

ENG 332
Romantic Poetry

1770s – 1830s

Blake – Wordsworth – Coleridge

Shelley – Keats

What is Romanticism

- ◆ *It's a shift away from neoclassicism and an emphasis on the importance of the emotions and the imagination.*
- ◆ *It's an exploration of the relationship between nature and human life.*
- ◆ *It was concerned with and emphasized the individual and the value of the individual's experience*

Romanticism was



- ◆ *a revolt against neoclassicism's rational order, regularity, & generalization*
- ◆ *concerned w/ the "irregular," "picturesque," "wild," & distant as well as the concrete & directly familiar*
- ◆ *idealistic & empirical (guided by practical experience)*
- ◆ *Explored power of dreams and the subconscious*

Romanticism



- ✦ *refuses to recognize restraint in subject or form, so it represents freely the abnormal, grotesque, & monstrous*
- ✦ *mingles several views, genres, modes of expression, etc.*
- ✦ *mirrors the struggle of genius against all limitation*
- ✦ *glorifies yearning, striving, & becoming*
- ✦ *glorifies the personality of the artist as larger & more significant than the sometimes incomplete expression of this personality in his work*

The Aim of Romantic Poetry

- ◆ *To render the world in its ideal state to help man make life better.*
- ◆ *To exalt intuition , imagination, individuality*
- ◆ *To perceive the sublime in life and nature and to convey its effect on thought and feelings.*

Major Concepts

- *Disconnect from restrictions and rules.*
- *Nature (natural world and human nature):*
 - i. Is to reach the basic / pure*
 - ii. To leave behind old / inherited ideas.*
- *Imagination:*
 - i. Not to disconnect from reality*
 - ii. To discover innovative ways to reach the inner realm and self.*

Neoclassicism vs Romanticism

Neoclassic Trends

- ◆ *Stressed reason and judgment*
- ◆ *Valued society*
- ◆ *Followed authority*
- ◆ *Maintained the aristocracy*
- ◆ *Interested in science and technology*

Romantic Trends

- ◆ *Stressed imagination and emotion*
- ◆ *Valued individuals*
- ◆ *Strove for freedom*
- ◆ *Represented common people*
- ◆ *Interested in supernatural*

INFLUENCES



- ◆ *The American Revolution & the emergence of the United States of America*
- ◆ *The French Revolution & Napoleon*
- ◆ *Democratic & egalitarian ideals*
- ◆ *Intense feelings of national identity*
- ◆ *The Industrial revolution especially in England*

The Literary Scene

✦ *Literacy*

✦ *Lectures*

✦ *Books*

✦ *Drama*

✦ *Magazines*

✦ *The Novel*

Basic Features of Romanticism

- ◆ Persistent reference to nature and natural objects.
 - * they depicted nature to convey the ideal
 - * they created “Pantheism” to emphasize the relationship bet God and man through nature
- ◆ Intimate self-revelation of the poet.
- ◆ Direct expression of strong, personal feelings.
- ◆ Feelings and emotion are superior to logic and analysis.

Language and Form

- ◆ The use of imagery and descriptive language.
- ◆ Reliance on the quality of suggestion.
- ◆ The language is simple, spontaneous and natural.
- ◆ Rejection of rigid poetic form

Intellectual Background

- ✿ Empiricism
- ✿ Transcendentalism
- ✿ Time, History, & Nostalgia
 - ★ Cultural Nostalgia
 - ★ Personal Nostalgia
- ✿ Organicism
- ✿ Imagination
- ✿ Role of the poet