

Marroni, Francesco / D'Agnillo, Renzo / Verzella, Massimo (eds)

### Elizabeth Gaskell and the Art of the Short Story

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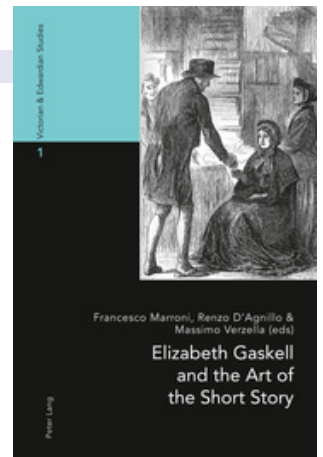
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Edited by Francesco Marroni

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### Book synopsis

This volume presents a collection of original and interconnected essays which aim to chart Elizabeth Gaskell's literary imagination by focusing on diverse aspects of her short stories. It includes the papers read at the conference on «Elizabeth Gaskell and the art of the short story», organized by the Centre for Victorian and Edwardian Studies (CUSVE, «G. d'Annunzio» University, Pescara, 2010), to celebrate the bicentenary of her birth. While offering fresh insights into Gaskell's shorter fiction, this collection provides an introduction to the many issues that absorbed her literary attention. Most importantly, by considering the growing significance of some neglected aspects of her works and the cultural and ideological context in which she lived, the contributions collectively delineate Gaskell's artistic tensions, ethical sensibility and social commitment in a rapidly changing world. In their overall critical design, the contributors intend to shed light on the complex web of dialogic suggestions underlying her fiction, while at the same time revealing the extraordinary and multifaceted inventiveness of one of the most important Victorian writers.

### Contents

Contents: Alan Shelston: Exploring the boundaries in Elizabeth Gaskell's shorter fiction – Ian Campbell: Chains of our own forging: Gaskell and a search for freedom – Massimo Verzella: Tracing the linguistic fingerprints of the Unitarian ethos: A corpus-based study of Elizabeth Gaskell's short stories – Mariaconcetta Costantini: Elizabeth Gaskell and the crime short story – Renzo D'Agnillo: Elizabeth Gaskell's «Disappearances»: Narratives of absence between mystery and empirical detection – Anna Enrichetta Soccio: In and out of the Victorian house: The representation of domestic spaces in Gaskell's «The Grey Woman» – Benedetta Bini: «The cat on her knee»: Gaskell's leave-taking – Marilena Saracino: Interpreting otherness: Elizabeth Gaskell and «The Crooked Branch» – Francesco Marroni: Narrating nineteenth-century dress codes: Elizabeth Gaskell and the desire for a turban – Valentina Polcini: Illustrating *Cranford*: George du Maurier and Hugh Thomson – Raffaella Antinucci: Filming Gaskell's shorter fiction – Allan C. Christensen: «Ruth...sick for home»: The Keatsian imagination in the novel of Elizabeth Gaskell – Michela Marroni: A quasi-Ruskinian tale: Elizabeth Gaskell's concern for objectivity – Eleonora Sasso: Morrisian hauntings in Gaskell's supernatural tales.

### About the author(s)/editor(s)

Francesco Marroni is Professor of English Literature at the «G. d'Annunzio» University of Chieti-Pescara. Besides being the Director of the Centre for Victorian and Edwardian Studies, he is Vice President of the Gaskell Society (Manchester).

Renzo D'Agnillo is Associate Professor of English Literature at the «G. d'Annunzio» University of Chieti-Pescara. His publications include *Bruce Chatwin: Settlers, Exiles and Nomads* (2000) and *The Poetry of Matthew Arnold* (2005).

Massimo Verzella is Contracted Lecturer of English Language and Literature at the «G. d'Annunzio» University of Chieti-Pescara. His publications include a monograph on Elizabeth Cary and Mary Wroth (2007) and *Samuel Butler: disegni narrativi e figure del paradosso* (2009).

### Reviews

«This collection is strong because its goal is to view an author from an original, innovative and dialogical perspective that is different from the perspective handed down in traditional criticism - and not merely for the simple sake of seeking originality. I do believe this volume achieves this, not only because it self-consciously looks at modern interpretive methods (corpus-based word studies, detective fiction techniques and television interpretations) but more importantly because it considers the short story genre rather than the more commonly interpreted novels,

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offering a new perspective that incorporates Gaskell's response to the issues of her time through her journalistic and serial writings.» (Carolyn Van Der Meer, *Brontë Studies*)

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Moosstrasse 1 - POB 350  
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