READINGS: ROMANTICISM

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What is Romanticism? In 1925, a Belgian scholar trying to establish the nature of the movement, counted up to a hundred and fifty definitions. Three-quarters of a century before that, one of the German founders of the school had to admit that, were he asked to give a definition of Romanticism, he could not do it. For Ludwig Tieck, there was no difference between the Romantic and the poetic. In a sense he was right-but only by implying a definition of the "poetic" in the Romantic sense, for certainly he would not have counted Boileau as a Romantic poet. At any rate, no student of the many and varied phenomena that have been called "Romantic" (at first, generally, by their critics) could hazard more than the vaguest and most inclusive answer to the question.

The Romantic spirit, so-called, is to some degree simply an intellectual reaction against the eighteenth-century ideals of order, discipline, and reason, and a nationalistic reaction against French predominance in the cultural, as in the political, sphere. And certainly the movement as a whole stresses freedom, inspiration, and originality in contrast to the formal rules and imitative procedure of the classic style, it replaces the somewhat detached, sometimes even impersonal approach of the late eighteenth century by the lyrical expression and expansion of personality, and denies "Enlightened" universalism by its insistence upon the local, the particular, the peculiar. The sources of the Romantic movement lie in Germany and England, away from those French cultural centers which it only begins to infiltrate after the turn of the century and to touch seriously after Waterloo, through the agency of Chateaubriand, of Madame de Stael whose book on Germany has been called the Romantics' Bible, and through Rousseau, long deceased yet more alive than ever when 492,500 volumes of his works were being printed between 1817 and 1824 alone.

In the various aspects of the Romantic reaction to the great Enlightenment dream of a rational and rationally comprehensible world inhabited by human beings equally accessible to reason, we may find the seeds of most subsequent cultural attitudes. In the work of the two generations whose lives were marked by the three great revolutionary explosions of the 1790's, 1830, and 1848 we find a subjective approach to reality which is assumed to lie first in the particular, then in oneself; we find respect for the organic, often incalculable, in opposition to the planned that is reducible to rational formulae; we find distrust of the Cartesian tendency to see the past in terms of the present and the conviction that, on the contrary, the present has meaning and being only in terms of its particular, frequently unfathomable, but inescapable roots in the past. We also find the passionate and uneasy discomfort or anguish, the cause less melancholy, the vague aspirations, the search for something one does, not quite know what, that the Germans call *Sehnsucht*-longing. It was this unfocused longing, this vague restlessness, that carried so many of Alfred de Musset's generation to escape in premature death-in duels like Pushkin or Lermontov, in war like Pet6fi or Byron, by accident or illness like Keats, or Shelley, or Novalis, by their own hand like Kleist or Gerard de Nerval.

These young men were sensitive, ardent, sometimes tormented, narcissistic, in love with love, with beauty, with passion, with themselves. just as the humanists of the Renaissance had brandished the virtues of Greece and Rome against the "Goths," their predecessors, so the young Romantic rebels resurrected the Middle Ages, when men were men and women fair ladies, to counter the formalism and the powdered wigs which to them represented the dark ages. The aristocracy itself fell prey to the new fashion: its country houses became Gothic castles, its parks became bosky dells whose shadows sheltered mysterious phantoms of another age, its would-be imitators followed suit, and enriched bankers like Salomon Rothschild built palaces whose dining rooms "looked like a cathedral's nave." The fashion in dress reflected the fashion in literature and art: women set out to dress like damsels of the Middle Ages or the Renaissance; men, at least young ones, like the glamorous heroes of Victor Hugo or Dumas. A Paris tailor wrote in 1834: "Mr. Hugo is a very great man: these past two weeks he has helped me sell five jackets and eight pairs of trousers. But I still prefer M. Alexandre Dumas."

But while all this made for a highly aesthetic and egocentric approach, it could also drag the dreamer out of his contemplation, his pursuit of beauty and the self, into social and political activities designed to secure freedom of expression for the bound and the oppressed, to defend art and beauty against the rude and greasy paws of ignorance, or it could simply provide a moment's amusement. Hence, very soon, we find the Romantic not only in the studio, the ivory tower, the exotic expedition in search of color and adventure, or in the protected and lofty Parnassus (whether secured by a private income or not), but down in the street and the caf6, contributing to propagandist papers and pamphlets, politicking in verse, in prose, and-as in Daumier's lithographs-in pictures.

While such social and political activities, the more radical the better, are natural enough exhibitions of youthful boisterousness, it is also possible to trace their inspiration back to earlier and much more abstract sources. To the thinkers of the "classic" eighteenth century, beauty was perfection made visible. Since perfection was regarded as something absolute, beauty must be universal: a concept identical for all men wherever they might be. And, as there is only one "beauty" whose definition is universally valid, there can be only one "good taste" whose science is called aesthetics. But the aesthete cannot seek his knowledge of beauty in nature, for the world is imperfect. Perfect beauty is an ideal which our conception can approach, but never attain. And, whatever else this may imply, it follows that idealism, philosophy, the products of the mind and of reason, are necessarily superior to any imitation of nature, and "realism" unthinkable for the man of good taste.

Later in the eighteenth century, *philosophes* like Diderot retained this belief in the primacy of mind, but discarded the idealism of their predecessors. Beauty and truth were rational concepts all right, or, at least, they were accessible to reason, but reason itself operated not in a realm of platonic ideas but by analyzing nature and society. The new approach was one of selective and thoughtful common sense-an idealized common sense which taught that the purpose of man was the perpetual improvement of the world and of himself. Thus beauty becomes moral, didactic, and socially conscious. Nature becomes important, too, as a model for the artist, the writer, the philosopher, but a model from which they select whatever seems most useful and inspiring for the improvement of character and society. The sentimental morality of the late eighteenth century, with its appeals to the heart, its good intentions, its often sugary pleas for civic and family virtue, was replaced during the revolutionary period by a sterner lore which drew upon the ancients for inspiring examples of Spartan or Roman virtues more appropriate to the grand emotions of the time. But it never died. Through all the changes of a long period of revolution and war, through the different styles and fashions that led from revolution in 1789 to restoration in 1815, and beyond, the anecdotal and moral tone-so well suited to the mentality of enriched shopkeepers and businessmen who were beginning to take over in western Europe-subsisted and thrived.

Writers like Diderot and Rousseau, painters like Greuze, had thought that art should teach a moral lesson. Many Romantics agreed. In 18oo, in her essay on *Literature Considered in Its Relations with Social Institutions,* Madame de Stael wrote that "the truly beautiful is that which makes man better." In the early 1830's, Social Catholics like Lammenais preached that art must help regenerate society. And even a long time later confirmation of this came from an unexpected quarter: in his prize-giving speech at the Salon of 1868, Napoleon the Third's representative and minister of Fine Arts, Marshal Vaillant, said the same thing: "Painting must try to speak to the masses which, today more than ever, it must be the mission of art to moralize."

These references to the mission of art and the regeneration of society reflect the influence of another great figure, that of the Comte de Saint-Simon who had died in 1825 preaching the coming of a new age and a new society in which men would be ranked according to their talents and the use they made of them. Social antagonisms, said Saint-Simon, must give way to universal association, hereditary property must disappear, the state should own all resources and allocate them according to individual talents and social needs. It was the Saint-Simonians who first launched a now-familiar slogan: "To everyone according to his capacities, to each capacity according to its works." Saint-Simon's ideas, the emphasis he laid on productivity, on the rational ordering of society, and on social justice of the most economically advantageous sort, were to leave their imprint on the whole century. More specifically, however, his theories reinforced the view that art, which is the product of its environment and hence of present society, has an important part to play in shaping the better society of the future. In Saint-Simon's scheme of world regeneration the artist is assigned an important role, almost a sacred mission: as the sculptors of the great Gothic cathedrals had interpreted the Christian message to the illiterate but hungry masses of their time, so the artist of today must become the interpreter, the prophet, of the new ideas.

Affected by these concepts, many writers and painters tried to do just that; and the Swiss-French painter Gleyre, who in 1835 met Saint-Simon's successor, Enfantin, and his disciples in Egypt, planned three great panels on the theme of Past, Present, and Future, which would represent first the old alliance of king and priest, then the bourgeois drawing the revenues of his factories and fields, and lastly the sovereign People

receiving and examining the accounts of its servants. The painting did not meet much public success, and this should remind us, if a reminder be needed, that ideas of true morality and beauty varied widely between established authority which liked the established order and enthusiastic youth eager to change it. The results of this difference of opinion were not long in appearing.

The connection between revolutionary activities in art and in politics soon became apparent both to artists, some of whom had begun by ignoring it, and to the public which had always suspected it. Between the publication of Victor Hugo's *Cromwell* in 1827 and the battle over his next play, *Hernani,* in 1830, the political orientation of the rising generation was reflected in its publications. Historians like Thiers, Guizot, and Sismondi, the first two destined for great political careers, were publishing what looked like very revolutionary works. A greater and more romantic historian, Michelet, was presenting European history as a long struggle for freedom. Meanwhile, on the musical front, Rossini's *William Tell* and Auber's *Muette de Portici* made the same point to audiences enthused by heroes fighting cruel tyrants against heavy odds. In July, 1830 it was a young musician, Hector Berlioz, who rushed through the competition in which his entry was to win him the much-coveted *Prix de Rome* and left as soon as he could to go in search of weapons with which to fight for liberty-the same liberty which the greatest of Romantic painters, Eu9~ne Delacroix, was to paint soon after the revolution as leading the people forward, not in the class struggles of a later day, but to affirm the common rights of man.

Soon enough, and especially under the influence of contemporary reformers and theorists like Saint-Simon, a politically revolutionary attitude became a socially revolutionary one. The July Monarchy (183o-i848) was the heyday of this social romanticism which, stifled in other parts of Europe, could flourish in Paris. From Rome, where his prize had taken him, we now find Berlioz writing to a SaintSimonian friend at home, asking what he could do to help the cause and telling him that he wants to be "musically useful." But writers could be more useful still, their products more easily accessible to the general public; and so the chief figures of the new movement were poets, critics, and novelists: Sainte-Beuve, George Sand, Victor Hugo, Lamartine. The last of these was even, for a brief while, one of the leading figures of the 1848 revolution and of the short-lived republic, second of that name, that followed in France.

But at this point labels and categories become hazy: social awareness and revolt led away from the intensely personal and lyrical attitudes of the first Romantics, toward the "realistic" choice and treatment of the subject matter which would stress the angry and pessimistic arguments of would-be reformers. What we call Realism may, in any case, have been inherent in the Romantic mentality. Jacques Barzun, whose *Romanticism and the Modern Ego* provides the sanest interpretation of this ill-defined attitude, has called his heroes "comprehensive realists," because they "instinctively knew that there is more than one layer of experience and many mysteries encountered in exploring it." And, in one sense, it is in such knowledge, and the explorations that followed upon it, that the tale of modern intellectual developments consists.

Yet, though this is true enough, such awareness would just as often make for withdrawal as for some "realistic" activism. We shall see the latter tendency develop in Section 11, pp. 125-188. As for the Romantics proper, especially after 1848, the increasingly widespread feeling of frustration before social injustice, political ineffectiveness, inability to make themselves understood, led many back to the ivory towers of an earlier day, to a new Hermetism, an art for initiates, to the searching investigation of subjective possibilities in the imagination and the senses rather than in the marketplace, that we shall find in Symbolism and in the aesthetic ideas of "art for art's sake."

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ROMANTICISM

Dominant cultural tendency in the Western world in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It caused a re-evaluation of the nature of art and the role of the artist in society. Significantly, from the 1790s it was a self-proclaimed movement, the first such, and so initiated a tradition that has remained in Western culture since. Romanticism was rejected or ignored by most of the major artists later seen as associated with it, but it nevertheless identified several key tendencies of the period. Though hard to define precisely, it essentially involves: 1) placing emotion and intuition before (or at least on an equal footing with) reason; 2) a belief that there are crucial areas of experience neglected by the rational mind; and 3) a belief in the general importance of the individual, the personal and the subjective. In fact it embodies a critique of that faith in progress and rationality that had characterized the main trend of Western thought and action since the Renaissance. This resulted in an opposition to the dominant contemporary values and social structures. Romanticism started as a literary movement but soon came to include the visual arts, particularly painting, the most notable exponents being Blake, Delacroix, Friedrich, Géricault, Goya, Philipp Otto Runge and Turner. To a lesser extent it also affected the graphic arts, sculpture and architecture. By the 1840s it was being superseded by Realism, though many of its ideas persisted throughout the 19th century and into the 20th.

1. The movement.

Romanticism emerged as a movement in literary circles in the 1790s but soon spread to the other arts, including the visual arts. The first definition of 'romantic poetry' was given in 1798 by the German critic Friedrich Schlegel in the magazine *Athenaeum*, which he ran with his brother August Wilhelm Schlegel. It appeared in the first issue and hailed Romantic poetry as 'progressive, universal poetry' that is 'always becoming, never completed', a characteristically heady and imprecise definition. The word itself was drawn from the medieval literary form, the 'romance'. What Schlegel did in effect was to turn the irrational and fantastic qualities of these tales into positive values and to assert that they represented the essential features of the modern (i.e. post-classical) tradition. Following Schlegel's pronouncement, the term gradually gained ground in Germany over the next decade and was then exported elsewhere. It reached England and France primarily through the French author Mme de Staël, whose *De l'Allemagne* (written in 1810, but published in London in 1813) was an apologia for contemporary German culture. By 1820 it had currency throughout Europe and North America as the term for a contemporary cultural movement.

Probably the best way to understand Romanticism is as a reaction to the rationalist ideals of the 18th-century Enlightenment. The belief in the perfectability of man on logical principles that this movement had promoted received a severe blow from the events of the late 18th century. The programme of political and social reform supported by the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment most dramatically culminated in the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789. In its aftermath there was first a period of horrific terror in France itself and then a period of European-wide war that ended only in 1815. Such turmoil seemed to many contemporaries to undermine the idea that society could be improved simply by removing old, corrupt conventions. Equally important were the changes taking place in commerce. The rapid economic development in the period, the Industrial Revolution, was interpreted by many as a sign of man's weak control over his own destiny even when subject to rational planning. On all sides, therefore, political, social and economic changes seemed to emphasize the helplessness of the individual when confronted by fate.

Stimulated by such experiences, Romanticism can be seen as a reaction to an earlier confidence in the power of reason. Like most reactions, it took a multiplicity of forms. Some favoured retreat, clutching at past traditions and evoking the 'good old days' of the Middle Ages. Others turned to worlds beyond the reach of civilization, to the contemplation of the 'primitive' in the natural world. This tendency underpinned the great outburst of 'nature' poetry of the period, and in the visual arts it led to a re-evaluation of the natural world. It encouraged a taste for more informal landscape gardens, for the depiction of rural and primitive life and, perhaps most significantly of all, for more ambitious and challenging forms of landscape painting. It is no exaggeration to say that Romanticism was responsible for one of the greatest moments in Western landscape painting, evident particularly in the work of such artists as Constable, Friedrich and Turner. For many, spiritualism or mysticism was the means of opposing the rationalism of the previous age. This can be seen in the prophetic works of Blake and in the more fantastic aspects of Goya's art. It is symptomatic of the oppositional nature of Romanticism that it had no clear political message, apart from that of criticizing the status quo. Some of those associated with the movement espoused an extreme political conservatism, as was eventually the case with Friedrich Schlegel. Others (such as Blake) supported heady forms of radicalism. Though it is hard to find a common denominator in all these reactions, it can perhaps be seen in the widespread endeavour to discover something beyond immediate experience, whether distanced by time (in the past or the future) or by space (in the cultures of distant lands).

(ii) Painting.

As in the other arts, Romanticism emerged in painting as a means of opposing the academic and the classical. This opposition was made all the more intense in the late 18th century because it occurred at the time of a vigorous revival of classical principles and the academic hierarchy that supported them. In the traditional hierarchy history painting was pre-eminent and, although accounting for only a tiny fraction of the paintings of this period, its prestige was such that major developments tended to crystallize around it. In the late 18th century Neo-classical principles triumphed in this genre, particularly in France, where David emerged as the leading painter. At the same time there were challenges, and in general there were two main alternatives: the treatment of exotic (and usually medieval) historical themes or of modern-life subjects. Both types encouraged a colourful, painterly treatment that contrasted with the severity of the classical mode. In France the medievalizing tendency can be seen in work by Jean-Simon Berthélemy and François-Guillaume Menageot from the 1780s. In England the medieval and the fantastic can be seen in the work of John Hamilton Mortimer and Fuseli and among those artists who also pioneered a rigorous classicism, such as James Barry and Benjamin West. English history painting was strongly influenced by the literary revival of medieval and national themes. One of the principle focuses for history painters in this period was the Shakespeare Gallery in London, which opened in 1789 and for which John Boydell commissioned a series of history paintings on Shakespearian themes. More important in international terms was Benjamin West's innovative and heroic treatment of contemporary historical subjects in modern dress, notably in his *Death of General Wolfe* (1770; Ottawa, N.G.; *see* West, benjamin, fig. 1). This tendency was later developed in France, notably by David, Gros and Géricault.

Of all these, Fuseli is the most firmly related to a pre-Romantic ideology. Swiss by birth, he settled in England after wandering in Germany and studying art in Rome. He started his career as a literary figure and was closely related to the German *Sturm und Drang* movement, which took the English nature poets as its model and emphasized the elemental and self-expression. His most famous work, *The Nightmare* (1781; Detroit, MI, Inst. A.; *see* Füssli, (3), fig. 2), combines violence, eroticism and fear of the unknown. Though an adherent of expression, Fuseli was a rationalist and was sceptical of religious and visionary experience. In this sense he fell short of the Romantic sensibility, and it is perhaps significant that his paintings show almost no interest in colour. He was, however, a great stimulus to a slightly younger generation who adopted the Romantic concept of the artist as prophet and visionary. From the 1780s Blake produced publications that combined his own poetry with Gothic-inspired illustrations. He was an absolute defender of the importance of vision and once exclaimed: 'Talent thinks, genius sees'. His pictures, with their striking imagery and unconventional technique,

exemplify his dedication to originality and imagination. In his painting and poetry he elaborated a complex personal mythology, and this highlights the importance of myth to the Romantics, who saw it as a kind of primitive narrative encapsulating experience not accessible to the rational mind.

Blake was far from being the only artist of the period to create his own mythology. In Germany the somewhat younger Runge elaborated a heady nature mythology around his uncompleted cycle the *Times of Day* (1803–10; e.g. *Morning*, 1808; Hamburg, Ksthalle), in which he sought to convey an ecstatic vision of the universe 'when everything harmonizes in one chord'. Another creator of a form of personal mythology was Goya, who in 1799 produced the *Caprichos*, a series of etchings in which bizarre nocturnal creatures emerge from the sleep of reason (*see* Goya, francisco de, fig. 1). Each of these 'visionary' artists produced a highly individualistic art, yet they are united by their belief in the importance of personal vision and in their critique of the rational. They also believed in the didactic and political role of art. In their different ways, their apocalyptic art forms are reactions to the political uncertainties of the period of the French Revolution and its aftermath. Goya's position was the most paradoxical, because as well as being a private visionary he was also the court painter to Charles IV and then Ferdinand VII. But his public works maintain an ambiguity and seem always to have a private side. His most moving painting, the *Third of May, 1808* (1814; Madrid, Prado, *see* Goya, francisco de, fig. 4), shows Spanish insurgents being executed by the French during their invasion of the country. Yet what is most clear in these martyrs is not their heroism but their fear of death: Goya cut through the rhetoric to express the personal emotion.

Unlike Blake and Goya, Runge was in contact with a programmatic Romantic movement. He lived in Dresden while the circle of 'Dresden Romantics' around Friedrich von Schlegel was active and he was particularly close for a time with one member of that group, the poet and novelist Ludwig Tieck. Yet Tieck effectively abandoned Runge, whose ideas and work developed beyond the sphere of the Dresden Romantics. A more programmatic relation between painting and literary Romanticism came with the medievalist movement, the interest in depicting medieval subjects in a style recalling the Middle Ages. Admiration for the Gothic had been growing since the mid-18th century and was widespread among Romantic sympathizers. Blake, for example, once declared 'Grecian art is mathematical form, Gothic art living form'. This medieval revival was already having an impact on subject-matter in the 1780s, but it was not until 1800 that it took a definitive form. To a certain extent it was fundamentally linked with programmatic Romanticism, for the very choice of the word 'romantic' referred back to medieval literary romances. More importantly, it was supported by the reaction against the excesses of the French Revolution (and, by implication, of classically inspired rationalism). This occurred in France as much as anywhere. Originally it was a protest movement, fanned by such defences of tradition as François-René Chateaubriand's *Le Génie du Christianisme ou beautés de la religion chrétienne* (1802). It then received a kind of official promotion when Napoleon, with great prescience, re-established Christianity in France and took the title of Emperor. Napoleon's court (and in particular his wife Josephine Bonaparte) favoured a chivalric medievalism that came to be known as the Troubadour style, and many French history painters of the day, such as Anne-Louis Girodet and Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, exploited this mood. Most intriguing of all was the use made of it by Ingres, who, though later seen as the bastion of classicism, was one of the most subtle interpreters of the Gothic at this time, as shown by the tender portrait of *Mlle Rivière* (1806; Paris, Louvre). Equally striking in the Napoleonic period was the promotion of a vivid, painterly style for heroic modern subjects. David himself made attempts in this direction, particularly with his record of the *Coronation of Napoleon in Notre-Dame* (1805–7; Paris, Louvre). But it was Antoine-Jean Gros who mastered this style with his celebrations of Napoleon's exploits, most notably that of *Bonaparte Visiting the Victims of the Plague at Jaffa* (1804; Paris, Louvre).

Such works seem to be Romantic in all but name. However, the leading artists of this period were strongly opposed to Romanticism later and were also defenders rather than critics of the status quo. The promotion of medievalism as a protest against the contemporary situation took place elsewhere, largely in Germany and in England. It was most overt in central Europe, where, in particular, a group of students at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Vienna formed the Lukasbrüder in 1809, in emulation of a medieval guild. The Nazarenes (as they later became known after their leaders, Friedrich Overbeck, Franz Pforr and others, moved to Rome in 1810) saw art essentially in terms of morality and placed sincerity of vision above technical accomplishment. In this sense their artistic ideals accord with those of such German literary Romantics as Tieck and Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, whom they admired, even though their art has little of the pictorial sensuousness normally associated with Romanticism. They were also representative of the movement in the way that they banded together to make their protest. They were not quite the first 'breakaway' group to be formed (that honour can probably be given to the Primitifs, a group of students active in David's studio *c.* 1800), but they were the first to make their protest successful. They thus established a pattern that has become one of the stereotypes of the modern art world, that of the avant-garde outburst that settles down to become the new orthodoxy. The Nazarenes' pious medievalism eventually brought them international fame. In the reactionary climate of post-Napoleonic Europe their traditionalism had a strong appeal, particularly in the authoritarian regimes of central Europe. Despite this, 'protest' medievalism remained a strong current in 19th century art, particularly in Britain where it stimulated both the Pre-Raphaelite movement in painting and the decorative arts and the Gothic Revival in architecture.

The emergence of a fully fledged genre of Romantic history painting occurred in France following the fall of Napoleon. This might be seen as a result of the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, since Troubadour painting was vigorously promoted by the new regime, as shown in pro-Bourbon historical subjects by Gros and François Gérard (e.g. Gérard's *Entry of Henry IV into Paris*, exh. Salon 1817; Versailles, Château). In fact the new history painting was largely motivated by disillusion and a spirit of opposition, as is clear from the career of Géricault, arguably the greatest painter of the first half of the 19th century. He began his career celebrating the heroism of Napoleonic France in such dramatic modern-life works as the *Charging Chasseur* (1812; Paris, Louvre); after the confusion of the Restoration (and many personal disappointments), he painted the monumentally anti-heroic work the *Raft of the Medusa* (exh. Salon 1819; Paris, Louvre), which combines all the uplifting visual qualities of the best history painting with a theme of utter despair (*see* Géricault,

théodore, figs 1 and 3). Géricault died young in 1824: both the tragedy of his death and still more the vistas opened up by his art left a vivid challenge to other French artists. The growing discussion of Romanticism in literary circles at the time, as embodied in the philosophy of Victor Cousin and the writing of Stendhal and Victor Hugo, also provided a new and convenient rallying-point for their protest. By far the most intelligent and skilled of this younger generation was Delacroix. In later years he was disdainful of the term Romantic, but in the early 1820s he seemed happy enough to accept it. His major Salon paintings of the 1820s, notably the *Massacres of Chios* (1824; Paris, Louvre) and the *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827; Paris, Louvre; see fig. 1), combine the subversiveness of Géricault, though usually subtly mediated, with a more dedicated exploration of colour as the means of conveying sensation.

A large number of other artists emerged at this time who combined sensationalism with the portrayal of exotic, modern or medievalizing themes, notably Horace Vernet, Eugène Devéria, Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps and Léopold Robert. The new interest in sensationalism led to an unprecedented attention to English art, including the naturalism of Constable. A number of English and Anglo-French artists profited from this concern, the most remarkable being Richard Parkes Bonington, a brilliant watercolourist who did much to establish a new form of informal historical painting that appealed to the Romantic interest in the anti-heroic. With the July Revolution of 1830 Romantic history painting came of age in France and received much official support under the government of Louis-Philippe. It is characteristic of Delacroix that he should have benefited from this new mood by gaining a prodigious number of state commissions for murals (most notably those for the library of the Palais du Luxembourg in Paris; *in situ*) while distancing himself increasingly from programmatic Romanticism. Nevertheless, the reflective pessimism of his later work and his deepening exploration of colour effects show him to have been working within the spirit of the movement at a profounder level. Other history painters of the Romantic generation showed little capacity for development, and the field of fashionable history painting was soon given over to such academic artists as Paul Delaroche, Théodore Chassériau and Thomas Couture, who attempted to achieve a *juste-milieu* by creating a rapprochement between Romantic and classical and/or Realist tendencies.

The impact of French Romantic history painting spread throughout Europe from the late 1820s. At that time the two dominant historical schools were acknowledged to be those of Paris and of the Nazarene-inspired history painting of Germany, as represented in particular by the work of Peter Cornelius. In Belgium the tendency was more towards the French school, notably in the work of Gustaf Wappers and Antoine Wiertz. In England William Etty's work showed the strong influence of French artists, while such later artists as Daniel Maclise and William Dyce looked more towards the Germans. In Italy the Roman-based Purismo Movement (whose leading figure was Tommaso Minardi) showed the impact of the Nazarenes, while in the north Francesco Hayez painted in a more individual mode that had strong affinities with elements of the work of Ingres and Delacroix. In Germany itself the Düsseldorf school constituted a middle road between Nazarene and Parisian history painting (particularly in the work of Karl Friedrich Lessing). A similar combination can be seen in the art of eastern Europe, as in the history painting of Karl Bryullov and Sergey Ivanov. History painting also began to gain ground in the USA: Washington Allston was strongly influenced by English art (*see* United states of america, fig. 13), while the work of such later painters as Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze reveals the impact of the Düsseldorf school.

Parallel with the development of individualism, medievalism and modernity in history painting came the challenge of other genres for a status similar to that of history. The strongest came from genre painting, as the growing power of the bourgeoisie throughout Europe at this time did much to stimulate its popularity. To some extent this had been initiated by the genre scenes of the French painter Jean-Baptiste Greuze. The sentimental attitude to the simple, moral life articulated in his works created a taste that was exploited by such other painters of the rural and domestic as George Morland in England. In the early 19th century the Scottish painter David Wilkie achieved an immense success in London with his Dutch-inspired portrayals of domestic life. In France the depiction of simple domestic virtue was carried on by Louis-Léopold Boilly. In Germany it developed a sentimental direction, particularly in the post-Napoleonic Biedermeier style, when Moritz von Schwind, Ludwig Richter and Carl Spitzweg treated the theme with varying degrees of fantasy and humour.

Another figurative genre that took on new dimensions at this time was portraiture. The Romantic interest in individualism and temperament had its effect at both the fashionable and the more private level. At the former it led to a new kind of suave society portrait, which was mastered most effectively by the English painter Thomas Lawrence, who became the most sought-after portrait painter in Europe. At a deeper level it led to the profoundly paradoxical portraits of Goya (such as the group portrait of the *Family of Charles IV*, 1800; Madrid, Prado; *see* Goya, francisco de, fig. 3), which seem both to celebrate social status and undermine individual character, and to moving explorations of aberrant personality, most notably in Géricault's portraits of the insane (e.g. *Gambling Mania*, 1823; Paris, Louvre; *see* Géricault, théodore, fig. 4). The interest in passion and temperament also stimulated a new interest in the portrayal of animals. Following the tradition established by George Stubbs, the English showed a marked proficiency in this genre, as exemplified by James Ward and Edwin Henry Landseer in particular. Indeed, the only form of portrayal of the natural world that does not seem to have gained a new dimension in the Romantic era is still-life, but perhaps it is because this genre shows nature curtailed and organized rather than organic and living.

The perception of nature as a living entity certainly underpinned one of the most remarkable and original developments in the Romantic era, namely the re-evaluation of landscape painting. The change was both external and internal. Externally it led to the claim that the subject of landscape was as important as that of history painting. This is a view that was supported by the development of 'nature' poetry in the 18th century, with its refocusing on nature as the source of spiritual inspiration. The writings of the Swiss-French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau were also significant because of their insistence that man and society were at their best in the natural state. A new enthusiasm for landscape—in particular the representation of wild and evocative scenery—was prevalent throughout Europe at this time. Probably the most famous landscape painter of this period was Joseph Vernet, who both reintroduced works of idyllic calm based on the

work of the 17th-century landscape painter Claude and innovatively painted scenes of wild storms that drew their inspiration from the current interest in the Sublime. Wild landscape scenery became a vogue in England too, promoted by Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg and by Gainsborough in some of his later work. This led to a re-evaluation of the wilder parts of the British Isles, such as the Lake District and north Wales. On the Continent the high mountain scenery of the Alps began to be appreciated in a new light, as shown in the work of the Swiss landscape painter Caspar Wolf. The new taste for travel in search of the Picturesque (generated by the writings of William Gilpin, Richard Payne Knight and Uvedale Price) also led to a wider interest in topography. The growing concern with direct observation is symptomatic of this interest and led, among other things, to the promotion of the *plein-air* oil sketch and to the development of watercolour painting. The British proved to be particularly adept at the latter, and many of the greatest landscape painters of the period, including Thomas Girtin and John Sell Cotman, practised largely or exclusively in this medium.

It was the generation who came to maturity around 1800 who took Romantic landscape painting to its height. This occurred for the most part in Britain. In general there seem to have been two major tendencies, one to explore the dramatic and fantastic, the other to become immersed in the minutiae and in a sense of the local and particular. Trained as a watercolour painter, Turner aimed to master all forms of landscape, but he was at his best in extremes, in dramatic scenes of disasters (such as his early *Shipwreck*, 1805; London, Tate) and in quiet moments of intense lyricism. He penetratingly explored the effects of nature as shown in *Rain, Steam and Speed: The Great Western Railway* (1844; London, N.G.; see fig. 2), in which he also ironically included a hare running ahead of the train, so suggesting the limitations of technology. He was equally concerned with modes of representation and in his later works achieved transcendent visions of colour effects. Other painters, notably John Martin and Francis Danby, emulated his dramatic tendencies, but none could equal his late, near abstract work. The other major landscape painter of the period, Constable, aimed at depicting local scenery on a grand scale. Like the poet William Wordsworth, he was deeply attached to the scenes of his childhood. His *Hay Wain* (1821; London, N.G.; *see* Landscape painting, fig. 10) has subsequently become a symbol of idyllic English rural life, but he himself became increasingly depressed by the collapse of the rural society of his childhood, and his later works are stormy and pessimistic. As well as these depictions of tranquil rural life, there was a more visionary interpretation of the countryside, represented most strongly in the work of Samuel Palmer (*see* Palmer, samuel, fig. 1), a follower of Blake. This attitude is, however, more evident in Germany, where there was a greater interest in the expression of religious and philosophical ideas through landscape. Runge represents this tendency at its most extreme, but it was Friedrich who most successfully combined such concerns with actual experiences of nature.

Up to 1820 these developments took place largely in England and northern Europe. After that, there was a growing tendency in France to view landscape more seriously. To some extent this was part of the response to English art of the period, and such painters as Paul Huet largely based their style on that of the English. Others, such as Georges Michel, looked to the great Dutch landscape painters of the 17th century. There was also a reassessment of an indigenous tradition: Pierre Henri de Valenciennes had done much to promote *plein-air* painting, as well as the prestige of the genre in general. The most important beneficiary of this was Corot, who studied in Rome (1825–8) and developed a quiet, meditative form of naturalism that is positively Franciscan in its pantheism. The search for a wild 'national' naturalism (so much a keynote of Romanticism in every country) was answered largely by the Barbizon painters, who from *c.* 1830 began to settle in the village of that name in the forest of Fontainebleau. Although most of this group are more closely associated with Realism, its leading figure, Théodore Rousseau, was still deeply affected by the Romantic quest for the spiritual in nature. A similar combination of naturalistic and spiritual interests can be found in the numerous other groups of landscape painters who proliferated around Europe after 1820. Pride of place must be given to the artists of the Danish school, in particular Christen Købke. In Germany there were major centres in Dresden, where the Norwegian J. C. Dahl reigned supreme, in Düsseldorf and in Berlin. In the last named place Karl Blechen gave a new dimension to Romantic landscape painting through his exploration of ironic effect. Romantic landscape painting was also one of the most successful visual exports to the New World. In the USA there was a distinguished tradition of practitioners, including Thomas Cole, who developed the fantastic along the line of Turner and Martin, and such other members of the Hudson River school as Asher B. Durand, who were involved in a more direct celebration of American nature.

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William Wordsworth

Wordsworth was born and lived most of his life in the rural northwest of England known as the Lake District. Like many other Romantic writers, he saw in Nature an emblem of god or the divine and his poetry often celebrates the beauty and spiritual values of the natural world. He revolutionized English poetry with the publication of Literary Ballads *(1798), co-authored with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge who contributed "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" for the volume. In this book Wordsworth sought to break the pattern of artificial situations of eighteenth-century poetry, which had been written for the upper classes, and to write in simple, straightforward language for the common man. Other English Romantic poets would follow Wordsworth's lead in taking apparently insignificant moments and, by observation and contemplation, raising them to illuminations of experience. Wordsworth defined poetry as the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," intense "emotion recollected in tranquillity." In the sonnet "The World Is Too Much with Us" the poet contrasts Nature with the world of materialism and "making it." Because we are insensitive to the richness of Nature, we may be forfeiting our souls. To us there is nothing wonderful or mysterious about the natural world, but ancients who were pagans created a colorful mythology out of their awe of Nature.*

What does Wordsworth think is wrong with the modern world?

The world is too much with us

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.--Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn; (1)
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea, (2)
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus (3) rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton (4) blow his wreathed horn.

(1) Brought up in an outdated religion.
(2) Meadow.
(3) Greek sea god capable of taking many shapes.
(4) Another sea god, often depicted as trumpeting on a shell.

The Tables Turned" (1798)

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!

He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impose from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur. Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.
These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye;
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;

And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration: -feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: -that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on -
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft -
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart -
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished though
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led -more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. -I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. -That time is past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear -both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee; and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured

Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance -
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence -wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service; rather say
With warmer love -oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY. *TO A SKYLARK*

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see--we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud.
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chaunt
Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt--
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest
thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now!

BETTINA BRENTANO

Elisabeth Brentano (y85-t8g9) was born, like Goethe, in Frankfurt, one of the twenty children of an immigrant Italian businessman. Bettina, as she was called, who eventually married the poet and novelist Achim von Arnim, from her childhood moved in the company of the best-known figures of the German literary world, including Goethe who was a good friend of her aunt and Beethoven whose conquest she describes below. Her lavish correspondence provided her with the raw material for a number of rather controversial books which, more or less faithfully, cite the letters she received and sent; but perhaps her chief role in the history of German Romanticism was that of a delightful, witty, and -talented hostess for the poets and musicians, critics and professors, artists, philosophers, theologians, and scientists who gravitated around her in her Berlin salon.

More than a mere blue-stocking, however, and more than a dilettante, she was also an active social reformer, seeking out in their unpleasant reality the causes of poverty, violence, and disease in the Berlin slums, publishing the results of her investigations, and seeking to move to action the German public and the Prussian king. Seldom successful in her social and political efforts, she holds nevertheless an important place in the annals of social Romanticism.

Beethoven's declarations to the enthusiastic young girl who burst in upon him on a showery spring afternoon express a view of musical creation that is wholly Romantic. Before Beethoven such passion and fire had been unknown or, at least, unboasted; but now the artist affirms himself no longer a mere technician (however skilled) or entertainer (however successful). He 4 the carrier and interpreter of divine inspiration, an almost holy vessel of the sublime, whose creations attempt to interpret the torrential forces and revelations that possess him. Some of his words recall Alfred de Vigny's Moses, whom God had caused to live "puissant et solitaire": another possessed and powerful Romantic giant, calling to his like across the wastes of puny humanity as Beethoven calls to Goethe in the letter below.

Letter to Goethe
Vienna, May 10, 1810

When I met the man about whom I want to tell you today, the whole world disappeared for me . . .

It was in front of Beethoven, about whom I want to talk to you, that I forgot the whole world and even yourself. I am, it is true, only a child, but I am not mistaken when I affirm (what perhaps no one will understand and believe today) that he is fast advancing far ahead of human civilizationand who knows whether we shall ever catch up with him? I doubt it. May he only live until the perfect ripening of the sublime and powerful enigma he carries within him, oh! yes, may he attain his supreme goal! Surely then he will leave in our hands the key of a heavenly initiation that will carry us one degree closer to true beatitude.

I can well confess it to you: I believe in a divine magic that is an element of spiritual nature; and this magic, Beethoven exercises it in his art. All he could tell you about it is pure magic; no motive, no orientation which is not the expression of a superior existence, and Beethoven himself feels himself to be the founder of a new perceptible principle of spiritual life.

You will work out for yourself what I want to say and what is true. Who among us could replace this genius? from whom could we expect a similar achievement? All human activity is like the pendulum of a clock that comes and goes for him: he alone is free and produces of his own free will, as he wishes, the uncreated and the unexpected. What matters then his traffic with the world, to him whom the rising sun finds already engaged upon the hallowed task of every day and who hardly lifts his eyes at sunset to glance about him; he who forgets to feed his body and whom the torrent of his inspiration keeps far removed from the platitudes of daily life? He has told me himself: "From the moment when I open my eyes I begin to groan, for what I see goes against my religion, and I must despise the world which does not sense that music is a more sublime revelation than all wisdom and all philosophy; it is the wine that inspires and leads to fresh creations, and I am the Bacchus who presses for mankind this wine of magnificence, it is I who makes them spiritually drunk; and when they find themselves with an empty stomach once more, they have in their intoxication fished in all sorts of things that they bring back with them onto the dry shore. I have no friend, I have to live alone with myself; but I know well that God is closer to me in my art than to all others, and I advance with him without fear, having recognised and understood him every time. Nor do I feel anxious about my music which could have no adverse destiny: he who freely opens his mind and his feelings shall be forever exempt from all the misery in which the others drag along."

All these things Beethoven said to me when I saw him for the first time. A great sentiment of veneration took hold of me on hearing him thus reveal his thoughts to me who must have seemed

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to him so puny. I was the more surprised since I had been assured that he was misanthropic and would engage in conversation with no one. Nobody wanted to introduce me to him; I had to seek him out for myself. He owns three apartments in which he hides in turn: one in the country, one in town, the third in the bastion; it was there, in the third, that I was to find him. I went in unannounced; he was at the piano; I told him my name. He received me affectionately and asked me at once whether I would like to hear a song he had just put to music. And then he started to sing Kennst du das Land . . . [Knowst thou the land . . . one of Mignon's songs from Goethe's Wilhelm Meister] in a voice so powerful and penetrating that its melancholy took possession of me.-"Is it not beautiful?" he asked me enthusiastically. "Wonderful." "I shall sing it a second time." He rejoiced at my delighted approval. "Most humans," he said to me, "are moved by something good, but they are in no way artistic natures; artists are made of fire; they do not weep:" And he began once more to sing another song of yours, which he had composed in the last few days: Trocknet nicht, Traenen der ewigen Liebe . . . Dry not, tears of everlasting love . . .] He walked me back to the house, stopping on the way and speaking so loudly that one needed some courage to listen to him: but he speaks with so much passion and says such unexpected things that one forgets one is in the street. Everyone was very surprised to see him come home with me, where we found a great company, and stay to dinner. After dinner, he sat down at the piano of his own accord, without being asked, and he played long and wonderfully; his pride fermented together with his genius. In these moments of inspiration, his genius creates the Imperceptible and his fingers shape the Impossible.

Since then, whether he comes here or I go there, we see each other every day. That is why I have abandoned social gatherings, exhibitions, shows, and even, yes, the tower of St. Stephen's [Cathedral]. Beethoven said to me: "Bah! what do you want to go and see there? I shall come to pick you up and we shall go, towards evening, strolling in the alleys of Schonbrunn." Yesterday I went with him through a splendid garden where everything was in flower; and, the greenhouses open wide, the scents were intoxicating. Beethoven stood stock still full in the sun and said: "The verses of Goethe have a great effect on me, not only through their contents, but also by their rhythm. This language that bears itself as if lifted higher and higher by some aerial spirits and which already carries within itself the secret of harmony, calls and urges me to compose. Indeed, at the incandescent moment of inspiration, I have to let the melody run over everywhere and escape me; I pursue it passionately, I attain it again, I see it fleeing, flying, disappearing, in a mass of emotions, of divers and different impulses; soon I grasp it once more and seize upon it with a new transport of passion; I can no longer separate from it, I have to develop all my very varied modulations in an ecstasy of enthusiasm, and it is only at the last moment, then, that I triumph at last over my first musical idea; you see: that is the symphony. Yes, music is the proper bond between the life of the mind and the life of the senses. I should like to talk with Goethe about all this, but will he understand me? Melody is the perceptible life of poesy. Is it not melody which translates the spiritual content of the poem into a comprehensible sentiment? is it not melody which makes us understand in the song of Mignon all the maiden's feelings? and does not this sensation awaken fresh emotions in its turn? Then the mind wants to reach out towards the boundless universal where, all in all, it becomes the channel of this great apprehension that rises from the simple and pure musical thought and which without it would remain occult, unnoticed, unsuspected. That is what harmony is, the harmony my symphonies express, in which the fusion of varied forms darts forward in one stream towards the goal. That is when one feels that there is something eternal, infinite, impossible to grasp, in all things of the spirit; and though in my works I always have a sense of success, nevertheless, I always feel an unquenchable thirst to start over again, like a child, that which only a moment before seemed finished and exhausted with the last crash of the cymbals which came to drive, like a wedge, my joy and my musical convictions into my listeners' ears. Talk to Goethe about me, tell him to go and listen to my symphonies and he will admit that I am right, that music is the sole and immaterial gate which leads to the higher world of knowledge: this world that surrounds man but which man, for his part, cannot manage to grasp.

"It is advisable to have a rhythm of the spirit in order to grasp music in its intimate essence; it gives the feeling, it carries the inspiration, of heavenly sciences; and that which the mind perceptibly draws from it is the incarnation of spiritual knowledge. -Even though minds live on music as we live on air, it is nevertheless something else again to understand music through the mind; but still, the more the soul gets of its indicated nourishment, the more the mind itself ripens upon this happy accord, when it achieves perfect harmony with it. -But rare are the chosen ones; for even as there are thousands who marry for love, and among these thousands love does not reveal itself even once (even though all follow the calling of love) so there are thousands who follow the calling of music and yet

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lack its revelation. It is also that music has for groundwork and foundation, like every art, the great marks of moral sentiment: every authentic sensation is a moral progress. To submit oneself to its inscrutable laws, to manage to curb one's own spirit to these laws, to lead it according to them so that it should reflect its revelations, this is the isolating principle of the art: to be dissolved into these revelations is to give oneself up to the sublime, to abandon oneself to the divinity that in the serene repose of its sublime authority masters the fury of untamed forces and thus leads imagination to the highest degree of efficacy. It is thus that art always proceeds from divinity, and that human relations with it are religion. That which we get from art we hold from God: what it tends to is the divine inspiration which fixes a goal to man's aspirations, and one such that he can attain.

"We do not know what knowledge awaits us. The almost wholly closed seed needs a damp soil, electrically warm, in order to shoot up, to conceive, to express itself; music is that electric ground in which the spirit lives, thinks, and discovers. Philosophy is a mere derivative, an echoing discharge of the electric spirit; but music is alone to fill the need, the need of all of us, to relate everything to an unique initial principle; and even though the mind should not become capable of mastering that which it had begotten, through it nevertheless it knows happiness in creation. Thus every authentic creation of the art is independent and stronger than the artist himself. By these apparitions it ever returns to its sacred source, and its only connection with man is in so far as it furnishes proof of the divine acting in him.

"Music provides the intellect its relationship with harmony. An isolated thought still carries in the mind the sense of its whole relationship, of generalization by analogy; and this is why all musical thought is an intimate and inseparable part of the general community of harmony, which is Unity. Everything of an electric nature impels the spirit to expand, to express itself, to create musically.

"I am an electric nature . . . But I must stop expounding my not very wise wisdom, or I shall miss the rehearsal! Write to Goethe telling him about me if you have understood me; for if I cannot be responsible for what you will write, I shall on the other hand be very glad to accept his teaching."

I promised him to write you everything as well as I could. He took me to an important rehearsal of the grand orchestra, where I settled down alone in the great hall, dark and deserted. Through the cracks and the holes in the partitions there passed a few rays of light in which, as in a river, there danced here and there little glittering specks; you would have thought they were heavenly highways travelled by innumerable happy souls.

Then I saw , this immense, prodigious genius conduct his company. O, Goethe! no king, no emperor, has, such .consciousness of his power, none emanates such forces as this very Beethoven who, only a moment before, in the garden, sought to know whence he drew them. If I understood him as well as I feel him, then I should know all things. He stood there, straight and firmly resolved, all his movements and his face expressing the complete perfection of his work; he anticipated every mistake, every slip in interpretation; not the slightest breath that came from any initiative, everything was ordered, controlled, worked up by the tremendous presence of his genius. One could easily predict that such a spirit must reappear in its next incarnation as the master of the world.

I wrote this letter yesterday evening and read it to him this morning from beginning to end; he asked "Did I say that?-Then I must have been in a trance." He reread everything again, carefully, struck out what is up above and wrote in between the lines because he expressly wants you to understand him.

Give me the joy of a prompt reply, that Beethoven should know you esteem him highly; we had always intended to talk about music, and I was fond of it myself, but now, because of Beethoven, I feel that henceforward I shall be completely incapable of it.

My address is: Erdberggasse, Birckenstock house, where your answer will find me for about two weeks.

Bettina.

BEETHOVEN

Born in Bonn, on the Rhine, son of a court musician of Flemish descent, the young Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was trained at first to be an infant prodigy, his cloddish, drunken father going so far as to falsify his birthdate by three years in order to make him seem younger than he really was. The young man's talent secured for him first the patronage of his father's master, the Archbishop-Elector of Cologne, then of the musical and cultivated Viennese aristocracy; but his originality began by shocking the public, first and foremost among them fellow musicians like Haydn. Though never free of criticism, by the time Bettina Brentano sought him out the forty-year-old musician had achieved

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recognition. The Viennese public held him to be one of the chief ornaments of their city, and he himself claimed the rights due to his genius. By 1813, the son of a Rhenish court servant (for musicians were no more than that) would affirm the exceptional position and privileges of his superior talent, even at the expense of the Austrian Imperial family; and if the truth of the story his letter tells is not altogether certain (si non a vero, a ben trovato) its implications in Romantic thinking are perfectly clear. The French revolutionary and the Romantic artist both affirmed the supreme importance of personal achievement and personal endowment which must always count for more than rank or titles. Probably the revolutionary had more concrete goals in mind than the Romantic, but, as the case of Werther shows, the two attitudes were never far apart, and Beethoven claiming priority for genius appears as revolutionary as the French mob claiming equality for men. Though this was not immedi ately evident, one asserted a qualitative standard where the other emphasized the quantitative; and therein lay the seeds of future misunderstanding and friction. But, meanwhile, both claims-that of the rights of genius, and that of the rights of men-would prove deeply subversive of the old order of things.

Toeplitz, August 15, 1813

My good and very dear friend,

Kings and princes can turn out as many professors and privy councillors as they please, grant titles and ribbons, but they cannot produce great men, minds that rise above the human herd and whose task it is to make themselves, for which they must be regarded with respect. When two men like Goethe and myself walk together, these great lords must be shown what we hold to be great. Yesterday, as we were walking back, we met all the Imperial family, we saw them coming from afar, and Goethe let go my arm to get out of their way onto the side of the road. No good arguing with him, it was impossible to make him take another step ahead. For myself, I pulled my hat down over my eyes and bore down on to the very centre of the company, hands crossed behind my back! Princes and courtiers parted and stood aside, the Archduke Rudolph took off his hat to me, the Empress was the first to salute me; their lordships know me. I saw, to my great amusement, the procession pass before Goethe: he stood there by the roadside, hat in hand, bowing deeply; then I told him off good and proper, allowing no excuses, and I taxed him with all his sins, especially against you, dear friend, of whom we had just been talking. God! if I had spent as much time beside you as he has, I should have produced, you may believe me, far more and greater things. A musician is also a poet, two eyes have also the power to carry him into a more beautiful world, where greater minds converse with him and impose upon him truly important duties. What did not pass through my mind when I learnt to know you in the little observatory, during that magnificent May shower which was fruitful for me too! Under your gaze, the most beautiful themes came straight to my heart, melodies which will enchant the world when Beethoven no longer conducts them. May God grant me another couple of years and I shall see you again, dear friend, as wills that voice which still and always maintains its rights within me. Minds can also love each other and mine will always seek out yours; your approval is for me the dearest thing in the whole world. I told Goethe what I thought, and how approval acts upon us others, and that one wants one's peers to understand one through the intelligence: emotional sensitivity is a woman's business (forgive me), for men the fire of music must flash out of the mind. Ah! my dearest child! it is so long since we are of one mind on everything! Nothing is so good as to have a fine intelligence, that one sees reflected in everything, and before which there is no need to hide. One must be somebody if one wants to appear somebody.-One day the world will come round to recognizing this, it is not so unjust; but it matters little, for my aim is higher.

I hope to have a letter from you in Vienna, write me soon, very soon, and a lot, I shall be there in a week. The court, leaves tomorrow; today they give one more performance. He [Goethe] has rehearsed the Empress in her role; his Duke [the Grand Duke of Saxa-Weimar, whom Goethe accompanied as Privy Councillor] and himself wanted me to play some of my music; I refused them both. Both of them love China porcelain, one must not hold it against them since the intelligence no longer holds the reins. But I will not play my music for their flounces and furbelows, I will have no part of these absurdities-in-common, and never with the princes who, anyway, never do a good job.

Farewell, farewell, dearest, your last letter remained all of one night upon my heart where it quickened and vivified me. Musicians permit themselves everything.

God! how I love you!

Your very loyal friend and your deaf brother,

Beethoven

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Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther

Everyone was out in the fields. Only a boy about four years old, was sitting on the grass, holding an infant of about six months pressed with both arms tightly to his chest between his feet, thereby forming a sort of armchair for the child. In spite of the alert way he was looking about him out of his dark eyes, he sat perfectly still. The sight amused me. I sat down on a plow that was standing nearby and began, with great enthusiasm, to sketch this little picture of brotherly devotion. I put in the fence, a barn door, and a few dilapidated wagon wheels--everything, just as it was--and found, after an hour had passed, that I had produced a very well-arranged and interesting drawing without, really having contributed anything to it. This strengthened my decision to stick to nature in the future, for only nature is infinitely rich and capable of developing a great artist. There is much to be said for the advantage of rules and regulations, much the same things as can be said in praise of middle-class society -- he who sticks to them will never produce anything that is bad or in poor taste, just as he who lets himself be molded by law, order, and prosperity will never become an intolerable neighbor or a striking scoundrel. On the other hand -- and people can say what they like -- rules and regulations ruin our true appreciation of nature and our powers to express it Very well, say that I am being too harsh and that rules and regulations merely serve to curb us, cut down the rank vine, etc. Would you like me to give you an example? We can, for instance, apply what I have just said to love. A young man's heart belongs to a certain girl. He spends every hour of the day with her and expends all his strength and his entire fortune on assuring her every moment that he is all hers. Along comes a Philistine, an official, let us say, and says to him, "My dear young man, to love is human, but you must love properly. Arrange your time more circumspectly into time for work, and spend only your hours of recreation with your sweetheart. Count your money and give her a present out of whatever remains after paying for the necessities of life . . . there is nothing to said against that, only don't do it too often . . . for her birthday, let us say, or her nameday," etc. If the fellow obeys you have a worthy young man and I would be willing to advise any Prince to let him head a committee. But as far as love is concerned, that's finished. And if he is an artist, the same applies to his art. Oh my dear friend, would you like to know why genius so rarely breaks its bonds, why it so seldom bursts upon us like a raging torrent to shatter our astounded souls? My friend, it is because of the sober gentlemen who reside on either side of the river, whose precious little summerhouses, tulip beds, and vegetable gardens would be ruined by it, and who know so well how to build dams divert all such threatening danger in good time….

Yesterday, she went for a walk with Marianne and little Amelia. I knew about it and met them, and all of us walked on together. About an hour and a half later we were approaching town again and we came to the spring.... Lotte sat down on the low stone wall, the rest of us stood around her.... I looked down and could see Amelia carefully carrying up a cup of water; I looked at Lotte and realized what she meant to me. Meanwhile, Amelia arrived with the cup and Marianne wanted to take it from her. "No," the child said, with the sweetest expression, "no ... Lotte, you must drink first."

I was so entranced with the child's candor and goodness that I could express it in no other way than by picking her up and kissing her fervently, whereupon she immediately squealed and began to cry. "You shouldn't have done that," Lotte said.

I was abashed.

"Come, Melly," she said, taking the child by the hand and leading her down the steps. "Wash yourself in the fresh spring water quickly, and it won't matter at all." I stood there and watched the child rub her cheeks energetically with her little wet hands, so confident that the spring's miraculous powers would wash away all impurity, and she would not have to fear the shame of growing an ugly mustache. Lotte said that was enough, still the child went on scrubbing her cheeks as if more could only be better than little. William, I assure you that I never attended a baptism with more reverence, and when Lotte came up the steps again I longed to throw myself at her feet, as one throws oneself down before a prophet who has just washed his people clean of sin.

That evening my heart so overflowed with joy that I could not resist describing the event to a gentleman, a sensible fellow who, I was therefore sure, had a good understanding of human nature. But that was a mistake. He was of the opinion that Lotte was wrong -- children should never be misled. Such nonsense could lead to innumerable errors and superstitions, and a child could not be protected from such things early enough in life. It occurred to me suddenly that only a week ago the man had had one of his children baptized, so I let it pass, but in my heart I remained true to my belief:

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we should treat children as God treats us when He lets us go our way in a transport of delightful illusions….

In the end, Albert became so involved in what he was saying that I stopped listening and was soon lost in my own thoughts. Suddenly, with a rough, abrupt gesture, I pressed the mouth of the pistol against my forehead, just above the right eye.

"Shame on you!" Albert said, as he forced my hand down. "What on earth is the meaning of this?"

"It isn't loaded," I said.

"Even so . . . what was going on in your mind?" He sounded impatient. "I simply cannot imagine how a man could be so foolish as to shoot himself. The very idea disgusts me."

"Oh you people," I cried, "who, when you talk about anything must immediately declare: that is foolish, that is clever, that is good, that is bad! And what does it all amount to? Do you think you can uncover the vital circumstances of an action with your questions? Are you sure you know how to get at the heart of the matter: why did it happen? Why did it have to happen? If you were, you wouldn't be so hasty with your decisions."

"You will grant me, I am sure," Albert said, "that certain actions are vicious whatever the reason may be."

I shrugged and had to agree with him. "And yet, my dear fellow," I went on, "here too you will find your exceptions. To steal is a sin, true, but the poor man who steals to save himself and his dear ones from starvation, what does he deserve? Pity or punishment? Who will cast the first stone against the married man who, in his first fury, murders his faithless wife and her vile seducer? And what about the young girl who in a blissful hour loses herself in the irresistible delights of love? Even our laws, cold-blooded and pedantic as they are, can be moved to withhold punishment."

"That is something quite different," said Albert. "A man who lets himself be overwhelmed by passion can be considered out of his mind, and is treated like a drunkard or a madman."

"Oh you sensible people!" I cried, but I was smiling. "Passion. Inebriation. Madness. You respectable ones stand there so calmly, without any sense of participation. Upbraid the drunkard, abhor the madman, pass them by like the priest and thank God like the Pharisees that He did not make you as one of these! I have been drunk more than once, and my passion often borders on madness, and I regret neither. Because, in my own way, I have learned to understand that all exceptional people who created something great, something that seemed impossible, have to be decried as drunkards or madmen. And I find it intolerable, even in our daily life, to hear it said of almost everyone who manages to do something that is free, noble and unexpected: He is a drunkard, he is a fool. They should be ashamed of themselves, all these sober people! And the wise ones!"…

I undertook the journey to my former home with all the reverence of a pilgrim, and was gripped by a few quite unexpected emotions. I had the carriage stop beside the tall linden tree that stands about a quarter of an hour's drive from the city... I got out and told the postilion to drive on so that I might enjoy every memory on foot, vividly and renewed, according to the dictates of my heart. There I stood, under the tree that was once goal and limit of my walks as a boy, and how changed I was! In those days I longed with a happy ignorance to go out into the unknown world where I hoped to find so much nourishment for my heart, so much delight for my yearning soul. And now I have returned from the wide, wide world, oh my friend, with so many shattered hopes and ruined plans. Stretched out before me I saw the mountains that had been the objective of my longing a thousand times. I used to be able to sit there by the hour and yearn for those mountains and lose my whole being in the woods and valleys that presented themselves to me in such a pleasant twilit fashion. And then, when I had to return at a certain time, with what reluctance I used to leave the beloved spot!

I approached the town and greeted all the old familiar little houses, thought the new ones were repulsive, also all other innovations. I walked in at the gate and at once found myself again -- all of me! Dear friend, I don't want to go into details. It was an enchanting experience, but would only fall flat in the telling.

I had decided to take lodgings on the market square next to our old house. On the way there, I noticed that our former schoolroom, where an honest old woman had crowded all our childhood together, had been turned into a general store. I recalled the restlessness, the tears, the dullness, and fear that I had experienced in that little room. I could not take a step that was not worthy of note. A pilgrim in the Holy Land would not find so many places with sacred memories,

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nor could his soul possibly be filled with more reverent emotions. One more example will suffice: I walked down river to a certain farm. It used to be a favorite walk of mine and a place where we boys tried to see how many times we could make a flat stone ricochet on the water. I could remember vividly how I used to stand sometimes and watch the water, with what a marvelous feeling of reverie I would follow its course, and in a highly adventurous spirit, imagine the regions into which it flowed, until I soon found that my imagination had gone as far as it could--still it had to go on and on until I was lost utterly in invisible distances.

Yes, my dear friend, that is how restrained yet happy our glorious ancestors were; their feelings and poetry were childlike. When Ulysses speaks of the boundless sea and the never-ending earth, it is so true, so human, so sincerely felt, so close and mysterious. Of what use is it to me that I can now recite with every schoolboy that the earth is round? A human being needs only a small plot of ground on which to be happy and even less to lie beneath….

Dear William, I am in the condition in which those unfortunates who were believed to be possessed of evil spirits must have found themselves. Sometimes it takes hold of me--not fear, not desire, but an inner, unfathomable turmoil that threatens to burst the confines of my breast and choke me. Then I wander about in the dread nocturnal setting of this unfriendly season.

Last night I had to go out. We had a sudden thaw. I had heard that the river had overflowed its banks, all streams were swollen, and my beloved valley was inundated from Wahlheim down. It was after eleven. I ran outside. What a terrible spectacle, to see the turbulent flood in the moonlight, pouring down from the rocks to cover field, meadow, and hedgerow! Whichever way you looked, the broad valley was one stormy sea in a howling gale. And when the moon came out again above a black cloud, and the flood rushed me with a dull roar in its gloriously frightening reflection,

I was overcome by a great trembling and, once more, a yearning. With my arms open wide, I stood facing the abyss, breathing down, down, and was lost in the bliss of hurling my torment and suffering into it to be carried off foaming, like the waves ... and couldn't lift my feet from the ground to put an end to my misery! My time is not yet run out. I feel it. William, I would have given my life to be able to tear the clouds apart with the gale that was howling, and to grasp the floodwater itself! Ha! And will not this prisoner perhaps be granted such bliss one day? As I looked down in my melancholy, at a spot where I had rested once with Lotte under a willow tree during a hot walk, it too had been inundated. And I had scarcely recognized the willow, William, when I had to think, what about her meadows? Her neighborhood? The lodge? Has our summerhouse been destroyed by the torrent? And the sunshine of the past fell upon me as a dream of herds, meadows, and honors falls upon a prisoner. I stood still. I don't have to reproach myself, for I have the courage to die ... I could have ... and now I sit here like an old woman who gathers her firewood from broken-down hedges and begs her bread from door to door to prolong her fading, joyless existence one moment more....

Selections from German Romantic Stories

"You must know, my sweet darling," she began, "that the elements are full of creatures that look exactly like you, but very seldom let you see them. Fire is the playground of strange, glittering creatures called Salamanders. Deep down in the earth live mischievous, wizened little things called Gnomes. Through the woods wander the wood-spirits, who belong to the element of air, and the lakes and streams and brooks are inhabited by innumerable water-spirits. It's wonderful to live down there beneath echoing vaults of crystal, through which the sky looks in with the sun and all the stars. And one can wander about over the pure sea-sand, and over lovely shells of every color in the rainbow. And there are all the relics of the ancient world, beautiful things that people nowadays have lost the right to enjoy, covered over by the waves with their mysterious veil of silver. There one can see tall and stately monuments glistening with drops of living water, and all overgrown with splendid flowers of moss and clusters of reeds. The men and women who live there are very beautiful to look at—far more beautiful than most human beings. From time to time a fisherman is lucky enough to be within earshot, when a delicate sea-maiden rises above the waves to sing. When this happens, the man is never tired of telling how beautiful she was, and so there are many stories about these strange women, who are commonly called Undines. But you, at this moment, my dearest friend, are actually looking at an Undine."

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The knight tried to persuade himself that his lovely wife was in the grip of one of her queer fancies, and had made up this ingenious story just to tease him. But try as he would, he could not believe it for a moment. A shudder went through him. —*Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué*, *Undine*

"Most gracious lady, please accept this posy and all the other flowers in my garden and everything I own! I would go through fire and water for you!"

At first she had looked at me gravely, almost angrily, that I had trembled like a leaf, but as I spoke, she cast her eyes down. Suddenly the sound of the huntsmen's voices came from the thicket, and snatching the posy from my hand, she rode away down the tree-lined avenue.

From this moment onwards I knew no peace. I was in the unshakeable grip of that restless yet happy feeling which only used to come over me in springtime, an inexplicable feeling that some great stroke of fortune or other remarkable event was about to befall me. In particular I could not master the wretched bookkeeping at all, and when the rays of golden sunlight shone through the chestnut tree in front of the window and fell on the figures, lighting up now the balance, now the total, upwards and downwards, I became completely bewildered and could not even count up to two. The 8 came to look like my plump, tight-laced lady with a broad coiffure, while the wicked 7 was a signpost pointing backwards, or a gallows; the 9 caused me the greatest amusement, for whenever I turned my back, it stood on its head and became a 6; and the 2, shaped like a question mark, made a quizzical face as if to ask: "Where is this all going to get you, you puny zero? Without *her* your slender One and only you will never add up to anything!" —*Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, Memoirs of a Good-for-Nothing*

The forest grew lighter, and through the last few trees I saw a lovely green open space where a group of children were playing noisily around a tall linden tree. There was also an inn there, in front of which a party of peasants were sitting round a table . . . chatting to each other in the cool of the evening. I immediately took out my fiddle and struck up a jolly country dance as I walked out of the woods towards them. The girls were surprised, while the old men broke into peals of laughter that echoed through the trees. However, as I strolled up to the linden tree and stood there leaning against it, still playing my fiddle, the young folk began to murmur and whisper to each other; then, putting down their pipes, the lads got up, each took his girl by the hand, and before I knew where I was, they were all dancing merrily round me, with the dogs barking, smocks flying and the children staring at me in curiosity as my agile fingers moved over the strings.

When the first dance was over, it was plain for all to see how deeply a piece of good music can affect people. For a few moments ago these lads had been lolling on the benches, their legs outstretched and their pipes in their mouths, whereas now they were suddenly transformed, letting their brightly colored kerchiefs hang down from their buttonholes and dancing so charmingly round the girls that it was a real delight to watch.

One of them, who obviously had a high opinion of himself, then fumbled in his waistcoat pocket for a long while, so as to be sure that the others would notice it, and finally produced a silver coin which he tried to press into my hand. This offended me, even though I did not have a penny to my name, and I told him to keep his charity for himself, since I was only playing out of happiness at being among people again. —*Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, Memoirs of a Good-for-Nothing*

Selections from Goethe, *Faust*, Part I

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN

The Lord. The Hosts of Heaven. Afterwards Mephistopheles.
The three Archangels come forward.

RAPHAEL. The day-star, sonorous as of old,
Goes his predestined way along,
And round his path is thunder rolled,
While sister-spheres join rival song.
New strength have angels at the sight,
Though none may scan the infinitude
And splendid, as in primal light,
The high works of the world are viewed.
GABRIEL. Swift, unimaginably swift
The glory of the earth rolls round,

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And scenes of heavenly radiance shift
To fearfulness of night profound
By floods of sea in foaming forces
Cliffs at their shuddering base are churned,
And flung in planetary courses
The seas and cliffs are ever turned.
MICHAEL. And storms contend in angry fuming
From sea to land, from land to sea,
A chain of raging force assuming,
In their tempestuous majesty.
The flame of brilliant devastation
Now lights the thunderbolt his way;
But angels, Lord, in adoration,
Hail the sweet progress of thy clay.
THE THREE. New strength have angels at the sight,
Amazed at thy infinitude,
And splendid as in primal light
Are all thy mighty works renewed. [39]

The spirit's splendour, in the soul unfurled,
Is ever stifled with a stranger stuff.
Our nobler veins, the true, life-giving springs,
Are choked with all the dust of earthy things.
What though imagination spread her wings
In early hope towards the things eternal,
Shrunk is her spacious realm in the diurnal
Defeat that loss and disappointment brings.
Full soon in deepest hearts care finds a nest,
And builds her bed of pain, in secret still,
There rocks herself, disturbing joy and rest,
And ever takes new shapes to work her will,
With fluttering fears for home or wife or child,
A thought of poison, flood or perils wild;
For man must quail at bridges never crossed,
Lamenting even things he never lost. [52]
Ah, happy he who still can hope to rise
Emerging from this sea of fear, and doubt!
What no man knows, alone could make us wise;
And what we know, we well could do without.
But let not mortal troubles cast their shades,
Before this hour of sweet content has run.
Mark, now, the glimmering in the leafy glades,
Of dwellings gilded by the setting sun.
Now slants the fiery god towards the west**,**
Hasting away, but seeking in his round
New life afar. I long to join his quest,
On tireless wings uplifted from the ground.
Then should I see, in deathless evening-light,
The world in cradled stillness at my feet,
Each valley hushed, fire touching every height,
While silver brooks in golden rivers meet.
Then mountains could not check my god-like flight.
With wild ravine or savage rocky ways;
But lo, the sea, with warm and tranquil bays,
Would hold its beauty to my wondering sight.
And now at length the sun-god seems to sink,
Yet stirs my heart with new-awakened might,

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The streams of quenchless light I long to drink,
Before me day and, far behind, the night,
The heavens above me, and the waves below:
A lovely dream, but gone with set of sun.
Ah me, the pinions by the spirit won
Bring us no flight that mortal clay can know.
And yet an inborn impulse bids us rise,
As with an aspiration, constant, strong,
Or when, lost from sight in blue and dazzling
The skylark scatters thrilling shafts of song,
Or when, above the pines and mountain tree
The eagles wide of pinion veer and sway,
And far across the open plains and seas
The stately cranes will wing their homeward way. [66-67]

Two souls, alas, are housed within my breast,
And each will wrestle for the mastery there.
The one has passion's craving crude for love,
And hugs a world where sweet the senses rage;
The other longs for pastures fair above,
Leaving the murk for lofty heritage.
0 spirits, if there be, that range the air,
Swaying in potency 'twixt heaven and earth
Come down, from out your golden skyey lair,
Bear me to beauteous life, another birth.
Yea, if a cloak of magic could be mine,
With power to bear me far in foreign lands,
I would not change it for the raiment fine
Of monarch throned with royal star and bands. [67-68]

Ay me, though humbly I entreat for rest
No more comes sweet contentment to my breast.
Must we then find so soon the fountain dry,
And man in thirsty torment left to lie?
That is the truth that long experience brings,
Yet may these sorrows bear a compensation:
We learn to cherish here immortal things,
And look with longing hearts for revelation,
Whose high inspired and wonder-bearing word
Most clear in the New Testament is heard.
My mind is moved this hour to consecrate,
In simple, honest will to understand
The sacred codex, and its truth translate
In the loved accents of my native land.
(He opens a volume and sets to work.)
'Tis writ, 'In the beginning was the Word.'
I pause, to wonder what is here inferred.
The Word I cannot set supremely high:
A new translation I will try.
I read, if by the spirit I am taught,
This sense: 'In the beginning was the Thought:
This opening I need to weigh again,
Or sense may suffer from a hasty pen.
Does Thought create, and work, and rule the hour
'Twere best: 'In the beginning was the Power.'
Yet, while the pen is urged with willing fingers,
A sense of doubt and hesitancy lingers.

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The spirit comes to guide me in my need,
I write 'In the beginning was the Deed.' [71]

She cannot put your image from her mind,
And all because she loves you to despair.
First came your wave of passion past control,
As when the snow melts, and the stream runs high;
This torrent you let loose upon her soul,
But now, it seems, the river's running dry.
May I suggest our mighty man thinks good
To leave majestic posing in a wood
And, stepping from his citadel above,
Rewards the poor young monkey for her love.
For her the time drags on a weary pace.
Her little face
Haunts by her window. On my word,
I saw her there, just gazing at the sky,
And never once she stirred.
An old refrain,
'Were I a bird'
Comes, as she sees the clouds drift by
Over the city wall, to mock her pain.
Except for that, her only song is sighing;
And often it is plain
She has been crying.
And then the wretched girl will try
To smile again,
Though loving fit to die.
FAUST. You snake of snakes!
[...]

MARGARETA'S ROOM
My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
It is gone for ever
And evermore.
Life without him
Is mere distress:
My eyes grow dim
With bitterness.
No way to reason
Can I find:
Wild fancies flutter
Over my mind.
My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
It is gone for ever
And evermore.
For him alone I watch all day,
Only for him
From home I stray.
His stride and style,
So noble and wise,
His lips when they smile,
And the shine of his eyes!
The sound of his words
Is honey and bliss,

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The touch of his hand,
And oh, his kiss!
My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
It is gone for ever
And evermore.
My bosom stirs,
My heart will pine
To touch him and hold him
And have him for mine,
And kiss him too
My joy to crown,
And let his kisses
My senses drown.

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