

## Editorial

The focus of volume 8, issues 1 and 2, is on articles developed from papers presented at the First World Congress of Scottish Literatures held at Glasgow University in July 2014. This gathering of hundreds of scholars from all over the world, presenting papers on all genres of Scottish literature from all periods of history, marked the extent to which study of Scottish literature has become an international interest. Papers were presented by speakers from many countries and every continent. *IJOSTS* agreed with the organising committee that it would offer volume 8 as a platform for the development of selected papers on drama and theatre from the conference. Issue 8.1 includes contributions by Ian Brown, Barbara Bell and Thomas Crochunis which are concerned with eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Scottish theatre.

Ian Brown's article, 'Eighteenth-Century Scottish Drama and the Contestation of National Identities', explores varieties of ways in which in the eighteenth century, a period he has demonstrated in other recent work to have been particularly lively in Scottish theatre, drama explored profound questions of national identities in the period following the Treaty of Union and the conflicts of Jacobites and Hanoverians in the first half of the century. His article presents evidence for Scottish drama having been a key area of contestation of the nature of both surviving and emerging versions of Scottish identities and, indeed, constructions of 'Scotland' during that century.

Barbara Bell's article, 'The Scottish theatrical landscape leading into the emergence of the National Drama', carries forward her record of fascinating research into the roots and nature of the National Drama. In this article, she offers careful investigation of repertoire and text to open new perspectives on the nature of Scottish theatre programming at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Her profound historical knowledge enriches our understanding of the ways in which the theatre of the period she addresses explored varieties of drama and versions of Scottish history on stage – and the nature of the Scottish stage itself – as it moved into the nineteenth century.

In his article, 'Leading Lady of the Patent House: Harriet Siddons in Edinburgh', Thomas Crochunis offers fresh perspectives on the career of Harriet Siddons. He shines new light on the importance of her role in the developing Edinburgh theatre culture of the early nineteenth century and her relations with key players in the theatre scene of her time, including, of course, her relationship with W H Murray as they worked together in Edinburgh's Theatre Royal. As Crochunis concludes at the end of his article, 'Choosing to see Harriet as comparable in her influence on the theatre to these noteworthy men requires us to reformulate both what kinds of historical influence we value and what procedures of investigation we engage in when reconstructing elusive, affective forms of power'. His discussion of her role in the negotiations, debates and management decisions of the time make clear just how influential she was.

This issue's forum article complements the historical bent of the peer-reviewed articles. Alan Riach reviews two substantial works on the history and nature of Scottish theatre, Ian Brown's *Scottish Theatre: Diversity, Language, Continuity* and Trish Reid's *Theatre & Scotland*. Riach offers candid insight into the qualities of both these books, each of which in its different ways demands a reconsideration of the myths that somehow Scotland was not historically a theatrical nation and that for centuries after the Reformation drama and theatre were somehow suppressed in Scotland. The picture Riach sees demonstrated in these two studies suggests a different and far more vibrant scene than myths of theatrical suppression recognise.