

# TRANSACTIONS

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### I.—Romantic Movements in Antiquity

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It is a wise bit of advice which Cicero in his *De Re Publica* 1.38 puts in the mouth of Scipio when he is about to begin his discussion of the state. "Ingrediar," he says, "in disputationem ea lege . . . ut eius rei, de qua quaeretur, si nomen quod sit conveniat, explicetur quid declaretur eo nomine; quod si convenerit, tum demum decebit ingredi in sermonem; numquam enim, quale sit illud de quo disputabitur intellegi poterit, nisi quod sit fuerit intellectum prius." The advice, however, is hard to follow when the discussion is one requiring the use of such terms as "romantic" and "romanticism," for these terms have become so attached to certain literary and aesthetic theories and have become so entirely divorced from any concrete reference that they are now practically indefinable, at least in a lexicographical sense. Even if we suppose that to Rousseau, when he first used the French words *romantique* and *romanticisme*, they were symbols of definite ideas, hardly half a century had passed before there was such uncertainty as to their meaning that Alfred de Musset was able to write a merry satire on the subject. He represents two friends, Depuis and Cotonet, engaged in a correspondence with the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in an endeavor to discover the real meaning of romanticism. They adopt one definition after another only to find that these are self-contradictory or that something important had been omitted from each one of them; they finally conclude that the essence

of romanticism lies in the use of numerous adjectives, *beaucoup d'adjectifs*.

Of the hundreds of serious definitions offered by critics since that time, some contain terms which themselves need definition, some apply to but one aspect of the movement called "Romanticism" or to but a few of its representatives, some are in flat contradiction to each other. The resulting confusion is well-expressed in Gertrude Stein's sentence: "Romanticism is there where everything being the same everything is simply different and romanticism."

These attempts to define romanticism and its related terms, to discern its true nature, have been almost entirely confined to students of modern literature, and it is only very rarely that they make any reference to the literature of the Greeks and Romans except to label this, without distinction of periods, "classical," and thus to contrast it with "romantic."

On the other hand students in our own field not infrequently use the terms "romantic" and "romanticism" in connection with ancient writers and their works, but here the terms are used in a narrow sense and are applied solely to literature. For example, Rohde, defining romanticism as "a lively opposition to the exclusive dominance of common sense," saw in the comedies of Aristophanes a romantic revolt against social conventions. Leo, who seems to have been the first to use the word "romantic" with reference to Latin literature, makes Varro the chief representative of what he calls *römische Romantik*, by which he means the interest in Rome's past, the tendency to idealize it, and to contrast it with the less happy present. This idea of Leo's Norden expands by adding two other elements to his *römische Romantik*, one, the search for Utopia, as exemplified in Horace, *Epode* 16, and "more realistically," in Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue*; the other, a literal return to nature, as illustrated by Vergil's *Bucolics* and such a passage as *Georgics* 2.458ff. It is to be noted, however, that this "return to nature" certainly did not mean for Vergil what it has always meant to the true romantic, the search for a tower of ivory, a complete surrender of one's self to the dominion of the outer world. Moreover, this element, as well as the search for Utopia, was a part of the literary heritage which the Augustan poets received, as Norden himself remarks, from "Hellenistic romanticism," for it is only during the post-classical period of Greek literature that a marked sentimental attitude toward nature begins to manifest itself. Hence Butcher

was justified in making this attitude the chief subject of his chapter on "The Dawn of Romanticism in Greek Poetry." To this sentimental attitude toward nature, Gilbert Murray has added the sentimental attitude towards women and has made these two elements the chief ingredients in what he describes as "that something which in a large sense may be called the Romantic Movement." It is somewhat confusing, however, to find Aeschylus called "The Romantic Aeschylus" because his plays are awe-inspiring, picturesque, spectacular, vigorous, to find both him and Sophocles described as "romantic" as concerns the heroic saga in contrast to Euripides who is the apostle of enlightenment, and to read a refutation of this last view on the ground that the characters in Euripides' plays are "romantic" because he portrays men as "they ought to be."

Such differences of opinion and the confusion they cause in the mind of the reader, cannot be avoided, it seems to me, as long as we confine our attention solely to the literary aspects of the problem of romanticism. Although we must depend chiefly on literature for the evidence on which to form our judgments, literature is after all but one manifestation of what is a vast social change, a change, it has been called, "in men and things." And since such a change must be due to man, not to some impersonal force, to man's impulses, desires, activities, which, as far as we can tell, have altered but little through the years, it would seem to follow that the movement we call "romantic" need not have been confined to but one region and period, nor to any one field of human activity, but may have occurred whenever the same or similar conditions prevailed, and that the results may have shown themselves not only in literature, but in morals, religion, economics, science, art, and politics.

Once we recognize romanticism as a social phenomenon, it ought to be possible to determine whether the features which modern critics agree, as far as they agree at all, are characteristic of the romantic movement of the nineteenth century, had manifested themselves during earlier periods. The most important of these features may be listed, for the sake of convenience, under such catch-phrases as: Individualism, Cosmopolitanism, Escape, Primitivism, Revolt, Eroticism, Pessimism, Mysticism, Realism. Whenever these features manifest themselves in conjunction as predominant in the social life and literature of a period, we are justified, it would seem, in calling that period "romantic."

Two such periods may be recognized, I think, within the limits of our studies, periods during which the social and literary manifestations are so similar to those of our modern period that the catch-phrases I have listed above apply with equal validity to all these periods. The first of these began in the Greek world toward the end of the fifth century B.C.; the other in the Roman world in the second century of our era, although these dates cannot be fixed with exactness, and are not important. A third period should, I think, be added, but, since this begins about the twelfth century, I shall leave it to the mediaevalist.

The first generalization which seems to be justified from such a comparison is this: that all three periods are marked by significant social and political changes which represent a strong contrast to a previous order. In the modern period there are the foundations of our own democratic government, resting on the revolutionary principle that all men are created equal and are endowed with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and the French Revolution, with its similar principles of freedom, brotherhood, equality of all men. In the third century, the Empire was about at its lowest ebb; the anarchy and treason which preceded the close of antiquity and the end of the *Imperium Romanum* in the fourth were rife within it, the barbarians were knocking at its gates, poverty and pestilence, wars and famines were prevalent everywhere, and the final dissolution of society seemed to be at hand. On the social side there was the rise and spread of Christianity with its denial of age-old social distinctions and its insistence upon a world brotherhood. In the Greek period, there was the loss of political freedom of the city-state, and the rise of the new political principle of world-empire. In all three periods, therefore, there was a distinct change in the position of the individual, a change so important in its results and one so clearly delineated in the history of the Greek world of the fourth century B.C. that I must dwell upon it, even at the risk of repeating what is already well known to you and of neglecting other periods.

The Greek city-state, as exemplified at least in Athens of the fifth century B.C., rested upon a principle, no doubt itself the result of a slow development, of the equality of all citizens under the law. The Greeks, with their ability to find symbols for abstractions, had a name for it, the word *isonomia*, the possession of equality under the law. It was this principle on which were founded the political

and social reforms of Solon, the Athenian law-giver. The state, which thus came into being, was a democracy, in which each individual citizen joined with his fellows in ruling themselves. Not only did he have the right of suffrage, but he himself at some time during his life was a member of the governing body and may even have had to preside at its meetings. Civil rights, civil duty, and civil responsibility on the part of each individual have never since been so closely connected, except, perhaps, in the New England town meeting.

This Athenian city-state, in which, by whatever name we choose to call its constitution, the dignity and worth of individual character were clearly recognized, was able as the leader of other Greek states to defeat the attempt of an Oriental monarchy, who denied this view, to bring Greece and the West generally under its despotic sway. This defeat of the Persians was a victory against such overwhelming odds that it seemed to the men of that generation that God's hand must have been in it. And in the great dramatic literature that came to its flower during the fifth century, we find this belief clearly stated. Thus Aeschylus can say, "Though the deep will of Zeus be hard to tract,/ Yet does it flame and glance,/ A beacon in the dark, 'mid clouds of chance/ That wrap mankind. Yea, though the counsel fall, undone it shall not lie,/ Whate'er be shaped and fixed within Zeus' ruling mind./ Dark as a solemn grove, with sombre leafage shaded,/ His paths of purpose wind,/ A marvel to man's eye," (*Supp.* 80ff., tr. Morshead).

It is evident, however, to one who reads this literature, that the individual as such had not yet become dissociated from the group, from the family, and the state. He had not yet become an object of interest and of study in himself. His dignity and worth, his character and intelligence are of value as they contribute to the good of the whole, and to these qualities Athens owed her leadership. This leadership, however, brought with it the glamour of wealth and power, and this glamour led individuals to seek self-aggrandizement rather than the benefit of all. That this danger, which seems to be inherent in a democratic form of society, was recognized even in the time of Athens' glory is clear from the speech which Aeschylus puts into the mouth of Athena when she establishes the court of the Areopagus: "This court . . . By day and night continuing shall restrain/ This folk from wrongdoing, whilst the citizens/ Avoid rash innovation. Crystal streams/ Tainted

with clay yield no refreshing draught./ I counsel this my people to revere . . . the form of state removed/ Alike from anarchy and tyranny." (*Eum.* 625ff., tr. Campbell).

The fears which the poet has thus expressed, that the individual, while willing to accept his privileges, would fail to accept the responsibility which went with them, and thus upset the very principle of equality under the law, were soon realized. The increase of Athenian wealth and power, a growing fear of her dominance, resulted in a challenge to her leadership on the part of other Greek cities, especially Sparta. Sparta, owing to her unique system of military organization and military discipline, was able to defeat Athens during the long and bloody struggle of the Peloponnesian Wars, during which Athens relinquished its noble ideal of freedom under the law and fell a prey to mobs and demagogues; its democracy degenerated into mass-rule. Nor did Sparta's supremacy continue for long and both she and Athens and the other Greek states had to yield to the superior might of Macedon, under the leadership of Philip and Alexander the Great, whose aim it was to weld the world, both East and West, into one vast empire. The world-empire of Alexander, however, ended with his death, but it was succeeded by governments differing from it only in degree, by separate monarchies under one supreme head in whom all authority was centered.

The most marked effect of this political revolution, surely one of the most catastrophic through which mankind has ever passed, was, as Professor Ferguson puts it in his brilliant discussion, that "individualism became the dominant feature" of the period which followed, the so-called Hellenistic Age, just as it has been the dominant feature of our modern world since the French Revolution. In the old city-state the individual had a position and a function which were his by virtue of his citizenship and of his equality with his fellows and responsibility under the law. Now in this new world he had no such position. The ties which had bound him with his fellows in a closely-knit society enjoying political freedom and political responsibility were now severed; the protection which the old culture, the old religion, the old traditions had offered him was now destroyed, and he seemed to be alone.

In the new order, subserviency to a monarch and the resulting bureaucracy robbed the individual of the opportunity to play a part in political life, and he therefore lost all interest in it; he cast

off all civic responsibilities, all feeling for home politics. His gaze was turned from without to within himself, and his own personal welfare and happiness became the center of his thought and activity, just as the individual's well-being became the chief interest in the schools of philosophy which arose after Aristotle. We may say indeed, that as the Greeks of the fifth century discovered the individual as part of the group, the dignity and worth of individual character, so the Greeks of the fourth century discovered the individual apart from the group.

This emphasis upon the individual had as one result the awakening of interest in his inner states, his passions and emotions, in "Man's thoughts, loves, hates," to use a phrase of Browning's, and in all the incidents of the individual soul, above all in that passion which Plutarch, writing in our second period, calls the "dark, insoluble mystery of love." It also led, in the case of the Cynics, and certain Jewish sects, for example, just as in the case of some followers of Rousseau, to an extreme individualism expressing itself in a rebellion against the restrictions and conventions of the old order, so that uniqueness of personality sought to express itself in uniqueness of appearance, behavior, and dress; the careless clothes, the unkempt hair, the long beard of the Cynics became proverbial. And this extreme individualism in turn, when combined with the bitterness of frustration, sometimes produced an anti-social attitude of which Timon of Athens, immortalized by Shakespeare, became the typical representative, he whom Lucian makes say: πάντες καὶ ἄμα καὶ θεοὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπους μισῶ. Similarly during the third and fourth centuries of our era, there were many Christians, like St. Anthony of Egypt, who, even if they were not actuated by hate toward God and man, certainly did not love their fellows, and withdrew from their society to live in solitude, intent only upon their own individual salvation, unshaven, unwashed, undressed, the type made famous in popular story as "the Hairy Anchorite." The inner state of all such men could certainly not have been very different from that of Rousseau who says of himself in the opening chapter of his *Confessions*: "I feel my own heart; and I know men. I am not made like any of those I have seen; I dare believe that I am made like no one who now lives." Such a conviction, if carried to extremes, is just as anti-social as Timon's positive hate. More often, however, the individual's feeling of loneliness, cut as he was from his ancient moorings and cast adrift in "a vast, disintegrating world."

led him to seek refuge in the society of others having similar interests and desires. Not only did philosophers and their pupils seek the seclusion of groves and gardens, but lesser men joined together to form clubs, comparable with the Parisian Clubs of the nineteenth century and the Kiwanis, Rotarian, and Lions of today.

Partly, no doubt, as a similar sort of compensation, partly because of the realization, incident to the mingling of peoples during and after Alexander's conquests, of the essential oneness of human nature, partly, too, owing to the new concept of a world-state with a common equality, there arose for the first time the idea of the brotherhood of man; cosmopolitanism went hand in hand with individualism, so that the slogan of the French Revolution might very well have been the slogan of Cynics and Stoics. The Stoics, indeed, saw behind the divergent rules of law and custom one universal law embodied in nature and directed by a universal meaning and purpose, the Divine Reason or Logos or God; and believed that, since all men possess the faculty of reason, they are, to quote Emerson, "part and parcel of God." Gone now were Aristotle's inequalities of human nature, gone the old social and racial distinctions of the city-state, and the nationalistic impulses which had pitted state against state; all men were now equal in "the possession of a common humanity, in a common affinity to the divine reason and in a common subjection to the eternal principles of right and justice"; "one who looks at man," as Cicero puts it, "must see that in reality he is a citizen of the world, of one great city." Similarly, in the eyes of the Christians, the church was a universal world-state, in which men were brothers, not only on moral grounds by natural endowment, but as sons of God among whom there was to be no distinction between Greek and Jew, Scythian and barbarian, bond and free. And during the third century after Christ also, pagan jurists were proclaiming their "humanitarian ideas of equal law for everybody and of the duty of protecting human life in general, and the weak and poor in particular."

To many, however, the gulf between what actually was and what ought to be seemed impossible to bridge; the sense of the individual's oneness became overwhelming; the dangers and complexities of life were so many that they could not be resolved. Hence there resulted disappointment, disillusionment, melancholy, and a desire to escape from grim reality. This escape could be realized by actually withdrawing from the society of one's fellows,



just as Timon did, and certain Jewish sects (Essenes) and many early Christians and extremists of the nineteenth century, or by a withdrawal in imagination, by constructing an ideal world in which men could live happier and better lives than in the present one. Thus civilized man's discontent with civilization as he found it resulted in Primitivism, the idea that the best and happiest society had existed in the past before civilization began, or exists now among peoples less civilized or less well-known than those of one's own world or living far removed from it. We are told that the historian Ephorus, like the modern Chateaubriand, actually found his "noble savages," who had all things in common, like the early Christians, but he seems, here differing from Chateaubriand, to have returned from his quest well-satisfied with what he had found. This revolt against the familiar, this cult of the strange and the unknown, are aspects of that exoticism, whether chronological or geographical, which is one of the distinguishing traits of modern "romantic" literature.

The fall of the old social order carried with it important changes also in the religious life of the people. The city-state had been the center of that life and participation in its religious ceremonies had been one side of man's duty to the state, a social obligation. Now, however, religion like all else became individualistic, each man's own personal affair. If, in the case of the learned few, this change resulted in the high philosophic ideal that man was sufficient unto himself and alone responsible for his progress toward the highest good, this sort of ethical idealism was too lofty for the common man. In the face of political disintegration, the suffering, the strife, against which he felt his own power was of no avail, and of his fears that he could not solve the many new problems raised by the changed world-order, the faith of his fathers in a Providence working through men toward a harmony of the whole failed him and he longed for a savior, for a revelation of a power mightier than his own. He found both, thanks to the cosmopolitanism of the time, in the strange cults of the Orient, such as those of the Great Mother, of Isis, of Mithra and the other mystery religions which promised him, by means of mystic ceremonies, redemption from his sins and freedom from suffering in a blessed personal immortality. At the same time there is a marked growth, apparent now for the first time in Greek life, in Mysticism, the conviction that the individual has in him the making of a god and that he can by ecstasy, reverie,

contemplation, enter into alliance with the divine, ideas that find their culmination in the doctrines of Philo, where reason has given way before the passionate longing for revelation through union with God, so that "the soul, emptied of itself, becomes one with the Absolute." The only other periods during which such ideas have flourished to the same and even to a greater extent are precisely those under discussion. During the third century after Christ there lived in Egypt and in Italy the man who has been called the very father of modern mysticism, the Neoplatonist Plotinus, whose last words aptly sum up the creed of all mystics: "I strive to render up the Divine in myself to the Divine in All." It is from such Neoplatonic ideas that are derived ultimately Schelling's "Soul of the World" and the faith held by Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, in the inner light and mystical vision. A modern French critic goes so far indeed as to find in mysticism the fountain-head of all the currents in our modern "romantic" movement.

At the opposite pole from mysticism, it would seem, stands science, but this too has its roots in individualism and arises from "a concept of society whereby the claims of the state upon the individual are relaxed and the rights of the individual receive a corresponding emphasis." There is kinship too between the scientific spirit and the spirit of revolt in that both are overwhelmingly in favor of the new as opposed to the old. Hence just as mysticism, science, and revolt existed side by side during the nineteenth century, so they are found together during the Hellenistic Age. Then in Alexandria and other great urban centers were gathered men who eagerly pursued research in every field, especially in mathematics and medicine, to the advancement of which they made lasting contributions. And as the intellectualism of such men looked forward, so in the case of others it looked backward; philology was born and the old authors were collected, annotated, and endlessly debated. Although the Roman world under the Empire has no such achievement to its credit, and although pure science gave way almost entirely to superstition, magic, and astrology, still this last is a form of science, however debased we may consider it, and it did promise a scientific method, based upon an almost infinite experience, by which "the hitherto inscrutable book of the sky could be deciphered and the destiny of the individual could be determined with the same certainty as the date of an eclipse."

It was inevitable that these various and diverse manifestations of the results of the fall of the old political and social order should be reflected in literature in a corresponding break with the past in literary types, aims, and expression. Men became alive to the fact that the form, content, and style of literary art were not sufficient to express the new interests and experiences of life, that they had become utterly conventional and outworn. The comment of a French scholar on the similar development in modern "romantic" literature applies equally well to the literature of the fourth century B.C. and of the Roman Empire: Ces formes consacrées restaient en arrière de la vie. Literary speech had lost its life, literary forms their appeal, the gap between the language of literature and the language of everyday life had gone on widening until it had become difficult to bridge it. Whenever this situation develops, as it did in all my periods, the only escape from it, the only remedy against literary dissolution, is to go back to the people and begin over again. In this sense the movement is democratic and, if we must define romanticism in its literary aspect, it is what Professor C. H. Page once called it, "the rise of the democracy in literature." Not only do we go back to the people in language, hence the use of homely and familiar words and the so-called archaistic revivals, and in form, hence the rise to honor of genres formerly despised, but also in content, tastes, and point of view. The hitherto neglected stories and legends of the common folk become important for literary purposes, the common people themselves take the place of gods, kings, and potentates as literary characters, the private life of the common man takes the center of the stage, and in this connection sentiment in various forms is emphasized to an unprecedented degree. To state it briefly, the difference between the classic age of Greece, the age of Pericles, and the Hellenistic Age is the difference between a tragedy of Aeschylus and a comedy of Menander, between Addison's *Cato* and Bulwer's *Lady of Lyons*. Whenever we have such a movement, the process of change always leads us so to speak from *Die Leiden des alten Prometheus* to *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*.

Even the cursory glance, which alone time allows me, into the literature of the Greeks of the fourth century B.C. and of the Greeks and Romans of the declining years of the Empire is sufficient to enable us to see how these general principles are reflected in the literature of the two periods.

The herald of the new movement, as several critics have pointed out, was Euripides, and in his plays we find a fore-shadowing at least of nearly all the traits which are commonly accepted as "romantic." It is, of course, a mistake—one, I feel, which is all too common in the criticism of Euripides—to conclude, that, because characters in his plays express certain opinions, these opinions represent his own thinking. They may, but what is of far greater importance, is the fact that they must have corresponded to a greater or less degree with the thoughts and feelings of his audience; otherwise, he, as a successful and popular dramatist, would not have used them. Hence it is that the prevailing interest in man as man, in his life and his problems, is one of the marked characteristics of his plays. It is shown in his effort to bring tragedy down, as far as convention would allow, from the skies to the earth, to make it "democratic," so that his characters and his themes are often those to which our word "romantic" is usually applied, the sudden reversal of fortune whereby beggars become kings, kings, beggars; the search for thrills, often with little regard for motive or probability, so that the dramatic tends to become the melodramatic; the increasing resort to the principle of contrast not only in scenes and characters but also in language. There is, too, the glorification of the common man, as in the case of the peasant husband of Electra whose nobility of soul inspires the prince Orestes to exclaim:

οὗτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ οὐτ' ἐν Ἀργείοις μέγας,  
οὐτ' αὖ δοκῆσει δωμάτων ἀγκωμένος  
ἐν τοῖς δὲ πολλοῖς ὦν ἄριστος εὐρήθη.  
(*El.* 380–383)

There is his preoccupation with the inner states of his characters and an analysis of their emotions by which he lays bare the doubts and fears of a troubled spirit with the result that his plays, as Butcher finely remarks, "became the history of the human heart, as of a world divided against itself." There is the centering of interest on love, which "has become the soul of tragedy," a "new and independent power," which claims the right "to compete with the established forces of the moral world, with the voice of law, and with the positive deities." Perhaps it was this narrow concentration upon the individual that enabled Euripides, as Aristotle remarks, to depict men and women as they are, and to give, along with this realistic delineation of his characters, realistic pictures of

the little things of daily life, the hurry and bustle attendant upon Clytemnestra's arrival at Aulis, and her anxiety for the safety of her child, the morning chores of Ion, sweeping the steps of the temple, of the weary Electra carrying the water-jar upon her head, or of the chorus in the Hippolytus washing their garments in the brook. There is, too, cosmopolitanism in his sympathetic delineation of high and low, free and slave, Greek and barbarian, so that with him, someone has remarked "it is not Hellenism but humanity." Just as he questions the validity of the old social and political distinctions, so he is sceptical of the value and the efficacy of the traditional religious beliefs—"he has made men think there are no gods," is Aristophanes' charge against him—and with a destructive scepticism is joined a no less destructive mysticism. His attitude toward nature also is different from that of his predecessors; the mythological veil which had partly hidden nature from man's gaze has begun to fall and Euripides observes her more closely, feels a sympathy between her moods and his, and, if we may take the choral ode in the Hippolytus as the expression of his own feeling, he even longed to escape from the turmoil, the suffering, the injustice of his world to her sweet calm. The poet makes his chorus wish, like the Hebrew Psalmist during a similar period of distress, for the wings of a bird to fly away, away "to the strand of the daughters of the Sunset,/ The apple-tree, the singing, and the gold,/ Where the mariner must stay him from his onset,/ And the red wave is tranquil as of old," (*Hipp.* 732ff., tr. Murray).

It is not until after Euripides, however, that the literature reflects the complete break with the past in regard to forms, themes, and treatment, and the traits accepted as "romantic" begin everywhere to manifest themselves. The change in the attitude toward the individual is well illustrated by comparing Aeschylus' epitaph (*Vita* ch. 11 and Paus. 1.14.5) with the epigram on Theocritus; in the one, the poet's claim to immortality rests upon his participation in the struggle on the field of Marathon of Athenians against Persians, in the other, upon his own individual achievement as a poet: "my Muse is all my own." It is this interest in the individual which accounts for the rise of biography as a literary genre, both in the form of the scholarly *Bioi*, which editors prefixed to their new editions of classic authors and of the longer *Lives* of the great individuals of past and current history in which truth and fiction, fact and fancy, are united to form a sort of historical romance, of

which the *Life of Alexander* by Callisthenes is an example, or the romance of Ninus. On the other hand, the tastes, the feelings, the activities of the average man are the subjects of the New Comedy. And even in the higher forms of poetry, such as the epic and the hymn, where the theme is of gods and heroes, these walk and talk and feel as men. Apollonius shows us an Aphrodite, unceremoniously awakened from her beauty-sleep, with tousled curls that lack the bobby-pins; and Callimachus gives us a picture of Artemis, a child of three, pulling hairs from the shaggy breast of Brontes (*Hymn to Artemis* 72). Such realism resulting from the narrower concentration of interest and heightened subjectivity, shows itself not only in the depicting of characters, divine and human, but also of incidents and things and is seen at its best in the mimes of Herondas. And no matter what the literary form, the part taken once by intellect and reason has given way to sentiment, fancy, and emotion. Indeed, the motto of the new literature may well be the query of Asclepiades, "What is life, what is joy without golden Aphrodite," or even Coleridge's famous lines:

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love  
And feed his sacred flame.

Not only did Apollonius introduce love into the epic and give us in his portrayal of Medea a masterful analysis of a woman's passion, of the struggle between her love and duty, but in many an old legend which the antiquarian interest of the time had brought to light, love, even where there may have been no hint of it before, becomes the chief element in the story and often the cause of the catastrophe that befell many an ancient hero. Whether or not the Alexandrian poets told in their elegies, as their Roman successors did, of their own love-experiences, they certainly told those of others in "the deep, the low, the pleading tone" which, as in the case of Coleridge and his Genevieve, interpreted their own.

Common to many of those tales, and the same is true, also, of some plays of the New Comedy, Menander's *Necklace* for example, is the idyllic setting; the scene is laid in a sort of fairy world of half lights and shadows, the description of which gives the poet the opportunity to express the new sentimental attitude towards nature, the feeling of sympathy between her and man, of which Butcher has

said all that needs to be said. These Hellenistic poets delight in expressing the hidden correspondences between the passions of the human heart and nature's diverse moods. The disconsolate lover wanders alone in the woods, telling his sorrow to the sympathizing trees and streams, the love-lorn maiden utters her lament to the stars. There is in the literature also, as in the art of the time, a new pictatorial sense of landscape, including wide views and distant horizons. This sort of a "return to nature" is one aspect of the conflict, which played an important part in the philosophical discussions of the day, between *φύσις* and *νόμος*, nature and convention, the same conflict which is made so much of by the modern romanticist. The sentimental glorification of the simple life as opposed to the artificiality of an over-ripe culture became a stock theme in the elegy and it is one of the contributing causes, at least, to the rise of the pastoral; nor did Callimachus hesitate to introduce it into his epyllion, *Hecale*, where he gave a sympathetic picture of kindly Hecale's life on a little, in her lowly cot, and of her generous sharing of that little with the wandering hero, Theseus. Here we have, on a small scale, the bestowal of epic grandeur on lowly things, such as Goethe attempted in a much larger way in his *Hermann and Dorothea*. A similar longing for a more natural life, although it resulted in a different sort of escape, led philosophers because of their condemnation of anything "unnatural" in man, especially social distinctions, and because of their dissatisfaction with the existing order, to construct their Utopias, their dream of a happier world where people lived in primitive simplicity, unsullied by the stains of civilization, and crowned with the highest human virtues. In Plato, the happier world of the lost Atlantis existed in the distant past; in Zeno, it was still to come. But Zeno's citizens are not, like Plato's, members of a city-state; they are citizens of the world and the laws of the land are not the conventional laws framed by society, but the laws of nature. One is reminded of Coleridge's dream of the future when each man will be a law unto himself, when the universal family will enjoy in common the produce raised by common toil. Other philosophers, such as Euhemerus and Iambulus, gave a greater reality to their Utopias by picturing them as actually existing on islands in distant seas. The historians of the period followed the lead of the philosophers in praising on the one hand the "natural life" of early man, and on the other, the barbarians who were still living, far from the corrupting influences

of civilization. There was many a Shangri-la before that of Hilton's *Lost Horizon*.

However pleasant such a dream-world was, it was after all a dream and from the crushing weight of the present reality there was to many no escape. Their mood became one of frustration and defeat, and bitterness and melancholy; they looked, to use Shelley's phrase, "before and after and pined for what was not"; a mood that often finds its most definite expression in the epigrams contained in the *Anthology*. Not only do many of these express the same sentimental and regretful longing for the past, but picture a future without hope. This day is but a finger's breadth (*A.P.* 12.50), the present life simply a pin-point between two eternities, and not far away is the time when we shall rest throughout the long night; indeed, to live with death always before us is a worse evil than death itself.

Not only do these epigrams, written as they were by men living in various parts of the Greek world, furnish evidence for the prevalence of these "romantic" traits, but, since a great number of them date from the later years of the Empire, they also bear witness, which is supported by other types of literature both pagan and Christian, to their prevalence during this period as well. The same sense of impending doom, of the end of all things, of the futility of life, pervades the writings of both pagan and Christian. To the Christian, an actual escape from the present suffering was afforded by a withdrawal into deserts and mountains to live the life of solitary asceticism or to join with others to live within monastic walls. There was also the assurance of immortal happiness hereafter, popularized by various apocalypses and portrayed by St. Augustine, writing at the moment when man's Eternal City had fallen before the Goths under Alaric and when the Vandals were pillaging his own bishopric,—a happiness to be found only in that City not made by man, the king of which is truth, the laws of which are love, the duration of which is eternity, the heavenly city, where "we shall have leisure and vision, when we shall see and love and praise." The pagan turns again to nature, to the simple life, the *simplex cultus* of which Claudian speaks (*in Ruf.* 1.196), and which he described in his well-known epigram on that old man of Verona who, passing his days in the fields, finds a joy, denied the city-dweller, in the free vision of an ampler sky. The average man lost himself amid the exotic scenes where were laid the thrilling adven-



tures of the lovers in the Greek romances or the equally strange and exciting *Lives of the Saints*; or he found release in the mystical union with the divine, after the fashion of Claudius Ptolemaeus (*A.P.* 9. 577) who tells us in an epigram how he, though but the creature of a day, as he searches into the revolving spirals of the stars, no longer rests his feet upon the earth but takes his stand by Zeus and feeds on the food of the gods. If the bond between man and nature is emphasized here, there is on the other hand a new interest in nature apart from man, a new love of her for her own sake, a new appreciation of landscape, of light and shadow, of atmospheric effects. How art was affected by the new attitude we may learn from the pictures described by Philostratus in his *Imagines*. And in literature Ausonius could take as his text for his description of the Moselle the phrase, *Naturae mirabor opus*. Not as well known as this poem but no less important than it as an example of the movement which links the poets of the fourth century to those of the nineteenth is the description of a spring scene by Tiberianus (*P.L.M.* 3, p. 264), where "the gentle breezes stirred and told to the leaves a whispered tale of love"—a bit of sentiment that his contemporary Claudian exaggerates into sentimentality in his picture of Venus' Mount contained in his *Hymn on the Marriage of Honori<sup>us</sup> and Maria* (vss. 49ff.). This love for description is manifested in the numerous ecphrases with which both the boy in school and the writer outside had to embellish their themes; and the result is often a display of art for art's sake, of dilettantism and aestheticism which finds its closest parallel in certain writers of the earlier Hellenistic period and of the modern romantic movement. And just as these last delight, to quote Schlegel's criticism of them, "in indissoluble mixtures," in the blending together of "all contrarieties, nature and art, poetry and prose, seriousness and mirth," so the writers of the fourth century, Greek and Latin alike, break down the barriers that hitherto had separated not only the different literary genres, but also the different arts. The rhetorician Himerius, for example, delivers an oration on the coming of Spring, which, he frankly says, he has adorned with all the flowers of lyric poetry. On the other hand, a heightened interest in the individual as such is attested both in pagan and Christian literature by the fondness for biography and especially by the creation of new forms of prose and verse in order to express, by means of mystical imagery and symbolism, as in the hymn, the new thoughts and emotions aroused in the indi-

vidual by the new religion, "the doubts and fears and hopes, a new longing for something lost or unattainable." Thus Prudentius, as he looks back upon his busy past, can write in his Prologue to his collected works: Numquid talia proderunt carnis post obitum vel bona vel mala cum iam quidquid id est quod fueram mors aboleverit? This period gives us, too, in the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, whatever may have been the motive behind their composition, the first example in ancient literature of an individual's analysis of himself, reminding us, however different the content and expression, of the *Confessions* of Abelard and Rousseau.

This inadequate survey of what is after all a very large and complex problem will be sufficient, I trust, in spite of its inadequacy, to justify the application of the adjective "romantic" to the social and literary movements during the Hellenistic Age and the last centuries of the Roman Empire. A summary of my interpretation of the spirit of these periods,—and this spirit is what really matters,—might take the following form: "There was a decay of all the values on which civilization had been built, a decline in the power of tradition to hold the allegiance of men. Some in despair sought to escape into a defence of individualism, or by recommending esoteric Oriental philosophies which had no serious relation to the conditions confronting them. The decline of the traditional religious faiths into a polite ceremonial expressing a creed upon which most people did not dream of acting was remarkable. The governing class had lost confidence in itself. . . . The main body of literature was almost wholly, in its serious manifestations, one of criticism and dissent." These words, however, except for a change in the tense of verbs, are not my words nor were they written with reference to ancient Greece and Rome; they are the words of Professor Harold J. Laski in which he gives us an analysis of the spirit of our own day and of ourselves.