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Timothy Morton

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This book brings together the themes of diet, consumption, the body and human relationships with the natural world, in a highly original study of Shelley. A campaigning vegetarian and proto-ecological thinker, Shelley may seem to us curiously modern, but Morton offers an illuminatingly broad context for his views in eighteenth-century social and political thought concerning nature, culture and society. The book is at once grounded in the revolutionary history of the period 1790–1820, and informed by current theoretical issues, and anthropological and sociological approaches to literature. Morton provides challenging new readings of much-debated poems, plays and novels by both Percy and Mary Shelley, as well as the first sustained interpretation of Shelley's prose on diet. With its stimulating literary–historical reassessment of questions about nature and culture, this study will provoke fresh discussion about Shelley, Romanticism and modernity.

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# SHELLEY AND THE REVOLUTION IN TASTE

*The Body and the Natural World*

TIMOTHY MORTON

*Department of English, New York University*



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A sense of the body's place in the natural world can provide ...  
a social ecology and an alternative rationality that articulate a  
cultural and moral challenge to the exploitation and domination  
of 'the nature within us and without us'.

Paul Gilroy, 'Urban Social Movements, "Race" and  
Community' in P. Williams and L. Chrisman, eds.,  
*Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: a Reader*, 407.

The image of the tiger reveals the truth of eating.

Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, 38

Break that deer; ... rear that goose; lift that swan; sauce that  
chicken; unbrace that mallard; unlace that cony; dismember  
that heron; display that crane; disfigure that peacock; unjoint  
that bittern ...

Rabisha, *The Whole Body of Cookery Dissected*, 241

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This book is dedicated to my parents, Garth and Jasmine, and to Dominique Calapai, without whom it would never have been written.

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|            |                                                                                                                              |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [ ]        | denotes my insertion within a quotation                                                                                      |
| < >        | deletion within a quotation                                                                                                  |
| A6r        | page A6 recto                                                                                                                |
| A6v        | page A6 verso                                                                                                                |
| <i>DNB</i> | <i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>                                                                                      |
| <i>J</i>   | the 'Julian' edition of Shelley's works (see bibliography)                                                                   |
| <i>L</i>   | Shelley's letters (see bibliography)                                                                                         |
| <i>V</i>   | Shelley, Percy Bysshe, <i>A Vindication of Natural Diet</i> (London: printed for J. Callow, 1813); the <i>Julian</i> version |
| 'VSys'     | Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 'Essay on the Vegetable System of Diet' (1814–1815)                                                   |

## A note on the text

Notes are given for published works (author, short title and page number). Full titles and other publication data are listed in the bibliography. Short-titles are employed in the text. Bracketed numbers in the main body of the text refer to poetry quotation line numbers. After a displayed poetry quotation, the number of the first line is recorded. Data referring to the publication of Shelley's poems in his lifetime is given in the notes.