



DUNCAN WU

ROMANTICISM

AN ANTHOLOGY

FIFTH EDITION

WILEY Blackwell

Romanticism

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AN ANTHOLOGY

Fifth Edition

EDITED BY DUNCAN WU

WILEY Blackwell

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Introduction

I perceive that in Germany as well as in Italy there is a great struggle about what they call Classical and Romantic, terms which were not subjects of Classification in England – at least when I left it four or five years ago.

(Byron, in the rejected Dedication to *Marino Faliero*, 14 August 1820)

When *Lyrical Ballads* first appeared in 1798 the word ‘Romantic’ was no compliment. It meant ‘fanciful’, ‘light’, even ‘inconsequential’. Wordsworth and Coleridge would have resisted its application; twenty years later, the new generation of writers would recognize it as the counter in a debate conducted by European intellectuals, barely relevant to what they were doing. Perhaps that is the nature of academic discourse: even when conducted by practitioners, it may not bear greatly on the creative process, which has its own customs and rules which vary between writers.

Originally a descriptive term, ‘Romance’ used to refer to the verse epics of Tasso and Ariosto. Eighteenth-century critics like Thomas Warton used it in relation to fiction, often European, and in that context Novalis applied it to German literature. The idea didn’t take flight until August Wilhelm Schlegel used it in a lecture course at Berlin, 1801–4, when he made the distinction mentioned by Byron. Romantic literature, he argued, appeared in the Middle Ages with the work of Dante, Petrarchis and Boccaccio; in reaction to Classicism it was identified with progressive and Christian views. In another course of lectures in Vienna, 1808–9, he went further: Romanticism was ‘organic’ and ‘plastic’, as against the ‘mechanical’ tendencies of Classicism. By 1821, when Byron dedicated *Marino Faliero* to Goethe, the debate was in full flood: Schlegel’s ideas had been picked up and extrapolated by Madame de Staël, and in 1818 Stendhal became the first Frenchman to claim himself *un romantique* – for Shakespeare and against Racine; for Byron and against Boileau. Within a year Spanish and Portuguese critics too were wading in.

Having originated in disagreement, and largely in the academe, the concept has remained fluid ever since, and though many definitions are suggested, none commands universal agreement. In that respect Romanticism is distinct from movements formed by artists, which tend to be more coherent in their ambitions, at least to begin with. When the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood turned themselves into a school, they wanted to challenge received notions about pictorial representation; the Imagists published a manifesto of sorts in *Blast* that presented an agreed line of attack. The British Romantic poets could not have done this. Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats never all met in the same room and, had they done so, would have quarrelled.

One factor was the generation gap. Byron, Shelley and Keats might have enjoyed the company of Wordsworth as he was in his later twenties and early thirties, but by the time they reached artistic maturity – c.1816 for Shelley and Byron, 1819 for Keats – he was well into middle age, had accepted the job of Distributor of Stamps for Westmorland, and appeared to have forsaken the religious and political views of his youth. His support for the Tory Lord Lonsdale in the 1818 general election confirmed his association with a brand of conservatism

they loathed. So far as they were concerned, he had betrayed the promise of ‘Tintern Abbey’ for a sinecure. All this makes it doubly unfortunate they could not read ‘The Prelude’, unpublished until 1850, by which time they were dead. Had they done so, they would have seen him differently.

Byron caught up with the critical debate surrounding Romanticism in 1821, but Coleridge beat him to it by a year. In 1820 the sage of Highgate compiled a list of ‘Romantic’ writers in which the only English poets of the day were Southey, Scott and Byron. Byron would have disliked being placed in the same class as Southey, whom he hated. But this only goes to show how resistant the concept is to codification – or at least to a form of codification that makes any sense. Perhaps the best advice one can offer is to be suspicious of anyone who claims to have the answer.

Romanticism: Culture and Society

The Romantic period has an immediacy earlier ones tend to lack. This is because so many of our values and preoccupations derive from it. It coincides with the moment at which Britain became an industrial economy. Factories sprang up in towns and cities across the country, and the agrarian lives people had known for centuries stopped being taken for granted. Instead, labourers moved from the country into large conurbations, working long hours in close proximity to each other. This had a number of consequences, not least that they began to fight for their ‘rights’. Today we take our rights for granted, forgetting the intellectual journey working people had to make merely to understand they had such things. For many, something very similar to the feudal system of medieval times continued to dictate their place in society – though things were changing.

The process by which people were awakened to a sense of self-determination was global. It began with the American Revolution and continued with that in France. And the impact of those upheavals cannot be overstated. Whole populations began to question the legitimacy of hereditary monarchs whose right to rule had once been accepted without question. It was not surprising that struggles elsewhere to do away with monarchical government affected the British; in fact, the real surprise is their refusal to take the same step – a testament to the determination with which their government stifled unrest. By the summer of 1817, it had in place a sophisticated network of spies practised in thwarting popular uprisings in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. A favoured technique was for *agents provocateurs* to incite revolutionary activity, and for the government to execute supporters.

Revolution in America and France generated conflict because of the effect on international trade. By the time Wordsworth was in his mid-twenties, Britain was embroiled in nothing less than world war which, unlike those in the twentieth century, would last not for years but decades. From 1793 to 1802, and then from 1803 until 1815, Britain grappled with France across the globe, often fighting single-handedly against a well-equipped and resourceful enemy who, for much of that time, had the advantage. On an island-bound people like the British, the constant threat of invasion over more than two decades had a powerful effect. Whatever one’s sympathies with the ideals of the American and French Revolutions, it became difficult to express anything but support for the national cause. Patriotic feeling in its most jingoistic form ran high, something vividly indicated by the caricatures of James Gillray.

Then as now, the cost of war was exorbitant and, in order to pay its debts, the post-war government of Lord Liverpool had to levy higher taxes. On 14 June 1815, additional expenditure arising from Napoleon’s escape from Elba and its consequences led Nicholas Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to raise £79 million through tax revenues. On 18 March 1816, the government decided to repeal income tax altogether, causing the burden disproportionately to fall upon the poor, in the form of duties on tobacco, beer, sugar and tea. This generated intense hardship at a time when jobs were scarce and pay low.

International conflict, the threat of invasion by Napoleon, social and political discontent – the writers in this book lived with these things, and were shaped by them. To that extent, it is appropriate to consider them as war poets, surrounded by upheaval and conflict, and passionately engaged with it. That engagement was made possible by another important development: the rise of the media.

This period was the first in history in which the population could keep abreast of political developments through newsprint. Historians have long acknowledged that the French press played an important part in the Revolution, enjoying unprecedented freedom between the fall of the Bastille in July 1789 and that of the monarchy in August 1792. It was not for nothing that J. L. Carra and Antoine-Joseph Gorsas, both journalists, were among those guillotined by Robespierre. The inventions of the steam-press (by which *The Times* was produced from 1814 onwards) and the paper-making machine (in 1803) meant it was easier than ever to produce newspapers on an industrial scale. And from around 1810 the mail-coach, which travelled at the hitherto unimaginable speed of 12 miles an hour, enabled publishers to distribute on a nationwide scale. For the first time, it was possible for Coleridge in Keswick to receive the papers the day after publication before sending them on to Wordsworth in Grasmere; there is no sense in which those living in the provinces were cut off from world affairs.

Nor was it only poets in the Lake District who kept up with the news: bulletins were now available to the poor and illiterate. Cobbett sold his *Political Register* at a price that made it accessible to the labouring folk he addressed – twopence, which led Tory critics to christen it ‘twopenny trash’. Groups of men would club together and buy a single copy, which would be read aloud.

The new-found influence of the press was hard to control, but the government did its utmost to suppress unfavourable comment: Peter Finnerty was imprisoned in October 1797 for his report of the trial and execution of William Orr, which criticized Lord Castlereagh; Cobbett was imprisoned in June 1810 for having condemned the flogging of five English militiamen by German mercenaries; in 1813 John and Leigh Hunt were imprisoned for ridiculing the debauched lifestyle of the Prince Regent in *The Examiner*. All received sentences of two years. There were calls for stiffer penalties such as transportation, not least from such erstwhile revolutionaries as Robert Southey, now a contributor to the Tory *Quarterly Review*. In an article published in February 1817, less than a month prior to the suspension of habeas corpus, he asked:

Why is it that this convicted incendiary [Cobbett], and others of the same stamp, are permitted week after week to sow the seeds of rebellion, insulting the government, and defying the laws of the country? [...] Men of this description, like other criminals, derive no lessons from experience. But it behoves the Government to do so, and curb sedition in time; lest it should be called upon to crush rebellion and to punish treason.

Not content with pleading that liberal journalists be arrested while suspension of habeas corpus allowed it, Southey took it upon himself to write a private memorandum to the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, telling him that laws, however repressive, are ‘altogether nugatory while such manifestoes as those of Cobbett, Hone, and the *Examiner*, &c., are daily and weekly issued, fresh and fresh, and read aloud in every alehouse where the men are quartered, or where they meet together’. This was supported by a typically convoluted letter by that other distinguished former revolutionary, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who expressed his ‘support of those principles [...] of the measures and means, which have at length secured the gratitude and reverence of the wise and good to your Lordship and your Lordship’s fellow-combatants in the long-agonizing contest’ – by which he meant the government’s suppression of dissident opinion. This was not Coleridge at his best, in terms of either sentiment or eloquence, and Liverpool confessed that, despite the distinction of his correspondent, ‘I cannot well understand him.’ The Prime Minister felt less threatened by the liberal press than did his correspondents, for he declined to take the steps they urged. Cobbett, however, took no risks: believing suspension of habeas corpus in March 1817 would curtail his freedom, and not relishing the prospect of another prison term, he fled to America where he remained for the next two years.

Time and again, newspaper and journal reports were the means by which authors in this volume learnt of developments at home and abroad: it was how Wordsworth kept up with events in France when he returned from Paris in late 1792, and how Shelley heard of the Peterloo Massacre in 1819. Not only that; they published in newspapers – including Wordsworth and Coleridge in *The Morning Post*, Shelley and Keats in *The Examiner*. Coleridge was invited to write for the *Morning Chronicle* in early July 1796, and possibly to edit it. In June 1794, avowing his disapproval ‘of monarchical and aristocratical governments’, Wordsworth proposed to his friend William Mathews that they co-edit a journal addressed to ‘the dispassionate advocates of liberty and discussion’. Not only were these writers shaped by their historical moment – they sought to shape it.

The most obvious evidence of the media's effect on the populace was the new-found appetite for scandal. As is the case today, the press was excited by stories in which sex and politics were intertwined. Mary Anne Clarke hit the headlines in early 1809 when it was revealed she had been paid by army officers to commend them for promotion to her lover – Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, second son of George III, and the army's commander-in-chief. The matter was raised in the Commons and referred to a Select Committee, which found the Duke culpable, precipitating his resignation (though he was reappointed in 1811). Eight years later Hazlitt could have referred in passing to 'the droll affair of Mrs Clarke', confident his readers would remember how much entertainment it had given them.

Another symptom was the cult of celebrity, the first and biggest beneficiary being one of the authors in this volume – Byron. He was colourful enough not to have required the assistance of gossip-columnists, but he had it anyway, and during his years in London, 1812–16, day-to-day reports of his affairs and adventures filled their pages. It is hard to imagine any poet generating such speculation today, or crowds of people following him (or her) through the streets – but that was the case with Byron. The world, as Samuel Rogers observed, went 'stark mad' about him. He found fame both intoxicating and tiresome. And not surprisingly: he was sufficiently indiscreet about his incestuous passion for his half-sister for London to have been ablaze with it in the weeks prior to his exile from Britain. When he died, helping Greece in its fight for independence, scenes of mass hysteria greeted his coffin as it journeyed from London to Nottinghamshire, the like of which had not previously been seen.

The new mass society even had its own entertainment industry – which, more than the media, gripped the imaginations of the writers in this book. Another century would pass before radio would enable performers to address the nation, but in the meantime, the two licensed theatres in London – Drury Lane and Covent Garden – were capable of accommodating audiences of over 3,000, more than three times the size of the Olivier Theatre in London's National Theatre today. Every night of the working week these venues drew capacity crowds from across the social spectrum, who quickly learnt how to exercise a collective influence: when the management attempted to increase admission prices in September 1809, they orchestrated sixty-seven nights of riots, making performance impossible – a state of affairs that ended only by negotiation with the management. It is hard to imagine such a thing happening today.

Should there be any doubt as to the importance of theatre to the Romantics, it is worth recalling that one of the distinctions of which Byron was most proud was his seat on the management committee of Drury Lane Theatre. Along with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Hazlitt and Lamb, he was an enthusiastic playgoer. Hazlitt collected his theatre reviews into the greatest theatre book of the time – *A View of the English Stage* (1818), while Coleridge, Shelley, Wordsworth, Keats and Byron all wrote plays of their own.

Romantic Poets

There were reasons for being cynical about the affairs of the world during the Romantic period. The everyday squalor of the lives of working people made it impossible to believe they could revolt against the conservative interests that kept them in their place. To Burke, they were 'a swinish multitude', while for Shelley, who believed in change, the Dublin poor were 'one mass of animated filth'. Extreme poverty and lack of education meant that social and political justice were decades in the future, with no attempt at political reform until 1832 (after the deaths of Blake, Keats, Shelley and Byron). In the meantime there were obstacles aplenty, one being the instability of the monarchy. George III, to whom the British looked for leadership, was subject (1788 onwards) to periodic fits of insanity, and was declared totally mad in 1811. This was more serious than it would be today, when the monarch is little more than a figurehead; in those days he had the power to dissolve Parliament, appoint and dismiss governments and declare wars. Without his full involvement, laws could not be passed. When he suffered relapses, his administration was effectively suspended, arousing the power-hungry tendencies of his son, the Prince of Wales.

Perhaps we have seen too much in our lifetimes to feel much hope. If so, that is where we differ from the Romantics, whose capacity for belief defines them. They were 'optimists for human nature'. Some were activists, seeking to foment revolution where they could – Shelley during his stay in Ireland, or Byron, willing

to die in the cause of Greek independence; others, though not activists, sided with revolution at times when to do so placed them at considerable risk – Wordsworth, who lived in France, 1791–2, adopted many of the ideas and convictions of Robespierre.

They were products of their time in believing in a more just world than that in which they lived, and even more so for believing that poetry had the potential to accomplish revolutionary aims. The most obvious example is Wordsworth’s ‘The Recluse’, the poem designed to persuade readers that love of nature leads to love of mankind. Yet such views as this made Wordsworth and Coleridge prime targets of interest to the surveillance services. Spies monitored their movements and discussions from 1797 to 1798.

Even after the Napoleonic Wars, the government did not relax its grip: the Ely and Littleport bread-riots of 1816 resulted in the execution of five ringleaders, who were no threat to anyone; 600 starving weavers set out from Manchester in March 1817 to petition for help for the ailing cotton trade, but were rounded up by government forces as they crossed from Staffordshire into Derbyshire; and in August 1819, in the worst example (the Peterloo Massacre), armed militiamen cut down hundreds of men, women and children demonstrating peacefully at St Peter’s Fields, Manchester – a measure that won the endorsement of the Prince Regent and his government.

In spite of this, the writers in this book refused to succumb to despair, preferring to believe in a better, fairer world. It is not just their capacity for optimism that distinguishes them, but the kind of belief to which they clung. Where earlier generations looked to an afterlife, the Romantics tended to reject formalized religion. This was partly because the Church of England then wielded a degree of political power it no longer possesses, and was complicit in the injustice the writers opposed. Typical of this is the reference by Blake’s chimney sweeper to ‘God and his Priest and King / Who make up a heaven of our misery’. Instead, they thought they could create, through their writing, a promised land in which property was of no consequence and people would live in harmony. It lay neither in the distant future nor in the abstract; it was attainable in the here and now. Wordsworth’s ‘Tintern Abbey’ speaks of how his engagement with nature was the direct path to a transcendent, almost godlike, apprehension of the world, when he refers to

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts, a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man –
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

(‘Tintern Abbey’ 95–103)

The feeling he has while standing on the banks of the Wye is in itself divine, generated by a ‘presence’ that will redeem humanity from the post-lapsarian ‘weariness’ encountered earlier in the poem. Wordsworth is famous for having said he had no need of a redeemer; when he wrote ‘Tintern Abbey’, he had little need of God, at least in the generally accepted sense. For him, mankind is redeemed through self-realization – something that explains the appeal of ‘Tintern Abbey’ to Shelley and Keats. What excited them was its faith – not in formalized religion, but in the redemptive potential of the mind. It can be traced to ‘The Eolian Harp’ (1795), in which Coleridge had asked himself whether all living things might be

organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o’er them sweeps,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each, and God of all?

(ll. 37–40)

The answer Coleridge receives from his wife-to-be is (in effect) ‘no’, reflecting his awareness of the radical nature of what he asks. As a Unitarian he could not accept many aspects of the Anglican faith, yet Coleridge

was emphatically Christian in his poetry, more so than Wordsworth. The conceit that human beings were instruments waiting to be struck by the divine spirit within the universe is precisely such a notion, valuable for affirming our susceptibility *en masse* to God's will. This was what revolution meant to Coleridge: he reconceived it as a religious event on a universal scale, by which God's 'intellectual' (spiritual) influence would redeem fallen humanity.

Some critics have accused Wordsworth of suppressing his knowledge of the hardships of working people in his poetry, particularly 'Tintern Abbey'. This is not the occasion for a refutation but it is worth saying that Wordsworth thought his work engaged fully with life as it was lived; indeed, it was on those grounds he was attacked by reviewers. He considered his millenarian aspirations had to be grounded in an awareness of suffering – the 'still, sad music of humanity'. When Keats raved about Wordsworth in May 1818, it was to commend his ability to sharpen 'one's vision into the heart and nature of man, of convincing one's nerves that the world is full of misery and heartbreak, pain, sickness, and oppression'. And he was right. In that respect, Wordsworth was a crucial influence on how Keats conceived 'Hyperion: A Fragment' – a poem about the aspirations that spring out of dispossession.

Byron shared the radical aspirations expressed by Wordsworth and Coleridge in their youth, but rejected their philosophizing. For him, the word 'metaphysical' was an insult. He was more practical, something underlined by his readiness to die in the Greek War of Independence (for which he remains a national hero in Greece, with streets and squares named after him). Yet even he is capable of expressing, in 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' Canto III, something of Wordsworth's pantheist conviction in the redemptive power of nature:

I live not in myself, but I become
 Portion of that around me; and to me
 High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
 Of human cities torture....

(ll. 680–3)

Byron remained true to himself in that he knew the Wordsworthian response to nature affirmed something he took seriously – inner potential. Frustration with the restrictions of our earthly state permeates his poetry, compelling him to aspire to a level of existence beyond the merely human. Hence his ambiguous praise for that arch-overreacher Napoleon. As Wordsworth put it, 'We feel that we are greater than we know.'

In 'Don Juan', Byron's greatest achievement in verse, his setting is not the natural world favoured by Shelley and Wordsworth, nor the arena of philosophical disquisition to be found in Coleridge's 'Religious Musings'; it is the 'real' world of human affairs, masked balls, the perils of travel, and the passions of men and women. For Byron, the seclusion sought by Wordsworth was little more than a posture, one he was unwilling to assume for the few minutes it took him to write the relevant parts of 'Childe Harold' III. He is more at home when analyzing the random and the everyday in all their meaningless variety, or when studying human behaviour, marvelling at the follies and foibles of his characters, and addressing his reader in disarmingly familiar style, as if he were speaking to us from an armchair, a glass of claret in his lordly grasp. The life assumed by the poem seems to have surprised even him. 'Confess, you dog', he wrote to his friend Douglas Kinnaird, 'It may be profligate, but is it not *life*, is it not *the thing*? Could any man have written it who has not lived in the world? – and tooled in a post-chaise? In a hackney coach? In a gondola? Against a wall? In a court carriage? In a vis-à-vis? On a table – and under it?'

Blake is sometimes considered the exception to virtually anything one might want to say about these writers – and, in a sense, he is. He was born in 1757 – and is as much an eighteenth-century writer as a Romantic one. If, like his contemporaries, he read Wordsworth, it was late in life, and without much pleasure. However, it was he who, in 1789, on the brink of tumult in France, described the 'son of fire':

Spurning the clouds written with curses, stamps the stony law to dust, loosing the eternal horses from
 the dens of night, crying, 'Empire is no more! And now the lion and wolf shall cease.'

Revolution as apocalypse: to Blake, events in France were harbingers not merely of political liberation, but of the spiritual millennium predicted in the Bible. And in this he was no less Romantic than the writers who were to follow. For him, as for them, the fallen world was a conundrum the resolution to which led back to

paradise. He would spend much of his creative life explaining to the world, in his own distinctive manner, how paradise had been lost, and how it might be reclaimed. And never without grief at the 'Marks of weakness' and 'marks of woe' on the faces of those around him.

In that way he was, of course, as compelled by the privations of working people as other writers in this book – not least, perhaps, because he lived among them. He was as sensitive as they to the unfairnesses that dominated workers' lives. We know he was disturbed by scenes of anarchy and near revolution at the Gordon Riots in 1780, but there's no evidence he disagreed with the crowd's desire to even things up a little with the wealthy and privileged whose property they destroyed. In fact, his use of the image of fire to illustrate pictures of Revolution recalls the Riots.

Blake was too individualistic to simply 'subscribe' to others' thoughts or work – and from that perspective it's difficult to enlist him to a group of writers like the Romantics, diverse though they may be. But he certainly has much in common with them, sufficiently so as to warrant our regarding him as one of them rather than one of the eighteenth-century writers who preceded them.

Editor's Note on the Fifth Edition

This is the fifth edition of *Romanticism: An Anthology* since its first publication in 1994, exactly three decades ago. The principle goal in revising has been to reduce the size of the book and the burden of carrying it round a university campus.

After running through the various possibilities, I have chosen to include only the six canonical authors: Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Byron and Shelley. This decision was taken in the light of an assurance to make the fourth edition of the anthology available to readers online.

Texts are edited for this volume from both manuscript and early printed sources. Typically, readers are not restricted to highlights but have access to complete works, with all their fluctuations of tone, mood and rhythm. No attempt has been made to encompass the rich and extensive corpus of Romantic novel-writing. I have worked on the assumption that teachers will adopt separate volumes for novels they wish to include in their courses. Texts by European writers are not included either, on the grounds that Romanticism on the Continent is a world to itself, deserving more space than I have.

It is my hope that those using the fifth edition of *Romanticism: An Anthology* will find it helpful, and regard themselves as free to inform me of ways in which it may be further improved. The shaping of this book has been a gradual process that has continued at irregular intervals since 1994, and the advice of readers continues to be of paramount importance in determining how it should continue.

Editorial Principles

This edition adopts the policy advocated by Coleridge on New Year's Day 1834, widely accepted as the basis for contemporary scholarly editions: 'After all you can say, I think the chronological order is the best for arranging a poet's works. All your divisions are in particular instances inadequate, and they destroy the interest which arises from watching the progress, maturity, and even the decay of genius.' Authors are introduced successively by their dates of birth; works are placed in order of composition where known and, when not known, by date of publication.

The edition is designed for the use of students and general readers, and textual procedures are geared accordingly. Except for works in dialect or in which archaic effects were deliberately sought, punctuation and orthography are normalized, pervasive initial capitals and italics removed, and contractions expanded except where they are of metrical significance (for instance, Keats's 'charact'ry' is demanded by the exigencies of metre, but 'thro" is expanded to 'through'). Although the accidental features of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century printed texts have their own intrinsic interest and are of importance in considering the evolution of any given work, it should be noted that most poets were content to leave such matters to the printers or their collaborators. In many cases, therefore, accidental features of early printed texts cannot be assumed to be disposed according to the author's wishes. Conversely, I have taken the view that, on those occasions when capitalization is demonstrably authorial, and consistently applied, it should be allowed to stand – as in the case of Shelley's 'Adonais' and 'The Mask of Anarchy'. The punctuation applied by writers to their own works is another matter, as styles vary from one person to another, are sometimes eccentric and can mislead the modern reader. I have treated authorial punctuation as a good (though not infallible) guide as to emphasis, meaning and sentence structure, but have not followed it without question.

For this fifth edition I have checked and double-checked many editorial decisions I once took for granted. All texts have been edited for this anthology. I have followed procedures designed to produce a clear reading text. In editing from manuscript, I have aimed to present each draft as it stood on completion. Deletions are accepted only when alternative readings are provided; where they are not, the original is retained. Alternative readings are accepted only when the original has been deleted; where they are not, the original is retained. Where the original reading is deleted but legible, and the alternative fragmentary, illegible or inchoate, the original has been retained. Where, in the rush of composition, words are omitted, they have been supplied from adjacent drafts or manuscripts, or in some cases presented as hiatuses in the text, using square brackets. As a rule, I have silently corrected scribal errors. Ampersands are expanded to 'and' throughout.

Headnotes are provided for each author. Annotations gloss archaisms, difficult constructions, allusions, echoes, other verbal borrowings, provide points of information.

Acknowledgements

First Edition (1994)

Work on this volume began with consultation of numerous colleagues, who kindly offered advice on the anthology they wished to use. For that and help of various kinds it is a pleasure to thank Jonathan Bate, Shahin Bekhradnia, J. Drummond Bone, Geoffrey Brackett, Richard W. Clancey, David Fairer, Richard Grivil, Jack Haeger, Keith Hanley, Anthony Harding, Brooke Hopkins, M. C. Howatson, Kenneth Johnston, Grevel Lindop, Jerome J. McGann, Philip Martin, Michael O'Neill, Roy Park, Janice Patten, Tom Paulin, Cecilia Powell, Roger Robinson, Nicholas Roe, the late William Ruddick, Charles Rzepka, William S. Smith, Jane Stabler, David Stewart, Tim Trengove-Jones, J. R. Watson, Mary Wedd, Pamela Woof and Jonathan Wordsworth. I wish also to thank the advisers consulted by Blackwell for comments and advice.

This anthology is more dependent than most on original research for its texts, and in the course of editing I have incurred debts of many kinds to various librarians and archivists whom it is a pleasure to thank here: B. C. Barker-Benfield and the staff of the Upper Reading Room, Bodleian Library, Oxford; Elaine Scoble of the Wolfson Library, St Catherine's College, Oxford; the staff of the English Faculty Library, Oxford; Deborah Hedgecock of the Guildhall Library, London; and Jeff Cowton of the Wordsworth Library, Grasmere. It was my good fortune to have been a Fellow of St Catherine's College, Oxford, during work on this book, and among friends and colleagues there I acknowledge the generous help of Richard Parish, J. Ch. Simopoulos and J. B. McLaughlin. Nicola Trott was my collaborator at an early stage of work, and played a crucial part in formulating its aims and procedures, and in seeking advice from colleagues. My work has been expedited by the rapid and accurate typing of Pat Wallace; James Price of Woodstock Books kindly provided me with early printed texts of a number of works included; and Andrew McNeillie, my editor, offered enthusiastic help and advice through-out. This book was produced during tenure of a British Academy post-doctoral Fellowship; I am deeply grateful to the Academy for its kind support.

Second Edition (1998)

Since this anthology was first published, I have received suggestions for revision from many people; I thank them all. I owe a particular debt to those students with whom I have used it as a course text, and who have helped determine the various ways in which revision might be implemented.

For expert advice and information I thank Douglas Gifford, Bonnie Woodbery, Nicholas Roe, Jane Stabler, Edwin Moïse, Nelson Hilton, Suzanne Gilbert, Bob Cummings, Richard W. Clancey, David Pirie, Roger Robinson, R. E. Cavaliero, Zachary Leader, David Fairer, David Birkett, Peter Cochran, Richard Cronin, Charles Branchini, Susan Castillo, E. A. Moignard, Michael O'Neill, Jonathan Wordsworth and Constance Parrish.

In researching new texts for this anthology, I am grateful once again to Jeff Cowton of the Wordsworth Library, Grasmere, and the staff of the Upper Reading Room, Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the British

Library, London. I am particularly indebted to my proof-reader, Henry Maas, and Alison Truefitt, my copy-editor, for the care they have taken over a challenging typescript. Once again, Andrew McNeillie has proved a patient and supportive editor.

Third Edition (2004)

I thank all those who have suggested ways in which *Romanticism: An Anthology* might be revised. The NASSR-List continues to be an invaluable means of communicating with fellow Romanticists, and I am grateful to its subscribers for sending me information on their respective courses, in particular Kevin Binfield, Dan White, Brad Sullivan, Sara Guyer, SueAnn Schatz, Richard Matlak, Charles Snodgrass, Mary Waters, David Latane, Ann R. Hawkins and Patricia Matthew. I wish also to thank the many university professors who responded to the survey conducted by Blackwell Publishers into how this book might be revised. For specific help I thank Jane Stabler, Nicholas Roe, Susan J. Wolfson, Leslie Brisman, Nanora L. Sweet, Lucy Newlyn, Simon Kövesi, Jacqueline M. Labbe, Judith Pascoe, Ronald Tetreault, Hans Werner Breunig, Essaka Joshua, Grant Scott, Monika Class and Kim Wheatley. It has not been possible to adopt all suggestions, but the wealth of information and advice provided by all parties has been the most important single influence on the shape of this new edition.

At Blackwell Publishers I wish for the last time to thank Andrew McNeillie, who commissioned the first edition of this anthology over a decade ago, and who was responsible for commissioning this one. I am indebted to his successors, Al Bertrand and Emma Bennett, for the care they have taken in guiding this edition to the press, and to copy-editor Sandra Raphael and proof-reader Henry Maas, who have saved me from infelicities too numerous to mention.

Fourth Edition (2011)

Preparation of this edition began with a survey of those who use, and do not use, this textbook. I wish to thank those who responded. Their comments have been at hand throughout work, and have been given careful consideration.

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Fifth Edition (2024)

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Georgetown University

Sources

The Bodleian Library, Oxford, for material from MS texts of Percy Bysshe Shelley.
 The British Library for material from MS texts of the letters of William Blake.
 The British Library, for material from MS texts of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The Corporation of the City of London for the Collections at Keats House, Hampstead, for John Keats's holograph texts, 'On Sitting Down to Read *King Lear* Once Again' and 'Bright Star, Would I Were Steadfast as Thou Art'.

The Morgan Library, New York, Victoria College Library, Toronto, the British Library and the Wordsworth Museum, Grasmere, for MS texts of the letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The Morgan Library, New York, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Houghton Library, Harvard, and the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, for material from the MS of the letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

The Houghton Library, Harvard University, for manuscript material by Mary Shelley, MS Eng 822, 2r–2v, and Percy Bysshe Shelley, MS Eng 258.3, 2r–3r.

The Houghton Library, Harvard University, and The Corporation of the City of London collections at Keats House, Hampstead, for material from MS texts of the letters of John Keats.

The Houghton Library, Harvard University, for material from the manuscripts of John Keats.

The John Murray Collection at the National Library of Scotland and the British Library for material from MS texts of the letters of Lord Byron.

The John Murray Collection at the National Library of Scotland for material from the MS of the works of Lord Byron.

Victoria College Library, Toronto, for material from *Table Talk* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, for material from MS texts of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, for material from MS texts of William Wordsworth

A Romantic Timeline 1770–1851

| Current affairs | Date | Science and the Arts |
|--|--|--|
| Boston massacre | 1770 5 March 7 April 20 May 24 August 16 December | Wordsworth born, Cockermouth, Cumbria Hölderlin born Chatterton poisons himself in London, aged 17 Hegel born, Stuttgart Beethoven born, Bonn |
| | 1771 25 December | Dorothy Wordsworth born, Cockermouth, Cumbria |
| Emmanuel Swedenborg dies William Murray, Lord Mansfield, rules that there is no legal basis for slavery in England, giving a stimulus to the movement to abolish the slave trade in the colonies Lord Mansfield delivers judgement in the case of James Somersett, a runaway slave, ruling that no one has the right 'to take a slave by force to be sold abroad' – often regarded as the beginning of the end of slavery in England | 1772 29 March 14 May 22 June 4 August 9 October 21 October December | Blake apprenticed to the antiquarian engraver James Basire Mary Tighe born, Dublin Coleridge born, Ottery St Mary, Devon Anna Laetitia Aikin publishes her <i>Poems</i> (dated 1773 on title-page), including 'A Summer Evening's Meditation' |
| | 1773 May | Hannah More publishes <i>The Search after Happiness</i> |