

English 203 final part

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“ The principal object, then [...] was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men; and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way [...] Low and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity [...] The matters of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings.”“ circumstance which distinguishes these poems from the popular poetry of the day” is that the “ feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling” William Wordsworth, Preface to Lyrical Ballads*Synopsis: He begins by talking about how he intends for this collection to be written in the *” language of men”*Discusses his relationship with Coleridge and his influence on him. Discusses the magnitude of this project, and his fear over how it will be received since he is *deviating from conventional literary norms*desires to use objects from “ common” and “ rural” life since they are more pure.**Good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of feelings* His poetry will illustrate the manner in which our feelings and ideas are associated in a state of excitement. The subject is the most important part of poetryClaims he will deliver *no “ poetic diction”*Poetry is pretty much, in his opinion, the same as prose*” What is a poet?”: A man speaking to men!*More willing to express himself. A sort of “ translator” to express situations*Poetry = the image of man and nature“ Emotion recollected in tranquility”*Poetry created

in pain will be “ pathetic and impassioned”; instead, it is to be written in a state of calmness

Major Themes

The poet speaking in the “ common tongue” is pretty much what the entire preface focuses on. Since poetry is supposed to reflect how we interact with nature, those who live in rural areas, and thus aren’t governed by social standards to the same extent, are seen as more “ pure” and “ free” to Wordsworth. They can be physically closer to nature, as well as emotionally — since their selfhood reflects their ontology more than society. Thus, in order to write authentically – and connect with one’s audience – the poet should try to mimic their speech and way-of-life.

Moreover, he suggests that the poet is the same as all other people, experiencing the same life; why, then, should the poet separate themselves from humanity by using language that is inaccessible and implies a sense of prophetic prophecy?

William Wordsworth, Simon Lee—goes against the readers’ expectations; the poem does not narrate a story, but emphasizes *emotions*

Displays *” democratic range”*: synthesizes politics in the choice of subject matter (e. i. Those who would usually be marginalized by society, such as Simon Lee; think enclosure laws, land ownership)———A simple Child, That lightly draws its breath, And feels its life in every limb, What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl: She was eight years old, she said; Her hair was thick with many a curl That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air, And she was wildly clad: Her eyes were fair, and very fair;—Her beauty made me glad.

“ How many are you, then,” said I, “ If they two are in heaven?” Quick was the little Maid’s reply, “ O Master! we are seven.”

“ But they are dead; those two are dead! Their spirits are in heaven!” “ Twas throwing words away; for still The little Maid would have her will, And said, “ Nay, we are seven!”

William Wordsworth (and Samuel Taylor Coleridge), We are Seven

Synopsis: Written in the ballad form with an ABAB rhyme scheme, it is a dialogue between a first person narrator and a little girl on the topic of death. Throughout the poem, the narrator serves as a foil to the little girl as the narrator represents the ‘ real-burdened’ and unimaginative adulthood to the naive and imaginative innocence of the girl.

Major Themes: Nature, Divine, Child’s Eye-view, wildness

The first three stanzas seem to work as a preamble as it lays out the underlying Romantic themes of ‘ Child’s Eye-View’ and Nature as teacher and panacea/ divine. The first stanza, written by Coleridge, describes the little girl being full of life. The juxtaposition between the third line where the girl has “ life in every limb” and “ What should it [A simple Child] know of death?” → Coleridge, in this first line, seems to set up the discourse on the different perceptions of death that reels in the themes of nature and faith. In the second and third stanza, the girl is positively introduced with natural characteristics: “ wildly” ; “ rustic, woodland air”

Expostulation and Reply William Wordsworth Expostulation: trying to persuade someone not to do something. In this case, a friend (Matthew) is addressing

Wordsworth (“ Why, William,”) and asking him why he’s spending his time by the lake instead of reading Matthew says that books are “ light bequeathed” and tells WW to “ drink the spirit breathed from dead men to their kind” WW replies that nature nurtures the mind with a wisdom of its own, people can observe it passively and still have their senses stimulated Romantic aesthetics privilege nature and experience over academic study (what Enlightenment thinkers prioritize) Books! ’tis dull and endless strife, Come, here the woodland linnet, How sweet his music; on my life There’s more of wisdom in it. And hark! how blithe the throstle sings! And he is no mean preacher; Come forth into the light of things, Let Nature be your teacher. Tables Turned, William Wordsworth “ An evening scene on the same subject” [nature or books] Presents the other side, as indicated by the title Friend asks him to stop reading books because it’s beautiful outside “ Books! ‘ Tis a dull and endless strife” Nature is full of wealth. Theme: we ruin the beauty of things by analyzing, dissecting: “ We murder to dissect”. Experience, don’t try to make sense of the unknowable sublime Receptivity and sensibility: “ Bring with you a heart that watches and receives”.... And I have felt A presence that disturbs me with the joy Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime Of something far more deeply interfused, Whose dwelling is in the light of setting suns, And the round ocean and the living air, And the blue sky, and in the mind of man: A motion and a spirit, that impels All thinking things, all objects of all thought, And rolls through all things. (93-102)

Nature is “ The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse, The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul Of all my moral being.” (109-111).

.... Therefore am I still A lover of the meadows and the woods, And
 mountains; and of all that we behold From this green earth; of all the mighty
 world Of eye, and ear, – both what they half create, And what perceive; well
 pleased to recognise In nature and the language of the sense, The anchor of
 my purest thoughts, the nurse, The guide, the guardian of my heart, and
 soul Of all my moral being. (102-112)

Tinturn Abbey, William Wordsworth

Synopsis: Written right after leaving this place, the poet writes that “ no poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this.” The poem starts with a description of the landscape in the first stanza. In the second stanza, he talks about the ‘ weariness’ of ‘ towns and cities’ and moves towards talking about the beauty and sustenance derived from Nature. He reviews his past, evaluates the present, and anticipates the future as being hopeful with Nature as his guide. He ends the poem by rounding back quietly on the scene that has been his point of departure and talks fondly of it.

Major Themes: Nature as sustenance, Sublime, Nature as teacher

“ Fair as a star, when only one” (7): first foot is trochaic instead of iambic, shows how Lucy stands out, sets her apart from all the other women.

“ The difference to me!” (12): this final line lacks a stress (has two instead of three), and so marks the speaker’s loss and anguish.

William Wordsworth

Synopsis: A literary ballad in which the speaker laments the death of his beloved Lucy, (likely referring to his daughter) a little known maid who lived in the countryside. Poem is written at the beginning of Romanticism, left behind balance and rationale of Enlightenment and focused on passion and emotion.

Major Themes: Nature, love, feelings, loss

“ I wandered lonely as a cloud”, William Wordsworth This is a lyric poem.

Summary: Poet is walking alone when all at once he sees a long belt of daffodils that are dancing in the breeze. There are so many and they are so bright that they twinkle like stars on the milky way. The waves in the water are also dancing but the daffodils out-do the sparkle of the waves. He is so happy, a poet could not but be happy when he sees them, and he reflects on what wealth this area of daffodils brought to him. Often when he lies on his couch he thinks of them, the dancing daffodils calling them “ the bliss of solitude”. “ My heart leaps up”, William Wordsworth He says this feeling he gets he has had since he was child, now that he is a man, and hopefully until he grows old. *Child is father of the Man* He ends the poem by saying “ I could wish my days to be/Bound each to each by natural piety”. Analysis: This reference of piety might make the rainbow he is talking about be the rainbow that God laid over the sky in Genesis after the Flood, where the rainbow was supposed to be a token of God’s promise to Noah that he would never flood the Earth again. It is a symbol of the covenant God keeps with Noah Some commentators have speculated that Wordsworth felt such joy because the rainbow indicates the constancy of his connection to nature throughout his life. Others have said that it celebrates “ the continuity in

Wordsworth's consciousness. 1There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream, The earth, and every common sight, To me did seemApparelled in celestial light, The glory and the freshness of a dream. It is not now as it hath been of yore;—Turn wheresoe'er I may, By night or day, The things which I have seen I now can see no more. 2The Rainbow comes and goes, And lovely is the Rose, The Moon doth with delightLook round her when the heavens are bare, Waters on a starry nightAre beautiful and fair; The sunshine is a glorious birth; But yet I know, where'er I go, That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

5Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting: The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, Hath had elsewhere its settingAnd cometh from afar: Not in entire forgetfulness, And not in utter nakedness, But trailing clouds of glory do we comeFrom God, who is our home: Heaven lies about us in our infancy! Shades of the prison-house begin to closeUpon the growing Boy, But He beholds the light, and whence it flows, He sees it in his joy; The Youth, who daily farther from the eastMust travel, still is Nature's Priest, And by the vision splendidIs on his way attended; At length the Man perceives it die away, And fade into the light of common day.

“ Ode: Intimations of Immortality” WordsworthAbout his struggle to understand humanity's failure to recognize the value of natureNature seems mystical and transient: “ every common sight... [was] apparelled in celestial light” but now he can “ see no more” Child's eye view is lost with the passage of time, age strips away the “ visionary gleam”. “ The Child is Father of the Man” As infants, we have some memory and conception of heaven/the divine, but time on Earth severs the connection gradually: “ our

birth is but a sleep and a forgetting” Everything on Earth conspires to make us forget heaven: “ forget the glories he hath known / and that imperial palace whence he came”. WW expresses sadness over witnessing a child pretending to be an adult, when the childlike stage is the purest and closest to heaven. Life is ultimately “ endless imitation” (kind of echoes Plato’s world of becoming; the world of being is similar to what WW speaks of us having lost contact with → we have conceptions of the higher world but are stuck in the realm of senses) as a result we only have ‘ intimations of immortality’.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*-comments on WW, struck with a force of radical revelation, calls WW’s work “ original poetic genius”. WW unified thought and feeling in poetry, C says it’s the repeated meditation that makes WW fresh of sensation. Emphasizes idea of genius and the extraordinary potential of an individual.

*Idea of ‘ genius’ shifted – first defined as a guiding presence then later as a quality**2 cardinal points of poetry: sympathy and imagination*

Objective is to investigate imagination, i. e. that which illuminates*

Primary imagination*: “ prime agent of all human perception”; analogous to divine powers’ work of making the universe; repetition of the eternal and infinite in the finite mind; can generate from within itself, create ideas out of nothing*

Secondary imagination*: “ an echo of the former, coexisting with the conscious will”; poetic imagination and craft; engages with pre-existing objects in the world; analyzes into parts and components, rearranges*

Defamiliarization*: art should engage us in a process of defamiliarization, i. e. reawakening and reimagining. World’s wonders are obscured by “ a film of familiarity” and we don’t pick up on beauty. Art can produce a shock of awareness: “ genius produces the strongest impressions of novelty” Making the familiar unfamiliar and vice-

versaSupernatural v. natural*Fancy*: a mode of memory that joins pre-existing sensations with new ones, lower than imagination -work is more supernatural, engages with strange realms. Features charged, eroticized encounters. Paranormal, trance, spell cast. Compare to WW whose work emphasizes earthly “ common subjects” It is an ancient Mariner, And he stoppeth one of three.’ By thy long grey beard and glittering eye, Now wherefore stopp’st thou me?

The Bridegroom’s doors are opened wide, And I am next of kin; The guests are met, the feast is set: May’st hear the merry din.’

He holds him with his skinny hand,’ There was a ship,’ quoth he.’ Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!’Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—The Wedding-Guest stood still, And listens like a three years’ child: The Mariner hath his will.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “ The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”

An ancient Mariner stops one of three wedding guests and begins telling him the story of his tragic voyage. Initially the trip goes well, but the ship is eventually sent off course to Antarctic waters where they are plagued by thick fog. An albatross comes and leads the ship out of the waters. Despite knowing it is wrong the Mariner kills the albatross, which initially angers the crew who force him to wear the albatross around his neck. The fog clears after the albatross has been killed and so the crew decided that the albatross was actually a bad omen and praise the Mariner, making them complicit in his crime. The spirits of Death and Life-in-Death arrive and play dice, betting

on the lives of the crew. Death wins every crew member's life except the Mariner. The crew members all die, except the Mariner who is forced to endure seven days and seven nights of watching the curse in the eyes of the dead crew. Eventually the curse lifts and the ship approaches the mariners home before it sinks in a whirlpool. The Mariner is rescued by an old hermit, a pilot, and the pilot's son, who believe him dead. When he wakes the pilot's son goes crazy and all the men fear the Mariner is the devil. The Mariner, feeling guilty due to the hardship he has caused, from that moment forth is tasked with telling everyone his story as a means of warning. The wedding guest upon hearing this story is profoundly changed and leaves "a sadder and a wiser man"(624)

In the opening to the poem the poem's narrator introduces the two major characters the titular Mariner and the Wedding Guest. After this point the narrator largely goes away as the Mariner begins his tales. This passage deals with the parameters for storytelling which include a story teller and tellee, it also focuses on the power of the story, particularly how it can entrance a listener.

The wedding stands in for the motif of the mundane, that tries to assert over the sublimity but fails; storm (nature) is a Romantic ideal and shows how overpowering it is. The Albatross is the ultimate symbol of the sublime; it entrances but it kills, showcasing the potential dangers of the sublime. Also connects it to the religious world (God) and the natural world.

Kubla Khan, Samuel Taylor Coleridge-Showcases ability to build through the power of imagination-Making the extraordinary seem natural/immediate/real:

“ sunny caves of ice”-Displays the kind of gorgeous, dazzling fictions that a strong imagination can generate, rich with sensory beauty-Effect on readers that he aims for is akin to the effect that some of the characters of his poetry experience when they disappear in *trances*-He signals interest in the governing of power outside of the active mind-He is connecting this with creative process*howing us how he is imagining the primary imagination – as a divine creative force (god had created something in someone out of nothing), , -Draws us in by syntactical inversion “ In Xanadu did _____/A stately pleasure-dome decree:” Instead of focusing on a pleasure dome, we spend a lot of time following Alph, sense of tumultuous force, “ romantic chasm...savage place” Indicating a shift from trimeter, bringing us to a deeper realm focusing on the force and the sacred river, which in turn figures poetic imagination and also a romantic conception of divinity rounded in nature “ turmoil, fast, thick, vaulted, flung” connote intense, primal force, conjures a kind of erotics, zone of sublime“ Huge”: force that is so grand in size that is dwarfs the human, signalling scale *mathematical sublime*-" fragments": brings us to think of the creative process because we know this poem is a fragmentHe wants us to connect the sublime to creative process, the creative process bringing him to a trance-like state (very romantic) privileged moments-Fraught relationship that is signaled by Coleridge, interested in how poetic inspiration can induce a state in which the will is suspended in some way, altered state of consciousness-notion of poet as visionary, beyond ordinary human knowledge and domains, a figure who is not_____ but a kind of genius figure, elevated above the ordinary, holy visionary figure beyond ordinary world, elevation of the poet as heroic outlaw, visionary genius-Poet is conceptualized not as conscious control of

her craft but someone who has seen visions from beyond our everyday lives (nod to his creative process) Samuel Taylor Coleridge “ To William Wordsworth”-Response to Prelude Praises the author (says his mind is “ prophetic,” and that his soul “ received the light reflected” → Romantic idea of the visionary lamp). Notes author’s understanding of external and internal human nature. author is the “ great Bard” C downplays his own poetic achievement. He’s receptive and teachable: “ I listened with a heart forlorn”. When he recites, the poet sits “ in silence listening, like a devout child” Outlines ‘ character and privilege’ of genius, the capacity of an individual: “ genius given” Current of religious reverence runs along the poem. Poet hangs on to the author’s recitation even after it finishes: “ when I rose, I found myself in prayer”. Refers to his “ communion” with him. Admiration taken to an extreme “ Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the burdened air; Hungry clouds swag on the deep.

Once meek, and in a perilous path, The just man kept his course along The vale of death. Roses are planted where thorns grow, and on the barren heath Sing the honey bees.

Then the perilous path was planted, And a river, and a spring, On every cliff and tomb; And on the bleached bones Red clay brought forth;

Till the villain left the paths of ease, To walk in perilous paths, and drive The just man into barren climes.”

“ But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged; this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away,

and displaying the infinite which was hid. If the door of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern." (N 154-55)

" I saw a mighty Devil folded in black clouds, hovering on the sides of the rock, with corroding fires he wrote the following sentence now perceived by the minds of men, & read by them on earth: How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way, Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five?" (N 151)

Begins with " The Argument" in which a " villain" is contrasted with a " just man" which is a raging poet, and *Blake here states his two primary ideas: that there is no progress without contradiction, and that being good means passively obeying while being evil means being active with energy*. In the next section, " The Voice of the Devil," he explains how the body and soul are one and elevates the Devil as a worthy hero, particularly praising Milton for his depiction of him in Paradise Lost. Afterwards, the speaker descends into hell in " A Memorable Fancy" and thereafter lists short sayings in " Proverbs of Hell" which value desire, temptation, creativity, and expression. He then returns to " A Memorable Fancy" which presents angels as limiting forces and looks at the world from the perspective of the devils. Overall, he argues that the values of Heaven and Hell must be combined if we are to progress, and he champions imagination as the method through which this is to be achieved.

Major Themes: Good, Evil, spirituality, desire, temptation, creativity, limitations, expression, opposites, imagination.

explains that the body and the soul are one, and that he intends to show the verity of this view by adopting Hell's methods, by using corrosives to tear away false perceptions until we arrive at the truth.

Focus on devilish perceptions to uncover what is hidden.

“ There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head
That curled like a lamb's
back, was shaved, so I said, Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's
bare, You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.”

“ And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy, He'd have God for his father
& never want joy.”

William Blake, The Chimney Speaker

Synopsis: A poem in which the speaker is a young boy working as a chimney sweeper. He was sold away at young age by his father and now toils to survive with countless other such abandoned boys. However, though their lives are horribly hard, they keep a positive outlook on life, not realising their misery, and taking comfort in religion. This poem is part of Songs of Innocence which, as the title suggests, looks at the more wholesome side of the world, as opposed to Songs of Experience.

Shows the naïve attitude of the boys as they accept their suffering and find good parts in their misery. Their innocent child's eye view limits them from seeing the harsh reality and allows them to cope with their situation

Major Themes: Child's eye view, suffering, innocence, religion, salvation, injustice, indignation.

Holy Thursday, William Blake
Synopsis: In this poem, from the Songs of Experience, Blake seems to criticize the Church for the lack of attention given to the reality of poverty. Broken up into four stanzas, the first portrays the contrast between the fruitfulness of the land and the misery of the poor who receive charity from a 'cold and usurous hand'. The second stanza is a repeated list of questions that seem to critique religious practice of charity as they seem to take on an egocentric experience to charity. This egocentric experience is characterized positively for those engaging in charity in the moment but they seem to be blind to the reality of poverty as a constant state. Though, the poem seems to end on a neutral note as the final two stanzas normalize the reality of poverty as a constancy.

Major Themes: Religion, Charity, Poverty, Church

"The Lamb", William Blake
Synopsis: This poem should be talked about with its match contrary, "The Tyger". Both poems try and depict a face of God that has the characteristic of being powerful and fear-inspiring yet also being caring and gentle. Blake conveys this paradoxical sentiment by presenting creations (The Lamb and The Tyger) of God that reflect these two, very contrasting, creatures that represent 'innocence' and 'experience'. The Lamb is a poem that reflects the former. He is characterized by his gentleness and the speaker of the poem continually asks "Little Lamb, who made thee? / Dost thou know who made thee?"

Major Themes: Innocence, God, Matched Contraries

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The Tyger, William Blake
 Synopsis: Similar to “ The Lamb,” (look above) this poem portrays the more ferocious side of God’s creation and through indirect characterization, a more ‘ experienced’ side of God. This poem really teases out the paradox of the match contraries in the line “ When the stars threw down their spears / And water’d heaven with their tears, / Did he smile his work to see? / Did he who made the Lamb make thee?”. Here the speaker seems to question and unable to conceive a God that can create both something as gentle as the Lamb and as ferocious as the Tyger, expressed with the successive questioning. In contrast to the Lamb, that has a soft tune with its AABB rhyme and trochaic rhythm, the Tyger has a harsher, more forward moving trochaic stresses on more sharper sounds like ‘ T’.

Major Themes: Experience, God, Matched Contraries

P. B Shelly, A Defense of Poetry-Responds to the notion that poetry is useless compared to (hegemony of) science. Theorization and justification for poetry, written in polemical spirit. 2 classes of mental action: reason and imagination*Reason*: contemplates relation of thoughts. Respects differences of things*Imagination*: acts upon thoughts, adds colour and light to them, composes from them. Respects similitudes of things. Distinguished forcefully from reason, placed higher*Poetry is “ the expression of the imagination” * Metaphor of the lyre: “ produces not melody, alone, but harmony.” Humanity is an instrument-Aesthetics and taste: Author argues that there’s a gradation in people’s “ faculty of approximation to the beautiful,” i. e. some people have better aesthetic taste than others. He further says that “ those in whom it [aesthetic sensibility] exists in excess are poets.” “ To be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful”-Poets

aren't only writers → defines ' Poet' broadly: they are " institutors of laws," " founders of civil society," " teachers," etc. Basically anyone who " draw[s] into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true." To him, makers/creators are all poets; we need poetry in its expanded sense bc the merely scientific and analytical only supports facts. Scientific progress comes from artistic wisdom and imaginative insight-Poetry is a " mirror", the " organ of moral nature," " something divine." Source of ' The Good,' i. e. empathy and self-transcendence. Imagination allows us to transcend ourselves, join with the Beautiful through an emphatic leap-Language is plastic: poetry is superior to other art forms because " language is arbitrarily produced by the Imagination and has relation to thoughts alone" whereas other conditions of art have relations to each other (ex. colours, forms, lines, etc. of a painting interact w each other)We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon; How restlessly they speed, and gleam, and quiver, Streaking the darkness radiantly!-yet soon Night closes round, and they are lost forever:

Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant strings
Give various response to each
varying blast, To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.

We rest.-A dream has power to poison sleep;
We rise.-One wandering thought pollutes the day;
We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep;
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away:

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow, The path of its departure still is free:
 Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow; Nought may endure but
 Mutability.

PB Shelly, Mutability Summary: The poem consists of four quatrains in ABAB iambic pentameter. The first two stanzas concern the bustle of human life that only serves to conceal its inherent transience. A first person poetic persona compared people to restless clouds who speed brightly across the sky, then disappear at night. They are then compared to lyres, which are always playing different tunes based on different experiences. The latter two stanzas concern the lack of freedom that we all share. The mind cannot control its unconscious thoughts, and human actions are subject to uncontrollable internal or autonomic reactions and to external forces. The persona complains that day or night, bad dreams or wandering thoughts interfere with our happiness. Whatever we think or feel will pass away, as we are creatures that constantly change. The path of departure of sorrow or joy is still free—that is, not under our control. All that endures is mutability.

Themes: Human agency or lack of, the unity of humanity and nature, humanity's constant need to change (but not necessarily progress), the transience of life and innocence, the purity/impurity of the unconscious mind, narcissism, vanity, French Revolution and the political environment of Europe at the time Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know That things depart which never may return: Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first glow, Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn. These common woes I feel. One loss is mine Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore. Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine On some frail bark in winter's

midnight roar: Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood
Above the blind and
battling multitude: In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
Songs
consecrate to truth and liberty,—Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,
Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be. Grieving the loss of
WWSaying that he shares many of the same viewsbut regrets that he grew
more conservative as he got older“ I met a traveller from an antique
landWho said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stoneStand in the desert. Near
them on the sand, Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frownAnd
wrinkled lip and sneer of cold commandTell that its sculptor well those
passions readWhich yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things, The hand
that mock'd them and the heart that fed. And on the pedestal these words
appear:“ My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye
Mighty, and despair!” Nothing beside remains: round the decayOf that
colossal wreck, boundless and bare, The lone and level sands stretch far
away.” Ozymandias, PB Shelly-A fourteen line petrarchan sonnet (an octave
followed by a sestet) with an untraditional rhyme scheme-The speaker
recalls meeting a traveler from an “ antique land” who recounted the tale
about the ruins of a statue he saw in the desert (implied in Egypt). This old
statue is fragmented and broken, yet the “ visage” of the subject is still
visible. The face is cruel, frowning and sneering, which point towards the
commanding and ruthless presence of the subject. It is likely that the “
sculptor” who reproduced the “ passions” of the man was ordered to make
the statue, and snidely depicted the ruler’s domineering side. These
emotions survive “ stamp’d” on the “ lifeless” statue. The sculptor “ mock’d”
these characteristics, by both literally imitating, and belittling the ruler. At
the foot of the statue is a pedestal, on which is a message from the ruler.

The inscription reveals that the statue is of Ozymandias and suggests that he is arrogant with an inflated self-assessment of his worth. He calls himself the “king of kings” and brags about his “works,” which are so grand that the “mighty” will “despair.” Around the ruins of the statue, nothing remains other than the “lone and level sands” that stretch around it. His monomaniacal claims are oddly disproven in the desert wasteland—his civilization has long been turned to dust by the inevitable power of time. The statue is only a monument of his pride and hubris, not his achievements as a ruler or politico. He is as insignificant in the face of history as any other person. The only thing that has survived is the power of words, i. e., art. Yet, even art, in the form of the statue, has survived partially, which opens up the question about the fate of art and man’s involvement.

Themes: transience and temporariness; pride, hubris, and ambition; time as a ‘levelling’ force that is ultimately destructive; the ‘immortality’ of art and culture; nature as a force of devastation; life and death; history; power

“ Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is: What if my leaves are falling like its own! The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone, Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce, My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe Like wither’d leaves to quicken a new birth! And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguish’d hearth Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind! Be through my lips to unawaken’d earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind, If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

Synopsis: Structured in five cantos, *Ode to the West Wind* is an ode written primarily in terza rima (ABA BCB CDC...) in iambic pentameter. Each canto consists of fourteen lines (v sonnet-ish)— four sets of three lines and a couplet.

Shelley invokes the “ wild West Wind” as a powerful force of nature, one that he wishes to harness to spread his own thoughts and words amongst humanity. The wind is viewed as both a destroyer” and a “ preserver.”

Shelley wishes to be infused with the wind’s energy in order to become a new man with novel ideas. He points to the wind’s powers in the realm of the natural world by giving examples of its interaction with the environment. In the first canto, the wind sweeps away multicoloured, dead leaves; buries seeds in the ground; and opens the flower buds. It is primarily a force of regeneration by bringing the ending of the winter and the hope of the spring to follow. In the next, the wind is the harbinger of storms, responsible for the dispersion of clouds; the downfall of rain; and the “ death” of the old year. In the third canto, the wind stirs the the Mediterranean sea; disturbs the waters of the Atlantic; and causes marine animals to “ tremble.” In the last two cantos the speaker broaches his own relationship with the wind, and what he wishes for. He says that if he were a dead leaf, or cloud, or wave, or a young boy (a “ comrade” of the wind) he wouldn’t have to pray so to feel the power and strength of the wind— he would feel as “ uncontrollable” as the wind, and wouldn’t have felt “ bowed” with the passing of time. Ultimately, the speaker asks the wind to turn him into a lyre that the wind will play. He

wants to feel its impact as directly as nature does, just as the trees and leaves around him decaying with the passing of time experience. The wind plays music as it rustles through the branches and leaves, giving meaning to something that is slowly dying, and the speaker wants the wind to give meaning to his life too. Then he asks the wind to become him, for him to be imbued with its power. He wants to unite the wind's fierce spirit with his own, or to even replace his selfhood. He asks the wind to scatter his words among people, and to be the "trumpet of a prophecy." His words are compared to dead leaves—fertile and renewing new thought and hope.

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold, And many goodly states and kingdoms seen; Round many western islands have I been Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold. Oft of one wide expanse had I been told That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne; Yet did I never breathe its pure serene Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold: Then felt I like some watcher of the skies When a new planet swims into his ken; Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—Silent, upon a peak in Darien. Synopsis:- A highly learned man who had travelled in the realm of gold (the world of poetry) and gets the translation of Homer by Chapman- Poetry as geographic: kingdoms, states, new worlds - (to read poetry is to travel)- The speaker likens the experience of reading Chapman's Homer to ascending the peaks of Darien - and breathing the air "pure serene"- When reading Chapman's translation, felt like "some watcher of the skies / When a new planet swims into his ken" - the sense of an expanding world- Also feels like

an explorer, Cortez – sense of discovery, ascension, awe – speechless in the presence of it

Major Themes:- Powers of language for ascension, to reach new realms- Trance like state of poetry — that renders its readers speechless- That Keats could not fully experience Homer without the translation (class and education)- Realms of gold: the world of poetry

“ A Thing of Beauty”, John Keats Summary: This poem starts off by saying that beauty lasts forever, with a lot of examples rooted in nature. However, some of the language of the play subtly contradicts this opening statement, providing conflicting accounts of beauty throughout the poem. Deals with human’s inability to quantify/capture beauty? Major Themes Nature: there are constant references to beauty in a natural, *pastoral* context. Describes beauty in terms of the sun and the moon and the stars, the trees and the daffodils, simple sheep and musk-rose blossoms. *Time* opens the poem by saying that “ A thing of beauty lasts forever,” and throughout the poem, he makes constant references to time — “ on every morrow,” “ an endless fountain of immortal drink.” He is always talking about the future, usually in reference to how true beauty never dies or how beauty only grows with age. All of his uses of time seem to back up his initial statement, but they are contrasted by other elements of the poem. *Light and Dark* this also includes day and night, waking and sleeping, and alive and dead. Light and Dark often aligns neatly with the theme of time — day and night mark the passage of time, as do the cycle of waking and sleeping, and alive to dead hints at the circle of life. However, the idea that seems to portray with his language of light and dark conflicts with that portrayed in the language of

time. There is a very clear alliance between light and beauty, as (after a long list of dark things, including “ gloomy days” and “ o’er-darkened ways”) claims “ in spite of all, some shape of beauty moves away the pall from our dark spirits.” So beauty is light, beauty cannot exist in the darkness. But the darkness is necessary for the passage of time, which conflicts with the earlier statements that a thing of beauty lasts forever.“ On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again,” John Keats- A Shakespearean sonnet to describe a Shakespeare play, although he has made a few tweaks to the rhyme scheme, and the last line has an extra foot of iambic meter.-In the first stanza, he sets aside his muses and his own artistry to focus on King Lear. The second stanza is focusing on Lear, described as “ the fierce dispute / betwixt damnation and impassion’d clay.” The final four lines are alluding to eventual death, and he is expressing his preference for dying young and bright “ consumed in the fire” (which he did) and rising like a phoenix, rather than dying quietly and “ wander[ing] in a barren dream.” Major Themes: Death: contemplating his own death — how he will die and how he wants to die — in conjunction with King Lear, which has been called the tragedy to end all tragedies. His desire to die young and beautifully is probably a contrast to Lear, who died old and heartbroken and half-mad. Line 11, “ through the old oak forest,” is probably another reference to Lear, who trekked through the woods to be reunited with his daughter before his death.*Negative capability*: Both mastered negative capability, the ability of being in uncertainties and recognizing discordant ideas. He is recognizing and (sort of) accepting the uncertainties of death and the afterlife. Keats’ life: Keats’ life was marked by tragedy, and he had a lot of experience with death (at the time he wrote this poem, he’d lost both parents, two siblings,

and an unknown number of patients from his time working in a hospital).

Keats also handles Shakespeare with a great deal of reverence and a great deal of distance between himself and The Bard, possibly due to his working class background. When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be, John

Keats Summary: A perfect Shakespearean sonnet in which the poet yet again contemplates his own death. Major Themes: Death: Keats is contemplating dying young and what the implications of that would be. Dying young would mean dying before he got a chance to say everything he wants to say, having nobody love or remember him after his death. It would mean making no impact on the earth, so that when the speaker dies, he doesn't just die, but completely ceases to be. Love: describe the fair creature of the hour, implying a love that is fleeting as Keats knows life is. This love is impossible and despairing, as the speaker says, "I shall never look upon thee more." The speaker also references the fair creature's "fairy power," indicating a divine or magical quality to the love, while maintaining its impossibility.

Nature: as with most of the Romantics, there's a fair amount of nature imagery in this poem. invokes "night's starr'd face" and the "huge cloudy symbols," remarking on nature's vast extraordinary qualities. He then uses juxtaposition to compare these examples of nature to himself, just one man, and to human constructs, like time. Ambition: aims high, and he writes like he's running out of time. He wants to be able to say everything, write everything, do everything. He wants to be important enough to be loved and remembered after he dies. He wants to be able to trace the clouds and capture nature in his writing. St Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was! The owl for all his feathers was a-cold; The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass, And silent was the flock in woolly fold: Numb were the Beadsman's

fingers, while he told His rosary, and while his frosted breath Like Pious incense from a censer old, Seem'd taking flight for Heaven, without a death, Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith "The Eve of St.

Agnes", John Keats Major Themes: Nature: Though the poem takes place in a fairly urban setting, there is a great deal of nature imagery throughout the poem. Invokes the stars and the moon on many occasions, as well as frequently comparing Madeline and Porphyro to flowers and other plants.

The theme of nature is closely intertwined with sexuality as well.

Supernatural: Madeline is described as a "conjurer," while Porphyro is called the "liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays." There are frequent references to fairies and elves and other supernatural creatures throughout the poem.

There is also the supernatural element to the ritual Madeline performs to see her future husband and to the fact that Madeline at first thinks Porphyro is a hallucination or a dream. Religion: Religion overlaps a little with the supernatural — the ritual and the hallucination both have religious elements as well as supernatural. The poem opens with a beadsman (a man hired by a noble to pray for him), and the kindly old woman is named ANGEL-a.

Throughout the poem, Madeline is compared to an angel or a saint, while Porphyro thinks of himself as a pilgrim or a worshipper. The poem is also named after a saint. Deceit: Porphyro lies to Angela to get into Madeline's room, then spies on Madeline unbeknownst to her. Madeline sleeps with Porphyro thinking that he is a dream, but only realises after the fact that he is not. At the end of the poem, Madeline and Porphyro creep out of the castle and run away together. There are a lot of aspects of the poem that heavily rely on lying and sneaking around. "O what can ail thee, knight at arms, Alone and palely loitering? The sedge has wither'd from the lake, And no

birds sing.[...]And this is why I sojourn here, Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake, And no birds sing." A literary ballad in which the speaker interrogates a knight who has been seduced, killed, and enthralled by la belle dame sans merci, and who now wanders the countryside alone as a sad ghost.

Major Themes: Nature, temptation, mystery, danger, sickness, regret, loneliness.

" Ode to a Nightingale", John Keats
Mortality: references age and time quite a few times, which are references to his own mortality. comparing his mortality and the responsibilities that come with it to the carefree, immortal life of the nightingale. There's also this idea that's prevalent in a lot of poetry of not a literal immortal life, but a sort of immortality that comes with art. Nature: The nightingale is a major symbol in this poem, and the poem is set in a dark forest far from humanity. Nature is a place and a frame of mind, associated with serenity and happiness, but ultimately unsustainable, as the speaker wakes up at the end of the poem. (This is probably a reiteration of Shakespeare's concept of the Green World, as we know that Shakespeare was a major influence on Keats' poetry). Reality: Again, the concept of the Green World. The forest where this poem takes place is a sort of liminal space, where the speaker is able to be absorbed into nature. The lines between dreams and reality are blurred, as the speaker tries to use his imagination to create a new reality, and it works for as long as the nightingale is singing." Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare; Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss, Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve; She

cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss, For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!" (15-20)

" Who are these coming to the sacrifice? To what green altar, O mysterious priest, Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies, And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?"

Synopsis: An ode in the form of a descriptive-meditative lyric which describes an urn which itself tells stories, notably one in which a lover chases his beloved and another in which villagers are soon to perform a sacrifice. The poem makes use of apostrophe in addressing the urn, as well as of ekphrasis in describing another form of art through literary means. It also invokes a pastoral haven but complicates that comfortable picture to suggest that art can preserve but in doing so presents us with an artificial realm.

Major Themes: Nature, art, beauty, permanence

This love story is put in a timeless stasis; the lovers will never meet and the tree never lose its leaves. Real beauty is ephemeral, but here it is made permanent, though what does that mean: does art provide everlasting life to that which it portrays by making it permanent, or does it kill the thing it portrays by immortalising it in a state of lifelessness?

The religious scene is analogous to how poetry provides a sacred space for whatever it takes as its subject, and also shows the renewing power of art, albeit at a cost (i. e. the sacrifice).

Suggests that art is a superior realm which might help us. However, the urn being static may not be able to provide us with all the answers or, exactly because it is unchanging, it is eternal and thus provides us with truth. There are many interpretations to these lines, but, just like the urn, the poem is unchanging and unresponsive regardless of our interpretations, which suggests that beauty will exist regardless of human experience and perspective.