

From Shakespeare to Rembrandt

By the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the work of European artists, sculptors, playwrights, and poets had grown increasingly secular.

The greatest literary artist of this period may well have been the English playwright and poet William Shakespeare (1564–1616). Shakespeare wrote three dozen plays including histories, comedies, and tragedies. Some of his greatest tragedies—*Hamlet* (1601), *King Lear* (1605), and *Macbeth* (1606)—while not set in England, revealed pertinent themes such as the abuse of power and authority.

The subjects and themes of Shakespeare's plays were often the object of moral criticism. Puritans complained that his plays featured revenge, murder, insanity, suicide, ghosts, and witchcraft.

Yet Shakespeare was not alone in writing for the English stage: Roughly 300 English playwrights produced thousands of plays between 1580 and 1640. Other nations produced their own great dramatists. The Spaniard Lope de Vega (1562–1635), a contemporary of Shakespeare, wrote more than 1500 plays!

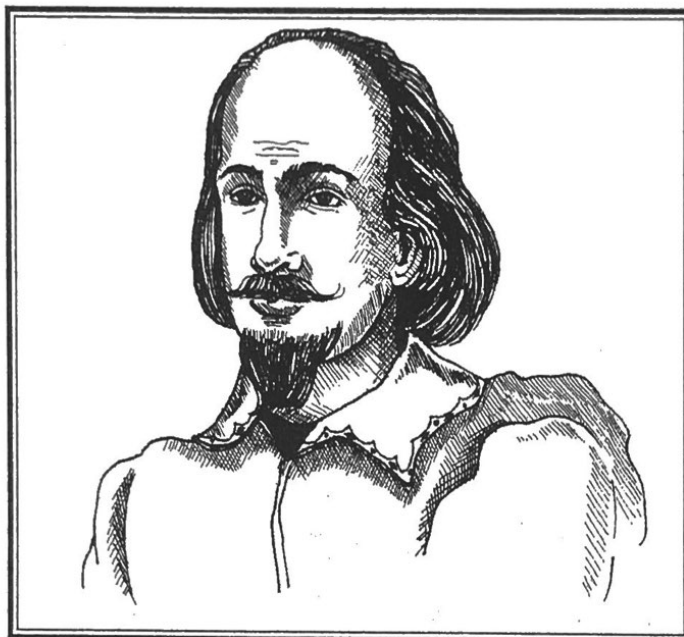
Some of the greatest contributions to the art of the period came from those who worked in the baroque style. Sometimes identified as Late Renaissance, the Baroque era covered the period from 1600 to 1750. The origins of the word *baroque* are not clear. Perhaps it derives from the Portuguese word, *barocco*, meaning “irregularly shaped pearl.” It may come from the Greek word *baros*, meaning “heavy.” Regardless, the word refers to art which is highly colorful, sensual, elaborate, passionate, bright, and grand.

As with Renaissance art, the Baroque movement began in Italy. The traditional models of classical art became exciting, powerful, even garish in the hands of Baroque artists. Baroque art is extremely ornate, sometimes overdone, and was designed to stun or startle.

Baroque painters knew no state boundaries. The greatest Baroque artist was known as El Greco, the Greek. Born Domenico Theotokopoulos (1541–1614), he painted in Spain, producing vibrant works which emphasized lightness and airiness. El Greco was highly religious and a devout Catholic. The majority of his works feature religious subjects.

The greatest of the French Baroque painters was Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640). Rubens painted large canvasses featuring a wide variety of subjects including biblical scenes, allegories, and portraits. He especially enjoyed depicting the human body, clothed and unclothed. His works usually include scenes of high drama, passion, and a flamboyant use of color.

In Holland, the greatest painter of the period was Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669). Although his works do not present as much drama, lightness, and color as those of other masters of his day, they are technically inspiring. Rembrandt painted religious subjects, but was also one of the greatest portrait painters. His use of contrast between light and dark is rivaled by no one other than perhaps Da Vinci.



Playwright, William Shakespeare

Research and Write

1. Select one of the baroque-period artists and architects listed below and write 150 words about his work: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Diego Velasquez, Murillo, Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorraine, Anthony Van Dyck, Jan Vermeer, or Frans Hals.
2. Describe the contributions made to English literature by William Shakespeare.

The Age of Romanticism

With the rise of Napoleon to power in France in 1799, the French Revolution was almost completely eroded. The little general ruled France with an iron hand, and crowned himself emperor.

When the Napoleonic Wars came to an end in 1814 or 1815, following Napoleon's attempt to return to power and the Battle of Waterloo), the great powers in Europe met in Vienna and worked hard to restore the old ruling families and the old monarchies and regimes. A new age of repression spread across Europe.

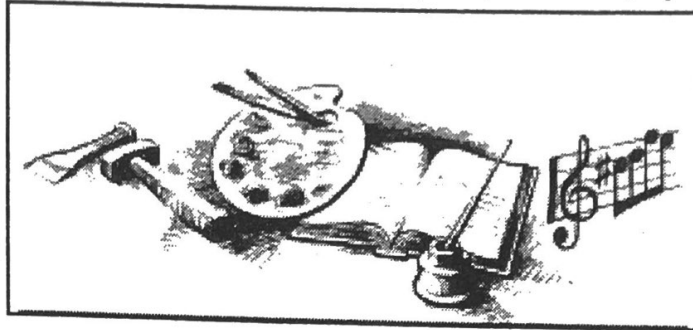
However, political revolution did not die. New struggles developed and old ones continued throughout the first half of the 19th century. Liberals demanded constitutional governments. The middle class (known as the *bourgeoisie*), urban workers, and the peasants all rallied for recognition of their rights, freedoms, and for greater economic opportunities.

Several waves of revolution erupted anew across Europe, especially in 1820, 1830, and 1848. Such revolutions were part of a general intellectual and philosophical climate. This new way of thinking came to be called *romanticism*. Historians refer to the period between 1820 and 1830 as the Age of Romanticism.

What exactly was romanticism? It is a difficult term to pin down. In a few words, romanticism placed greater emphasis on the value of expressing one's emotions. It was based less on logic and reason and more on imagination, inspiration, and mysticism.

Romanticism in the early 19th century was a direct response to the Enlightenment of the 18th century. The enlightened philosophes of the 1700s emphasized the value of scientific investigation. They believed that knowledge was gained only by experience, and the testing of experience against logic and reason. The Enlightenment gave little emphasis to the expression of emotion. It played down the spiritual side of human beings and did not recognize the existence of miracles or even of God's direct involvement in people's lives. While the Enlightenment was cold and austere, romanticism hinged on the expression of feelings.

Romantics, therefore, were often artists, painters, and writers. They wanted to express themselves in new ways, with few restraints or rules to hold them back. Romantic artists rejected the rules of formal art and painted canvases which depicted raw emotion, violence, bloodshed, mysticism, and sensuality.



One aspect of the romantic movement was a rejection of the status quo. Romantics came to accept the inevitability of change. They came to view change as a normal and necessary part of life.

While the Enlightenment had emphasized the never-changing, mechanical nature of the world and its natural laws, the romantics viewed the world as organic, as always ready to become something else.

Many romantics were individualistic. They followed their hearts, rather than their heads. Romantic writers created stories with strong, intensely emotional heroes. Such writers created exotic worlds, like no place in Europe, setting their stories in the Middle East, Turkey, or some mysterious world of the unknown.

Some romantics were deeply religious, expressing a desire to tap their spiritual sides. They looked for an emotional religion. Their faith caused them to believe in an involved God, an emotional God, one responsive to their needs, unlike the God of the Enlightenment Deists.

Romanticism was, in part, a reaction to the new world of the early 19th century. As factories sprang up causing people to become more regimented—their smokestacks belching dark clouds across nature's landscape—the romantics insisted that the world was not a machine. They refused to see themselves as fitting into the great machinery of humanity. They refused to lose their identity. They wanted—and they wanted the rest of humanity—to feel something. This rebellion against reason eventually led some romantics to oppose the established powers and leaders of the nations of Europe.

Creative Minds of Romanticism

The Age of Romanticism was represented in the writings and artistic endeavors of many novelists, poets, musicians, painters, and sculptors of the period. Many of these talented people were dissatisfied with their world and chose to question its Enlightenment values and assumptions.

The world of the early 19th century was increasingly materialistic, commercialized, and regimented. Many romantics sought to provide escape to their readers or their viewing audience. Their musical scores, stories, and paintings were often set in exotic, far-off places. Such romantics depicted the past as a time of great adventure and excitement. Sometimes these artists, musicians, and writers relied on folklore and old

heroic legends as the backdrop of their works. The settings for their works were often fictional places in strange, unreal locales, such as lonely, icy lakes, dark, creepy forests, and dank, gloomy castles. One form of romantic literature was the Gothic novel, which often included elements of the supernatural, ghosts, and eerie spirits.

Such novels were quite popular in the 19th century, as they still are today. One of the greatest of the Gothic novelists was an American, Edgar Allan Poe. His tales of spirits, macabre deaths, and premature burials made his works some of the best of their kind. Another American writer, Nathaniel Hawthorne, wrote notable Gothic stories, such as the *House of the Seven Gables*. One of the most famous Gothic works was *Frankenstein*, written by the English author, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. In Europe, romantic writers such as Sir Walter Scott of Scotland set his stories in the medieval world of chivalry and knights. His book, *Ivanhoe*, became a 19th-century classic.

Important romantic poets included the German poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and the Englishman, William Wordsworth. Such poets expressed positive images of their world, one ruled

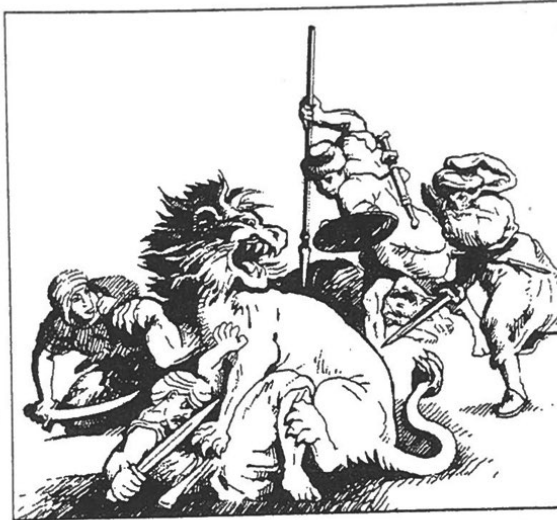
by nature's beauty and the basic goodness of the universe. The English poet Lord Byron, however, expressed a general unhappiness with his world. (Byron would directly participate in the coming revolutionary movements in Europe.) The Scottish poet, Robert Burns, was one of the chief romantic

writers of the period. His poems often focused on the lives of ordinary people, especially quaint and simple Scottish folk.

The romantic painters of Europe abandoned the structures and restrictions of the neoclassical age before them. They ventured far afield for their subjects and their paintings often presented strange and curious places. Many of their works are bold presentations depicting lion hunts, wild-eyed horses, and violence—all cast in a highly

charged, emotional atmosphere. Among the leading romantic painters were Eugene Delacroix of France, Joseph Turner of England, and the great Spanish artist, Francisco Goya. Such painters employed vivid colors, as well as vigorous brushstrokes and chaotic excitement.

The music of the Romantic Age began around 1820. Typical works are highly emotional and imaginative. The great Austrian romantic composer, Franz Schubert, wrote hundreds of works, including symphonies and piano solos. Other important romantic musicians include Felix Mendelssohn, a German composer known for his expressive piano works, the Frenchman, Hector Berlioz, whose compositions were sometimes based on popular works of literature, and the German, Robert Schumann, best known for his romantic symphonies, vocal pieces, and character compositions.



Detail from *The Lion Hunt* by Delacroix

Review and Write

Select any one of the painters, musicians, or writers named on this page and write 100 words about his or her contributions to the Romantic Age.

The New Revolutions

With the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo in 1815, the victorious powers of Europe set about reestablishing their world as it had existed prior to the Napoleonic Wars. They were led by ideals such as legitimacy (restoring pre-Revolutionary kingdoms and dynasties), and reaction (restoring pre-Revolutionary autocratic governments). Meeting in the Austrian Empire in 1814 and 1815, the international Congress of Vienna was highly conservative and opposed to all revolutionary ideas.

But this hard line taken by the great powers of Europe, including France, led to a constant string of political revolutions across the Continent which lasted through the next generation. Such revolutions were typically liberal in nature. This means that the new revolutionaries were like the leaders of the French Revolution—they wanted to see the establishment of constitutional government and the expansion and recognition of basic human rights and freedoms.

The first of these new revolutions developed in Spain in 1820. In a short time, this revolution spread to neighboring Portugal and later to Italy. Although these revolutions had some initial success, they ultimately failed for several reasons. In the first place, the revolutionaries in these states were a small minority of the people. They did not receive much support from the illiterate peasant masses. Secondly, powerful, conservative nation-states intervened and ended the political uprisings. Austria put down the Italian conflict in 1821 and France intervened on the Iberian Peninsula and ended the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions. (Portugal did establish a limited parliamentary government, thanks to support from England.)

Despite the valiant efforts of revolutionaries in Spain, Portugal, and Italian Naples, they were not successful. One of the most important revolutions of the 1820s, however, was the Greek War of Independence. Here, events turned differently. The Greeks succeeded because they were helped by the great powers of Europe rather than hindered.

The Greeks attempted to revolt against their oppressor, the ruler of the Ottoman Empire. The chief revolutionaries were members of a secret society, the Herairia Philike, which led the rebellion in the spring of 1821 against the Ottoman Turks. When the Greeks appeared to be losing against the Turks, other European states intervened in support of the Greek rebels. (During this period, the great English romantic poet, Lord Byron, went to Greece to help fight in their revolution.)



Illustration based on *The Shootings of May Third 1808* by Goya

In 1827, French, British, and Russian naval vessels fought and destroyed much of the Turkish and Egyptian navies in the battle of Navarino Bay. The next year, the Russians directly declared war on Turkey. By 1829, the fight was over, and the Ottoman Empire agreed to the Treaty of Adrianople, which established Greece as an independent kingdom. (The Egyptians and the Serbians of south central Europe gained their independence from Turkey as well.) The Greek cause

represented a successful revolution.

During the years of the Greek revolution, another rebellion was under way, this one in Russia. The Russian czarist government of Alexander I [1801–1825] was highly repressive. Secret societies opposed to Russian power began to form (some of their members were army officers) to overthrow the Russian government. In December 1825, when Alexander died, questions developed over which of his brothers—Constantine or Nicholas—should succeed him. The army sided with Constantine. They carried signs that read: “Constantine and Constitution.” This Decembrist Revolt ultimately failed because it was unorganized and did not have the backing of the peasants. Also, it did not even have the complete support of Constantine.

Thus, this first wave of revolutions in the 1820s saw little success. The great powers of Europe played key roles in whether a revolution succeeded or failed.

The Second Wave of Revolutions

The first revolutions to challenge the Congress of Vienna and its reactionary ideal were, generally, failures. These political challenges did not succeed because they were ended by the powerful political states of Europe. However, the second round of European revolutions (those taking place from 1830 to 1833) were more effective and successful. The walls of reaction were beginning to crack.

The second wave of revolutions began in France and spread to other nations. When the French king, Louis XVIII (ruled 1814–1824), died, he was succeeded by the Count of Artois as Charles X. Charles was the highly conservative brother of Louis. His rule was harsh and unpopular and liberals opposed him. When challenged, however, Charles X reacted with greater force.

By the spring of 1830, liberal leaders had had enough of Charles. They brought about a revolution by July. Street rioting took place. Revolutionists erected barricades of crates, wagons, barrels—anything that could serve as protection against government troops. The dates of July 28–30 became known as *the three glorious days* among the revolutionaries, who included workers, the middle class, and students. They were seeking a republic.

When troops were called in to stop the revolutionaries in Paris, most of the army refused to fire on the barricades. Charles X's days appeared numbered. However, despite the republican cries of the street demonstrators, more moderate liberals took control of political events. The new government became a constitutional monarchy rather than a republic.

The new French king was Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans. (He was related to the Bourbon family, yet his father had voted during the French Revolution of the 1790s in favor of executing Louis XVI.) This revolution brought change, then, including an expansion of voting privileges from 100,000 French citizens to twice that number.

The success of this French Revolution of 1830 led to a series of additional revolutions elsewhere in Europe. The first country to witness revolution next

was Belgium. Just a month after the successful French uprising in the summer of 1830, the Belgians rose up against their Dutch rulers. (The Congress of Vienna had forced the unification of Belgium and the Dutch Netherlands to serve as a buffer state to France.) Many of the rebels were Catholics who

opposed their Dutch Protestant Calvinist rulers. By 1831, the Belgian liberals created a constitution and selected their own king, Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (ruled 1831–1865). (He was an uncle to Queen Victoria of England.)

When the Dutch attempted to quell the revolution by military force, England and

France supported the Belgians with troops. By 1839, the Dutch recognized Belgian independence.

Other rebellions took place in Europe during these years of political upheaval. In 1830, revolutions broke out in several German states, including Saxony, Brunswick, and Hesse-Cassel. In each of these states, constitutional monarchies were established. Simultaneously, in Switzerland, the rulers of many of the *cantons*, or states of the Swiss Confederation, led a peaceful political campaign liberalizing their governments.

In other European states, revolutions were not as successful. Austrian troops blocked revolutions in the Italian states of Modena and Parma. And in Poland, the Russians put down an extremely bloody revolt. During the 1830s, then, revolutions in western Europe were generally successful, while those in the east failed. This only widened the gap between the autocratic powers of Eastern Europe and the increasingly liberal governments of the west.



Review and Write

From your reading on this and the previous page, what are some reasons why revolutions in the 1820s and 1830s succeeded or failed?

The Unification of Italy

In 1850, the Italian peninsula and its nearby territory included ten separate states: Piedmont in the northwest (which controlled the island of Sardinia), featuring the city of Genoa; the duchies of Tuscany, Parma, and Modena to the east and south; Rome and the Papal States in the center of the peninsula; two states controlled by Austria—Lombardy and Venice (both in the north); and two tiny states—Monaco and San Marino. Over the next decade, these states joined together to create a unified Italian nation.

Piedmont led the way in the unification of Italy. Aided by the French, the uniting of the Italian states took place in four stages: (1) war resulted in Lombardy's independence from Austria; (2) Piedmont acquired Modena, Parma, Tuscany, portions of the Papal States, and the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily through negotiation and warfare in 1860, and joined with Piedmont in 1861 to form the Kingdom of Italy; (3) the Kingdom of Italy took control of Venice from the Austrians through war and diplomacy in 1866; and (4) an 1870 military campaign incorporated Rome and the rest of the Papal States into the Kingdom of Italy.

The man essential to the start of this process was Count Camillo di Cavour (1810–1861). In 1852, he became the premier of Piedmont. He had already developed a plan to unite the whole of Italy under a constitutional monarchy. He was certain that foreign help was needed to make his dream a reality. Cavour turned to the French for support against Austria, which controlled portions of the Italian peninsula.

To seal the alliance, Cavour sided with the French in the Crimean War. When the war ended, Cavour attended the peace conference in 1856. There, he made his grievances toward Austria known.

Meanwhile, Cavour was giving secret support to a group known as the National Society, which was preparing to rally against the Austrians in the northern Italian provinces. By 1858, Cavour had negotiated with Napoleon III to have troops sent to aid Piedmont in the creation of an Italian Kingdom at Austria's expense. By spring of 1859, Austria invaded Piedmont. But a combined French and Piedmont force defeated the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino. At the same time, the National Society launched revolts in Modena, Tuscany, and Parma. During later negotiations, Austria granted control of Lombardy to Piedmont.



Giuseppe Garibaldi

By January 1860, Cavour negotiated the annexations of Modena, Parma, Tuscany, and the Papal State of Romagna to Piedmont. By spring, revolution began in Sicily. The great freedom fighter, Giuseppe Garibaldi, along with 1000 volunteers—the Red Shirts—fought to free Sicily from French control. Before year's end, Garibaldi campaigned in the Kingdom of Naples. By year's end, Sicily and Naples were added to the Kingdom of Italy.

Garibaldi continued his campaign of conquest and unification of all of Italy. However, his success threatened French intervention, so Cavour and the Italian king, Victor Emmanuel II, sent Italian troops to stop Garibaldi. On August 29, 1861, Garibaldi was defeated.

By April of 1866, the Kingdom of Italy formed an alliance with Prussia against Austria. Under the alliance, Italy received control of Venice. When military action forced the French out of Italy, especially Rome, Garibaldi was brought back into action, invading the Papal States in 1867. But his defeat came at the hands of French and papal troops.

Only when the French left Rome (owing to the Franco-Prussian War in 1870) did an Italian army occupy the city. Then the Italian Kingdom annexed the remaining Papal States (except the Vatican), uniting the Italian peninsula into a single nation-state.

Review and Write

What steps did Cavour carry out to ensure the making of a unified Italy?