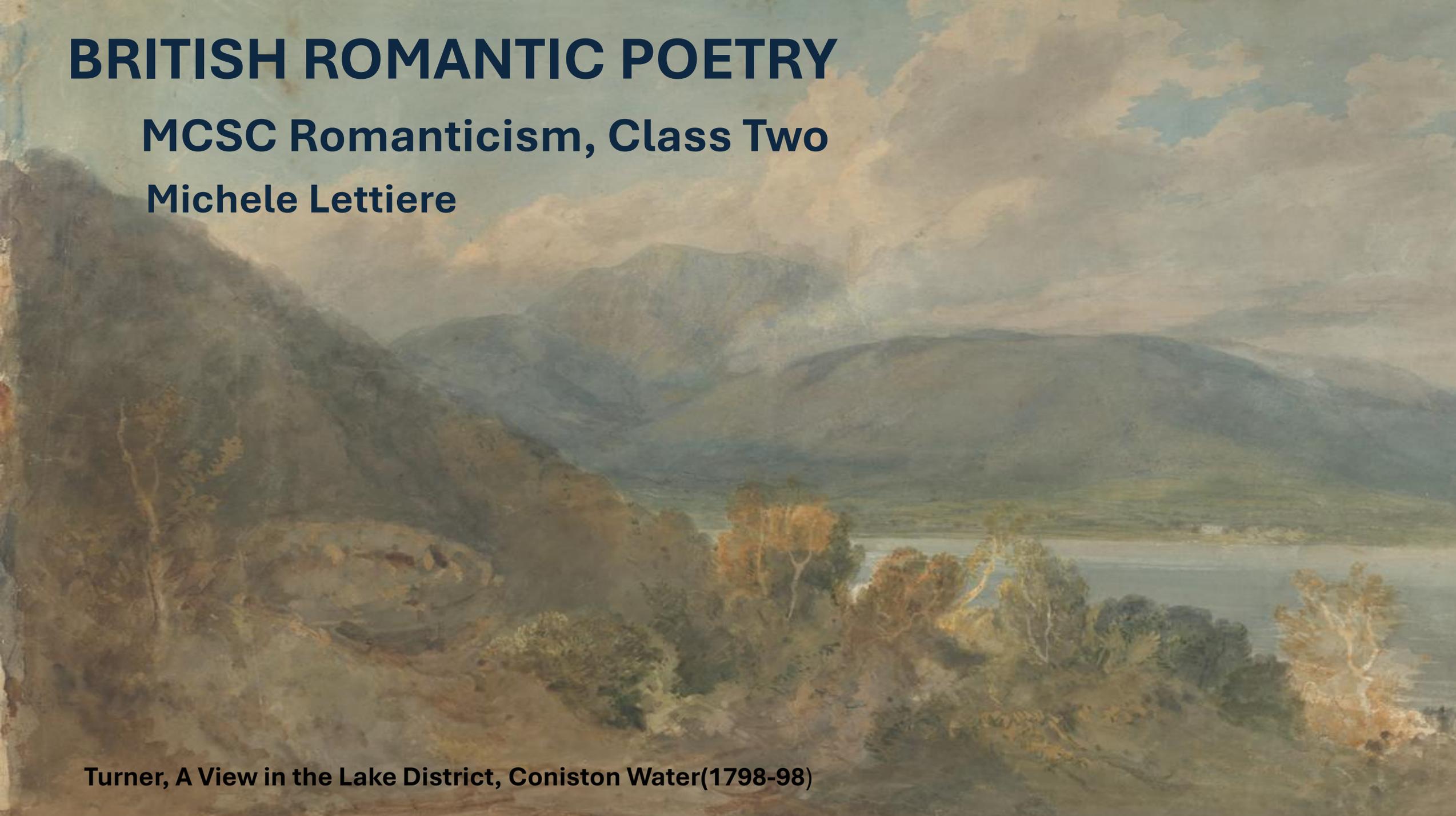


# **BRITISH ROMANTIC POETRY**

**MCSC Romanticism, Class Two**

**Michele Lettiere**

**Turner, A View in the Lake District, Coniston Water(1798-98)**



# FEMALE ROMANTIC ERA POETS

**JOANNA BAILLE (1762-1851)**

**FELICIA HEMANS (1793-1835)**



**ANNA LAETITIA BARBAULD  
(1743-1825)**

**CHARLOTTE SMITH  
(1749-1806)**

**MARY ROBINSON  
(1749-1806)**



# FIRST GENERATION ROMANTICS: Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge



1757-1827

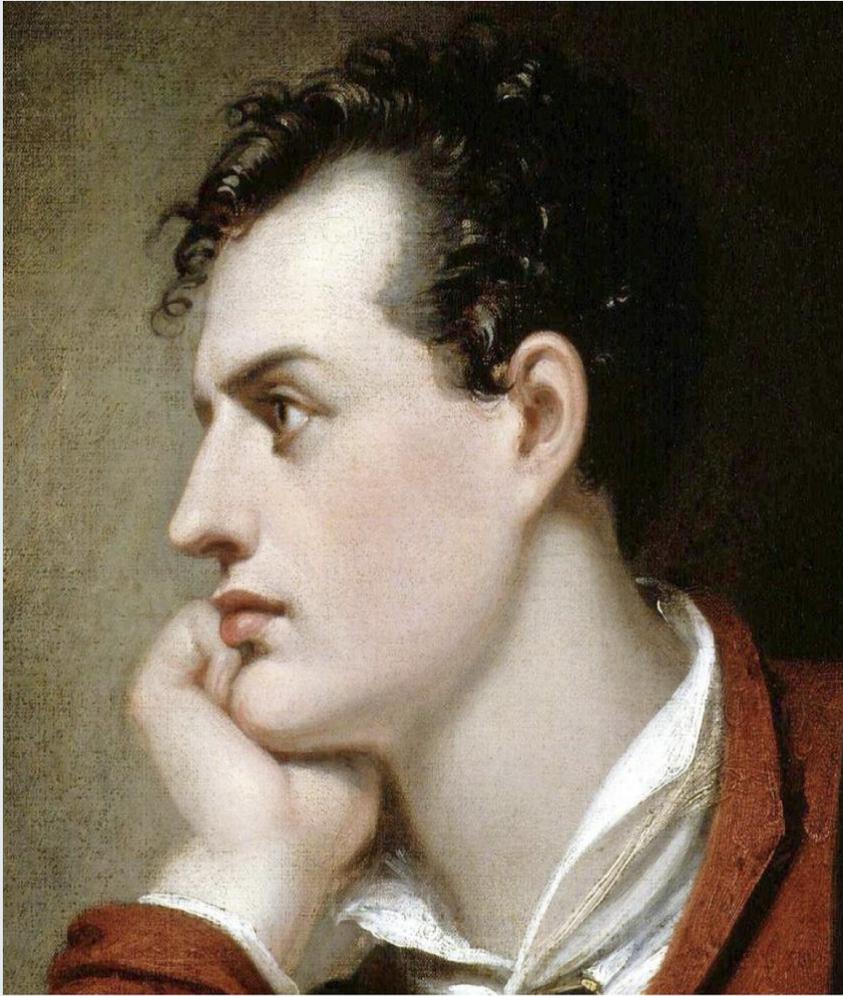


1770-1850



1772-1834

## SECOND GENERATION ROMANTICS. Byron, Shelley, Keats



1788-1824



1792-1822



1795-1821

## Enlightenment Poetry

(Pope, Dryden, Johnson)

.....versus.....

## Romantic Poetry

(both first and second generation poets)

### VALUE

- Reason.....

- Emotion and Imagination

### View of NATURE

- Ordered System.....

- Spiritual, mysterious force

### TONE

- Satirical, Rational .....

- Emotional, Visionary

### STYLE

- Formal, Balanced.....

- Expressive, Flexible, Incomplete

### SUBJECT

- Society and Morality.....

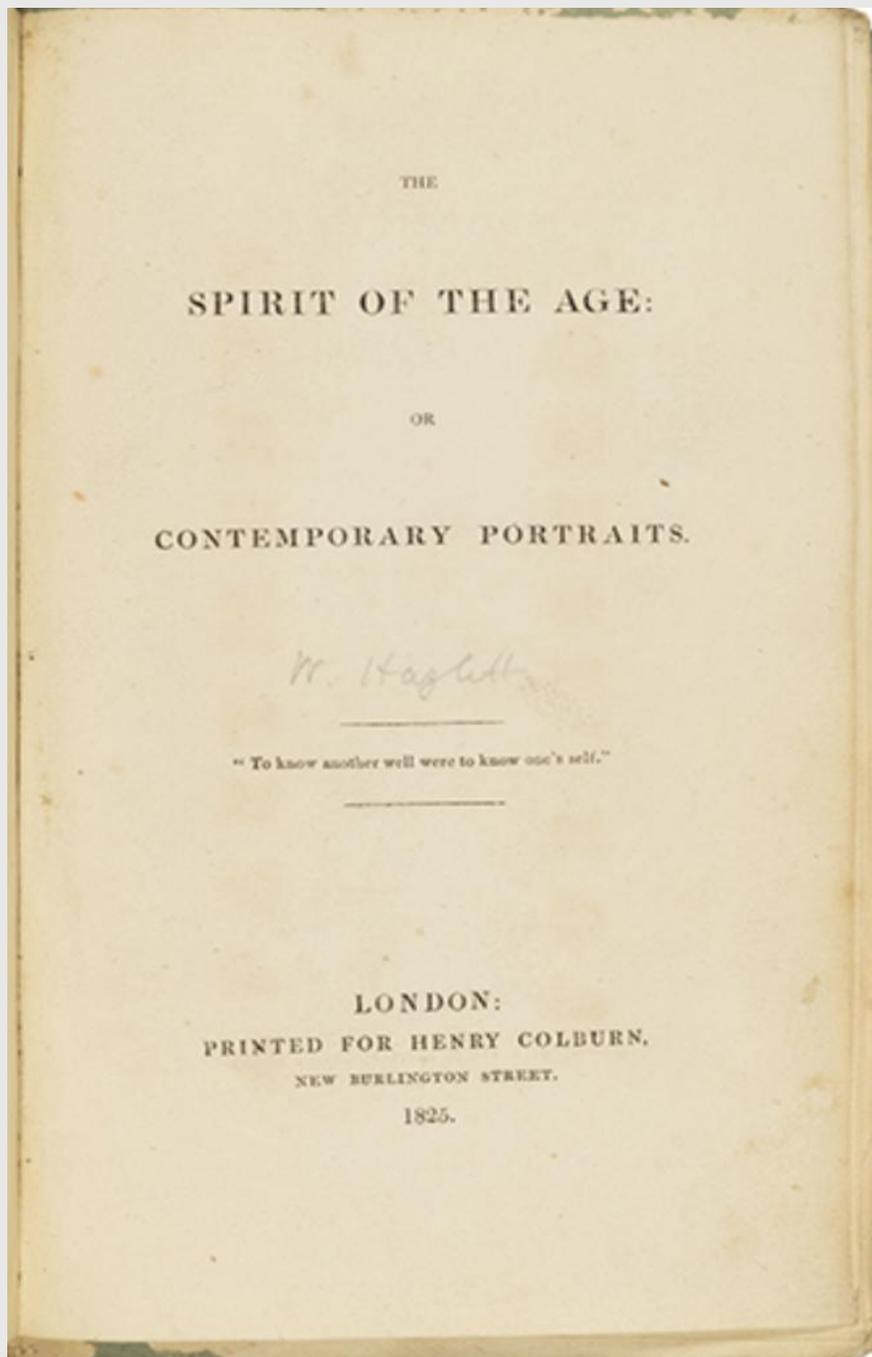
- The Common Man, Individuality

### INFLUENCES

- Classical Greek/Roman.....

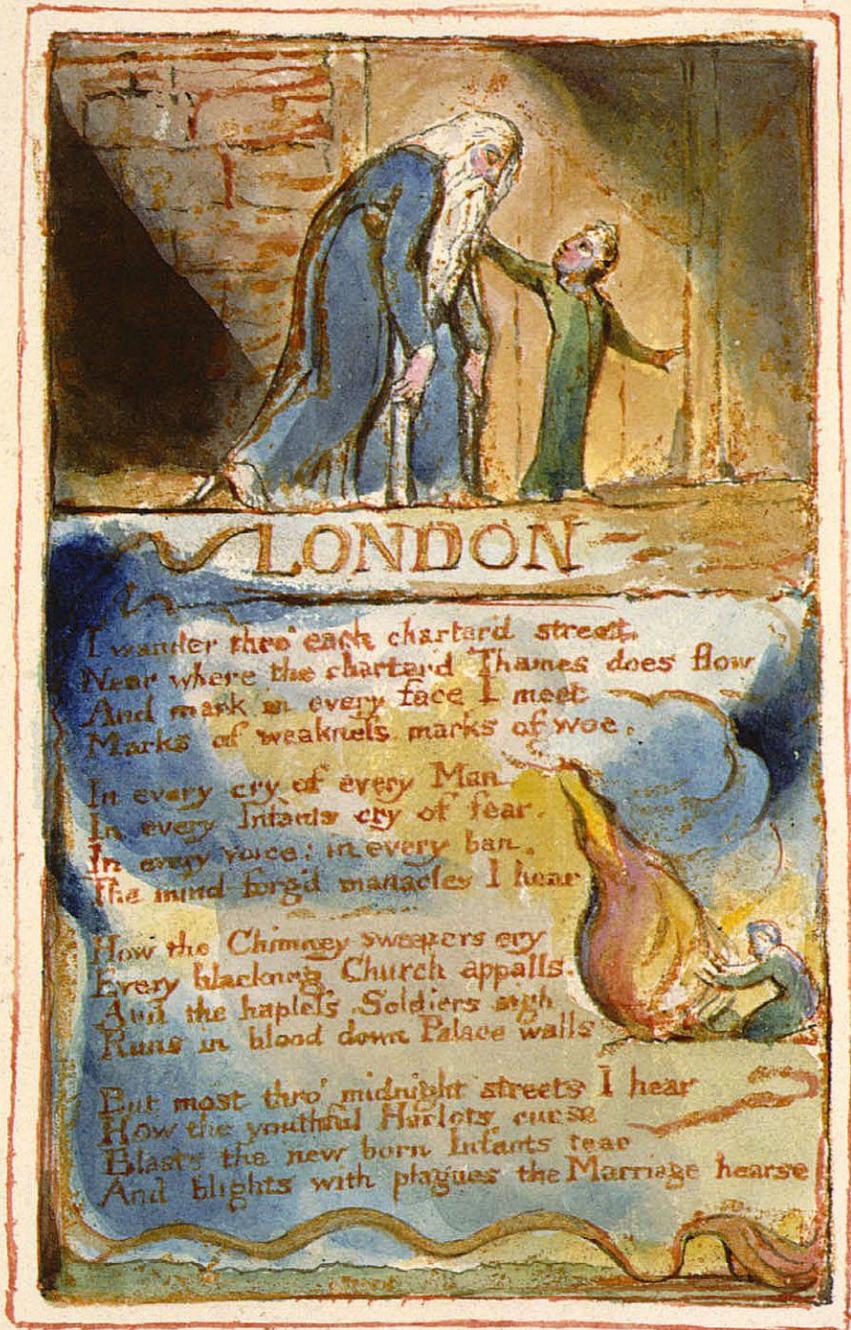
- \* Folk Traditions

...



**Mr. Wordsworth's genius is a pure emanation of the Spirit of the Age....[it] partakes of, and is carried along with, the revolutionary movement of our age: the political changes of the day were the model on which he formed and conducted his poetical experiments. His Muse...is a levelling one. It proceeds on a principle of equality, and strives to reduce all things to the same standard.**

**William Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age* (1825)**

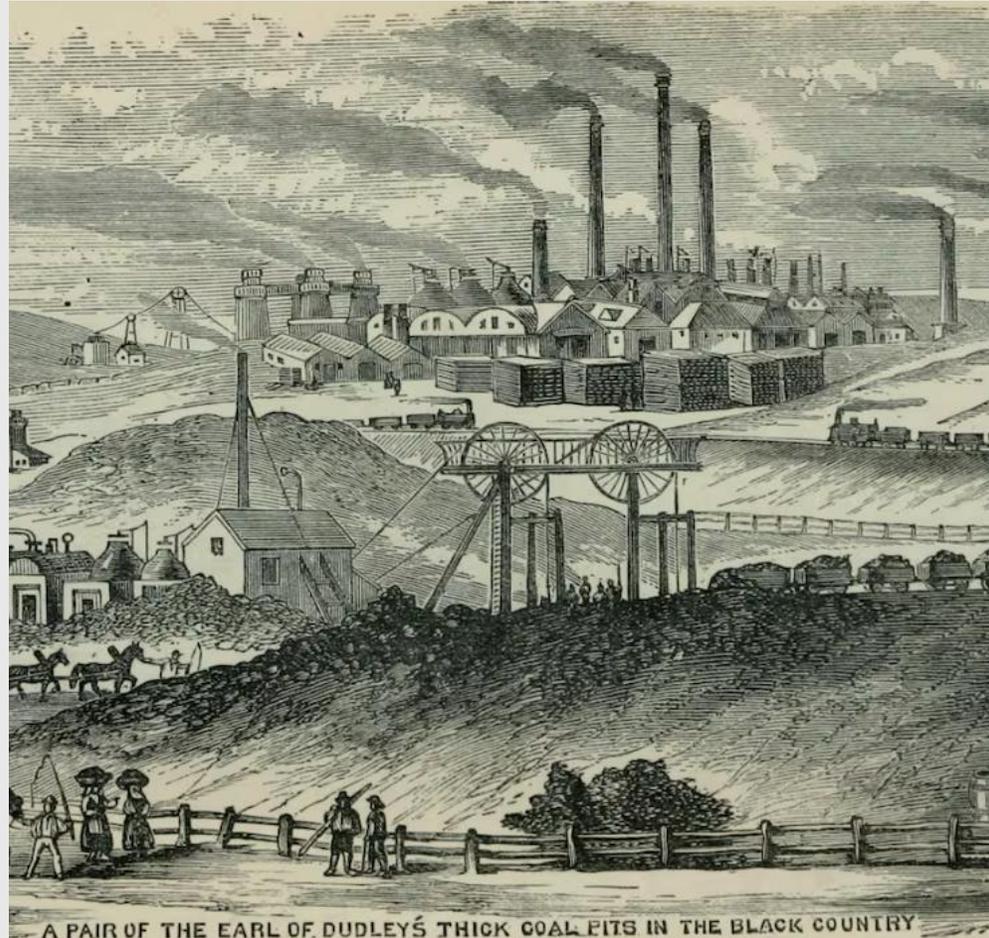


I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
 Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.  
 And mark in every face I meet  
 Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,  
 In every Infants cry of fear,  
 In every voice: in every ban,  
 The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

From "London"  
 in *Songs of Experience*  
 William Blake (1794)

Excerpt from **The World is Too Much with Us**  
(1802)



A PAIR OF THE EARL OF DUDLEY'S THICK COAL PITS IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

**The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;  
—Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not...**



Chivvy Chase.

None but the brave deserve the Fair.

Cut him down, Cut him down.

Oh pray Sir don't kill Mamma, she only came to see Mr. Hunt.

Shame, Shame, Murder, Murder, Massacres.

Shame.

Shame, Shame

Manchester Heroes, 1819  
George Cruikshank

# England in 1819

Percy Bysshe Shelley

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying King;  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow  
Through public scorn,—mud from a muddy spring;  
Rulers who neither see nor feel nor know,  
But leechlike to their fainting country cling  
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow.  
A people starved and stabbed in th' untilled field;  
An army, whom liberticide and prey  
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield;  
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay;  
Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;  
A senate, Time's worst statute, unrepealed—  
Are graves from which a glorious Phantom may  
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

# LYRICAL BALLADS 1798

*With a Few Other Poems*

## ADVERTISEMENT

“It is the honourable characteristic of Poetry that its materials are to be found in every subject which can interest the human mind. The evidence of this fact is to be sought, not in the writings of Critics, but in those of Poets themselves.

The majority of the following poems are to be considered as experiments. They were written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure.”

LYRICAL BALLADS,

WITH

*A FEW OTHER POEMS.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. & A. ARCH, GRACECHURCH-STREET.

1798.

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“The ‘experiment’, we think, has failed, not because the language of conversation is little adapted to ‘the purposes of poetic pleasure’, but because it has been tried upon uninteresting subjects. Yet every piece discovers genius.”

Robert Southey, *Critical Review*, October 1798

...Mr. Wordsworth, instead of confining himself almost entirely to the society of the dalesmen and cottagers, and little children, who form the subjects of his book, had condescended to mingle a little more with the people that were to read and judge of it, we cannot help thinking that its texture might have been considerably improved.

Francis Jeffrey, *Edinburgh Review*

# Poetry

## Wordsworth

”the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling”

Originates from “emotion recollected in tranquility”

Grounded in human experience, ordinary life, and the “essential passions of the heart”

”...the understanding must necessarily be in some degree enlightened...”

## Shelley

“the expression of the imagination” that “makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world”

“..the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth.”

Transfigurative: “It awakens and enlarges the mind itself....contains within itself the seeds at once of its own and social renovation.”



# Visions of Nature

Wordsworth: Nature shapes moral character, acts as a “guide” and teacher. Childhood encounter foundational for creating empathy, humility, and virtue. Experiential.

Coleridge: Morality linked to an imaginative perception of nature, recognizing the divine unity within nature. Imaginative.

Shelley: Nature as morally elevating and politically transformative. Inspires freedom and resistance to oppression.

Keats: Nature as a source of emotional truth and ethical sensitivity. Refines perception and moral awareness through beauty and feeling.

*from* ***The Tables Turned***

**Sweet is the lore which Nature brings:  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:--  
We murder to dissect.**

**Enough of Science and of Art:  
Close up those barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives.**



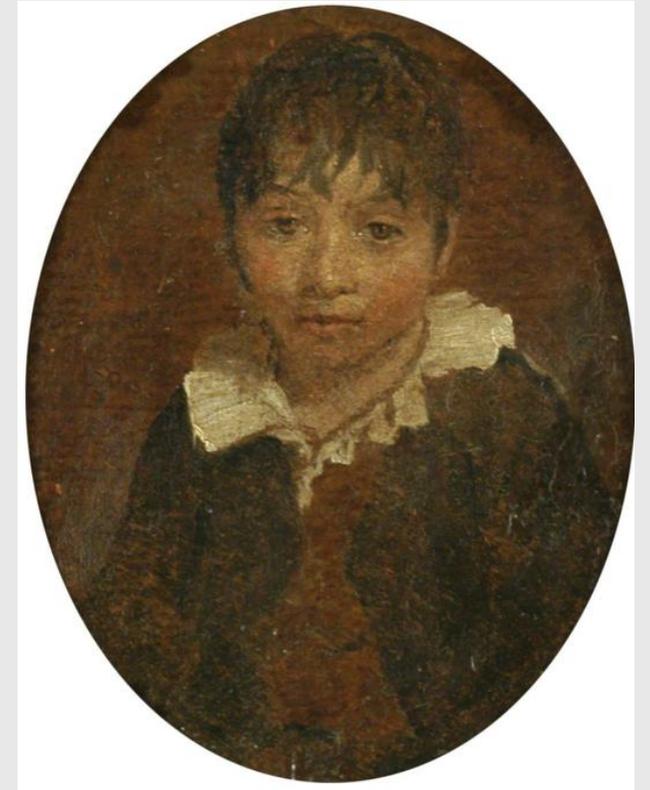
NEWTON by William Blake (1795 and 1805)

from **Frost at Midnight**

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

For I was reared

In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,  
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.  
But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze  
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags  
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,  
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores  
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear  
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible  
Of that eternal language, which thy God  
Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
Himself in all, and all things in himself.  
Great universal Teacher! he shall mould  
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.



Hartley Coleridge, as a Boy, by David Wilkie

Philosophical Enquiry  
INTO THE  
ORIGIN of our IDEAS  
OF THE  
S U B L I M E  
AND  
B E A U T I F U L.



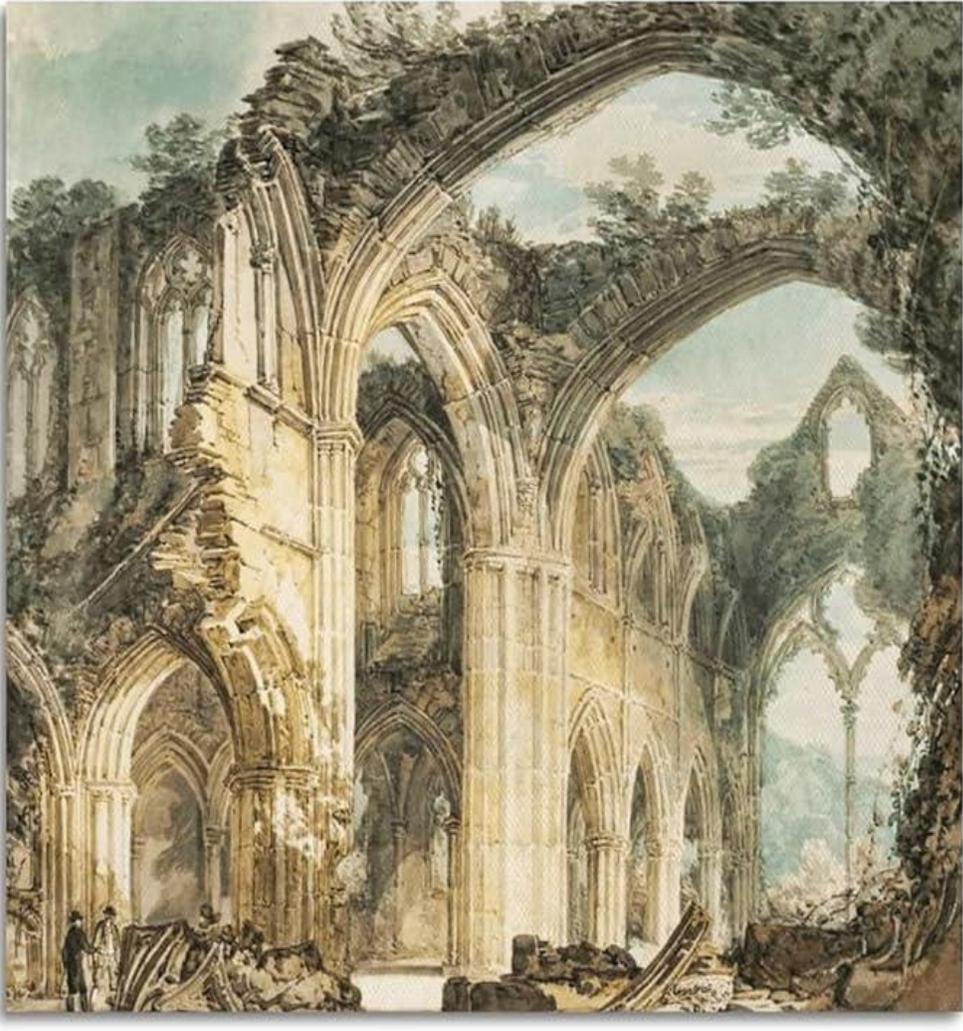
L O N D O N :

Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY, in Pall-mall,  
M D C C L V I I .

‘Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.’

Edmund Burke

From ***Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey***



Turner, *The Chancel and Crossing of Tintern Abbey, Looking towards the East Window*, 1794

**For I have learned  
To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes  
The still, sad music of humanity...**

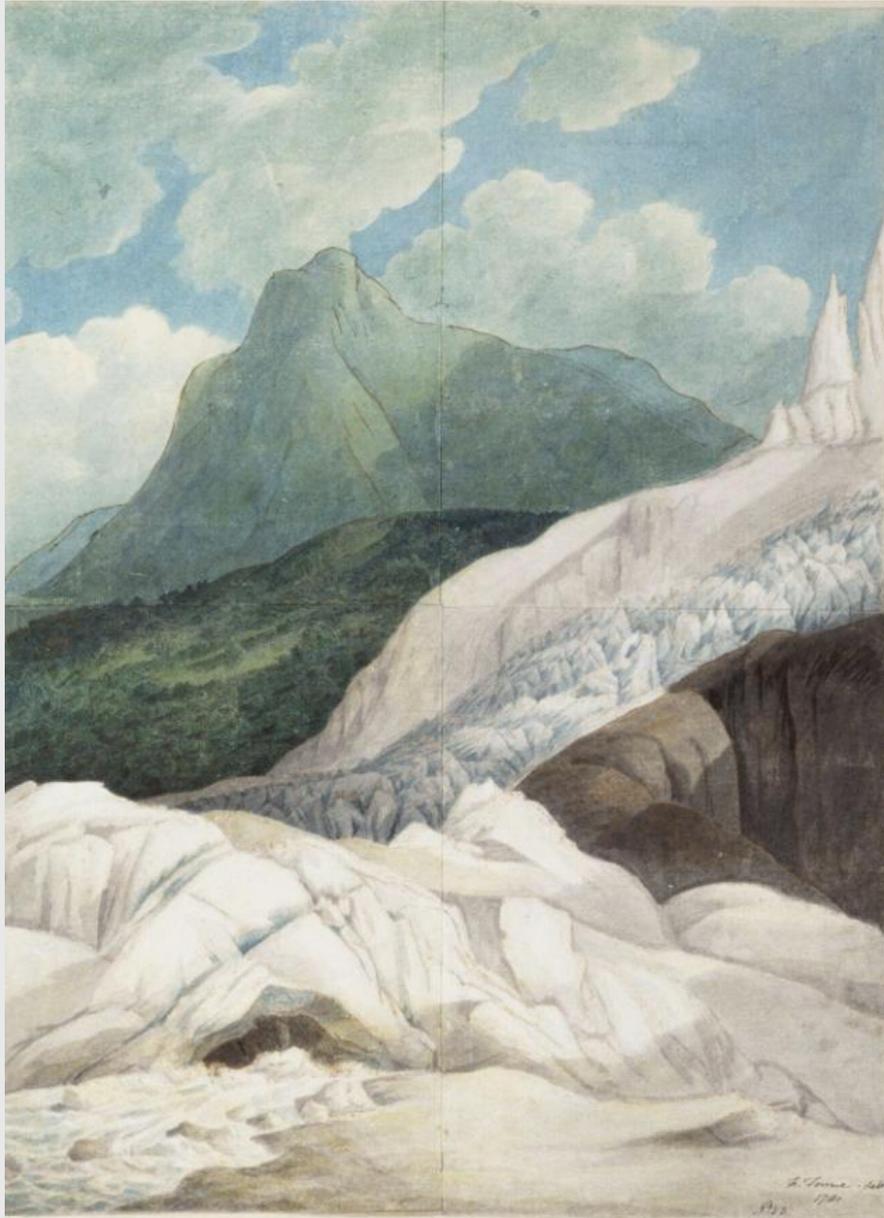
**And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean, and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:  
A motion and a spirit,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

*from* **KUBLA KHAN:**  
**OR, A VISION IN A DREAM**

**A FRAGMENT**

**A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,**

**That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.**



Francis Towne, *The Source of the Aveyron; Mount Blanc in the Background*, 1781

# **MONT BLANC:** Lines Written in the Vale of Chamouni, 1816

V

**Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:—the power is there,**

**The still and solemn power of many sights,  
And many sounds, and much of life and death...**

**The secret Strength of things**

**Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome  
Of Heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!**

**And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,  
If to the human mind's imaginings**

**Silence and solitude were vacancy?**

Percy Bysshe Shelley

From **Ode to a Nightingale** (1819)

**Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!**

**No hungry generations tread thee down;**

**The voice I hear this passing night was heard**

**In ancient days by emperor and clown:**

**Perhaps the self-same song that found a path**

**Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,**

**She stood in tears amid the alien corn;**

**The same that oft-times hath**

**Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam**

**Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.**

- Joseph Severn, *Keats Listening to the Nightingale on Hampstead Heath*, 1849



# TO WORDSWORTH

Percy Bysshe Shelley

(1816)



Wordsworth, 1819 by Henry Colburn

Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know  
That things depart which never may return:  
Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first glow,  
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.  
These common woes I feel. One loss is mine  
Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.  
Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine  
On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:  
Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood  
Above the blind and battling multitude:  
In honoured poverty thy voice did weave  
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—  
Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,  
Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.