

Romanticism

- Revolt against the Age of Reason
- Romantic individualism
- Shapes national identities

1

EMPIRICISM (Age of Reason)	IDEALISM (Romanticism)
knowledge derived from the senses (mirror)	knowledge produced by the mind (lamp)
tabula rasa (blank slate)	understanding as innate
reason	imagination
imitation: prescribed form	originality: organic form
social concerns	individualistic
didactic: writer/poet as teacher	visionary, confessional: writer/poet as prophet

Wieland (1799)

First Gothic romance by Charles Brockden Brown

First American writers recognised in Europe

Washington Irving
James Fenimore Cooper



Washington Irving (1783-1859)

The Sketch-Book
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
Rip Van Winkle

Rip Van Winkle

is a farmer who wanders into the Catskill Mountains. He meets there a group of dwarfs playing ninepipes. Rip helps a dwarf and is rewarded with a draught of liquor. He falls into an enchanted sleep. When he awakens, 20 years later, the world has changed. He is an old man with a long, white beard. Rip goes into town and finds everything changed. His wife is dead, his children are grown. The old man entertains the people with tales of the old days and his encounter with the dwarfs.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient hen-pecked husband (*pod pantoflem*). Indeed, to the latter circumstances might be owing that meekness of spirit (*mirná nátura*) which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious (*úslužní*) and conciliating (*smířliví*) abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. A termagant (*hašteřivá*) wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle (*i.e. his wife*). The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity (*píle*) or perseverance (*výdrž*); for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble (*škubnutí splávku*). He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil (*dřina*), and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own.

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)

The Leatherstocking Tales

<i>The Pioneers</i>	1823	Natty Bumppo as an old man
<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i>	1826	Set in 1757; Natty (Hawkeye) as man in his prime (v nejlepším věku)
<i>The Prairie</i>	1827	Natty as an old man
<i>The Pathfinder</i>	1840	Set in 1759; Natty as man in his prime
<i>The Deerslayer</i>	1841	Natty as a young man

Inspiration – Daniel Boone

a scout and a mediating figure between the advancing white settlers and the Native Americans

Romantic poetry

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Hiawatha)

Hiawatha - Introduction

Should you ask me, whence these stories? Whence these legends and traditions, With the odors of the forest With the dew and damp of meadows, With the curling smoke of wigwams, With the rushing of great rivers, With their frequent repetitions, And their wild reverberations As of thunder in the mountains? I should answer, I should tell you, "From the forests and the prairies, From the great lakes of the Northland, From the land of the Ojibways, From the land of the Dacotahs, From the mountains, moors, and fen-lands	Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah, Feeds among the reeds and rushes. I repeat them as I heard them From the lips of Nawadaha, The musician, the sweet singer." Should you ask where Nawadaha Found these songs so wild and wayward, Found these legends and traditions, I should answer, I should tell you, "In the bird's-nests of the forest, In the lodges of the beaver, In the hoofprint of the bison, In the eyry of the eagle! "All the wild-fowl sang them to him, In the moorlands and the fen-lands, In the melancholy marshes;
---	---

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849)

Poetry, aesthetic theory, detective stories, mysteries / thrillers

Alone From childhood's hour I have not been As others were; I have not seen As others saw; I could not bring My passions from a common spring. From the same source I have not taken My sorrow; I could not awaken My heart to joy at the same tone; And all I loved, I loved alone. Then—in my childhood, in the dawn Of a most stormy life—was drawn	From every depth of good and ill The mystery which binds me still: From the torrent, or the fountain, From the red cliff of the mountain, From the sun that round me rolled In its autumn tint of gold, From the lightning in the sky As it passed me flying by, From the thunder and the storm, And the cloud that took the form (When the rest of Heaven was blue) Of a demon in my view.
---	--

- virtually created the detective story and perfected the psychological thriller
- pioneered science fiction and gothic or sensational tale
- had a profound influence on Modernism through Charles Baudelaire and the French Symbolist poets.
- Is famous for memorable pathological narrators, which readers have confused with Poe himself

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)

- The Scarlet Letter* (1850)
- Mistrust of institutionalized authority
 - Freedom of an individual vs. rigid theocratic society
 - Personal guilt vs. public office

Synopsis
 It is 1642 in the Puritan town of Boston. Hester Prynne has been found guilty of adultery and has born an illegitimate child. Instead of being put to death, she is condemned to wear the **scarlet letter A** on her dress as a reminder of her shameful act. (“A“ for “**ADULTERY**“) Hester's husband had been lost at sea years earlier and was presumed dead, but now reappears in time to witness Hester's humiliation on the town scaffold. Upon discovering her deed, the vengeful husband becomes obsessed with finding the identity of the man who dishonored his wife. To do so he assumes a false name, pretends to be a physician and forces Hester keep his new identity secret. Meanwhile Hester's lover, the beloved Reverend Dimmesdale, publicly pressures her to name the child's father, while secretly praying that she will not. Hester defiantly protects his identity and reputation, even while faced with losing her daughter, Pearl.

Exctract:
 A throng of bearded men, in sad-coloured garments and grey steeple-crowned hats, inter-mixed with women, some wearing hoods, and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes.
 The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognised it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison. ... a prison. But on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-hush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems (*flowers*), which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as he came forth to his doom (*execution*), in token that the deep heart of Nature could pity and be kind to him.

Other works:
Twice-told Tales (1837), *The Blithedale Romance* (1840), *The House of the Seven Gables* (1850)
 Significant short stories: *Birthmark* and *Rappaccini's Daughter*

Herman Melville (1819 – 1891)
 Best known for *Moby Dick* (1851) which is often considered one of the greatest American novels.

His other major works include:
Teepee (1846), *White Jacket* (1850), *Pierre* (1852), *Billy Budd* (published posthumously – 1924)
 Most of these draw on his experience as a sailor, mostly in the Pacific.

Significant short stories:
Benito Cereno and *Bartleby the Scrivener*
 (regarded as a predecessor of Existentialist and Absurdist literature)

Moby Dick - 3 extracts

"All ye mast-headers have before now heard me give orders about a White Whale. Look ye! D'ye see this Spanish ounce of gold? - holding up a broad bright coin to the sun - it is a sixteen dollar piece, men. D'ye see it? Mr. Starbuck, hand me yon top-maul. (a hammer) " While the mate was getting the hammer, Ahab, without speaking, stood slowly rubbing the gold piece against his jacket, as if to heighten its lustre (shine), meanwhile lowly humming to himself, a sound so strange it seemed the humming of his vitality. Receiving the top-maul from Starbuck, he advanced towards the main-mast with the hammer uplifted, exhibiting the gold, "Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale with a wrinkled brow and a crooked jaw; whosoever of ye raises me that white-headed whale, with three holes punctured in his starboard fluke - look ye, whosoever of ye raises me that same white whale, he shall have this gold ounce, my boys!" "Hurrah! hurrah!" cried the seamen, as they hailed the nailing the gold to the mast. It's a white whale," I say, resumed Ahab, as he threw down the top-maul; a white whale. "Skin your eyes for him, men; look sharp for white water; if ye see but a bubble, sing out." (cry out)

All this while Tashtego, Daggoo, and Queequeg had looked on. "Captain Ahab," said Tashtego, "that white whale must be the same that some call Moby Dick." "Moby Dick?" shouted Ahab. "Do ye know the white whale then, Tash?" "Does he fan-tail a little curious, sir, before he goes down?" said the Gay-Header deliberately. "And has he a curious spout, too," said Daggoo, "very bushy, even for a parmacetty, and mighty quick, Captain Ahab?" "And he have one, two, tree - oh! ...good many iron in him, too, Captain," cried Queequeg disjointedly, "all twiske-tee betwisk, like him - him - " faltering hard for a word, and screwing his hand round and round as though uncorking a bottle - "like him - him - " "Corkscrew!" (jako vývrtka) cried Ahab, "aye, Queequeg, the harpoons lie all twisted and wrenched in him; aye, Daggoo, his spout is a big one, like a whole shock of wheat, and white as a pile of Nantucket wool; aye, Tashtego, and he fan-tails like a split jib in a squall. Death and devils! Men, it is Moby Dick ye have seen - Moby Dick - Moby Dick!"

"Captain Ahab," said Starbuck, "was it not Moby Dick that took off thy leg?" "Aye, it was Moby Dick that tore my soul and body until they bled into each other. "Aye! And I'll follow him round the horn (mys), and round the Norway maelstrom, and round perdition's flames (plamenů pekelných) before I give him up. And this is what ye have shipped for, men! To chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls dead out.

Romantic element of strong-willed individualism and self-reliance should also include e.g.:

Transcendentalist philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, and the poetry of Walt Whitman.

Transcendentalism (a distinctive stream within American Romanticism)

Origins: Unitarian Church
Reformist religious movement ➤ a pilgrimage from the idolatrous world of creeds and rituals to the temple of the Living God in the soul.
Romantic view of man's steady degeneration from childhood to adulthood as he/she is corrupted by culture.
Romanticism: essential nature of human beings is good and, left in a state of nature, human beings would seek the good x Neoclassicism: society alone is responsible for keeping human beings from giving in to their own brutish natures

Major topics: God/Ethic ("Transparent eyeball") is universal and transcends all religions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> essential perfectibility of the human spirit the values of non-conformity intellectual and spiritual independence self-reliance /individualism civil disobedience / passive resistance 	Key issue: How much control a person has over his/her own destiny? <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Genre</th> <th style="width: 50%;">American Author</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Perceived the individual as...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Romantics</td> <td>Ralph Waldo Emerson</td> <td>a god</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Realists</td> <td>Henry James, William Dean Howells Mark Twain</td> <td>simply a person</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Naturalists</td> <td>Stephen Crane, Frank Norris</td> <td>a helpless object</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Genre	American Author	Perceived the individual as...	Romantics	Ralph Waldo Emerson	a god	Realists	Henry James, William Dean Howells Mark Twain	simply a person	Naturalists	Stephen Crane, Frank Norris	a helpless object
Genre	American Author	Perceived the individual as...											
Romantics	Ralph Waldo Emerson	a god											
Realists	Henry James, William Dean Howells Mark Twain	simply a person											
Naturalists	Stephen Crane, Frank Norris	a helpless object											

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Quotes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a man write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mouse-trap than his neighbour, tho' he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door. The god of the cannibals will be a cannibal, of the crusaders a crusader, and of the merchants a merchant. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not been discovered.
--

Self-Reliance (1843) - extracts

Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company (*akciová spoločnosť*), in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous (*difficult*) in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. [...] Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. [...] I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser, who was wont to importune (*bother*) me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within? my friend suggested, — "But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin (*skřiváček*) of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself (*zabývať sa*) with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said today.

Henry David Thoreau (1817 - 1862)

Walden (1854) A "diary" – set in Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, where he lived 2 years and 2 months "by the labor of his hands"
Civil Disobedience (1849) – the "passive resistance" principle later employed e.g. by Gandhi and Martin Luther King (Originally published as "Resistance to Civil Government")
Synoptic extracts: I heartily accept the motto,— "That government is best which governs least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,— "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it,

that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient (*účelná, efektivní instituce*); but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will (*vykonávat svou vůli*), is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset (*from the start*), the people would not have consented to this measure.

... when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience (*svědomí*)? — in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable?

Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, **resign his conscience to the legislator**? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience.

A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart (*buší vám z tobo srdce*). They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? Or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power?

How does it become a man to behave toward this American government today? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as *my* government which is the *slave's* government also.

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable. But almost all say that such is not the case now. But such was the case, they think, in the Revolution of '75. If one were to tell me that this was a bad government because it taxed certain foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is most probable that I should not make an ado about it, for I can do without them. All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.

I meet this American government, or its representative, the State government, directly, and face to face, once a year—no more—in the person of its tax-gatherer; this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, Recognize me; and the simplest, the most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensable (*the most indispensable – nejnepostradatelnější*;) mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then.

Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs (*zadupe*) by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible.

I have never declined (*refused*) paying the highway tax, because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject; and as for supporting schools, I am doing my part to educate my fellow-countrymen now. It is for no particular item in the tax-bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance (= *loyalty*) to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the course of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man or a musket to shoot one with—the dollar is innocent—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance.

Walt Whitman (1829 – 1892)

Free-verse, individualism, abolitionism

His poetry echoed many Transcendentalist themes

***Leaves of Grass* (1869)**

I CELEBRATE myself, and sing myself,
 And what I assume you shall assume,
 For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
 I loafe and invite my soul,
 I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.
 My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,
 Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same,
 I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,
 Hoping to cease not till death.

Have you reckon'd a thousand acres much? have you reckon'd the earth much?
 Have you practis'd so long to learn to read?
 Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?
 Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
 You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there are millions of suns left,)
 You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes
 of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,
 You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
 You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.