CHAPTER I

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The publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 starts the beginning of the Romantic Movement in Literature. Born of a strong belief in the capacity to create imaginary worlds, the Romantic poets felt it unnatural to curb this capacity. It was in the exercise of this the faculty of imagination which made them poets.

The Romantic Movement began when poets became tired of the artificial and conventional nature of eighteenth century verse. Strong emotions came back into poetry, new ideas and original verse forms were tried out freely and a new conception of the poet came into circulation. The poet was expected to look into his heart and write. The Romantics although converged on a set of concepts were very different from one another. The whole essence of the Romantic outlook was that each writer should develop his individuality to the full.

To begin with Romanticism "emphasised the revolt against the principles of neo-classical criticism,"
the rediscovery of older English Literature, the turn towards subjectivity and the worship of external nature slowly, prepared during the eighteenth century and stated boldly in Wordsworth and Shelley.¹ It turned away from the neo-classical set rules and tried to discover the freshness in old English Literature once again. The new writers gave expression to their subjective feelings in a simple manner. It became a quest for novelty. They broke away from the tradition of writing on fixed patterns. Nature formed the chief theme of their writings.

Romanticism centres on a concern for the reconciliation of subject and object, man and nature, consciousness and unconsciousness. George Poulet, the most eminent of the French Critics generalises that “Romanticism is a consciousness of the fundamentally subjective nature of the mind, a withdrawal from reality to the center of the self, which serves as a starting point of a return to Nature. He uses insistently the figure of the circle and circumference. His conclusion corroborates the view of Romanticism as an effort to overcome the opposition

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of subject and object in a personal experience".  
John Stuart Mill said that Romanticism represented a reaction "against the narrowness of the eighteenth century European enlightenment." "The Romantics thought that world too narrow because of its addiction to geometric thinking and the allied doctrine of neo-classicism or else to Lockean empiricism. The geometric spirit, though metaphysically bold, tried to subject all life to reason and thus to mechanise and demean it. Neo-classicism similarly ambitious in seeking out Nature's ideal patterns imposed universal and iron rules on art and the artist".  
Romanticism might be centered in several quite marked predispositions, an emphasis on particularity or individuality and a sense of the infinite and the irrational component in human life. The Romantics characteristically found God in nature. These "natural supernaturalists" sought to make nature a home in which man could once again live and feel close to God. In classical humanism man though not necessarily unaware of wider cosmic forces was free to

3. Ibid.
set purposes for himself and to a large degree make
his own fate. The Romantics however, commonly saw
man in the context of great cosmic and historical
movements which enveloped him in an infinity greater
than himself. Man is simply not the measure in Romantic
landscape painting or in the new type of "English"
garden, not geometrized or ordered by human hand as in
"classical" gardens.

By comparison with the enlightenment the
Romantics greatly enhanced Man's capabilities. They
emphasized man's activity and creativity. Romantic Man
contrasts sharply with the rational Man of the enlighten­
ment or the "Classical tradition". He was at once more
many sided and more complicated. In him "reason" was
not preeminent but took orders from the deepest feelings
or intuitions. Because of this emphasis on feeling they
also insisted on man's individuality and freedom of
will. The Romantics were also acutely aware of a
"night-side", of an anxious and troubled human nature,
of forces hidden in man which could tear him and his
world apart. The unconscious could lead man to a higher
purpose but it could also let loose the demonic in and
around him. There was another side to this Romantic philosophy. This was the Byronic side which was expressive of melancholy, agony, disenchantment, unfulfilled longing and even rebellion.

The permanent heritage of Romanticism is its emphasis on individuality, particularity, subjective touchstones and self-expression. By accepting the fact that man is an irrational animal, it has enlarged the compass of art to include areas excluded by the harmonious rationalism of Neoclassicism - the dualism of human nature, the death wish along with the affirmation of life (John Keats, Coleridge, Novalis, Edgar Allan Poe) the Janus - face of good and evil (William Blake, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Fyodor Dostoyevsky). Although Romantic art was weakened by striving towards a super human totality beyond any individual's powers and resulted paradoxically in excessive fragmentation the Romantic protest continues to arise against the threat of any mechanical system that would stunt the potentials of human experience.
Twentieth century critics have come to see the contrast between classicism and Romanticism as an emphasis on poetic form and conscious craftsmanship opposed to a poetics of personal emotion and logically incommensurable inspiration. Order, clarity, tranquility are obviously classical qualities. Curiosity and the love of beauty are the integral factors in Romanticism, the one intellectual, the other emotional. The Romantic Revival stressed the dignity and importance of man as man, the glories of the world of Nature. These ideas were born centuries before and had been gradually working in men's minds through all the political unrest of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A subtle sense of mystery is found on analysis to be a complex emotion compounded of awe in the presence of the unknown, wonder in the presence of the known, and an exquisite response to manifestations of beauty wherever they may be found—a rapture.

Romanticism drives those who feel its spell into strange bypaths of thought and feeling away from the broad highway of ordinary human experience. Ultimately it comes back to the highway—only at a greater elevation.
Romanticism was not opposed to reality. It was reality disfigured by new powers of vision and feeling. It revealed an intellectual curiosity. Romanticism had an instinct for the elemental simplicities of life — the dignity of the new interest in Nature turned man's interest back towards the bosom of Nature. It was opposed to the superfluous classical conventions which had choked the elemental varieties of life. As a result Blake and Wordsworth idealised childhood. Burns, Wordsworth and Coleridge took up simple unsophisticated natures. The great Romantics found a sense of mystery in the simplicities of every day life, an ordinary sunset, the rain-bearing west wind, the song of the nightingale, a cottage girl, a simple old dalesman. Such objects inspired the great Romantics to supreme achievement.

Man's capacity to raise his thoughts to the sky or transform them within himself form the two poles of the Romantic extremes. Keats and Shelley both sought a centre of their own creating where the imagination was unconditioned. In the nineteenth century instead of transformation progress offered the possibility of another kind of change. Progress alienates man from the
Idea that the environment should reflect the life of the imagination. "At the beginning of the nineteenth century the poet finds himself imprisoned inside his own sensibility as in a cage. He tries - like Keats - to make the cage "a rosy sanctuary" or - like Shelley - the centre of a revolution of the world through poetry. Married to political philosophy". The poets in the cage attempted even within the cage to achieve an unconditioned centre. The unconditioned centre is where the imagination has power to influence people to transform the outward form of things. This is affirmed by the institutions of beliefs. Poetic imagination which can communicate with an invisible world remains at the centre. The centre is conditioned when imagination is banished into an individual solitude, outside man's own nature.

I.A. Richards gives the picture of a poet in the modern world in a famous essay called 'Science and Poetry'. A poet must effect a complete severance of his poetry from all beliefs "Beliefs prevent him from

seeing the situation which he has to deal within his poetry as an international affair of humanity in the face of a neutralised nature which is utterly indifferent to it". 5

The Romantics on the verge of the materialist nineteenth century, were aware of the crisis of belief. Coleridge was pre-occupied with the 'willing suspension of disbelief' and Keats with the idea of 'negative capability'. Their affirmations go along with their negations - Shelley on the poet as legislator and Keats identifying beauty with truth. "When the poet abandons the belief which connects visible with invisible worlds, he is left with nothing but a problem of adjustment through poetry to the situation of man in the surroundings of alien nature. He is in a cage with bars that are mirrors reflecting only himself". 6

In Western Europe an encyclopedic Myth, derived mainly from the Bible dominated the literary and philosophical traditions for centuries. 7 Romanticism marks

6. Ibid., p.279
a change in this pattern. In the centuries preceding Romanticism the view of the artificial creation myth was held in which both man and nature were creatures of God. Christianity considered identification with nature as pagan. To regain his true identity man had to keep aloof from the nature. He should consider himself first as a social being. In Romanticism this idea is changed and the artist seeks an identification with nature.

In the elder mythology the Myth of Creation is followed by a gigantic cyclical myth, outlined in the Bible, which begins with the fall of man, is followed by a symbolic vision of human history under the names of Adam and Isreal and ends with the redemption of Adam and Isreal by Christ. The two poles are the alienation myth of the fall, the separation of man from God by sin, and the reconciling, identifying or atoning myth of redemption which restores to man his forfeited inheritance.  

9. Ibid., p.17.
This myth assumes a different shape when translated into Romantic terms. In Romanticism there is a sense of identity between man and nature which has been lost. This is similar to the unfallen state or lost paradise of Eden in the older myth. Corresponding to the "fall" or the myth of alienation man "falls" into self-consciousness. This consciousness separates him from nature. The alienated man is the "Romantic equivalent of post Edenic Adam." 10

In the older myth, man was morally and intellectually separated from nature. His identity was a social one symbolised by the city. In the older structure, human nature was thought of as above physical nature. Eden is usually on a mountain top. The structure of civilization and social discipline raises man above the level of physical nature. For the quest of the soul, the attaining of man's ultimate identity, the traditional metaphors were upward ones, following the movement of the ascension of Christ. In Romanticism this quest of identity is downward and inward, towards a hidden basis or ground of identity between man and nature. 11

11. Ibid., pp.32-33.
Pre-Romantic literature in Western Europe had a four-tiered structure. These four levels are heaven, the unfallen world, which is man's original and proper home, the ordinary world of experience, and the demonic world of eternal death. The two levels of nature in the middle are related cyclically. The imagery of fertility and spring describe the world man fell from and to which he would return. Heaven and Hell on the other hand are worlds of eternal separation, one standing for identity and one for alienation represented by the imagery of "up" and "down". Romanticism also has this four-tiered structure but with a difference. It is less concretely related to the physical world. Heaven and Hell, the worlds of identity and of alienation are still present. The imagery associated with them of the opposition of "within" and "without" rather than of "up" and "down", is almost reversed. The identity "within" refers to a communion with nature or God, it is represented by the imagery of depth or descent. On the other hand, the sense of alienation is reinforced by the imagery of the terrifying waste spaces of the heavens. In pre-Romantic imagery social life lead to identity.

In Romantic imagery human society lead to alienation rather than identity. Romanticism emphasises a creative and healing alienation to be gained from a solitary contact with the order of nature outside society. So the Romantic appeal to nature is a mighty force.

A work of art is the internal made external, resulting from a creative process involving the poet's perceptions, thoughts and feelings. The work ceases to be a reflection of nature. The mirror held up to nature becomes transparent and yields an insight into the mind and heart of the poet. Literature is exploited as an index to personality in the early nineteenth century. According to John Stuart Mill, sensible objects serve as a stimulus for poetry and then poetry is not in the object itself but in the state of mind in which it is contemplated. 'A poet is a nightingale' according to Shelley 'who sits in darkness and sings to cheer, its own solitude with sweet sounds'. His auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician. The task of analyzing the nature and function of metaphor was given to the critic of literature. Metaphor is an inseparable element of all discourse. The metaphor
of the mirror was used in order to show the nature of art, but as a mirror can only reflect what is presented from a single direction Hazlitt complicates the analogy by combining the mirror with a lamp to show that a poet reflects a world already bathed in an emotional light he has himself projected. Art is the mediator between and reconciler of nature and man. It is the power of humanizing nature, of infusing the thoughts and passions of man into every object of his contemplation. Poetry derives its materials from the mind and avails the forms of nature to express them.

"The leitmotif of Romantic thought is to place the external images of nature so as to reflect internal thought. Nature becomes thought and thought nature. The changing metaphors of the mirror, the fountain and the lamp were used for the mind."13 The mind was also considered as a 'waxed tablet' into which, sensations like seals, impress themselves.

The experience of the one life within us and abroad cancels the division between animate and inanimate,

between subject and object. Wordsworth refers to the relation with nature in terms of a filial bond. Wordsworth's 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality' employs the familiar optical metaphors of light and of radiant objects, lamps and stars. His problem is one of a loss of 'celestial light' and 'glory' from meadow, grove and stream. The figure of the soul is 'our life's star', 'trailing clouds of glory' at its rising but gradually in the westward course of life fading "into the light of common day" though leaving behind recollections which 'Are yet the fountain light./ Of all our day/ 'but if maturity has its loss of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower', it has its compensating gains, and the period, though altered, retains its power of radiant give and take with the external world.

For Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats the spirit of Nature was a universal glittering. There is a glory in the gliding trout, the soaring lark, the sounding cataract and the mind of man which with its reference to nature transcends any other way of communication.
The eighteenth century poet personified the objects of the physical world as a theoretical convention. This did not permit the power of natural and spontaneous passion to enter into and remake the fact it perceived. The Romantics on the contrary showed the poet's power to animate and humanise nature by fusing their own life and passions with those objects of sense. Imagination impresses "the stamp of humanity" over inanimate objects. A human and intellectual life is transferred from the poet's own spirit into the objects of nature. Romantic poets used those symbols with freedom and vitality. Symbolism in Romantic poetry was the expression of the imagination when recreating the world of sense.

In the Romantic writers the favourite analogy for the activity of the perceiving mind is that of a lamp projecting light. Wordsworth describing in 'The Prelude' his boyish communications with nature affirms, "An auxiliar light / Came from my mind which on the setting sun / Bestowed new splendor" Coleridge adopted Wordsworth's favourite image of radiance to describe the theme of The Prelude. He combined the figure of the lamp of the mind with the figure of external nature as mirror.
The familiar Neoplatonic figure of the soul as a fountain or an outflowing stream, is also frequent in Romantic poetry. This implies a give and take between mind and external object. Wordsworth, who spoke of poetry as an 'overflow of feeling' also spoke of whatever he 'saw or heard, or felt on his visit to the Alps as but a stream that flowed into a kindred stream; a gale confederate with the current of the soul'.

Wordsworth and Shelley took special note of the image of the wind-harp, to show the mind. Coleridge had suggested the harp as an analogue for the thinking mind. "And what if all of animate nature,/ Be but organic harps diversely fram'd, / That tremble into thought, as O'er them sweeps, / Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze. / At once the soul of each and God of all". Shelley later used the image "There is a power by which we are surrounded like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chords at will. "Even the most imperial and stupendous qualities though active relatively to inferior portions of its mechanism, are nevertheless
the passive slaves of some higher and more omnipotent power. This power is God and those who have been harmonised by their own will give forth divinest melody when the breath of universal being sweeps over their frame'.

The mind is imaged by Romantic poets as projecting life and passion into the universe. This outer life is a constant reciprocation with the life and soul of man the observer. The poet attempted to overcome the sense of man's alienation from the world by healing the cleavage between subject and object.

For the Romantics the image of the child represented a lost paradise and innocence which they yearned for. The final wisdom of life lies in the virtues of the 'child' as symbol. The child shows an unself-regarding obedience to the life of things, and a defenceless giving away of himself. He represents the universal life. As he grows up his existence is a dark glass through which he begins to see all things. Man struggles to grow up and remembers his 'invisible childhood', the blissful condition before his birth.

after he loses it. Through imagination man recreates this paradise. The visible childhood represents delight and liberty, activity and hope, Wordsworth reveals the child as the father of man who instructs man. But it is the mature man who realises the worth of it.

The child image appealed to the Romantics as it represented a lost paradise. All the common things of earth are alive with celestial radiance and may be said to be dreaming their own existence in God. Childhood reveals a completely unself-conscious identity with the totality of life. It is a source of the deepest insights of artists. It represents a life which is still fresh in total unity with the Universe, and unconfused by the world. This image stays within the mind of man. It is the image of a home, a heaven, a glory to be discovered by resolutely going on. Children practise their adult lives to be and are never content to remain in their heaven-born freedom. Similarly man struggles through life to rediscover this radiant vision of childhood.

The Romantics were fond of using images that represented the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature. Prometheus in Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound'
illustrates that man as a soul is not only indestructible but through will and then inspired by love, is creative. Shelley's main theme is the emancipation of man, to which the spirits of nature form a chorus. The entire Romantic Movement represents this question. Nature reflects man's own condition. The suffering in nature is identical with man's suffering, the creative power of man, is identical with the beauty and splendour of nature.

Romantic nature poetry contains a great deal of philosophy. The nature of birds, trees and streams forms its subject. It also talks of an animating principle, a special sensibility and a theory of poetic imagination. The Romantic poets read meanings into the landscape. Wordsworth's "The Prelude" from the cliff that "upreared its head" in the night above Ullswater to the "blue chasm" that was the "soul" of the Moonlit cloudscape beneath his feet on Snowden, shows his way of reading nature. His "Tintern Abbey" is a fine example of a whole pantheistic poem woven of the landscape. In Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" the awful shadow of the "unseen power" is
substantiated by 'moon beam showers of light behind' the 'Piny Mountain', of 'Mist O'er mountains driven'. Byron spoke of "a living fragrance from the shore", a 'floating whisper on the hill'. Such instances reveal the presence of the spirit in Nature. Contrary to Wordsworth and Byron Blake saw the landscape as a spirit personified. Shelley's Alastor is a spirit of this kind, making the 'wild his home', a spectral spirit of wind, expiring 'Like some frail exhalation; which the dawn robes in its golden beams. Byron's Childe Harold desired that he himself might become a 'portion', of that around him, of the tempest and the night.

"Be thou spirit Pierce", said Shelley to the West wind, "My spirit" "Be thou me".

Nineteenth century poetry is more plain spoken than that of the previous age. There were many stock terms scattered through poetry such as 'wild' 'bright', 'lonely' and 'dream' and the various forms of the word 'breathing'. "To breathe" Henry Taylor says "has become a verb poetical which means anything but respiration". Breathing is one of the terms used.

in Romantic poetry. "Breathing is air in motion whether it occurs as breeze or breath, wind or respiration."^{16}

In many Romantic poems "the wind is not only a property of the landscape but reveals changes in the poet's mind. The rising wind, usually linked with the outer transition from winter to spring is co-related with a complex subjective process, the return to a sense of community after isolation, the renewal of life and emotional vigor, after apathy and a death-like torpor, and an outburst of creative power following a period of imaginative sterility."^{17} In Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode", the poetic meditation is set in April, which turns out to be the cruelest month. In breeding life out of the dead land, it painfully revives emotional life in the observer mixing memory and desire. As the poem opens, a desultory breeze makes itself audible on a windharp.

The lyre was used as an emblem for poetizing. The lyre of Apollo was replaced in Romantic poetry by

^{16} The Correspondent Breeze, p.37
^{17} Ibid., p.37-39.
the Aeolian lyre which was evoked not by art but by a force of nature. Shelley stated that 'poetic man' is an instrument subject to impressions like the alterations of an ever-changing wind over an Aeolian lyre, which move it by their motion to ever changing melody. The wind harp was a figure of the poetic mind for the Romantics. It was "a mediator between outer motion and inner emotion." The Romantics showed how the mind and the imagination responded to the wind.

In Coleridge's "Dejection" the moaning wind-harp foretells a storm which the lyric speaker awaits in the hope that it 'may send my soul abroad' and release the stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief, which finds no natural outlet, no relief. As the speaker thinks of the condition's of the death in life the outer wind mounts to a storm of driving rain and compels the windharp into loud music. The poet also responds to the storm with increasing strength 'the


passion and the life, whose fountains are within', once more break out. But with a lull of wind the poem ends where it began with a calm both of nature and of mind. The poet's spirit awakens to violent life as he laments, achieves release and shows the power of imagination.

Coleridge's letters reveal his delight in wind and storms, which he watched with a total feeling worshipping the power and "eternal link of energy" in it. Similarly with Wordsworth winter winds were his delight. "Throughout his 'The Prelude' the wind represents the inter-change between outer motions and the interior life and powers." 20

Earlier poets had invoked a muse, Apollo or the Holy Spirit for inspiration. Wordsworth however wrote in his opening lines of 'The Prelude' "Oh there is a blessing in this gentle breeze / That blows from the green fields and from the clouds / And from the sky". Released from the city, the poet says "I breathe again", so also does nature with a spring like revival of the spirit after a winter season.

20. The Correspondent Breese, p.39
Wordsworth going beyond Coleridge equates the poetic inspiration with the inspiration of the prophets when touched by the Holy Spirit. There is a parallel between poetic creation and the creation by divine utterance, "Nature's self", Wordsworth said later, "is the breath of God."

Wordsworth parallels Milton's reinvocations of his divine guides by recalling the "animating breeze" which had made a glad preamble to this verse and now, made visible by the tossing boughs of his favourite grove, once again spreads through me a commotion like its own, something that fits me for the poet's task. When Wordsworth felt "utter loss of hope itself, and things to hope for" Wordsworth shows his recovery by addressing again the correspondent breeze:

"Ye motions of delight, that through the fields stir gently breezes and soft airs that breathe the breath of Paradise, and find your way to the recesses of the soul"

Even the influence of Dorothy is felt to be reviving spring breeze 21 - When Coleridge's spirits were dejected

Wordsworth's words / fanned his torpid spirit into a
temporary and painful rebirth./ Childe Harold found
his spirit participating in the violence of an Alpine
tempest, and drew a parallel with the violent explosion
of his mind in poetry. De Quincey, as a child of six
stood beside his sister's death-bed. Just then "a solemn
wind began to blow" as his "ear caught this vast Aeolian
intonation" and his eye turned from the golden fulness
of life, outdoors in the midsummer noon to settle "upon
the frost which over spread my sister's face, - instantly
a trance fell upon me - I in spirit, rose as if on
billows". 22

Shelley addresses the wind directly in his
best-known poem "Ode to the West Wind". In the opening
stanzas the wind is referred to as both a destroyer and
a preserver. In the autumn it tears down the dead leaves
and the seeds, in order that in a later season another
West Wind - "thine azure sister of the spring" May
blow the clarion of resurrection, revive the seeds,
and call out the buds to feed on the wind. In the last

22. De Quincey, "The Affliction of Childhood".
stanza Shelley like Coleridge in Dejection, cries out to the wind to blow through him as through a windharp - 'Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is' - and to drive the withered leaves of his dead thoughts over the universe, 'to quicken a new birth'.

The blast of the wind sounds for the last time the general destruction and resurrection. One finds the effect of the wind on the unawakened earth, the singer's inspiration to poetry and prophecy and the spring time of the human spirit everywhere.

* Be thou, spirit fierce
  My spirit | Be thou me impetuous one
* Be through my lips to unawakened earth
  The trumpet of a prophecy.

The Romantic poems use the wind to show the progress from despair to consolation. "Most of these poems begin with a literal wind which transfers itself into the metaphorical wind of inspiration."

23. The Correspondent Breeze, p. 44.
In myth and religion, wind and breath often played an essential part in the creation both of the universe and of man. In the beginning the spirit, or breath or wind (ruach) of God moved upon the face of the waters; and after forming man, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul". God's breath is also sometimes a destroying force. Shelley's West wind has ample precedent in pagan and Christian mythology. In the revitalizing zephyrus of the Romans, and the trumpet blast of the Book of Revelation. According to classical belief this supernatural breath stimulated the visionary utterances of religious oracles and prophetic poets.24

In the Biblical commentaries of the church fathers it was recognized that the moving air, the breath of the Lord, the Holy spirit, the life and spiritual rebirth of man and the inspiration of the prophets in the testaments were connected. Before the end of the fourth century saint Augustine had imported the idea of spiritual breeze, which became common to all the

24. The Correspondent Breeze, p.45.
Romantic writings. During the Middle Ages the internal conditions of the mind were expressed in natural and seasonal metaphors, winter, drought and desert as against spring, the coming of rain and burgeoning plant.

In the later Renaissance, the alteration of aridity and freshness became a frequent topic. The Romantic wind is remote from the storm of the eighteenth century. Romantic lyrics are secularised versions of an older devotional poetry. Yet the religious element remains in them like an echo. Coleridge's finest odes end in the form of a prayer. Even Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" is a formal orison addressed to the spirit and breath of Autumn's being.

The 'Correspondent Breeze' like the guilt haunted wanderer and the Promethean or Satanic figure of the heroic rebel is one of the Romantic images. The poets used the attributes of the wind to express the philosophical, political and aesthetic preoccupations of the age.

Thus Wordsworth's winds are viewless winds, which are 'unseen though not inaudible'. Shelley's
wind is an unseen presence. The wind as an invisible power known only by its effects had an even greater part to play than water, light and clouds in the Romantic revolt against the world view of the Enlightenment. Moreover Nature's breezes were inhaled into the body and fused materially and metaphorically with the soul of man. The Romantic wind is typically a wild wind and a free one -- Shelley's 'thou uncontrollable' -- which, even when gentle holds the threat of destructive violence, Wordsworth's gentle breeze, soon like the breeze in Coleridge's "Dejection" 'Mounts to a tempest .... vexing its own creation'. The windstorm thus represented Romantic activism and the free Romantic spirit. The wind embodies a revolutionary violence which destroys in order to preserve.  

The very word Nature is enough to make a Romantic poet oblivious of this world. He reaches poetic heights when the sweet voice of singing birds falls upon his ears. While the Eastern poets were fascinated by the Swan's beauty, the Peacock's grace

25. The Correspondent Breeze, p. 52.
or the Cuckoo's melodious voice, it is the nightingale's melody that has captured the Western poets. This singing bird has offered a marvellous theme to many English poets. But their angles of vision differ from one another. According to ancient Greeks the bird is a symbol of melancholy and many poets followed this path, but to some ears it is melodious and happy. Different poets have different visions even of birds of one class.

The song of the cuckoo among the groves of trees heralds the arrival of spring. It announces the beginning of a beautiful and bright period. The sweet sound of singing birds forms the real beauty of nature. No beautiful garden would be complete without beautiful birds in it. In the past many kings of eastern countries used to keep parrots, pigeons, peacocks and many other beautiful birds in their royal gardens. These birds not only delighted and entertained the members of the royal family but proved useful in doing many important works. In Indian literature birds have been the messengers of love. It was a swan which bridged the love between Mala and Damayanti and united them through the
messages it carried. Because of either beauty or intelligence of birds, men have been displaying a great liking for birds of all kinds. So they have been rearing parrots, pigeons, and mynahs as their pets.

In classical tradition 'Pythagoras and Plato had defined music as an art practiced not only by human musician's but also by the cosmos. According to Plato's Timeus, the music of the spheres is produced by sirens each of whom in her particular sphere, sings notes whose pitch is conditioned by the velocity of the revolution of her sphere.\(^{26}\)

The totality of these notes produces the world harmony or symphony inspired by loving rivalry which is inaccessible to human ears, and which is willed by the demiurge, the world spirit. The Christians replaced the pagan world spirit by the Christian God of Love and associated the music of the spheres with Christian "caritas".

"In Dante, the Pythagorean world harmony will be sung not by the Siren's of the Timaeus but by the pure intelligences, the angels vying with each other in the different revolving heavens through the physical and spiritual attraction of that Divine Love. The theme that the music of nature blends with human voices in praise of the Lord is first developed in a text of Saint Ambrose, intended to interpret the line of Genesis in which God is presented as satisfied with the creation of the sea." 27

In surging prose Ambrose offered a powerful description of the harmony in which one fused the song of the waves and the choirs of the devout congregation in an island sanctuary; the voices of men, women, children, chanting psalms. With Ambrose for the first time in occidental literature there is a fusion of nature and humanity into one 'stimmung' - a unity of tone and atmosphere promoted by Christian feelings. It is this transcendental unity which permits the single objects to lose their matter of fact identity and to melt into the general atmosphere of poetry. In the pantheism of the

27. Leo Spitzer, p.15
ancients on the other hand, though the single phenomenon may even change into another form (as the metamorphoses of Philomella or Echo) clear-out forms still continue to exist individually not fused into an-all-embracing atmosphere.

After Ambrose birds are presented in Latin medieval poetry as psalmists of God, nature's singers introduced into the more sophisticated company of human singers. Among these birds the nightingale is a very predominant one. The classical Philomela, the ravished mutilated sorrowing woman becomes a song bird, becomes in Christian poetry the singer, naturally endowed with divine grace who sings to testify to grace. In a tenth-century Latin poem the nightingale sings at Easter time inviting all believers to join her in praise of the resurrected Christ. From now on medieval love songs reflecting the theological theme begin with a picture of nature revived in spring with the birds and the poet vying in grateful song. The word refrain (lit-refraction) which in old French was applied to the twittering of birds as well as to the musical or verbal refrain, must be explained by the concept of the echo.
which is represented in the response of the birds to the music of the world. Similarly the modern word concert (lit "Musical contest") and the Elizabethan word consort (concert) = consortium (association) are late derivatives from this same idea of peaceful strife, of musically harmonious emulation in the praise of God.

The thirteenth century Spanish poet Gonzalo de Berceo goes so far as to portray learned birds that serve as preachers of religious orthodoxy. Church fathers and prophets of the Old Testament, Augustine, Saint Gregory and Isaiah are presented as nightingales in an earthly paradise competing under the dictation of the virgin Mary. Saint Francis, the minstrel of God, feeling that one human being alone would not be worthy of praising the Lord, brings into his poem all creatures which may testify with him to the greatness of the creator: "Messer lu Prate Sole" (the Lord my brother sun) My brother the wind, My sister the water, My sister the earth - and "My sister Death". The saint does not mention his brother the bird, but in the painting of Giotto, Francis is depicted as preaching to the birds.28

28. Leo. Spitzer, p.16.
In the Renaissance, the original classical concept of Pythagorean and Platonic world harmony was revived by poets and scholars. The Christian implications however which had come to be associated in the middle ages with that ancient theory was not disregarded by the Platonists whether Catholic or Protestant. Thus when Shakespeare stressed the unmusical in Shylock or Cassius he meant that these characters were untouched by Christian grace. The Renaissance painter, Rap hael shows saint Cecilia, surrounded by such figures as St. Augustine and Saint Mary Magdalen (the Christian theoretician of music) and the representative of love rewarded by grace) in a moment of ecstasy when she an earthly being, gifted for music, or endowed with grace is privileged to hear the Music of heaven. Dryden's "Song for St. Cecilia's Day" and Milton's "At a Solemn Music" celebrate the reunion in heaven with God's music from which we earthly singers have been estranged through original sin...

"disproportioned sin / Jarr'd against nature's clime
and with harsh din/. Broke the fair music that all creatures made / To their great lord."
O may we soon again renew that song
And keep in tune with Heav'n till
God are long
To his celestial consort us unite
To live with him, and sing in endless
Morn of light

It is sweet to die with the expectation of
heavenly Pythagorean Christian music. Not only the
sweetness of musical reunion with Christ, but the
sweetness of a musical death for Christ is expressed
by a seventeenth century German Mystic Friedrich von
Spee in a language that has the simplicity of the folk
song. He gives a baroque twist to the classical motif
of the tragic death of Philomela. He combines this
motif with that of the Echo in Ambrose, although the
scenery here is not the all embracing ocean, but a
German forest. A nightingale exultantly sings out the
name of Christ to which the echo responds with equal
enthusiasm. The "risings and fallings" of the two
voices that descend in order to ascend to ever higher
pitch, suddenly cease. The nightingale had died in "
the praise of Mein Jesum - a martyr of love and strife
for God."
The English Romantics introduce into poetry their problems of disenchantment caused by the waning of faith in the eighteenth century. Now the poet was isolated from the musical birds and there was no musical concert. Shelley was startled to hear a lone nightingale "answering him with soothing song" when he sits pale with grief beneath the tower. Or else he will address the skylark

Teach us, sprite or Bird, what sweet thoughts are thine
Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know

"The bird is here a teacher as in medieval poetry, but not a teacher of a firmly established orthodoxy which is shared by bird and poet alike, nor a brother in the love of God. The teaching which the poet requests of the strange visitor (Sprite or Bird) from another world is apparently concerned with the knowledge of ultimate things in accessible to the poet." Keats who apostrophizes the Nightingale ("Thou wert not born for death immortal bird") feels himself to be immediately thrown back "from thee to my sole self."

29. Leo Spitzer, p.18.
The bird's voice fades away, the poet is left, unlike his medieval confrere in 'forlorn' uncertainty doubting whether the experience was a vision or a dream.

The German pre-Romantics and Romantics do not express the feeling of basic isolation from nature. On the contrary the Germans wished to recognize themselves in articulate nature. Along with the discovery of folk poetry and of Ossian there went the resurrection of those elemental spirits or sprites, those degraded demi-god's of antiquity who, inspite of the ban of the Church, had been able to survive in popular superstition.

Whereas Platos Sirens sang their symphonic Chorus in accord with a Pythagorean mathematical order now the Sirens of the folklore, the daemonic daughters of the 'Erl Konig' in Herder and Goethe, sing to lure innocent children away from their parents. The mermaid by her singing and pleading attracts the fisherman towards the abyss (Goethe, Der Fischer). By singing and by combing her fair German hair, she sends the boatsman down into the deep.
Thus as men gradually dechristianized - we may remember Goethe's belief in his (and Napoleons) 'daimonion' - an ambiguous folkloristic religion of underworld. Gods tend to replace the truly religious world of order and clarity that had produced the concept of musical world harmony. "But though the orderly picture of the world has faded by eighteenth century, the original desire of the individual to fuse somehow with nature has survived, particularly with the Germans who always feel their own individuality to be somehow incomplete". 30

This desire may assume two forms: the pantheistic and the religious. Whether so much torn in his feelings, is never shaken in his craving for pantheistic union with nature; in fact to integrate with the whole of nature is the purpose of his suicide. The religious variant is represented by Eichendorff. This Catholic poet is an unproblematic gaily bird like being, living in unison with the aimless beauty of the world.

No German poet has identified himself so thoroughly with the German forest and its denizens as 30. Leo Spitzer, p.19
Eichendorff. He speaks in the first person in the name of the skylark which sings bathed in sunlight feeling its breast bursting with song. His nightingale is called upon to announce the meaning of his poetic universe. The rustling of the dusky leaves of the forest as well as the dark confused dreams of man carry the same message, the affirmation of the aimlessness of nature.

The French Romantics, Lamartine and Victor Hugo, celebrated the pantheistic world harmony with their French articulateness. Victor's Hugo's Satyr (Le Satyre) dethrones the Serene Gods of the Olympus and reveals himself with a stentorian voice as Pan before whom Jove must abdicate. Hugo saw himself as that animal - God, as the incarnation of a strange Gallo Greek earthiness which owes more to Rabelais than to Theocritus.31

For Victor Hugo the poet is both the echo and the crystal placed in the center of the universe by a God whom he1 crowds out. Victor Hugo unites, reflects and speaks for the whole of creation. The tiny

31. Leo Spitzer, p.20.
voice of a bird would be superfluous in the concert of a thousand voices, or in the pandemonium started by the Bard alone.

Unlike Saint Francis, Hugo believed that the poet may give voice to the world concert. Less optimistically de Musset saw in the poet the voice of suffering incarnate. He offers humanity his bleeding heart for food as the pelican does to her young.

For Baudelaire, the poet is the albatross, an exile from heaven, plodding clumsily on this earth. Similarly for Matthew Arnold Philomela is a "wanderer from a Grecian shore" and her song is, as in Greek times, "eternal Passion, eternal pain". The function of the Hugoian "Sonorous world echo" was taken over in the second half of the nineteenth century by the great musician Richard Wagner. His operatic art is used to express the will to love and death which according to Schopenhauerian Philosophy animates all of creation, man and nature alike. The opera which had been created as a demonstration of the soothing power of music on all creatures is used by Wagner to express the religion of the nineteenth century pantheism the voice of the
forest in Siegfried, of fire in the Walkure and of
the individual striving for dissolution in death in
Tristan and Isolde. Wagner gave to his concept of
world harmony an orchestration which interpreted the
togetherness of voices in the world, each singing its
own melody in a novel design. It had a compact
texture which overpowered millions of listeners. 32

Through the ages the bird proved to be a
source of inspiration for many poets. But in the
hands of each poet, it turned out to be a different
symbol.

32. Leo Spitzer, pp.20-21.