

English 256CR and Comparative Literature 228

Comparative Romanticism: Practice and Theory

Fall Term 2019, Wednesdays at noon
Harvard University, Barker Center 269, Prof. James Engell

While romantic literature and art can be studied through individual national and linguistic traditions (and should be), in order to understand and work with Romanticism as a whole, and thus fully with its individual traditions as well, there is no substitute for understanding Romanticism comparatively in both theory and practice. This is how many if not most romantic writers understood their own age, the best and most influential ones, almost without exception.

This course approaches comparative Romanticism by examining several works of selected writers. The approach is by no means exhaustive. Seminar members should do additional reading. For example, Rousseau is not on the syllabus in a prominent way, yet Romanticism cannot be grasped absent acquaintance with his writings, not only literary works such as the *Confessions*, *Emile*, and *La Nouvelle Héloïse* but also his cultural and social writing, including the *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*, the *Discourse on Inequality*, and the *Social Contract*. Writers such as Scott, Novalis, Fichte, De Quincey, and Schopenhauer are not on the syllabus but could be. With twelve meetings, we don't have time to be as thorough as the subject demands. Seminar members may wish to concentrate for a presentation and research paper on authors and texts not on the syllabus.

Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (2 vols. in 1), Princeton

Wordsworth, *Poetry and Prose*, Norton

Coleridge, *Poetry and Prose*, Norton

Schelling. *Philosophy of Art*, Minnesota, UCP

Schelling. *System of Transcendental Idealism*, Virginia/Ingram

Kant. *Critique of Judgment*, Hafner

Schiller. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Oxford

Goethe. *Essays on Art and Literature*, Princeton

Hegel. *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, vol. 1, Oxford; also at:

<https://www-oxfordscholarlyeditions-com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/view/10.1093/actrade/9780198244981.book.1/actrade-9780198244981-work-1>

Emerson, *Emerson's Prose and Poetry*, Norton

Thoreau, *The Portable Thoreau*, Viking

Fuller. *The Essential Margaret Fuller*, UCP

Wollstonecraft, *The Vindications*, Broadview

Copies of *Criticism: the Major Texts (CMT)*, ed. Bate, will be distributed; a few reading selections will be available in pdf on the course website.

<https://tinyurl.com/300-F19-ENGL-256CR-CPLT-228>

A valuable book to own: *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Although the Preface to *CMT* is, in some ways, dated, it remains valuable: *CMT*, vii-xii.

Sept 4 Introduction

Discussion of Comparative Romanticism; the earlier 18th-century background

Rousseau, from *The Confessions* (completed 1765, pub. 1781)

Wordsworth, from Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800)

F. Schlegel, from *Athenäum Fragmente* 116, 238; *Gespräch über die Poesie*

Sept 11

“The Development of Modern Criticism,” *CMT*, 271-79

F. Schlegel, “Literature and National Character,” *CMT*, 413-15, 423-27

Goethe, “On World Literature,” *Essays*, 224-28

Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems* (1800/1802)

Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, vol. 1, Editors’ Introduction and chapter 4; vol. 2, chapters 14, 15, 17-20

Sept 18

Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads and Other Poems*

Coleridge, “On Poesy or Art,” *CMT*, 357-64, 393-99

Schelling, “Concerning the Relation of the Plastic Arts to Nature” (Simpson, pp. 149-58, handout or pdf); *Philosophy of Art*, 23-82

Wordsworth, Preface to *The Excursion*; 1815 Preface and Essay Supplementary

Sept 25

Goethe, “Simple Imitation, Manner, Style,” *Essays*, 71-74; “Winckelmann and His Age,” 99-121; “On Interpreting Aristotle’s *Poetics*” 197-99; from Conversations with Eckermann, *CMT*, 399-405

F. Schlegel, “The Subject-Matter of Poetry,” *CMT*, 426-27

Coleridge, on Imagination, “Shakespeare as a Poet Generally,” “Shakespeare’s Judgment Equal to His Genius,” *CMT*, 386-92, excerpts on Shakespeare, 2 pdf’s

Goethe, “Shakespeare, A Tribute,” “Shakespeare Once Again,” *Essays*, 163-74

A. Schlegel, on Shakespeare, *CMT*, 415-23

Suggested: Emerson, “Shakespeare, or the Poet” from *Representative Men*

Oct 2

Hazlitt, selections, *CMT*, 282-330

Keats, letters, *CMT*, 347-50, also letter dated May 3, 1818 to J. H. Reynolds, and journal letter dated Feb 14-May 3, 1819 to George and Georgiana Keats; “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer,” “Ode to Psyche,” “Ode to a Nightingale,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” “Fall of Hyperion” (Rollins is standard edition of letters, Stillinger of poems, though any responsible edition may be used)

- Oct 9** Schiller, *CMT* 405-07; *Aesthetic Letters*, Introduction and volume
Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry* in *CMT*, 427-35, Norton or Perkins anthologies
(If not previously read, Sidney's *Apologie for Poesy*, *CMT*, 77-106)
- Oct 16** Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (*Essential MF*)
- Oct 23** Kant, in *The Critique of Judgment, the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*
Eva Schaper, "Taste, Sublimity and Genius: The Aesthetic of Nature and Art," from
The Cambridge Companion to Kant (on the third *Critique*) pdf
Coleridge, "Principles of Genial Criticism," *CMT*, 364-75
Coleridge, from *The Friend* on Reason and Understanding, pdf
- Oct 30** Kant, continue in *Critique of Judgment, Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (*Critique of Teleological Judgment* optional but strongly encouraged)
Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, Schelling's Introduction and Major sections 1, 2, 5, 6
Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, vol. 1, chs. 4, [5-9 optional], 10, 12-13
- Nov 6** Hegel, *Aesthetics, Lectures on Fine Art*, vol. 1, 1-115, 153-77, 281-98, 517-29.
Goethe, "Ancient and Modern," *Essays*, 90-93, and *CMT*, 399-405
Schiller, from "On Simple [Naïve] and Sentimental Poetry," *CMT*, 408-12
- Nov 13** Emerson, [*Nature* (1836)], "The American Scholar," "Divinity School Address,"
"The Method of Nature," "The Transcendentalist," "The Poet," "The Over-Soul"
The Norton Emerson surprisingly does not include *Nature* (1836)
Whitman, read in *Song of Myself* from *Leaves of Grass*
- Nov 20** Thoreau, *Walden*, "Walking," "Life Without Principle"
- Nov 27** Holiday, Thanksgiving is Thursday, November 28
- Dec 4** Oral presentations (Note: this falls in Reading Period)
- Dec 12** Final paper due at noon. Note: this is a Thursday. No extensions, please.

Many topics in romantic theory might be pursued, e.g., genre; symbol; genius; language; Shakespeare; aspects of the transmission of ideas and texts between Germany, Great Britain, and America 1770-1840; the professionalization of authorship (e.g., books by Pfau, Mahoney, Siskin, and Levinson [ed.]); the changing reading public and its effect on writing (e.g., studies by Klancher and St. Clair); the idea of the soul; relation of science to literature (e.g., books by Noel Jackson, Tim Fulford [ed.], Trevor Levere, edited volume by Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine); prophecy; romantic regionalism (e.g., Scottish or New England Romanticism) and its relation to larger, comparative Romanticism; orientalism; literature and politics; environmental Romanticism. Members of the seminar may pursue such topics. Iain McCalman (ed.), *The Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832* (1999) or Nicholas Roe (ed.), *Romanticism: An Oxford Guide* (2005) may instigate further ideas. There is a good study to be written of the activity of translation in the later eighteenth century and Romantic era, especially English to German and German to English, but also including French.

Texts come from those on sale at the Coop (see course web site) or pdf downloads on the course website, and volumes in numerous editions in Child (non-circulating), Lamont, Widener, House Libraries, etc. Much of the English poetry and a few prose pieces may also be found in the Norton Anthology of English Literature, the volume devoted to Romanticism (ed. Deidre Lynch) or in David Perkins, *English Romantic Writers* (preferably 2nd ed.), neither assigned, but each invaluable. German texts are in the libraries; many are available in Reclam paperback editions. Downloads in pdf will be on the course website. *If material is under copyright, you may make one copy for your personal use.*

There are three requirements for work submitted: (1) an individual journal kept *throughout* the term *through November 20* with three to five pages (in Word or searchable pdf, double-spaced) each week; this journal is submitted via email list, *not* the course website, by noon Monday prior to our seminar meeting, at the latest; (2) an individual oral conference presentation to the seminar on Wednesday December 4, the first day of Reading Period, which will be recorded on video, and a self-critique of that presentation; (3) a short, journal-style research paper, approximately 12 to 20 pages, benefitting from the oral conference presentation and feedback. Research choices need to be made fairly early in the term. Because of Fall Term schedule in 2019, we have only 12 regular meetings and one meeting for oral presentations.

It is imperative to get into the Library *and* to get online immediately. Please explore! The seminar encourages research methods useful for almost any literary or cultural field. This is not a course where one can follow common reading well enough and then in the last couple weeks sprint to write a paper that is decent though not the best work that one could produce. Any seminar should foster high levels of scholarly and research practice. It's not alchemy; it's putting in the time and using creative initiative and resourcefulness, ferreting out what is available, what has been done, and discovering what interests you most.

To repeat: *Please keep a reading journal and submit it by email attachment to the whole seminar by Monday noon for the weeks agreed.* This will permit us to read the reactions and responses of other members and to come to meetings ready to discuss the material *and* what others have said about it. We'll learn from each other.

There is no requirement to buy the books or editions available at the Coop; however, most are current, widely used reading texts and, in some cases, standard scholarly editions. You will likely want them for your permanent library. ***Please bring to class texts to be discussed that week, preferably in print, though electronic copies are acceptable if you are able to annotate them.*** We shall decide in advance, tentatively, which texts to emphasize. Your readings and journal entries should suggest particular issues for discussion. Please come ready to contribute orally.

Office Hours for substantive discussions may be by appointment. Please see me or e-mail jengell@fas.harvard.edu. Regular hours for shorter discussion and routine matters are Thursdays, Barker Center 272, 3:00-4:30 p.m.

The work of Plato, Aristotle, and Spinoza are all germane to romantic theory, and Plato and Aristotle for poetic practice as well. For Plato and Aristotle's *Poetics*, see CMT, 3-49.

Samples of comparative and other useful studies

Julie Ellison, *Delicate Subjects: Romanticism, Gender, and the Ethics of Understanding*, on

Coleridge, Schleiermacher, and Fuller

M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*

James Engell, *The Creative Imagination*

Gerald Chapman, *Literary Criticism in England, 1660-1800*

Cultural Interaction in the Romantic Age, ed. Gregory Maertz

Romantic Legacies, ed. Shun-liang Chao and John Michael Corrigan

Elinor Shaffer, "Kubla Khan" and the Fall of Jerusalem: the Mythological School in Biblical

Criticism and Secular Literature, 1770-1880; ed., *Reception of S. T. Coleridge in Europe*

Thomas McFarland, *Coleridge and the Pantheist Tradition*

David Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism, and the Revolt Against Theory*

Gian Orsini, *Coleridge and German Idealism*

Samantha Harvey, *Transatlantic Transcendentalism: Coleridge, Emerson, and Nature*

René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750-1950*

Mark Kipperman, *Beyond Enchantment: German Idealism and English Romantic Poetry*

Michael John Kooy, *Coleridge, Schiller, and Aesthetic Education*

(Re-)writing the Radical: Enlightenment, Revolution and Cultural Transfer in 1790s Germany,

Britain and France, ed. Maike Oergel

Robert Weisbuch, *Atlantic Double-Cross: American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson*

Madame de Staël, *De L'Allemagne*

German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism, 3 vols. (I) Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe. (II) Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel. (III) The Romantic Ironists and Goethe. Ed. respectively: (I) H. B. Nisbet, (II) David Simpson, and (III) Kathleen Wheeler.

The Origins of Modern Critical Thought: German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism from Lessing to Hegel, ed. David Simpson, a somewhat abridged and modified volume subsuming some of the material in the three-volume series above.

Some key British critics whom the Germans read:

Shaftesbury, Anthony Asley Cooper, 3rd Earl, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) and other works
 Joseph Addison, *Spectator* papers, especially those on the distinction between natural and learned genius, on Milton, and on the Pleasures of the Imagination
 Robert Lowth, *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum: praelectiones academicae Oxonii habitae* (1753), trans. as *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (1787; German 1793, French 1812; Calvin Stowe, Harriet Beecher's husband, produced the American edition in 1829)
 Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)
 Lord Kames, *Elements of Criticism* (1762)
 Richard Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762), "On the Idea of Universal Poetry" (1765-66)
 Joseph Warton, *Observations on the Faerie Queene* (1754)
 Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759)
 Thomas Warton, "On the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe," prefixed to his *History of English Literature* (1774)
 David Hartley, *Observations on Man* (1749)
 Joseph Priestley, *Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* (1762)
 Bishop Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765)
 William Duff, *Essay on Original Genius* (1767)
 Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783)
 Alexander Gerard, *An Essay on Taste* (1759), *An Essay on Genius* (1774), which Kant read
 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy* (1769-90)
 Maurice Morgann, *Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff* (1777)

Some Anglophone writers who spread German thought and literature:

William of Norwich
 Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 Thomas Love Beddoes
 Thomas De Quincey
 Margaret Fuller
 Frederic Henry Hedge
 James Marsh
 George Ticknor

Some German and Continental writers influencing and influenced by Anglophone writers:

G. W. Leibniz (or Leibnitz)
 J. K. Bodmer and J. J. Breitinger (known as "the Swiss Critics")
 Johann Nicolaus Tetens (psychologist and philosopher, Kant read attentively)
 G. F. Klopstock
 Johann Winckelmann
 C. Wieland
 G. E. Lessing
 F. Jacobi
 Moses Mendelssohn

Some American writers who read widely, often as comparatists

Mary Moody Emerson, her *Almanacks* (mss in Houghton)

Charles Brockden Brown

Joseph Dennie, *The Port-Folio*

William Cullen Bryant

Nathaniel Hawthorne, perhaps especially *The Marble Faun*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Some journals that publish comparative studies in Romanticism:

European Romantic Review

Symbiosis

Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen

Comparative Literature

The Coleridge Bulletin

Studies in Romanticism

Romanticism