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978-1-107-07194-0 - Romanticism in the Shadow of War: Literary Culture in the Napoleonic War Years

Jeffrey N. Cox

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ROMANTICISM IN THE SHADOW OF WAR

Jeffrey N. Cox reconsiders the history of British Romanticism, seeing the work of Byron, the Shelleys, and Keats responding not only to the “first-generation” Romantics led by Wordsworth, but more directly to the cultural innovations of the Napoleonic War years. Recreating in depth three moments of political crisis and cultural creativity – the Peace of Amiens, the Regency Crisis, and Napoleon’s first abdication – Cox shows how “second-generation” Romanticism drew on cultural “border raids,” seeking a global culture at a time of global war. This book explores how the introduction on the London stage of melo-drama in 1803 shaped Romantic drama, how Barbauld’s prophetic satire *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven* prepares for the work of the Shelleys, and how Hunt’s controversial *Story of Rimini* showed younger writers how to draw on the Italian cultural archive. Responding to world war, these writers sought to embrace a radically new vision of the world.

JEFFREY N. COX is Professor of English, of Comparative Literature, and of Humanities at the University of Colorado Boulder, where he is also the Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs. He is author of *Poetry and Politics in the Cockney School: Shelley, Keats, Hunt, and their Circle* (Cambridge, 1998) and *In the Shadows of Romance: Romantic Tragic Drama in Germany, England, and France* (1987).

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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107071940

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First published 2014

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

ISBN 978-1-107-07194-0 Hardback

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In memoriam
Kenneth A. Cox
Jane Moody

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Acknowledgments

This project began as an invited talk at the 2004 meeting of the International Conference on Romanticism held at Texas A&M International in Laredo on “Romantic Border Crossings.” I want to thank ICR, the conference organizers, and above all Jeffrey Cass for providing the impetus to begin thinking about the issues I engage here. The colleagues who were there and the border site itself made this a meeting to remember.

The first actual audience for these ideas was Dana Van Kooy, Terry Robinson, and Jennifer Jones, who were good enough to listen to a practice version of the ICR talk. One of the last audiences for the book was Michele Speitz, who offered advice on final revisions. They were all once graduate students or post-doctoral fellows at the University of Colorado Boulder and are now colleagues whose own work inspires mine and gives me a sense of where Romanticism as a field is headed. I owe a great debt to them and to other fine Colorado graduate students, former and current, including John Leffel, Kurtis Hessel, Scott Hagele, Priya Jha, Daniel Larson, Kirstyn Leuner, Deven Parker, and Jim Walker.

This project has grown within a series of intellectual communities. Most immediately are my colleagues in the Colorado Romanticism Collective and its core members, Jill Heydt-Stevenson (who sees into the “life of things”), Padma Rangarajan (“seemed made to shew / How far the genuine flesh and blood could go”), John Stevenson (“Philosophy like thine turns to pure gold / Earth’s dross”), and Paul Youngquist (“Who is, what others seem” and who acts upon the committed, collective Romanticism others talk about). Through daily acts of friendship and through career-long scholarly accomplishments, their efforts make mine possible. These are the local representatives of a larger gathering of Romanticists who care for each other and create new knowledge, who have welcomed me and my students into the profession, and who have created the warmth of community amidst what can be cold professionalism. I cannot name them all, but as representatives of the rest: Mark Lussier, Greg Kucich, Michael

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Gamer, Dan White, Tilar Mazzeo, Julie Kipp, Michael Macovski, Julie Carlson, Sonia Hofkosh, Fran Botkin, Devoney Looser, Thora Brylowe, Talissa Ford, Charles Snodgrass, Nick Roe, and Jane Stabler. Missing from this list and from our lives is our great lamented friend, Jane Moody, the best and brightest of us all.

There is an incredible gathering of scholars at the University of Colorado Boulder who have helped with this project, including Christopher Braider, Peter Knox, Merrill Lessley, David Mapel, Warren Motte, Fred Anderson, and Helmut Mueller-Sievers. I have learned much from these colleagues, and their commitment to intellectual community has shaped my arguments for what I call communal Romanticism. I want also to acknowledge the support of the University of Colorado's Center for Humanities and the Arts, a community that supported my work when it began, when I was directing the Center, and when it ended, as the Center has been led by Helmut Mueller-Sievers. Throughout that time, the Center's administrator, Paula Anderson, has been a key ally and colleague, who has truly enabled me to get my work done. Before CU and its center was Texas A&M University and its Interdisciplinary Group for Historical Literary Scholarship, and I continue to owe a debt to my friends from those days, particularly Margaret Ezell, Susan Egenolf, Katherine O'Keeffe, Larry Reynolds, Mary Ann O'Farrell, and David McWhirter.

I wrote most of this book while serving as Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs, working under four Provosts, Susan Avery, Phil DiStefano, Stein Sture, and Russ Moore. Each has understood my desire to keep doing scholarly work while being an administrator, and each has been generous in supporting my efforts. I owe them my personal gratitude just as the campus owes them thanks for their excellent leadership during the last decade of the university's life. I was lucky to find in my administrative life an incredible, intellectually lively group of colleagues and, in particular, William Kaempfer, Michael Grant, and Bob Boswell. The staff of the Office of Faculty Affairs, the best administrative group on campus to my mind, has helped me complete this project, not least by being so very good at their own jobs.

There are communities elsewhere that have helped this project forward. Various pieces have been delivered at meetings of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, "The Performing Society: A Conference on Nineteenth-Century Theater" at the Huntington Library in March 2006, the conference "Poetic and Dramatic Forms in British Romanticism" held in Bari in March 2007, and the Conference on Dante and Romanticism, which took place in Florence in January 2010. I have given

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related papers at Boston University, the University of St. Andrews, the Washington Area Romantics Group held at the University of Maryland, the University of Zurich, and the LA Area Romantics Group hosted by Anne Mellor. I owe debts to many friends and colleagues at such events, including Chuck Rzepka, Neil Fraistat, Orrin Wang, Fred Burwick, Marilyn Gaull, Paul Douglass, Tim Fulford, Tracy Davis, Peter Holland, Mary Favret, Franca Della Rosa, Lilla Maria Crisafulli, Anna Maria Sportelli, Diego Saglia, Timothy Morton, Alan Richardson, Anne Mellor, Marjorie Levinson, Stuart Curran, Kevin Gilmartin, and William Galperin.

The support of Cambridge University Press has been decisive in this project. The two anonymous readers provided incredibly generous and smart responses; I hope I have done justice to their critiques. Jim Chandler has not only provided a measure of the work that one might do but been a model of helping the rest of us do what we can do. Linda Bree has watched this book grow from its first glimmers of thought to its publication. Her friendship, her intelligent help, and her expert administration have made this project possible. Thanks to her, to Anna Bond, and the rest of Cambridge University Press.

Ideas set forth in this book have appeared in different forms in other places, and they are reprinted with permission. Chapter 1 draws upon “The death of tragedy; or, The birth of the melodrama,” in *The Performing Century: Nineteenth-Century Theatre’s History*, edited by Peter Holland and Tracy Davis (London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2007), pp. 161–81. Chapter 2 uses material from “*Manfred* and the melodrama,” in *Poetic and Dramatic Forms in British Romanticism*, edited by Franca Dellarosa (Bari, Italy: Laterza and Figli, 2006), pp. 17–38. A version of Chapter 5 appeared as “Revisioning Rimini: Dante in the Cockney School,” in *Dante and Italy in British Romanticism*, edited by Frederick Burwick and Paul Douglass (London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2011), pp. 183–204. Thanks to all these editors for including me in these wonderful projects.

This book would not have been done, given my other obligations, without the forbearance of my family. Amy, Julia, Emma, and Claire have all supported this work in ways they probably do not even know. My parents have always stood behind my efforts, and I am saddened that I did not complete this project before my father, Kenneth Cox, passed away. I hope he would have seen some of his own buoyant spirit in this account of keeping hope alive in difficult times.

Abbreviations

Allot	<i>The Poems of John Keats</i> , ed. Miriam Allot. London: Longman, 1970.
BLJ	<i>Byron's Letters and Journals</i> , ed. Leslie Marchand. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973–82.
BCPW	<i>Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works</i> , ed. Jerome J. McGann and Barry Weller. 7 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980–93.
Cox	<i>Poetry and Politics in the Cockney School: Shelley, Keats, Hunt, and their Circle</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
CWH	<i>The Complete Works of William Hazlitt</i> , ed. P. P. Howe. 21 vols. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1930–34.
KL	<i>The Letters of John Keats, 1814–1821</i> , ed. Hyder Edward Rollins. 2 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958.
KPP	<i>Keats's Poetry and Prose. A Norton Critical Edition</i> , ed. Jeffrey N. Cox. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2009.
SL	<i>The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> , ed. Frederick L. Jones. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.
SPP	<i>Shelley's Poetry and Prose. A Norton Critical Edition</i> , ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Fraistat. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2002.
SWLH	<i>Selected Writings of Leigh Hunt</i> , General Editors: Robert Morrison and Michael Eberle-Sinatra. 6 vols. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2003.
Wordsworth	<i>Poetical Works</i> , ed. Thomas Hutchinson, rev. Ernest De Selincourt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936.