

Nigel Harkness et Jacinta Wright (éds)

George Sand: Intertextualité et Polyphonie II

Voix, Image, Texte

FRENCH STUDIES
of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

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Introduction

The essays in this volume continue the reflections on intertextuality of Volume 1 by way of the concepts of dialogism and polyphony, the former drawing on Bakhtin's work on Dostoyevsky's novels, the latter concept (also, of course, a Bakhtinian term) foregrounding here the importance of both voice and music in Sand's fiction. Where Volume 1 stressed the intertextual polyvalency of the Sandian novel and examined questions of exchange, rewriting and influence, this volume focuses on the centrality of dialogue and the dialogic, interdiscursivity, voice, music and the visual arts as constituent parts of Sand's inherently plural creative practice. The work of Roland Barthes lays the ground for the interconnections between the musical and the intertextual that this volume pursues, as the allusion in our title to the English-language collection of Barthes's essays, *Image, Music, Text* implies.¹ In *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes*, the critic conceives the texture of the literary work in musical terms: 'L'intertexte n'est pas forcément un champ d'influences; c'est plutôt une *musique* de figures, de métaphores, de pensées-mots; c'est le signifiant comme *sirène*.'²

Of all the arts in which Sand immersed herself, music was perhaps the most important and most influential. Her autobiographical reconstruction of her birth makes music a significant element of this event: 'le 5 juillet 1804 je vins au monde, mon père jouant du violon et ma mère ayant une jolie robe rose' (*OA* 1, p. 466). She also quotes her aunt as having announced the birth with the comment, 'elle est née en musique' (*OA* 1, p. 464). Sand's work provides multiple examples of the importance of

1 Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, ed. and trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977).

2 *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 148 (emphasis added).

music and the reaction of the philosopher Alain to her major musical work, *Consuelo*, draws our attention to the centrality of this art for her fiction: 'George Sand est immortelle par *Consuelo*, œuvre pascale. C'est notre *Meister*, plus courant, plus attachant par l'aventure, et qui va au plus profond par la musique, comme fait l'autre par la poésie.'³

Numerous critics have stressed the centrality of music in Sand's life and work. For Léon Guichardet, 'George Sand est incontestablement, de tous les écrivains romantiques, celui pour lequel la musique fut la plus vivante et la plus constamment présente, sous les formes les plus diverses.'⁴ Peter Dayan echoes this view, adding that Sand 'was doubtless the best musician (and the most musically educated) of the great writers of her generation in France.'⁵ And David Powell has explored the role of music in Sand's fictional works, at both the 'microcosm of a musician's professional problems' and the 'macrocosm of the place of art and the artist in society.'⁶ He argues:

Music was such a driving, emotional force in Sand's life, from her early days at Nohant with her grandmother to her friendship with Liszt and her affair with Chopin, as well as her admiration from afar of Meyerbeer, Berlioz, Gounod, and Massenet, that it would be quite impossible to exempt music from a serious study of her artistic creation. (p. 19)

Music thus permeates Sand's texts in ways which, for Powell, foreshadow Proust: 'The memory of music, the remembrance of music heard, is an experience Sand will repeatedly try to incorporate into her works, a query she bequeaths to Proust' (p. 18). For Sand, as for a generation of Romantic writers, music was linked to the ineffable, the infinite. Béatrice Didier argues that in its dream of a communion between the arts, roman-

3 Alain, *Propos de littérature* (Paris: Hartmann, 1934), p. 223.

4 Léon Guichardet, *La Musique et les lettres au temps du Romantisme* (Paris: PUF, 1955), p. 355.

5 Peter Dayan, *Music Writing Literature, from Sand via Debussy to Derrida* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 1.

6 David Powell, *While the Music Lasts: The Representation of Music in the Works of George Sand* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001), p. 13.

ticism accords music a privileged position as ‘intercesseur de l’infini’.⁷ In Sand’s case, *Consuelo* is the prime expression of this tendency. Here we read:

La musique dit tout ce que l’âme rêve et pressent de plus mystérieux et de plus élevé. C’est la manifestation d’un ordre d’idées et de sentiments supérieurs à ce que la parole humaine pourrait exprimer. C’est la révélation de l’infini. [...] La musique est un langage plus complet et plus persuasif que la parole.⁸

Sand was intensely aware of the complex ways in which music signifies, and in which it translates the real. As Dayan shows, a careful reading of her comments on music – particularly on Chopin’s compositions while they were in Majorca – reveals the depth of her musical sensibility and her understanding that music cannot directly translate or incorporate real experiences without mediating them.⁹ Indeed, in a long discussion of Delacroix’s art in *Histoire de ma vie*, it is music which has the final word, for it is music which serves as a privileged example of the impossibility of direct translation from one art to another, and hence the difficulty of capturing the essence of either painting or music in writing.

Je ne parle pas de la couleur de Delacroix. Lui seul aurait peut-être la science et le droit de faire la démonstration de cette partie de son art, où ses adversaires les plus obstinés n’ont pas trouvé moyen de le discuter; mais parler de la couleur en peinture, c’est vouloir faire deviner la musique par la parole. [...] Décrira-t-on le Requiem de Mozart? On pourrait bien écrire un beau poème en l’écoutant; mais ce ne serait qu’un poème et non une traduction; les arts ne se traduisent pas les uns par les autres. Leur lien est serré étroitement dans les profondeurs de l’âme; mais, ne parlant pas la même langue, ils ne s’expliquent mutuellement que par de mystérieuses analogies. Ils se cherchent, s’épousent et se fécondent dans des ravissements où chacun d’eux n’exprime que lui-même. (*OA* II, pp. 254–55)

7 Béatrice Didier, ‘George Sand et l’imaginaire de la musique’, in *George Sand, pratiques et imaginaires de l’écriture*, ed. by Brigitte Diaz et Isabelle Naginski (Caen: Presses Universitaires de Caen, 2006), pp. 215–24 (p. 215).

8 George Sand, *Consuelo. La Comtesse de Rudolstadt*, ed. by Nicole Savy and Damien Zanone (Paris: Laffont, 2004), p. 321.

9 See in particular chapter 2 of *Music Writing Literature*, ‘Translating the raindrop’.

This musical sensibility makes itself felt too in Sand's critical writing, for musical metaphors recur with particular frequency to structure and illustrate her reflections on both literature and art. Thus it is to images from music and song that she turns in her 1832 preface to *Indiana* to defend the morality, harmony and restraint of the narrator's account: 'Il a mis la sourdine sur les cordes quand elles résonnaient trop haut; il a tâché d'étouffer certaines notes de l'âme qui doivent rester muettes, certaines voix du cœur qu'on n'éveille pas sans danger'.¹⁰

If the musical connotations of polyphony obtain with particular force in relation to Sand's work, they also serve to point up related issues of voice, exchange and dialogue. In fact, dialogue emerges as an integral part of Sand's textual practice: for her, writing is always a rewriting involving engagement with an Other; orality is not only the privileged medium of the pastoral novels but underpins many of the fictions; and exchange transcends generic boundaries to embrace music, theatre, politics and the visual arts.

Indeed, it is arguably in the mode of orality that the musical, the theatrical and the fictional intersect in Sand's work. For Martine Reid, Sand is 'fascinée par la forme orale, exploitant habilement la technique du récit enchâssé, utilisant avec talent les ressources formelles du roman épistolaire'.¹¹ The oral performance of storytelling is of course most in evidence in the *romans champêtres* – *François le Champi*, *La Mare au diable*, *La Petite Fadette*, three works which were to have formed part of a collection entitled 'Veillées du chanvreur' – but it is also part of the narrative structure of many of the novels: *Indiana* is recounted by Ralph to the young narrator in the concluding part of the novel; Mauprat and Monsieur Sylvestre (*Le Dernier Amour*) similarly tell their stories to younger narrators; *Lélia* is an heterogeneous mix of monologues, dialogues, letters and third-person narrative. The centrality of orality to a Sandian poetics from the very beginning of her career is again attested by the 1832 preface to *Indiana*: here the narrator is presented as a 'conteur', a 'diseur' (p. 8), terms more redolent of the oral than written medium; this impression is

10 George Sand, *Indiana* (Paris: Garnier, 1983), p. 8.

11 Martine Reid, *Signer Sand* (Paris: Belin, 2003), p. 151.

underscored with the affirmations: ‘il vous *dira* tout’; ‘il vous *raconte* ce qu’il a vu’; and ‘le narrateur espère qu’après avoir *écouté* son *conte* jusqu’au bout, peu d’*auditeurs* nieront la moralité qui ressort des faits’ (p. 8; emphasis added). In this preface, as the activity of the narrator is presented in terms which privilege the voice and performance, so too the activity of the reader shifts from the visual to the aural.

But this voice is almost invariably male. The device of the oral transmission of a story between two men seems to write the female voice out of the creation of literary narratives.¹² In each of the examples given above, the woman is reduced to silence: Indiana retreats to her bedroom before Ralph begins to recount their story; both Edmée and Félicie are dead when Bernard and Sylvestre begin their narratives. Only in *François le Champi* does one find a female narrator, but Mère Monique, who begins the telling of the story, soon relinquishes control of the narrative to the more authoritative *chanvreur*. Indeed, it is striking that while there are numerous examples in Sand’s fiction of male characters who are writers – of philosophy (Jacques Laurent in *Isidora*, Pierre in *Monsieur Sylvestre*), history (Urbain in *Le Marquis de Villemér*), political treatises (Raymon in *Indiana*) and poetry (Sténio in *Lélia*) – few female characters take up the pen.¹³ Focusing on the female artist – whether painter, musician or singer – provides an important counterpoint to the dominance of the male literary voice and serves to highlight a range of other issues. Questions of originality, pastiche and transgression can be explored through the artistic practices of female characters such as Laure de Nangy (*Indiana*) and Thérèse (*Elle et Lui*). And Liliane Lascoux has shown how a focus on the musical voice which Sand privileges in her work, that is, the contralto, a singing voice which bridges the traditional masculine and feminine ranges – it is the voice of Consuelo, the princess Quintilia in *Le Secrétaire intime* and Fiamma in *Simon* – provides insights into questions of gender and creativity in Sand’s

12 For a more detailed consideration of these issues, see Nigel Harkness, *Men of their Words: The Poetics of Masculinity in George Sand’s Fiction* (Oxford: Legenda, 2007).

13 Only the eponymous heroine of *Lucrezia Floriani* fits into this category (and by the beginning of the action of the novel, she has, in any case, given up writing).

work: 'Le contralto envisage l'androgynie de façon oblique, comme métaphore de l'idéal et comme signe d'une dualité non résolue, légitimement maintenue, celle du créateur'.¹⁴

Marie-Ève Thérénty has argued that Sand's journalistic articles privilege dialogue as a structuring matrix: 'La pensée de George Sand est naturellement équilibrée, portée vers l'avancée dialectique. Elle aime mettre les faits en opposition, trouver le contrepoint éclairant à une vérité'; 'la forme dialogique [...] fournit la matrice de tous ses articles dans les années 1840'.¹⁵ Nathalie Vincent-Munnia et Hélène Millot have also noted in relation to Sand's critical practice how 'le choix du dialogue [...] semble surtout adapté à la critique telle que la conçoit et la pratique Sand: élaborant la théorie à partir des contradictions mêmes de la pensée, au risque d'ambiguïtés idéologiques, mais dans un refus de l'univocité qui permet aussi d'échapper au dogmatisme'.¹⁶ It is not just that dialogue is important for Sand in enabling her to define and structure her ideas; her fiction also becomes a space of dialogue, incorporating a variety of voices which represent a plurality of social, political and artistic discourses. Simone Vierende sums up the ideological and literary implications of this practice:

Le dialogue ressortit à une sorte d'esthétique de l'oralité qui est elle-même une morale et une philosophie: car il s'agit non seulement de plonger le lecteur dans un univers fictionnel, mais de l'impliquer en le faisant participer aux problèmes exposés, comme y participent les personnages de la fiction et comme il y participerait si l'auteur lui parlait face à face.¹⁷

- 14 Liliane Lascoux, 'George Sand, Rossini et la voix de contralto', in *George Sand et les arts*, ed. by Marielle Caors (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2005), pp. 37–49 (p. 48).
- 15 Marie-Ève Thérénty, "'Songez que je n'ai aucune des conditions du journalisme...': poétique journalistique de George Sand", in *George Sand: écritures et représentations*, ed. by Éric Bordas (Paris: Eurédit, 2004), pp. 207–38 (p. 221).
- 16 See their preface to 'Dialogues familiers sur la poésie des prolétaires', in *George Sand critique*, ed. by Christine Planté (Tusson: Du Lérot, 2006), pp. 195–221 (p. 196).
- 17 Simone Vierende, 'Sand et le dialogue: d'une forme à une philosophie', in *George Sand et l'écriture du roman*, ed. by Jeanne Goldin (Montreal: Département d'Études Françaises, Université de Montréal, 1996), pp. 133–41 (p. 140).

We concluded our reflections in Volume 1 on the significance of the Other in Sand's conception of the literary text and argued that Sand's practice of intertextuality was profoundly bound up with a relationship to the Other. In this volume, Marie-Ève Thérénty's analysis of the list of potential dedicatees, which Sand drew up for an edition of her *Œuvres complètes* that was never to be published, adds further weight to this sense of the Sandian text as situated firmly within a network of personal, political, artistic and literary influences. The dedication thus functions as a 'pratique sociale à l'intérieur de la vie littéraire',¹⁸ a means of making manifest 'une relation intellectuelle ou privée, réelle ou symbolique, et cette affiche est toujours au service de l'œuvre, comme argument de valorisation ou thème de commentaire'.¹⁹ It is also part of a literary ideology which attenuates (even rejects) a vertical and hierarchical model of influence in favour of a more egalitarian concept of literary (inter-)relations, in which influence is acknowledged, incorporated, dispersed.²⁰

Dialogue, voice and music are important elements in Sand's work which contribute to the definition and illustration of this ideology. Thus when Sand writes of the musician in *Lettres d'un voyageur*, it is his/her place within a group of artists which is stressed: 'Le musicien vit d'accord, de sympathie et d'union avec ses élèves et ses exécutants. [...] Quelle superbe république réalisent cent instrumentistes réunis par un même esprit d'ordre et d'amour pour exécuter la symphonie d'un grand maître' (*OA* II, p. 818). In this republic of the arts, collaboration, harmony and common purpose are stressed; to this one can add the egalitarian considerations which emerged from our analysis of the artistic novel *Les Maîtres mosaïstes* in the

18 Jean-Benoît Puech and Jacky Couratier, 'Dédicaces exemplaires', *Poétique*, 69 (1987), 61–82 (p. 61).

19 Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), p. 126.

20 We can contrast Sand's conception of the literary dedication with that expressed by Balzac when he dedicated his *Mémoires de deux jeunes mariées* to Sand in 1840: 'Le cortège de noms amis qui accompagnera mes compositions mêle un plaisir aux peines que me cause leur nombre [...]. Ne sera-ce pas beau, George, si quelque jour l'antiquaire des littératures détruites ne retrouve dans ce cortège que de grands noms, de nobles cœurs, de saintes et pures amitiés, et les gloires de ce siècle?' (*La Comédie humaine* (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1976), I, p. 195).

introduction to Volume 1, and which are also reflected in the emphasis placed on popular music in *Consuelo* and *Les Maîtres sonneurs*. As Lucienne Frappier-Mazur highlights, the ‘fonction égalisatrice’ of popular music in these novels entails a further levelling of artistic hierarchies: ‘elle présuppose une véritable homogénéité entre public et exécutants, elle peut se pratiquer en dehors des circuits commerciaux.’²¹

In the essays which we have selected for this volume, our contributors respond to and engage with these issues from a variety of perspectives and, focusing particularly on Sand’s fiction and correspondence, submit them to sustained enquiry in relation to her textual practice. In the first section – ‘Voix, Oralité, Polyphonie’ – Isabelle Naginski’s essay begins by challenging many of the preconceptions regarding Sand’s fiction, notably the critical focus on a limited sub-section of Sand’s literary production – the ‘romans champêtres’ – which has served to project a one-dimensional image of Sand’s work. Naginski offers a re-assessment of the structural cohesion of Sand’s fiction by examining the importance of the *veillée* as a trope which, beyond its ethnographic anchoring in the rural traditions of the Berry region, unites the nocturnal, oral storytelling and writing as recurrent features of Sand’s work, such that ‘le monde fictionnel sandien s’élabore à partir de la veillée’ (p. 31). In David Powell’s assessment of the polyvocality of *Isidora*, critical attention is directed towards the way in which a plurality of discourses, particularly as they circulate around a problematic female protagonist, can serve a feminist agenda by undermining the dominant voice of the male narrator, thereby enabling otherwise subordinate voices to be heard. Monia Kallel’s article continues this focus on the voices within the Sandian text, but emphasises the tension which exists in the early fiction between the polyphonic impetus (exemplified by dialogues and the mobility of enunciative positions) and a dominant, authoritarian voice. Catherine Mariette-Clot’s pursues this examination of the polyphony of the Sandian novel by way of an analysis of the ambiguities and multiple narrative layers of *L’Homme de neige*, which highlights

21 Lucienne Frappier-Mazur, ‘Ambiguïtés du politique: la musique populaire dans *Consuelo* et *Les Maîtres sonneurs*’, in *Le Siècle de George Sand*, ed. by David Powell (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998), pp. 35–43 (p. 38).

the operation of two distinct but overlapping concepts: the enigma and the secret. Finally in this section, Françoise Massardier-Kenney's analysis of *La Filleule* demonstrates that polyphony can also have an ideological dimension. By shattering monologic unity, Massardier-Kenney argues, Sand opens this novel up to a variety of perspectives on race, and, by allowing contradictions to flourish, she draws the reader in as active participant in the production of meaning in this 'roman scriptible', thereby exposing the processes which underpin the cultural construction of racial stereotypes.

In the opening essay of Section II – 'Musiques sandiennes' – Peter Dayan establishes Sand as a paradigmatic author for thinking about the inter-relationship between literature and music, and for reconsidering the meaning of polyphony. Tracing the term's musical origins to Palestrina, Dayan argues that no novel can be truly polyphonic, for the definition of polyphonic music implies not just a multiplicity but also an equality of voices. Indeed, as Dayan shows, Bakhtin drew a distinction between the polyphonic and the heterophonic novel, though the distinction between the terms has been largely lost as both Russian terms have been translated as 'polyphony'. For Bakhtin, only Dostoyevsky achieved true polyphony in that his novels included a plurality of equal voices; all other novels are simply heterophonic, in that they are composed of a multiplicity of different voices. Nonetheless, Dayan contends that an aspiration towards the equality inherent in polyphony – in its true Bakhtinian and musical sense – and a recognition that this is an unattainable ideal characterise Sand's great musical novel *Consuelo*. Anne Marcoline continues this examination of polyphony in *Consuelo*, arguing that music functions as a model of communication capable of engendering authentic relationships. Through a close analysis of the different narrative frames and levels of narrative embedding, Marcoline shows how *Consuelo* and the extradiegetic narrator are united as artists who both attempt to bridge the world of music and words. Véronique Bui shifts the discussion of music towards a more pastoral key through an exploration of the repeated references to frog-song in Sand's novels. Analysing this as more than a simple effect of local *berriçon* colour, Bui argues that frog song also functions as a call for greater social equality and draws attention to those within society whose voices are not heard. Finally in this section, Simone Bernard-Griffiths deploys the

musical metaphor of harmony to structure her examination of the multiple meanings attached to a Sandian poetics of the night. If night-time scenes can have an anthropological function in that they refer to legends of the Berry, Bernard-Griffiths shows that they are also significant moments of dialogue and communication, of encounter and confession.

Where Volume 1 examined Sand's interaction with a range of literary, philosophical and theatrical predecessors, notably from the eighteenth century, our third section in this volume – 'Échanges et Correspondances' – focuses on Sand's interactions with her contemporaries before opening onto a broader consideration of questions of exchange and correspondence in her fictional texts. Marie-Ève Thérénty offers original insights into Sand's network of personal and social relations in her analysis of a neglected document from June 1875, in which Sand proposed a list of dedicatees for a new edition of her complete works. The list of names, drawn from Sand's personal and intellectual spheres, serves to confirm the importance of interpersonal and social relationships in Sand's literary practice. However, Thérénty argues, these dedications also have a metadiscursive function, in that the particular political or literary resonances of some of the names can be seen as an attempt on the author's part to direct the interpretation of those novels to which they were to be applied. The following three essays explore the significance of exchanges within Sand's political and literary network. Máire Cross examines the complex relations between Sand and her female socialist contemporary, Flora Tristan, and focuses her analysis on the small number of Tristan's letters to Sand which have survived. Reading Sand's reactions to Tristan's solicitations between the lines of Tristan's own letters, Cross sheds new light on the personal and political dynamics of what she calls this 'conflicting but corresponding pair'. Michèle Hecquet's essay focuses on the four instances between 1832 and 1845 when Sand integrated texts addressed to Jules Néraud, her botanist friend and neighbour, into her fictional and critical writing. In an analysis which intersects with Thérénty's discussion of the function of the literary dedication for Sand, Hecquet argues that Néraud's name signals a shared debt to Rousseau, expressed in the privileging of natural spaces and a philosophical heritage emphasising equality. It is to Sand's theatrical relations that Shira Malkin turns in her essay, with particular reference to the Shakespearean actor

William Macready. She argues that it was Macready's interpretation of *Hamlet* that provided the impetus for Sand's own theorisation of the theatre, and that the key tenets of Sand's theatrical aesthetic were thus profoundly influenced by Macready.

The two concluding essays in this section shift the focus back to Sand's fiction. Thelma Jurgrau charts the evolution of the epistolary form in two novels from different periods of Sand's writing career – *Jacques* (1834) and *Mademoiselle la Quintinie* (1863) – and analyses the reasons for a shift from a private, intimate epistolary structure in the earlier novel to one which emphasises a network of social relationships in the later novel. Mary Rice-Defosse explores intercultural spaces or 'contact zones' where dominant and non-dominant cultures meet. Using the theories of Eugen Weber amongst others, Rice-Defosse examines Sand's depiction of this cultural clash, and shows how *Le Meunier d'Angibault* proposes an alternative model based on contact, exchange and community.

The essays in Section IV – 'Le Roman d'art' – are united by their focus on the visual arts in Sand's novels, a relatively unexplored aspect of her creative practice. Janine Gallant argues that Sand's integration of the visual arts into her fictions always goes beyond simple painterly allusions, and her analysis draws attention to the diverse ways in which citation of famous painters, the use of the portrait, and descriptive techniques redolent of portraiture function in the early novels. Nancy Rogers continues these reflections in relation to the 1872 novel *Nanon*, in which the eponymous female narrator claims at the end of the first part of her story that she will now raise the level of her language and *appréciations* to that of the middle class to which she now belongs. Rogers shows how increasing use of *ekphrasis* is an integral part of this heightened narrative sophistication. In her essay, Barbara Wright examines Sand's exchanges with the artist Fromentin, and the revisions she suggested to the conclusion of his novel *Dominique*, to show how a complex gender dynamic underpinned Sand's relations with this painter. In the concluding essay of the volume, Alexandra Wettlaufer examines Sand's representation of the figure of the female painter in three novels – *Valentine* (1832), *Elle et Lui* (1858) and *Le Château de Pictordu* (1872). Wettlaufer traces the shifting politics of art and gender in Sand's work, and offers a powerful demonstration of how the aesthetic,

the political and the personal intersect in the process of construction of the figure of the female artist, which is also the construction of Sand's own literary voice and persona.

The thematic axes around which these volumes have been organised offer new perspectives on the narrative textures of Sand's novelistic and theatrical production. The dialogues and exchanges which her work pursues with her predecessors and contemporaries reveal much about the textual networks which informs her writing, but also highlight the specificity of the intertextual practice of an author who did not hesitate to draw attention to those who had influenced her by means of explicit citation. While Sand's place within the canon of French literature is now secure, no-one working on her fiction can fail to be aware of the tenacity of certain prejudices, or of the way in which aesthetic preferences in nineteenth-century criticism which favour authors adopting anonymous or ironic enunciative positions, have marginalised her. The multiplicity of perspectives adopted by the essays in these two volumes reveals the Sandian text to be open, plural, musical, and, like the model proposed by Barthes, 'fait d'écritures multiples [...] qui entrent les unes avec les autres en dialogue.'²² Such a fundamental plurality is affirmed in *Les Lettres d'un voyageur*, Sand's autobiographical fiction which in many ways charts the development of her (masculine) literary voice. This work concludes not with the affirmation of the literary identity, 'je, George Sand', but with the revealing formula which stresses the connections between the author and an artistic community: 'George Sand et compagnie' (*OA II*, p. 942). Behind the singular, masculine voice of Sand's narratives, there is always a plurality of other perspectives which enter into dialogue one with the other, a network of connections, affiliations and exchanges, a musical orchestration of voices, a 'tissu' or mosaic of quotations and allusions. Arguably, it is what constitutes the specificity of a textual practice profoundly marked by what Sand herself termed 'un communisme de la pensée.'²³

22 Roland Barthes, 'La Mort de l'auteur', in *Œuvres complètes*, 3 vols (Paris: Seuil, 1994), II, pp. 491–95 (p. 495).

23 George Sand, 'A propos des Charmettes', in *George Sand critique*, pp. 623–56 (p. 634).