

ENGLISH ROMANTICISM AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** English Romanticism, characterized by a passionate revolt against the logic and order of the Enlightenment era, is considered a seminal phase in literary history. This trend, which began in the late 1700s and put an emphasis on emotion, individualism, and the sublime, signaled a significant change in the direction of artistic expression. This article explores the history, major personalities, subjects, and enduring influence of English Romanticism.

**Keywords:** The Romantic period in British literature,romantics,Robert Burns' Poetry,Impact,legacy.

**INTRODUCTION**

English Romantic literature is a broad category that includes a variety of works created in England between the late 18th and the mid-19th century, when the Romantic movement was in full swing. The works of notable poets, authors, and artists who aimed to portray the essence of the natural world and human experience defined the Romantic movement in England.

**The Romantic period in British literature.**

Romanticism was an artistic, literary, and intellectual movement that originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century. Various dates are given for the Romantic period but here the publishing of William Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads in 1798 is taken as the beginning , and the crowning of Queen Victoria in 1837 as its end. Romanticism arrived later in other parts of the English-speaking world, such as America. There was no self-styled "Romantic movement" at the time, and the greatest writers of the era did not refer to themselves as Romantics, so "Romantic" is an essential but somewhat misleading term to describe the most distinctive writers who flourished in the last years of the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th. A distinct line was not drawn until August Wilhelm von Schlegel's Vienna lectures in 1808-1809 between the "organic," "plastic" elements of Romantic art and the "mechanical" nature of Classicism.

The Romantic period changed the whole complexion of English literature during the nineteenth century. The Romantic Movement started with Lyrical Ballads' in 1798 A.D which was written by Samuel Coleridge and William Wordsworth. This new age of romantic poets broke the traditional classical style of literature writing which was primarily written for the higher class of people. As the people of the eighteenth century experienced only the classicform of literature, the people of the nineteenth century experienced a completely new and refreshing form of the English literature. This so called Romantic period ended in 1837 by covering only one-third of the century.

However, many of the most influential writers of the day believed that something new was taking place in global affairs. Percy Bysshe Shelley's "The world's great age begins anew" mirrored William Blake's declaration from 1793 that "a new heaven is begun."

John Keats said of William Wordsworth and Leigh Hunt, "These, these will give the world another heart, And other pulses." New values began to emerge; in particular, the long-cherished English ideal of freedom was being applied to all spheres of human achievement. It became commonplace to think that the era of tyrants may soon come to an end as that ideal spread throughout Europe.

English writers of the late 1700s and early 1800s substituted passion for Augustan harmony and moderation. They preferred mysteriousness, believed in the creative power of the imagination and adopted a personal view of the world. These writers are called **romantics**.

*Romantics*-.Artists who are in the spirit of fantasy, influenced by romance, describe events and processes with beautiful expressions.

### **Robert Burns' Poetry.**

Robert Burns (1759) wrote many classic poems and songs, so whittling down his complete works to just ten recommendations has been hard. Nonetheless, there are a few poems that simply have to be on any list of Burns's best poems, so we hope that most of our choices here won't seem too perverse or controversial.

Robert Burns was the most famous Scottish poet of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He wrote poetry in English and Scottish dialect. Robert was a capable boy. He became fond of reading, learning the French and Latin literature and languages. His favourite writers were Shakespeare, Sterne, Smollet, and Robert Fergusson, and another talented Scottish poet. Burns started writing poems at the age of seventeen. When he wrote in English, he wrote as a cultivated English poet would write, and his Scottish poems were not narrative dialect pieces, but clever manipulations of language varying from Ayrshire to standard English. He composed verses to the melodies of old folk-song, which he had admired from his early childhood. He sang of the woods, fields and wonderful valleys of his native land. He sang the beauty of his native land where he had spent all his life. One of such poems is "My Heart's in the Highlands".

### **My Heart's in the Highlands**

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,  
 My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer,  
 Chasing the wild deer and following the roe.  
 My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.  
 Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,  
 The birth-place of Valour, the country of Worth;  
 Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,  
 The hills of the Highlands forever I love.  
 Farewell to the mountains, high covered with snow;  
 Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;  
 Farewell to the forests and high-hanging woods;  
 Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.  
 My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,  
 My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer,  
 Chasing the wild deer and following the roe.  
 My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Hard work destroyed the poet's health. In 1796 he died in poverty at 37. After his death, his widow and 12 children were left without a shilling. But the common Scottish people collected enough money to provide the widow with the sustenance for the rest of her life and give all his children an education.

### **Themes and Characteristics.**

English Romanticism was characterized by several recurring themes and characteristics. Nature held a central place, serving as a source of inspiration, solace, and transcendence. The sublime, an aesthetic concept evoking feeling of awe and terror in the face of nature's grandeur, featured prominently in Romantic literature. Individualism and the celebration of the unique, subjective experience of the self were also core tenets of the movement, as seen in the emphasis on introspection and personal emotion.

**Impact and Legacy.**

The legacy of English Romanticism extends far beyond the 19<sup>th</sup> century, shaping subsequent literary movements and artistic endeavors. Its emphasis on emotion, imagination, and the natural world laid the groundwork for later movements such as Symbolism, Surrealism, and Modernism. Furthermore, Romantic ideals of individualism and the pursuit of authentic self-expression continue to resonate in contemporary literature and culture.

**CONCLUSION**

English Romanticism emerged as a powerful response to the societal upheaval and intellectual currents of its time, offering a vision of beauty, imagination, and individual freedom. Through the works of poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge, the movement forged a profound connection between humanity and the natural world, inspiring generations of artists and thinkers to explore the depths of human experience. As we continue to navigate the complexities of the modern world, the spirits of Romanticism reminds us of the enduring power of creativity, imagination, and the pursuit of truth.

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