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B. A Undergraduate Sem-II Major/Minor
Topic - European Classic literature

The Enlightenment and Romanticism

There had been significant increase in the volume of printed material across the Europe during the time of enlightenment, resulting in greater emphasis over reason, individualism and education in the society. The era also remarked the advancement of science and philosophy. Some of the major and influential texts of enlightenment were produced by profound thinkers like Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788) in the canon of western philosophy. Literary works like 'The Elements of Law' and 'Natural and Politic' (1640) by Hobbes, an essay regarding human understanding (1689) by Locke and 'The social contract' (1762) by Rousseau, continues to be some of the most significant texts.

However, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the European writers started to favour sentimentality and imagination above

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The rationalism of the Enlightenment. By the start of the 19th century, Romanticism - which had its roots in Germany in the late 1700s and placed a strong emphasis on the individual expression of the art and political rights - has emerged as the dominant literary and artistic movement in Europe.

Romantic writers including Victor Hugo (1802-1885), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) and William Blake (1757-1827) emphasised the depth of emotion, nature's beauty and the need for freedom of imagination.

To be continued.

Karunaditya Singh
asst. Prof.
Dept - English
Shri Shakti College, Sar