

Exploring Romanticism in Literary Traditions

Km Devendri¹ and Dr. Nikhat Saquib²

Research Scholar, Department of English¹

Professor, Department of English²

Sunrise University, Alwar, Rajasthan, India

Abstract: *The Latin word that gives us the phrase "the Romance languages" is the source of the ancient French word "Romantic," which originally meant a vernacular tongue. However, the term eventually grew to refer to more than just a language. It suggests the caliber and themes of writing produced in "the Romance languages," particularly tales and romances, in addition to being a whimsical tale and a courtly romance. But as time went on, it became to symbolize a great deal of other things as well. By the seventeenth century, everything that is fantastical or extravagant, whimsical or odd, exaggerated and fanciful, or imaginative or imaginary was considered "romantic" in English, a translation of the French term.*

Additionally, the term "roman-tic" was used with a negative meaning. It began to be used more often in the eighteenth century, and it began to have a variety of positive implications, particularly when describing the attractive aspects of the terrain. The word "romantic" encompasses all these and other meanings and implications, which illustrates the richness and plurality of European Romanticism.

Keywords: Romantic, civilization, society

I. INTRODUCTION

One literary trend that started in the late 18th century and ended in the middle of the 19th century was romanticism, but its impact may still be seen today. It is distinguished by an emphasis on the individual that is, the distinct viewpoint of a person, often influenced by illogical and emotional impulses a reverence for the natural world as a whole, and a celebration of the ordinary man. Romanticism is clearly a response to the profound shifts in society that took place during this time, notably the revolutions that swept across nations like France and the US, bringing in the great democratic experiments.

Throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Romanticism as an attitude or intellectual orientation was present in a great deal of Western civilization's literature, art, music, architecture, criticism, historiography, and other areas. The principles of order, tranquility, harmony, balance, idealization, and rationalism that characterized classicism in general and late 18th-century Neoclassicism in particular might be understood as being rejected by romanticism. It was also, in part, a response to the Enlightenment, the rationalism of the eighteenth century, and to physical materialism in general. Individuality, subjectivity, irrationality, inventiveness, personal spontaneity, passion, vision, and transcendence were all highlighted by romanticism.

ROMANTICISM DEFINITION

The word "romanticism" is derived from the French word "romant," which refers to a romantic tale presented in rhyme, rather than directly from the idea of love. Romanticism that, in contrast to the conventional literature of the period, is centered on emotions and the writer's inner sentiments and is often utilized as an autobiographical asset to educate about the work or even to give a pattern for it.

Romanticism is praised for elevating "regular people" to the status of the primordial, which was novel at the time. In addition to being obsessed with nature as a primal force, romanticism promoted the idea that solitude is essential to one's growth as a person and as an artist. Romanticism was characterized by a number of attitudes, such as a deeper appreciation of nature's beauty, an emphasis on the importance of the senses over reason, a turning inward toward oneself, and a heightened examination of human personality and its moods and mental potentialities; an obsession with the genius, the hero, and the exceptional figure in general, with an emphasis on their inner struggles and passions; a

new understanding of the artist as a supremely unique creator, whose creative spirit is more important than strict adherence to formal rules and traditional procedures; a focus on imagination as a gateway to transcendent experience and spiritual truth; an obsession with folk culture, national and ethnic cultural origins, and the medie.

Pre-Romanticism may be characterized as a series of events that were followed by the actual Romanticism starting in the middle of the eighteenth century. Among this came the emergence of Medieval Romance, the term of which was taken by the Romantic Movement. The whole romance was a chivalric adventure story or song. The strange stood in stark contrast to the refined formality and artificiality of dominant Classical forms of writing, such as the English heroic couplet in poetry or the French Neoclassical tragedy, and it was centered on the non-native and individual heroics. Overtly emotional literary representations of the past were to be a major note in Romanticism, despite the somewhat callow nature of this new passion.

In the 1790s, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Lyrical Ballads were published, which aided in the introduction of Romanticism into English literature. The English Romantic movement in poetry was founded upon Wordsworth's "Preface" to the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads, when he defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." The third significant poet of this early English Romantic Movement was William Blake. A fascination with the supernatural, mystical, and subconscious, as well as changes in literary form and subject, characterized the initial phase of the Romantic Movement in Germany. Friedrich Hölderlin, Novalis, August Wilhelm Jean Paul, Friedrich von Schlegel, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Friedrich Schelling, and Ludwig Tieck are among the many gifted individuals who belong to this first stage. Due to their significant historical and theoretical publications, Madame de Staël, Vicomte de Chateaubriand, and François-Auguste-René were among the main pioneers of Romanticism in revolutionary France.

The second phase of Romanticism, which spanned the years 1805 to 1830, was characterized by the emergence of a rapidly growing cultural nationalism, a renewed focus on national origins, and the gathering and imitation of local folklore, poetry, dance, and music, as well as previously unappreciated works from the Renaissance and medieval periods. Sir Walter Scott, who is widely seen as the creator of the historical novel, turned the resurrected historical recognition into creative literature. Around this same period, the writings of Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, and Lord Byron represented the height of English Romantic poetry.

Works addressing the paranormal, strange, and horrific such as those by Charles Robert Maturin, the Marquis de Sade, E.T.A. Hoffmann, and Mary Shelley were a noteworthy byproduct of the Romantic movement's focus in emotions. Joseph von Görres, Clemens Brentano, Achim von Arnim, and Joseph von Eichendorff led Germany's second wave of Romanticism.

By the 1820s, Romanticism had spread over all of Europe's literature. Later in the second phase, the movement adopted a less global perspective and focused more on investigating the cultural and historical legacies of every country as well as the aspirations and hardships of remarkable people. Thomas De Quincey, William Hazlitt, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë in England; Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, Alphonse de Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Stendhal, Prosper Mérimée, Alexandre Dumas, and Théophile Gautier in France; Alessandro Manzoni and Giacomo Leopardi in Italy; Mikhail Lermontov and Alexander Pushkin in Russia; José de Espronceda and Ángel de Saavedra in Spain; Adam Mickiewicz in Poland, and nearly all of the significant writers in pre-Civil War America would be included in a brief survey of writers influenced by Romanticism.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMANTICISM:

The significance of nature, the emphasis on the individual and spirituality, the celebration of sadness and loneliness, the idealization of women, personification, and the pathetic fallacy are the six fundamental features of romantic literature.

CELEBRATION OF NATURE:

Romantic writers found nature to be a teacher and a source of infinite beauty. One of the most famous works of John Keats- 'To Autumn' where he has emphasized Romanticism.

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,

And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;

Keats, in the above stanza, has personified the season and followed its progression from the arrival of summer, through the harvest season and finally till autumn's end as winter takes its place.

FOCUS ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND SPIRITUALITY:

Romantic authors were known for their introspection and appreciation of the unique experience. As a result, the spirituality of Romantic art became more intense, and occult and supernatural aspects were added.

An excellent illustration of this movement's themes can be found in Edgar Allan Poe's work, *The Raven*, which narrates the tale of a man who is grieving for his deceased love a woman who is idealized in the Romantic tradition when it appears that a sentient Raven has arrived and is torturing him. This could be taken literally or as a sign of the author's mental instability.

CELEBRATION OF ISOLATION AND MELANCHOLY:

One of the most important authors of the Romantic period, Ralph Waldo Emerson's collections of essays exposed and formalized many of the literary movement's topics. His 1841 essay "Self-Reliance," a classic piece of Romantic literature, exhorts readers to examine themselves, choose their own paths, and depend only on their own resources. Melancholy, which is connected to the emphasis on isolation, is a significant aspect of many Romantic works and is typically understood as a response to inevitable failure. Writers sought to adequately elaborate the pure beauty they saw, and their inability to do so led to hopelessness similar to that expressed by Percy Bysshe Shelley in *A Lament*:

O world! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb.
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more Oh, never more!

INTEREST IN THE COMMON MAN:

William Wordsworth was one of the first poets to take up the concept of writing that could be read, enjoyed, understood, analyse and interpret by anyone. Instead of using stylized language, Wordsworth used and referred to classical works in favour of emotional imagery, that was conveyed in simple and elegant language, as in his most famous poem, 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud':

I wandered lonely as a Cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and Hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden Daffodils;
Beside the Lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

IDEALIZATION OF WOMEN:

Women were always portrayed as idealized love partners in works like Poe's "The Raven," where they were lovely and pure but often had nothing more to give. Ironically, owing of these beliefs, the most famous books of the Romantic era were written by women, such as Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Charlotte Bronte, who had to have them first published under male pseudonyms. The idea that women are flawless, innocent creatures who should be loved, grieved, and revered but never touched or depended upon permeates a lot of romantic fiction.

PERSONIFICATION AND PATHETIC FALLACY:

The emphasis on nature in romantic literature is typified by the frequent use of personification and the sad fallacy. The pretty lake reflects the blue and serene sky; when the winds disturb it, their uproar is like the play of a vivacious newborn contrasted to the blaring of the enormous ocean. These are some of the strategies utilized by Mary Shelley to create impact in Frankenstein.

Romanticism continues to influence writing today. Although Stephenie Meyers wrote the Twilight books a century and a half after the movement's active existence ended, they are still better representations of the period, retaining most of its traits.

VISUAL ARTS:

Many British painters, including James Barry, Henry Fuseli, John Hamilton Mortimer, and John Flaxman, started painting on subjects that were very unique with strict decorum and had mythological, classical, and historical subject matter of conventional figurative art in the 1760s and 1770s, both at home and in Rome. These painters portrayed their works with tensely linear lines and vivid contrasts of light and shadow, and they were drawn to topics that were strange, wretched, or extravagantly heroic. The second major English early Romantic poet and painter, William Blake, created his own unique and potent visionary imagery.

The major distinction between English Romantic skeleton painting in the next generation may be seen in the paintings of John Constable and J.M.W. Turner. These painters sought to depict a dynamic natural environment that might inspire awe and grandeur by focusing on the fleeting and dramatic effects of light, atmosphere, and color.

The two main early Romantic painters in France were Théodore Géricault, whose portraits of the insane and *The Raft of the Medusa*, which depicted individual suffering and heroism, and Baron Antoine Gros, who painted dramatic scenes from the Napoleonic Wars. These paintings really kicked off the movement around 1820. The last, more academic period of French Romantic painting was represented by Paul Delaroche, Théodore Chassériau, and occasionally Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. The greatest Romantic painter of all time was Eugène Delacroix, who is renowned for his free and expressive brushwork, his rich and enjoyable use of color, his dynamic compositions, and his unnaturalized and unique subject matter, which ranged from North African Arab life to revolutionary politics at home. Germany In the paintings of Philipp Otto Runge, romanticism acquired figurative and symbolic elements. The greatest German Romantic painter, Caspar David Friedrich, created surreal, quiet landscapes that may evoke wonder and mystery in the viewer on a religious level.

The main ways that romanticism is expressed in architecture are by emulating earlier architectural movements and through the peculiar structures known as "follies." The Gothic Revival was sparked by the Romantic movement in England and Germany, which was captivated by the Gothic architecture of the Middle Ages.

The focus on individuality, freedom of form, and the expression of one's own emotions were characteristics of Romanticism in music. Due to the essentially classical nature of their formal musical procedures, Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert were able to connect the Classical and Romantic eras. Their use of programmatic themes and very individualized musical style served as a significant inspiration for Romantic composers of the 19th century.

The development of new musical forms like the lied, prelude, intermezzo, capriccio, nocturne, and mazurka, as well as the growth and refinement of the instrumental repertory, carved out opportunities for a significant degree of expression in music. Poetry, folklore, and mythology were often sources of inspiration for the Romantic movement. Another characteristic of Romantic music is the way words and music are linked, either programmatically or via incidental and concert overture forms. Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Liszt, Frédéric Chopin, and Hector Berlioz were the main Romantic composers of the first wave. These composers experimented with the relationship between instrumentation and human voice, stretched the harmonic vocabulary to use the whole chromatic scale, and explored the expressive possibilities of orchestral instruments. Individuals like Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Edvard Grieg, and Antonín Dvořák exemplify the intermediate era of musical Romanticism. Composers from Russia, France, and Scandinavia, as well as the Czechs Antonín Dvořák and Bedřich Smetana, exemplified the romantic attempts to use music to convey a nation's distinctiveness.

While Carl Maria von Weber's compositions initiated Romantic opera in Germany, the symphonist Gaetano Donizetti, Vincenzo Bellini, and Gioachino Rossini perfected it in Italy. Giuseppe Verdi introduced the Italian Romantic opera,

which achieved its zenith of popularity. The works of Richard Wagner, who fused and merged several Romantic threads including impassioned nationalism, the worship of the hero, exotic sets and costumes, expressive music, and the demonstration of skill in orchestral and vocal settings, brought Romantic opera to its pinnacle in Germany. Composers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including Richard Strauss, Jean Sibelius, Gustav Mahler, and Edward Elgar, typify the last period of Romanticism in music.

II. CONCLUSION

Romanticism in literature marked a profound shift towards the celebration of individualism, emotion, and nature, challenging the rationalism and order of the preceding Enlightenment period. It emphasized the importance of personal experience, intuition, and imagination, often exploring themes of beauty, the sublime, and the complexity of human emotions. Romantic literature also embraced the mystical and the transcendental, seeking to connect the human soul with the natural world and the divine. This movement profoundly influenced the trajectory of modern literature, inspiring a deeper exploration of the human psyche, creativity, and the power of emotional expression.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Parker, James. "A Book That Examines the Writing Processes of Two Poetry Giants." The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company, 23 July 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2019/07/how-two-literary-giants-wrote-their-best-poetry/594514/>.
- [2]. Alhathani, Safa. "EN571: Literature & Technology." EN571 Literature Technology, 13 May 2018. <https://commons.marymount.edu/571sp17/2018/05/13/analysis-of-romanticism-in-frankenstein-through-digital-tools/>.
- [3]. Jerome, J McGann. "The Romantic Ideology".
- [4]. Robert Jauss. "Toward an Aesthetic of Reception".