Similarities and dissimilarities between shelley and keats

Literature, Russian Literature

Similarities and dissimilarities Though P. B. Shelley and John Keats were mutual friends, but they have possessed the diversified qualities in their creativity. These two are the great contributors of English Literature, though their lifecycle were very short. Their comparison are also little with each other, while each is very much similar in thoughts, imagination, creation and also their lifetime.

Attitude towards Nature

P. B. Shelley: Whereas older Romantic poets looked at nature as a realm of communion with pure existence and with a truth preceding human experience, the later Romantics looked at nature primarily as a realm of overwhelming beauty and aesthetic pleasure. While Wordsworth and Coleridge often write about nature in itself, Shelley tends to invoke nature as a sort of supreme metaphor for beauty, creativity, and expression.

This means that most of Shelley's poems about art rely on metaphors of nature as their means of expression: the West Wind in " Ode to the West Wind" becomes a symbol of the poetic faculty spreading Shelley's words like leaves among mankind, and the skylark in " To a Skylark" becomes a symbol of the purest, most joyful, and most inspired creative impulse. The skylark is not a bird, it is a " poet hidden. " John Keats: Keats’s sentiment of Nature is simpler than that of other romantics. He remains absolutely influenced by the Pantheism of Wordsworth and P. B. Shelley.

It was his instinct to love and interpret Nature more for her own sake, and less for the sake of the sympathy which the human mind can read into her

with its own workings and aspirations. Keats is the poet of senses, and he loves Nature because of her sensual appeal, her appeal to the sense of sight, the sense of hearing, the sense of smell, the sense of touch. Both men were great lovers of nature, and an abundance of theirpoetryis filled with nature and the mysterious magnificence it holds.

Their attitudes towards the Nature are slightly difference. P. B. Shelley treats the natural bjects as the supreme elements of inspiring him. Natural elements are successfully glorified by Shelley. He worships Nature and wants some of power from nature to enrich his poetical power to transmit his message to the people in this older world. On the other hand Keats treats nature as an observer, as a traveler. He finds interest to appreciate the physical beauty of Nature. Both writers happened to compose poems concerning autumn in the year of 1819, and although the two pieces contain similar traits of the Romantic period, they differ from each other in several ways as well.

Keats' poem " To Autumn" and Shelley's poem " Ode to the West Wind" both contain potent and vivacious words about the season and both include similar metaphors involving autumn. However, the feelings each writer express in their pieces vary greatly from each other, and Keats and Shelley address nature in their poems with different intentions as well. Shelley and Keats exhibit their genius for rich energized word use within these two poems wonderfully. Also, interesting similarities between the two pieces are some of the metaphors the poets implement.

Hair is a subject both writers explored as ametaphor for nature. Shelley, in " Ode to the West Wind," claims the wind is " like the bright hair uplifted from the head/ Of some fierce Maenad," while Keats views autumn as " sitting careless on a granary floor,/ Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind. " Hair, often used in poetry metaphorically, tends to symbolize feminine beauty and strength; in this case, both poets make use of thesubject of hair when describing certain aspects of nature. The speakers in these two poems also express their thoughts on theportent of the coming spring.

In the final couplet of Shelley's poem, the speaker asks, " Oh wind,/ if Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? " The speaker in Keats' poem inquires, " Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they? " Both poets look upon autumn as an indication of the coming season which is opposite of autumn. The subjects of seeds and budding plants are also touched upon within the two pieces. Autumn is when, as Shelley writes, " the winged seeds" are placed in their " dark wintry bed" and " lie cold and low.

And Keats writes that autumn is the time when the hazel shells are " plump with a sweet kernel; to set budding more. " These similarities between the two pieces are interesting; however there are many differences in the poems as well. Keats and Shelley express different emotions about the fallseason. Shelley looks at autumn as being wild and fierce while Keats has a more gentle view of the season. Shelley perceives autumn as an annual death, calling it " Thou dirge/Of the dying year," and he uses words such as " corpse" and sepulchre" in the poem.

He also employs words such as " hectic" and " tameless", and looks upon the autumn horizon as being " the locks of the approaching storm. " Also, he claims the autumn winds are where " black rain and fire and hail will burst. " Lines such as this reveal the speaker's attitude that autumn is a ferocious and reckless season bearing morbid portence of the coming winter. On the other hand, Keats fills his poem with lighter words such as " mellow," " sweet," " patient," and " soft.

The speaker of this poem looks out upon the landscape and hears the " full-grown lambs loudbleat from hilly bourn," and listens as the " gathering swallows twitter in the skies. " These lines indicate a much softer and moreamiable emotion felt by the speaker; sentiments quite opposite to those felt in " Ode to the West Wind. " Another great difference in these poems is the intentions of the poets themselves. Shelley, in his thirst for being known, wants to attain power like the wind has.

He asks of the wind, " Be thou, Spirit fierce,/ My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one! He pleads for it to move his thoughts " over the universe/ Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth," and to " scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth/ Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind. " Shelley's more ambitiousapproach to the weather differs from Keats, who merely enjoys the season for what it holds and asks nothing from it. Keats thoroughly enjoys the " stubble-plains with rosy hue," and listening as " the red-breast whistles from a garden-croft. " Although both writers examine the autumn season, each express different intentions in the poems they have written.

Shelley's " Ode to the West Wind" and Keats' " To Autumn" have striking similarities when it comes to their rich metaphors; however, the poems differ in almost every other sense. Shelley holds a much more savagenotion about the season, while Keats looks upon autumn as being soft and gentle. Shelley's ambitions are expressed in his piece, while Keats only reflects the beauty of what he sees. Both writers display their own unique talent as poets, deserving their titles as being two of the greatest Romantic writers of the period.

Imagination

Imagination is one of the striking characteristics of Romantic Poets.

P. B. Shelley's poem " To a Skylark" and John Keats's poem " Ode to a Nightingale" are both centered on nature in the form of birds. Both poems are classified as Romantic and have certain poetic elements in common, but in addition both poems have differences in style and in theme that differentiate them clearly. Both poets are spurred to react and to write because of their encounter with a bird. Shelley is addressing the bird that excites his interest more directly, while Keats turns to reverie because of the song of the nightingale more than the nightingale itself.

In the latter case, the song of the poet has a different tone from the song of the bird--the joy of the bird becomes a contemplative song for the poet. Each poet begins with the reality of the bird or its song and then uses that as a beginning point for aesthetic and philosophic speculation. P. B. Shelley: If the West Wind was Shelley's first convincing attempt to articulate an aestheticphilosophythrough metaphors of nature, the skylark is his greatest

natural metaphor for pure poetic expression, the " harmonious madness" of pure inspiration.

The skylark's song issues from a state of purified existence, a Wordsworthian notion of complete unity with Heaven through nature; its song is motivated by the joy of that uncomplicated purity of being, and is unmixed with any hint of melancholy or of the bittersweet, as human joy so often is. The skylark's unimpeded song rains down upon the world, surpassing every other beauty, inspiring metaphor and making the speaker believe that the bird is not a mortal bird at all, but a " Spirit," a " sprite," a " poet hidden / In the light of thought. "

In that sense, the skylark is almost an exact twin of the bird in Keats's " Ode to a Nightingale"; both represent pure expression through their songs, and like the skylark, the nightingale " wast not born for death. " But while the nightingale is a bird of darkness, invisible in the shadowy forest glades, the skylark is a bird of daylight, invisible in the deep bright blue of the sky. The nightingale inspires Keats to feel " a drowsy numbness" ofhappinessthat is also like pain, and that makes him think of death; the skylark inspires Shelley to feel a frantic, rapturous joy that has no part of pain.

To Keats, human joy and sadness are inextricably linked, as he explains at length in the final stanza of the " Ode on Melancholy. " But the skylark sings free of all human error and complexity, and while listening to his song, the poet feels free of those things, too. Structurally and linguistically, this poem is almost unique among Shelley's works; its strange form of stanza, with four

compact lines and one very long line, and its lilting, songlike diction (" profuse strains of unpremeditated art") work to create the effect of spontaneous poetic expression flowing musically and naturally from the poet's mind.

Structurally, each stanza tends to make a single, quick point about the skylark, or to look at it in a sudden, brief new light; still, the poem does flow, and gradually advances the mini-narrative of the speaker watching the skylark flying higher and higher into the sky, and envying its untrammeled inspiration--which, if he were to capture it in words, would cause the world to listen. John Keats: With " Ode to a Nightingale," Keats's speaker begins his fullest and deepest exploration of the themes of creative expression and the mortality of human life.

In this ode, the transience of life and the tragedy of old age (" where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, / Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies") is set against the eternal renewal of the nightingale's fluidmusic(" Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird! "). The speaker reprises the " drowsy numbness" he experienced in " Ode on Indolence," but where in " Indolence" that numbness was a sign of disconnection from experience, in " Nightingale" it is a sign of too full a connection: " being too happy in thine happiness," as the speaker tells the nightingale.

Hearing the song of the nightingale, the speaker longs to flee the human world and join the bird. His first thought is to reach the bird's state through alcohol--in the second stanza, he longs for a " draught of vintage" to

transport him out of himself. But after his meditation in the third stanza on the transience of life, he rejects the idea of being " charioted by Bacchus and his pards" (Bacchus was the Roman god of wine and was supposed to have been carried by a chariot pulled by leopards) and chooses instead to embrace, for the first time since he refused to follow the figures in " Indolence," " the viewless wings of Poesy.

The rapture of poetic inspiration matches the endless creative rapture of the nightingale's music and lets the speaker, in stanzas five through seven, imagine himself with the bird in the darkened forest. The ecstatic music even encourages the speaker to embrace the idea of dying, of painlessly succumbing to death while enraptured by the nightingale's music and never experiencing any further pain or disappointment. But when his meditation causes him to utter the word " forlorn," he comes back to himself, recognizing his fancy for what it is--an imagined escape from the inescapable (" Adieu! he fancy cannot cheat so well / As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf").

As the nightingale flies away, the intensity of the speaker's experience has left him shaken, unable to remember whether he is awake or asleep. In " Indolence," the speaker rejected all artistic effort. In " Psyche," he was willing to embrace the creative imagination, but only for its own internal pleasures. But in the nightingale's song, he finds a form of outward expression that translates the work of the imagination into the outside world, and this is the discovery that compels him to embrace Poesy's " viewless wings" at last.

The " art" of the nightingale is endlessly changeable and renewable; it is music without record, existing only in a perpetual present. As befits his celebration of music, the speaker's language, sensually rich though it is, serves to suppress the sense of sight in favor of the other senses. He can imagine the light of the moon, " But here there is no light"; he knows he is surrounded by flowers, but he " cannot see what flowers" are at his feet.

This suppression will find its match in " Ode on a Grecian Urn," which is in many ways a companion poem to " Ode to a Nightingale. In the later poem, the speaker will finally confront a created art-object not subject to any of the limitations of time; in " Nightingale," he has achieved creative expression and has placed his faith in it, but that expression--the nightingale's song--is spontaneous and without physical manifestation.

Idealism

Idealism is the very much common characteristics especially in second generation Romantic Poets. Romantic idealism favored this hermeneutic and phenomenological outlook on life. At this juncture, we want here to address and emphasize the question of the poem’s inspiration by the natural phenomenon, the luminous star.

P. B. Shelley: Among the great Romantics whose poetry, in the early nineteenth century, forms one of the most glorious chapters in the whole of English Literature, no one perhaps was inspired by a purer and loftier idealism than P. B. Shelley. Shelley’s is divided by three sub categories: · Revolutionary Idealism · Religious Idealism · Erotic Idealism “ Penetrates and clasps and fills the world” ---Epipsychidion “ That Beauty in which all things

work and move” ---Adonais John Keats: “ The hush of natural objects opens quite To the core: and every secret essence there

Reveals the elements of good and fair Making him see, where Learning hath no light. ” With regard to Romantic idealism, there are undoubtedly elements here that show Keats’s enthusiasm for nature. Even if Keats’s conception of nature has affinities with spirituality as discerned in the works of Romantics like William Wordsworth (1770–1850), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) and Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), the intention of this write-up is not primarily the fullness of spiritual experience in nature. Nature plays a vital role in the understanding of his aesthetic ambitions and achievements.

Though there are a number of characteristic features in Keats’s poetry which affiliate with Coleridge and Wordsworth, his nature-consciousness will be seen to take a slightly different turn. Keats’s poetry and prose show proof of certain monistic traits common in the two elder poets, justifying the assertion that he can be discussed within the mainstream of Romantic idealism with regard to nature, even if he does not handle the matter in a like manner. It can be argued equally that his poetry lends credence to apprehend nature from an organics viewpoint.

Yet, his eco-poetics, as we intend to analyze, does not place priority on the visionary and transcendental and, therefore, the dominant spiritual dimension of nature is not like that of his elder colleagues, for it tends to reduce nature primarily within the confines of his aesthetic quest rather than brood over it fundamentally as a universal force or the basis of his spiritual

longings. 04) Revolution M. H. Abrams wrote, " The Romantic period was eminently an age obsessed with fact of violent change". Especially the second generations Romantic Poets are the pioneer to revolt against society, religion and state.

P. B. Shelley: Shelley resembles Byron in his thorough-going revolt against society, but he is totally unlike Byron in several important respects. His first impulse was an unselfish love for his fellow-men, with an aggressive eagerness for martyrdom in their behalf; his nature was unusually, even abnormally, fine and sensitive; and his poetic quality was a delicate and ethereal lyricism unsurpassed in the literature of the world. In both his life and his poetry his visionary reforming zeal and his superb lyric instinct are inextricably intertwined. Shelley was the most politically active of the Romantic poets.

While attempting to instigate reform in Ireland in 1812-13, he wrote to William Godwin, author of Political Justice. (Note also Godwin's connections with Wordsworth and Coleridge.) Shelley's pure idealism led him to take extreme positions, which hurt the feasibility of his attempts at reform. By 1816 he had mostly given up these politics in favor of the study and writing of poetry; his Queen Mab later became popular among the Chartists. The longest-lasting effects of his extreme views were the fact that he met and eloped with William Godwin's brilliant daughter Mary, abandoned his wife, and was eventually forced to leave England.

Even far away in Italy, however, he was incensed by the Peterloo massacre and wrote The Mask of Anarchy in response to it. He also turned into an attack on George IV his translation of Sophocles, Oedipus Tyrannus; or Swellfoot the Tyrant. John Keats: Keats was neither rebel nor Utopian dreamer. As the modern seemed to him to be hard, cold, and prosaic, he habitually sought an imaginative escape from it. Not like Shelley into the future land of promise, but into the past of Greek mythology, as in Endymion, Lamia, and the fragmentary Hyperion.

SymbolismP. B. Shelley: Shelley uses symbolism successfully in his famous sonnet Ozymandias. Nothing, in this world is immortal. Even things that are cast in stone, can be one day undone; that things may fall and crumble there; forgotten one by one. It has been said time after time for as long as most anyone can recall, a small saying that says nothing is cast in stone. This poem is just another example that unlike something cast in stone, nature will always conquer over all despite the way that mankind may think.

The poet Percy Bysshe Shelley tells us the same thing in the poem 'Ozymandias' through both exquisite wording and beautiful imagery. The poem is a genius work about strength and the fall of false greatness, told from the eyes of a traveler who encounters an elderly stranger. In the poem the stranger tells him about the fall of a great kingdom that had thought itself unbeatable by even time. The author uses the image of a statue as a symbol for this kingdom. The image of a broken stone man, which has been beaten down by nature and time plays as an example for many things.

The reader learned throughout the poem that not only did time and nature beat this great kingdom, but also they themselves did it during their struggle to be great. The image of two trunkless legs still planted and slowly being covered by the sand is, in a way, exposing how mankind thinks. Men often believe they are unstoppable even by nature and time, often comparing the elements to other men, believing that the best surpasses even their power. In another line the writer refers to the face of the statue, left fallen in the sand, its lips curled in a look of cold and cruel command.

This is a play on the way that mankind is by nature. Mankind is a race that spends all it's time rushing about, using commands and war to strive for survival. It is a common belief that he who is strongest will outlive them all. In this poem the writer shows that this is almost always outlived. Weather they are beaten by time, the elements, or themselves, the strongest kingdom will always crumble. The words written on the statues base are said in a beautiful passionate queue, " My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!

In this passage the writer says that the sculptor of this piece knew all to well, that even the strongest army will fall with time, look and despair that man is not eternal. The sculptor leaves a morbid example to all who would wander upon his works to look around and see what has become of greatness. It is, in a way, telling the reader that greatness is short lived, and that nothing is forever. The last lines are a beautiful expression of the fallen city, which lie in the sand about the pieces of the broken statue.

Crumbled and dead, the sands stretch on still, holding the vast proof that forever is not so long a time in the eyes of the world and that life will continue on even after the walls have crumbled. It is this poem that sets a perfect example that mankind does not give credit to the strength that comes with time and the forces of nature, and will often put so much time into becoming the best and most powerful that they lose sight on life, becoming nothing more than a fallen king. Perhaps the writer hoped to express a greater understanding of the tragedy of greatness, or even express the value of life over the conquest of power.

John Keats: In ‘ Ode to a Nightingale’ one can discern the consciousness of the use of nature, symbolized in the bird and its melodious song, not only for poetic composition, but also for advancing the poet’s philosophical speculations. Both bird and song represent natural beauty, the poetic expression of the non-verbal song signaling the harmony of nature. Apart from the ecstasy that the bird’s song generates, the unseen but vivid pictorial description of the surrounding landscape adds to the bliss and serenity of the atmosphere: I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,

Nor what soft incense hangs upon the bough, But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet Wherewith the seasonable month endows The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine; Fast fading violets cover’d up in leaves; And mid-May’s eldest child, The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine, The murmurous haunt of lies on summer eves. (Stanza V, L. 41 – 50) These lines express the splendor of

spring while foreshadowing the approach of summer, which will have its own store of nature beauty and luxury.

As earlier said, nature here seems to be a springboard for intense speculations in the face of the impermanence and mutability of life which strongly preoccupies the poet. To put it in other words, the song seems to engender a phenomenological process of self-transformation or a psychologicalmetamorphosisthat enhances a deep desire for the eternal and unalterable through death. Yet the poet submits to a stoical fortitude, apparently emphasizing the material and sensuous realm of existence rather than the struggle to maintain a permanent and idealistic state.

This has often been problematical as imaginativefailure, or as a characteristic Keatsian trademark of ambivalence between reality and imaginative illusion. 06) Melancholy Second generations Romantic Poets were Melancholic according to the bad effect ofFrench Revolution. Their desires did not come true and their endeavor to the Ideal world remained in their dream. So they were very much frustrated and possessed agony to the real world order. P. B. Shelley: He is one of the greatest, successful Melancholic in his age.

It is this unsatisfied desire, this almost painful yearning with its recurring disappointment and disillusionment, which is at the root of Shelley’s melancholy. His most famous and powerful lines, reveals the melancholy, are in Ode to the West Wind: Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud! I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed One

too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud. His melancholy is thus vital to his poetry. It may be said that his music is the product of his genius and his melancholy.

His melancholy is what the world seems to like best as: “ Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts. ” John Keats: In the poem " Ode on Melancholy," Keats takes a sinister look at the human condition. The idea that all human pleasures are susceptible to pain, or do inevitably lead to pain, is a disturbing thought. Keats comments on the miserable power of melancholy, especially how it thrives on what is beatiful and desirable and turns it into its opposite. She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that must die; And joy, whose hand is ever at his lips

Bidding adeiu; and aching Pleasure nigh, Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips: Ay, in the very temple of Delight Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine, Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine; His soul shall taste the sadness of her might, And be among her cloudy trophies hung. (ll. 21-30) In this passage, there seems to be an emphasis on lost hope. There seems to be this idea that true happiness is either ephemeral or unreachable. For example, Keats writes above about " Joy... Bidding adeui" and Pleasure Turning to poison.

Keats seems to be saying that happiness is a temptation which people are tragically prone to dream about, an illusion upon which is unrealistic.
07) Hellenism & Platonism From the Renaissance to the nineteenth century

Greece was a primary object of myth-makers' attentions, its history as well as its mythology fodder for the imagination. These two poets were deeply influenced by the Greek literature. Shelley wrote ‘ Hellas’, which is the ancient name of Greece. Keats was also influenced by Hellenism, while P. B. Shelley was influenced by Platonism. John Keats:

Shelley expressed the opinion that “ Keats was a Greek”. Indeed, Keats was unmistakably a representative of Greek thought, in a sense in which Wordsworth and Coleridge and even Shelley were not. The Greek spirit came to Keats through literature, through sculpture, and through an innate tendency, and it is under Hellenic influence as a rule that he gives of his best. Keats has “ contrived to talk about the gods much as they might have been supposed to speak”. The world of Greek paganism lives again in his verse, with all its frank sensuousness and joy of life, and with all its mysticism.

Keats looks back and lives again in the time: When holy were the haunted forest boughs, Holy the air, the water, and the fire. ---Ode to Psyche P. B. Shelley: Shelley's Platonic leanings are well known. Plato thought that the supreme power in the universe was the Spirit of beauty. Shelley borrowed this conception from Plato and developed it in his metaphysical poem: Hymn to Intellectual Beauty. Intellectual Beauty is omni potent and man must worship it. The favorite Greek conceit of pre-existence in many earlier lives may frequently be found in other poems besides the " Prometheus Unbound" quoted in part II of our series.

The last stanza of "" The Cloud," is Shelly's Platonic symbol of human life: I am the daughter of earth and water And the nursling of the sky I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores I change, but I cannot die. For after the rain when with never a stain The pavilion of heaven is bare And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams Build up the blue dome of air I silently laugh at my own cenotaph And out of the caverns of rain Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb, I arise and unbuild it again. 08) Love & Beauty John Keats:

Keats is called the poet of beauty or some critics address him as ‘ the worshiper of beauty’. Keats’s notion of beauty and truth is highly inclusive. That is, it blends all life’s experiences or apprehensions, negative or positive, into a holistic vision. Art and nature, therefore, are seen as therapeutic in function. Keats was considerably influenced by Spenser and was, like the latter, a passionate lover of beauty in all its forms and manifestation. This passion for beauty constitutes his aestheticism. Beauty, indeed, was his pole-star, beauty in Nature, in woman, and in art.

He writes and defines beauty: “ A think of beauty is joy for ever” In John Keats, we have a remarkable contrast both with Byron and Shelley. He knows nothing of Byron’s stormy spirit of antagonism to the existing order of things and he had no sympathy with Shelley’s humanitarian real and passion for reforming the world. But Keats likes and worships beauty. In his Ode on a Grecian Urn, he expresses some powerful lines about his thoughts of beauty. This ode contains the most discussed two lines in all of Keats's poetry: “ Beauty is truth, truth beauty," - that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. ” The exact meaning of those lines is disputed by everyone; no less a critic than TS Eliot considered them a blight upon an otherwise beautiful poem. Scholars have been unable to agree to whom the last thirteen lines of the poem are addressed. Arguments can be made for any of the four most obvious possibilities, -poet to reader, urn to reader, poet to urn, poet to figures on the urn. The issue is further confused by the change in quotation marks between the original manuscript copy of the ode and the 1820 published edition. P. B. Shelley:

Shelley expresses love as one of the God-like phenomena in human life and beauty is the intellectual beauty to him. We find the clear idea of Shelley’s love and beauty through Hymn to the Intellectual Beauty. The poem's process is doubly figurative or associative, in that, once the poet abstracts the metaphor of the Spirit from the particulars of natural beauty, he then explains the workings of this Spirit by comparing it back to the very particulars of natural beauty from which it was abstracted in the first place: " Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains driven";

" Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds depart... This is an inspired technique, for it enables Shelley to illustrate the stunning experience of natural beauty time and again as the poem progresses, but to push the particulars into the background, so that the focus of the poem is always on the Spirit, the abstract intellectual ideal that the speaker claims to serve. Of course Shelley's atheism is a famous part of his philosophical stance, so it may seem strange that he has written a hymn of any kind.

He addresses that strangeness in the third stanza, when he declares that names such as " Demon, Ghost, and Heaven" are merely the record of attempts by sages to explain the effect of the Spirit of Beauty--but that the effect has never been explained by any " voice from some sublimer world. " The Spirit of Beauty that the poet worships is not supernatural; it is a part of the world. It is not an independent entity; it is a responsive capability within the poet's own mind.

If the " Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" is not among Shelley's very greatest poems, it is only because its project falls short of the poet's extraordinary powers; simply drawing the abstract ideal of his own experience of beauty and declaring his fidelity to that ideal seems too simple a task for Shelley. His most important statements on natural beauty and on aesthetics will take into account a more complicated idea of his own connection to nature as an expressive artist and a poet, as we shall see in " To a Skylark" and " Ode to the West Wind. Nevertheless, the " Hymn" remains an important poem from the early period of Shelley's maturity.

It shows him working to incorporate Wordsworthian ideas of nature, in some ways the most important theme of early Romanticism, into his own poetic project, and, by connecting his idea of beauty to his idea of human religion, making that theme explicitly his own. 09) Diction One of the most distinct attributes of the Romantic writers Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats is their gift of using both lush and tactile words within their poetry. P. B. Shelley: Shelley uses terza rima in his Ode to the West Wind.

Terza rima utilizes three-line stanzas, which combine iambic meter with a propulsive rhyme scheme. Within each stanza, the first and third lines rhyme, the middle line having a different end sound; the end sound of this middle line then rhymes with the first and third lines of the next stanza. The rhyme scheme thus runs aba bcb cdc ded efe, and so forth. Shelley's “ Ode to the West Wind” (1820) instances one of the finest uses of terza rima in an English-language poem: O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being, Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead

Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing, Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red, Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou, Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed Each of the seven long stanzas of the " Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" follows the same, highly regular scheme. Each line has an iambic rhythm; the first four lines of each stanza are written in pentameter, the fifth line in hexameter, the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh lines in tetrameter, and the twelfth line in pentameter. (The syllable pattern for each stanza, then, is 555564444445. Each stanza is rhymed ABBAACCBDDEE.

John Keats: Influenced by Greek literature, he applied those Classical characteristics of his poetry; Keats is one of the great word painters in English Literature. " Ode on a Grecian Urn" follows the same ode-stanza structure as the " Ode on Melancholy," though it varies more the rhyme scheme of the last three lines of each stanza. Each of the five stanzas in " Grecian Urn" is ten lines long, metered in a relatively precise iambic

pentameter, and divided into a two part rhyme scheme, the last three lines of which are variable.

The first seven lines of each stanza follow an ABABCDE rhyme scheme, but the second occurrences of the CDE sounds do not follow the same order. In stanza one, lines seven through ten are rhymed DCE; in stanza two, CED; in stanzas three and four, CDE; and in stanza five, DCE, just as in stanza one. As in other odes (especially " Autumn" and " Melancholy"), the two-part rhyme scheme (the first part made of AB rhymes, the second of CDE rhymes) creates the sense of a two-part thematic structure as well.

The first four lines of each stanza roughly define the subject of the stanza, and the last six roughly explicate or develop it. (As in other odes, this is only a general rule, true of some stanzas more than others; stanzas such as the fifth do not connect rhyme scheme and thematic structure closely at all.). 10) Their Odes John Keats: The odes explore and develop the same themes, partake of many of the same approaches and images, and, ordered in a certain way, exhibit an unmistakable psychological development.

This is not to say that the poems do not stand on their own--they do, magnificently; one of the greatest felicities of the sequence is that it can be entered at any point, viewed wholly or partially from any perspective, and still proves moving and rewarding to read. There has been a great deal of critical debate over how to treat the voices that speak the poems--are they meant to be read as though a single person speaks them all, or did Keats invent a different persona for each ode?

There is no right answer to the question, but it is possible that the question itself is wrong: The consciousness at work in each of the odes is unmistakably Keats's own. Of course, the poems are not explicitly autobiographical (it is unlikely that all the events really happened to Keats), but given their sincerity and their shared frame of thematic reference, there is no reason to think that they do not come from the same part of Keats's mind--that is to say, that they are not all told by the same part of Keats's reflected self.

In that sense, there is no harm in treating the odes a sequence of utterances told in the same voice. The psychological progress from " Ode on Indolence" to " To Autumn" is intimately personal, and a great deal of that intimacy is lost if one begins to imagine that the odes are spoken by a sequence of fictional characters. When you think of " the speaker" of these poems, think of Keats as he would have imagined himself while writing them.

As you trace the speaker's trajectory from the numb drowsiness of " Indolence" to the quiet wisdom of " Autumn," try to hear the voice develop and change under the guidance of Keats's extraordinary language. P. B. Shelley: The wispy, fluid terza rima of " Ode to the West Wind" finds Shelley taking a long thematic leap beyond the scope of " Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," and incorporating his own art into his meditation on beauty and the natural world.

Shelley invokes the wind magically, describing its power and its role as both " destroyer and preserver," and asks the wind to sweep him out of his torpor

" as a wave, a leaf, a cloud! " In the fifth section, the poet then takes a remarkable turn, transforming the wind into a metaphor for his own art, the expressive capacity that drives " dead thoughts" like " withered leaves" over the universe, to " quicken a new birth"--that is, to quicken the coming of the spring.

Here the spring season is a metaphor for a " spring" of human consciousness, imagination, liberty, or morality-all the things Shelley hoped his art could help to bring about in the human mind. Shelley asks the wind to be his spirit, and in the same movement he makes it his metaphorical spirit, his poetic faculty, which will play him like a musical instrument, the way the wind strums the leaves of the trees.

The thematic implication is significant: whereas the older generation of Romantic poets viewed nature as a source of truth and authentic experience, the younger generation largely viewed nature as a source of beauty and aesthetic experience. In this poem, Shelley explicitly links nature with art by finding powerful natural metaphors with which to express his ideas about the power, import, quality, and ultimate effect of aesthetic expression.

Conclusion

To an extent, the intensity of feeling emphasized by Romanticism meant that the movement was always associated with youth, and because Byron, Keats, and Shelley died young (and never had the opportunity to sink into conservatism and complacency as Wordsworth did), they have attained iconic status as the representative tragic Romantic artists. Shelley's life and

his poetry certainly support such an understanding, but it is important not to indulge in stereotypes to the extent that they obscure a poet's individual character.

Shelley's joy, his magnanimity, his faith in humanity, and his optimism are unique among the Romantics; his expression of those feelings makes him one of the early nineteenth century's most significant writers in English. Shelley is regarded as a major English Romantic poet. His foremost works, including Prometheus Unbound, Adonais, The Revolt of Islam, and The Triumph of Life, are recognized as leading expressions of radical thought written during the Romantic age, while his odes and shorter lyrics are often considered among the greatest in the English language.

In addition, his essay A Defence of Poetry is highly valued as a statement on the moral importance of poetry and of poets, whom he calls “ the unacknowledged legislators of the world. ” While Shelley's significance to English literature is today widely acknowledged, he was one of the most controversial literary figures of the early nineteenth century. Keats was one of the most important figures of early nineteenth-century Romanticism, a movement that espoused the sanctity of emotion and imagination, and privileged the beauty of the natural world.

Many of the ideas and themes evident in Keats's great odes are quintessentially Romantic concerns: the beauty of nature, the relation between imagination and creativity, the response of the passions to beauty and suffering, and the transience of human life in time. The sumptuous

sensory language in which the odes are written, their idealistic concern for beauty and truth, and their expressive agony in the face of death are all Romantic preoccupations--though at the same time, they are all uniquely Keats's.