gallery, 1993, p. 35.
5. Meredith Gamer, 'Watercolours related to Samel Rogers's *Italy*, c. 1826–1827', subset, August 2006, in *J.M.W. Turner: Sketchbooks, Drawings and Watercolours*, David Blayney Brown (ed.), Tate Research Publication, December 2012, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/jmw-turner/watercolours-related-to-samuel-rogers-italy-r1133288, accessed 22nd October 2015.
6. *Ibid.*

In consequence, a poem which had previously attracted only a small readership was now close to the heart of many travellers and consumers of aesthetic pleasure and a justified and continued commercial success. Within two years of publication, this illustrated edition had sold 6,800 copies, reaching a sale of 50,000 by 1847 and generating five reprints by 1859 (though, as a previous description has shown, even this was not a matter of passive reproduction since the text showed some developments during that period and an edition of 1838 printed illustrations of full size).

Nor was this all. Cecilia Powell records a complicated but pleasingly rich legacy which shows that *Italy* achieved a highly significant impact beyond the realms of the merely literary:

> The celebrated 1830 edition of Rogers's *Italy* [...] led the way for cheaper editions with engravings after other contemporary artists. From the 1830s to the 1850s [...] Edward Moxon issued a small edition with woodcut vignettes not only after Stothard but also after works by other colleagues of Turner [Calcott, Eastlake, Landseer and Uwins are specified]. The other development was that paintings based on Rogers's *Italy*, and accompanied by quotations, immediately started appearing at the Royal Academy. Their creators included Richard Westall, Henry Howard, Edward Corbould, William Collins and J.R. Herbert. Sometimes the artists took subjects already illustrated by Stothard or Turner, sometimes they found new subjects of their own, but their interest in illustrating Rogers's *Italy* at all was obviously aroused by the popular—and commercial—success of the 1830 edition.[7]

This account may seem almost overwhelmingly detailed, though its very profusion of names and particulars eloquently makes the point. It shows how widely Rogers's *Italy* was received and how its popularity was at least partly due to a taste for Italy and things Italian, to which the illustrated edition contributed but from which it also undoubtedly profited. Cecilia Powell's listing also demonstrates how closely poetry, art and various kinds of publication were intermeshed, and how intimately such apparently separate categories depended on each other. Even today, the illustrated 1830 edition of *Italy* remains a significant volume, both in the reception of 'Italy' in England and in the history of the book. For a variety of reasons, claims Maureen McCue, Rogers was now able 'not only to reach a large audience, but also to shape the taste of the nineteenth

7. Cecilia Powell, *Turner in the South: Rome, Naples, Florence*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1987, p. 187.

century.'[8] This shaping influence may have been centred on the illustrated edition of 1830 but its effects were often indirect and almost incrementally extensive.

Until recently such attention as Rogers has attracted has been mainly concentrated on *Italy*. Such concentration may have been largely justified by the commercial success of this volume and its impress on sophisticated readers such as Ruskin. Unfortunately, though, this focus has distracted readers from the journal which Rogers kept on his first journey and which has much to tell us about his interest in Italy, his predilection for the picturesque and, by comparison, what he chose to omit from the poem which continues to be much better known. *Journal* was not published till 1956 but it preserves another perspective which is crucially important to an understanding of Rogers and the nature of his achievement. Constituent poems in *Italy*—such as 'A Funeral', 'Paestum' and the large group concerned with Venice, including 'The Gondola' (first published in 1823), or even perhaps the double farewell to Italy (the second farewell is publicly dated 1839)—can fruitfully be compared to those passages in *Journal* for which the diary may have acted as some sort of quarry but from which they are also suggestively different. For instance, the uses of Protestant sensibility in an Italian setting can be explored by comparing 'The Nun' with those pages in *Journal* (pp. 238–240) devoted to an evocation of the taking of the veil, a ceremony which Rogers, like many tourists ('they, that came in idleness to gaze / Upon the victim dressed for sacrifice'), attended with a detailed and almost anthropological curiosity ('The Cardinal', Rogers observes with alliterative but pointed precision, 'afterwards breakfasted on Coffee & Chocolate in the Convent'). The poem refers, perhaps sentimentally, to 'a chant of psalms, most saint-like, most angelical, / Verse after verse sung out how holily, / The strain returning [...] / Yet it was sad as sweet, and, ere it closed, / Came like a dirge.' The prose records in brackets a sharper and less gratifying reality: 'Behind it & before the Altar within she had thrown herself down as dead, & the Nuns sung the Miserere around her, all present holding tapers.' The journal account but not the poem, notices her 'little sister' who 'was in a sky-blue vest, her hair in a wreathe of flowers, & on her shoulders were long wings shaded with blue' (p. 238). After the ceremony, this sister, who forms part of the elaborate choreography, 'threw her arms round her neck, sobbing & saying, my dear Sister, do come home with us—don't stay here' (p. 239). Where the poem predictably contents

8. McCue, 'Reverse Pygmalionism', p. 112.

itself with contrasting before and after, *Journal* provides details which are simple but dramatic and memorable (p. 239): 'She [the novice] had yesterday been in the corso, & at night at the Opera'; and, when Rogers is sampling the crowded and unfamiliar delights of the Carnival, he notices (p. 240) the young nun's mother and sister in a carriage. As this exercise in comparison shows, *Journal* has its virtues and might claim to have some importance in its own right, even beyond the record of an observant diary; it is also significant because it clearly shows what captured the attention of Rogers and both what can be traced in *Italy* and what, by way of contrast, the revised text of Rogers's poem is decidedly not. *Journal* is of special interest both because, as Hale persuasively argues,[9] it often provides a foundation for *Italy* and because it emphasizes the deliberate limitations of that work by travelling into territory which is generically, and perhaps commercially, forbidden or left unvisited.

At its most elementary, the diary can claim a basic biographical significance. From its register of entries we know that on 20th August 1814 Rogers set out for Italy (by way of Paris, Dijon, Copet, Chamonix, Lausanne, Meillerie, Bois la Duc, Rutli, Arth, Sumiswald, Concise, St Gingoulph, Sion and the Simplon Pass). This section of Rogers's book has its special interest, both because of his reactions to what he sees, within a few weeks of Waterloo, and because in some way these reactions serve as a stimulus and a prelude to his Italian experiences; unfortunately, there is no room to consider them in any detail at this stage. On 5th October Rogers finally reached Italy where he visted Bavino, Milan, Verona, Padua, Venice, Mestre, Arqua, Ferrara, Bologna, Florence (with an expedition to Vallombrosa), Torricella, Terni, Tivoli, Rome (where he stayed from late November till early in February 2015), Fondi, Naples (where he stayed for much of February and March 2015, with expeditions to Vesuvius, Baiae, Pompeii, Paestum, Salerno and Gaeta), and a concluding journey briefly including Rome and Florence again and taking Rogers through Austria and the Netherlands, ending in Ghent on 6th May 1815. To set out the details of this itinerary may seem unnecessary and pedantic but the diary clearly shows that Rogers travelled widely in Italy (much more widely, for example, than the young Wordsworth or, some years later, Leigh Hunt), although, like most of his contemporaries, he visited the south but did not get as far as Sicily. The dates are significant, too, since Rogers's accounts were written before Byron or the two Shelleys had even begun their Italian journies and many years before the *Prelude*

9. Hale, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–115.

appeared in print. In particular, the record of *Journal* shows clearly that, although the Fourth (or 'Italian') Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* had been published several years before the first edition of *Italy*, Rogers's prose reactions to the discovery of the country, its landscape and cultural presence, could not have been influenced or conditioned by Byron's powerful poetic example. *Journal* makes an interesting comparison with, among others, the accounts of Goethe and Lady Morgan, the poetry, letters and essays of Byron, the two Shelleys, Thomas Moore and Leigh Hunt, and a variety of travel-books from this period, including those by William Beckford (not published till much later), Anna Jameson, Marianne Starke, Henry Matthews, William Hazlitt and the Countess of Blessington.

Much of Rogers's expedition is vividly recorded in *Journal* though, for various reasons, including the prevailing force of generic conventions and the imagined reactions of a reading-public, and with only a few exceptions, the poem rarely seems to take advantage of those details which Rogers had so freshly registered. *Journal* includes a number of set-pieces, though they may not have been intended to serve that function and often form part of still longer descriptive passages. It is particularly telling in its accounts of Venice (pp. 172–179), the approaches to Florence and Rome (pp. 187, 206) (Florence itself compels description [p. 197] while there is also a panoramic account of Rome [p. 207]), the Neapolitan scene (p. 250), Pompeii (described more than once) (pp. 253, 259–260), the approach to Paestum and Paestum itself (pp. 260–264). Rogers's accounts of the Carnival at Rome and particularly the masquerade (pp. 240–241, 243–246), and his ascent of Vesuvius (pp. 255–256) are vivid and memorable. The force of these descriptions sometimes depends on the meticulous gathering of details; on occasions, too, Rogers registers the scene by a sequence of brief notations, which have the effect of cumulative brush-strokes. The evidence of *Journal* should not be underestimated in face of its more celebrated, and richly illustrated, poetic counterpart. Because of its alternative perspective, we can now tell where there is some coincidence between the two versions and, more significantly, where the poem deliberately omits an episode or a detail which features in *Journal*. Though Rogers can not have intended such a critical convenience, not least because *Journal* was not published till just over a hundred years after his death, this private notebook has much to tell us about his first expedition and, both positively and negatively, the aesthetics which conditioned his later accounts in *Italy*.

An instructive example of what *Journal* has to offer can be found in Rogers's delighted description of what he encountered on the Corso at

Milan, one of his first recorded reactions to the astonishing facts of everyday Italian life (p. 165):

> The balconies were full of people & before the coffeehouses they were sitting out & drinking coffee & sherbet, as in Summer [the date was 9th October]. The air warm & mild & soft as in a Spring-day. The narrow streets, the houses of a pearly-white, the balcony to every window from which a female figure is almost always looking as in P. Veronese & Tintoret, the open turrets on the roofs, & the statues on the churches & palaces all give one back what I have seen so often with pleasure in Italian paintings.

This intimation of contentment has much in common, for instance, with Goldoni's happy recognition in *Memorie* of the animation of Venetian crowds on his return to the city. Rogers, of course, was not an Italian so his pleasure is, necessarily, that of an outsider, although recognition is also a central feature of the experience he rapturously describes. Not surprisingly, his response includes an element which is strongly sensual and, again not surprisingly, Rogers must pinch himself before he can accept the apparently unmistakable evidence (pp. 165–166): 'Am I in Italy? have I said to myself a thousand times. Am I crossing the Alps? Am I on Lago Maggiore, am I in Milan? Do I at last see the Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci, & the Works of Bramante? How often in this manner shall I question myself before I have done.' The ordinariness of bewildered repetition (signalled perhaps by the awkward turn of 'last' into 'Last') does not solve the problem (p. 166): 'These very words have been said again & again by others & *will be* again & again.' These words (or their equivalent) are written again and again by Rogers too (in verse as well as in prose) since he is regularly astonished by the realities of travel and the evidence of his own eyes.[10] As the entry also shows, even at this early stage, Rogers tries to make sense of what he sees by thinking in terms of art: his references to Veronese and Tintoretto and to his own familiarity with the representations of Italian painting show that, as he would continue to do throughout his travels, he is checking the art against the scene or the scene against the art, each faithfully giving back the other. But, even if the representations of art must be tested against local facts, even if the gratified embrace is supported or qualified by a stabilizing

10. Cf. the detailed passage on the unreality of a vividly-realized Verona ('To me it seems like a dream', etc. [*Journal*, 169]). The trope also occurs in *Italy*. Cf. the opening lines of the constituent poem 'Italy.'

sense of recognition, it is obvious that Rogers takes pleasure not only in Italian painting but in the observable social realities on which it is based.

For another example of how this process works, consider Rogers's vivid account of the cosmopolitan scene at Venice, made only a week after his enthusiastic but analytical response to Milan (p. 173):

> the turk, the greek and polish Jew, the Venetian muffling his chin in his cloak, his wife in her white veil—fasciole & antiently her zendeletta [silken veil] all black, the Jew formerly in his red hat—not to mention the black gondolas assembled before the steps of the vast platform, & the various cries [illegible] of the gondoleers, the sellers of zucca & of every eatable under heaven [...]

In this scene, or scenes, there is an intimation of the presence of history as well as of the animated present—see, for instance, 'antiently her zendeletta all black, the Jew formerly in his red hat', as if the full force of the scene required attention not only to present circumstances but to the picturesque past. In these pages on Venice, perhaps even more centrally than in most of his other descriptions, a recurrent sense of mortality and the ghosts of history haunt the liveliness of the prose. An account of a ride in a gondola effectively conveys something of the experience of the privileged tourist (p. 176):

> Nothing can be more gentle than the gliding motion of a gondola—no jerk—no plash as on the Thames—no feathering the oar—& nothing can be more well-bred & attentive & silent than a gondolier. He never looks back. He dips it & lifts it up again without noise his back towards You—With or without the felze you lie & read at your ease on a black leathern cushion that rises to your head. It is a conveyance refined & improved upon by the experience & study of the most sensual & luxurious people for many ages. You move rapidly & the motion is soothing & pleasurable to the nerves.

This evocation can be compared to that in *Italy* which begins with a lengthy simulation of 'La Biondina in Gondoletta' and concludes, by way of informing the reader that 'At Venice, if you have *la riva in casa*, you step from your boat into the hall', with the story of Bianca Capello which is recounted in a substantial footnote. The passage of prose avoids this temptation of experiencing the city through recreating the allusions of history; yet, for all its immediacy, even *Journal* deflects the attention

of the reader from the personal experience of Samuel Rogers, who is transformed into the 'you' of the generic traveller, while the second last sentence firmly suggests that even so sensual and luxurious an experience as being silently conveyed through the waterways of Venice while reading on a leather cushion is, in some way, the product of much consideration and a long historical process. Descriptions like this may be vividly (but comfortably) immediate, like the ride in a gondola which Rogers recreates, but alertness to occasion is counterpointed by sociological attention to Venetian practice. This is one of many cases where Rogers's *Journal* serves as the guidebook which so often directs the progress of *Italy* and the pocket-companion which he mentions in his own annotation.

Yet this attention to the past is obviously qualified by an openness to the present. In Venice, as elsewhere in Italy, Rogers is responsive, as he so often is, to the components of the soundscape, so that his version of Italy is aural as well as visual (p. 176) : 'in other parts of the city [that is, Venice] the tinklings of a guitar accompanied by a female voice are frequently heard thro' an open window, interrupted only by the dashing of the oar below.' Slightly later, in a passage the second sentence of which might be a commentary on the yet-to-be-written *Beppo*, he shows that his sensitivity to sound encompasses the contrasting significance of silence, when he exclaims (p. 180): 'how infinitely more interesting, as more mysterious, their [gondolas'] silence than the noise of carriage-wheels. Nothing can be more luxurious than a Gondola with its little black cabin in which you can fly about unseen; the gondoliers so silent all the while, they dip their oars &c.' When he visits Ferrara not long afterwards, his ears are again alert to those cries he had heard at Venice (p. 184): 'The vendors on foot wander every where, & seem far to exceed the rest of the moving population. Criers of Zucca, two bearing it between them on a board, hissing hot, slices of which all sorts eat greedily. Criers of its dried seeds—of pomegranates—of biscuits, of thrushes, &c.' In December in Rome, where he had heard the Suono dei Morti which signalled funeral processions (see above), he observes (p. 224): 'The bag-pipe plays in the streets by night & by day for nine nights before Xmas'; only two days later, he sees the sun set and hears guns signalling that Christmas has finally arrived. 'What', he asks,'if such sounds had been heard here in the old Time. The Auspices would have come out & Livy have recorded it, as an Omen of dreadful import.' He is delighted by 'Celestial voices' at a papal high mass, but remains sensitive to excessive or intrusive sound and comments with apparent asperity (p. 226): 'The Moors—Moriscoes—of Spain could abjure their religion, but their

ears could never endure the ringing of Bells. What a drawback on the pleasures of Rome that perpetual clang of iron against Iron.' Outside Rome on Ash Wednesday 1815, he notices how, immediately after sunset, 'the distant tinklings of the ave-maria died away in the air' (p. 246). Following a mule-path near the edge of Naples, he hears (p. 265) how 'the strange songs & noises of the Mule-drivers made the grotto re-echo'—this is more restrained but also more alienated and frightened than the reaction of Percy Shelley in December 1818 when 'in the darkness of night' his 'savage' guides 'unexpectedly begin to sing in chorus some fragment of their wild & but [*sic*] sweet national music.'[11] The sounds of Vesuvius itself (anticipated, perhaps, by the 'bubbling sound' he hears at Pozzuoli, soon followed [p. 250] by violin and guitar) are graphically registered, though to describe their range and variety accurately is a challenge which drives Rogers, in spite of a Virgilian quotation, to an unusual but striking investment in simile (pp. 255–256):

> The noise was not continual, but by fits—The silence that came continually, rendering it still more awful—a noise now deep & hollow, like the rolling & dashing of waters, or of a metallic fluid, much heavier and harder than water—now sharp & clattering like that of a Forge such as Virgil places in Etna—Vulcani Domus—& now like the explosion of great Ordnance, or of thunder among mountains—the noise instantly followed by a discharge of large substances, most of them red hot, many of which fell back into the abyss, & many against the sides with a violent crash—& some at our feet & behind us. In the air they appeared like shells thrown by an enemy, & the danger was not small my two guides continually pulling me by the arm, & crying 'Andiamo, Signor.'[12]

That sense of the past which marks the poem, also leaves its formative impress on *Journal*. As Rogers writes in one of his footnotes on Verona, predictably but suggestively: 'It has been observed that in Italy the memory sees more than the eye. Scarcely a stone is turned up that has not some historical association, ancient or modern; that may not be said to have gold under it.' The point is famously confirmed in the Preface to later editions: this poem 'may not perhaps be uninteresting to those who have learnt to live in Past Times as well as Present, and whose minds are

11. *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, Frederick L. Jones (ed.), Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964, pp. ii. 63.
12. 'Vulcani,' as in *Aeneid*, 8.422 (for 'Volcani') is my correction of the Hales transcription.

familiar with the Events and the People that have made Italy so illustrious; for wherever he [the Author] came, he could not but remember; nor is he conscious of having slept over any ground that has been "dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue"'(the formulation, which would have been instantly recognizable to many of Rogers's contemporaries, and which seems to sanction Rogers's reverential practice, is taken from Samuel Johnson's reaction to Iona in *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*). This cultural memory features frequently in *Journal*. On 11th December 1815, for instance, Rome causes Rogers to comment (pp. 219–220): 'The snow at this moment shines on Soracte [the celebrated starting-point of Horace, *Odes*, 1.9], the Tiber winds along from the Apennines to the Tyrrhene sea, & the sun still continues to rise & set in the same places. What materials then are left for the Imagination to work with!' Passing through Rome seventeen days later, he is still delightedly conscious of the traces of history as well as those of his own chariot wheels (p. 226):

> In our daily journey thro' the City, what various scenes have taken place where our wheels were unconsciously rolling. Who but must consider it as a vast theatre in which the human passions have acted. Here C[a]esar fell, here Cicero pleaded, here the Roman Matrons went in longa ordine. Here Brutus saw his sons die, here Virginia received the knife of her father, here Cornelia received her boys from school, & Sylla walked the streets after his abdication. Here Virgil & Horace wandered together & Scipio Africanus passed in triumph—& how many kings have ascended to the Capitol to be strangled after the shew.

The pattern of this double vision is almost everywhere in evidence.When he visits the Circean Promontory on the following 9th February (p. 247), Rogers finds 'A Country full of history & fable': 'Here stood the enchanted Palace of Circe—Here Cicero embarked to cross the bay on the day he died.' Even more hauntingly, he believes, it is possible to come closer to the original experiences by engaging empathetically with features of the landscape which, like the Roman landscape, have changed little, if at all: 'The bay across which Cicero had gone the mountains on which he had looked so often.' At Baiae (p. 251) (soon to exercise a potent influence on Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind'), Rogers records: 'Arches above arches, half-sunk, broken, & honeycombed by water & fire, chambers, caves, these in continual succession, as the boat moves silently under them, remind you of Cicero, & his questiones Academicae, of Lucullus[,] of Piso, Hortensius, Marcellus, Augustus,

Pompey, C[a]esar & Marcus'. Looking along the shore towards Gaeta (pp. 264–265), he is reminded of the 'subject & occasion of Cicero's dialogue on Friendship' and how 'along the sands Scipio & Laelius used to wander, gathering shells & sea-weed.' At St Agatha Sessa, 'a town well-situated on an eminence', and not far from Capua, Horace is said to have met Virgil, & into it I went' (p. 271). Although the main force of this recreation of the past was directed towards the Romans, Rogers was not unaware of other figures and other traditions. At Florence, he gives expression to this sense of a further dimension (p. 200): 'What a life was a life passed in such a city—in such a valley—in such a country—with such people in the golden days of Florence! Here came in succession Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavel, Gallileo, M. Angelo, Raphael, Milton.'

On occasion, Rogers admits that in some ways this sense of historical saturation can be disappointing and deceptive. Once, exploring the ruins of Ancient Rome, and seemingly against the grain of the larger and more conventional touristic passage, he exclaims (p. 209): 'It was a brilliant day, & the scene interesting beyond all others, yet melancholy rather than beautiful, & grand rather from association than reality.' Sometimes such a pressing sense of the past can even blunt or blind or inhibit a fresher, more immediate response. At Tivoli, for example, Rogers describes the setting in admiring detail (p. 275) but there is also a constricted feeling that even such picturesque familiarity has its limitations and is frustratingly self-sufficient: 'But the many falls, & the many turns of this magnificent glen presenting a thousand pictures, have been so often painted, why add more?' The *Journal* entry shows that Rogers was responsive to the beauties of the scene, but they were supplemented by a further dimension (p. 276): 'How rich in associations is Tivoli. Horace & Catullus, Claude & Poussin have given it a lustre not its own, yet in itself it is a gem of the first order. Sat half an hour in the olive-grove over against Maecenas's Villa, the most classically beautiful, the most romantic, the gayest scene in the world.' The full significance of this surrender to the force of classical associations can only be understood if the reader is aware of other competing elements (p. 276): 'It was Easter-Sunday, & many young women, in their best attire, were sallying forth.' Rogers's climactic accolade of 'the gayest scene in the world', with which this journal entry ends, picks up the 'gaily drest' which had been used earlier in the passage but now accords it the considered weight of his approval as the 'classically beautiful' transcends the charm of the merely gay.

Visiting Italy brought out the picturesque propensities of Rogers. As he says, 'The very name calls up a picture.' Rogers knew William

Gilpin well enough to engage in a detailed correspondence and he seems to have been an eager and well-instructed disciple.[13] Entries in *Journal* make it recurrently clear that, as in the case of many tourists, Rogers's Italian journey, or journies, translated into a continuous search for picturesque effects. Throughout his travels, he was characteristically alert to the artistic and painterly possibilities of what he observed. This must have had its effect on the composition of *Italy* and on the instructions which he eventually conveyed to the illustrators, but the more personal and less obviously filtered record of his diary is more extensive and reveals a frame of mind which often coincides with that of the poem but is more fully expressed in its unprotected prose. For example, on 20th December 1814, Rogers records (p. 224): 'From the terrace a view of Rome; the Sabine Mountains in deep shadow, the snowy mountains beyond them all couleur de rose.' Coming out of the room in which Tasso died, in his entry for the same day he observes 'A Girl leaning out of the Window, with her scaldino—her marito—in her hand; a pretty subject for a picture.' On Ash Wednesday 1815 (February 8) he provides a detailed description of the scene from Albano, 'the black shadows of ev[enin]g spreading over it [the Lake], & a flock of goats drinking on its brink—the convents round it on the Alban Mount, the Rocca di Papa &c & the town of Castel Grandolpho [*sic*] the favourite spot of Ganganelli [Pope Clement XIV]—its dome & roofs & pinnacles immediately over it & black against the sky, as it had been cut out in Paper' (p. 246). At Terracina (p. 247) he finds 'hanging orange-gardens glowing with the richest yellow in the sun, like the gaudy representations of fruit-trees, I remember to have admired when a child in a penny-print.' Carefully observing the temples at Paestum, he notes (p. 263): 'The columns of the richest & warmest tint—like metallic rust that relieves the bright verdure with which Nature has touched them above—gashed severely in many places—but just enough to give the freedom & spirit an Artist would like to give.' Many of Rogers's favourite concerns come together in a rapturous description of the scene near the 'Villa of Cicero' (pp. 271–272):

> The view from the terrace enchanting as ever—& towards the town on the shore—orchard-trees in full bloom, their light branches red, & white with blossoms—orange-trees and lemon trees full of fruit, such as a child would draw, who thought he could never put in fruit enough—the Seville Oranges

13. For tangible evidence of this connection, see Carl Paul Barbier, *Samuel Rogers and William Gilpin: their Friendship and Correspondence*, London and New York, Oxford University Press, 1959.

> rich as gold—& noble cypresses rising below against the blue sea, or against picturesque buildings under the mountains—Saw a composition of the last kind—perfect & beyond all my dreams of Italy.

Rogers is susceptible both to scenes which remind him of his own childhood and to those which he identifies as carrying pictorial potential. As these examples show, he notices colour with a particularly watchful eye: near Naples, he observes (p. 252) 'the blue transparent mist along the surface under the dark mountains & discovering the dark sails thro' it'; embarking at Baiae, he records 'White sails, sails bright as silver against the distant mountains of a deep purple'(pp. 268–269); passing Gaeta, he notices 'the yellow orange-trees below, yellower at a distance than heath in the fullest flower, & intermixed with cypresses'(p. 248); going along the new road towards Pozzuoli, he describes the scene in detail (p. 257):

> Delicious views across the bay, a transparent blue medium seemingly diffused over the surface of the sea, rare as ether, a bloom—rather suddenly changing into a lighter colour along the horizon, & the opposite shore under the Mountains—a bloom, if I may call it so, a blue light I had never before seen but in a Claude.

This invocation of Claude reminds the reader that Rogers often translated his experience into comparisons with the work of specific artists. At the most basic level, his Italian journey allowed him to see firsthand for the first time a number of statues and particularly of paintings both by acknowledged masters and by artists whose reputations were less widely received; his lengthy visits to Venice, Florence, Rome and Naples alone provide many examples (see, for instance, his appetite for Titian on his visit to Venice or his excitement at the Vatican). Not surprisingly, the future trustee of the National Gallery was eager to improve his knowledge. His journal entries also make it clear that he often read or constructed the Italian landscape or scenes on his travels in terms of his knowledge of art: for instance, only shortly after his arrival in Italy, he notes (p. 163): 'Every peasant you meet is the same slouching sauntering figure you see in an Italian caricatura.' Much more commonly, his observations were based on specific interpretations of individual painters. This tendency extends its influence beyond Italy and can be found both before and after the Italian part of the journey, for example, in entries on Switzerland (p. 145) ('The window-panes, like those in an Ostade, of an Oyster-shell

fashion') and Amsterdam (p. 294) ('Wherever you go, at every turn, you have a Teniers, a Cuyp, a Vanderveldt, a Gerard-dow, so faithfully have those enchanting painters represented a Country that knows little or no change.')

Since Italy is at the centre of Rogers's travels, it necessarily provides the richest stock of examples, though these moments of observation, both earlier and later, indicate that the habit was not merely Italian in its focus. Hale provides quotations and references which include Claude, Salvator Rosa, Rembrandt, and Raphael, and he notices how in Rogers's account of the chapel on Monte Cavallo 'the Pope knelt, leaning on the same stool as in the miracle at Bolsenna' (by Raphael ; elsewhere [p. 241] Rogers admits that this is 'Perhaps the picture I should most wish as an altar-piece for my chapel').[14] Two other entries not only suggest some characteristic associations but remind the viewer that, according to a certain 'realistic' aesthetic, paintings often represent a reality which can only be fully appreciated 'on the spot.' In some cases, only first-hand experience of Italy acts as a proper corrective to ill-founded pre-conceptions. So, for instance, examination of the sky at Florence puts art into its true perspective (p. 200): 'In the sky a red streak so often in Italian paintings; & which I used to think unnatural.' So when Rogers passes under Torricella and Cortona and notices the colours of the evening and the components of the scene (p. 203): 'the innumerable groves of olives, & the mountain-ridges beyond them, line waving beyond line, gave what Claude has so often given. The olive tint also reminded of G[aspar] Poussin , & of what used to disappoint me in his paintings, but what disappears under a full illumination.' Outside Rome, he describes in detail the attractions of the view (see previous paragraph), and comments (p. 246): 'The scene gave every variety that Claude has given, & how divinely.' At Naples, Rogers registers both the scene and his own careful scrutiny (p. 256) 'Water beautiful—deep blue, fading into a light blue under the mountains, that transparent mist or rather light so happily imitated by Claude.' On 16th March 1815 he records yet another scene which puts him in mind of a painting (p. 269): 'Puzzuoli seen on the

14. *Journal*, p. 103. Hale comments: 'He was always on the lookout for a good pictorial effect, a happy arrangement of mountains, houses and cypresses, or a group of peasants, a girl leaning from a window. Crossing the Brenner on the way home he made a remark (p. 282) that reveals much about his attitude to landscape; there was "a spire always in sight, and almost always where it should be, where you would wish to find it."'

Baiae side like a town of Albert Durer's.' Seeing the moon rise with 'A beautiful halo round it' (p. 279), he is reminded of Raphael's 'Dispute of the Sacrament', and remarks, 'Raphael must have had such a thing in his mind.' Sometimes the response may be well-informed but seems almost automatic; on other occasions, as in the cases of Gaspar Poussin, Claude and Raphael, Rogers is determined to understand the relations between artistic representation and the world which he sees. These examples provide instances of that process which is at work in his reading of the scene at Milan in terms of Veronese and Tintoretto (for full quotation, see above p. 30): the appearance of the city and the recognizable facts of its architecture 'give one back what I have seen so often with pleasure in Italian paintings.' This phrasing (especially 'give one back') suggests a happy reciprocity, a magic circle of viewer and viewed, a contented and gratifying intimacy and, perhaps, a confirmation of preconceptions.

This self-conscious pursuit of the aesthetically pleasing scene can be traced throughout the pages of *Journal*. There are frequent examples of Rogers seeking out an appropriate vantage-point or the most satisfying perspective from summits, terraces, balconies, and windows. He takes advantage of *lontani* and panoramic vistas and on occasion, with picturesque preconceptions, he is prepared to enjoy a scene through trees or columns. We find him looking down on Rome from the Rondonini Palace (p. 213; 'We dwell above the clouds'); catching advance glimpses of St Peters through 'loop-holes' in the trees (p. 217; see also p. 265); enjoying a perspective from a summer-house (p. 222); viewing the city of Rome from a terrace (p. 224) and, several days later, from the top of Trajan's Column (p. 227)—the view, which is described in detail, turns out to be 'inferior to that from the Capitol the Vatican & the Lateran'; and once again viewing Rome, this time from the windows of the unfurnished Quirinal (p. 230). From the top of his house at Naples, he can see Vesuvius 'at intervals discharging red flame' (p. 250); only two sentences later, installed at his own window he sees 'At this moment [...] a column of white smoke like a cloud (the other evening at sunset it received the richest lights) issuing from its crater & rolling off to the South East.' At Naples he visits Virgil's Tomb (p. 257): 'From the vineyard thro' which you pass to it, a full view of the bay, the city &c a romantic situation.'

This tendency to identify the picturesque possibility can be traced through all his travels but is perhaps at its most acute in the south of Italy. At Paestum he remembers 'the solemn gloom' of Tintern Abbey at

twilight and exclaims (p. 262): 'Who could stand half-way & look up & down without emotion thro' those enormous & majestic masses first to the sea—then to the mountains, as night came on—Who ever saw them elsewhere thro' such a framework?—.' This appeal to the emotions of the imagined traveller is also made at Pompei, where Rogers identifies 'a strange & not unpleasing sadness' (p. 253) and, on another visit, immediately after his experience at Paestum, 'a melancholy to be found no where else' (p. 264); but in this case the placing of the observer and the importance of looking through the temple columns specifically invokes the practices of the picturesque. Visiting the great temple and basilica at Paestum, he notices the architecture with a combination of the analytical and the appraising (p. 263): 'How heightened their effect by broad lights & shadows thrown across the columns—As the eye wanders within while you stand without, the intricacy & grandeur strike you far beyond the most majestic grove.' On the same visit, he goes into a church (p. 263) and observes a man 'kneeling with his crook [...] a most picturesque figure.' Writing more generally (p. 266), he claims that women's dresses in Italy are 'much more Picturesque' than in England, and notices how their colour-schemes and 'the ass & mule they ride on are often very ornamental to the landscape, the head of the animal being fringed and tasselled with rich colours. & the women sitting picturesquely with a graceful bend of the head.' A few days afterwards, he is captivated by his experience (271): 'Larks singing—picturesque farmhouses with their open porticoes at a little distance in the common fields.'

Up to a point, this attention to the picturesque (partly paralleled by our more recent resort to the camera) was a regular part of the tourist experience. As Hale puts it:

> The picturesque view of nature suited the tourist of the time with his somewhat bookish approach to the countries he travelled through. [...] The delight of remembering what had happened in a certain historic building was paralleled by the pleasure of recognizing in nature the tones of a Poussin, the sort of clearing that would have appealed to Claude, or a meadow occupied by peasant roisterers of the kind Teniers might have painted. Travellers did not yet go to Italy to experience an emotional upheaval, nor to let the imagination run riot. They went for the pleasure of reconstructing the past, of recognizing in nature what they were familiar with in art, of tracing the movements of fictitious characters [...][15]

15. *Journal*, p. 96.

This picturesque view was sometimes enhanced by a cultivated receptiveness to moonlight and sunset. Visitors to Italy can not have been surprised to approach many of its cities and historical sites by moonlight or to observe the spectacular gradations of an Italian sunset from a carefully selected and convenient vantage point. Though neither poet had been directly subjected to the didactic routines of tourism, both Byron and Percy Shelley give evidence of a heightened sensibility which may well have been stimulated by the recurrent proximity of such practices or the expectant frame of mind which they encouraged. Perhaps, too, they were influenced by prevailing concepts of Italy and the 'Italian experience.' Examples can easily be found in the Fourth Canto of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, which includes a description of an Italian nightscape divided between moon and sunset and an iconic and emotional visit to the Coliseum by moonlight ('the moonbeams shine / As 'twere its natural torches'); or, perhaps, in the letters of Shelley who, for instance, reported to Peacock on 9th November 1818 that he had 'just returned from a moonlight walk thro Bologna' where 'the effect of moonlight' in the city of colonnades was 'strikingly picturesque.' A slightly later letter suggests that this practice had been self-consciously continued: 'I walk forth in the purple & golden light of an Italian evening & return by star or moonlight thro this scene.'[16]

This taste was certainly shared by Rogers. Moonlight provides the background to the boat-ride in 'The Gondola' but this only fixes a penchant which was in evidence several years before the poem was published. In *Journal* he records impressionistically a visit to the palaces on the Brenta in which 'Moonlight' features in the detailed catalogue of effects; on 27th November he notes (p. 209) 'The Coliseum, by moonlight' (a more detailed reaction to its vast solidity and durability is recorded two days later); several months afterwards, following a detailed account of the Neapolitan sunset, he observes that 'the full moon rose majestically from behind the crater of Vesuvius, silvering its smoke now like a fleecy cloud' (p. 256). Perhaps the most striking description of this sort concerns Spoleto which he saw on 21st November (p. 205): 'The Aquaduct traversing a deep & almost immeasurable chasm. Saw it by moon-light; & its vastness & entireness, connecting us at once with some mighty people, affected me deeply.' On the terrace at Mme Vaudricourt's near Naples he looks over 'the gardens & the bay by moonlight' (p. 254). On his return to Rome on 24th March 1815, he picks up his old practice

16. *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, pp. ii, 53 (Bologna), p. 86 (Rome).

(p. 275): 'In the Evening walked thro' the Coliseum & the forum by Moonlight.'

Journal is more frequently concerned with sunsets, a taste which Rogers seems to have shared with other visitors but which he exercised with aesthetic discrimination. For example, a passage in which the location of Florence is carefully but rapturously examined and described in observant prose includes the following, which combines an almost geometrical analysis with an emotional response to the varieties of colour (p. 197):

> The sunbeams played divinely among the mountains & discovered & relieved their waving lines. The gradations of an Italian sun-set; the full blaze, the last parting rays as from the eye of heaven, the cloud edged with a line of light & gloriously beyond any thing of the kind in our northern climate, the flame-coloured, the golden, the rosy, & at length the pearly sky. As we approached Florence saw the dome, the belfry, & the watch-tower of the Palazzo vecchio—with many other turrets—black against the evening sky.

Walking by the Arno (p. 202), he is impressed by a 'glorious Sunset', when he can see 'The whole sky in a delicate bloom or faint rose-colour.' The following day (p. 202) he is in the Vale of Arno and exclaims:

> Nothing could be more beautiful than such a vale at sunset. The chain of hills on our left in full splendour. That on our right in black shadow, every church & convent with its tower & belfry, every villa with its gallery & cypresses, with its long roof its dark & clear outline against the brilliant sky. A young moon.

On the same day, he observes the sun setting in 'a cloudless sky' (p. 203): 'his broad disk, full to the eye, unobscured by mist, & only now & then lost to the eye in a blaze of glory. Then came the colours of evening, till the moon shewed itself higher up in the sky.' In Rome, he watches the sunset from the roof of the Palazzo Rondinini (p. 217) and more than once from the Monte della Trinità (p. 223) where he observes 'every pine tree on the horizon, every electrical wire on the churches visible against the glow.' On another occasion, watching from 'before the Church del Trinita [*sic*] & the Medici villa' (p. 222), he notes 'A glow thro' the windows under the dome of St Peter's. That, & every other object in deep shadow. A rich glow on that Church at half past 5.' On Christmas Eve

(p. 225) he watches the sun set from the Trinità and hears 'the guns announce Christmas'; only three days later, he is walking in the same place at sunset (p. 226). Outside Rome, he describes the landscape in appreciative detail and records its pictorial constitution at the conclusion of the day (p. 246): 'Saw the sun set for the first time in the Mediterranean, the sky afterwards red as a ruby. [...] The scene gave every variety that Claude has given, & how divinely.' When he visits Paestum, he is greatly struck both by the architecture and by the emotional possibilities of the natural setting. After a description of the temples in their context and a recognition of the awfulness of their solitude, he breaks into an uncompleted sentence which is both an example of picturesque practice and, it might seem, a kind of personal resolution (p. 262): 'To muse by moonlight in the temples of Pestum, to gaze on the shadowy mountains, thro' those gigantic columns, & the dark blue sea' (sentence apparently unfinished).

Both in *Italy* and especially in *Journal*, Rogers's ecstatic description is accorded full attention, so that (notably in the case of *Journal*) this episode might be interpreted as the climax towards which the rest of the book acts as a prologue or introduction (even though neither version concludes at that point). Returning through Florence on 31st March 1815, he observes the scene at sunset and concludes with a passage both as analytical as notations in the diaries of Ruskin and Hopkins and as obviously excited by the effects of nature (p. 277):

> The sun set gloriously, & an intermediate glen lay at our feet, broken & winding & solemn in the highest degree. What colours above the horizon in an Italian sky, when the sun has just gone down!
>
> Blue
> Rose-colour
> Pale Yellow
> Amber
> Deep Orange
>
> The 'celestial rosy red' [*Paradise Lost*, 8. 619] diffused far & wide, such as I never saw in our Northern sky, never in an Italian Painting—Nor am I sure it would please in Painting—yet in Nature who could turn his eyes from it? It went; & the orange & the blue remained, & the stars came out—

Once again, Italian painting provides the measure; yet, once again, *Journal* is prepared to acknowledge the limitations even of art. Rogers's

encounter with Italy is both a confirmation of what he knows and an educational and life-affirming experience.

During the writing of *Italy*, Rogers seems to have been constrained by an aesthetic deliberately excluding those details which, whatever their intrinsic attractions, might have distracted readers from the larger objectives of the poem. This eighteenth-century aesthetic, articulated among others by Joshua Reynolds, and observed by poets such as Samuel Johnson, informed the larger poetics of *Italy* which, for all its use of prose and its division into manageable poems on stated subjects, is essentially conservative and conditioned by a sense of unity which prefers to eliminate details when they can be interpreted as merely random. Although *Italy* might appear to be based on a more liberated definition of poetry appropriate to its wanderings across the landscape of Italy (a country at this time still far from unified, in spite of its title), it is informed by a poetic which recurrently imposes its own rigid aesthetic, and largely avoids those locally animating particulars which are a feature of so many travel narratives and add a distinctness of vision to Rogers's own journal. Sometimes that controlling poetic can be traced in the notes as well as in the text since they both contribute to a vision of Italy which is carefully calculated.

The aesthetic selectiveness of *Italy* and its deliberate decision to limit and concentrate its subject-matter according to fixed criteria, is best exemplified by a reading of *Journal*. Its record throws light on the character of *Italy* in all its versions, but particularly from 1830 onwards, by revealing how attentive Rogers was to the world about him and how much has been excluded from the poetic text. If, as Hale claims, prose notes provided a foundation for *Italy*, it is worth noticing how many of the prose details do not appear in the poetry. Many of these are vivid, even arresting, and serve to animate and, as it were, authenticate Rogers's vision of Italy but by the standards of a rigorous aesthetic they might be regarded as random or even distracting and (in the words of Hale) 'inflexibly prosaic', so they do not feature in the poem.

A few examples demonstrate the difference, and what local life the poem has chosen to sacrifice. For instance, in Milan near the beginning of his Italian travels, Rogers records the busy scene in front of the cathedral (p. 168), including 'A Conjuror, breaking an egg into his hat, stirring it, round with a spoon, sugaring it: & then exhibiting round to a laughing circle of 200 at least—a pancake!' In the theatre at Bologna, he is delighted by what he sees, even though the dancing is 'in the lowest stile of burlesque' (p. 185): 'It being for the benefit of the Prima ballerina, she

sat in her rouge among the receivers at the door.' At Florence, he records 'A boutique for Odours in the Convent' (p. 202) and notices 'Oranges, Lemons & Citrons in abundance': 'Discovered by it, that many of the streets have the same odour, as we drive thro' them.' At Rome, he encounters a funeral procession for the Marchesa di Caligula (p. 212): 'The bells are now tolling the suono di Morti ['Three treble notes in quick time; then after an interval three base notes']—& a loud chant is heard at a little distance, & the Corso is full of lights from one end to the other[...]. Most of the procession is moving under umbrellas for the rain is heavy; Many white dresses. It is now gone like a dream!'[17] Like a number of passages in the diary, this description is enclosed by brackets, which suggests that it may have been added to the original and also enforces its dream-like appearance in the larger text.[18] Although there may be an obvious connection with 'A Funeral', not only the white dresses but the procession of umbrellas have vanished like a dream from the poem. Only a few days later, Rogers describes a Roman crowd (p. 216): 'Almost all the men with umbrellas & jockey capes to their great coats; the sleeves hanging down & seldom used. A poulterer's shop, people plucking feathers from dead fowls, living ones on all the shelves side by side as if they were roosting.' The attention to detail here is unconventional and arresting and grounds the *Journal* once again in a world which is vivid and in some ways uncomfortably real; of course, these details do not appear in *Italy*, where there would have been no place for such miscellaneous objects as the umbrellas and jockey capes and the plucking of feathers from dead fowls, or for the sudden intrusion of such 'unpoetic' particulars into the text.

Not long after this entry, Rogers records the scene at the Scala Santa, in a manner which is caustic rather than sentimental (p. 219): 'A monk at the gate receives the canes & umbrellas of the devotees; &, strange to relate, there are chains & collars fixed to a pillar for their convenience. We saw a Lady releasing her lap-dog after having accomplished the pious labour. The noise as they mount together is like that of horses in a stable.' During the 'high-tide' of Carnival at Rome, he is approached (p. 243) by 'A seller of frogs, his frog-basket on one arm,

17. More correctly, the notebook should read 'dei Morti', a phrase which Rogers uses elsewhere. It is not clear whether Rogers himself was in error here or whether Hale misread the original.

18. In *Journal*, p. 255 n. 1. Hale notes the mysterious effect of Rogers's 'disconnected interpolations.'

& some skinned frogs in a wooden bowl in the other, which he offered for sale'; during the same festivities, he observes, again with no comment (p. 245), 'A cocked hat stuck round with radii of turkey feathers—the face ochred, the feet fringed with brocoli leaves.' At Rome, he also registers a general fact, which still evokes Italian scenes with striking force (p. 244): 'When the Austrians attempted to light up the theatre at Milan, they desisted from a fear of a disturbance. The Italians like to sit in the dark, some that they may go undrest, others perhaps from other motives.' At Naples, he records (p. 270): 'At the orange & ice stalls—Sorbettario—or rather snow-stalls [...] strings of oranges like onions, are suspended & intermixed with green leaves on each side.' Only two days later, he catalogues activities in the little town of Capua, where he notices (p. 271) macaroni hanging from the ceiling of the shop where it was being made, and 'two men muffled in their cloaks [who] were drinking off rapidly their coffee.' Two days afterwards, when he is returning to Rome (p. 273), he notes: 'Passed & sat before one [a convent] shaded by enormous ilexes—a monk in his spectacles walking & reading before the church door.' On the same return journey he notices at Bransotta an ordinary scene (p. 283), ripe perhaps for genre painting (in itself a picturesque convention) but unsurprisingly ignored by the poem: 'A boy kneeling barefoot in a chapel, by his mother probably, his dusty shoes slung from his back.'

If the prevailing poetic concentrates on the pleasing and the picturesque, it is not surprising that it rejects intimations of the turbulent and the potentially upsetting. Maureen McCue, who directly relates this kind of choice to Rogers's strong desire to gratify his readership, notices his mixed feelings about the statue of Lorenzo in Florence:

> By recording the struggles of several visits, Rogers's journal tracks the ways in which he emancipated himself from this terrible demon (Rogers's own word). In Italy, however, this struggle is glossed over as he confidently leads his readers through the sites [...][19]

This exclusionary tactic is at its most noticeable on his return journey, when some of the beauties which he had previously admired were now compromised by the traces of war. At Bologna on 5th April 1815 (p. 279), the signs are already disturbing: 'Troops filing Thro'. A battle last night. A wounded officer leaning on his servant in the street [...]. The Cavalry

19. McCue, 'Reverse Pygmalionism', p. 118.

discovered by a long file of dust proceeding towards Ferrara. The Custode of the Church saw the flashes of the guns yesterday.' The same entry records a picturesque view of Bologna but cannot ignore the troubled scene: 'Prisoners marched into town to-night to a convent—& wounded soldiers bandaged up—on Cars.' Stubbornly, Rogers visits an antiquarian and sees the Great Mogul's pipe and the Pope's slipper. He walks in the public gardens ,'where the guns had been heard yesterday in the direction of Ferrara' but where the 'lilac was in full blow.' He sees 'some Correggios in a palace' and eats 'ice' (p. 280). The next day he leaves Bologna but can not avoid traces of war (p. 280): 'Soldiers on the road. New graves.[...] A house full of bullet-holes. Tête du Pont shattered. Soldiers bivouacking before the gates of Modena.' Neapolitan soldiery is gradually infiltrating the landscape and 'filing thro' the town' (280). Details in *Journal* are irregular but vivid: 'The [river] bank, full of Austrian sharp-shooters. Sentinels before their straw hats on the river' (p. 281); 'Soldiers scattered along the roads, & bivouacking in the fields. Waggons of bread—& ammunition' (p. 281); 'Waggons of wounded soldiers'(p. 282). These intimations of war are briefly and poignantly put into context when Rogers passes through Roverbella (p. 282) and 'An old priest at the Posthouse door asked what news in latin & would shake my hand at parting.'

In the *Journal* these uncomfortable details of disruption and conflict sit alongside positive images of landscape and ordinary life and disturb by their very incongruity in such settings, or even sentences. They are excluded from *Italy* which largely controls violence by setting it in the uncontagious past and cultivating the pleasures of memory; by preferring the history of the Foscari, or even the exotic threat of *banditti*, to the more contentious and sometimes brutal realities of the present, it usually keeps the ugly, the threatening and the violent at a safe distance. On Rogers's return to the Campagna, for example, he includes without further discussion 'gibbets exposing legs & arms by the way-side' (p. 273) in a catalogue which also mentions 'aqueducts stretching far away' and 'the Coliseum, wall flowers along its ledges'; gibbets were sufficiently familiar in England (see Wordsworth's memories) and added a frisson and an awkward piquancy to the experience of the traveller, but they do not feature in *Italy*.

When he bids farewell to the 'classic ground' of Italy, Rogers is still alert to the significance of a panoramic perspective and prepared to record its details (pp. 282–283): 'At one moment leaving a little town thro' which we passed, a line of white houses & boats discovered themselves on the other side of the river—a scene as gay as Kew or Barnes, &

reminding me of them. The young people that ran from opening to opening in a vineyard-paling to catch a sight of the carriage.' This is not the last entry in *Journal*, which ends with the inconclusiveness of life itself and, predictably, provides further evidence of disruption ('Cannon balls landed on the shore. Wind. NNW.'); yet, in its innocent gaiety, this detail seems briefly to mark a moment of departure and finality, and its seemingly random particulars speak quietly of a world of stability and the charms of the ordinary which are now threatened by ominous signs of violence and war. This kind of detail, and Rogers's patient recording, should help to ensure that, for this as for other reasons, the record of *Journal* is accorded that serious attention which so far it seems not to have received.

University of Bristol