

GEORGE GORDON BYRON (1788-1824)

Task 1. Read the text

One of the great poets of England the **revolutionary romanticist** George Gordon Byron was born on January 22, 1788 in London, in an old aristocratic family. Byron as a heir to the title of Lord and the family castle went to school in Harrow then to Cambridge University. When he was 21 he became a member of the House of Lords. In 1809 he travelled abroad visiting Portugal, Spain, Albania, Greece and Turkey. He returned home in 1811. In 1816 Byron went to Switzerland where he made friends with the poet Percy B. Shelley, his great contemporary. Both of them hated oppression and stood for the liberty of nations.

At the end of 1816 Byron continued his voyage and went to Italy, where he lived till 1823. There he became actively engaged in the Carbonary movement against Austrian rule, for the liberation of Italy. In summer of 1823 he went off to Greece to fight for its liberation from Turkish oppression. There, on April 19, 1824, Byron died of a fever. The Greeks who considered him their national hero buried his heart in their country. His body was buried in England in his family estate. Only in 1969 the authorities finally allowed his remains to be buried in the «Poets' Corner» in Westminster Abbey.

Byron's creative work is usually divided into four periods.

THE LONDON PERIOD. At the beginning of this period the first two cantos (songs) of *CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE* were published. During the years of the London period Byron wrote his famous lyrics *HEBREW MELODIES*, his "oriental" poems ("The Corsar", "Lara").

THE SWISS PERIOD. Byron wrote his third canto of *Childe Harold*, his drama *Manfred*.

THE ITALIAN PERIOD. It is the most important period in his creative work Byron wrote the last canto of *Childe Harold*. Besides many others he writes *DON JUAN*. This is considered to be his most important creation. In it he gave a great, satirical panorama of the European social life of his time

THE GREEK PERIOD. Byron wrote little, only some lyrical poems.

The importance of Byron's poetic works is great. Byron addressed the oppressed nations, calling upon them to stand up against the tyranny- and fight, for freedom. Byron had a deep faith in man, in people's desire for freedom.

Task 2. Answer the questions:

1. What family was G.Byron born in?
2. When did he become the MP?
3. Who was one of his great contemporaries?
4. What united both great poets?
- 5.What movement was he engaged in in Italy?
6. Why did he go to Greece?
7. Why did the Greeks bury his heart in their country?
8. Where are his remains buried now?

Task 3. Write down Byron's most known literary works:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____