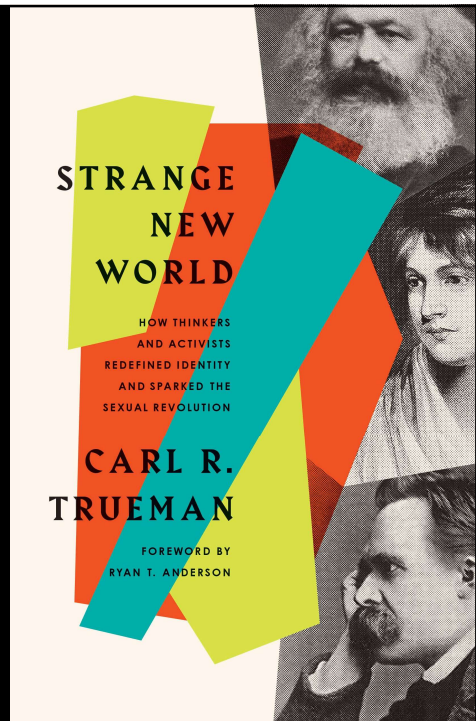


## CHAPTER 2

### *Romantic Roots*

#### Major Premise:

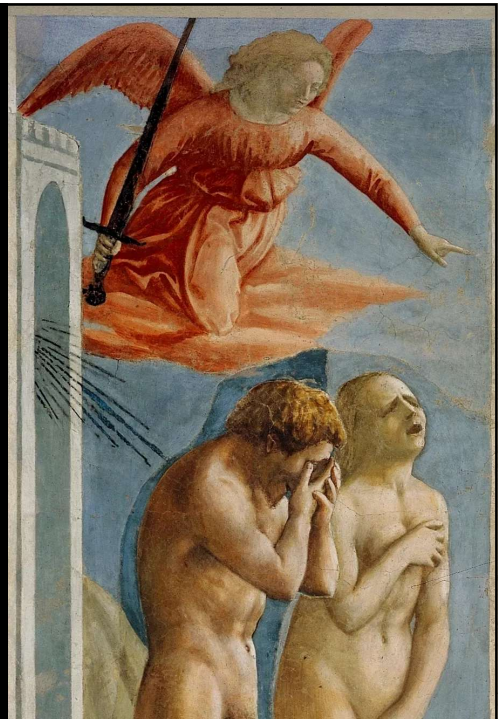
A key cause of the recent radical changes in our society and social imaginary is the “*granting of decisive authority to inner feelings.*” This “authorization” has its roots in the philosophies of Descartes, Rousseau, and the Romanticists.



1

### **The Fall of Man, Original Sin, and the Corruption of the Human Heart.**

All of creation, including humankind, was created in a state of original goodness and perfection (Gen. 1:31). Adam & Eve, through their disobedience (Gen. 3:1-7), sought to displace God, bringing on themselves and all humanity corruption and death (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:8-24; Rom. 5:12-21).




2

This event in history is called the Fall and the subsequent corrupted nature of Adam and Eve and all their posterity is called original sin. Sin in this sense is not just transgression of the law or an act of wickedness, but a state of hostility toward God (Rom. 5:10; 8:7-8). In this state, we are all by nature objects of God's wrath (Eph. 2:3). This state is universal (Rom. 3:9-20); we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Therefore, the human "heart" is corrupt and deceitful (Jer. 17:9) seeking to gratify our selfish and sinful desires (Eph. 2:3). The "heart" is neither a source nor a reliable guide for goodness, truth, or beauty.

3



*"The transgender person . . . sees inward, psychological conviction as the nonnegotiable reality to which all external realities must be made to conform." (Trueman, p. 33)*

4



**René Descartes(1596 – 1650)**  
 French mathematician &  
 philosopher

Through his “method of doubt”, Descartes was trying to establish a firm foundation for absolutely certain knowledge, especially the knowledge of God.

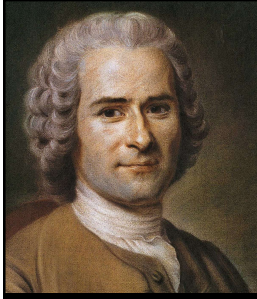
Descartes thus initiated the “turn to epistemology” in the history of philosophy. Unfortunately, he began with the subjectivity of the “knower” and thereby placed the answer to how we know things on a “foundation” of personal introspection and examining our own inner mental states. It was not his intention to reduce “knowledge” to feeling, but his thought could be led in that direction. And it was.

5



Descartes “*establishing this psychological foundation for certainty set in place a conceptual framework that makes transgenderism plausible.*”  
 (Trueman, p. 34)

6



***Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778)***  
 Genevan (French-Swiss) philosopher,  
 political & educational theorist, musician,  
 and writer

Rousseau's influence on the modern idea of the self is focused in two ideas: 1) *"he locates identity in the inner psychological life of the individual"* (p. 34), and 2) *"he sees society ... as exerting a corrupting influence on the individual To the extent that society prevents us from acting consistently with our feelings, to that extent it prevents us from being who we really are"* (pp. 34-35)

7



*"Rousseau's focus on the inner psychological life of the individual life of the individual as taking us to the heart of who he or she is represents a key development in Western culture, the significance of which still has a profound effect on how we think of our identities today."* (Trueman, p. 37)

8



## **Romanticism** (late 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 19<sup>th</sup> cent.)

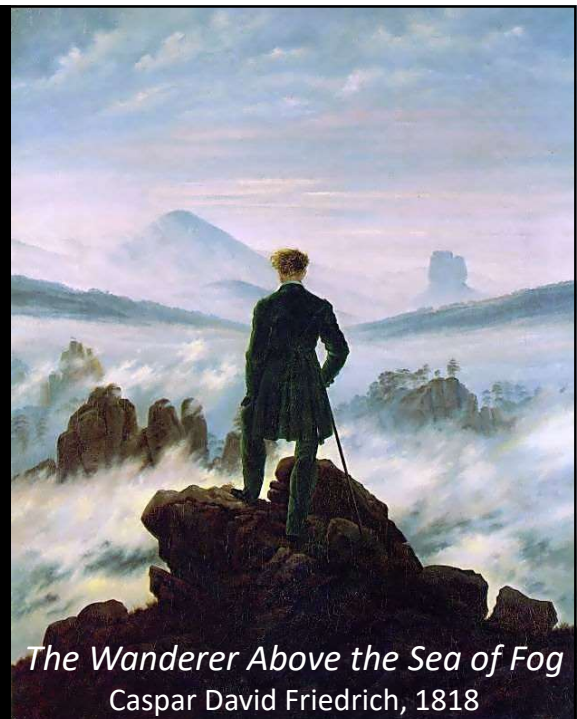
Exemplars of Romanticism included Lord Byron, William Wordsworth, Mary Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Theodore Gericault, Caspar David Frierich, Franz Schubert, and Ludwig Beethoven.

Romanticism was a literary and artistic movement which emphasized personal feeling and trust in nature as inspiration and teacher of morality and proper human sensibilities. *“At its heart, Romanticism sought to find authentic humanity in an acknowledgment of, and connection to, the power of nature”* (p. 42) *“The Romantics grant an authority to feelings, to that inner psychological space.at all humans possess.”* (p. 46)

9

“One impulse from a vernal  
wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.”

from *The Tables Turned*  
William Wordsworth



*The Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*  
Caspar David Friedrich, 1818

10



Rousseau and the Romantics “*are important because they represent an impulse in the modern world that tends to see sophisticated society as corrupting and to regard instinct, or that inner voice of nature, as possessing significant authority. . . . looking at Rousseau and the Romantics allows us to see the significance, and the tacit assumptions, of the culture in which we live.*”  
(p. 47)

11

## Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Dr. Trueman is making a convincing case (so far) for the nature and influence of expressive individualism?
2. In what ways might you be an expressive individualist?
3. Can emotions/feelings be right and wrong or are they neutral?
4. How do you see original sin in the world today?
5. What are the consequences of denying original sin and believing that humans are essentially good? In the Church? In society?
6. How is the inward reflection of the Psalms and Paul different from expressive individualism?

12