



Romantic Psychoanalysis: The Burden of the Mystery

Joel Faflak

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How the Romantics invented psychoanalysis in advance of Freud.

In this provocative work, Joel Faflak argues that Romanticism, particularly British Romantic poetry, invents psychoanalysis in advance of Freud. The Romantic period has long been treated as a time of incipient psychological exploration anticipating more sophisticated discoveries in the science of the mind. Romantic Psychoanalysis challenges this assumption by treating psychoanalysis in the Romantic period as a discovery unto itself, a way of taking Freud back to his future. Reading Romantic literature against eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophy, Faflak contends that Romantic poetry and prose—including works by Coleridge, De Quincey, Keats, and Wordsworth—remind a later psychoanalysis of its fundamental matrix in phantasy and thus of its profoundly literary nature.

Joel Faflak is Associate Professor of English Literature at the University of Western Ontario. He is the editor of several books, including *Nervous Reactions: Victorian Recollections of Romanticism* (coedited with Julia M. Wright), also published by SUNY Press, and *Sanity, Madness, Transformation: The Psyche in Romanticism*.

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