

2 most relevant british romantic painters are Constable and Turner
Constable tended to put the focus on picturesque landscaped, while Turner on sublime ones

Second generation of british Romanticism

They were:

- Byron
- P. B. Shelley
- Mary Shelley
- J. Keats

They are called members of the second generation because they were younger →they were born 20 years after Wordsworth and Coleridge

They also died young, under tragic circumstances

Byron died for example while he was in Greece, as he prepared to fight against the Turkish Empire →he died from a malaric feaver, during training

P. B. Shelley died during a storm, while sailing on a ship he owned, in Liguria

Keats died of tuberculosis →he was burried in a protestant cemetery in Rome

Politically speaking →they were radicals →they didn't have the time to become conservative

They were also critical of Coleridge's and Wordsworth's conservatism as adults

Lord Byron

1788-1824

He was the member of a powerful aristocratic family →his family was so prestigious that he had a seat in the british parliament

Parliament was made of 2 houses:

- house of commons →MPS (members of parlament) are elected through general election
- house of lords →whose seats are inherited

However his childhood was not happy →his parents neglected him →he had been raised by his calvinist nanny (she brought him up and influenced him from a religious point of view)

She was fundamental in his upbringing (not education)

He then attended university →then he became extremely famous in London →he was like an idol

- literary fame →his works were appreciated and were best sellers
- biographical fame →his lifestyle was scandalous →some criticized him for this reason, others appreciated his freedom

He was married, but had several lovers →he believed in free love →he despised marriage as an institution

It is also believed that he was bisexual

At one point he became member of the parliament →however a day a mob (infuriated crowd) attacked his house →some rumors had spread about his homosexuality

It was also believed that he had incestuous relationship with his half sister

He wasn't hurt, but he was so shocked that in year 1816 he decided to leave England for good

For him english society was too narrow minded and moralistic →he had a fall from grace

He moved to the continent (continental europe) →he leaved in Geneva, where he owned Villa Diodati

This villa is important for romanticism →in year 1816 one night he was hosting P. B. Shelley and his wife (Mary)

They decided to have a writing competition →the winner had to write the most horrifying horror story →the winner was Mary Shelley →she wrote only a short tale

Then she expanded it in a full novel in the following 2 years →it is Frankenstein

In the introduction she claims that the story comes only from her imagination →but recognizes that Byron and his husband played an important role

She wrote the tale after a nightmare she had →the dream was inspired by a conversation she had heard between Byron and P. B. Shelley

The 2 were talking about an experiment of Galvani →he tried to make dead frogs come to life with electricity

Byron travelled then in europe →he lived in Venice, Rome, Ravenna →while he was in Italy, he was in touch with italian independetists, who were against the austrian empire

The austrian police found him →so he went to Greece →he was very radical from a political point of view →he was ready to risk his life to help indipendentists (both italian and greek)

He was very athletic →but he was a lame, a cripple →malformation of a foot

He was psychologically touched by this physical disability →he suffered from this

Even his view of nature depended on this disability he was born with →he was fascinated by the sublime aspects, on the other hand he accused nature to be a evil stepmother →she made his life difficult

Nowadays british scholars do not consider neoclassicism and romanticism as in stark opposition →byrond embody this duality and the evolution of romanticism from neo-classicism

He composed romantic and neoclassical works →he was a romantic poet but also neoclassical production

Most famous for narrative production

Romantic works:

- lyrical poems →collected under "Hours of Idleness (ozio)" →he is better known for his narrative ones
- verse tales →narrative poems in verses →most important ones under the collection "Oriental tales" →most two relevant are "The Corsair" and "Lara" →here the character feels strong and powerful emotions, and the atmosphere is gothic →typical main character is the figure of the "Byronic hero"
- "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" →semi-autobiographical poem →not totally, because the events are loosely based on his life →the protagonist is Harold, an aristocratic young man, who travells on a grand tour in Southern Europe (like Byron did)
- verse plays →written in poetry (not prose), set mainly in Italy →philosophical plays, focusing on political freedom →they were rarely put on stage because are very complex to follow →they are mainly meant to be read →ex. "Manfred", "Marino Falliero", "The two Foscari" →"theatre of words, not of action"

He also wrote neoclassical works, in the form of satirical / mock-heroic poems →written in "ottava rima" (eight-line stanzas)

They satirize the hypocrisy of the british society →he despised them (satire) →ex. "Don Juan", he is an anti-hero (reason for mock-heroic) →he fell in love with many women, ...

The verses followed a specific rime pattern

In writing this works, he was influenced by Augustian poetry, which was mocking

and used poetic diction → he was also influenced by Swift (for the use of satire) and Sterne (for the use of digressions)