

## ROMANTIC BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

To start with, you should read *Lyrical Ballads* and study its Preface and its background, and 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', very closely; then you should read the whole of the 1805 *Prelude*. Next you should study *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience* in specific relation to Blake's own illustrated presentation of these texts; then progress to Byron's *Don Juan* and Shelley's *The Triumph of Life* and Keats's 'Odes' and 'The Fall of Hyperion'. These are all substantial works and demand close, meditative reading; *Don Juan* requires to be read attentively but fast. Re-read Jane Austen (indoors). Read Coleridge's 'conversation poems' and the letters of Keats. If you should be near the top of a high mountain or the shores of a boundless sea, read Blake's *Jerusalem*, and De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, also Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and 'Mont Blanc'. If the mountains should be wild and stormy, read Byron's *Manfred*. Ponder these works, and your reactions to them. Below are a few further starting-points, to guide you further on your way.

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William Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Poets* (1818) and *The Spirit of the Age, Or, Contemporary Portraits* (1825), with intro. by C.M. Maclean (Everyman Library; London, 1910 and reprinted); *The Spirit of the Age* (1825) also in facsimile (Menston, 1971); *My First Acquaintance with Poets* (1823) (facsimile, Woodstock Books, Oxford, 1993).

Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, ed. J.E. Jordan (London, 1960 and reprinted); or ed. A. Hayter (Penguin English Library, Harmondsworth, Middx, 1971 and reprinted); or ed. G. Lindop (World's Classics; Oxford, 1985 and reprinted).

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David Wright (Penguin English Library; Harmondsworth, 1970 and reprinted).

Bromwich (David) (ed.), *Romantic Critical Essays* (Cambridge, 1987).

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Hazlitt (William), *My First Acquaintance with Poets* (facsimile, Woodstock, Oxford, 1993) [orig. pub. *The Liberal*, Vol. 2, 1823]; see also William Christie, 'Reading: William Hazlitt, 'My First Acquaintance with Poets'', in Nicholas Roe (ed.), *Romanticism; An Oxford Guide* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 437-43.

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William Hazlitt, 'Character of Mr. Wordsworth's New Poem, The Excursion', *The Examiner* (1814), reprinted in his *Complete Works*, ed. P.P. Howe (21 vols, London, 1930-4), XIX; compare Thomas De Quincey, 'On Wordsworth's Poetry', *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* (1845), reprinted in J.E. Jordan (ed.), *De Quincey as Critic* (London, 1973), Chap. 28.

D.D. Devlin, 'Power and Knowledge', in his *De Quincey, Wordsworth and the Art of Prose* (London, 1983), Chap. 4.

Thompson (E.P.), 'Disenchantment or Default: A Lay Sermon' in Conor Cruise O'Brien and W.D. Vaneech (ed.), *Power and Consciousness* (New York, 1969), reprinted in E.P. Thompson, *The Romantics; England in a Revolutionary Age* (New York, 1997).

Abrams (M.H.), *The Mirror and the Lamp; Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York, 1953).

Abrams (M.H.), *The Correspondent Breeze; Essays on English Romanticism* (New York, 1984), esp. 'English Romanticism: The Spirit of the Age', 'The Correspondent Breeze: A Romantic Metaphor' and 'Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric'.

Altieri (Charles), *Painterly Abstraction in Modernist American Poetry; The Contemporaneity of Modernism* (Cambridge, 1989), Chap. 3: 'Abstraction and the Romantic Tradition'.

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to distinguish it from the second volume (1888); best text in Matthew Arnold, *Lectures and Essays in Criticism*, ed. R.H. Super (Complete Prose Works, III; Ann Arbor, Mich., 1962).

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- Bromwich (David), *Hazlitt; The Mind of a Critic* (New York, 1983).
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- Clark (J.C.D.), *English Society, 1688-1832* (Cambridge, 1985).
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- Chandler (James K.), *Romantic Metropolis; The Urban Scene of British Culture* (Cambridge, 2005).
- Cooper (Andrew M.), *Doubt and Identity in Romantic Poetry* (New Haven, 1988).
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- Gage (John), *Colour in Turner; Poetry and Truth* (London, 1969); also (principally for the colour plates) the same author's *J.M.W. Turner: 'A Wonderful Range of Mind'* (New Haven, 1987); or (better still), a visit to the Tate Gallery, London.
- Harding (D.W.), *Regulated Hatred; And Other Essays on Jane Austen*, ed. Monica Lawlor (London, 1998).
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- McGann (Jerome J.), *The Romantic Ideology; A Critical Investigation* (Chicago, 1983).
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