Edited by
JOEL FAFLAK and
JULIA M. WRIGHT

A Handbook of Romanticism Studies

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A Handbook of Romanticism Studies

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Published:

A Handbook of Romanticism Studies
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WILEY-BLACKWELL
A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2012

Blackwell Publishing was acquired by John Wiley & Sons in February 2007. Blackwell's publishing program has been merged with Wiley's global Scientific, Technical, and Medical business to form Wiley-Blackwell.

Registered Office
John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Offices
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A handbook of Romanticism studies / edited by Joel Faflak and Julia M. Wright.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4443-3496-8 (cloth)
1. English literature—19th century—History and criticism—Handbooks, manuals, etc.
2. English literature—18th century—History and criticism—Handbooks, manuals, etc.
3. Romanticism—Great Britain. I. Faflak, Joel. II. Wright, Julia M.
PR457.H265 2012
820.9′007—dc23 2011034129

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Set in 10.5/13 pt Minion by Thomson Digital, Noida, India

1 2012

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Acknowledgments

We begin our thanks with our contributors, for without their hard work and timely diligence this volume would not have been possible. We are also grateful to Emma Bennett for her steady support for this project from its inception, as well as others at Wiley-Blackwell for their astute advice and generous assistance as this volume came together. We both thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for its generous support of our research, and Geordie Miller for his research assistance. We would also like to thank Tilottama Rajan for her inestimable influence on our thinking about Romanticism, and the value of mentorship and collegiality. Wright would also like to thank the Canada Research Chairs Program for its invaluable support of her research, including that most precious of resources – research time. We are both also daily grateful for our partners' patience, perspective, tolerance, and great good humor.

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Introduction

Joel Faflak and Julia M. Wright

This *Handbook of Romanticism Studies* is organized around a set of key terms. Some of these terms have been central to Romanticism studies for some time, such as imagination, sublime, and poetics. Other terms reflect critical trends of the last thirty years, including philosophy, race, historiography, and visual culture. And yet other terms name a selection of genres and modes on the margins of canonical Romanticism but increasingly important to a wider Romanticism studies, including satire, gothic, drama, and sensibility. The list of terms addressed here is not exhaustive, but it does offer a wide range of entry points to the study of Romanticism, from debates over the formal properties of high art to the complex world of Romantic-era theater to the impact of philosophical and scientific debates on conceptions of culture and cultural works.

Romanticism studies, like other literary fields, has undergone a series of sea changes in the last thirty years. Until the 1980s, Romanticism scholarship and teaching were dominated by the so-called "Big Six": William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, John Keats, and Percy Bysshe Shelley. Sometimes this was reduced still further, to the "Big Five" or "Big Four," dropping the unlyrical Blake and/or the too-worldly Byron. Then the field was reshaped by canon reform, spurred largely by feminist theory, the general turn to theory in English departments, and critical studies that rethought and resituated received ideas about Romantic transcendence and lyricism, such as Tilottama Rajan's *Dark Interpreter* (1980) and especially Jerome McGann's *The Romantic Ideology* (1983). Canon reform led to new classroom anthologies, such as Jennifer Breen's *Romantic Women Poets* (1992), McGann's *Romantic Period Verse* (1993), Duncan Wu's *Romanticism* (1994) and companionate *Romantic Women Poets* (1997), Andrew Ashfield's *Romantic Women Poets* (1995), Anne Mellor and Richard

A Handbook of Romanticism Studies, First Edition. Edited by Joel Faflak and Julia M. Wright.

Matlak's *British Literature 1780–1830* (1996), and Paula R. Feldman's *British Women Poets of the Romantic Era* (1997), not to mention dozens of new single-author editions of long-out-of-print novels and verse, particularly through new publishers such as Broadview Press, founded in 1985, and the short-lived Pandora Press, active in the 1980s. In recent years, the Romantic canon has been significantly shaped by New Historicism not only in its interest in material culture and its contexts – the sciences, historical events, labor conditions, the cost and hence accessibility of cultural works – but also in its reframing of culture itself on broader terms, embracing materials pitched at "popular" as well as elite audiences and media beyond that of the printed volume, including the stage, the single-sheet print or ballad, magazines, public spectacles, and oral culture in general.

Romanticism studies never really focused exclusively on a small set of lyric poets, though. There was a well-established "sub-canon" of writers, many personally connected to the Big Four: William Godwin and Mary Shelley (P. B. Shelley's father-in-law and wife, respectively); Robert Southey, Thomas De Quincey, and William Hazlitt (friends of Wordsworth and Coleridge); Thomas Love Peacock (friend of P. B. Shelley); Leigh Hunt (friend and mentor of Keats). Some of these writers were sub-canonical because they wrote prose rather than verse; along with Godwin, Mary Shelley (*Frankenstein* only), and Thomas Love Peacock, Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott rounded out the canon of Romantic fiction. This ground began to shift with the canon reform of the 1980s, initially focused on women writers through the influence of such feminist texts as Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979): Mary Robinson, Felicia Hemans, Anna Letitia Barbauld, Amelia Opie, Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan), Maria Edgeworth, Letitia Landon (L.E.L.), Charlotte Smith, and myriad other significant authors were incorporated into scholarship and thence into anthologies and modern editions. Moreover, as Julie Ellison suggests in her chapter here, such rethinkings of the canon opened the door to previously marginalized (feminized) modes, such as sensibility – and, we might add, sub-genres largely associated with women writers, such as the national tale and the silver fork novel.

The rise of postcolonial theory and "four nations" historiography followed feminism in reshaping our sense of Romantic literature, opening the door not only for Scottish, Irish, and Welsh writing as nationally distinctive (no longer to be collapsed into an ill-defined "English" or "British" category), as well as the literature of empire in general, but also for a rethinking of even canonical writers' positions. Scott, heralded by Georg Lukács as the originator of the historical novel, became important as a writer of the Celtic periphery, and Southey, known to the previous generation for dubbing P. B. Shelley and Byron "the Satanic school of poetry," became known instead as a demagogue for empire. This was assisted by New Historicism, a Marxist revision of "old" historicism that attends to historical forces beyond the elite and major events to consider minority and oppressed groups, regional distinctiveness, and a range of cultural as well as documentary sources. With New Historicism came a concomitant turn to the details that round out the larger picture of culture – urban life, entertainment, learning, the thousands of printed works that never saw a second edition – and a

sense of Romantic literature not as a collection of authors' major works but as a cultural moment in which myriad texts were produced, many anonymous, pseudonymous, or bearing the names of authors about whom we know little or nothing. In other words, as Romanticism studies turned its gaze toward marginalized populations – women, the colonized, the Celtic periphery, the lower classes – the field's sense of the literature of the period broadened as well. And, as it broadened, it moved away from not only the centrality of the Big Six but also the centrality of the author. In the wider print culture, authorship is a much more tenuous category, from the composite authorship of periodicals to the collaborative authorship of the stage and the concealed authorship of the radical press. It has also moved away from the idea of a dominant "Romanticism" that unifies the literary period as a coherent cultural moment, largely because, as a number of chapters here note, that unification proceeded through exclusion – not only of kinds of writers, but also of kinds of writing and cultural production, including those addressed here in chapters on the gothic, drama, satire, narrative, and visual culture.

It is a commonplace to point out that "romantic," when it was used at all, was a somewhat pejorative term in the early 1800s, usually implying naïve idealism or troubling fantasy, and it is not a term with which any writer we now call "Romantic" identified. Subsequent Victorian writers such as Matthew Arnold and Robert Browning *did* reinforce notions of an incomplete, insecure, and thus ineffectual Romanticism, despite the fact that later movements such as the pre-Raphaelites, the Symbolists, and the Decadents were influenced by what had by then crystallized as a "Romantic" influence. What this designation meant, however, was the cause of some confusion, as Arthur O. Lovejoy complained in 1924; this lack of conceptual focus was to plague the period until the mid twentieth century when such influential works as Abrams's *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (1953) helped to consolidate a sense of Romanticism in relation to the expression of genius – the lyric gush of individuality. But Romanticism was never fully consolidated in relation to literary history, partly because it was never a purely historical category. While many literary periods are named for objectively defined eras – the Early Modern era, the eighteenth century, the Victorian period – Romanticism names a transhistorical attitude that resists the imposition of temporal or even national boundaries. German Romanticism is roughly contemporary with English Romanticism, but they are variously dated. For English Romanticism, 1789 (French Revolution) and 1798 (Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*) were traditionally used starting dates, and the most common end-dates are still 1837 (Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne) and 1850 (the death of Wordsworth). In recent years, the starting date has been pushed back to 1785, to approach the publication dates of early volumes by William Blake, Robert Burns, and Charlotte Smith, and even back to 1750 (see Wolfson), an expansion followed by a number of contributors here.[1] French Romanticism postdates English Romanticism, as does American Romanticism, which overlaps with a broader "American Renaissance," partly because it was defined as an offshoot of English Romanticism. And contemporary poets such as Seamus Heaney are sometimes dubbed "Romantic" if they show debts to William Wordsworth or P. B. Shelley. Romanticism as a literary

period, moreover, supplanted earlier periods such as the Regency (1811–1820), which approximates the heyday of the so-called "second-generation" Romantics – P. B. Shelley, Keats, and Byron. To add to the complications, some scholars are uncomfortable with the implication that a unifying "ism" can describe a diverse period of literature, and many now eschew the term "Romanticism" in favor of formulations such as "literature of the Romantic period."

This decentering has been reinforced through a series of sea changes at the theoretical level. As Jerrold E. Hogle notes in his contribution to this volume, the New Criticism that dominated literary study by the mid-1900s shared a number of values with contemporary understandings of Romanticism, particularly Coleridgean organicism.[2] James Benziger begins a 1951 essay on Coleridge, "Perhaps only one who has been long interested in the phrase *organic unity* is wholly aware of how commonplace it has become in twentieth-century criticism" (24). A fuller history of this trajectory might link Coleridge's aesthetic theory to the "Romantic" poets of the American Renaissance, particularly Emerson (mentioned by Benziger 25), and thence to the US New Critics of the early twentieth century, a transatlantic theoretical genealogy founded upon the valorization of transcendence through the unifying forces of the individual, the imagination, and organicism. "The organic form, said Coleridge – translating Schlegel almost word for word, 'is innate; it shapes as it develops itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form'" (Benziger 24), the parts working together synergetically so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In a reading of a latter-day Romantic, W. B. Yeats, foundational New Critic Cleanth Brooks thus writes of a "flowering of a few delightful images," urging, "We must examine the bole and the roots, and most of all, their organic interrelations" (186). There is a seductive symmetry to this kind of organicism that follows Romantic ideas of the relationship between the human and the divine – the poet (from the Greek *poesis*, or "maker") echoes, on a lower register, the creative force of the Christian God or, as Coleridge puts it, "primary imagination" is "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" (I:263). The "well wrought urn," in Brooks's phrase, is both metaphor and proof of the capacity of the imaginative individual to create order out of chaos – to transcend the material world and all of its limits and contradictions, and to approach the divine or ideal. But along with this organicism comes a naturalizing that obscures the theorization that the organic, originally, merely tropes: organic verse and New Critical readings alike become "natural," objective truths that transcend the messy politics, textual histories, and literary climates from which both literature and critical readings emerge. Brooks's study, after all, his dedication suggests, came at least partly out of a class he taught in the summer of 1942, just a few months after the United States entered World War II, and its Preface is deeply concerned with what Brooks calls "The temper of our times" (x).

To borrow two terms from French thinkers Deleuze and Guattari, we might say the idea that Romantic writing forms an arborescent body of thought has gradually been replaced by a conception of a more diffuse or rhizomatic Romantic *culture*. This process began in the late 1970s and 1980s as "theory" writ large pushed

New Criticism out of its naturalized dominance: first feminism (bifurcated into French feminism and Anglo-American feminism), deconstruction, psychoanalysis (Freudian, then Lacanian as well), and Marxism and post-Marxism offered new ways of reading texts, then postcolonial theory, New Historicism, gender theory, cultural studies, and even a revised editorial theory. But crucial to this theoretical shift was an insistence on calling attention to the theorizing that the New Critics rendered nearly invisible. Thus, while "organic unity" is, as Benziger implies, a term that operates in New Criticism as a "commonplace" rather than the theoretical construct that he reveals it to be, the proliferation of theoretical schools went hand in hand with the proliferation of specialized terms that were never commonplace: *différance*, the Imaginary, intertextuality, Capital, the metropole, Ideological State Apparatus, and so on. Using the terms both made precise theoretical distinctions and flagged the theoretical frame being applied, so that Romanticists became not only Wordsworthians or Coleridgeans but also Derrideans, de Manians, Kristevans, Marxists, Foucauldians, or Habermassians. But this opacity was then read not only as a reaction against the self-effacing theory of New Criticism or an openness about the theoretical assumptions being applied, but also as obscurity – or, worse, an elitist obscurity that relies on a "jargon" that alienates readers. Such theories hence became known, collectively and somewhat wryly, as "High theory," echoed in Romanticism studies through the naming of canonical, transcendent Romantic writing as "High Romanticism." "High theory" then spawned its own counter-movement, particularly through the influence of a Marxist-inflected New Historicism that sought to recover lost voices, introduce forgotten texts, and draw a more finely detailed picture of the historical moment.

This turn may seem "anti-theory," but, like New Criticism, this revived historicism has its own theoretical contours, beyond simple materialism, even if it tends not to foreground them – it is broadly Marxist and often feminist in its interest in non-elite culture and life, for instance, and often implicitly Foucauldian in its understanding of and interest in the operation of power or Habermassian in its attention to a public sphere of complex sociopolitical interactions. It also gestures toward a healthy suspicion of the schematizing impetus to emerge from many 1980s theoretical schools as specialized terms became treated as nearly universal concepts. Scholars thus disputed the merits of using Marxist ideas to analyze preindustrialized Britain, or the appropriateness of applying Pierre Bourdieu's remarks about twentieth-century French culture to any other time or place. "High theory," in other words, as it was sometimes used, was legible as Romantic transcendence by other means – a philosophizing turn that, like the lyric moment itself, took us out of history.[3] The historicist reaction against "High theory" is thus another corrective, an effort to counter abstraction with materialism, and systematization with a heterogeneous mass of detail that refuses generalization. No counter-movement, however, has erased its precursors, and we now operate in a complex theoretical field in which New Criticism, "High theory," and (New and old) historicism are all in play, to one degree or another.

Romanticism studies has thus moved from naturalized organicism (New Criticism), to self-conscious conceptualization ("High theory"), to an almost sublime

avalanche of details about Romantic-era culture, one that has, most strikingly, radically changed our sense of the Romantic canon far beyond the inclusion of women writers and lower-class authors of both genders. There is some nostalgia in the field for the days in which Romanticists could quote Wordsworth's 1850 *Prelude* at each other – for a time in which the theoretical frame was monologic and the Romantic canon compact enough to be known intimately by all. But as much as our circumference (of theoretical approaches, of texts and authors, of historical conditions) has expanded almost exponentially, the center still holds: the first conference of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism (NASSR) in 1993 had ten papers explicitly on William Wordsworth and five on P. B. Shelley; the eighteenth NASSR conference in 2010, about twice the size of the first conference, had nineteen papers on Wordsworth and seven on Shelley. Readers of this volume will find these poets' names again and again in its pages – but will find them alongside repeat appearances by such newly canonical writers as Barbauld. Romanticism studies has changed dramatically over the last thirty years, and it is now as crucial to recognize the names Hemans, Moore, and Barbauld as it is still expected that we will know that Wordsworth wrote *Michael* and Coleridge about the "infinite I AM," and essential to be aware that Romanticism studies is now broadly concerned with scores of authors, popular culture, spectacle, visual culture, and other pieces of the complex puzzle that is Romantic-era culture. One might argue that this change sometimes reflects an "archive fever" to document Romanticism so exhaustively that it exhausts whatever conceptual power the terms "Romantic" or "Romanticism" might still hold. The opposite is also true, however, for now perhaps more than at any other time we are aware of the heterogeneous range of authors, texts, events, documents, and cultural artifacts that make the terms more vital to us than ever before.

A key aim of this volume is to help the reader through this renovated and diverse field, both center and circumference. While our general focus throughout is British Isles Romanticism, the significance of continental writing and European Romanticism is a recurring concern, particularly in essays on the sublime, philosophy, gender and sexuality, science, and psychology. We need to remember that the British Romantics read, wrote, and often traveled widely across national boundaries. William Wordsworth and Helen Maria Williams were frontline witnesses to events unfolding on the continent, although a comparison of Wordsworth's sublime "crossing" from Switzerland to Italy in Book 6 of *The Prelude* and Williams's *Letters Written in France* (1790) indicates how diverse British reaction to affairs beyond the metropole could be. Disaffected with British conservatism, the Shelleys and Byron exiled themselves to Italy, from where they wrote British cultural identity and politics large in more continental terms, and Byron met his fate at the "margins" of the West. This transnational exploration unfolded at once with and against both the progressive and repressive aspects of British colonial and imperialist expansion. British Isles Romantic writing thus articulates and reflects the hopes, desire, and anxieties of the metropole, both from within and from without: Byron's and Southey's orientalist narratives, the xenophobic fantasia of De Quincey's various opium writings, Sydney Owenson's novel of cross-cultural confrontation, *The Missionary* (1811), and

Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* (1789) all offer telling counterpoints here. More often than not, the engagement was more metaphoric or psychic than empirical. The jingoism of De Quincey's various writings on the Opium Wars in the later nineteenth century was buttressed by the fact that their author never actually visited China, and in Sweden, Norway, and Finland, Mary Wollstonecraft, though an actual visitor, used their topography to map the melancholy of her introspective nature. But, as Kari Lokke reminds us in her chapter here, British Romantic thought and writing were also generatively cosmopolitan affairs, a libidinous economy of knowledge and desire that reflected the enlightened and global *frisson* as well as anxieties of transnational human interaction.

This volume begins with a cluster of chapters on "Aesthetics and Media," partly to register the shift in Romantic studies from one to the other and partly to highlight the ways in which Romanticism remains fundamentally yoked to form – to the lyric, the sonnet, the dramatic poem, and the epic; to emergent print culture and thriving theatrical culture; to the capitalizing of the "p" in Poet. The first essay in this section, inevitably if not naturally, is on the Romantic imagination. Richard C. Sha traces its elevation on the one hand as near-mythic in its power to transform and transcend, and on the other its recent critical pathologization as the vehicle of concealed ideology and the corruptions of history. Sha instead argues that we need to move away from deterministic views of the relationship between interiority and the material world (either transcendence or historical embeddedness) to consider instead the complex interplay between self and world imagined in Romantic literature. In the period, that interplay, as Sha suggests, could be understood as pathological – bad stimuli could make diseased imaginations and so diseased minds; unhealthy imaginations could negatively affect the body – but also transform bodies through the proper stimuli and training. Julie Ellison, in the second chapter in this section, deals with another aesthetic theory concerned with the disciplining of the subject's response to exteriority – sensibility. Sensibility might seem to stress interiority through its interest in the subject's sympathetic identification with the feelings, and especially sufferings, of others. But, as Ellison makes clear, it was also entangled with the transformation of public culture through, for instance, the emergence of politeness and the public display of morality, including opposition to slavery and other forms of social injustice. Sensibility redefined the civic leader as the "man of feeling," and martialed scenes of suffering to argue against myriad social ills. The third chapter in this section deals with efforts to theorize overwhelming exteriority – the sublime. Anne Janowitz traces the larger history of the sublime back to Longinus and Lucretius, and then forward through the emergence of translations of classical writings to the eighteenth century in which the sublime was a key concept in aesthetic thought across an array of disciplines, and not only through the familiar icons of Burke and Kant. As Janowitz's chapter makes clear, the idea of the philosophic poem – taken from Lucretius by early eighteenth-century writers and carried through to Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Barbauld – is entwined with efforts, through the sublime, to think through the nature of the cosmos.

In the final two chapters in this section, we turn from the traditional interest of Romantic studies in the individual's experience of and escape inward from external phenomena, particularly through aesthetics (sensibility, imagination, the experience of the sublime), to the divisions of aesthetics by medium, taking periodicals and visual culture as our examples. We do not trace here merely a shift from the Romantic interest in interiority to a New Historicist interest in the materials of culture but rather recognize overlapping regimes of organization for Romantic aesthetics, and the ways in which they are classed. As Sha notes in his chapter, the imagination of Coleridge's *Biographia* was not considered to be available to the lower classes or to women. Sensibility, the sublime, and the imagination were alike the province of the cultivated, the well read, the judicious – the upper class, the formally educated, and generally the male. Periodical and visual culture, dramatically pitched at more diverse audiences, both embraced and policed different reader- and viewerships. In their chapter, Kristin Flieger Samuelian and Mark Schoenfield make clear the ways in which periodicals engaged a much broader array of cultural interests than the dominant artistic modes and vehicles can represent. Celebrity culture, court fashions, dancing, boxing, folk song, as well as literature, politics, current events, travel, and science, dominated the periodicals – and the periodicals dominated print culture and the era's proliferation of reading publics and, along with those publics, standards of "taste" that sought to regulate, for instance, the Romantic novel on terms entwined with particular visions of social and domestic order. In the next chapter, Sophie Thomas addresses the significance and diversity of visual culture in the era, including such popular entertainments as the panorama and an 1816 exhibition of Napoleon's belongings, in order to trace the centrality of visuality to Romantic culture across a variety of media and viewerships. If the gothic, as Hogle discusses in his chapter in the next section, insists on calling attention to the ubiquity of the counterfeit, many Romantic spectacles depended on it – the panorama in particular offering to simulate the "wonder" or terror of being in the midst of battle, unfamiliar landscapes, and even "ghost shows" (we might think here of the visuality of the gothic, from its staged versions to its narratives' reliance on architectural forms, paintings, and displays of emotion that are otherwise beyond utterance). The limited populism of such spectacles – most requiring the disposable income to pay for admission, though not the substantial resources required for a private library or art collection – cut two ways, on the one hand distributing legitimated forms of knowledge (scientific, anthropological, aesthetic) to a wider audience and, on the other, eroding hegemonic control over culture, the priority of the "natural" (in the proliferation of "illusion"), and the common identification of elevating aesthetic response with solitude. The latter was reconnected to the visual, however, through book illustration and ekphrastic verse, returning the visual to the private. As the chapters in this section make clear, moreover, the visuality of the Romantic period cuts across media and mode: the interest in the relationship between self and world traced by Sha is first and foremost understood through *looking*, whether at the "scene of sensibility" (Ellison), the sublime vista (Janowitz), or the entertainments described in the pages of the periodicals (Samuelian and Schoenfield). All are, in some measure, "scenes of seeing" (Thomas).

But there is another relationship crucial to literary Romanticism, and that is the one between author and reader – what Wordsworth famously described as a contract or "a formal engagement" in his 1802 Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* (596), an agreement on conventions of genre and style through which the author meets the expectations of (or is even comprehensible to) the reader. Our section on "Theories of Literature" thus begins with essays on the author and the reader. As Elizabeth A. Fay and Stephen C. Behrendt demonstrate, these concepts are bound up with fundamental questions of authority, of the author's power to represent (to organize, narrativize, and affirm), and of the reader's increasing role as consumer and interpreter of authorial output. Central to Fay's argument is the author as a locus of organization, from Edmund Burke's "creat[ion] of a narrative whole" out of the nation's history in his *Annual Register* to Foucault's concept of the "author function," as a process through which an author's body of work is made "whole." As Fay demonstrates, this is closely allied to the emergence of copyright (and concomitantly, the profitability of print), placing the question of authorship amidst concerns about intellectual property and public authority, as well as communities formed through reading, and interleaved with more aesthetically framed concerns, such as originality ("genius"), allusiveness, and representation – and the complicating fact of collaborative writing in the period. In his chapter, Behrendt attends to the growth of a reading public at the same time – the proliferation of kinds of readers, and of kinds of readings – and the related effort to organize them through a course of reading that would serve "to inform, and thus to *form*, an educated and sophisticated citizenry capable of exercising moral, economic, military, and scientific leadership." Readers were caught in the countervailing pressure to both normalize readers through "standard English" and common bodies of knowledge, and to sustain social hierarchies through different levels of literacy and access to print, in a complicated organicist maneuver that naturalized both the coherence of Englishness and the divisions that separated the educated elite from the increasingly literate and educated populace, which was demanding greater political rights in the period. Suggestively, both Fay and Behrendt discuss Coleridge's "Kubla Khan": for Fay, the poem's fragmentation and polyvocality put on display the poet's "genius" and "trustworthiness," making it possible for readers to "share" in the creative process; for Behrendt, this readerly role is part of "the Romantic-era empowerment of the reader."

The remaining essays in this section deal with questions of form, as part of this author–reader contract – a guide to expectations, and a set of conventions to be transgressed. Because of the traditional stress on Romantic verse and the lyric in particular, we begin with Jacqueline Labbe's chapter on "Poetics." Labbe situates Romantic debates over poetical proprieties within a larger eighteenth-century concern not only with verse, but also with the questions of politeness, taste, and cultural authority that concern many of the earlier chapters in this volume. What Labbe finds distinctive in the Romantic period is a "poetics of place," that is, an insistent return to "locality" for various purposes, often to situate the poetic speaker and memory, or to introduce the reader to unknown (colonial, peripheral) locales –

a concern of prose narrative as well, as the next chapter shows. This poetics undergirds the alliance between poetry and nation that Labbe traces in the traditional Romantic poetic canon, and can be more fully contextualized through the expansion of that canon in recent decades. In the next chapter, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson addresses what was once the province of the sub-canonical but now is central to the revised Romantic canon – narrative. While Labbe focuses on the poetics of place, Heydt-Stevenson attends to the motion of narrative. Narrative not only propels the action forward but also moves through time and across space, turns to contemporary debates, details the growth of character, and perhaps even spurs readers to act. Romantic narrative, she suggests, is marked by various techniques that resist the conventional impetus to support the narrative illusion of transparency, consistency, and plausibility. Framing narratives and paratextual materials (notes, glossaries, appendices), digressions, irony, free indirect discourse – all challenge the reader to puzzle over the text's meaning without offering any conclusive answers. In the next chapter, David Worrall addresses another significant genre that has been marginalized by the dominance of lyric, the drama. As Worrall makes clear, theatrical culture extended far beyond the two licensed theaters at the center of the metropole – reaching out to London theaters that could stage "lighter" dramas (burlettas, for instance) without state permission (and censorship) and onward to provincial theaters and home entertainments, like that represented famously in Austen's *Mansfield Park*. This larger picture of Romantic theater is much more diverse, including middle-class events, women theater-managers, and African-American actors, and it is traceable not in our canonical anthologies but rather in the wider documents of history, including letters, diaries, playbills, accounts registers, and the Larpent archive of manuscripts submitted for the Lord Chancellor's approval. Worrall's chapter thus not only explains but also offers a salutary rethinking of the Big Six's interest in dramatic form – their plays, he suggests, are canonically trivial, from a historicist perspective in which there were hundreds of more successful plays, and yet their dramatic work also registers the ubiquity of interest in contemporary theater.

In the final chapters in this section, we turn to two key modes: the gothic and satire. As modes, they appear across genres – verse, prose fiction, drama – and can constitute isolated moments within texts dominated by other modes. A novel of manners can veer toward satire for a few pages, and a poem of exploration can have a gothic section. And, as Jerrold E. Hogle establishes in his chapter, the gothic mode is inextricable from the modalities of Romanticism; it is the reflection of Romanticism against which canonical Romanticism defined itself to secure its status and stability in a complicated tangle of fear and desire that Hogle frames through the Kristevan idea of the abject. Calling attention to the gothic preamble, almost premise, of Coleridge's famous statement on the imagination in Chapter XIII of the *Biographia Literaria*, Hogle traces the pervasiveness and indeed the centrality of the (abjection of the) gothic to English Romanticism in particular, and reminds us that the marginalization of the gothic was largely pursued by New Criticism. In his chapter on satire, Steven E. Jones pursues the similar abjection of satiric writing in the

development of a mid-century Romanticism. But, as Jones notes, satire was always in Romanticism – in scholarship that attended to the importance of print satire, in passages in canonical poems, and in non-canonical works by canonical authors. The putative opposition between Romanticism and satire, Jones suggests, was a Victorian maneuver through which to empty out the radical politics of the Romantic period (and so construct the period as a starry-eyed "Romantic") or to ally it with an atavistic Augustanism (as in comparisons of Byron's satire to Alexander Pope's). As Jones's chapter demonstrates, satire was nearly ubiquitous in the era, in the works of long- and newly-canonical authors, in graphic satire by such notables as James Gillray, and in newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and songs. Together, these two chapters not only trace the oppositional moves by which Romanticism was entrenched by the New Critics as serious, organicist, and transcendental, but also the ways in which such moves excise influential or otherwise-significant materials as well as elide the very oppositionality of Romantic-era culture itself – not least the importance of radicalism, criticism of the imperial enterprise, challenges to dominant codes of politeness and gender propriety, and efforts to transform literature itself.

In his 1792 *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* William Godwin flirted with, and subsequently mourned, the idea of a society free of "Ideologies and Institutions," the title of our third section, which takes up how Romantic bodies and bodies politic were formed and striated by the stresses of history. The historical (re)turn in Romanticism studies reminds us that the period was at once intensely utopian, skeptical about, and self-aware of its historical moment. Ted Underwood begins his chapter on "Historiography" by noting the shift from studying exemplary (male) individuals or events to systematizing historical processes. This shift reflected awareness of sexual, cultural, national, or racial difference, but also of the remoteness of antiquity, nature, the cosmos, even of the human mind and body themselves; of progress, evolution, and decline; and thus of the strangeness of time itself. Underwood focuses on sacred versus secular history in biblical hermeneutics, the politics of historical interpretation, and the science of language and museum culture, both of which emerged to compare, evaluate, and conserve historical process and progress. Increasingly, such developments elided history with historiographical practice and thus with the educational, political, and aesthetic utility of historical discourse. This ideological form of history is, of course, a central concern of the historical (re)turn in Romanticism studies. Or to paraphrase Orrin N. C. Wang in the next essay, in Romanticism "Ideology" realizes that it has a history, one that takes in our own attempts to read Romanticism. Via their concern to work through and past ideology (Burke's exploitation of ideology to achieve a sense of "natural" Englishness, for instance), Romantics were at once mired in and critical of ideology, aware of the social, educational, and political influence of their writing. Reading between Romantic ideology and our critique of it, Wang thus traces a shift from ideology as habit, custom, or doctrine to a shifting structure of desire or aesthetic phenomenon at once protean and disciplinary, productive and repressive. For Julia M. Wright ideology gains purchase on "truth" to the profit of "Nation and Empire." Although British histories post-1776 or post-1789 remarshaled national energies

toward building a Second Empire, nationalist debate often contested this (in)corporation, a productive comparison between nationalisms and nationalist literatures (English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish) that belied simplistic patriotism to signify an often resistant singularity. This contest of national differences comprises an incipient postcolonialism now central to political critiques of Romanticism. For Wright three genres in particular express both a British Isles nationalist cum imperial consciousness and its unconscious energies: epic, ballad or song, and national tale. Critical hegemonies both Romantic and contemporary have tended to obscure in each the historical and material traces of a Romantic ambivalence toward as well as celebration of nation and empire.

The final three chapters in "Ideologies and Institutions" explore further this tension between hegemony and singularity, center and margin, in Romantic writing and criticism. Like Wright, Michael Scrivener, in his chapter on "Class," takes up modes and genres that voice ideas silenced by "official" Romantic culture and politics, but also by more recent Romantic criticism. Middle and lower ranks wrote against the cultural hegemony of Wordsworth's critique of Augustan rhetoric and its "anti-aristocratic cultural offensive." But class further complicated this offensive: were the Shelleys or Byron any less justified than Clare when speaking for the polis? For Scrivener, class, language, and genre unavoidably intersect to necessitate the study of pamphlets, periodicals, or broadsides alongside "legitimate" objects of aesthetic contemplation. Accounting for laboring-class poetry, for instance, means displacing the author as icon and thus replacing a high/low dichotomy with a spectrum of political identities from individual to communitarian, in turn evoking a cultural politics overdetermined by the capitalism of the shifting critical marketplace then and now. Peter J. Kitson's essay on "Race" explores this cultural politics through criticism's account of Romantic attempts to exorcise the ghosts of racism. Caught between race as social construction and as a biological or essential marker of human difference, Romantic critiques of race (abolitionist debates, slave narratives, ballads, and so forth) were also complicit with the same racial categories they sought to overturn, especially as Romanticism continues the classification and distinction that characterizes eighteenth-century aesthetic, scientific, and philosophical practice. But whereas earlier racial distinctions were uncertain, the racialized sciences of Romantic comparative anatomy, ethnology, or physical anthropology, or the Romantic aesthetics of the beautiful and the sublime, often turned shades of gray to black and white, a "neutral" but nonetheless insidious racialization that effaces difference. Kari Lokke takes up this "divisive" elision in this section's final chapter on "Gender and Sexuality." Assuming and further exploring the feminist critical revision of the Romantic canon in the 1970s and 1980s discussed by Ellison, Lokke begins with the "unprecedented, highly public, and cosmopolitan platform for the expression of women's political opinions" offered by French Revolutionary debates, a political ferment that made Romantic concerns with gender and sexuality an especially cosmopolitan, pan-European affair. The innovation, expansion, and democratization of Romantic writing practices, publishing markets, and reading publics allowed women to write across class, race, gender, and national boundaries in

the public sphere. This investment accrued, however ambivalently, to the profit of both women and men writers, creating what Lokke calls a synergy of sexual relations that at once rewrote and entrenched marital, familiar, and sexual categories.

The final five chapters, in a section entitled "Disciplinary Intersections," address ideas, ideologies, and institutions that shaped Romantic and post-Romantic disciplines and interdisciplines – bodies of knowledge formed by the conflagration of a number of cultural, philosophical, scientific, historical, and political drives. They also thus address the disciplinary desire of knowledge itself, both in the Romantic period and in the criticism and theory that shaped Romantic writing after the fact. In "Philosophy" Marc Redfield explores this shifting anatomy at the "porous" boundary between theology, politics, literature, and science, but also between and across nations. As Theresa M. Kelley and Joel Faflak later explore with regard to Romantic science and psychology, philosophy unfolds in specific national settings – empirical and materialist in England and Scotland; metaphysical and idealist in Germany. An earlier organicist Romantic criticism implicitly ventriloquized these divisions by privileging a transcendental view of the imagination shaped by the influence of German philosophy on Wordsworth, Coleridge, or De Quincey. Redfield's chapter corrects the historical and critical reaction formation that condensed fears of a "Germanized" Romanticism with those about the later "undue" influence of continental philosophy or "theory" in order implicitly to protect the properly material and historical nature of English thought from the taint of French or German abstraction. That is to say, he reminds us how British Romanticism, like German thought, was itself profoundly polymathic. Michael Tomko addresses a similarly transdisciplinarity in the oldest discipline, religion. By desacralizing an earlier Romantic poetic faith, Romantic criticism has rehistoricized Romantic religion as a conflicted congregation of theological, sociopolitical, scientific, and philosophical forces, which at once collapse and reify the church/state divide. The French Revolution shifted sacred to secular concerns, but also unleashed the fanaticisms of theology, science, and politics that rushed to fill the void left by the death of sacred rites and systems. Post-revolutionary religious politics transmutes into what Hent de Vries calls political theologies: evangelicism, millenarianism, low versus high church, the zealousness of scientific and economic promise. For Tomko, however, perhaps Romantic religion exists beyond metaphysics, mysticism, or politics via its radical engagement with "the unknown," the intellectual, affective, and spiritual dimensions of which Romanticism studies is only beginning to appreciate.

Philosophy and religion clashed with science in vitalism debates of the later eighteenth century, which raged far beyond the Romantic period. At stake was the soul and life itself. Who or what controlled life? One side aligned spiritual forces with a higher power (or powers) beyond human control; the other saw vitality in increasingly materialist, physiological, secular terms: the human as the product of its own biopolitics. For Theresa M. Kelley in "Science," this latter group's hegemony was by no means stable, however. The scientific disciplines we now know emerged from a rather more polymathic philosophical inquiry that crossed between the material and immaterial. Or as Kelley puts it, Romanticism's scientific spirit floated

between empiricism and speculation, forensics and theory. Romantic thought experimented in the laboratory of scientific practice to "constitute the arresting core of Romantic science as a professional and public inquiry pitched to recognize the possibility of imaginary and imagined physical worlds." Ideology and imagination thus vitally interplay both to observe and classify lived and hypothetical experience, from the biological unfolding of organic life, to the broader evolution of species and the natural world, to the unimaginable warp and woof of cosmic and geological time and space. Science's often tenuous ability to imagine and systematize a shaped and shaping world becomes a rather more determinate scientific inquiry in James Robert Allard's essay on "Medicine." Formed out of the perfect storm of politics, science, philosophy, and literature, Romantic medicine sought to classify, diagnose, and thus cure the forces of historical decline in the human body. This war against biological destiny was armed by medicine's ability to sell its knowledge to the public, embodied in the doctor, particularly the surgeon, as physical and social healer. In this triumph of biopolitics the literal and metaphorical "precision" of the medical gaze signified the power to administer and thus "author" life properly, an author-ity was indebted to the Scottish Enlightenment as the intellectual, scientific, and philosophical center of modern scientific debate. *Who* argued was as important as *what* they argued, Allard contends. Surgical personality and celebrity as well as knives cut to the source of disease to arrest the vital forces of decay, a Romantic scientific Prometheanism always poised, as Mary Shelley prophesies, on the abyss of its own Frankensteinian ambitions. One outcome of this Prometheanism, as Joel Faflak shows in this volume's final chapter on "Psychology," is the emergence of the human mind and consciousness as both engine and crucible of human knowledge, determination, and progress. Emerging between philosophy, religion, science, and medicine, psychology evokes the poetics of Romantic thought itself, the literary equivalent of a human endeavor that is also a central feature of Romantic personhood, society, and politics. If medicine materializes the physiology of motivation and desire in the brain, psychology analyzes the mind as both material substance and immaterial drive, a potentially knowable (because we are its vital witnesses) and ineluctably inaccessible origin (because we can never witness ourselves witnessing). So, when in "Ode to Psyche" Keats builds a shrine to the unsung Psyche in some "untrodden region" (51) of his mind, he locates the mind's powers at the center of ideological, social, political, philosophical, religious, scientific, and cultural activity. At the same time, however, he bequeaths to us the impossibility of "thinking" our way beyond or outside of this human dimension, an impossibility that Romanticism studies is only now beginning to contemplate.

Notes

1 See Blake's *Poetical Sketches* (1783), Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786), and Smith's *Elegaic Sonnets* (1784).

2 For more on organicism, see Sha's contribution to this volume.

3 This was most striking in the Paul de Man controversy of the late 1980s, in which deconstruction was read as a rationalization for eliding the significance of de Man's contributions in the early 1940s to a newspaper with anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi leanings.

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