

## STAËL, ROMANTICISM AND REVOLUTION

Two centuries of sexism have hidden Germaine de Staël's place in international history. Straddling the divides of the French Revolution, Napoleonic Europe, emergent nationalism, and European Romanticism, and playing pivotal roles in those movements, she was also a friend of Byron, Thomas Jefferson, and Tsar Alexander. Extensive archival research and a complete contextual overview of Staël's writings here restore Staël's canonical status as political philosopher, historian, European Romantic theorist, and revolutionary. While the term *stateswoman* is not commonly used, it describes Staël aptly, acting as she necessarily did through men around her. The brilliant game of masks and proxies imposed on her by patriarchy is detailed here, alongside her unending fight for the oppressed, from the nations of Napoleon's subjugated Europe to the victims of the Atlantic slave trade. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

JOHN CLAIBORNE ISBELL is a scholar, educator, and poet. He has published in French and English on Staël and on European Romanticism, starting in 1994 with *The Birth of European Romanticism: Truth and Propaganda in Staël's "De l'Allemagne"* (Cambridge University Press). His most recent monograph is *An Outline of Romanticism in the West* (2022).

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN ROMANTICISM

Founding Editor

Marilyn Butler, University of Oxford

General Editor

James Chandler, University of Chicago

Editorial Board

Claire Connolly, University College Cork

Paul Hamilton, University of London

Claudia Johnson, Princeton University

Essaka Joshua, University of Notre Dame

Nigel Leask, University of Glasgow

Alan Liu, University of California, Santa Barbara

Deidre Lynch, Harvard University

Jerome McGann, University of Virginia

David Simpson, University of California, Davis

This series aims to foster the best new work in one of the most challenging fields within English literary studies. From the early 1780s to the early 1830s, a formidable array of talented men and women took to literary composition, not just in poetry, which some of them famously transformed, but in many modes of writing. The expansion of publishing created new opportunities for writers, and the political stakes of what they wrote were raised again by what Wordsworth called those 'great national events' that were 'almost daily taking place': the French Revolution, the Napoleonic and American wars, urbanization, industrialization, religious revival, an expanded empire abroad, and the reform movement at home. This was an enormous ambition, even when it pretended otherwise. The relations between science, philosophy, religion, and literature were reworked in texts such as *Frankenstein* and *Biographia Literaria*; gender relations in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *Don Juan*; journalism by Cobbett and Hazlitt; and poetic form, content, and style by the Lake School and the Cockney School. Outside Shakespeare studies, probably no body of writing has produced such a wealth of commentary or done so much to shape the responses of modern criticism. This indeed is the period that saw the emergence of those notions of literature and of literary history, especially national literary history, on which modern scholarship in English has been founded.

The categories produced by Romanticism have also been challenged by recent historicist arguments. The task of the series is to engage both with a challenging corpus of Romantic writings and with the changing field of criticism they have helped to shape. As with other literary series published by Cambridge University Press, this one will represent the work of both younger and more established scholars on either side of the Atlantic and elsewhere.

See the end of the book for a complete list of published titles.

# STAËL, ROMANTICISM AND REVOLUTION

*The Life and Times of the First European*

JOHN CLAIBORNE ISBELL

*University of Texas Rio Grande Valley*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781009362719](http://www.cambridge.org/9781009362719)

DOI: [10.1017/9781009362719](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009362719)

© John Claiborne Isbell 2023

This work is in copyright. It is subject to statutory exceptions and to the provisions of relevant  
licensing agreements; with the exception of the Creative Commons version the link for which is  
provided below, no reproduction of any part of this work may take place without the written  
permission of Cambridge University Press.

An online version of this work is published at [doi.org/10.1017/9781009362719](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009362719) under a  
Creative Commons Open Access license CC-BY-NC 4.0 which permits re-use, distribution and  
reproduction in any medium for non-commercial purposes providing appropriate credit to the  
original work is given. You may not distribute derivative works without permission. To view  
a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

All versions of this work may contain content reproduced under license from third parties.  
Permission to reproduce this third-party content must be obtained from these third-parties directly.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI [10.1017/9781009362719](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009362719)

First published 2023

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*A Cataloging-in-Publication data record for this book is available from the Library of Congress*

ISBN 978-1-009-36272-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-009-36273-3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence  
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
remain, accurate or appropriate.