

Romanticism – 27 April 2020

Lesson one – Romantic ideals

Romanticism wasn't a war, technology or set of rules. It was a mindset and a way of feeling. It changed the way people look at nature, children, love, sex, money and work. Romanticism is a reaction to the birth of the modern world. The Age of Enlightenment, the industrial revolution is said to be triggers to the start of the romantic period. As we have seen from human history there tends to be a reaction against the past. The romantic period was no different. Rather than rationalism which had become the center of the Enlightenment period, the romantic period promoted the idea spontaneity and beauty.

The movement emphasized intense emotion as an authentic source of an aesthetic experience, placing new emphasis on emotions such as apprehension, horror and terror, awe and the beauty of nature. It elevated spontaneity as a desirable characteristic (as in the musical impromptu). In contrast to the Rationalism and Classicism of the Enlightenment, Romanticism revived medievalism and elements of art and narrative perceived as authentically medieval in an attempt to escape population growth, early urban sprawl, and industrialism

The *Emile*, written by Jean Jacques Rousseau was ultimately a parenting book, but its praise of the child and the child's spontaneity was important. The child figure started gathering praise. The child was not bogged down by rationality but was pure, unschooled and outside of adult discipline. It was the seat of creativity and genius. For the first time glamour was directed not at the attainment of reason and adult self-control but the freedom from tradition and natural innocence and sweetness of the child.

Many Romantic composers took an interest in art and literature:

- Far off lands
- The distant past
- Dreams
- Night and moonlight
- Rivers, lakes and forests
- Nature and the seasons
- The joy and pain of love
- Fairy tales
- The supernatural
- Magic

And now to see who has read through today's work, answers due tomorrow when I send the next little bit:

1. List five ideals associated with romanticism and
2. List five ideals associated with the Age of Enlightenment (Classical period).