

Romanticism was an artistic, literary, musical and intellectual movement that originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century and in most areas was at its peak in the approximate period from 1800 to 1850. Romanticism was characterized by its emphasis on emotion and individualism as well as glorification of all the past and nature, preferring the medieval rather than the classical. It was partly a reaction to the Industrial Revolution, the aristocratic social and political norms of the Age of Enlightenment, and the scientific rationalization of nature. It was embodied most strongly in the visual arts, music, and literature, but had a major impact on historiography, education, and the natural sciences. It had a significant and complex effect on politics, and while for much of the Romantic period it was associated with liberalism and radicalism, its long-term effect on the growth of nationalism was perhaps more significant.

The movement emphasized intense emotion as an authentic source of aesthetic experience, placing new emphasis on such emotions as apprehension, horror and terror, and awe, especially that experienced in confronting the new aesthetic categories of the sublimity and beauty of nature. It considered folk art and ancient custom to be noble statuses, but also valued spontaneity, as in the musical impromptu. In contrast to the rational and Classicist ideal models, Romanticism revived medievalism and elements of art and narrative perceived as authentically medieval in an attempt to escape population growth, early urban sprawl, and industrialism.