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Get this from a library! The literary dream in French romanticism: a psychoanalytic interpretation. [Laurence M Porter].

Its History, Literature and Influence on Civilization, vol. Historical Publishing Company, Ceosio During the latter part of the eighteenth century the drama in France had steadily declined from the glorious position which it had achieved in the reign of Louis XIV. The genius of Voltaire, by its stage-reforms and innovations, had partially stayed the downward movement in tragedy, and the philosophic Diderot had sought to substitute for mirthful comedy a new species--the serious--which should be an agent of social reform, and in fact the consummation of dramatic art as a mirror of life. Classical tragedy had been weighted down by the artificiality of the court in every direction, and thus made a beautiful monster. The plays of the new style, vaguely called drames, were intended to be true to life and to inculcate the proper principles of society. The idea had already been advanced in the dreams of various social philosophers, but for obvious reasons no attempt had been made to reduce it to practice. Diderot, though an able writer in other departments, failed as a dramatist, but some who had adopted his idea had better success. The most remarkable dramatist of the period, however, was Beaumarchais, who boldly revived the old Spanish comedy of intrigue. He not only surpassed his predecessor in the skillful framing of plots, but drew his characters with peculiar truth. His dialogue was brilliant with flashes of wit, and his plays were charged with social satire. But taken altogether, the drama of this period is rather of historic interest than actual value. It consists of imitations of the great works of the classic age, themselves imitations of antiquity, or imperfect attempts at reform and extension. It became thoroughly mechanical and lost artistic value. The Revolution proclaimed, among other liberties, that of theatres, and fifty were soon open in Paris. The tragic poet of the period was M. Under the empire the theatres came under the direct control of the government. The number in Paris was limited to nine, and each was restricted to a certain class of plays. Minor theatres might produce melodramas, vaudevilles or operas-comiques. Napoleon wished to encourage the drama, and offered prizes for the best tragedy, but he failed to secure a great dramatist to give lustre to his reign. The grand ideals to which their noblest minds had so recently aspired became a laughing-stock. From those pure and lofty visions of humanity and the noble motto--Liberty, Equality, Fraternity--which they had cherished for themselves and even sought to impose on a reluctant world, their leaders now turned away with foolish contempt. Liberty, so highly prized, so dearly purchased, was crushed under an accumulation of mischances and adversities which seemed to be the natural outcome of the Revolution. Statesmen declared the Directory, the Consulate, the Empire the logical result of the Revolution. The philosophic historian sees in them the inevitable backward swing of the mighty pendulum of human government. His envy was kindled by the seventeenth century, that golden age of literature and art, and he trusted to renew and surpass its beauty and fertility, as he was able to enact a new and better code of laws. But the conqueror of Italy and Germany could not restore life to the noble victims of the guillotine nor renew the inspiration of departed genius. The entire intellectual and spiritual product of the Empire--its literature and philosophy, its arts and music--is the debased outcome of imperial despotism. The fondness for classical tragedies which had lasted through the convulsions of the Revolution and the Empire remained after the fall of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons. The emigrant nobles, on their return, found the drama on the stage as they had left it. Tragedy was strictly bound by the unities of time, place and action, and the new writers who attempted it lacked the inventive power of their predecessors. Comedy fared better, and many writers who wrought in this department produced plays which have not suffered the complete eclipse that has befallen contemporary tragedies. But when the despot Napoleon was overthrown and France was again subjected to the Bourbon tyranny and misrule, where was there any prospect or hope of her intellectual redemption? Her ideals of the moral world had been shattered and destroyed. The gaudy balloon of the republic, whose apparition had but lately startled the nations, had soon been rent in mid air by the explosion of its own motive power. Monarchy was restored to the Bourbons, who had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. The old institutions were to be rebuilt where the very foundations had been destroyed by earthquakes. To what period in her past history or to what nation beside herself could France turn for models in

reconstruction? Two great writers of the time offered replies to the grand question of the time--Chateaubriand and Madame de Stael--replies widely variant, yet each having a substantial amount of truth. Chateaubriand had visited America and seen something of savage life in the wilderness, which afterward formed the basis of picturesque and ideal descriptions. He was also a champion of the restoration of the Catholic religion, whose rites and churches had been wantonly assailed and overthrown in the French Revolution, yet had been reinstated in their former place under Napoleon. Chateaubriand regarded Christianity as "the most poetical of all religions, the most attractive, the most fertile in literary, artistic and social results. Madame de Stael, exiled by Napoleon, wandered to Germany and there became acquainted with Goethe and Schiller and their surroundings. Her romances, *Delphine* and *Corinne*, also led the imagination in new fields. Different as were the spirit, aim and style of these two writers, they combined in their enthusiasm in inaugurating what has become known as Romanticism. This was fostered by the writings of Sir Walter Scott, which were eagerly welcomed in France. Then war was declared against classicism in the drama, which was supported chiefly by writers of the Liberal party. Political divisions became less prominent, and literary sympathies alone formed the bond of the union. On the other hand the more violent members of the club declared its object to be the burning of everything which had been adored, and the adoring of everything which had been burnt. The rejected the established canons of the classic drama--the unities, the arbitrary selection of subjects, the restrictions on the use of words, the requirements of periphrasis instead of plain speech, the cultivation of artificial beauty. These enthusiasts wished to hear in the drama, as the language of passion and emotion, the words in common use. The Romantics were sometimes designated as the flamboyant, referring to the gay and picturesque attire affected by some of their most enthusiastic adherents, as well as their literary style. Both parties assembled in force, one prepared to applaud, the other to hiss. Cries arose as the play proceeded, and even blows were struck. But the Romantic play was kept on the stage for two months, and the fierceness of the fight gradually subsided. The Romantics had won the day, though they had by no means suppressed the opposition. It lasted throughout the reign of Louis Philippe. The younger men of letters were all Romantics. Romanticism has been defined in various ways, both by its advocates and by its opponents, and, indeed, by the historians who sought to be impartial. It was plainly a revolt against the enforcement of the rules which had been framed in the golden age of French literature as representing the best practice of the best writers. But these rules had been interpreted in a narrow spirit and enforced in an arbitrary manner by succeeding generations of critics. Scant allowance was made for the necessary growth of language, and for the introduction of new ideas and forms of thought. The classic literature belonged to the court and was modeled by strict rules of etiquette, which were out of harmony with the wider view of life and nature struggling for expression. Romanticism gave liberty to the author to express his thought in such terms as seemed to him most appropriate, without regard to what his predecessors had said. It refused to be trammelled by the notions of the French lawgiver Boileau, of the seventeenth century, or by the principles of the philosopher Aristotle, who wrote three centuries before Christ. It vindicated the rights of the modern world, and of each individual in that world, to utter and write his message to his fellow-men. Yet, in actual practice it did not depart so widely from the standards already established, as either its opponents feared or its advocates claimed the right to do. Victor Hugo wrote his *Hernani* in rhymed Alexandrines, and observed many other conventionalities of the drama. The conservatives had been trained to criticise minute variations from the rules, and they doubted whereto those vaunted reforms would grow. The Romantics had themselves been trained in the same school and, as a matter of course, retained much of the old discipline. They knew that this was necessary if they were to be heard and understood by the people. Their changes were limited to lessening the restraint and relaxing the bonds of the old rules. They did not destroy and burn as they had threatened. The new liberty was found to be moderate, pleasing to the imagination and satisfactory to the calm judgment. If at times proper bounds were overstepped, criticism, rational and not arbitrary, could intervene to correct the error. The dramatic changes have not been of the greatest value or most permanent character. What is chiefly seen in the theatre is the prevalence of tragi-comedy, which the French call *drame*, a modified mixture of the old divisions of the art. It admits a greater variety of personages on the stage, and rejects the stock characters of the old style. It even allows that disjointed action, which has always been characteristic of the English stage, but was positively

prohibited by the canons of the French, and even of the Greek theatre. The chief of these were Henry III and Antony, in which new elements of strife were interjected, especially with regard to morality. La Tour de Nesle was also a fruitful source of discussion, the question of authorship being involved. Alexandre Soumet and Casimir Delavigne adhered more closely to the old models and won support from the Classicists. A new variety of comedy was introduced under the name of Proverbs, slight dramatic sketches in which the dialogue is of more importance than the action. In this class the poet Alfred de Musset specially distinguished himself. Hernani - Analysis of the play which brought the battle between French Classicists and Romantics to a head on February 25,

2: Romanticism | Definition of Romanticism by Merriam-Webster

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The confines of the Industrial Revolution also had their influence on Romanticism, which was in part an escape from modern realities; indeed, in the second half of the 19th century, "Realism" was offered as a polarized opposite to Romanticism. Romanticism elevated the achievements of what it perceived as heroic individualists and artists, whose pioneering examples would elevate society. It also legitimized the individual imagination as a critical authority, which permitted freedom from classical notions of form in art. Irving advocated for writing as a legitimate career, and argued for laws to protect writers from copyright infringement. He was named Washington after the hero of the American revolution which had just ended, George Washington, and attended the first presidential inauguration of his namesake in Washington. Irving was educated privately, studied law, and began to write essays for periodicals. He travelled in France and Italy in 1806, wrote whimsical journals and letters, then returned to New York City to practice law -- though by his own admission, he was not a good student, and in 1809, he barely passed the bar. In 1810 he went to the Continent, living in Germany and France for several years, and was then in Spain and became attaché at the US embassy in Madrid. Although he became a best-selling author, he never really fully developed as a literary talent, he has retained his reputation as the first American man of letters. Irving also advocated for writing as a legitimate career, and argued for stronger laws to protect writers from copyright infringement. William Cullen Bryant was born on November 3, 1796, in a log cabin near Cummington, Massachusetts; the home of his birth is today marked with a plaque. He was the second son of Peter Bryant, a doctor and later a state legislator, and Sarah Snell. Bryant and his family moved to a new home when he was two years old. The William Cullen Bryant Homestead, his boyhood home, is now a museum. After just two years at Williams College, he studied law in Worthington and Bridgewater in Massachusetts, and he was admitted to the bar in 1818. He then began practicing law in nearby Plainfield, walking the seven miles from Cummington every day. On one of these walks, in December 1815, he noticed a single bird flying on the horizon; the sight moved him enough to write "To a Waterfowl". Bryant developed an interest in poetry early in life. The Fireside Poets The Fireside poets also called the "schoolroom" or "household" poets were the first group of American poets to rival British poets in popularity in either country. In general, these poets preferred conventional forms over experimentation, and this attention to rhyme and strict metrical cadences made their work popular for memorization and recitation in classrooms and homes. Lowell and Whittier, both outspoken liberals and abolitionists, were known for their journalism and work with the fledgling *Atlantic Monthly*. They did not hesitate to address issues that were divisive and highly charged in their day, and in fact used the sentimental tone in their poems to encourage their audience to consider these issues in less abstract and more personal terms. His first wife, Mary Potter, died in 1820 after a miscarriage. His second wife, Frances Appleton, died in 1825 after sustaining burns when her dress caught fire. After her death, Longfellow had difficulty writing poetry for a time and focused on his translation. He died in 1862. He became the most popular American poet of his day and also had success overseas. He has been criticized, however, for imitating European styles and writing specifically for the masses. Transcendentalists believed that society and its institutions - particularly organized religion and political parties - ultimately corrupted the purity of the individual. They had faith that man is at his best when truly "self-reliant" and independent. It is only from such real individuals that true community could be formed. Emerson was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1803. His father was a Unitarian minister who died when young Emerson was only eight. Emerson began keeping journals at a young age, these journals would in turn provide him with a wealth of material for his later works. He entered Harvard College after studying classics at Boston Latin School, and graduated in 1825, continuing to the Divinity School there in 1826. At the time, American academics were undergoing controversy as translations of Hindu and Buddhist poetry were making the rounds as well as works from German critics. This controversy can be seen to be of much influence on

Emerson as his thought developed through his later works. Emerson continued to question Christian faith and in he resigned his post. The death of Ellen Louisa a few years after their marriage also influenced his religious beliefs and most likely influenced this decision as well. He moved to Concord, Massachusetts and spent years travelling and studying. It was in Paris at a botanical exhibition that Emerson found a calling as a naturalist and when he returned to the United States he took part in lecturing as a part of the lyceum movement. He also married his second wife, Lydia Jackson in with whom he would have four children. He writes in the introduction: Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far, as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth. In like manner, nature is already, in its forms and tendencies, describing its own design. Let us interrogate the great apparition, that shines so peacefully around us. Let us inquire, to what end is nature? All science has one aim, namely, to find a theory of nature. We have theories of races and of functions, but scarcely yet a remote approach to an idea of creation. We are now so far from the road to truth, that religious teachers dispute and hate each other, and speculative men are esteemed unsound and frivolous. But to a sound judgment, the most abstract truth is the most practical. Whenever a true theory appears, it will be its own evidence. Its test is, that it will explain all phenomena. Now many are thought not only unexplained but inexplicable; as language, sleep, madness, dreams, beasts, sex. Emerson continued to give speeches along with beginning to gain notoriety as an essayist. A couple notable ones in the period of the late s and into the 40s attacked dependence on continental thought, "The American Scholar" and he created even more controversy with his "Divinity School Address. As it appears to us, and as it has appeared for ages, it is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the person of Jesus. The soul knows no persons. It invites every man to expand to the full circle of the universe, and will have no preferences but those of spontaneous love. The sublime is excited in me by the great stoical doctrine, Obey thyself. That which shows God in me, fortifies me. When it was launched in the later eighteenth century, The Gothic featured accounts of terrifying experiences in ancient castles – experiences connected with subterranean dungeons, secret passageways, flickering lamps, screams, moans, bloody hands, ghosts, graveyards, and the rest. His own life was marred by tragedy at an early age his parents died before he was three years old and in his oft-quoted works we can see his darkly passionate sensibilities – a tormented and sometimes neurotic obsession with death and violence and overall appreciation for the beautiful yet tragic mysteries of life. They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night. He has been the subject of numerous biographers and has significantly influenced many other authors even into the 21st Century. He had a brother named William Henry and sister Rosalie After the death of his parents Edgar was taken in by Frances d. Young Edgar traveled with the Allans to England in and attended school in Chelsea. In he was back in Richmond where he attended the University of Virginia and studied Latin and poetry and also loved to swim and act. While in school he became estranged from his foster father after accumulating gambling debts. Now living in their last place of residence, a cottage in the Fordham section of the Bronx in New York City, Virginia died in Poe turned to alcohol more frequently and was purportedly displaying increasingly erratic behavior. A year later he became engaged to his teenage sweetheart from Richmond, Elmira Royster. The story starts as an adventure for a young Nantucket stowaway on a whaling ship but soon turns into a chilling tale of mutiny, murder, and cannibalism. There are conflicting accounts surrounding the last days of Edgar Allan Poe and the cause of his death. Some say he died from alcoholism, some claim he was murdered, and various diseases have also been attributed. Most say he was found unconscious in the street and admitted to the Washington College Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. He died soon after, on 7 October , and was buried unceremoniously in an unmarked grave in the Old Westminster Burying Ground of Baltimore. A bas-relief bust of Poe adorns the marble and granite monument which is simply inscribed with the birth and death dates of Poe although his birth date is wrong , Maria, and Virginia who, in , was reinterred with her husband and mother.

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These castle grounds have had flowers since the 13th century, when King Edward I allowed Queen Eleanor of Provence to introduce garden design to England. This act is perhaps the root of Romanticism. Source Love of Nature, Animals, Landscape It may seem strange to us to imagine life without flowerbeds. However, it was not until a French Queen introduced the idea to England in the 13th century, that garden design began. It was a novel idea, because no one had thought of it, and no one prior to the implementation of beautiful garden design could see the point of doing it. The definition of romanticism is a bit like this too. The appreciation of what is right in front of us, reordered and given higher purpose. In the case of garden design, it is the artistic arrangement of the natural. In the case of the Romantic movement, it is the same. Puritan belief systems were questioned. Authors such as Abraham Cowley reacted to ideas that sobriety was a good moral in his sombre poem *Drinking*. Perhaps one could say the founding idea for modern internet retrieval systems and wiki collections. The beginning of modern thinking about spirituality in terms of there being more than one deity and religion. A philosophical explosion of new ideas including Immanuel Kant and Jean Jacques Rousseau moving ideas from the objective to the subjective. This meant that romantic artists and poets explored nature as if they were present within it, and not looking at it. This could be said to be an era of empathy. The French Revolution was the impetus for political and social change as the underclass of Europe revolted against their impoverished circumstances. Romanticism paintings in oil flourished alongside romanticism in literature and poetry. There is a really good Literary Periods Timeline chart here if you are a more visual type of learner. The War Song of Dinas Vawr original illustration. In his poem the English soldiers crow; "the mountain sheep are sweeter, but the valley sheep are fatter; we therefore deemed it meeter, to carry off the latter. Earlier, I referenced gardening, and how it was an occupation no one was familiar with in the 13th century. Land law was so prohibitive in the Romantic Period that it was unheard of to have a private garden unless you held land freehold, which was all owned by aristocrats. The emerging wealth of the mercantile class, or *nouveau riche*, saw much pressure to alter legislation concerning ownership of freehold title, and this was seen to in the late s under the reign of Queen Victoria. Prior to this, poets, artists, philosophers and political activists were claiming that ordinary people had a right to their share of the wealth. The Romantic Movement strengthened as public sympathy aligned with French Revolutionaries, and a rich industrial and merchant class paying rent to crown estates grew fed up watching idle aristocrats playing with wealth that appeared undeserved. French citizens were impoverished, to which their frivolous and spendthrift Queen Mary supposedly said; "Let them eat cake! The Romantic Poets Romanticism was essentially a movement of thought which had its philosophical roots in Europe and its artistic expression in England. The ways the English Romantic poets expressed these ideas were quite interesting.

4: Dream vision - Wikipedia

A dream vision or visio is a literary device in which a dream or vision is recounted as having revealed knowledge or a truth that is not available to the dreamer or visionary in a normal waking state.

Furthermore, no period has been the topic of so much disagreement and confusion over its defining principles and aesthetics. Romanticism, then, can best be described as a large network of sometimes competing philosophies, agendas, and points of interest. In England, Romanticism had its greatest influence from the end of the eighteenth century up through about 1830. Its primary vehicle of expression was in poetry, although novelists adopted many of the same themes. In America, the Romantic Movement was slightly delayed and modulated, holding sway over arts and letters from roughly 1800 up to the Civil War. In a broader sense, Romanticism can be conceived as an adjective which is applicable to the literature of virtually any time period. With that in mind, anything from the Homeric epics to modern dime novels can be said to bear the stamp of Romanticism. In spite of such general disagreements over usage, there are some definitive and universal statements one can make regarding the nature of the Romantic Movement in both England and America. First and foremost, Romanticism is concerned with the individual more than with society. The individual consciousness and especially the individual imagination are especially fascinating for the Romantics. There was a coincident downgrading of the importance and power of reason, clearly a reaction against the Enlightenment mode of thinking. Nevertheless, writers became gradually more invested in social causes as the period moved forward. Thanks largely to the Industrial Revolution, English society was undergoing the most severe paradigm shifts it had seen in living memory. The response of many early Romantics was to yearn for an idealized, simpler past. In particular, English Romantic poets had a strong connection with medievalism and mythology. The tales of King Arthur were especially resonant to their imaginations. On top of this, there was a clearly mystical quality to Romantic writing that sets it apart from other literary periods. Of course, not every Romantic poet or novelist displayed all, or even most of these traits all the time. On the formal level, Romanticism witnessed a steady loosening of the rules of artistic expression that were pervasive during earlier times. The Neoclassical Period of the eighteenth century included very strict expectations regarding the structure and content of poetry. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, experimentation with new styles and subjects became much more acceptable. In terms of poetic form, rhymed stanzas were slowly giving way to blank verse, an unrhymed but still rhythmic style of poetry. The purpose of blank verse was to heighten conversational speech to the level of austere beauty. Some criticized the new style as mundane, yet the innovation soon became the preferred style. One of the most popular themes of Romantic poetry was country life, otherwise known as pastoral poetry. Mythological and fantastic settings were also employed to great effect by many of the Romantic poets. Though struggling and unknown for the bulk of his life, poet and artist William Blake was certainly one of the most creative minds of his generation. He was well ahead of his time, predating the high point of English Romanticism by several decades. His greatest work was composed during the 1790s, in the shadow of the French Revolution, and that confrontation informed much of his creative process. Throughout his artistic career, Blake gradually built up a sort of personal mythology of creation and imagination. The Old and New Testaments were his source material, but his own sensibilities transfigured the Biblical stories and led to something entirely original and completely misunderstood by contemporaries. He attempted to woo patrons to his side, yet his unstable temper made him rather difficult to work with professionally. Some considered him mad. In addition to writing poetry of the first order, Blake was also a master engraver. His greatest contributions to Romantic literature were his self-published, quasi-mythological illustrated poetry collections. Gloriously colored and painstaking in their design, few of these were produced and fewer still survive to the present day. However, the craft and genius behind a work like *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* cannot be ignored. If one could identify a single voice as the standard-bearer of Romantic sensibilities, that voice would belong to William Wordsworth. His publication of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 is identified by many as the opening act of the Romantic Period in English literature. It was a hugely successful work, requiring several reprinting over the years. The dominant theme of *Lyrical Ballads* was Nature, specifically the power of Nature to create strong

impressions in the mind and imagination. There is the sense that past, present, and future all mix together in the human consciousness. One feels as though the poet and the landscape are in communion, each a partner in an act of creative production. Wordsworth quite deliberately turned his back on the Enlightenment traditions of poetry, specifically the work of Alexander Pope. He instead looked more to the Renaissance and the Classics of Greek and Latin epic poetry for inspiration. His work was noted for its accessibility. The undeniable commercial success of *Lyrical Ballads* does not diminish the profound effect it had on an entire generation of aspiring writers. In the United State, Romanticism found its voice in the poets and novelists of the American Renaissance. The concentration on the individual mind gradually shifted from an optimistic brand of spiritualism into a more modern, cynical study of the underside of humanity. The political unrest in mid-nineteenth century America undoubtedly played a role in the development of a darker aesthetic. At the same time, strongly individualist religious traditions played a large part in the development of artistic creations. The Protestant work ethic, along with the popularity and fervor of American religious leaders, fed a literary output that was undergird with fire and brimstone. The middle of the nineteenth century has only in retrospect earned the label of the American Renaissance in literature. No one alive in the s quite realized the flowering of creativity that was underway. In fact, the novelists who today are regarded as classic were virtually unknown during their lifetimes. The novelists working during this period, particularly Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, were crafting densely symbolic and original pieces of literature that nonetheless relied heavily upon the example of English Romanticism. However, there work was in other respects a clean break with any permutation of Romanticism that had come before. There was a darkness to American Romanticism that was clearly distinct from the English examples of earlier in the century. Herman Melville died penniless and unknown, a failed writer who recognized his own brilliance even when others did not. In novels like *Benito Cereno* and *Moby Dick* , Melville employed a dense fabric of hinted meanings and symbols that required close reading and patience. With *Moby Dick*, Melville displays his research acumen, as in the course of the novel the reader learns more than they thought possible about whales and whaling. The novel itself is dark, mysterious, and hints at the supernatural. Superficially, the novel is a revenge tale, but over and above the narrative are meditations of madness, power, and the nature of being human. Interestingly, the narrator in the first few chapters of the novel more or less disappears for most of the book. He is in a sense swallowed up by the mania of Captain Ahab and the crew. Although the novel most certainly held sway, poetry was not utterly silent during the flowering of American Romanticism. Arguably the greatest poet in American literary history was Walt Whitman, and he took his inspiration from many of the same sources as his fellows working in the novel. His publication of *Leaves of Grass* in marked a critical moment in the history of poetry. He attempted to include all people in all corners of the Earth within the sweep of his poetic vision. Like the rest of the poets in the Romantic tradition, Whitman coined new words, and brought a diction and rhythmic style to verse that ran counter to the aesthetics of the last century. Walt Whitman got his start as a writer in journalism, and that documentary style of seeing the world permeated all his creative endeavors. Poe crafted fiction and poetry that explored the strange side of human nature. His sing-song rhythms and dreary settings earned him criticism on multiple fronts, but his creativity earned him a place in the first rank of American artists. He is credited as the inventor of detective fiction, and was likewise one of the original masters of horror. The master of symbolism in American literature was Nathaniel Hawthorne. Each of his novels represents worlds imbued with the power of suggestion and imagination. *The Scarlet Letter* is often placed alongside *Moby Dick* as one of the greatest novels in the English language. Not a single word is out of place, and the dense symbolism opens the work up to multiple interpretations. There are discussions of guilt, family, honor, politics, and society. Modern readers often believe that *The Scarlet Letter* was written during the age of the Puritans, but in fact Hawthorne wrote a story that was in the distant past even in his own time. Another trademark of the novel is its dabbling in the supernatural, even the grotesque. Separate from his literary production, Hawthorne wrote expansively on literary theory and criticism. His theories exemplify the Romantic spirit in American letters at mid-century. He espoused the conviction that objects can hold significance deeper than their apparent meaning, and that the symbolic nature of reality was the most fertile ground for literature. Throughout his writings, one gets a sense of darkness, if not outright pessimism. There is

the sense of not fully understanding the world, of not getting the entire picture no matter how hard one tries. As has been argued, Romanticism as a literary sensibility never completely disappeared. It was overtaken by other aesthetic paradigms like Realism and Modernism, but Romanticism was always lurking under the surface. Many great poets and novelists of the twentieth century cite the Romantics as their greatest inspirational voices. The primary reason that Romanticism fell out of the limelight is because many writers felt the need to express themselves in a more immediate way. The Romantic poets were regarded as innovators, but a bit lost in their own imaginations. The real problems of life in the world seemed to be pushed aside. As modernization continued unchecked, a more earthy kind of literature was demanded, and the Romantics simply did not fit that bill. Do not reprint it without permission. Written by Josh Rahn. Major Writers of the Romanticism Movement.

5: Characteristics of Romanticism in English Literature | Owlcation

English literature - The Romantic period: As a term to cover the most distinctive writers who flourished in the last years of the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th, "Romantic" is indispensable but also a little misleading: there was no self-styled "Romantic movement" at the time, and the great writers of the period did not call themselves Romantics.

It was at its height between and But it came later in some countries, such as Italy, Spain, and the United States. It occurred first in art and literature and later in music. In part, romanticism was a reaction against the artistic styles of classical antiquity. Neoclassicists placed great importance on the power of reason as a way of discovering truth. That is why the neoclassical era is often called the Age of Reason. The romantics, in contrast, hoped to transform the world into a new Golden Age through the power of the imagination. Themes and Ideas When the English poet and painter William Blake was asked whether he saw a round, shining ball of fire when the sun rose, he replied, "Oh no, no. For them, it was the quality that set artists apart from other people. It allowed them to express their emotions in their art. As exceptional individuals, artists were free to pursue their creativity, unrestrained by the demands of society. The romantics developed a deep love of nature. They thought it to be mainly good and kind, in contrast to the corruption of society. Many romantic works take nature for their theme or setting. The dark side of nature, such as storms and fire, also fascinated the romantics. Through nature, artists could escape from an unsatisfying present into a better world. Another escape route was into the past. The romantics were strongly attracted to the distant, the exotic, and the mysterious. They were drawn to the supernatural and to real and imaginary lands of long ago and far away. They rediscovered the heritage of the Middle Ages, collected folk songs and tales, and tried to understand dreams. In this way, romanticism opened up a wide range of new interests. It injected into the arts a vitality and urge to experiment that laid the foundation for many later developments. Romanticism in Art Romanticism was more prominent in painting than in sculpture or architecture. Subjects for paintings were often taken from nature. But biblical, mythological, and supernatural subjects were also used. Romantic painters generally used radiant colors and unrestrained, expressive brushwork. They also showed a preference for curving lines and shapes. Romantic art differed from place to place, even within the same country. In England, William Blake created dreamlike illustrations for his poetry. These artists captured the beauty and power of nature. They often used watercolors to give their paintings a feeling of freshness and immediacy. The nature paintings of the German artist Caspar David Friedrich create a solemn, mysterious mood. Johann Friedrich Overbeck led a religious brotherhood of German painters, the Nazarenes, in Rome after His intense portraits, such as *The Young Girls*, are remarkable for their flowing lines. The Swiss artist Henry Fuseli painted fantastic and nightmarish subjects. This was a group of landscape painters who depicted rural life. They were inspired by the optimism of a young, rapidly growing nation. Romanticism in Literature Romanticism in literature was equally varied, developing many new forms. The emphasis on imagination and emotion led to the flourishing of lyric poetry. These are short poems that express personal emotion. The Gothic novel, with its emphasis on mystery and the supernatural, and the historical novel were popular prose forms. Least interest was shown in drama. Many plays were written to be read rather than performed. The exception was in France, where the battle for romanticism was fought in the theater, the home of an established neoclassical tradition. In England all the major romantic poets wrote lyric poetry, each in an individual voice. In Germany, romantic literature ranged widely from the difficult theories of Friedrich von Schlegel and his brother August Wilhelm to the fantastic tales of Johann Ludwig Tieck and E. The greatest romantic poet in France was Victor Hugo. Alfred de Musset wrote both plays and poems. Alphonse de Lamartine is known for his touching nature poetry. Alexandre Dumas was the author of many lively tales, among them *The Three Musketeers* Romanticism came somewhat later in the United States than in Europe. But it was a vigorous movement there with distinctive themes. The love of nature took a philosophical form in the group of New England writers known as transcendentalists. The theme of the American frontier experience was introduced by James Fenimore Cooper in such well-loved tales as *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Deerslayer* The poems of Walt Whitman were published after under the title *Leaves of Grass*. They celebrate

the American spirit and remain influential. The bold new orchestral sounds invented for opera were then brought into the concert hall. Overtures were written, not as introductions to operas, but as concert pieces with themes suggested by books, plays, or personal experiences. In addition to opera, more intimate kinds of music were also produced by romantic composers. Mendelssohn titled some of his collections "songs without words. Some romantic composers favored program music. This kind of music tells a story with music and is sometimes explained in a concert program. Harold in Italy , by the French composer Hector Berlioz, is a leading example of program music. Other program compositions, such as Don Juan , by the German composer Richard Strauss, were called tone poems. Opera, too, tended to become increasingly spectacular. Mythological and literary subjects were turned into stirring musical dramas that often reflected the national pride of newly emerging countries.

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In particular, English Romantic poets had a strong connection with medievalism and mythology. The tales of King Arthur were especially resonant to their imaginations. On top of this, there was a clearly mystical quality to Romantic writing that sets it apart from other literary periods.

Noah Heringman The MA and PhD specializations in British Romanticism offer students the opportunity to focus intensively on one of the most turbulent and productive periods in British literary history. The half-century around the French Revolution saw an astonishing rise in political radicalism followed by a sweeping wave of political and cultural reaction. Both movements were fueled by a massive expansion of print culture and an increasing variety of exhibitions, entertainments, and other cultural commodities aimed at an expanding public. This volatile climate encouraged aesthetic experimentation. Romanticism across Europe and the Americas launched many of the ideas that gave modernity its decisive shape. The field offers new opportunities for traditional literary scholarship as well as for interdisciplinary engagement with visual culture, political theory, the history of science, and the practice of creative writing, among other possibilities. Both nationally and locally, Romanticists benefit from their proximity to scholars in the eighteenth century and the Victorian period, whose wide-ranging and often allied studies of the earlier and later decades help to maintain a scholarly niche for the intensive study of the revolutionary decades. He serves on numerous graduate committees for students in literature as well as creative writing poetry. Opportunities Our program offers students of Romanticism a strong larger community of faculty and graduate students in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature as well as in related fields such as art history, history, and German studies. We meet informally several times each semester, providing a forum for discussion of shared critical reading as well as student work. In addition to attending conferences, graduate students in Romanticism also have the opportunity to team-teach in their specialty with a faculty member, a model that allows much greater independence than the "teaching assistant" model while also giving students exposure to the advanced undergraduate classroom. For example, students interested in the picturesque will find an unusually complete collection of the works of William Gilpin, in the original editions. Recent upper-level undergraduate courses: British Romanticism Taught by Noah Heringman This course reconsiders traditional definitions of Romanticism as the poetry of nature and imaginative vision by reading the six canonical poets--Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats--with and against a range of women writers in prose and poetry, including Charlotte Smith, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Ann Radcliffe. Although there are some obvious contrasts between male and female writers in this period, this approach also highlights the many concerns they shared: Byron and Scott Taught by Noah Heringman This course deals with one of the most intense rivalries in literary history. Sir Walter Scott became famous in the early nineteenth century by publishing verse romances such as *The Lady of the Lake*. That same year, however, Scott published his first novel, *Waverley*. These commercially successful novels remain beloved by readers and widely studied by scholars, who regard them as establishing the model for the historical novel. Byron, meanwhile, fell into disrepute because of his scandalous divorce and wrote much of his best poetry from his self-imposed exile in Italy. In the second half of the course, we will read his satiric masterpiece, *Don Juan*, in its entirety, along with three of the *Waverley* novels perhaps *Waverley*, *Old Mortality*, and either *Rob Roy* or *Ivanhoe*. Jane Austen Taught by Lily Gurton-Wachter In this class we will develop our close reading skills as we move slowly and carefully through the novels of Jane Austen. Our discussions will investigate a wide range of topics, from how Austen delineates the nuances of feeling, sympathy, and attachment, to her formal innovations in realism, irony, and the representation of interiority. We will consider how Austen used the novel form to comment on the major social and political issues of her time, to explore issues of gender, politics, history, and class, and to develop new ways of thinking about the experience of reading and the work of literature. Students will write regular close reading papers, a longer research essay on a topic of their choice, and give at least one oral presentation on their research. But the idea of romantic love-- coming from the courtly literature of the Middle Ages-- was under revision in the Romantic period, and the transformation of the idea of Rousseau, Thomas De Quincey,

Mary Shelley, and others will be one of our central topics. We will also read the Memoirs of Mary Robinson, initially famous as a gifted actress who won the heart of George IV and later famous as a poet. We will spend time examining and thinking about different critical models as well as different practices of life writing and the special kinds of pressure that it puts on verisimilitude. Work for the course includes a substantial research paper as well as reading responses and at least one exercise in autobiography or memoir.

Reading William Blake Taught by Lily Gurton-Wachter This class will focus on the visual and verbal work of poet and printmaker William Blake who, though unrecognized in his own time, is today hailed as a prophet, genius, and revolutionary. What did Wordsworth and Coleridge do differently from Thomas Percy, Robert Burns, and the many other poets before them who revived the ballad, a form of verse narrative in quatrains that came down from the European Middle Ages, often by way of oral tradition? Are ballads really literature? Samuel Johnson, predictably, said no. What is a literary revival, and is it conservative, innovative, or just undead? How did Romantic poets bridge the European literary tradition with the modern nationalist practice of collecting folk songs and folk tales? The course concludes with a unit on versions of the ballad in American popular music.

Poetry and Politics in the Romantic Period Taught by Lily Gurton-Wachter In this seminar, we will ask how literary texts of British Romanticism responded to and intervened in the political climate marked most famously by the French Revolution, but also by the Napoleonic Wars, the Peterloo Massacre, abolitionism, and by controversial political debates throughout England about immigration, enclosure, the suspension of habeas corpus, free speech, the rights of man, the rights of women, and alarmism. Through close readings of the literary texts of British Romanticism—a movement that, for a long time, was characterized as an apolitical retreat into either the self or the natural world—we will investigate what this literary tradition has to say about revolution and rights, about the vulnerabilities of war, or about the unsteady distinction between natural history and national history. We will explore the impact of war, revolution, and historical violence on literary form, and examine texts that look to literary form for new ways to represent historical experience and frame political argument. At least one class will be devoted to the proliferation of poems with dates; another to the lyric poems that detail the feelings prompted by the anticipation of an invasion. The course will be divided roughly into thirds, with one-third devoted to the poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley and one-third devoted to the fiction and nonfiction prose of Mary Shelley. We will look at P.

7: Romancticism - Literature Periods & Movements

From to the midth century Revolution and empire. The French Revolution of provided no clean break with the complex literary culture of the Enlightenment. Many ways of thinking and feeling—whether based on reason, sentiment, or an exacerbated sensibility—and most literary forms persisted with little change from to

Charles Baudelaire quoted that "Romanticism is precisely situated neither in choice of subject nor exact truth, but in a way of feeling. Among the aspects of the romantic movement in England may be listed: Among the specific characteristics embraced by these general attitudes are: Typical literary forms include the lyric, especially the love lyric, the reflective lyric, the nature lyric, and the lyric of morbid melancholy An interesting schematic explanation calls romanticism the predominance of imagination over reason and formal rules classicism and over the sense of fact or the actual realism , ggibson01 Student The chief characteristics of Romanticism include a reverence for and celebration of nature; a focus on the inner-self and the expression of emotions; an emphasis on individuality and personal freedom; interests in the supernatural, Gothic, and bizarre; a celebration of the goodness of humanity, which is most evident in youth; the idea that progress and civilization is bad; and a reasonably optimistic overall view of the world. This comprises of or similar to a romance and the traits of romanticism. Imagery plays a vital role of having no basis in fact. Then there is visionary, the state of impractical inconception of plan or romantic ideas. Moreover, emphasis is on the imaginative or emotional appeal of what is heroic, adventurous, remote, mysterious or idealized. Also, characterized mainly on subjective emotional qualities and freedom of form connecting to feelings of the writer of this music, lyrics, book or article. Hence, having an inclination for romance: Sometimes, the expression of love or affection comes in the form of poetry, quote from bible scriptures, conducive to or fit for love making. Most of all, often linking to or constituting the part of the hero specifically in a good humor. Some sources say there are ten; others report five or seven. For a more thorough list, see the enotes. Continuous as the stars that shine And twinkle on the milky way, They stretched in never-ending line Along the margin of a bay: Ten thousand saw I at a glance, Tossing their heads in sprightly dance. The waves beside them danced; but they Out-did the sparkling waves in glee: A poet could not but be gay, In such a jocund company: I gazed--and gazed--but little thought What wealth the show to me had brought: For oft, when on my couch I lie In vacant or in pensive mood, They flash upon that inward eye Which is the bliss of solitude; And then my heart with pleasure fills, And dances with the daffodils. In this poem, nature is the central theme. First, Wordsworth is writing about flowers; secondly, references to nature abound. See the first stanza. I have bolded references to nature. Another characteristic of Romantic writing is seen with the personification of daffodils in the last line of that first stanza, as he describes them: The personification continues on through the poem. His tone is especially lighthearted. Wordsworth writes of the bird that flies from the sky back to the ground. He finds that the nightingale, so praised by writers and poets for its song, cannot compare to the skylark. Wordsworth admires the bird for flying out in the light to share his song with those below. Type of the wise who soar, but never roam; True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home! A link for this poem is provided. Some characteristics of Romanticism are the following: New emphasis placed upon horror, terror, and, especially awe. The dream or inner experience of the individual as the articulation of self is emphasized. Nature is a concept of divinity. Suspicion of established religion. God is perceived as part of the universe rather than separate from it. Romanticism provides an escape from modern realities Poetry is the highest form of literature. 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 And I can listen to thee yet; Can lie upon the plain And listen, till I do beget That golden time again. Clearly, in both poems Wordsworth finds solace in nature that the industrial and materialistic world does not provide. His personal experience with nature refreshes his soul and even delights him abdulqudoos Student Love of the Common Man Neo-Classicism.

Readers of Romantic poetry usually come into contact with literary criticisms about the influence of opium on its works. Whether or not opium had a direct effect is still up for debate; however, the literary criticism that has emerged throughout the years suggests very compelling things about opium and its impact on Romantic texts.

Fresh ideals came to the fore; in particular, the ideal of freedom, long cherished in England, was being extended to every range of human endeavour. As that ideal swept through Europe, it became natural to believe that the age of tyrants might soon end. The most notable feature of the poetry of the time is the new role of individual thought and personal feeling. To Particularize is the alone Distinction of Merit. Poetry was regarded as conveying its own truth; sincerity was the criterion by which it was to be judged. But feeling had begun to receive particular emphasis and is found in most of the Romantic definitions of poetry. Another key quality of Romantic writing was its shift from the mimetic, or imitative, assumptions of the Neoclassical era to a new stress on imagination. Samuel Taylor Coleridge saw the imagination as the supreme poetic quality, a quasi-divine creative force that made the poet a godlike being. Imagination, the Divine Vision. A further sign of the diminished stress placed on judgment is the Romantic attitude to form: Hand in hand with the new conception of poetry and the insistence on a new subject matter went a demand for new ways of writing. It could not be, for them, the language of feeling, and Wordsworth accordingly sought to bring the language of poetry back to that of common speech. Nevertheless, when he published his preface to *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800, the time was ripe for a change: Poetry Blake, Wordsworth, and Coleridge Useful as it is to trace the common elements in Romantic poetry, there was little conformity among the poets themselves. It is misleading to read the poetry of the first Romantics as if it had been written primarily to express their feelings. Their concern was rather to change the intellectual climate of the age. William Blake had been dissatisfied since boyhood with the current state of poetry and what he considered the irreligious drabness of contemporary thought. His early development of a protective shield of mocking humour with which to face a world in which science had become trifling and art inconsequential is visible in the satirical *An Island in the Moon* written c. 1795. His desire for renewal encouraged him to view the outbreak of the French Revolution as a momentous event. In works such as *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793) and *Songs of Experience*, he attacked the hypocrisies of the age and the impersonal cruelties resulting from the dominance of analytic reason in contemporary thought. Here, still using his own mythological characters, he portrayed the imaginative artist as the hero of society and suggested the possibility of redemption from the fallen or Urizenic condition. William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, meanwhile, were also exploring the implications of the French Revolution. Wordsworth, who lived in France in 1792 and fathered an illegitimate child there, was distressed when, soon after his return, Britain declared war on the republic, dividing his allegiance. For the rest of his career, he was to brood on those events, trying to develop a view of humanity that would be faithful to his twin sense of the pathos of individual human fates and the unrealized potentialities in humanity as a whole. His investigation of the relationship between nature and the human mind continued in the long autobiographical poem addressed to Coleridge and later titled *The Prelude* (1799) in two books; in five books; in 13 books; revised continuously and published posthumously. *The Prelude* constitutes the most significant English expression of the Romantic discovery of the self as a topic for art and literature. *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. Simultaneously, his poetic output became sporadic. In Wordsworth dedicated a number of sonnets to the patriotic cause. The death in 1805 of his brother John, who was a captain in the merchant navy, was a grim reminder that, while he had been living in retirement as a poet, others had been willing to sacrifice themselves. From this time the theme of duty was to be prominent in his poetry. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge benefited from the advent in 1811 of the Regency, which brought a renewed interest in the arts. *A Vision; The Pains of Sleep* was published in *Biographia Literaria*, an account of his own development, combined philosophy and literary criticism in a new way and made an enduring and important contribution to literary theory. His later religious writings made a considerable impact on Victorian readers. Sir Walter Scott, by contrast, was thought of as a major poet for his vigorous and evocative verse narratives *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*. Other

verse writers were also highly esteemed. Another admired poet of the day was Thomas Moore , whose Irish Melodies began to appear in His highly coloured narrative Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance and his satirical poetry were also immensely popular. Charlotte Smith was not the only significant woman poet in this period. He differs from the earlier Augustans, however, in his subject matter, concentrating on realistic, unsentimental accounts of the life of the poor and the middle classes. He shows considerable narrative gifts in his collections of verse tales in which he anticipates many short-story techniques and great powers of description. His antipastoral The Village appeared in After a long silence, he returned to poetry with The Parish Register , The Borough , Tales in Verse , and Tales of the Hall , which gained him great popularity in the early 19th century.

*Dickens (the great English writer who discussed utilitarianism in many of his novels, particularly *Hard Times*, his last one) was born in the Romantic Era, but came next with his works largely falling in the Victorian Age, or as I like to call it - the age of the novel.*

From to the mid-th century Revolution and empire The French Revolution of provided no clean break with the complex literary culture of the Enlightenment. Many ways of thinking and feeling—whether based on reason, sentiment, or an exacerbated sensibility—and most literary forms persisted with little change from to. Certainly, the Napoleonic regime encouraged a return to the Classical mode. Likewise, while the Gothic violence that had emerged in early Revolutionary drama and novels was curbed, its dynamic remained. The seeds of French Romanticism had been sown in national ground, long before writers began to turn to other nations to kindle their inspiration. His work first appeared in volume in and is thus associated with the first generation of French Romantic poets, who saw in him a symbol of persecuted genius. The completed fragments reflect the Enlightenment spirit but also anticipate the episodic epic poems of the later Romantics. His best-known poems, however, are elegies that sing of captivity, death, and dreams of youth and lost happiness. Revolutionary oratory and polemic The intensity of political debate in Paris during the Revolution, whether in clubs, in the National Assembly, or before tribunals, threw into prominence the arts of oratory. The impact of this work was enormous, not least in its reinstatement of nature, and natural landscape, as the lodging place of spiritual repose and renewal. Within it were two short narratives, *Atala* Eng. The *Memoirs of Chateaubriand*, the masterpiece he worked on most of his adult life and intended for posthumous publication, uses the autobiographical format to meditate on the history of France, the passing of time, and the vanity of human desires. His lyrical and rhythmic prose left a deep impression on many Romantic writers. Her contribution to intellectual debate far exceeded any narrow definition of literature. At first liberal and then, after her offer of support was rebuffed, fiercely anti-Napoleon in politics, eclectic in philosophy, mixing rationalism and spiritualism, and determinedly internationalist in her feeling for literature, she moved most easily in a world of ideas, surrounding herself with the salon of intellectuals she founded at Coppet, Switzerland. Her two novels, *Delphine*; *Delphine* and *Corinne*; *Corinne, or Italy*, focus on the limits society tries to impose on the independent woman and the woman of genius. She explored the contrast, as she saw it, between the literature of the south rational, Classical and the literature of the north emotional, Romantic, and she explored the potential interest for French culture of foreign writers such as William Shakespeare, Ossian, and above all the German Romantics. Many of these ideas emerged from discussions with August Wilhelm von Schlegel, whose work on the drama was widely translated, and from meetings with and readings of the Germans Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller. Acutely conscious of being products of a very particular time and place, French writers wrote into their work their obsession with the burden of history and their subjection to time and change. Most French Romantics, whether they adopted a liberal or conservative attitude or whether they tried to ignore the weight of history and politics, asserted that their century was sick. Romantics often retained the encyclopaedic ambitions of their predecessors, but faith in any simple notion of progress was shaken. Some distinction can be made between the generation of , whose members wrote, often from an aristocratic viewpoint, about exhaustion, emptiness, loss, and ennui, and the generation of , whose members spoke of dynamism—though often in the form of frustrated dynamism. Travel had broadened intellectual horizons and had opened up the European cultural hegemony of France to other worlds and other sensibilities. Byron provided a model of poetic sensibility, cynicism, and despair, and his death in the Greek War of Independence reinforced the image of the noble and generous but doomed Romantic hero. Italy and Spain, too, exercised an influence, though, with the exception of Dante, it was not their literature that attracted so much as the models for violent emotion and exotic fantasy that these countries offered: French writing suffered a proliferation of gypsies, bandits, poisonings, and revenge tales. The outstanding poets of the period were surrounded by a host of minor talents, and the way was opened for a variety of new voices, from the melancholic lyricism of Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, giving frustrated desire a distinctive feminine

expression and bringing politics into poetry, writing ardent socialist polemic, to the frenetic extravagance of Petrus Borel. Using a restricted Neoclassical vocabulary and remaining unadventurous in versification, he nevertheless succeeded in creating through the musicality of his verse and his vaporous landscapes a sense of great longings unfulfilled. This soft-centred elegiac tone is tempered by occasional deep despair and Byronic revolt. The early poetry of Hugo was also in the 1830s that the powerful and versatile genius of Victor Hugo emerged. In his first poems he was a supporter of the monarchy and the church. Hugo published four further important collections in the 1830s, in which poetry of nature, love, and family life is interwoven with a solitary, hesitant, but never quite despairing exploration of poetic consciousness. The poetry moves from the personal to the visionary and the prophetic, prefiguring in the lyric mode the epic sweep of much of his later work. In common with Hugo and many other Romantic poets, however, he proposed the poet as prophet and seer. For Vigny the poet is essentially a dignified, moralizing philosopher, using the symbol less as a vehicle for emotion than as an intense expression of his thought. Broadly pessimistic in tone, emphasizing suffering and noble stoicism, his work focuses on figures of victimhood and sacrifice, with the poet-philosopher as quintessential victim. The control and concentration of expression is in contrast to the verbal flood of much Romantic writing. His exuberant sense of humour led him to use extravagant Romantic effects and at the same time treat them ironically. Later, a trajectory from dandyism through debauchery to a sense of emptiness and futility, sustained only intermittently by the linking of suffering with love, resulted in a radical dislocation of the sense of self. The dense symbolic allusiveness of these latter works is the poetic transcription of an anguished, mystical quest that draws on the most diverse religious myths and all manner of literary, historical, occult, and esoteric knowledge. They represent one of the peaks of achievement of that side of the Romantic Movement that sought in the mystical a key to the spiritual reintegration of the divided postrevolutionary self.

Romantic theatre Some critics have been tempted to call Romantic theatre in France a failure. Few plays from that time remain in the active repertory, though the theatre was perceived throughout the period to be the dominant literary form. Quarrels about the theatre, often physically engaging audiences, provided some of the most celebrated battles of Romanticism against Classicism. *Hernani* was one such battle, and Romanticism won an important symbolic victory. In the preface, Hugo called for a drama of action "which he saw as appropriate to modern man, the battleground of matter and spirit" that could transcend Classical categories and mix the sublime and the grotesque. *Hernani* also benefited from the production in Paris of several Shakespearean and historical dramas—in particular, a sustained and triumphal season in 1830 by an English troupe playing Shakespeare. *Hernani* drew on popular melodrama for its effects, exploited the historical and geographic local colour of an imagined 16th-century Spain, and had a tragic hero with whom young Romantics eagerly identified. *Ruy Blas*; Eng. *Ruy Blas*, in a similar vein, mixes poetry, comedy, and tragedy with strong antithetical effects to provide the mingling of dramatic genres that the preface to *Cromwell* had declared the essence of Romantic drama. *Chatterton*, in its concentrated simplicity, has many analogies with Classical theatre. It is, however, a bourgeois drama of the sort called for by Diderot, focusing on the suicide of the young poet Thomas Chatterton as a symbolic figure of poetic idealism misunderstood and rejected by a materialistic society—a typical Romantic estrangement. **Musset** Alfred de Musset did not have public performance primarily in mind when writing most of his plays, and yet, ironically, he is the one playwright of this period whose works have continued to be regularly performed. In the 1830s he wrote a series of short comedies and proverbes "almost charades" in which lighthearted fantasy and the delicate hesitations of young love, rather in the manner of Marivaux, are contrasted with ironic pieces expressing underlying disillusionment. The larger-scale *Lorenzaccio*; Eng. *Lorenzaccio* is the one indisputable masterpiece of Romantic theatre. A drama set in Renaissance Florence but with clear links to the disillusionment of post-Revolution France is combined with a brilliant psychological study of a once pure but now debauched hero almost paralyzed by doubt. The world of wasted youth and lost illusions and the powerlessness of men to overthrow corruption are evoked in a prose that at times resembles lyric poetry. The showy historical colour and the bluster typical of Romantic melodrama are replaced here by a real feeling for the movement of individuals and crowds of which real history is made and a deep sense of tragic poetry that stand comparison with Shakespeare. **The novel** from Constant to Balzac The novel was the most rapidly developing literary form in postrevolutionary France, its

enormous range allowing authors great flexibility in examining the changing relationships of the individual to society. The Romantic undergrowth encouraged the flourishing of such subspecies as the Gothic novel and the terrifying or the fantastic tale—the latter influenced in many cases by the translation from German of the works of E. Hoffmann —works that, when they are not simply ridiculous, seem to be straining to provide a fictional equivalent for the subconscious or an intuition of the mystical. Adolphe , presented as a fictional autobiography, belongs to an important strand in the tradition of the French novel—namely, the novel of concentrated psychological analysis of an individual—which runs from the 17th century to the present day. In that tradition, Adolphe has about it a Classical intensity and simplicity of line. However, in its moral ambiguity , the hesitations of the hero and his confessions of weakness, lies its modernity, responding to the contemporary sense of moral sickness. The historical novel The acute consciousness of a changed world after the Revolution and hence of difference between historical periods led novelists to a new interest in re-creating the specificity of the past or, more accurately, reconstituting it in the light of their own present preoccupations, with a distinct preference for the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Until about the Middle Ages had generally been regarded as a period of barbarism between Classical antiquity and the neoclassical 17th and 18th centuries. The vogue for historical novels was at its strongest in the s and was given impetus by the immense influence of the French translations of Sir Walter Scott though Madame de Genlis claimed strenuously that her own historical novels had established the vogue long before. In it Hugo re-created an atmosphere of vivid, colourful, and intense 15th-century life, associating with it a plea for the preservation of Gothic architecture as the bearer, before the coming of the book, of the cultural heritage and sensibilities of the nation. Stendhal The works of Stendhal Henri Beyle , deeply concerned with the nature of individuality, the claims of the self, and the search for happiness, represent an effort to define an aesthetic for prose fiction and to establish a distinctive, personal voice. In many ways Stendhal is an 18th-century rationalist with a 19th-century sensibility. He came to the novel form relatively late in life. Both present a young would-be Napoleonic hero grappling with the decidedly nonheroic social and political environment inherited by the post-Napoleonic generation. The Red and the Black, a masterpiece of ironic realism both in its characterization and its language, focuses on France in the late s. His work had a quicksilver style, capable of embracing in rapid succession different emotions, ideas, and points of view and creating a sense of immediacy and spontaneity. He had a genius for precise and witty understatement, combined with an ironic vision that was simultaneously cynical and tender. All these qualities, along with his capacity for placing his floundering, aspiring heroes, with a few brushstrokes, in a multilayered evocation of the world in which they must struggle to survive, make of him one of the most individual, humane, and perpetually contemporary of novelists. Sand George Sand Amandine-Aurore-Lucile Dudevant was a dominant figure in the literary life of the 19th century, and her work, much-published and much-serialized throughout Europe, was of major importance in the spread of feminist consciousness. For a long while after her death, her literary reputation rested on works such as *La Mare au diable* ; *The Enchanted Lake* and *La Petite Fadette* ; *Little Fadette* , sentimental stories of country life tinged with realistic elements, of little artistic value. More interesting are the works modeling the subordinate position of women in the 19th-century family, such as *Indiana* ; Eng. *Lelia* , whose heroine, beautiful, powerful, and tormented, founds a community to educate a new generation of independent women. *Mauprat* is immensely readable, with its lyrical alliance of woman, peasant, and reformed aristocracy effecting a bloodless transformation of the world by love. She is an excellent example of the sentimental socialists involved in the Revolution of —her record rather marred by her reluctance to associate herself closely with the rising groups of women engaged in their own struggle for civil and political rights. A different perspective on contemporary feminism emerges in the vigorous and outspoken travel writings and journal of the socialist and feminist activist Flora Tristan, notable for *Promenades dans Londres* ; *The London Journal of Flora Tristan* and *Le Tour de France*: More commonly, combining a Classical analytic style with Romantic themes, he directed a cool, ironic look at violent emotions. Short stories such as *Mateo Falcone* and *Carmen* ; Eng. *Carmen* are peaks of this art. In these works he concentrated mainly on an examination of French society from the Revolution of to the eve of the Revolution of , organically linking realistic observation and visionary intuition while at the same time seeking to analyze the underlying principles of this new world. He ranged

back and forth, often within the same novel, from the philosophical to the social, the economic, and the legal; from Paris to the provinces; and from the summit of society to the petite bourgeoisie, studying the destructive power of what he called thought or passion or vital energy. By using techniques such as the recurrence of characters in several novels, Balzac gave a temporal density and dynamism to his works. Most presciently, he emphasized the paradox of money—its dissolving power and its dynamic force—and of the every-man-for-himself individualism unleashed by the Revolution, at once condemning and celebrating the raw energies of a nascent capitalism. Literary debate interwoven with political considerations was renewed after 1815, and a shifting spectrum of royalist Romantics and Neoclassical liberals moved toward a liberal-Romantic consensus about 1830. The young critic Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, himself the author of poems, was an advocate of Romanticism about 1820, but he progressively detached himself from it as he elaborated his biographical critical method. Criticism in the major literary reviews tended to be from a modified Neoclassical viewpoint throughout the 1820s and even the 1830s, the Romantics replying in inflammatory prefaces attached to their own works. Historical writing Early 19th-century historians were committed to historical erudition, but their works often seem closer to the world of literature. Claude-Henri de Rouvroy, comte de Saint-Simon, and his followers tried to evolve a synthesis, which proved unstable, between socialistic scientific analysis, particularly of economics, and Christian belief. The whole first half of the century is marked by attempts to reconcile religious faith, and the hierarchies it supported, with the legacy of the Enlightenment that increasingly governed society and its structures: Renan, Taine, and positivism After the failure of what was seen as the vague idealism of the revolution, a consciously scientific spirit, directed toward observed fact, came to dominate the study of social and intellectual life.

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