

Romantic Expression in Art: A Study of Nineteenth Century Romanticism and Belief

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Abstract

Romanticism was a complex social movement and period of history, which is associated with Romantic thought, which originated during that time and continues today. With mass changes stemming from human discovery, an equally massive backlash tends to follow. Romanticism is one of these backlashes. Best known for its explosive expansion around the Industrial Revolution, Romanticism became a name for those holding beliefs such as an affinity for nature and a subsequent opposition to the evolution of technology. Many experts, such as Edwin Berry Bergum and Edward

F. Kravitt, have attempted to define Romanticism, but have been unable to encompass its facets, given the flexible nature of Romantic thought, uncertain beginning to the movement, and its indiscernible ending (if one has yet to, or could, occur). Without a widely recognized definition of Romanticism, the movement must be considered by the works that uphold its legacy. The arts became an outlet for Romantics, with authors like Jane Austen and Mary Shelly, musicians like Vaughan Williams, and artists like Ivan Aivazovsky, utilizing their passions to create pieces representing their beliefs. It is the intention of this study to examine the correlation between Romanticism as an outlet to express belief in the nineteenth century, and the subsequent increase in art output at the time. Specifically, the goal is to use these findings to aid the understanding of human expression and how it can be identified, and therefore further studied as the wonderous curiosity that it is.

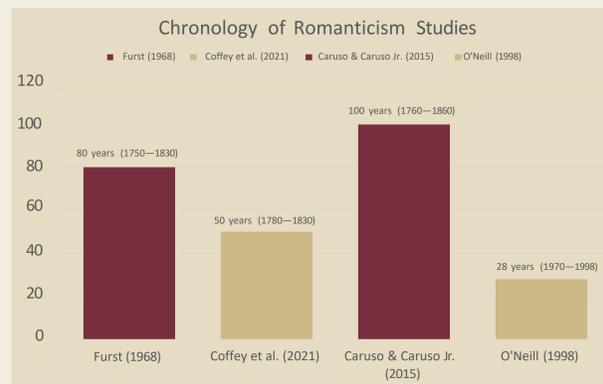
Introduction

Expression can reflect a persona's inner belief, particularly as it pertains to art, and especially during the Romantic Period. Although Romanticism as a concept appears to have declined from an outside perspective, many of the foundational issues that were faced by Romantics and helped to formulate their beliefs are, in fact, still around today (Peter L. Thorslev, 1975). Among these issues is listed: "man in his relationship to history, society, to his own identity, and his relationship with knowledge" (Peter L. Thorslev, 1975). The bounds of Romantic thought are tumultuous to say the least, but it is nonetheless essential that commonalities and causation are drawn so that expression can be studied as the phenomena that it is. It is the prospect of this research to answer one question: How did the Romantic Movement impact the prevalence of the use of art as an outlet to express belief in the nineteenth century?



The Ninth Wave (1850) by Ivan Aivazovsky, a Russian Romantic artist during the nineteenth century

Literature Review Results



Results

These studies of Romanticism focus on different periods in history, with some labeling the span of their focus as the strict length of the Romantic Movement. Without a clear definition for Romanticism, even the bounds of the movement are uncertain.

Discussion

By identifying the common factors in Romantic pieces and finding a working definition for Romanticism which can be applied to further studies, it is plausible that the very foundation of mankind's form of artistic expression may be taken further than simply defined, and may one day be understood.

Importance

Bearing all of this in mind, a conclusion may be drawn which allows a deeper understanding of human thought, and the use of art as an outlet for expression, particularly in nineteenth century Romanticism. The implications of any findings which emerge from this study hold weight in many ways. Thus, the study itself finds meaning in the possible results and in the fields it impacts. Prior to the study itself, a background must be established; a foundation on which the research may stand. This may be found in defining Romanticism.

Proposed and Current Methods

Over the course of the following year, five or fewer faculty members at FSU Panama City will be surveyed, their professional opinions surrounding the Romantic movement collected and compiled, and the commonalities therein entered into Microsoft Excel and formatted as summative graph, representative of the study conducted. For this quantitative, correlational survey, the participants will consist of faculty between the ages of 18 and 60, who work in relevant fields to the research topic and question (such as art, art history, general history, belief, et cetera.). The participants will be selected from their course of study, major/minor, or occupational field, which be obtained with the aid of a dean. The survey will be created using general questions that spawn from my research question, which are broad enough to offer personal perspective, but guiding enough to allow correlation to be drawn between participants' answers so that data can be created from my survey. This survey will serve as a small portion of the research and carry the weight of a single source. The information gathered thus far has been collected via FSU Libraries' collection of Research Databases, namely the JSTOR and Scopus databases. This background was then compiled into a literature review and used to draft the survey questions as well as to compile the graph to the left.

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