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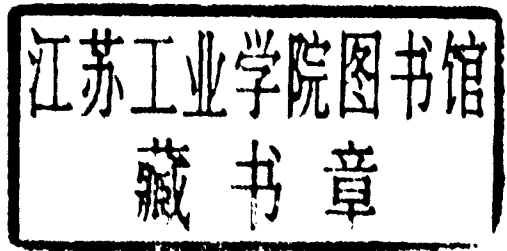
# SHELLEY

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*Edited by  
Timothy Morton*

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COMPANION TO  
SHELLEY

EDITED BY  
TIMOTHY MORTON  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all my contributors, who wrote, revised, and revised again to produce a stunning collection of essays that compellingly rediscovers Shelley for the twenty-first century. Thank you to David Simpson, who read and commented on my chapter on Shelley and ecology. I am very grateful to my wife Kate for reading through some of the chapters with me, and for accommodating my writing during the first year of our daughter Claire's life. I was lucky to have my research assistants, Seth Forrest and Christopher Schaberg, who worked on copy-editing and indexing. I am fortunate to have such a helpful and intelligent editor as Linda Bree. The University of California at Davis provided me with a Faculty Development Award and two Small Grants in aid of research to help with the publication of this volume.

## A NOTE ON THE TEXT

The latest editions of Shelley were as yet unfinished as this book went to press. I have taken the liberty, therefore, of referring principally to Everest and Matthews's edition (Longman; abbreviated as *P*), with references to the prose coming from David Lee Clark's handy, though out-of-date, edition (abbreviated as *Pr*), barring a few occasional citations from E. B. Murray's or Ingpen and Peck's edition (the latter is abbreviated *IP*). The Companion cites Clark's edition because of the ease with which students may find a copy of this edition of the prose. Where the Longman edition is not yet completed (works written after *The Cenci* (1819)), I refer to the revised Norton edition edited by Donald Reiman and Neil Fraistat. References to this text are marked with an *N* in parenthesis after citations. The Companion refers to translations in principal from Hutchinson's Oxford edition (*H*).

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1792 Percy Bysshe Shelley (PBS) born 4 August at Field Place, Warnham, near Horsham, West Sussex, the eldest child of Timothy Shelley, MP, and Elizabeth Pilfold Shelley, and eldest grandson of Bysshe Shelley.
- 1797 William Godwin marries Mary Wollstonecraft 29 March; she gives birth to their daughter Mary 30 August and dies 10 September.
- 1798 Studies with Warnham clergyman, Rev. Evan Edwards.
- 1802-4 Boards at Syon House Academy, Isleworth, on Great Western Road in the Thames Valley.
- 1804-10 PBS a student and boarder at Eton.
- 1806 Grandfather becomes Sir Bysshe Shelley, baronet. Earliest year in which PBS may have written poems in *The Esdaile Notebook*.
- 1808 Corresponds with his Wiltshire cousin Harriet Grove; she ends their informal engagement in late 1810.
- 1809 Writes several poems now gathered in *The Esdaile Notebook*.
- 1810 Writes and submits his first book-length poem *The Wandering Jew* for publication, which is rejected.  
Gothic novel *Zastrozzi* (spring).



Poems by PBS and his sister Elizabeth, under the title *Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire* (autumn).

University College Oxford (October); meets Thomas Jefferson Hogg.

Gothic novel *St Irvyne* (December).

*Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson* (December).

- 1811 Meets Harriet Westbrook (January).  
Writes and circulates *The Necessity of Atheism* with Hogg.  
Expelled from Oxford (March).  
Elopes with and marries Harriet Westbrook in Edinburgh on 29 August.  
Meets Robert Southey in Keswick.
- 1812 Dublin; *Address to the Irish People, Proposals for an Association of Philanthropists, Declaration of Rights*.  
Travels to Wales, then Devon; writes and circulates *Letter to Lord Ellenborough* in defence of the radical publisher Daniel Eaton, and the broadside ballad *The Devil's Walk*.  
Flees to Tremadoc, North Wales, near Harlech, under government surveillance.  
Raises funds for blocking an estuary to create more arable land.  
Meets William Godwin during brief visit to London (autumn).
- 1813 The Shelleys leave Wales at short notice (February), pursued by creditors or robbers.  
Dublin: retrieves the manuscript of *The Esdaile Notebook* from the printer.  
London: PBS prints and privately circulates *Queen Mab* (between May and December).  
Harriet and PBS's first daughter Ianthe born (23 June).  
Publishes *A Vindication of Natural Diet*.  
Joins expatriate, pro-revolutionary vegetarian French and English circle centered on Mrs Boinville.
- 1814 Early in the year publishes *A Refutation of Deism*.  
(July) PBS and Mary Godwin elope to France, with her half-sister Claire Clairmont along as translator. Six weeks later they all return, out of funds.

Mary's and PBS's joint *History of a Six Weeks' Tour* is based on this honeymoon trip. Harriet's and PBS's first son, Charles, is born (30 November).

- 1815 Sir Bysshe Shelley dies (5 January).  
 Mary's first child, a daughter, is born prematurely and dies (6 March).  
 As part of settlement of his grandfather's estate, PBS receives money to pay his (and Godwin's) debts and provide an annual income for Harriet.  
 Writes *Alastor*.
- 1816 William Shelley born (January).  
*Alastor . . . and Other Poems* (February), the first publication under his own name.  
 The Shelleys, Claire, Byron, and others settle in Switzerland for the summer.  
 Writes 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty' and later 'Mont Blanc'.  
 Mary writes the first draft of *Frankenstein*.  
 Claire becomes pregnant by Byron.  
 Mary's other half-sister, Fanny Imlay, becomes despondent and commits suicide (London, October).  
 Harriet Shelley, abandoned by another lover and pregnant with another child, commits suicide by drowning sometime in early December.  
 Mary and PBS marry (30 December).
- 1817 Claire's daughter Alba/Allegra is born in secret in Bath.  
 The Lord Chancellor (Lord Eldon) denies PBS custody of his children by Harriet.  
 Habeas Corpus suspended, making the civil rights of radical journalists legally indefensible.  
 The Shelleys settle at Marlow outside London when his own anti-government pamphlet *A Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote* is published.  
 (March until September) Writes *Laon and Cythna*. It is printed late in the year, but revised and reissued as *The Revolt of Islam* in December.  
 Clara born (September).  
 Drafts 'Essay on Christianity'.

Writes *An Address to the People on the Death of the Princess Charlotte* (November). *Frankenstein* published (December).

1818

Begins *Rosalind and Helen*.

The Shelleys and Claire, with their children and servants, leave for Italy in March.

PBS continues to negotiate Byron's acknowledgement and support for his and Claire's daughter.

Bagni di Lucca for the summer; translates Plato's *Symposium*; writes the essay 'On Love' and finishes *Rosalind and Helen* (published spring 1819).

PBS and Claire visit Allegra in Venice, although Claire stays nearby rather than at Allegra's home.

PBS and Byron become reacquainted.

During Mary's trip to Venice to join PBS, their daughter Clara becomes ill. She dies in September.

*Lines Written among the Euganean Hills* and *Julian and Maddalo*.

The Shelleys keep on the move, travelling to Rome, then Naples, Vesuvius, and other sites. They read Mme de Staël's *Corinne* together.

1819

They return to Rome (March); PBS completes a draft of the first three acts of *Prometheus Unbound*.

In June their son William dies; they leave immediately for Livorno.

The accumulated grief over the two children's deaths drives Mary into a deep depression.

PBS completes *The Cenci* and publishes it in Italy in 1819, in England a year later.

(August) Hearing news of the Peterloo Massacre of citizens listening to a speech about reform in a field outside Manchester, PBS writes *The Mask of Anarchy*.

(October) They move to Florence, where another child, Percy Florence, is born (12 November). *Peter Bell the Third*, 'Ode to the West Wind' (October–November).

PBS finishes *Prometheus Unbound* (published 1820); drafts the essays *A Philosophical View of Reform* and the brief 'On Life'.

British Parliament passes Six Acts collectively designed to suppress dissent still further.

- 1820 George III of England dies and is succeeded by his son George IV.  
Cato Street conspiracy to kill the English Prime Minister discovered and its plotters executed.  
The Shelleys move to Pisa. PBS writes 'Sensitive-Plant', 'Ode to Liberty', 'To a Sky-Lark', and 'Letter to Maria Gisbourne', who is visiting England at the time.  
(Autumn) *The Witch of Atlas*, 'Ode to Naples'. *Swellfoot the Tyrant* published and quickly suppressed (December).  
*Prometheus Unbound* published (September).  
Return to Pisa in October, where they meet Teresa 'Emilia' Viviani and the exiled Greek prince Alexander Mavrocordato.
- 1821 Edward and Jane Williams meet the Shelleys (January).  
The Williamses and Shelleys move to nearby residences at several different Italian locations.  
Writes *Epipsychidion* after visiting Teresa Viviani; published anonymously (May).  
In response to Thomas Love Peacock's *The Four Ages of Poetry*, writes *A Defence of Poetry*.  
Pirated editions of *Queen Mab* appear in England.  
Austrians crush the Neapolitan revolt and the Greeks rebel against Turkish rule.  
Learning of John Keats's death in Rome (23 February), writes *Adonais* (May–June; published July); it is printed in Pisa.  
Completes the drama *Hellas* in the autumn.  
Invites Byron, his lover the Countess Guiccioli, and her father and brother to Pisa.
- 1822 (January) Writes scenes for *Charles the First*; Edward John Trelawny arrives in Pisa.  
The group, but principally Shelley and Byron, plan theatricals.  
Writes several poems to or about Jane Williams, among them 'With a Guitar, to Jane'.  
Allegra Byron dies in a convent near Ravenna in April.  
(Summer) The Shelleys and the Williamses move to San Terenzo on the Bay of Lerici. PBS's boat arrives in May; PBS begins to write *The Triumph of Life*, unfinished at the time of his death.  
Mary miscarries (June).

Leigh Hunt and his family arrive; PBS invites Leigh Hunt to join, along with a more reluctant Byron, in a radical publishing venture, *The Liberal*.

Shelley and Edward Williams sail to Livorno (Leghorn) to meet the Hunts when they arrive. On the return trip (8 July), a sudden storm begins and PBS, Williams, and the boat boy are lost. Their bodies wash up later, and are cremated on the beach between La Spezia and Livorno; Shelley's ashes interred in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome in 1823.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- 1839 Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Poetical Works*, ed. Mary Shelley (London: Edward Moxon, 1839).
- Arnold Matthew Arnold, *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. W. Super, 11 vols. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960).
- CH *Shelley: The Critical Heritage*, ed. James E. Barcus (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).
- CP *The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Fraistat, 4 vols. (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000- ).
- H *Shelley: Poetical Works*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, corrected by G. M. Matthews (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).
- Hogg Thomas Jefferson Hogg, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, 2 vols. (London: Edward Moxon, 1858).
- IP Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Complete Works*, ed. R. Ingpen and W. E. Peck, 10 vols. (London and New York: Ernest Benn, 1926-30).
- KSJ *Keats-Shelley Journal*.
- L *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. F. L. Jones, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).
- MSJ *The Journals of Mary Shelley 1814-1844*, ed. Paula R. Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).
- N *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald Reiman and Neil Fraistat (2nd edn of Norton Critical Edition; 1st edn ed. Donald Reiman and Sharon B. Powers) (New York and London: Norton, 2002 (1977)).
- P *The Poems of Shelley*, ed. Kelvin Everest and Geoffrey Matthews (London and New York: Longman, 1989- ).
- Pr *Shelley's Prose: Or The Trumpet of a Prophecy*, ed. David Lee Clark (1954, 1966; London: Fourth Estate, 1988).
- RH Richard Holmes, *Shelley: The Pursuit* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987).
- W Newman Ivey White, *Shelley*, 2 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1940).

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TIMOTHY MORTON

## Introduction

### Contesting Shelley

‘Shelley, the genius, the prophet, Shelley, and Byron, with his glowing sensuality and his bitter satire upon our existing society, find most of their readers in the proletariat; the bourgeoisie owns only castrated editions, family editions, expurgated in accordance with the hypocritical morality of today.’<sup>1</sup> Thus Friedrich Engels intones towards the end of his relentless excoriation of the condition of the working class in England, the double incantation of the writer’s name charging the sentence with energy. Shelley continues to polarize people along class lines. I well remember, having been invited to present a BBC radio programme on Shelley’s poetry in the early 1990s, being summarily informed after having assembled my list and my introduction that most of the poems I had chosen were not actually by him. My selections were from *Queen Mab*, *Alastor*, *Prometheus Unbound*, and some of the radical lyrics of 1819. It was the latter that were in dispute, ensuring that I did not get to do the show at all. To the blushing eyes of some liberal humanist editors, the representations of starving mothers asking for a bit of food must have been fakes. The idea that he could not have written such things persists two centuries after Shelley himself sent off his ballads and songs for publication, moved by the massacre of a huge crowd of protesters at St Peter’s Fields in Manchester by those staunch relics of English hierarchy, the yeomanry cavalry.

Engels wrote his words four years before the adjective ‘Shelleyan’ came into circulation, though ‘Shelleyite’, perhaps denoting a stronger affiliation, appeared in the very year of Shelley’s death, 1822.<sup>2</sup> The connotation of aesthetic effeteness inspired the name of the modern pop band, Shelleyan Orphan, but Engels had something more urgent in mind. Some circles have still not forgiven Percy Shelley for having been a class traitor. Shelley grew up in the ranks of the gentry (his grandfather had become a baronet during his childhood), but most of his life was spent in radical departures from