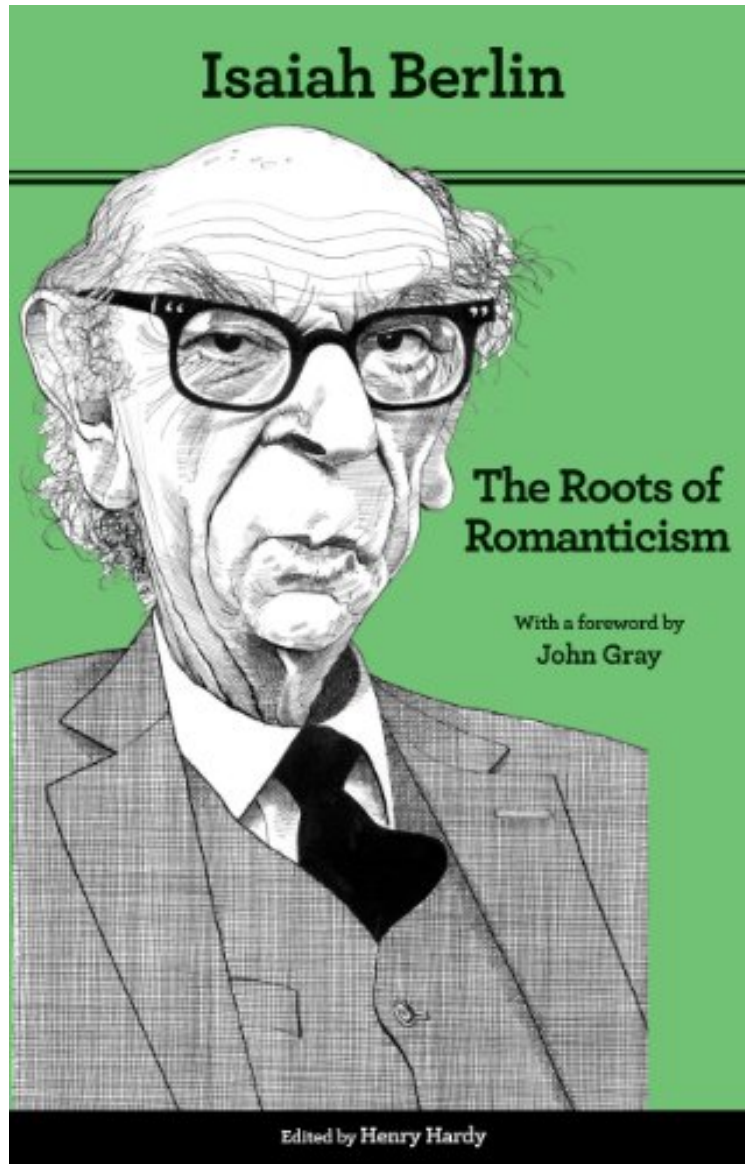


[Ebook pdf] The Roots of Romanticism: Second Edition (The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts)

The Roots of Romanticism: Second Edition (The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts)

Isaiah Berlin

*ebooks / Download PDF / *ePub / DOC / audiobook*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#200135 in eBooks 2013-06-02 2013-06-02 File Name: B00BUVF8SC | File size: 40.Mb

Isaiah Berlin : The Roots of Romanticism: Second Edition (The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Roots of Romanticism: Second Edition (The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts):

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The German ConnectionBy Richard B. SchwartzTake one of the great intellectual historians of the 20thc and turn him loose on a subject as vast, important and convoluted as

Romanticism and you have the most winning of combinations. The Roots of Romanticism is not a monograph, however; it is a set of lectures delivered in 1965 in the Bollingen series at the National Gallery. As such, the resulting material is very accessible. While Berlin is not speaking in an off-the-cuff, informal voice he is aware (and concerned) that the lecture format risks being less rigorous than a more discursive, settled, 'permanent' form. The book includes both an appendix that includes letters concerning the delivery of the lectures and a set of references elucidating the material in the lectures. Berlin's take on Romanticism can be briefly summarized. He knows that it has a core set of perspectives but that as an all-encompassing phenomenon it resists definition. 'Difficulty of definition' bedeviled such great predecessors as Lovejoy and Frye and thus Berlin will resist the temptation. That does not mean that he will not summarize Romanticism's core principles. The problem here is that one must select a locus for that core. Romanticism looks vastly different if your central figure is Wordsworth rather than, e.g., Blake. Berlin's central figures, however, are German (highly influential for Coleridge, of course). He sees their defining characteristics as a kind of anomie and feeling of marginalization that ultimately resulted from the depredations of the Thirty Years War. These are men who are affected by Lutheran pietism, individuals 'of a humiliated kind' who resist their plight by living in consciousness and who, ultimately, strive to turn the world into an aesthetic construct. They stress the indomitable will (in the face of straightened circumstances and a 2,000 year tradition of seeing the world as knowable and intelligible) and stress sincerity over reason (as their inheritors, the existentialists, will stress 'authenticity'). Their posture can embrace such seemingly contradictory poses as that of the primitive on the one hand and the dandy on the other, since each pose challenges the orderly, established status quo. The English model here is, of course, Byron, and Berlin traces the influences of the Byronic hero. It is not a pretty picture but Berlin argues, at the end, that Romanticism has resulted in a form of stability which its progenitors considered anathema. Given the fact that Romanticism ends with the celebration of will, power and a noticeable amount of antinomianism and nihilism, we finally realize that this 'passionate, fanatical, half-mad doctrinism' brings us to the realization that we must tolerate others and that we must see 'the necessity of preserving an imperfect equilibrium in human affairs . . .'. This may be a little too hyperbolic and it may be a little too optimistic, but the book is never dull. It is highly recommended for all readers of intellectual history.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. "A Robin Red breast in a Cage - Puts all Heaven in a Rage" - William Blake
By Clay Garner
The tension- even war - between the enlightenment (Locke) and romanticism (Wagner) has produced the conflicted modern present. Berlin presents a masterful analysis of why and when romanticism appeared in European thought. Great!

- 1 In Search of a Definition
- 2 The First Attack on Enlightenment
- 3 The True Fathers of Romanticism
- 4 The Restrained Romantics
- 5 Unbridled Romanticism
- 6 The Lasting Effects

"A great many phenomena of the present day - nationalism, existentialism, admiration for great men, admiration for impersonal institutions, democracy, totalitarianism - are profoundly affected by the rise of Romanticism, which enters them all. For this reason it is a subject not altogether irrelevant even to our own day." (xiii) It is like present thinks - 'enlightenment' - and then acts on - 'Romanticism'. "By the 1820s you find an outlook in which the state of mind, the motive, is more important than the consequence, the intention is more important than the effect. Purity of heart, integrity, devotion, dedication - all these things which we ourselves admire without much difficulty, which have entered into the very texture of our normal moral attitudes, became more or less commonplace, first among minorities; then gradually they spread outwards." (11)

Berlin's explanation of German Romanticism - "This did plant in Germany a permanent sense of sadness and humiliation which may be discovered in the rather doleful German ballad literature and popular literature of the end of the seventeenth century, and even in the arts in which the Germans excelled - even in music, which tends to be domestic, religious, passionate, inward, and above all different from the glittering court art and splendid secular achievements of composers like Rameau and Couperin." "There is no doubt that if you compare composers like Bach and his contemporaries, and Telemann, with French composers of that period, then although Bach's genius is incomparably greater, the whole atmosphere and tone of his music is much more, I will not say provincial, but confined to the particular inner religious life of the city of Leipzig (or wherever he happened to live), and was not intended to be an offering before the glittering courts of Europe, or for the general admiration of mankind, in the way in which the paintings and the musical compositions of the English, the Dutch, the French and the other leading nations of the world were obviously intended." "Against this background the pietist movement, which really is the root of Romanticism, became deeply embedded in Germany. Pietism was a branch of Lutheranism, and consisted in careful study of the Bible and profound respect for the personal relationship of man to God." (40)

"The whole thing was of course an immense protest against the French. It spread beyond Germany. Phenomena of this kind are noticeable in England also, where the most eloquent exponent of this point of view, somewhat later than Hamann, is the mystical poet William Blake. Blake's enemies, the persons whom he regards as the villains of the whole modern period, are Locke and Newton. Them he regards as those devils who killed the spirit by cutting reality into some kind of mathematically symmetrical pieces, whereas reality is a living whole which can be appreciated only in some non-mathematical fashion." (58)

"This is directed against the rationalists of the eighteenth century and the whole notion of symmetrically arranged order founded upon non-mystical empirical or logical reasoning. When he writes in those famous lines which everyone knows: 'A Robin Red breast in a Cage Puts all Heaven in a Rage' the cage of which he

speaks is the Enlightenment, and that is the cage in which he and persons like him appeared to suffocate all their lives in the second half of the eighteenth century." (59)³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. Intellectual adventure at its very best. By 3rd Day Believer I've been examining Romanticism in its various guises for decades now, and this is simply the most fun and fascinating book on the subject I've encountered. Mr. Berlin does a fine job of characterizing what I now choose to term "the counter-Enlightenment," since there is no meaningful definition of Romanticism, as the author takes pains to point out. Because this volume is derived from a series of lectures, each chapter is relatively self-contained, and short--this book has the merit of being brief. Also because these are lectures, there are often passages which prompt laughter. The German view of Enlightenment Parisians? "Dessicated monkeys." For some of us, this is the real beach reading, whether you're on the beach or not.

In *The Roots of Romanticism*, one of the twentieth century's most influential philosophers dissects and assesses a movement that changed the course of history. Brilliant, fresh, immediate, and eloquent, these celebrated Mellon Lectures are a bravura intellectual performance. Isaiah Berlin surveys the many attempts to define romanticism, distills its essence, traces its developments from its first stirrings to its apotheosis, and shows how it still permeates our outlook. He ranges over a cast of some of the greatest thinkers and artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Kant, Rousseau, Diderot, Schiller, the Schlegels, Novalis, Goethe, Blake, Byron, and Beethoven. The ideas and attitudes of these and other figures, Berlin argues, helped to shape twentieth-century nationalism, existentialism, democracy, totalitarianism, and our ideas about heroic individuals, self-fulfillment, and the exalted place of art. This new edition, illustrated for the first time, also features a new foreword by philosopher John Gray, in which he discusses Berlin's belief that the influence of romanticism has been unpredictable and contradictory in the extreme, fuelling anti-liberal political movements but also reinvigorating liberalism; a revised text; and a new appendix that includes some of Berlin's correspondence about the lectures and the reactions to them.

"Thoroughly brilliant, often thrilling and yet always accessible."--Publishers Weekly (starred review)"Exhilaratingly thought-provoking."--The Times (London)"Berlin at his best: quick-minded, erudite, witty and profound, and, above all, exciting. To read this book is to feel the force of living thought coming white-hot from the forge of a superb mind."--John Banville, *The Irish Times*"Here is Berlin doing what everyone said he did best: talk. . . . Berlin remains the tactful guest, discerning liberalism, toleration, decency and the appreciation of the imperfections of life also among the romantic movement's legacies. . . . Berlin liked to remind people that when they most believe they know where they are going, that is when they are likeliest to be wrong."--Colin Walters, *The Washington Times*"A fascinating intellectual history. . . . Berlin partakes in a kind of victory celebration, an often breathless study of the movement that ended the hegemony of the rationalist tradition."--Douglas A. Sylva, *New York Times Book* "A superlatively readable and absorbing primer. . . . As Berlin unfolds [Romanticism's] development, politics and art as we know them become more comprehensible than ever before."--Booklist"The lecture pace of this volume makes it an excellent resource for both beginning researcher and seasoned scholar."--Library Journal"[A] supremely intelligent and illuminating little book. . . . [A] marvelous example of Berlin doing what he did best--the judiciously poised and open-minded elucidation of 18th- and 19th-century philosophy. . . . In an era where humane intellectual discourse has been deconstructed, intertextualised, phallicised and generally kicked senseless, Berlin's writing shines like a beacon."--Rupert Christiansen, *The Spectator*"With *The Roots of Romanticism* . . . we get another instalment of scintillating, elusive, paradoxical thought. . . . [T]his is a welcome addition to Berlin's ever-growing oeuvre."--Ben Rogers, *Financial Times*"This small volume provides the distilled essence of Berlin and it provides wonderful examples of his technique: vast sentences in which a succession of parallel phrases draws out the meaning, inch by inch, and ends with a perfect rendering of the original clause upon which the reader has been left dangling for half a page, believing himself hopelessly lost. The experience is like waiting for an organist to resolve a mighty but elusive chord."--Anthony Smith, *The Observer*"This is a book that would be as salutary a read for prime ministers and presidents as for those who see themselves as cultural critics. Berlin's writing exemplifies the need for understanding and tolerance in the face of the plurality of human needs and aspirations, and the incompatibility of human ideals."--Peter Mudford, *The Times Higher Education Supplement*"The publication of the second edition of Isaiah Berlin's *The Roots of Romanticism* is a welcome event. . . . [It] is one of a handful of extant books capable of tracing the beginnings, illuminating some of the many manifestations, and identifying the diverse afterlives of that fruitful and inspired ideal in the history of human creativity which has come to be known as Romanticism."--Michael J. Neth, *European Legacy*From the Back Cover"Isaiah Berlin's Mellon Lectures on romanticism, a movement that he believed to be 'the greatest single shift in the consciousness of the West to have occurred,' are as eloquent, sprightly, and profound as anything he ever produced. This edition is provided with fascinating addenda as well as exacting editing and full references; it presents Berlin's analysis of the contradictions, plurality, and irrationality of a vital conjunction in intellectual, political, and artistic history, and restores the voice of the magus at its most thought-provoking and beguiling."--Roy Foster, *University of Oxford*"This book provides an excellent account of the topics that were to preoccupy Berlin throughout his life. . . . It is a history of ideas, wonderfully under control, always with the sense of

how those ideas have impacted on other ideas and eventually on the contemporary period."--Tracy B. Strong, University of California, San Diego "In a dark century, he showed what a life of the mind should be: skeptical, ironical, dispassionate and free."--Michael Ignatieff

About the Author Isaiah Berlin was one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century. A Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, he was renowned as an essayist and as the author of many books, among them *Karl Marx*, *Four Essays on Liberty*, *Russian Thinkers*, *The Sense of Reality*, *The Proper Study of Mankind*, and from Princeton, *Concepts and Categories*, *Personal Impressions*, *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, *The Roots of Romanticism*, *The Power of Ideas*, and *Three Critics of the Enlightenment*. Henry Hardy, a Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, is one of Isaiah Berlin's literary trustees. He has edited several other volumes by Berlin, and is currently preparing Berlin's letters and remaining unpublished writings for publication.