

# Romanticism



ALAN HAFFA

# Movement: Tendency of an Age



- Friedrich Schlegel in 1798: “The three great tendencies of the age are The French Revolution, Fichte’s Doctrine of Knowledge, and Wilhelm Meister.”
- Revolution—Change
- Fichte’s doctrine of Self and the Primacy of Self-Fulfillment through Discipline
- *Wilhelm Meister*: Goethe’s great novel of Individual Development and childlike Emotion

# Storm and Stress (1767-1785)

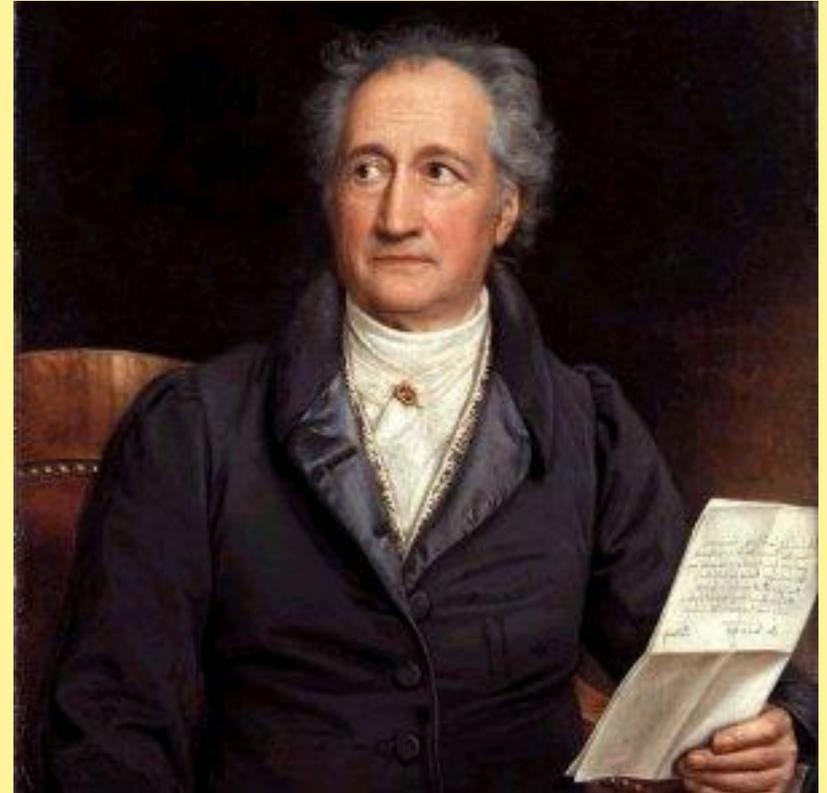


- Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803): Poetry requires Genius and can not be taught
- Shakespeare and Folk Literature as Expressions of Natural Genius
- Political Reaction against German Nobility
- Literary Reaction against constraints of Neo-Classicism
- Passion and Emotion replace Self-Restraint as primary value
- Youthful Energy for Freedom and Self-Fulfillment

# Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



- *Gotz von Berlichen*, 1773
- *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, 1774
- *Faust*: Begun in 1787; finished in 1833
- *Faust* Part I is more Romantic
- By end of his career, Goethe's passion softens and he returns to a refined Classicism



# *Gotz von Berlichien* as Storm and Stress



- Written in Shakespearean style
- Passionate
- Intuitive and Emotional Man
- Hero: Individualist  
Representing Freedom  
from Medieval ties of  
Fealty



# Prometheus Speaks, 1773



- Prometheus: Romantic Symbol
- Suffering Individual
- Passionate
- Freedom and Rebellion against Authority
- [http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/Goethe/goethe\\_prometheus.htm](http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/Goethe/goethe_prometheus.htm)



# Romanticism Mellows in Later Years: “Natur und Kunst” 1800



• “Nature and Art, it seems to us, diverge,  
But soon, before we know it, are united;  
I find myself both alike delighted,  
And both attract me with magnetic urge.

It is but honest striving we require!  
And only after long and measured hours  
Given to Art with all our spirit’s powers  
Can Nature in our hearts again catch fire.



“Man’s life and growth all take the self-same courses  
In vain will minds with unchained inspiration  
Aspire to reach the heights of pure perfection.  
Who would achieve, he must command his forces.  
A master shows his powers in limitation,  
And freedom follows only law’s direction.”

# Romanticism in Art

- Evolves in opposition to Neo-Classicism (example, Jacques Louis David)
- Late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries
- Emotionalism Emphasized (opposed to control and restraint of Neo-Classical)
- Exotic and Foreign
- Individual Freedom and Liberty; Espouses the principles of the French Revolution
- Landscapes: Idealizing Nature
- <http://faculty.evansville.edu/rl29/art105/fo2/art105-6.html>

# Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863)



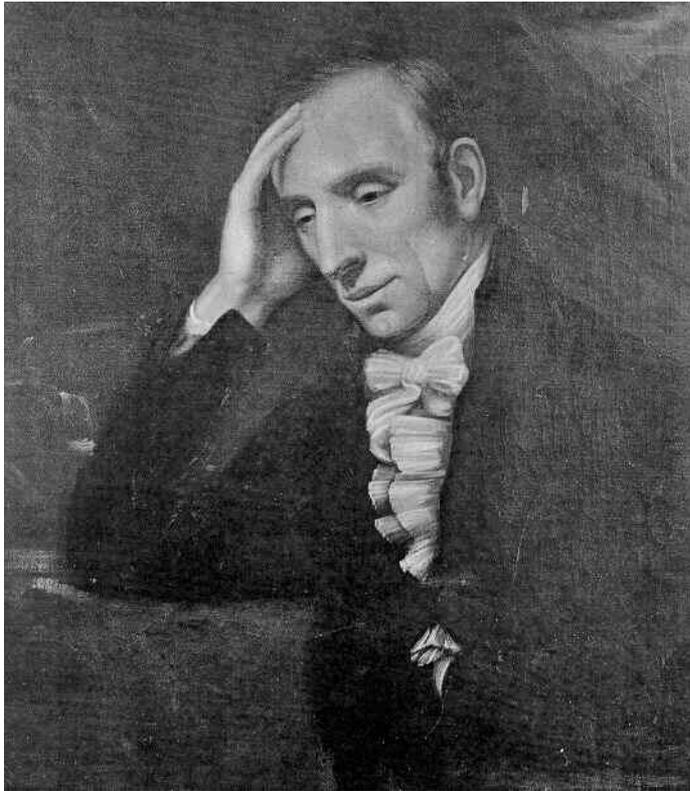
# Delacroix, Algiers



# John Constable (1776-1837)



# Controlling Ideas of Wordsworth's Preface, 1798



- Sympathy of Nature and Man
- Focus on Simple Men, Farmers (Pastoral?)
- Passion and Feelings over Reason
- Imagination

# My heart Leaps Up...



My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky:

So was it when my life began;

So is it now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.

1802

# Romantic Striving in English Novel



- Jane Austen's Middle Class Women striving for Personal Love and Independence
- Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, 1818
- Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, 1847



# France: Victor Hugo



- Movement in Literature developed later, after Revolution
- Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*
- *1830 June Revolution*
- Natural Goodness of Man
- Jean Valjean starts out as a common criminal, but is reformed and becomes an industrialist
- Helps out others
- Contrast with police chief, Javert—law and order and incapable of compassion

# Summary



- Romanticism is a movement
- Starts in Germany
- Moves to England and France later
- Inspired by Revolutions
- Change
- Passion
- Individualism
- Sympathetic to Nature