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THE ROMANTICISM

The period from 1776 to 1830 was marked by important events:

- The declaration of American Independence (1776);
- The industrial revolution;
- The British colonies became free nation;
- The French revolution.

ROMANTICISM IN LITERATURE

In literature the romanticism became dominant. The romanticism affirmed (afferme) a new sensibility: the supremacy of feeling and emotions (del sentimento e delle emozioni) against (contro) the faith (la fiducia) in reason.

There was a new sensibility based on introspection, nostalgia, emotionalism and individualism.

The country is preferred to the industrial town, because the man is in relationship (in contatto) with nature.

Another element typical was the revival of the past, opposed to the present reality. "Gothic vague" was called the rediscovery of the art, legends and popular tradition of the middle age (medioevo).

A NEW CONCEPT OF NATURE

The classical view of nature, as an abstract and philosophical concept, was replaced (venne sostituito) by the view of nature as something real and living (qualcosa di reale e vivente).

IMAGINATION AND CHILDHOOD

Imagination had a key role (ruolo-chiave) as expression to emotional experience against the rationalism.

Childhood was admired and cultivated because the child was considered pure and unspoilt (incontaminato) by civilisation.

INDIVIDUAL

The individual is seen (è visto) in a solitary state (stato di solitudine). The hero of the romantics is a solitary rebel, outcast (emarginato) and atypical. The society was considered an evil force (una forza del male).

Jean Jacques Rousseau said that the conventions of civilisation represented restriction on the individual personality and corrupted the natural behaviour (comportamento) that was, in origin, good.

THE CULT OF EXOTIC

Rousseau's theories also influenced the "cult of exotic", which is far away (ciò che è molto lontano) both in space and in time (sia nello spazio che nel tempo).

BRITAIN AND AMERICA: THE HISTORY

INDUSTRIEL REVOLUTION

Britain, during the last decades of the 18th century, lived (ha vissuto) enormous changes and became an industrial country. The great increase (aumento) in population, which meant (che significava) a demand for more goods (più merci), required (richiedeva) more efficient and quicker production.

A series of technological inventions and new machinery was developed (svilupata).

The most important inventions involved (riguardarono) machinery for cloth-making (macchine per vestiario). These machines let (permettevano) one man do (che un uomo facesse) what was previously done (ciò che veniva in precedenza fatto) by many (da molti).

Another important fact was the development and the introduction of steam-power (la potenza del vapore). As a result (come conseguenza) the new factories were built on the coal and iron fields (sui campi di carbone e di ferro) of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Central Scotland and South Wales. This fact allowed (permise) to manufacture cloth (di fare vestiti) more cheaply (+ a buon mercato) than elsewhere (che altrove) but put many people out of work.

TRANSPORT

The built (la costruzione) of new waterways (vie d'acqua) and the improvement (miglioramento) of road travel (viaggi su strada) made (resero) transport easier.

AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

There were also great changes in agriculture in two principal forms: massive enclosure of open fields (recinzione massiccia di campi aperti) and improvement in the breeding of cattle (miglioramento nell'allevamento del bestiame) and in farming techniques (tecniche di allevamento).

NAPOLEONIC WARS

With the Treaty of Versailles (1873) Britain recognised the independence of the American colonies. The Republic of United States adopted a federal Constitution, George Washington was the First President and the capital was, temporary, New York city.

The french revolution in Britain caused different reactions: the terror of "Jacobinism" in the ruling classes (classi dirigenti) and the support between the intellectuals.

The French revolution was followed (fu seguita) by Napoleon's ascent (dall'ascesa di Napoleone) and France declared war to Britain.

Britain decided to fight (combattere) France at sea (in mare). The great hero (grande eroe) of the British navy was Admiral Nelson who defeated (che sconfisse) the French-Spanish fleet (flotta) off Cape Trafalgar.

The total defeat of Napoleon happened in 1815 at the battle of Waterloo.

Despite (nonostante) the victory over France, Britain, which had enormous financial costs (che ebbe enormi costi), had gained (guadagnò) relatively little (relativamente poco) from a long and exhausting war (acquisition of Cape of Good Hope, Trinidad, Singapore, Ceylon and Malta)

THE LUDDITES

Britain's internal situation wasn't happy.

The inhuman working conditions in factories and the severe unemployment (disoccupazione) led (portarono) to episodes of machine-breaking (rottura delle macchine) culminating in the luddites riots (rivolte luddiste); the name comes from Ned Ludd the first worker that destroyed his machine.

The government declared (dichiarò) machine-breaking punishable by death (morte).

Also Associations or trade unions (sindacati) of workers were declared illegal.

In 1819 there was the "Peterloo Massacre" where eleven people were killed (fuono uccisi) by soldiers during a peaceful public meeting.

The Prince Regent (later to become George IV) acted as monarch (ebbe il ruolo di monarca) during the illness (malattia) of his father (George III) and this period was called "The Regency".

When William IV (1830) became king (divenne re) a new age (nuova epoca) of reforms started.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Industrial Revolution was a period of unhappiness (infelicità) for many (per molti). The workers lived in small town, the so-called (cosiddetti) mushroom towns (città-fungo).

Women and children were employed because they could be paid less (potevano essere pagati di meno).

The condition of a worker meant long working hours and bad living conditions. (La situazione del lavoratore significava lunghe ore di lavoro e cattive condizioni di vita)

The air and the water of industrial cities were polluted by smoke and filth (erano inquinati da fumo e sporcizia). The houses were overcrowded (affollate).

The life expectancy (l'aspettativa di vita) was very low (molto bassa) due (dovuta) to toil (fatica), disease (malattia) and heavy drinking (bere pesante) to bear (per sopportare) fatigue and alienation (l'alienazione).

AMERICAN IDENTITY

The American people is composed by: exiles (esuli), political refugees (rifugiati politici), emigrants, adventurers (avventurieri), african slaves (schiavi africani) and american indians.

Different cultural, ethnic and social factors helped to model (hanno contribuito a modellare) the american mind (mentalità).

Another important element was the religious faith (la fede religiosa), the Puritanism (Puritanesimo).

The Pilgrim Fathers (i padri pellegrini) encouraged the spirit of adventure and the ethic (l'etica) of hard work (del duro lavoro) in order (al fine di) to improve (migliorare) the social and financial situation.

The development (sviluppo) of the American mind was also influenced by faith (fede) in reason and human progress, the belief (convinzione) that man's efforts (sforzi) can lead him (possono condurlo) to success, the so-called American-dream.

Two forces influenced the culture of america: the values of wealth (ricchezza) and respectability (rispettabilità) of the East America and the pioneer spirit of the west America.

The american characteristics emerged (emersero) in prose, in short-story by Edgard Alan Poe or in the epic novels by James Fenimore Cooper.