

# Romanticism



# Focuses on Two Principles

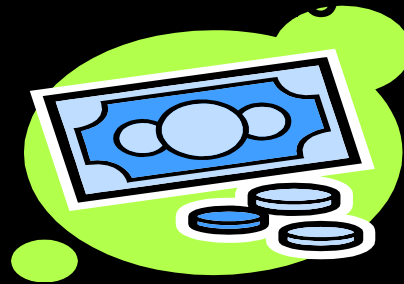


- 1. Exploring exotic settings (past or present)**
- 2. Contemplating the natural world**

# Romanticism vs. Rationalism

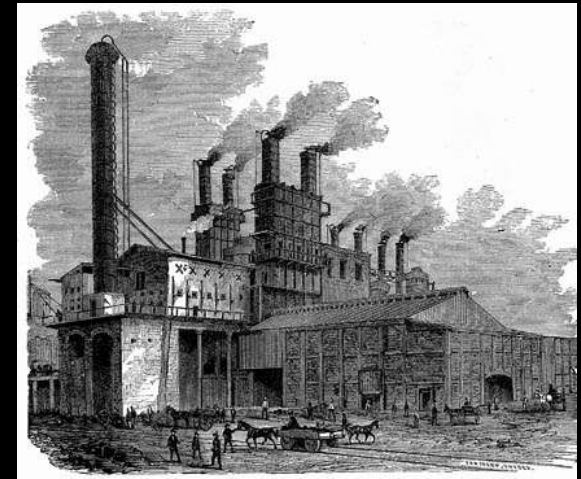
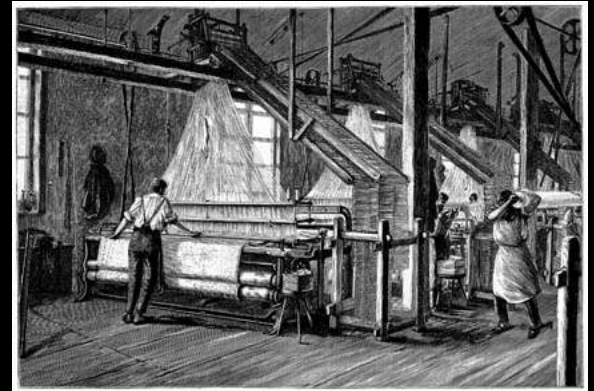
- Romanticism developed in part as a reaction against rationalism as people realized the limitations of reason
- Imagination, spontaneity, individual feelings, nature were of greater value than reason, logic, planning

# Focus of Previous Writings



# History of the Times

- The Industrial Revolution was changing the way people worked and lived.
- Many were optimistic that machines would advance the nation's progress.
- However, the rise of industry led to overcrowding and disease in the cities.



# Literature of the Times



- The Romantic movement helped express the discontent arising from the Industrial Revolution.
- Romantic writers viewed cities as places of immorality, corruption, and death.
- By contrast, they associated the countryside with independence, clarity, and healthful living.

# Romantic Elements

- Love of the natural world
- Distrust of civilization and society
- Fascination with the “journey”
- Idealistic, imaginary elements
- Supernatural elements
- Allegorical elements
- Suspension of disbelief
- Faith in the value of individualism



Quote: “Romantic writers placed increasing value on the free expression of emotion and displayed increasing attention to the psychic states of their characters.” (McMichael)

# Light Romantics



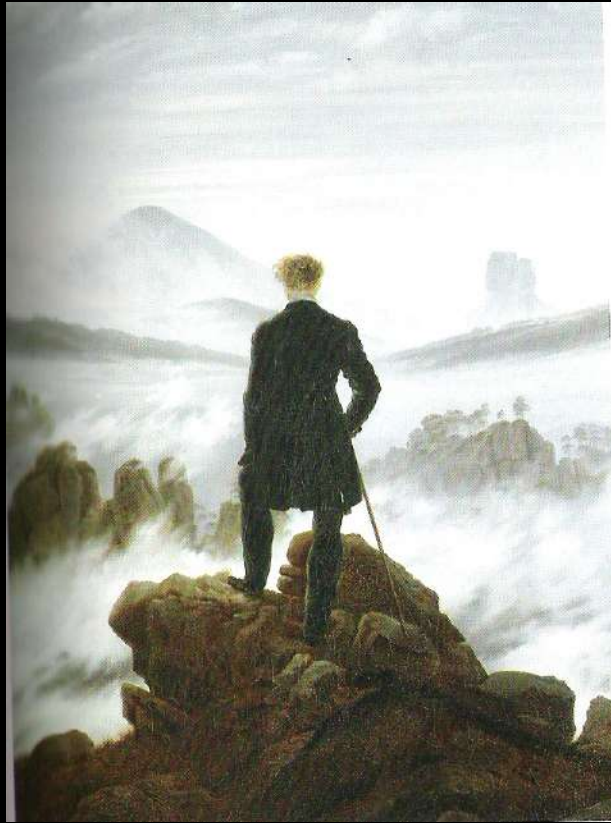
- Overly Optimistic
- Transcendentalism
  - Rejection of Rationalism
    - Feeling over reason
    - Individual expression over law and custom
    - Human spirit reflected in nature
    - Belief in utopia
    - All forms of being are spiritually united through a shared soul



# Light Romantic journey away from the city to the world of nature







# Dark Romantics

- Overly cynical, pessimistic
- “Gothic”
  - Use of the supernatural
  - Suspension of disbelief
- Allegorical
  - Story or poem in which characters, settings, and events stand for something else.
  - It can be read on a literal level and on a symbolic level.
- Anti-transcendentalism
  - Nature is indifferent, unexplainable.
  - People possess potential for good or evil.
  - Psychological effects of guilt and sin are explored.

