



# Coleridge, Language and the Sublime: From Transcendence to Finitude

*Christopher Stokes*

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# Coleridge, Language and the Sublime: From Transcendence to Finitude

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**Coleridge, Language and the Sublime: From Transcendence to Finitude** Christopher Stokes  
*Coleridge, Language and the Sublime* is the first full-length study to engage Coleridge's work through the aesthetics of the sublime. It argues for a double-edged Coleridge whose poetic and metaphysical commitments to transcendence were played out, under the sign of sublimity, against his sharp awareness of weakness and lack. Traversing the themes of language, terror and representation, his position in a conversation about finitude - a conversation that encompasses Longinus, Burke and Kant as well as modern theorists of the sublime - is shown to be an important element of our own post-Romantic legacy. Drawing on close readings of the best known poetry (the Conversation lyrics, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*) as well as more obscure poems, his prose works and notebooks, this study offers a vibrant, alternative Coleridge who is neither the magisterial architect of Romantic idealism, nor disillusioned and dejected, but a profound thinker of what it means to be at the limits of thought, language and experience.

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