

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS- ENGLISH

SEMESTER -II

THE ROMANTICS

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC COURSE (DSC)-IV

CORE – 201

BLOCK-2

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.



THE ROMANTICS

BLOCK-1

UNIT-1: Introduction to Romantic Poetry

UNIT-1: Burke – Excerpts from A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of Sublime and Beautiful;

UNIT-3: Kant- His Life and Philosophy

UNIT-4: Kant- “Analytic of Sublime” (From Critique of Judgment)

UNIT-5: Wordsworth – Preface to Lyrical Ballads

UNIT-6: Wordsworth – Prelude I

UNIT-7: Wordsworth – Prelude II

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BLOCK-2: THE ROMANTICS

Introduction to Block

UNIT 8 focuses on the work of Coleridge and his writings on the 'Biographia Literaria' that had made him famous as a Romantic poet. It shows one of the reasons why Coleridge's text on criticism is so famous is because he is able to show a shrewd understanding of the relative merits of various poets as he reflects on his own education.

UNIT 9 focuses on the Life and work of M.H.Abrams who had made a mark in the 20th century. He is a famous critic and a writer who had formed a dictionary or a glossary to help the learners of poetry.

UNIT 10 focuses on the story of the 'Mirror and the lamp' and Abrams shows that until the Romantics, literature was typically understood as a mirror reflecting the real world in some kind of mimesis; whereas for the Romantics, the writing was more like a lamp: the light of the writer's inner soul spilled out to illuminate the world. In 1998, ranked *The Mirror and the Lamp* one of the 100 greatest English-language nonfiction books of the 20th century.

UNIT 11 focuses on William Blake his life and his works and his special contribution to the age of the romantics. His writings were famous and made him an outstanding poet of the century. *The Lamb* is one of the most important poems in *Songs of Innocence*. It's parallel in *Songs of Experience* in Blake's most famous poem, *The Tyger*. *The Lamb* is regarded as a poem on Christianity. In the first stanza, the speaker, a child, asks the lamb how it came into being.

UNIT 12 focuses on the prose '*Marriage of Heaven and Hell*' he work was composed between 1790 and 1793, in the period of radical ferment and political conflict immediately after the French Revolution. The title is an ironic reference to Emanuel Swedenborg's theological work *Heaven and Hell*, published in Latin 33 years earlier. The prose focuses on themes and different characters.

UNIT 13 focuses on the most famous poet John Keats and his writings. 'The Spring Odes' and the 'Letters' written by him are nature poems and focuses on nature. Some of the most acclaimed works of Keats are "Ode to a Nightingale", "Sleep and Poetry", and the famous sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer". Some of the most acclaimed works of Keats are "Ode to a Nightingale", "Sleep and Poetry", and the famous sonnet "On First looking into chapman's homer".

UNIT 14 focuses on the poem '*Prometheus Unbound*' and its important themes in Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. The four-act play follows the Greek myth of Prometheus, a Titan. Prometheus possesses sympathy for mankind and steals fire in order to ensure the progression of mankind.

UNIT – 8: COLERIDGE – CHAPTERS 13, 13, 17 OF BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA

STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Chapter 13
- 8.3 Chapter 13
- 8.4 Chapter 17
- 8.5 Let us Sum up
- 8.6 Keywords
- 8.7 Questions for Review
- 8.8 Suggested Readings
- 8.9 Answers to Check your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- learn about “Coleridge – Chapters 13, 13, 17 of Biographia Literaria” by William Blake.
- and also, you will be able to go through its interpretation and summary.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Samuel Coleridge was an English poet, literary critic, philosopher, and theologian who along with his friend William Wordsworth, was also a founder of the Romantic Movement throughout England and was also, a member of the Lake Poets. Further, he also shared volumes and collaborated

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with the Robert Southey, Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb. He also wrote the poems *Kubla Khan* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and also, an important prose work *Biographia Literaria*. His critical work, on William Shakespeare, was considered to be as highly influential, and further, he introduced the German idealist philosophy to the English-speaking culture.

Coleridge coined many of the familiar words and phrases, including suspension of disbelief. He also had a major influence on Ralph Waldo Emerson and American transcendentalism. All his adult life, Coleridge had crippling bouts of anxiety as well as depression; it has also been speculated that he suffered from a bipolar disorder, which had not been defined during his lifetime. He was physically very unhealthy, which might have stemmed from a bout of the rheumatic fever and many other childhood illnesses. He was treated for these conditions through laudanum. Coleridge began *Biographia Literaria* as a literary autobiography but ended up in discussions about Kant, Schelling and Coleridge's perceptive of criticism of Wordsworth's poetry and a comprehensive statement on creative imagination which constitutes his most signal contribution to literary criticism and theory. As was his wont; the more ole ridge has let his awe-inspiringly powerful mind loose on aesthetics, its philosophical foundations and also, its practical application in an almost desultory manner.

The result is a mine of very inexhaustible potential which is called *Biographia Literaria* to which all the critics of all shades of opinion have turned for help and inspiration and very seldom has anyone of them been disappointed. Arthur Symons justly described the work as the greatest book of English criticism. Coleridge has sometimes been accused of borrowing from the Germans, particularly from Kant, the Schlegels but most of his ideas originally arrived, the system into which these ideas were fitted was the creation of his own great mind.

Coleridge's whole aesthetic - his definition of poetry, his idea of the poet, and his poetical criticism - revolve around his theory of creative imagination. Thus, chapters XII and XIV of *Biographia Literaria* are very important.

8.2 CHAPTER 13

On the Imagination, or esemplastic power

1) The Imagination then is considered to be as either primary or secondary. The primary Imagination which it holds to be is the living Power and prime Agent of all the human Perception, and also, as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite where he is. The secondary Imagination is considered to be as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will and, yet still as identical with the primary Imagination in the kind of its agency, and differing only in the degree, and in the mode of the operation. It dissolves, dissipates, diffuses, to re-create; or where the process is rendered to be as not possible, yet still at all the events it struggles to idealize and also, to unify. It is also essentially vital that all the objects are fixed and dead essentially.

Coleridge also divides the Imagination into two parts: the primary and secondary Imagination. As the "living Power and the prime Agent," the primary Imagination is considered to be as attributed as a divine quality, namely the creation of the self, that is "I Am." Nevertheless, because it is not subject to the human will, the poet had no control over the primary Imagination. It is also the intrinsic quality of the poet that makes him or her Creator; harking back to the Wordsworth, the primary Imagination can consider to be likened to the poetic genius. The secondary Imagination is the echo of the primary. It is like the former in each and every way except that it is restricted in some of the capacity. It also co-exists along with the conscious will; however, because of this, the secondary Imagination does not have the unlimited power to make. It also struggles to achieve the ideal but also can never reach it. Still, the primary governs the secondary, and thus, the Imagination gives rise to the ideas of perfection. Coleridge and Shelley share the same belief that inimitable forms of creation exist in mind only. No sooner

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the poet decides to write down his or her poem; for example, the work is inevitably disappeared.

2) Fancy, on the contrary, had no other counters to play with, but also the fixities and definite. The Fancy is indeed no other than the mode of Memory which is emancipated from the order of time and space; when it is blended with, and also, modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we further get expressed by the word CHOICE. But also, equally with the ordinary Memory of the Fancy must also, receive all the materials which are readily made from the law of association.

Coleridge further also adds Fancy in his description of the Imagination. As per his philosophy, Fancy is much lower than the secondary Imagination, which is already from the earthly realm. Fancy is the source of many baser desires. It is also not a creative faculty but is considered to be as a repository for lust.

Check your progress -1

1. What is Primary Imagination as per Coleridge?

2. What is Fancy as per Coleridge's description of Imagination?

8.3 CHAPTER 13

The occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and also, the objects which are originally proposed are prefaced to the second edition of the ensuing controversy, its causes, and acrimony.

In the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and him were neighbours, their conversations turned out frequently on the two cardinal points of the poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader on a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, as well as the power of giving up the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of the imagination. The sudden charm, which all the accidents of light and shade had and which moon-light or sunset got diffused over a known and familiar landscape appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature.

The thought suggested that an array of poems would have been composed of two sorts. In one, the incidents and agents were in part at least, supernatural; and also, the excellence aimed at was to be consistent in the interesting affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as could naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And also, real in this sense, they have been to every human being who is from whatever source of delusion that has at any time believed to be himself under supernatural agency. Also, for the second class, the subjects were to be chosen from the ordinary life; the characters and also, the incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and also, in its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling of the mind to seek after them, or to notice them, whenever they present themselves.

In this idea originated a plan of the LYRICAL BALLADS; in which it was agreed, that his endeavours would be directed to such persons and characters which are supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from the inward nature a human interest and a semblance of the truth which is sufficient to procure for these shadows of the imagination that willing suspension of the disbelief for the moment, that constitutes the poetic faith. Also, Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as the object and to give the charm of the novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling which is analogous to the supernatural, by making the mind's

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attention to the lethargy of custom, and also, directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before them; an inexhaustible treasure, however, for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and the selfish solicitude, they have eyes, yet they don't see, ears that don't hear, and hearts that don't feel nor understand.

With this view, he wrote THE ANCIENT MARINER and was also preparing among other poems, THE DARK LADIE, and the CHRISTABEL, wherein he would have more nearly realized his ideal than he had done in his first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had further proved so much that more successful, and the number of his poems were so much greater, that his compositions, instead of the forming of a balance, which appeared an interpolation of heterogeneous matter rather. Mr. Wordsworth further added two or three poems which were written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, as well as in a sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the LYRICAL BALLADS got published; and were also presented by him, as an experiment, whether such subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of the poems in general, may not be so managed in the language of ordinary life so as to produce the pleasurable interest, wherein the peculiar business of the poetry to impart. To the second edition he also added a preface of the considerable length; wherein notwithstanding some passages of an apparently a contrary import, he was understood to be as a content for the extension of the style of poetry of all the kinds, and also, to reject as vicious and indefensible all the phrases and forms of the speech that were not a part in what he called as the language of real life. From such a preface, the prefixed to the poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however, was mistaken in its direction may be deemed to arise a whole continued controversy. For from the conjunction of such a perceived power with which it is supposed to say here as he explains the inveteracy and in some examples, he grieves to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has also been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems being silly and have the childish things, which were for a long time mentioned as being had they been really differentiated from the compositions of the other poets merely by the meanness of the language and inanity of the thought; which they had indeed consisted of nothing more than what is found in the parodies and their pretended imitations; they must have also sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have been dragged the preface along with them. But year after year, which increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found not to be in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly amongst the young men of a strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration was distinguished by their intensity, he may say, by the religious fervour. These facts, and also

the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt and where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with the sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and also, of the alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of the criticism, which would itself have been borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface in a sense which obtained to them and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize.

He never concurred, but on the contrary also objected to them as an erroneous in principle, and as contradictory both to the other parts of the same preface and also, to the author's own practice in the most part of the poems. Mr. Wordsworth, in his latest collection found, degraded that this prefatory disquisition to the end of the second volume, which was to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as he can discover, announced any of the changes in his poetic creed. At all the events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honoured more than he deserves by the frequent conjunction of his name with that of his, he thinks it expedient to declare once for all, in what points he coincided with such opinions supported in that preface, and in what points he altogether differed. But in order to render myself intelligible he must previously, in as few words as possible, explain his views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself,

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in-kind, and in essence. The office of the philosophical disquisition which consists of just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher also to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is not a division. In order to get the adequate notions of any truth, he must intellectually separate the distinguishable parts; and that it is a technical process of philosophy. But having done so, we must also restore them in the conceptions to the unity, wherein they co-exist; and that, this is the result of such a philosophy. A poem which consists of the same elements as that of a prose composition; the difference, therefore,

should consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object which gets proposed. As per the difference of the object will be that of the difference of combination. It is also, possible that the object can merely facilitate the recollection of given facts or observations by the artificial arrangement, and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by meter, or by both conjointly or by rhyme. In this, lowest sense, a man would obtain the name of a poem to the well-known enumeration of the days in the several months; and also, others of the same class as well as the purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds as well as the quantities, all compositions that have this charm super-added, whatever be their contents, may be entitled poems. So much, for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure and that of the highest and most permanent kind may result from the attainment of the end, but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest, indeed is that the state of society, in which the immediate purpose would have been baffled by the perversion of the ultimate end; in which no charm of the diction or the imagery could

exempt the BATHYLLUS even that of an Anacreon, or the ALEXIS of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of such pleasure may be the immediate object of a work which is not metrically composed; and that such object might have been in a very high degree which is attained, as in the novels as well as the romances. Well then, in that case, will the super addition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle to the name of poems? The answer is that nothing can be permanent, which does not consist in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If the metre is superadded, all the other parts could be made consonant with it. They should be such, so as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, that an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound have been calculated to excite. The final definition then, so which is deduced, maybe thus worded. A poem is that species of such a composition, which is opposed to the works of science, which by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth; and from all the other species which is further discriminated by proposing to itself a delight from the whole, as it is compatible with a distinct gratification of each of the component part.

The controversy is also not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants while attaching each a different meaning altogether to the same word; and in few examples, there was this more striking, than in disputes which are concerning the current subject. If a man chooses to call each composition a poem, which is a rhyme, or a measure, or both, he must leave his opinion uncontroverted. This distinction is at the least is competent to characterize the intention of the writers. If it was subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections; he, of course, admits this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and Additional merit. But in case, the definition sought for being that of a legitimate poem, he should answer, and it should be the one, the parts of which are mutually supported and explained to each other; all in their proportion which harmonizes with, and supports the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all such ages also coincide with the ultimate judgment of all the countries, in equally denying the praises of just

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the poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines, each of which, also absorb the whole attention of the reader to itself, becomes a disjoined from the context, and it also forms separate whole, instead of the harmonizing part; and also, on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects fastly the general result which is unattracted by the components. The reader should also be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of the curiosity, or by any restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of the mind which is excited by many attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians also made the emblem of the intellectual power; or just like the path of sound through the air;—at every step he pauses and also, half of it recedes; and also, from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward.

Praecipitandus est liber spirits say Petronius very happily. The epithet, *liber*, here also balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should also be admitted as a satisfactory character of the poem, then still have to ask for a definition of the poetry. The writings of Plato, Jeremy Taylor, and Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*, provide undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind can exist without metre, and even without the contra distinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of *Isaia* is a poetry which is very emphatic in a sense; yet it would be not less irrational than any strange to assert, that pleasure, and not

the truth was thus, the very immediate object of the prophet. Whatever specific import that is attached to the word, the Poetry, there will be found to be a part in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem can be of any length and can be, nor ought to be, all poetry. Yet if any harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining

parts should be preserved while keeping the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and also the artificial arrangement, as that will also partake of one, though not very much peculiar

property of poetry. And, this can again be no other than the property of exciting more continuous and also in equal

attention than that of the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

His own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, are in the part which is anticipated in some of the remarks on the Fancy and Imagination in the early part of this work. What is poetry? It is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? That, the answer to the one which is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction which results from the poetic genius itself, which also sustains and also, modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the mind of the poet. Further, the poet also mentioned in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of a man into the activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other as per the worth and dignity. He also diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, which blends, and fuses, into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to that it would exclusively appropriate the name of the Imagination. It

powers the first put in action by the will and understanding and which is retained under their remissive, though the gentle and unnoticed, control, the *laxis effertur habenis*, also reveals that "itself in the balance or also, the reconciliation of opposite or discordant" qualities: of sameness, with a difference; of the general with that of the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual also with the representative; the novelty and also, the freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than the usual state of the emotion with more than the usual order; the judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with the enthusiasm and feeling of the deep or vehement; and while it blends and also, harmonizes the natural and the artificial, which still subordinates the art to the nature; the manner to the matter; and also, the admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. Doubtlessly, as Sir John Davies observes of the

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soul— Finally, a Good Sense is the Body of a poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life, and Imagination the Soul which is everywhere, and also in each; and forms all into one that is graceful and intelligent whole.

Examination of the tenets is very peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth—Rustic life, especially the unfavourable to the formation of a human diction. The best parts of the language the product of philosophers, not of clowns or that of the shepherds. Poetry is essentially ideal and generic. The language of the Milton as much the language of real life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager. As far as then as Mr. Wordsworth in the preface contended, and most ably further contended, for a reformation in the poetic diction, as far as he has further evinced the truth of passion, and also, the dramatic propriety of such figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, also stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into a mere artifices of connection or ornament, which constitutes the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns. And, also as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process that this change was further effected, and the resemblances between the state into which the reader's mind is thrown from the pleasurable confusion of the thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced further by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance on behalf of the truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot likewise add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or 12 years, with the majority of those created previously to the appearance of that preface, will leave no doubt in my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth which is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only,

the verses of those who have professed such admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by the hostility to his theory, and the depreciation of his writings, which are the impressions of his principles which are plainly visible. It is also possible that with these

principles others may also have been blended, which are not equally evident; and also, some of which are unsteady and submersible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But, also it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by any kindling and feeding the controversy, may also have conducted not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths but also that, by their frequent presentation as to the mind in an excited state, they can win for them a more permanent and practical result. A man shall borrow a part from the opponent more easily if he feels himself as justified in continuing to reject apart. While there remain an important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds the firm footing for continued resistance, he will slowly adapt to those opinions, which were very least remote from their own convictions, as not less than congruous with the own theory than with that which he reprobates. In a similar manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will also abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to have forgotten that they ever belonged to him, or the effects to consider them at the most as an accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which further leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

His very own disparities from certain alleged pieces of Mr. Wordsworth's hypothesis ground themselves on such presumption that his words had been appropriately translated, as implying too that of the correct phrasing for verse all in all which comprises out and out in a language which is taken, with due special cases, from the mouths of men, all things considered, a language which really is characteristic discussion of the men under such an impact of the regular emotions. His protest is, that in any sense the standard is appropriate just to specific classes of verse; which is besides, that even to such classes it isn't pertinent, with the exception of in such a sense, as hath which has never by anyone who has been denied or questioned; and furthermore, finally, that to the extent, and in that degree to which it is progressively practicable, it is yet when in doubt which is futile, if not in the least harmful, and therefore, either need not, or should not to be drilled. The writer additionally advises his peruses, that he had picked a low and exceptionally provincial life; however not as low and natural, or so as to

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rehash that joy of dubious good impact, which people of raised position and of predominant refinement in many cases get from a glad impersonation of the discourteous unpolished habits and talk of their inferiors. For the delight so inferred which can be followed to three energizing causes. The first is the instinctive nature, truth be told, of the things spoke to. The second is such an obvious instinctive nature of the portrayal, as raised and qualified by subtle implantation of the creator's own insight and ability, which imbuement does, surely, establish it an impersonation as recognized from a simple duplicate. The third cause might be found in the pursuer's cognizant inclination of his prevalence stirred by the complexity displayed to him; even with respect to a similar reason the rulers furthermore, incredible nobles of yesteryear held, here and there real comedians and imbeciles, however all the more as often as possible astute what's more, clever colleagues in that character. These, be that as it may, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. He picked low and rural life, "on the grounds that in that condition the basic interests of the heart locate a superior soil, in which they can accomplish the development, are less under restriction, and talk a plainer what's more, progressively insistent language; in light of the fact that in that state of life our basic emotions coincide in a condition of more prominent straightforwardness, and thusly might be all the more precisely thought about, and all the more coercively imparted; in light of the fact that the habits of provincial life sprout from those rudimentary emotions; and from the important character of provincial occupations are all the more effectively understood, and are increasingly strong; and ultimately, in light of the fact that in that condition the interests of men are joined with the excellent and changeless types of nature."

Presently it is evident to me, that is the most intriguing of the sonnets, in which the creator is pretty much emotional, as **THE BROTHERS**, **MICHAEL**, **RUTH**, **THE MAD MOTHER**, and others, the people presented are by no means are taken from low or rural life in the normal usual meaning of those words! What's more, it isn't less clear, that the suppositions and language, to the extent they can be considered to have been truly moved from the psyches and discussion of such people are owing to causes and conditions not really associated with "their occupations and residence." considerations,

emotions, language, and habits of the shepherd-ranchers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, to the extent they are really embraced in those sonnets, maybe represented from abuses, which will and do create similar outcomes in each condition of life, regardless of whether around the local area or nation. As the two head, I rank. That autonomy, which raises a man above subjugation, or day by day work for the benefit of others, yet not over the need of the industry and a cheap the straightforwardness of residential life; also, going with unambitious, however strong and religious, instruction, which has rendered few books well-known, however the Bible, and the Ritual or Hymnbook. To this last reason, without a doubt, which is so far unplanned, that it is the gift of specific nations and a specific age, not the result of specific spots or jobs, the writer owes the demonstration of the likelihood that his personages may truly feel, think, and converse with any bearable likeness to his portrayal. It is a great comment of Dr. Henry More's, that "a man of a restricted instruction, yet of good parts, by steady perusing of the Bible will normally frame an additionally winning and telling talk than those that are taken in: the intermixture of tongues and of fake expressions corrupting their style."

It is, additionally, to be viewed as that to the development of sound emotions, and a reflecting the personality, nullifications include hindrances not less considerable than complexity and horrible intermixture. I am persuaded that for the human soul to thrive in natural life, a specific vantage-ground is essential. It is few out of every odd man that is probably going to be improved by a nation life or by the nation works. Training, or unique reasonableness, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, structures, and episodes of nature are to demonstrate an adequate stimulant. What's more, where these are not adequate, the mind contracts, what's more, solidifies by the need of stimulants: and the man winds up narrowly minded, arousing, net, Furthermore, coldblooded. Let the administration of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or then again Bristol be contrasted and the common allotment of the poor rates in horticultural towns, where the ranchers are the regulators and watchmen of poor people. In the event that my claim experience have not been especially deplorable, as well as that of the

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numerous good nation priests with whom I have spoken regarding the matter, the outcome would cause more than wariness concerning the attractive impacts of low and provincial life in and for itself. Whatever might be finished up on the opposite side, from the more grounded neighborhood connections also, venturesome soul of the Swiss and different mountain dwellers applies to a specific method of peaceful life, under types of property that license and generate habits genuinely republican, not to natural life all in all, or to the nonappearance of Fake development. On the opposite, the mountain dwellers, whose habits have been so frequently praised, are as a rule preferable taught and more prominent perusers over men of equivalent position somewhere else. Be that as it may, where this isn't the situation, as, among the working-class of North Ridges, the antiquated mountains, with every one of their fear and every one of their wonders is pictures to the visually impaired, and music to the hard of hearing. I ought not to have entered such a great amount into detail upon this entry, yet here appears to be the point, to which every one of the lines of contrast merge as to their source and focus;— I mean, similarly as, and in whatever regard, my graceful doctrine differs from the principles proclaimed in this prelude. I receive with full confidence, the rule of Aristotle, that verse, as verse is basically perfect, that it maintains a strategic distance from and bars all mishap; that its evident distinctions of rank, character, or occupation must be agent of a class; and that the people of the verse must be dressed with conventional traits, with the normal traits of the class: not with, for example, one talented person may conceivably have, yet, for example, from his circumstance it is generally likely before-hand that he would have. In the event that my premises are right and my conclusions genuine, it pursues that there can be no idyllic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of a fanciful brilliant age. The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-sailor in the lyric of THE BROTHERS, what's more, that of the shepherd of Green-head Ghyll in the MICHAEL, have all the verisimilitude and agent quality, that the motivations behind verse can require. They are people of a known and tolerating class, what's more, their habits and opinions the characteristic result of conditions normal to The class. Take Michael, for example: On the other hand, in the

sonnets which are contributed to a lower key, as the HARRY GILL, and THE IDIOT BOY, the sentiments are those of human nature when all is said in done; despite the fact that the artist has prudently laid the scene in the nation, so as to place himself in the region of fascinating pictures, without the need for crediting a nostalgic impression of their excellence to the people of his show. In THE IDIOT BOY, in reality, the mother's character isn't so much the genuine and local result of a "circumstance where the basic interests of the heart locate a superior soil, where they can achieve their development and talk a plainer also, increasingly unequivocal language," as it is an the pantomime of nature Relinquished by judgment. Consequently the two after charges appear to me not entirely baseless: in any event, they are the main conceivable protests, which I have heard to that fine lyric. The one is that the creator has not, in the lyric itself, taken adequate consideration to block from the peruser's extravagant the nauseating pictures of common horrible stupidity, which yet it was in no way, shape or form his goal to speak to. He was even by the "burr, burr, burr," subcontracted by any first depiction of the kid's magnificence, aided we are reviewing them. The other is that the stupidity of the kid. is so equally adjusted by the imprudence of the mother, as to present to the general peruser Or maybe a ludicrous vaudeville on the visual impairment of anile dotage, then a diagnostic presentation of maternal friendship in its standard functions. In THE THORN, the writer himself recognizes in a note the need for an initial lyric, in which he ought to have depicted the character of the an individual from whom the expressions of the ballad should continue: a superstitious man tolerably creative, of moderate resources and profound sentiments, "a chief of a little exchanging vessel, for instance, who, being past the middle age of life, had resigned upon an annuity, or little free salary, to a few town or nation town of which he was not a local, or in which he had not Been familiar with life. Such men had nothing to do become gullible and garrulous from inactivity." But in a lyric, still more in a verse sonnet—and the Nurse in ROMEO AND JULIET alone keeps me from broadening the comment even to emotional verse, if undoubtedly even the Nurse can be regarded out and out a case in point—it is beyond the realm of imagination to expect to impersonate genuinely a dull and talkative discourser, without

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rehashing the impacts of bluntness and chattiness. Anyway, this might be, I dare affirm, that the parts—(and this structure the far a bigger segment of the entire)—which should or still better have continued from the writer's own creative mind, and have been spoken in his very own character, are those who have given, and which will keep on giving, all-inclusive charm; and that the sections only proper to the alleged storyteller, for example, the last the couplet of the third stanza; the seven last lines of the tenth ; and the five after stanzas, with the special case of the four excellent lines at the beginning of the the fourteenth is felt by numerous fair and unsophisticated hearts, as unexpected what're more, undesirable sinkings from the tallness to which the writer had recently lifted them, and to which he again re-raises both himself and his peruser.

On the off chance that at that point I am constrained to question the hypothesis, by which the selection of characters was to be coordinated, not just from the earlier, from grounds of reason, yet both from the barely any occurrences in which the writer himself need be assumed to have been represented by it, and from the similar mediocrity of those cases; still progressively should I delay in my consent to the sentence which right away. pursues the previous reference; and which I can neither concede as specific certainty, nor as a general rule. "The language, as well, of these men has been received (sanitized in fact from what gives off an impression of being its genuine imperfections, from all enduring what're more, reasonable causes of abhorrence or nauseate) in light of the fact that such men hourly speak with the best objects from which the best piece of language is initially determined; and since, from their position in the public eye and the similarity and restricted hover of their intercourse, being less under the activity of social vanity, they pass on their sentiments and ideas in basic and unelaborated articulations." To this I answer; that a provincial's language, cleansed from all provincialism and grossness, thus far remade as to be made predictable with the standards of punctuation—(which are fundamentally no other than the laws of all-inclusive rationale, connected to mental materials)—won't contrast from the language of any another man of sound judgment, anyway learned or refined he might be, aside from as far as the thoughts, which the

rural needs to pass on, are less and the sky is the limit from there Aimless. This will turn out to be still more clear, in the event that we include. The thought—(similarly significant however less self-evident)— that the provincial, from the increasingly flawed advancement of his resources, and from the lower condition of their development, points exclusively to pass on protected certainties, either those of his insufficient experience or his customary conviction; while the instructed man mostly tries to find and express those associations of things, or those relative the course of truth to certainty, from which some pretty much general law is deducible. For certainties are significant to an insightful man, predominantly. as they lead to the disclosure of the inhabiting law, which is the genuine being of things, the sole arrangement of their methods of presentation, and in the information of which comprises our respect and our capacity. As little would I be able to concur with the declaration, that from the objects with which the natural hourly conveys the best piece of language is framed? For first, if to speak with an item suggests such an association with it, as renders it fit for being discriminately considered, the particular learning of an uneducated natural would outfit a sparse jargon. A couple of things and methods of activity essential for his substantial accommodations would alone be individualized; while the remainder of nature would be communicated by a little a Number of confounded general terms. Furthermore, I deny that the words and mixes of words got from the articles, with which the natural is commonplace, regardless of whether with unmistakable or befuddled learning, can be fairly said to structure the best piece of language. It is more than likely that numerous classes of the beast creation have separating sounds, by which they can pass on to each other notification of such questions as concern their sustenance, sanctuary, or wellbeing. However, we falter to consider the total of such sounds a language, generally than allegorically. The best piece of human language, appropriately. supposed, is determined from reflection on the demonstrations of the mind itself. It is framed by an intentional assignment of fixed images to interior acts, to procedures and after-effects of creative mind, most of which have no spot in the awareness of uneducated man; however in cultivated society, by impersonation also, aloof recognition

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of what they get notification from their religious educators and other bosses, the most uneducated offer in the gather which they neither planted, nor harvested. In the event that the historical backdrop of the expressions in hourly money among our workers was followed, an individual not already mindful of the reality would be amazed at finding so huge a number, which three or four centuries the back was the elite property of the colleges and the schools; and, at the beginning of the Reorganization, had been moved from the school to the podium, and in this manner step by step goes into normal life. The extraordinary trouble, and frequently the inconceivability, of discovering words for the easiest good furthermore, scholarly procedures of the dialects of unrefined clans have demonstrated maybe the weightiest snag to the advancement of our generally ardent furthermore, dexterous preachers. However, these clans are encompassed by the equivalent. nature as our labourers are; yet in still progressively noteworthy structures; and they are, additionally, obliged to particularize a lot a greater amount of them. At the point when, in this way, Mr. Wordsworth includes, "likewise, such a language"— (which means, as in the past, the language of natural life refined from provincialism)— "emerging out of rehashed involvement and standard sentiments is a more changeless, and an undeniably more philosophical language, than that which is much of the time substituted for it by Artists, who feel that they are giving honor upon themselves and their specialty in extent as they enjoy subjective and eccentric propensities for articulation;" it might be replied, that the language, which he has in view, can be credited to rustics with no more prominent appropriate, than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange. Without a doubt, if what is impossible to miss to each was precluded in each; the outcome should requirements be the same. Further, the artist, who uses an outlandish lingual authority, or a style fitted to energize just the low also, the alterable joy of miracle by methods for baseless oddity substitutes a language of imprudence and vanity, not for that of the natural, however, for that of good sense also, common inclination. Here give me a chance to be allowed to remind the peruser that the positions, which I dispute, are contained in the sentences—" a choice of the genuine language of men;"— "the language of these men" (that

is, men in low and natural life) "has been embraced; I have proposed to myself to emulate, and, to the extent is conceivable, to receive the very language of men." "Between the language of exposition and that of metrical structure, there nor will be, nor can be, any basic distinction:" it is against these only that my the restriction is coordinated. I object, in the absolute first occasion, to a prevarication in the utilization of the word "genuine." Every man's language changes, concurring to the degree of his learning, the action of his resources, and the profundity or then again the speed of his Sentiments. Each man's language has, first, its singularities; furthermore, the regular property of the class to which he has a place; and thirdly, words and expressions of all-inclusive use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Religious administrator Taylor and Burke varies from the normal language of the scholarly. the class just by the prevalent number and curiosity of the musings and relations which they needed to pass on. The language of Algernon Sidney contrasts not at all from that, which each accomplished man of his word would wish to compose, and (with due remittances for the undeliberateness, and less associated train, of thinking normal and appropriate to the discussion, for example, he would wish to talk. Not one or the other one nor the other vary half as much from the general language of developed society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest arrangement varies from that of a normal worker. For "genuine" consequently, we should substitute standard or lingua communis. Also, this, we have demonstrated, is no more to be found in the diction of low and provincial life than in that of any different class. Preclude the idiosyncrasies of each, and the outcome obviously should be basic to all. Furthermore, without a doubt the oversights and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be moved to any types of the sonnet, but the show or another purported impersonation is at any rate as various and profound, as would be required in adjusting to a similar reason the common language of tradesmen and makers. Also, the language so it is exceptionally lauded by Mr. Wordsworth changes in each district, nay in each town, as indicated by the unintentional character of the priest, the presence or non-presence of schools; or even, maybe, as the excitement, publican, furthermore, hairdresser happens to be, or then again not to be, ardent

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government officials, and perusers of the a week after week paper-free public. Foremost to development the lingua communis of each nation, as Dante has very much-watched, exists wherever in parts, and nowhere in general. Not one or the other is the situation rendered at all increasingly reasonable by the expansion of the words, "in a condition of fervour." For the idea of a man's words, where he is emphatically influenced by satisfaction, despondency, or outrage, must fundamentally rely upon the number and nature of the general realities, originations and pictures, and of the words communicating them, with which his brain had been already put away. For the property of enthusiasm isn't to make; however, to set in expanded action. At least, whatever new associations of contemplations or pictures, or on the other hand—(which is similar, if not more than similarly, the suitable impact of solid fervour) — whatever speculations of truth or experience the warmth of energy may create; yet the terms of their movement must have pre-existed in his previous discussions, what's more, are just gathered and packed together by the abnormal incitement. It is without a doubt truly conceivable to embrace in a ballad the unmeaning reiterations, constant expressions, and other clear counters, which an empty or then again confounded comprehension mediates at short interims, so as to keep hold of his subject, which is as yet slipping from him, and to give him time for memory; or, in the unimportant guide of opening, as in the inadequate organizations of a nation organize a similar player pops in reverse.

8.4 CHAPTER 17

The best part of human language, properly so-called, is derived from the reflection on the acts of mind itself. It is created by a voluntary appropriation of the fixed symbols to the internal acts, to the processes as well as the results of imagination. The greater part of which have had no place in the consciousness of the uneducated man.

This starts the Coleridge's objection to the Wordsworth's use of the term "real language of men." As per Coleridge, such generalization can never

exist, for men are the individuals by nature. Furthermore, he is also attributing the acts of the imagination to the educated men, or in this case, those who have a poetic genius. What is more apparent is that the language of poetry which undoubtedly comes from the imagination. The way the poet perceives the world and, to use Wordsworth's term, translates it for everyone else is an act of the imagination.

Check your progress - 2

1. Why did Coleridge oppose use of the term “real language of men” as per Wordsworth?

8.5 LET US SUM UP

Samuel Coleridge was an English poet, literary critic, philosopher, and theologian who along with his friend William Wordsworth, was also a founder of the Romantic Movement throughout England and was also, a member of the Lake Poets.

Coleridge's whole aesthetic - his definition of poetry, his idea of the poet, and his poetical criticism - revolve around his theory of creative imagination. Thus, chapters XII and XIV of *Biographia Literaria* are very important.

In Chapter 13 of his *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge outlines the division of labour agreed upon between him and Wordsworth in *Lyrical Ballads*, published in 1798.

Coleridge also divides the Imagination into two parts: the primary and secondary Imagination. As the "living Power and the prime Agent," the

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primary Imagination is considered to be as attributed as a divine quality, namely the creation of the self, that is "I Am."

Fancy, on the contrary, had no other counters to play with, but also the fixities and definite. The Fancy is indeed no other than the mode of Memory which is emancipated from the order of time and space; when it is blended with, and also, modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we further get expressed by the word CHOICE.

The best part of human language, properly so-called, is derived from the reflection on the acts of mind itself. It is created by a voluntary appropriation of the fixed symbols to the internal acts, to the processes as well as the results of imagination.

8.6 KEYWORDS

- Prolific
- Devouring
- Ezekiel
- Devil
- Shmoopers

8.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Describe in detail the Proverbs of Hell.
2. Write a brief summary of The Marriage between Heaven and Hell.
3. How has The Marriage between Heaven and Hell influenced the works of other writers and poets?
4. What is the interpretation of The Marriage between Heaven and Hell by William Blake?

8.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

- Beer, John B. *Coleridge the Visionary* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1970). Nurmi, 558-562
- Wheeler, K.M. *Sources, Processes and Methods in Coleridge's Biographia Literaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980)

8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. As the "living Power and the prime Agent," the primary Imagination is considered to be as attributed as a divine quality, namely the creation of the self, that is "I Am." (answer for check your progress – 1 Q. 2)
2. Coleridge further also adds Fancy in his description of the Imagination. As per his philosophy, Fancy is much lower than the secondary Imagination, which is already from the earthly realm. Fancy is the source of many baser desires. It is also not a creative faculty but is considered to be as a repository for lust.. (answer for check your progress – 1 Q. 2)
3. As per Coleridge, such generalization can never exist, for men are the individuals by nature. Furthermore, he is also attributing the acts of the imagination to the educated men, or in this case, those who have a poetic genius. What is more apparent is that the language of poetry which undoubtedly comes from the imagination.(answer for check your progress – 2 Q. 3)

UNIT -9: M.H ABRAMS - HIS WRITINGS AND HIS CONTRIBUTION AS LITERARY CRITIC

STRUCTURE

9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.2 About M.H. Abrams

9.3 His writings

9.4 Classification of Literary Theory

9.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about M.H Abram and his works.
- The classification of Different Theories.
- What makes him famous in the 20th century

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Meyer Howard "Mike" Abrams was born on 23rd July 1912, have been cited as M. H. Abrams, was an American literary critic, known for the works on romanticism, in specific, his book 'The Mirror and the Lamp'. Under the Abrams' editorship, 'The Norton Anthology of English Literature' had become as the standard text for undergraduate survey courses across the U.S. and also became a major trendsetter in literary canon formation. His

theories are critically acclaimed and he has given a new view to the critical meanings of there

9.2 ABOUT M H ABRAMS

M.H.Abrams was the son of Eastern European Jewish immigrants in Long Branch, New Jersey. The son of a house painter and also, the first in his family to go to college, he had also entered in Harvard University as an undergraduate in 1930. He went into English because, he says, "there weren't jobs in any other profession.., so I thought I might as well enjoy starving, instead of starving while doing something I didn't enjoy". After earning his bachelor's degree in 1934, Abrams also won a Henry Fellowship to Magdalene College, Cambridge, where his tutor was I. A. Richards. He also returned to Harvard for the graduate school in 1935 and received a master's degree in 1937 and a Ph.D. in 1940.

During the World War II, he also served at the Psycho-Acoustics Laboratory at Harvard. He also describes that his work as solving the problem of the voice communications in a noisy military environment by establishing the military codes which are highly audible and also by inventing the selection tests for the personnel who had a superior ability to recognize the sound in a noisy background.

In 1945 Abrams also became a professor at Cornell University. The literary critics Gayatri Spivak, Harold Bloom, and E. D. Hirsch, and also, the novelists William H. Gass and Thomas Pynchon were amongst his students. He was also selected as a Fellow in 1963 of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. As of March 4, 2008, he was in the Class of 1916 as aProfessor of English Emeritus.

His wife of 71 years, Ruth had predeceased him in 2008. He turned 100 on July 2012. Abrams thereafter, died on April 21, 2015, in Ithaca, New York, at the age of 102.

Check your progress:

1. Write about the life of M.H Abrams in short.
2. Where did he work during World War II?

9.3 HIS WRITINGS

- The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition
- The Poetry of Pope: a selection
- Literature and Belief: English Institute essays, 1957.
- A Glossary of Literary Terms
- English Romantic Poets: modern essays in criticism
- The Norton Anthology of English Literature
- The Milk of Paradise: the effect of opium visions on the works of DeQuincey, Crabbe, Francis Thompson, and Coleridge
- Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature
- The Correspondent Breeze: essays on English Romanticism
- Doing Things with Texts: essays in criticism and critical theory
- The Fourth Dimension of a Poem and Other Essays

9.4 CLASSIFICATION OF LITERARY THEORY

Literary theory of Abrams holds can and be divided into 4 categories: mimetic theories, which focus on the relationship between text and universe

(by "universe" he means all things of the world apart from audience, text, and author); pragmatic theories, which are interested in the relationship between text and audience; expressive theories, which are not only concerned with the text-author relationship; and objective theories, the most recent classification, which focus on analysis of the text in isolation. This happened because nothing exists other than the universe, text, author, and audience, any form of theory must fit into one of these four categories, or be a combination of several.

As Abrams also stated above that nothing exists other than the universe, text, author, and audience, any form of theory must fit into one of these four categories. Let's see these four critical theories in details.

- **Mimetic theory**: The first category of the mimetic theories forms the oldest and is, according to Abrams, the "most primitive" of the four categories. According to this theory, the artist is an imitator of aspects of the observable universe. In *The Republic*, Plato divides his universe into three realms: the realm of ideas, the realm of particulars, and the realm of reflections of particulars (i.e., art and other "shadows"). The realm of reflections of particulars is the furthest removed from the realm of ideas (i.e., "ultimate truth"), and is, therefore, the lowest ranking of the three realms. Consequently, its practice, namely, mimetic art, is held in low regard. Plato's mentor Socrates seemed to agree with Plato's thesis, as he too ranked the third realm—mimetic art—at the bottom. In his famous analogy of the three beds, Socrates refers to the first bed, Bed 1, as the bed of ideas. Bed 2 is the bed I lie in, the carpenter's bed, which is the bed of the realm of particulars. Bed 3, the bed in the painting, is a representation of the ideal bed. Thus, being twice removed from the ideal bed, it is the most "untrue" of the three. Aristotle points out, however, that the value of Bed 3 (the painter's bed) is not dependent upon its relation to Bed 1 (the bed of the gods or ideal truth). Art, rather, is independent and should be assessed on its own terms. Aristotle thus frees the text from its relation to the universe to which

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Plato and Socrates bound it, while still acknowledging the text's imitative relation to the universe. Aristotle shows that it is the "manner of imitation" and not the relation to the truth which is important in art and that aesthetic evaluation should be based on the assessment of both the "manner of imitation" and the emotional effect produced in the audience.

- **Pragmatic theory:**

The second type of theories is pragmatic theories, which are concerned with the relation between text and audience. According to Abrams, these theories have constituted the dominant mode of analysis from Horace to the early 19th century, and much of its terminology is borrowed from ancient rhetoric.

Aristotle further argued in his *Ars Poetica* that the three functions of the poetry are to teach, to please, and to move. Cicero, the Church Fathers, and the Italian guides all developed a theory of poetry through this reinterpretation of Aristotle, and it was Sir Philip Sydney who in his *Apologie for Poetry* expanded Aristotle's theories into a specifically didactic theory of poetry. Sydney argues that poets differ from historians in that, unlike historians who deal only with what has been, poets also deal with what may be and that such moral utopianism is what makes poetry, specifically epic poetry, and superior to history.

The 18th-century critics, always itching to extract from specific works some a priori rule, started to prescribe guidelines that they hoped would assist future poets. Dryden dabbles in this sort of rulebook-criticism, explaining certain "universals" for "pleasing" in poetry. Other examples are to be found in the aesthetic "rulebooks" of Richard Hurd and in the writings of Charles Batteux. Samuel Johnson, however, was skeptical of such "rulebooks," and expressed mistrust of a priori laws in his work, "A Preface to Shakespeare," which proved to be a "monumental work of neoclassical criticism."

In it, he praises Shakespeare's talent for imitation; but, above all, he commends Shakespeare's ability to "instruct by pleasing."

Next, it was the psychological introspection of Hobbes and Locke, which paved the way for the third, artist-centered approach to the text.

- **Expressive theory:** By 1800, we begin to see "the displacement of mimetic and pragmatic by the expressive view of art," a phenomenon due in part to the writings of Longinus, Bacon, Wordsworth, and, later, the radical Romantics of the 1830s. With this new "expressive view" of art, the primary duty of the artist was no longer to serve as a mirror reflecting outer things, but instead to externalize the internal, and make one's "inner life" the primary subject of art. The external world, when it does happen to sneak into the work, is expressed only as heavily filtered noumena. It is around this time in the early 19th century that the "mirror," which had hitherto been the conventional symbol for the artist, becomes the "lamp."

The danger of such an inward turn is, of course, that it can lead to the cult of subjectivity and emotion, and that the criteria for art are degraded to the reductive: Is the text a sincere, genuine, and accurate reflection of the inner mind of the poet? Such fears are to be realized in later Romantic poetry, much of which abounds in solipsism, bathos, and excessive introspection. The most extreme tenets of Romanticism of this era are perhaps best exemplified in the following assertions made by John Stewart Mills in his Romantic manifestos, "What is Poetry?" and "The Two Kinds of Poetry." Mills upturns the old ranking as laid down by Aristotle, arguing that: the lyrical form usurps the dramatic; spontaneity is far more valuable than form or conceit; imitation of the external world is not important (rather, the external world is merely a tool used to express the internal state of mind of the poet); and finally, the presence of an audience is entirely unnecessary.

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To give an overview of the evolution of Western aesthetics up to this point, Abrams provides the following rough timeline. In the age of Plato and Aristotle, poets were mimetic poets, and their personal roles and intrusions were kept to a minimum. In the Hellenistic and Roman eras, poets were pragmatic, and they sought to satisfy the public, abide by the rules of decorum, and apply techniques borrowed from rhetoric. From 1800 to 1900, poets, specifically those of England and Germany, were triumphant and self-affirming figures whose task was to express to the world their inner genius. Finally, from the early 1900s through the present, the objective theories, such as those expounded by T.S. Eliot, the New Critics, and others, have been most prominent. (Abram's last point, however, seems debatable given the fact of the New Critics' decline in the second half of the 20th century.)

- **Objective theory:** Though extremely rare in pre-20th-century history, the fourth alternative that is to view the text in isolation has been the dominant mode for the criticism for at least half of the 20th century. Also, proponents of this theory have traced its origins to the central section of Aristotle's *Poetics*, where tragedy had been regarded as an object in itself, and also, where the work's internal elements (plot, thought, diction, melody, character, and spectacle, in order of importance) have been described as working together in the perfect unison to produce in the audience a "catharsis" of pity and fear. The other important point, the objective theorists, point out, is that these qualities are treated by Aristotle as inherent in the work itself and that the work is praised to the extent that these internal elements work together cohesively. Still, some of them might counter that Aristotle's *Poetics*, with its careful attention, had to be paid to the effect it was produced upon the audience, also in fact, more closely fits the criteria of the pragmatic theories than that of the objective theories.

As translations into Latin were scarce, Aristotle's influence disappeared for centuries until the Renaissance, when we see the re-

emergence of his ideas in new forms. Yet it is not until the 1780s in Germany that we see a significant objective theory brought forth. During this period from 1780-1820, and in large part as a consequence of Kant's writings, an "art-for-art's-sake" movement begins to emerge. Under this new theory, the poem came to be considered a "heteroecism" which functions independently and according to its own set of rules. But it is not until the first half of the 20th century— with its High Modernism, Chicago Neo-Aristotelians, and other schools— that this art-for-art's-sake movement would place the objective theories in a position of ascendancy over the other critical orientations.

Abrams clearly identifies himself as a critical theorist, not a philosopher, not a psychologist, not a scientist. From his perspective, the purposes, as well as the function of critical theory, are not to discover some "verifiable truth" but to "establish principles enabling us to justify, order, and clarify our interpretation and appraisal of the aesthetic.

Check your progress:

1. What are four theories written by M. H.Abrams.

2. What is the main idea of 'Objective Theory'.

3. Write the main idea of 'Expressive Theory.

4. Express in few sentences 'Mimetic theory'.

9.5 A Glossary of literary terms

This **glossary of literary terms** is a list of definitions of terms and concepts used in the discussion, classification, analysis, and criticism of all types of literature, such as poetry, novels, and picture books, as well as of grammar, syntax, and language techniques. For a more complete glossary of terms relating to poetry in particular. This Glossary is like a dictionary for the literature students helping all to understand the terminologies of ‘Poetry’ in literature.

Glossary of Common Literary Terms

- ◆ **Allegory:** an allegory is a narrative in which the characters often stand for abstract concepts. An allegory generally teaches a lesson by means of an interesting story.
- ◆ **Alliteration:** the repetition at close intervals of consonant sounds for a purpose. For example: wailing in the winter wind.
- ◆ **Allusion:** a reference to something in literature, history, mythology, religious texts, etc., considered common knowledge.
- ◆ **Ambiguity:** Double or even multiple meaning.
- ◆ **Analogy:** a point by point comparison between two dissimilar things for the purpose of clarifying the less familiar of the two things.
- ◆ **Antagonist:** the character or force that opposes the protagonist. (It can be a character, an animal, a force, or a weakness of the character.)
- ◆ **Apostrophe:** the device, usually in poetry, of calling out to an imaginary, dead, or absent person, or to a place, thing, or personified abstraction either to begin a poem or to make a dramatic break in thought somewhere within the poem.
- ◆ **Assonance:** the repetition at close intervals of vowel sounds for a purpose. For example: mad as a hatter.
- ◆ **Ballad:** a narrative poem that was originally meant to be sung. Ballads are generally about ordinary people who have unusual adventures, with a single

tragic incident as the central focus. They contain dialogue and repetition, and imply more than they actually tell.

- ◆ Cacophony: Harsh, clashing, or dissonant sounds, often produced by combinations of words that require a clipped, explosive delivery, or words that contain a number of plosive consonants such as b, d, g, k, p, and t; the opposite of EUPHONY.
- ◆ Catalog: a long list of anything; an inventory used to emphasize quantity or inclusiveness.
- ◆ Character: the vehicle (person, animal, creation) that moves the story forward. A character may be main or minor, depending on his or her role in the work of literature. While some characters are twodimensional, with one or two dominant traits, a fully developed character has a unique complex of traits. A) dynamic characters often change as the plot unfolds. B) static characters remain the same.
- ◆ Characterization: refers to the techniques employed by writers to develop characters. 1) The writer may use physical description. 2) Dialogue spoken by the character and by other characters reveals character traits. 3) A character's action may be a means of characterization. 4) The reactions of another character may also be revealing. 5) A character's thoughts and feelings are also a means of characterization.
- ◆ Climax: the point at which the conflict of the story begins to reach a turning point and begins to be resolved.
- ◆ Conceit: an elaborate figure of speech comparing two very dissimilar things.
- ◆ Conflict: the struggle between two opposing forces that is the basis of the plot. 1) internal conflict character struggling with him/her self, 2) external conflicts – character struggling with forces outside of him/her self. For example. Nature, god, society, another person, technology, etc. 1
- ◆ Connotation: the associations, images, or impressions carried by a word, as opposed to the word's literal meaning.

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- ◆ Consonance: the close repetition of identical consonant sounds before and after differing vowel sounds.
- ◆ Convention: In general, an accepted way of doing things.
- ◆ Denotation: the precise, literal meaning of a word, without emotional associations or overtones.
- ◆ Denouement: the final unraveling or outcome of the plot in drama or fiction during which the complications and conflicts of the plot are resolved.
- ◆ Diction: word choice
- ◆ Enjambment: the carrying of sense and grammatical structure in a poem beyond the end of one line, COUPLET, or STANZA and into the next.
- ◆ Epigram: any witty, pointed saying. Originally an epigram meant an inscription, or epitaph usually in verse, on a tomb. Later it came to mean a short poem that compressed meaning and expression in the manner of an inscription.
- ◆ Epigraph: a motto or quotation that appears at the beginning of a book, play, chapter, or poem. Occasionally, an epigraph shows the source for the title of a work. Because the epigraph usually relates to the theme of a piece of literature, it can give the reader insight into the work.
- ◆ Epitaph: the inscription on a tombstone or monument in memory of the person or people buried there. Epitaph also refers to a brief literary piece that sums up the life of a dead person.
- ◆ Euphony: A succession of sweetly melodious sounds; the opposite of CACOPHONY. The term is applied to smoothly flowing POETRY or PROSE.
- ◆ Exposition: background information at the beginning of the story, such as setting, characters and conflicts. In a short story the exposition appears in the opening paragraphs; in a novel the exposition is usually part of the first chapter.
- ◆ Fable: a brief tale told to illustrate a moral.
- ◆ Falling Action: events that lead to a resolution after the climax.
- ◆ Figurative Language: language employing figures of speech; language that cannot be taken literally or only literally.

- ◆ Flashback: a scene, or an incident that happened before the beginning of a story, or at an earlier point in the narrative.
- ◆ Foil: a character who provides a striking contrast to another character.
- ◆ Foreshadowing: a writer's use of hints or clues to indicate events that will occur later in the narrative.
- ◆ Hyperbole: an exaggeration for emphasis or humorous effect.
- ◆ Imagery: words and phrases that create vivid experiences or a picture for the reader. 2
- ◆ Irony: a contrast between appearance and actuality:
 - ◆ Verbal irony: a writer says one thing, but means something entirely different.
 - ◆ Situational irony: occurs when something happens that is entirely different from what is expected.
 - ◆ Dramatic irony: occurs when the reader knows information that the characters do not.
- ◆ Literal: A word for word interpretation for what is written or said.
- ◆ Metaphor: a figure of speech in which a comparison or analogy is made between two seemingly unlike things, as in the phrase "evening of life."
- ◆ Metonymy: a figure of speech that substitutes the name of a related object, person, or idea for the subject at hand.
- ◆ Mood: the feeling, or atmosphere, that a writer creates for the reader. Connotative words, sensory images, and figurative language contribute to the mood of a selection, as do the sound and rhythm of the language.
- ◆ Motif: A unifying element in an artistic work, especially any recurrent image, symbol, theme, character type, subject or narrative detail.
- ◆ Narrator: the person from whose point of view events are conveyed.
 - ◆ First person: the narrator is a character in the story, uses the pronoun "I." The first person narrator does not have to be the main character in the story.
 - ◆ Third person: is indicated by the pronouns he, she and they. The third person narrator is not a participant in the action and thus maintains a certain distance from the characters. A) In third person omniscient point of view, the narrator is all-knowing about the thoughts and feelings of the characters. B) The third person limited point of view deals with a writer presenting

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events as experienced by only one character. This type of narrator does not have full knowledge of situations, past or future events. C) In third person objective the story conveys only the external details of the characters—never their thoughts or inner motivations.

◆ Onomatopoeia. The formation or use of words. Such as: buzz, or cuckoo, whose meaning is suggested by the sound of the word itself. (boom, click, plop)

◆ Oxymoron: a figure of speech in which two contradictory words or phrases are combined in a single expression, giving the effect of a condensed paradox: “wise fool,” “cruel kindness.”

◆ Paradox: a statement or situation containing obvious contradictions, but is nevertheless true.

◆ Parallelism: the use of similar grammatical form gives items equal weight, as in Lincoln’s line “of the people, by the people, for the people.” Attention to parallelism generally makes both spoken and written expression more concise, clear and powerful. ◆ Parody: an imitation of a serious work of literature for the purpose of criticism or humorous effect or for flattering tribute.

◆ Personification: a figure of speech in which human qualities or characteristics are given to an animal, object, or concept.

◆ Plot: the plan of action or sequence of events of the story.

◆ Point of view: the vantage point, or stance from which a story is told, the eye and mind through which the action is perceived. (See also narrator.) 3 4

◆ Protagonist: the central character in a story; the one upon whom the actions center. The protagonist faces a problem and must undergo some conflict to solve it.

◆ Pun: A form of wit, not necessarily funny, involving a play on a word with two or more meanings.

◆ Resolution: the final unwinding, or resolving of the conflicts and complications in the plot.

◆ Rhyme scheme: the pattern of end rhyme in a poem.

- ◆ **Rising Action:** That part of the plot that leads through a series of events of increasing interest and power to the climax or turning point. The rising action begins with an inciting moment, an action or event that sets a conflict of opposing forces into motion.
- ◆ **Satire:** a literary technique in which foolish ideas or customs are ridiculed for the purpose of improving society.
- ◆ **Setting:** the time and place in which the action of a story occurs.
- ◆ **Simile:** a figure of speech in which two seemingly unlike things are compared. The comparison is made explicit by the use of a word or phrase such as: like, as, than, similar to, resembles, or seems— as in: He was strong as a bull.
- ◆ **Soliloquy:** A dramatic convention in which a character in a play, alone on stage, speaks his or her thoughts aloud. The audience is provided with information about the characters' motives, plans, and state of mind.
- ◆ **Stream of Consciousness:** the technique of presenting the flow of thoughts, responses, and sensations of one or more characters is called stream of consciousness.
- ◆ **Style:** the way in which a piece of literature is written. Style refers not to what is said, but how it is said.
- ◆ **Suspense:** the tension or excitement felt by the reader as he or she becomes involved in the story.
- ◆ **Syllogism:** a logical argument based on deductive reasoning.
- ◆ **Symbol:** a person, object, idea or action that stands for something else. It is usually something literal that stands for something figurative. For example: Roads can stand for choices.
- ◆ **Synecdoche:** a figure of speech in which a part of something stands for the whole thing.
- ◆ **Syntax:** sentence structure.
- ◆ **Theme:** the central idea in a literary work. The theme is usually an idea about life or about people. Writers sometimes state the story's theme outright, but more often they simply tell the story and let the reader discover

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the theme. Therefore, theme is an idea revealed by the events of the story; plot is simply what happens in the story; it is not the theme.

- ◆ Tone: the writer's or speaker's attitude toward a subject.
- ◆ Understatement: a type of verbal IRONY in which something is purposely represented as being far less important than it actually is; also called meiosis.

Check your progress:

1. What are the different words mentioned above used for poetry?

2. What is the significance of this 'Glossary'?

9.6 M. H. ABRAMS. THE FOURTH DIMENSION OF A POEM AND OTHER ESSAYS.

M. H Abrams remains a central figure in the history of modern literary criticism whose contributions to the field are of permanent importance. This collection of nine essays on different but related literary topics is a compilation of articles, lectures and addresses that were composed during a forty-year period. The volume's title comes from the name of first essay, which begins an eloquently written, well-researched book that explores some of the major issues in literary studies today. My short overview is a summary of five essays that are discussed in roughly chronological order, rather than in the order of their appearance in the published text.

Both "The Language and Methods of Humanism" (1975) and "What Is a Humanistic Criticism?" (1995) take issue with highly specialized approaches

to literature and approaches that jettison skepticism in favor of a vatic and oracular critical voice. The true voice of the critic, Abrams argues, is dispassionate but also able to relate to the world in which the author generally [End Page 401] lives and writes. At the same time, humanistic criticism is contrasted in the latter paper with poststructuralist criticism, which seems to ignore practical, everyday contexts in order to focus on meanings that are perpetually destabilized where truth seems to have lost its historical ties. Particularly in the latter essay, Abrams offers an informed and readable account of why deconstruction is often opposed to historical criticism. His discussion of Derrida is cogent and perspicacious, just as his inclusion of Wittgenstein in this on-going debate is useful and perceptive. It might be objected, nonetheless, that deconstructive criticism might be combined with historical approaches to literature to the degree that ambiguity in interpretation invariably operates in the sphere of indeterminacy itself.

In contrast, “Kant and the Theology of Art” (1981) explores intellectual history to account for the belief in beauty as a value for its own sake. In this essay, Abrams cites a vast range of authorities in the history of ancient and modern aesthetics to argue that theology performed an essential role in the evolution of criticism. Kant’s aesthetic model is said to occupy a pivotal position in this history insofar as it includes a belief in disinterestedness and also in the transcendent power of beauty as such. Modern criticism tends either to emphasize aesthetic disinterestedness or to uphold the value of art according to a tradition that is basically theological in origin. For instance, both New Criticism and various formalist approaches to the visual arts adopt a disinterested relationship to their subject matter. Abrams contends that the tendency to view art as a transcendent reality basically derives from different versions of Platonism as theologically impacted. And yet, Clive Bell provides a relatively secularized version of this tendency whenever the visual art object is identified with a quality of perfection that goes beyond everyday life experience.

“The Fourth Dimension of a Poem” (2010) and “Keats’ Poems: *The Material Dimension*” (1998) are justly placed at the beginning of this

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collection and contribute significantly to addressing an important linguistic, aesthetic and literary problem. At a time when poetry's sensuous qualities often go unheard, Abrams demonstrates that poetry is basically an aural medium and that aural quality is an aesthetic quality that casts light on crucial poems in the modern canon from Wordsworth to Ammons. He also argues strongly in the second essay that the lyrical tradition greatly benefitted from the syntactic, semiotic and intertextual resources that Keats deeply explores in his final poems. Rather than limit this aesthetic quality to materiality, strictly speaking, Abrams argues that the so-called fourth dimension can be discovered in Romantic and post-Romantic poems, as well as in modernist and contemporary works that exploit the material effects of sound.

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Check your progress:

1. Write the main idea of the 'Four Dimension' poem.

2. What is the theme of the above poems.

9.7 NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM: TRADITION AND REVOLUTION IN ROMANTIC LITERATURE

KIRKUS REVIEW

Romanticism began with Rousseau and ended with American Transcendentalism, it came crashing through the salons of neo-classicism with the cry of revolutionary idealism and sank into respectability with the Boston Brahmins. Professor Abrams fixes the dates at 1789 to 1835; others, more liberally, suggest 1756 to 1848. No matter: the subject is wide, complex, and variegated, the most important cultural movement of recent history, and Professor Abrams has risen to the challenge with his colors flying. It is a remarkable work, the best since Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony*, though humane and optimistic where Praz's classic was dark and Freudian-oriented: "Both read the Bible day and night/ But thou readst black where I read white." The essential point is that Romanticism was an "endeavor to salvage traditional experience and values by accommodating them to premises tenable to a later age." Thus Abrams concentrates on the transformation of traditional religious concepts, especially Christian mysticism, into a new poetics celebrating Love and Nature, as well as showing how Biblical eschatology influenced Hegelian philosophy and the social and political crises which followed in its wake. "In effect these poets cry out for a transformation of history from the shape of eternal recurrence to the shape of apocalyptic prophecy, in which history reaches its highest point and then stops." This has contemporary overtones and Abrams is not averse to drawing pungent parallels between the past and the present day. He is much too generous with Wordsworth, who was not "one of the great masters of complex poetic structure," but his enthusiasm is attractive, his erudition sublime. A superior study.

9.8 M. H. ABRAMS, NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM, REVIEW BY W. W. NORTON, 1971

M. H. Abrams's 1971 book *Natural Supernaturalism* takes its title from the tendency in English and German literature and philosophy of the Romantic period to naturalize Christian modes of thinking. This book centers on Wordsworth because "(as his English contemporaries acknowledged, with whatever qualifications) [he] was the great and exemplary poet of the age" (13). Abrams considers Wordsworth the prime example, and Shelley, Blake, Coleridge, Novalis, Holderlin, Goethe, Schiller, Hegel and Fichte supporting examples, of a kind of thinking, stemming from a Christian tradition, that results in a distinctive relationship to revolution, and in an apparent deletion of God from the classic triangle of God, Mind, and Nature.

Abrams offers a Christian approach to history underlying the Romantic approach to history. Distinctive features of Biblical history are that: 1) it is finite, where events occur only once and in a single temporal span; 2) it has a plot, with a beginning, middle, and end, 3) the plot of Biblical history has a hidden author, 4) change in Biblical history is characterized by abrupt events and turns, and 5) Biblical history is symmetrical, beginning with a paradise and ending with a paradise. The gradual secularization of Western culture has not been the product of the loss of a Christian understanding of history, but of the translation of that understanding in ways which are not obviously Christian. Wordsworth's narrator in the *Prelude* and *The Recluse*, for example, follows a path of growth paralleling the Biblical history of mankind. Before the fall, the narrator is in a state of youthful innocence, united with the natural world. The narrator experiences tremendous growing pains as he is cast out of blissful innocence and develops self-consciousness and a capacity to think analytically. No longer united to nature, the narrator feels isolated and pained. The pains are fortunate and justified, ultimately, because the maturity behind self-consciousness can provide the narrator a

means to win back his integrity, reunite with nature, and experience a paradise exceeding the original paradise.

Two features of Biblical history that resonate for Wordsworth, as they have resonated for his poetic and religious predecessors, are the apocalypse and the prodigal return. If the French Revolution and its subsequent failure did not bring about an earthly apocalypse, it brought about a spiritual apocalypse for Wordsworth's narrator in *The Prelude*, wherein his very identity is changed from man of action to prophetic poet. The supposition that the world would change as a result of the revolution evolved into the conviction that Wordsworth would change himself. The theme of the Prodigal Son underpinned Wordsworth's eventual return, a changed man in a changed world, to his home at Grasmere.

In spite of the Romantic deletion of God from the triangle of God, mind and nature, the Romantic relation to Christianity can still be characterized by more commonalities than differences.

“It is a historical commonplace that the course of Western thought since the Renaissance has been one of progressive secularization, but it is easy to mistake the way in which that process took place... The process—outside the exact sciences at any rate—has not been the deletion and replacement of religious ideas, but rather the assimilation and reinterpretation of religious ideas... Much of what distinguishes writers I call ‘Romantic’ derives from the fact that they undertook, whatever their religious creed or lack of creed, to save traditional concepts, schemes, and values which had been based on the relation of the Creator to his creature and creation, but to reformulate them within the prevailing two-term system of subject and object, ego and non-ego, the human mind or consciousness and its transaction with nature. Despite their displacement from a supernatural to a natural frame of reference, however, the ancient problems, terminology, and ways of thinking about human nature and history survived... (13)

“The Prospectus is an instance of the visionary style in which, according to a view until recently current, Wordsworth is held to indulge his penchant for resounding sublimities is hiding logical evasions behind vague phrasing and

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lax syntax. But let us assume that in a crucial passage so long meditated, so often written, and so emphatically stated, Wordsworth knew what he was saying... (20)

“A. C. Bradley long ago laid down an essential rule for understanding Wordsworth: ‘The road into Wordsworth’s mind must be through his strangeness and his paradoxes, and not round them’ (“Wordsworth”, Oxford Lectures on Poetry, London, reprinted 1950, p. 101)

Not only was Wordsworth the great and exemplary poet of his age, his ambition, at least for *The Recluse*, was “perhaps the most remarkable, and certainly one of the most grandiose, ever undertaken by a major writer” (19). Wordsworth’s equivalent of hell, a hell within the self, was deeper and darker than the Christian hell, and his conception of heaven was of one capable of producing a more profound joy and satisfaction than the Christian heaven. In justifying human suffering (according to an idea of personal growth), Wordsworth outdoes Milton’s justification of the ways of God to men, because the scope of Wordsworth’s cosmos exceeds that of Milton’s. On Wordsworth’s relation to the canon, he “remarked to Henry Crabb Robinson that ‘when he resolved to be a poet, [he] feared competition only with Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton.’ Of these poets, however, Chaucer and Shakespeare exemplify what Wordsworth called ‘the human and dramatic Imagination’; while it is Spenser, and above all Milton, who exemplify the ‘enthusiastic and meditative Imagination’ against which Wordsworth persistently measured his own enterprise” (22).

“William Blake, who respected Wordsworth enough to read him closely and take his claims seriously, told Henry Crabb Robinson, in whimsical exasperation, that this passage [...when we look/Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man—/My haunt, and the main region of my song.] ‘caused him a bowel complain which nearly killed him.’ ‘Does Mr. Wordsworth think his mind can surpass Jehovah?’ To which the answer is, ‘No, he did not,’ any more than he thought himself a greater poet than Milton. What Wordsworth

claims is that the mind of man is a terra incognita which surpasses in its terrors and sublimities, hence in the challenge it poses to its poetic explorer, the traditional subject matter of Milton's Christian epic. Blake took offense at Wordsworth's literary enterprise because it paralleled his own, but deviated on its crucial issue of naturalism. For in his *Milton* (1804-1810) Blake too had undertaken, as the epigraph said, 'To Justify the Ways of God to Men' by his own imaginative revision of the doctrines of *Paradise Lost*. (25)

"the more we attend to the claims of some of Wordsworth's major contemporaries, in Germany as well as in England, the less idiosyncratic do Wordsworth's pronouncements seem... radically to recast, in terms appropriate to the historical and intellectual circumstances of their own age, the Christian pattern of the fall, the redemption, and the emergence of a new earth which will constitute a restored paradise. ... In his *Dejection: An Ode* Coleridge wrote that the inner condition of total vitality he called 'Joy', ... wedding Nature to us, gives in dower/A new Earth and Heaven... Blake prefaced the concluding chapter of *Jerusalem* with the voice of the Bard arousing Albion from his 'sleep of death', so that he may unite with his separate female emanation... The poem closes with the dawn of the 'Eternal Day' of a universal resurrection in a restored paradise, ... At the conclusion of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* the regeneration of man in a renovated world has for its central symbol the union of Prometheus and Asia,... In a climactic passage of Holderlin's *Hyperion* the young poet-hero, inspired, cries out to 'holy Nature'... A rejuvenated people will make thee young again, too, and thou wilt be as its bride... Ther will be only one beauty, and man and Nature will unite in one all-embracing divinity. ... In one of his *Fragments* Novalis also stated flatly that all 'the higher philosophy is concerned with the marriage of Nature and Mind'. The philosopher Schelling looks forward to just such a union between intellect and nature, as well as to the poet-seer adequate to sing this great consummation in an epic poem (29-31)

The Bible's account of history "has assimilated elements from various

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enviroming cultures, but in its totality, and in accordance with the way that the earthly events are successively recalled and interpreted in the later books, it embodies a pattern of history which is profoundly distinctive...as against the Greco-Roman views” (34-35).

“The imagery and themes of the Apocalypse so permeated the depths of Milton’s imagination that he derived as many literary images from the Book of Revelation as from the three Synoptic Gospels together. A similar claim can be make for Spenser” (38).

“...the coming of the new heaven and new earth is signalized by the marriage between Christ and the heavenly city, his bride... The longing of mankind for apocalypse is appropriately expressed as an urgent invitation to the wedding... while those who are destined for the new heaven and earth are represented as guests who have been invited to the wedding feast... roots in the ancient Old Testament concept of marriage as a form of covenant, and the consequent representation of the Lord’s particular covenant with Israel by the metaphor of a marriage between the people and the Lord (Proverbs 2:17; Malachi 2:4-13). By easy metaphoric inference, the violation of this marriage covenant by Israel was figured as her sexual infidelity, adultery, or whoredom with idols and strange gods, of which the condign penalty for the bride is to be divorced from God and sent into exile; although with promise of a future reunion between the repentant and purified nation (or by metonymy, the purified land, or the renovated city of Jerusalem)... (42-43)

“Book I of The Faerie Queene. The prototype for the plot and symbolic elements of this work is the Book of Revelation. The Red Cross Knight escapes the wiles of the false bride, Duessa, the Whore of Babylon; is granted a vision of the New Jerusalem, ‘Whore is for thee ordained a blessed end’; assaults and, after a long struggle, slays the ‘old Dragon’, thereby lifting the long siege of the king and queen (Adam and Eve) and reopening access to the land called Eden; and at the end is ceremoniously betrothed to the true bride, Una, radiant with ‘heavenlie beautie’. In one of its dimensions this ‘continued Allegory, or darke conceit’ signifies the historical Advent of

Christ, whose coming victory over the dragon and marriage to the bride will herald the restoration of Eden to all elected mankind; in another dimension, however, it signifies the quest, temptation, struggle, triumph, and redemptive marriage to the one true faith which is acted out within the spirit of each believing Christian. (49)

The most detailed development of spiritual eschatology, however, is to be found not in the allegorists, but among the writers whom we know as Christian mystics... often in sensuous imagery suggested by the Song of Songs... death and renovation of the old self by means of a 'spiritual marriage' of the soul as sponsa Dei to Christ as Bridegroom, in a unio passionalis which sometimes is set forth in metaphors of physical lovemaking, or even of violent sexual assault (Donne, Batter my heart, three-personed God)... The violence of a wrathful but loving God, the conflict with the forces of evil embodies in one adversary, the destruction of the created world in an immense conflagratio (a detail from 2 Peter 3:10) in order to make it new (Revelation 21:5 Behold I make all things new), and ultimate marriage with the Bridegroom, represented as a rape of the longingly reluctant soul—all these elements, which had long since become commonplaces of Christian devotion. (50-51)

Paul, at Damascus, and Augustine, outside Milan, both "internalized the theater of events from the outer earth and heaven to the spirit...in which there enacts itself, metaphorically, the entire eschatological drama of the destruction of the old creation, the union with Christ, and the emergence of a new creation...here and now, in this life" (47).

"Francis Bacon's views on progress are especially relevant, because he was held in extraordinary esteem by Wordsworth, and by Coleridge and Shelley as well...Like the early Christian apologists, Bacon saw the cyclical theory as the specific enemy of his mission: "By far the greatest obstacle to the progress of science" is the despair engendered by the supposition... He undertakes, on the contrary, 'to give hope'; in this task 'the beginning is from God,' as is its destined end... Bacon's scheme is that of the readily possible (or as he suggests in the passage I have quoted, the providentially

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necessary and inevitable) advance in man's mastery over nature... The fall, Bacon says, had a double aspect, one moral and the other cognitive, for man 'fell at the same time from his state of innocency and from his dominion over creation. Both of these losses however can even in this life be in some part repaired: the former by religion and faith, the latter by arts and science.' Man's cognitive fall was occasioned by the loss of 'that pure and uncorrupted natural knowledge whereby Adam gave names to the creatures according to their propriety,' and this loss represented a divorce and separation of mind from nature, or (in terms of the mental powers involved) of the empirical sense from reason. (59-60)

"Oliver Cromwell himself expressed his persuasion that 'I am one of those whose heart of God hath drawne out to waite for some extraordinary dispensations, according to those promises that hee hath held forth of thinges to bee accomplished in the later time, and I canott butt thinke that God is beginning of them' (64)

"The concept and conduct of local rebellion against an oppressive individual or group or nation have doubtless occurred at all times and in all places. But peculiarly Western, and relatively recent, are the doctrine and trial of a total revolution, which is conceived to possess many, or all of these attributes: (1) the revolution will, by an inescapable and cleansing explosion of violence and destruction, reconstitute the existing political, social, and moral order absolutely, ... (2) bring about abruptly... the shift from the present era of profound evil, suffering, and disorder to an era of peace, justice, and optimal conditions for general happiness; (3) it will be led by a militant elite... (4) it will by irresistible contagion spread everywhere... (5) its benefits will endure for a very long time, perhaps forever" (62).

"If we nonetheless remain unaware of the full extent to which characteristic concepts and patterns of Romantic philosophy and literature are displaced and reconstituted theology... that is because we still live in what is essentially, although in derivative rather than direct manifestations, a Biblical culture, and readily mistake our heredity ways of organizing experience for the conditions of reality and the universal forms of thought" (65-66).

The Prelude is a fully developed poetic equivalent of... the Bildungsroman (Wordsworth called The Prelude a poem on 'the growth of my own mind') and the Künstlerroman (Wordsworth also spoke of it as 'a poem on my own poetical education'" (74).

The narrator experiences these growing pains in both in beautiful and fearful settings. Fearful settings, quite interestingly, such as "Mountains and other wild, waste places were the product not of divine benevolence but of human depravity, for they had been wrecked by the wrath of a just God at the original fall of man, in Eden, or alternatively (in some commentators, additionally) they had been effected by the devastating flood with which He punished the all-but-universal corruption of mankind" (99), according to Thomas Burnet's *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, a book whose author was often compared to Milton and who was esteemed by Coleridge.

"John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* is an austere secular account of his intellectual development... introduction to Wordsworth's *collective Poems* of 1815. These were 'a medicine,' says Mill, 'for my state of mind,'... Especially important was the *Intimations Ode*... 'I found the he too had had similar experience to mind; that he also had felt that the first freshness of youthful enjoyment of life was not lasting; but that he had sought for compensation, and found it, in the way in which he was now teaching me to find it. The result was that I gradually, but completely, emerged from my habitual depression, and was never again subject to it'. (136)

'when William James fell into a spiritual crisis, it was 'the immortal Wordsworth's *Excursion*' which helped rescue him. (138)

"The apologue of the Prodigal Son was a special favorite among Neoplatonic theologians... The basic categories of characteristic post-Kantian philosophy, and of the thinking of many philosophical-minded poets, can be viewed as highly elaborated and sophisticated variations upon the Neoplatonic paradism of a primal unity and goodness, an emanation into multiplicity which is ipso facto a lapse into evil and suffering, and a return to unity and goodness" (166-169).

Abrams provides a useful classification of Romantic-era philosophy as (1)

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“self-moving and self-sustaining... a dynamic process which is driven by an internal source of motion to its own completion”; (2) “in no way random, nor [permissive of] any essential options”; (3) “primarily a metaphysics of integration, of which the key principle is that of the ‘reconciliation,’ or synthesis, of whatever is divided”; (4) epistemological and cognitive “to an extraordinary degree... even though [it] undertook to account for the totality of the universe”; and (5) linked with literature as “at no other place and time” (172-192).

“After Kant and Schiller it became a standard procedure for the major German philosophers to show that the secular history of mankind is congruent with the Biblical story of the loss and future recovery of paradise; to interpret that story as a mythical representation of man’s departure from the happiness of ignorance and self-unity into multiple divisions and conflicts attendant upon the emergence of self-consciousness, free decision, and the analytic intellect; to equate the fall, so interpreted, with the beginning of speculative philosophy itself” (217).

“Holderlin... Late in 1795 he drafted a Preface to his novel-in-progress *Hyperion*, which summarized the intention of the work as it then stood... which turns out to have been a necessary departure on the way back to a higher reunion... ‘We all pass through an eccentric path, and there is no other way possible from childhood to consummation’ ... But as in Schiller, so in Holderlin, absolute unity between the self and severed nature is an infinite goal... it can be ever more closely approached but never entirely achieved... (237-238)

“While Romantic poets agree in the use of ‘love’ to signify the spectrum of attraction and relationship, they differ markedly in their choice of the specific type of relationship which serves as the paradigm for all other types. In Coleridge, for example, friendship tends to be the paradigmatic form, and he represents sexual love as an especially intense kind of confraternity. Wordsworth’s favored model is maternal love, and the development of relationship in *The Prelude* is from the babe in his mother’s arms to the all-

inclusive ‘love more intellectual’, which is higher than any love that ‘is human merely.’ In Holderlin all human relations, including sexual love, are largely subsumed under the agape, or primitive Christian love feast, as the elemental form. ‘A vision that haunts all Holderlin’s poetry,’ Ronald Peacock has said, is that of ‘the community, a people having common bonds and a common speech, gathered together to celebrate in a poetic festival its gods’... What makes the fusion of all affinities into love especially conspicuous in Shelley (as, among German poets, in Novalis) is that his persistent paradigm is sexual love, with the result that in his poetry all types of human and extrahuman attraction—all forces that hold the physical, mental, moral, and social universe together—are typically represented... erotic attraction and sexual union. (297-298)

“For Karl Marx the course of history has been an inevitable movement from a prehistoric stage of primitive communism through progressive stages, determined by altering modes of production, of the division and conflict of classes. This movement will terminate (after the penultimate stage of capitalism shall have played out its fate in total revolution) in return to communism, but in a mature form which will preserve the productive values achieved during the intervening stages of development” (313).

“In Catholic France the Revolution, conceived mainly in terms of the rationalism of the Enlightenment, had been grounded on a supposedly empirical science of history and of man... Most English radicals, on the other hand, were Protestant Nonconformists, and for them the portent of the Revolution reactivated the millennialism of their left-wing Puritan ancestors in the English civil war” (330-331).

Check your progress:

1. Write the theme of the book ‘Natural Supernaturalism’.

2. Why is the title of the book so?

9.9 LETS SUM UP

M.H.Abrams is considered a person who had brought a change in the process of writing and also a great literary critic of the era. To make the understanding of the poem easy he had written the ‘Glossary of Literary Terms’. His writings were helpful for all. He had created revolution by criticizing the Romantic era. His writings have set a different level of understanding for the readers.

9.10 KEY WORDS:

Neoplatonic - a strand of Platonic philosophy that emerged in the third century AD against the background of Hellenistic philosophy and religion.

Emanation- spread out

Theology– the study of God and religious beliefs.

Profound- showing or understanding great knowledge.

Pungent- toxic in nature or strong taste or smell.

Creed- different by birth and caste.

9.11 ANSWERS FOR REVIEW:

1. M.H Abrams was the person who created a different era in the 20th Century through his writings .Explain how his writings created a magic.
2. The books of M.H.Abrams have brought new thought process for the writers.
3. A great help in understanding was present through the writings of the M.H.Abrams.

UNIT – 10: M. H. ABRAMS – “THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPRESSIVE THEORY OF POETRY AND ART” (FROM THE MIRROR AND THE LAMP)

STRUCTURE

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Root Metaphors and the Problem of Limits

10.3 An Alternative Metaphor: Imagination as Lens

10.4 Paradigms and Limits: The Normative Imagination

10.5 Let us Sum up

10.6 Keywords

10.7 Questions for Review

10.8 Suggested Readings

10.9 Answers to Check your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- learn about William Blake and his life until death,
- also, learn about his array of works,
- and also, about his contribution towards romanticism.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

“The Mirror and the Lamp,” was written by an American scholar named M.H.Abrams. It also has a remarkable place in the history of English literature. It has also won Christian Gauss prize. It first got published in 1953 by the Oxford University Press in New York and was first issued as an Oxford University Press in 1975. This book has been treated as a significant impression in several other fields like history of ideas, English literary history, comparative literature, criticism, and aesthetics. The book is made into 335 pages and is followed by 55 pages of notes. This book also had a distant origin in a study of the writing of Dr. Johnson and Coleridge, under the stimulating direction of I.A. Richards at Cambridge University and developed at Harvard University with guidance and encouragement by Abrams’s mentor and friend Theodore Spencer. The title of the book has contained two important metaphors ‘The Mirror’ and ‘The Lamp’ and both have justified relevant meaning to its title. His main argument pertaining to its title is that the literature from Plato to the eighteenth century was just mirror, it was just reflector of external objects while nineteenth-century literature was a lamp and it was radiant projector which makes a contribution to the objects it perceives. The subtitle of the book “The Romantic Theory and The Critical Tradition” is even more accurately explained by Abrams. The text has contained 11 chapters, and each one has very well defined by the author. In the preface of the book, Abrams talked about the primary concern of the book. He says

“The primary concern of this book is with the English theory of poetry, and to a lesser extent of the major arts, during the first four decades of the nineteenth century. It stresses the common orientation which justifies us in identifying a specifically ‘romantic’ criticism; but not at the cost of overlooking the much important diversity among the writers who concerned themselves with the nature of poetry or art, its psychological genesis, its constitution and kinds, its major criteria, and its relation to the other important human concern. The book deals, for the most part, with the original and enduring critics of the time, rather than with the run of the mill

reviewers who often had a more immediate, though shorter-lived influence on the general reading public. In order to emphasize the pivotal position of the age in general history of criticism, I have treated English romantic theory in a broad intellectual context, and I have tried to keep constantly in view the background of eighteenth-century aesthetics from which romantic aesthetics was in a part development. I had described some of the relations of English critical theory to foreign thought, especially to the richly suggestive German speculations of the age, beginning with Herder and Kant, when Germany replaced England and France as the chief exporter of ideas to the Western world. Finally, I have undertaken, although briefly, to trace to the origins of prominent romantic ideas, not only in aesthetic discuss but also in philosophy, ethics, theology and in the theories and discoveries of the natural sciences.” (Preface 3-4).

M H Abrams shows that till the Romantics, the literature was typically comprehended as a mirror which reflects the real world in some kind of mimesis; whereas for all the Romantics, the writing was considered more like a lamp: the light of the writer's inner soul was spilled out to illuminate this world. In 1998, Modern Library ranked *The Mirror and the Lamp* as one of the 100 greatest English-language nonfiction books in the 20th century.

Check your progress - 1

1. Who wrote “The Mirror and the Lamp”?

10.2 ROOT METAPHORS AND THE PROBLEM OF LIMITS

In his classic study of Romanticism, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, M.H. Abrams identifies the root metaphors according to which imagination has

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been conceived - the mirror and lamp of his title - the one essentially mimetic and the other productive or creative. 'If Plato was the main source of the philosophical archetype of the reflector,' Abrams writes, 'Plotinus was the chief begetter of the archetype of the projector.' The shift of such emphasis from the former to the latter he takes to be the decisive event in the Romantic theory of knowledge as it emerged around the beginning of the nineteenth century. This intellectual gestalt switch is epitomized in a passage from William Butler Yeats that Abrams places as an epigraph on his title page:

It must go further still: that soul must become its own betrayer, its own deliverer, the one activity, the mirror turn lamp.

Richard Kearney applies these same two metaphors more broadly to represent the difference between premodern and modern theories of imagination. 'The *mimetic* paradigm of imagining is replaced by the *productive* paradigm,' he summarizes; '. . . the imagination ceases to function as a mirror reflecting some external reality and becomes a lamp which projects its own internally generated light onto things.' The problem of the limits of imagination varies according to the ways in which the faculty of imagination is conceived. The different root metaphors or paradigms by which the imagination has itself been imagined imply different situations with regard to limits. Each model of imagination entails a different problematic, suggests a different threat. The mimetic paradigm of the mirror, in which representations of the 'original' are more or less imperfectly reflected, dominated the most influential accounts of imagination from the time of Plato until the dawn of modernity. In this model, the underlying duality of original and copy sets the terms according to which imagination is understood and evaluated. This mimetic or reproductive model of imagination carries with it the threat of *distortion*. How do we know that the reproduction is really true to the original? Plato's denigration of the image as a mere copy of a copy epitomizes the problem of limits as it appears in mimetic views of imagination: here the imagination is itself the limiting factor, the source of distortion or deficiency. For Plato, the limitation is inherent in imagination's sensuous nature; like the prisoners in Socrates'

allegory of the cave, imagination is chained to the bodily senses. Unable to gaze directly on the source of light, it sees only indistinct shadows cast on the wall. The solution implied by this scenario is to break the chains of enslavement to the senses and ascend with the aid of reason to the pure intelligible sunlight of truth. On Plato's view, in Kearney's paraphrase, 'reason alone has access to the divine Ideas. And imagination, for its part, is condemned to a pseudo-world of imitations.' Rather than inviting or requiring limits, the mimetic imagination itself sets limits to our access to truth. Here the worry is not that imagination will overreach itself but rather that it may inhibit or interfere with the rational apprehension of truth.

As a result of the 'onto-theological' alliance of Athens and Jerusalem - the fusion of ancient Greek ontology with the biblical world view - the fundamental the attitude of suspicion towards the imagination continued to characterize the medieval period in Europe. Although the attempt of the iconoclasts to root out all images from Christian life and worship was officially repudiated by the church, the prevailing attitude towards imagination and the images it produces nevertheless remained, according to Kearney, 'essentially one of prudence or distrust.' Doctrines are governing the 'veneration' of images and proscribing their 'worship' served as necessary theological limits of imagination. As with so many issues in modern Western thought, a key turning point in the career of imagination occurred in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, who is primarily responsible for placing the question of imagination at the center of modern philosophical attention. Kant, who derived his concept of imagination from the psychology of Johann Nicolaus Tetens, assigns it a crucial role in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, calling it 'a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of which we are scarcely ever conscious.' Because the imagination takes the sensible manifold and synthesizes it into a unified experience, Kant claims that 'imagination is a necessary ingredient of perception itself.'

As a transcendental function, imagination takes what is given to the mind by the senses and processes it so as to make it available to the understanding: as

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such it is the link between body and mind. ‘The two extremes,’ he writes, ‘namely sensibility and understanding must stand in necessary connection with each other through the mediation of this transcendental function of imagination. . . .’ Kant breaks with the long tradition going back to Plato, according to which the imagination is mimetic, in the unoriginal business of re-presenting something ‘original.’ Accordingly, for Kant the imagination takes on an active, as opposed to a merely passive, role; it is no longer simply dependent on a prior original but assumes an ‘originating’ role of its own. Right here is the genesis of the modern problem of limits: for if imagination does more than simply reproduce for us what is already there, what are the warrants for its ‘productions’? How can we trust an admittedly ‘blind’ and largely unconscious faculty that derives its material neither from transcendent reality nor from the senses?

Only when the image of imagination as the lamp came to supplant the metaphor of the mirror did the problem of imagination’s limits truly come into its own. Kant’s discovery of the ‘productive’ imagination can be seen as the watershed. ‘In so far as imagination is spontaneity,’ he writes in the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, ‘I sometimes also entitle it the *productive* imagination, to distinguish it from the reproductive imagination, whose synthesis is entirely subject to empirical laws, the laws, namely, of association, and which therefore contributes nothing to the explanation of the possibility of *a priori* knowledge.’ The mimetic imagination that had hitherto dominated Western thought is now drummed out of philosophy altogether: ‘The reproductive synthesis,’ Kant rules, ‘falls within the domain, not of transcendental philosophy, but of psychology.’ The productive imagination, on the other hand, assumes an increasingly central role and lays claim to greater and greater creativity, not only in Kant’s own late writings but even more in the German Idealists and the Romantics who succeeded him. The need for limits is rooted in the suspicion of imagination embedded in both the principal sources of the concept, the Hebrew scriptures, and the Greek philosophical tradition. Kearney shows how the biblical figure of Adam and the Greek figure of

Prometheus both come to represent, each in its own way, the ambiguity of human imagination and therefore to reinforce the deep suspicion of imagination that pervades the Western intellectual tradition. ‘In both instances,’ Kearney writes, ‘imagination is characterized by an act of rebellion against the divine order of things. . . .’ Like a mirror, the imagination always runs the risk of producing mere copies, or even distortions, of the original. As a lamp, the creativity of the imagination threatens blasphemy or hubris. The resulting dilemma is how appropriate limits can be set on imagination so as to avoid the excesses of distortion and blasphemy. The challenge, put in positive terms, is to find norms by which the imagination might be guided into the pathways of truth. Can there be a normative imagination?

10.3 AN ALTERNATIVE METAPHOR: IMAGINATION AS LENS

According to Kearney's telling of the story of imagination, the answer is negative something he sees epitomized in the current plight of the imagination.

He proposes a third metaphor as the postmodern successor to both mirror and lamp: the labyrinth of the mirrors, in which the imagination creates only an endless reproductions, copies of copies where there is no longer an original, a kind of self-deconstruction of the imagination that erases the very difference between the imaginary and the real, leading to the collapse of the concept of imagination itself. Kearney's pessimistic conclusion, however, results from his flawed attempt to account for imagination entirely in terms of the metaphors of mirror and lamp.

It misses a central feature of imagination, one that has become increasingly evident in the modern period. Rather than imagining imagination as a mirror or as a lamp, that it be conceived as a focusing *lens*. This image combines features of both the 'reproductive' aspect of the mirror (imagination as mimetic) and the 'productive' aspect of the lamp (imagination as creative). At the same time, it preserves the representational intent of the language in

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such a way that it avoids the postmodern critique of the quest for a non-linguistic 'original' lurking 'behind' our signifiers. Rather, imagination is what allows us to see something as meaningful that is, filled with meaning, having significance rather than sheer randomness. It turns the marks on a page, or sounds in the ear, into meaning-filled language. The imagination allows us to make sense of what we perceive (and this is true from the level of perceptual imagination right on up to poetic and religious imagination).

This function of imagination is encapsulated in the metaphor of the lens, which is something we see *with* rather than something we look. Imagination conceived in this way is the analogical or metaphorical faculty, our ability to see one thing *as* another. In his more robust account of imagination in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (later toned down for the second edition), Kant, as we have seen, announced that 'imagination is a necessary ingredient of perception itself.' The reason it is necessary is that sheer sensuous input (what Kant calls the 'manifold of intuition') is not yet knowledge because it has no focus, no organization, no shape. As such, it is meaningless, without significance, until the imagination performs its service, which is 'to bring the manifold of intuition into the form of an image.' The nub of the issue is that the image actually does to accomplish this task. My contention is that Kant never succeeds in bridging the qualitative gap between sensibility and understanding - that is, between matter and mind - and that this failure leads eventually to the postmodern labyrinth of mirrors in which all imagination is imitation because no image is anchored in an 'original.' Broadly viewed, of course, Kant's problem is the great problem of modern philosophers beginning with Descartes: if 'thinking substance' is simply other than 'extended substance' (the names for the duality change with the times but the problem remains), how can they ever be brought into communication, let alone 'synthesis' (Kant's preferred term)? The search for the point of synthesis between mind and body is reminiscent of the scientific quest for the 'atom,' the ultimate indivisible unit at the base of physical reality: each time scientists think they have discovered the basic particle, further research uncovers more minuscule complexities within it yet. (The

paradox is manifest in the very notion of 'splitting the atom,' for the word *atom* means - or originally meant - that which cannot be cut or divided.) Kant is engaged in an analogous quest, focusing his transcendental microscope ever more keenly on the point at which sense and understanding touch. And his word for this point is 'imagination.' The specific way in which the imagination brings together to sense and understanding is by introducing *schemata*. Kant defines the schema of a concept as the 'representation of a universal procedure of imagination in providing an image for a concept.' A schema is not an image but rather, in the words of Frederick Copleston, 'a rule or procedure for the production of images which schematize or delimit.' The image belongs to sensibility, but the schema to the understanding and 'the imagination is able to mediate between the concepts of the understanding and the manifold of intuition.' But here Kant appears to be simply multiplying terminology in a futile quest to 'synthesize' what can't, in the nature of the case, be combined. For now, the duality reappears at a new, more minuscule level: *how* does the mental 'schema' manage to produce the sensible 'image'?

Kant is quite explicit that imagination is not passive at this point but active; that is why he calls it the *productive* imagination. But his use of this term introduces a confusion by suggesting that imagination, even in its role in sense perception, *produces* something beyond what it intuits in sense data. If we attend closely to Kant's account of how imagination functions at this critical point, however, it would be very accurate to describe it as a focusing or filtering, rather than a productive, activity. In the case of perception as described by Kant, imagination is not 'a lamp which projects its own internally generated light onto things' but rather a lens that focuses the light it receives from the senses, projecting it as a nexus of coherent images. The true lamp-function of imagination, as Abrams rightly emphasizes, is epitomized in Romanticism, where imagination is employed not to *perceive* the actual world but rather to *produce* virtual worlds of its own.

It is this creative use of imagination that should rightly be called productive. The perceptive and creative uses of imagination constitute different

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applications of the imaginative lens - applications that run in opposite directions. They are related in the same way that Clifford Geertz distinguishes the two functions of cultural models, which he calls 'an "of" sense and a "for" sense.' In the first case, a theory or symbol system' models. . . Relationships in such a way - that is, by expressing their structure in synoptic form - as to render them apprehensible; it is a model *of* "reality." In the second, the model is employed for 'the manipulation of the no symbolic systems in terms of the relationships expressed in the symbolic. . . .

Here, the theory is a model under whose guidance. . . Relationships are organized: It is a model *for* "reality." Geertz's example is a dam: a model *of* the dam (e.g., hydraulic theory or a flow chart) enables us to understand its workings; whereas a model *for* the building of a dam, such as a set of blueprints or a scale model, can be used for purposes of design and construction. These opposite (though compatible) uses of models are epitomized in the lens, which I am proposing as the root metaphor for the paradigmatic imagination. One use of a lens (e.g., in prescription glasses) is to focus our visual data in such a way that our eyes may perceive it correctly: this use corresponds to Geertz's model. But a lens may also be used (e.g., in a slide projector) in order to project an image outwards - the model-for function. Note that in the second case, the projected image, like the blueprint for the dam, can actually be used to construct something (e.g., a painting on a wall) according to the pattern projected from the model. These two activities employ the lens in the opposite directions: in the first case, the lens collects in the light from the outside, focusing it internally for apprehension; in the second, the lens projects light outwards, replicating it for potential use. This model clarifies basic confusion about the relationship between the 'reproductive' and 'productive' imagination in Kant. Expressed in his terminology, the two functions appear to be in conflict, for if the goal is to reproduce the perceived reality correctly, any 'productive' activity on the part of the imagination threatens to change or distort what is intuited. But the problem vanishes if we conceive the activity of imagination in terms of filter or focus: the intuited data is not supplemented or mixed with

something foreign but rather organized in such a way as to make its structure apparent. Perception, then, employs the imagination in a genuinely reproductive way, allowing the mind access to reality by means of received sensor data. On the other hand, the imagination can also be employed creatively, in a truly productive fashion, to conjure images of the unreal, for example, in fantasy, fiction, projections of future possibilities - or for purposes of deception. But these two uses of imagination, though complementary, are incompatible: we cannot both apprehend the real world and invent new worlds in the same imaginative act.

In its paradigmatic role, the imagination is like a radio receiver, which 'intuits.' Radio signals and processes them, focusing and organizing them into a meaningful pattern. In performing this function, it does not add any new content, yet neither is it a mere passive recipient. A lens may, in fact, actually filter some data out in the process of selecting what has meaning and discarding mere 'noise.' This filtering function is essential to the work of imagination, and it is the very opposite of distortion. Electronic audio components, in fact, frequently have the ability to remove distortion by filtering out some of the data. The fear that imagination may distort reality assumes that the data come to us 'pure' and undistorted, but that is obviously not the case, as these examples make clear. It nevertheless remains a problem that we may not be in a position to know whether or not a given 'meaningful' product of imagination is 'true to reality' or not. But the problem will not be resolved by yielding to the naive assumption that we can have some unmediated check on the reliability of our experience. The fear that imagination may distort the data must not tempt us into thinking we can short-circuit the imagination, make an end-run around it, do without its mediation by some *immediate* access to reality. This temptation is what Derrida calls the quest for a 'transcendental signified': it represents a kind of hermeneutical failure of nerve in which we deceive ourselves into thinking that interpretation is optional, that we can go ahead and examine things directly, without mediation. Critics like Kearney believe that this postmodern polemic against the quest for a transcendental signified leads inevitably to the destruction of imagination itself by erasing the distinction

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between imaginary and real. 'Right across the spectrum of structuralist, post-structuralist and deconstructionist thinking,' he writes, 'one notes a common concern to dismantle the very notion of imagination.' Thus in Kearney's account, both the mirror and the lamp give way to the labyrinth of mirrors in which images reflect images ad infinitum with no 'original' so that the very notions of illusion and reality lose their meaning.

I am proposing an alternative to Kearney's third metaphor, one that preserves elements of the mimetic and creative models, acknowledging both the reproductive and the productive functions of imagination and showing their interrelationship.

At the same time, this metaphor acknowledges the 'undecidability' of imagination and therefore, the inevitability of interpretation, but without the pessimistic consequences of a chartless relativism. Rather than the demise of imagination, this option suggests the ongoing centrality of imagination in all the activities of the human spirit, including the arts, the sciences, and religion.

Instead of imagining imagination according to the classical image of the *mirror* or the modern image of the *lamp*, let us think of imagination as a *lens* that gathers up and focuses the data we intuit into coherent patterns. Like the mirror, the lens performs a mimetic task, reproducing in an organized gestalt whatever aspect of reality we are apprehending. But like the Romantics' lamp, the lens also performs a 'creative' task, forming the raw material of intuition into meaningful shapes and sounds that we can recognize. The view of imagination that takes the focusing lens as its root metaphor is what I have called the *paradigmatic* imagination, because it names the human ability to apprehend meaningful patterns (Greek *paradigmata*) - indeed, to recognize the constitutive pattern that makes a thing what it is and not something else. Seen in this way, the imagination is paradigmatic also in the sense of being exemplary; it is the ability to see one thing *as* another, to recognize in a familiar or accessible image the heuristic model that illuminates another, more complex or recalcitrant aspect of the world. Thus the paradigmatic imagination is the metaphorical or analogical faculty, the ability to grasp something unfamiliar

by recognizing similarity, by seeing that it is *like* something else that we already know.

Check your progress – 2

2. What does Kearney's story of imagination say?

10.4 Paradigms and Limits: The Normative Imagination

As in the cases of the mirror and the lamp, conceiving the imagination under the figure of the focusing lens has implications for the problem of limits. A reflective view of vision (as a mirror) gives rise to the threat of distortion so that the question of limits becomes the problem of accurate imitation or reproduction. When imagination is taken to be creative (as a lamp), the need for limits arises because of the threat of excess, the danger that imagination will lose its foothold in reality and take flight in illusion and fantasy. In the former case, the problem actually concerns the divergence between original and copy; in the latter, it is a matter of distinguishing the imaginary from the real. In a paradigmatic theory of imagination (as a lens) the question of limits appears in yet another guise, one which is ambiguous in a way that involves both the problems of the other two cases. On the one hand, the question arises, Why this particular lens? How do we know that the paradigm by which we imagine something is the right one? Here the worry, as with the reflective imagination, is distortion. But even if we grant that a particular paradigm is appropriate, how can we know the limits of its application?

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This worry, as in the case of the creative imagination, involves distinguishing the real from the imaginary, fact from fiction, reality from illusion. Before looking specifically at religious imagination, let us examine cases from the arts on the one hand, and from the sciences on the other. The paradigmatic imagination appears in poetry most characteristically as a metaphor. Paul Ricoeur captures what he calls the ‘enigma of metaphorical discourse’ in this concise summary:

‘it “invents” in both senses of the word: what it creates, it discovers; and what it finds, it invents.’ It does so in the first place by means of the ‘eclipse of ordinary reference.’ One of the ways that a reader recognizes a metaphor is by the impossibility of taking it literally. The metaphor gets experienced as a ‘semantic impertinence’ that makes it impossible to read the statement as a case of literal descriptive reference and thereby introduces a second, metaphorical reference by analogy. By means of the metaphor, the poet invites us to see something as something else, to view it through a particular metaphorical lens. Ricoeur also stresses the role of ‘redescription’ in metaphorical discourse by means of the ‘creation of heuristic fiction.’ Drawing on Max Black’s theory of models, he claims that by using a metaphor the poet is ‘describing a less known domain . . . in the light of relationships within a fictitious but better-known domain.’ In this way, fiction is drafted into the service of truth-telling, which sounds paradoxical in terms of the ordinary ‘literal’ distinction between fact and fiction. It should be noted that although in literature, it is frequently the case that the ‘better-known domain’ is fictitious, this need not be the case, and often is not. What is philosophically interesting here is that metaphorical discourse can ‘tell the truth,’ whether it employs fiction or non - fiction as the means. (The inverse is also the case: one can lie not only with fiction but also with facts.) The same is true in science too, so that it is not possible to align ‘fiction’ with the arts and ‘fact’ with the sciences.

Using Black’s theory of models, Ricoeur emphasizes that metaphor (whether employing fact or fiction) allows one to ‘operate on an object that on the one hand is better known and in this sense, it is more familiar, and on the other

hand, is full of implications and in this sense, rich at the level of hypotheses.' It is significant that in exploring the role of paradigmatic imagination in the arts we find ourselves saying things that are equally true of the natural sciences. For what they have in common is the characteristically imaginative practice of 'seeing as.' Though one may speak more commonly of metaphor in poetry and models and paradigms in the sciences, the logic of the two is identical. The philosopher who first brought this aspect of science into prominence was Thomas S. Kuhn, whose work in the history of science provoked him to new insights in the philosophy of science. His description of the ongoing scientific enterprise focuses on the concept of paradigms, and one of their most exciting features has to do with the ambiguity of limits. The everyday work of scientists _ what Kuhn refers to as 'normal or paradigm-based research' _ is characterized by 'drastically restricted vision.' The shared paradigm 'forces scientists to investigate some part of nature in a detail and depth that would otherwise be unimaginable.' In this sense, it would be correct to say that the role of the scientific imagination is to set limits by focusing attention on 'that class of facts that the paradigm has shown to be particularly revealing of the nature of things.'²¹ Functioning as a model of reality, the paradigm enables scientific progress by focusing attention and energy in the direction implied by the likeness embodied in the standard. But as scientists follow the course prescribed by the standard, they also employ it as a model for further research and experimentation; and from this angle, it becomes possible to see why the imagination is also rightly called unlimited. As Ricoeur says of the metaphor, it is 'full of implications' and therefore (note the scientific diction) 'rich at the level of hypotheses.' So rich, in fact, is the successful poetic metaphor or scientific paradigm, that one cannot say _ indeed, cannot know in advance _ how far, or precisely in what direction, the analogical implications may lead one. It is thus quite accurate to say both that imagination sets limits by its choice of paradigm and that imagination knows no bounds, because of the open-ended nature of the analogy embodied in the metaphor or model. Finally, I would like to apply these conclusions about the limits of imagination to the specifically religious. Like the arts and the

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sciences, religions employ creativity in the paradigmatic sense, as a lens through which to view reality. The logic of religious imagination is similar to that of the poetic and scientific imagination; what distinguishes them are the different objects to which each enterprise (art, science, or religion) applies paradigmatic imagination. The task of defining religion is notoriously difficult and contentious, but most scholars of religion are willing to grant the use of multiple definitions for different kinds of analysis. I want to suggest one such heuristic definition from the perspective of the theory of imagination, convinced that it could brighten certain aspects of religion in order both to distinguish religious from other human activities and to distinguish one religion from others. Stated in simplest terms, my thesis is that a religion offers a way of seeing the world as a whole, which means that it is a way of living in the world, a last frame of reference for grasping the meaning of life and living in accordance with that vision. In a phrase of John Wisdom's, religion tells us 'what the world is like' not just in this way or that, not a particular aspect or part of the world, but the world as such. At the heart of a religious tradition is a paradigm a complex pattern of interwoven metaphors, models, scenarios, exemplary figures, etc. _ employed by the community and its members as a template for orientation in human life. The religious paradigm, described in Geertz's terminology, serves as both model-of and model-for, providing the religious community with a world view (a model of reality) and a similar ethos (what it feels like to live in that world and how one should behave accordingly). The issue of the limits of imagination also arises within the religious traditions themselves as a theological question. In closing, I would like to explore briefly how the preceding analysis of the philosophical issues can be applied to the problem of the limits of imagination in Christian theology. Because of the 'positivity' of religious paradigms (their unique particularity and unsubstitutable character), theological discussions are tradition specific by their very nature. The Christian example to be explored nevertheless has implications, *mutatis mutandis*, for other religious traditions as well. All three major Western religions have faced the same basic problem: how to imagine the invisible God. Polemics against idolatry and the making of

images is deeply rooted in the Hebrew scriptures, most centrally and succinctly expressed in the Decalog's prohibition against graven images, and the closely related prescriptions of worshiping other gods and of magical or 'vain' invocations of the name of the God of Israel. Similarly, the religion of Islam originated in the Prophet's struggle against the worship of the ancient cults on the Arabian peninsula. The issues are more involved in Christian tradition because of the New Testament identification of Jesus as God incarnate, the perfect 'image of the invisible God.' For Christians (here in sharpest contrast with Muslims)

The issues of worship and images remain distinct, even though related since iconic representations of Christ (and by extension other figures) can be grounded in biblical revelation; and far from being examples of worship, they are among its most effective antidotes. The first reason for wanting to set theological limits to imagination concerns the invisibility of God.

Although the question of divine darkness has been central throughout the long history of debates about idolatry, iconoclasm, and related topics, it is not itself the most important question but is finally only a symptom of a more basic theological principle.

As the context of the prohibition of images in the Decalog indicates, the real issue concerns not the metaphysical question of a divine attribute of invisibility but rather the religious question of accessibility and control over divine power. The God of Israel _ as indicated by the very content of his name - is not to be manipulated. Just as the ability to invoke one's deity by name gives the worshiper access to supernatural power, so does the localized physical representation of the deity in wood or stone. Just one example of this theological question in the history of the church: the rejection by the Protestant Reformers of the sacrificial understanding of the mass along with the supporting philosophical theory of the transmutation of the Eucharistic elements. The theological nub of the issue is the power that this localization of divine activity puts into the hands of the priestly celebrant (and thereby the institutional church that he serves). So while it is accurate to say that the God of the Old Testament is rightly understood to be invisible, it is essential

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to see that invisibility is not a metaphysical quality but is instead an implication of divine freedom. A second way in which the limits of imagination impinge on Christian theology is Christological and has to do with the grounds for the use of images in Christian worship and doctrine. The general rejection of images in earliest Christianity followed Jewish teaching and practice and identified the worship of images with pagan religion.²⁴ With the increasing need of the ordinary people for tangible models and exemplars, along with the rise of the cult of saints, the Church gradually became more hospitable to the use of icons, though opposition continued to be healthy. The whole issue came to a head in the eighth-century Byzantine Empire, when the emperor, under the influence of the dominant iconoclastic party, proscribed the use of images in worship. Although the iconodules (the pro-image party) achieved formal victory at the Second Council of Nicaea, strife between the two parties continued into the following century. The theological foundations for what came to be recognized in both east and west as the orthodox position on images was laid primarily by John of Damascus and Theodore the Studite. The iconoclasts argued that a graphic representation of Christ must either depict his divine nature, which is impossible and blasphemous, or his human nature alone, which amounts to the heresy of Nestorianism (separating the person of Christ into 'two sons'). John of Damascus countered that the making of images of Christ was legitimated by the incarnation, which transformed material reality and made it suitable for divine purposes so that the honour given to the image is transferred to the original. Indeed, their relationship is not physical but rather a 'hypostatic union.' John lays down the crucial theological distinction governing the limits of imagination: between the worship of God and the veneration of icons. Religion is the violation of this limit by offering to images the worship that belongs to the one God alone. Despite this generally accepted theology of images, the issues have remained live ones in the Christian tradition and have periodically erupted into controversy most recently concerning matters raised by feminist theological critique.

The theology of imagination extends the issues raised originally by the use of visible images to other methods of vision, which are not restricted, of course, to concrete physical objects. The question of limits requires what I would call a theology of the normative imagination, which for Christians is governed by the paradigm of Jesus Christ, embodied in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and interpreted in various, often conflicting, ways throughout the history of the church. The theological task is to articulate the grammar of the normative paradigm of the faith, to propose the rules according to which interpretations of shared paradigm may be evaluated and conflicts among them adjudicated. The complement to this internal theological task is to engage those other (religious and secular) paradigm communities with which we live in an ongoing dialogue of mutual interpretation. This task, while surely requiring all the resources of academic endeavour, is not confined to the academy. Like John Forbes Nash in *A Beautiful Mind*, all of us are engaged in an ongoing struggle against those schizophrenic temptations to distort or exceed the imaginative limits within which human life is possible and fruitful.

10.5 LET US SUM UP

The first chapter of the book 'Orientation of Critical Theories' talks about aestheticism and critical theories. It explains that 25 hundred year history of the western theory of art deals with aesthetic of external nature, while 18th-century criticism deals with pure art. The field of aesthetic presents an especially difficult problem to the historian. Abrams goes on to say that what has gone by the name of the philosophy of art seemed to Santayana "sheer verbiage." He mentions here critic D.H.Prall who himself wrote a book on the aesthetic subject and came to an end of conclusion by saying that traditional aesthetics is only a pseudo-science or pseudo-philosophy. In the field of criticism, there is more than a score of isolated and violently discrepant utterances about art, from Aristotle to the present time. So with

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mentioning I.A. Richards's "Principles of Literary Criticism," he says we still need to face up to the full consequences of the realization that criticism is not a physical nor even a psychological science. By setting out from and terminating in an appeal to the facts, only ethical aesthetics theory is indeed empirical in the method. Its aim, however, is not to establish a correlation between events which will enable us to predict, the future by reference to the past, but to establish principles allowing us to justify, order and clarify our interpretation and appraisal of the aesthetic facts themselves. An excellent critical theory nevertheless has its kind of validity. It means it should have scope, precision, and coherence of the insights that it yields into the properties of single works of the art. Abrams says we usually tend to think of the work of the art in terms of the artist, who is acting through his powers of imagination and willfully gets into being his creations. But this artist-centered interpretation of the text is a more recent development, first seen in the early nineteenth century. From Plato until late 18th century the artist was considered to have thought to play a back-seat role in the creation of art, he was also regarded as no more than "a mirror," reflecting nature either as it exists or as it is perfected or enhanced through the mirror. This artist-as-mirror conception remained dominant until the advent of the Romantic era when the artist began to make his transformation from "mirror" to "lamp"—a lamp that actively participates in the object it illuminates. There are four kinds of literary theory Abrams has divided

- Mimetic theories- which focus on the relationship between text and universe
- Pragmatic theories- which are interested in the relationship between text and audience
- expressive theories-which are concerned with the text-author relationship
- Objective theories- the most recent classification, which focuses on the analysis of the book in isolation.

The second and third chapters about the relation of arts and mirror. In order to illuminate the nature of one or another technique, the mirror is required.

The fourth chapter is about the development of the Expressive theory of poetry in Romantic and German Literature.

The fifth and sixth chapter shows varieties of Romantic theory in Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Hazlitt, John Keble, and others.

The seventh chapter talks about the psychology of literary invention in imagination in context to Coleridge's Mechanical Fancy and Organic Imagination

The eight-chapter goes with related to the previous one, but here Abrams talked about theories of Unconscious Genius and Organic Growth in context to the eighteenth-century of English literature and criticism.

In the ninth chapter, Abrams dragged us to an age of Milton, Shakespeare, and Homer. Here he talked about Subjectivity and Objectivity in English theory and related these two things with Romantic Polysemism.

Poetry is conceived to be an imitation of nature, and we may expect cardinal requirement that poetry is 'True' that it accord in some sense to the environment it reflects. Beauty in poetry is the truth, and the taste is an organ for perceiving reality. In this chapter, Abrams says fact may indeed be always one and always the same. A charm of myth, truth, and metaphor in Romantic poetry and criticism has been discussed in this Unit.

Traditional scheme underlying many eighteenth-century discussions of the relation of poetry to other discourses is summarized in this chapter how science has influenced the literature of the eighteenth century. Here we see Positivism vs. Poetry, Poetic truth, and Sincerity.

10.6 KEYWORDS

- Aesthetics
- Paradigm
- Metaphorical

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- Criticism
- Incarnation

10.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- Write a summary of “The Mirror and the Lamp” by M.H. Abrams.
- Explain the Paradigms and Limits: The Normative Imagination.

10.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

- Abrams, M.H. *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*. London: Oxford University Press, 1953. Print
- Bargholz, Harry. Review of “The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition”. *The Modern Language Journal*. Vol. 38.7: November 1954. P. 380. Print
- Ulmer, William. *The Christian Wordsworth 1798-1800*. *The Journal of English & Germanic Philology*. Vol. 95.3: July 1996. P. 336- 358. Print.
- New York: Oxford University Press, 1953
- Essays concerning Human understanding, 1, 121, (II,i,2)

10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- “The Mirror and the Lamp” was written by M H Abrams. (answer to check your progress 1- Q1)
- According to Kearney's telling of the story of imagination, the answer is negative something he sees epitomized in the current plight of the imagination. (answer to check your progress 2 - Q2)

UNIT – 11: LIFE AND WORKS OF WILLIAM BLAKE AND HIS CONTRIBUTION AS A ROMANTIC

STRUCTURE

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 About Life of William Blake

11.3 List of William Blake's Work

11.4 William Blake's Contribution as a Romantic

11.5 Let us Sum up

11.6 Keywords

11.7 Questions for Review

11.8 Suggested Readings

11.9 Answers to Check your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- learn about William Blake and his life until death,
- also, learn about his array of works,
- and also, about his contribution towards romanticism.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Born on 28th November 1757, William Blake was an English poet, printmaker, and painter. He was not that known while he was alive. However, now he is considered as a seminal figure in the history of

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the poetry as well as the visual arts of the Romantic Age. He called his prophetic works which were said by the 20th-century critic the Northrop Frye to form the "what is in proportion to its merits the least read body of poetry in the English language." The visual artistry of Blake also led the 21st-century critic Jonathan Jones to proclaim him "far and away from the greatest artist Britain has ever produced." In 2002, Blake was placed on number 38 in the BBC's poll of the 100 Greatest Britons. While he was which staying in London in his entire life, except for the three years which were spent in Felpham, he made a diverse and symbolically rich œuvre, which held the imagination as of "the body of God" or "human existence itself."

Though Blake was treated as a mad by the contemporaries for his idiosyncratic views, he is still held in high regards by the later critics for his expressiveness and creativity, and the philosophical and mystical undercurrents within his work. His paintings and poetry were characterized as a part of the Romantic Movement and as "Pre-Romantic." [8] A committed Christian who was hostile to the Church of England, Blake was further influenced by the ideals as well as the ambitions of the French and American Revolutions. [9] Although he, later on, rejected many of these political beliefs, he maintained an amicable relationship with the political activist Thomas Paine; he also got influenced by many thinkers like Emanuel Swedenborg. In spite of such known influences, the singularity of Blake's work made him difficult to classify. The 19th-century scholar William Michael Rossetti considered him as a "glorious luminary." And, also "a man not forestalled by predecessors, or to be classed with contemporaries, or to get replaced by known or readily survivable successors."

Check your progress - 1

1. When was William Blake born?

2. William Blake's poetries and paintings are characterized as a part of which movement?

11.2 ABOUT LIFE OF WILLIAM BLAKE

Early Life

Blake was born at 28 Broad Street in Soho, London. He was the third child out of seven children of his parents, two of whom died in infancy. James, Blake's father, was a hosier. He had attended school only until he could learn to read and write. He was otherwise educated at home by his mother, Catherine Blake. Even though the Blake was the English Dissenters, William was later on baptized on 11 December at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London. Blake had an early and profound influence of the Bible at quite an early age and which remained as a source of inspiration all across his living.

Blake also started engraving the copies of drawings of the Greek antiquities which were purchased for him by his father; it was a practice that was preferred to for the actual drawing.

Within these drawings, Blake came across his first exposure to the classical forms through the various works of Raphael, Albrecht Dürer, Michelangelo and Maarten van Heemskerck. The number of prints and bound books which James and Catherine were able to purchase for young William suggests that Blake also enjoyed a lot, at least for a time with a comfortable wealth. When Blake was ten years old, his parents knew of his headstrong temperament, which he was not sent to school. But rather got enrolled in drawing classes at Pars's drawing school in the Strand. He then read avidly on subjects of his choosing. During this period, Blake also made explorations into poetry; his early work displays knowledge of Ben Jonson, Edmund Spenser, and the Psalms.

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Apprenticeship to Basire

Blake was apprenticed on 4 August 1772, to engraver James Basire of Great Queen Street, at the sum of £52.10, for the term of 7 years. At the end of such a term, aged 21, he became a professional engraver. None of the records survives of any serious disagreement or the conflicts between the two during the period of Blake's training, but Peter Ackroyd's biography notes which Blake later added in the Basire's name is to a list of artistic adversaries – and after that crossed it. Besides, Basire's style of line-engraving was of a kind held at the time to be old-fashioned, which were compared to the flashier stipple or mezzotint styles. It has been speculated After two years, Basire sent his trainee to copy the images from the Gothic churches in London. His experiences in Westminster Abbey had helped him to form his artistic style and ideas. The Abbey of his day was then decorated with suits of armour, painted funeral effigies, and varicoloured waxworks. Ackroyd also notes that "...the most immediate [impression] would have been of faded brightness and colour". The close study of the Gothic has left clear traces in his style. During the long afternoons, Blake spent his time sketching in the Abbey. He was also occasionally interrupted by the boys from Westminster School. These were allowed in the Abbey. They teased him. And, also one of them tormented him so much that Blake knocked the boy off a scaffold to the ground. After Blake had complained to the Dean, the schoolboys' privilege was withdrawn. Blake further claimed that he experienced visions in the Abbey. He saw Christ with his Apostles and also, a great procession of the monks and priests and heard their chant.

Royal Academy

Blake joined the Royal Academy in Old Somerset House, near the Strand on 8 October 1779. While the terms of his studies required no payment, he was expected to supply his materials throughout the six years. There, he also rebelled against what he was regarded as the unfinished style of fashionable painters like Rubens, which was championed by the school's first president, Joshua Reynolds. Over time, Blake came to detest the attitude of

Reynolds towards art, especially his pursuit of the "general truth" as well as "general beauty."

Further, Reynolds also wrote in the Discourses that "disposition to abstractions, to generalizing and classification, is the great glory of the human mind." Blake also responded, in marginalia to his copy, "To Generalize is to be an Idiot; to particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit." Further, Blake also disliked the Reynolds' apparent humility that he held to be a form of hypocrisy. Against Reynolds' contemporary oil painting, Blake further preferred the Classical precision of his very early influences with Raphael and Michelangelo. As suggested by David Bindman, Blake's antagonism for Reynolds arose not so much from president's opinions, but rather "against his hypocrisy in not putting his ideals into practice." Certainly, Blake was not reluctant in exhibiting at the Royal Academy, submitting the works on six different occasions between 1780 and 1808.

Blake became friends with Thomas Stothard, John Flaxman, and George Cumberland in the first year of Royal Academy in Old Somerset House. They also shared radical views, with Cumberland and Stothard joining the Society for Constitutional Information.

Gordon Riots

Blake's first biographer, Alexander Gilchrist, recorded that in June 1780 while Blake was walking towards Basire's shop in Great Queen Street, he was swept up by a rampaging mob that stormed Newgate Prison. The mob attacked the prison gates with the pickaxes and shovels, set the building on fire, and also, released the prisoners inside. Also, Blake was reportedly in the front rank of the mob while there was an attack. The riots which are in response to a parliamentary bill revoking sanctions against the Roman Catholicism got to be known as the Gordon Riots and provoked a flurry of legislation from the government of George III, and the creation of the first police force.

Marriage and early career

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Blake met Catherine Boucher in 1782 while he was recovering from a relationship which had ended up in a refusal of his marriage proposal. He also narrated the story of his heartbreak with Catherine and her parents. Thereafter, he asked Catherine whether she had a pity on him to which she positively replied. That's when Blake told Catherine that he loved her. After that, Blake married his junior Catherine on 18th August 1782 at Battersea's St Mary Church. As Catherine was illiterate, she had signed her wedding contract with an X. Also, the original wedding certificate can be looked at in the church, where a commemorative stained-glass window was put between in 1976 and 1982. Later, along with teaching Catherine to read and write, he also trained her to be an engraver. All his life she proved an invaluable aid, helping to print his illuminated works and maintaining his spirits throughout numerous misfortunes. Blake's first set of poems, *Poetical Sketches*, also got printed in 1783. After his father's death, Blake and his former fellow trainee James Parker opened a print shop in 1784. They started working with radical publisher Joseph Johnson. Johnson's house was a meeting place for some of the leading English intellectual dissidents of their time: philosopher Richard Price, theologian and scientist Joseph Priestley, artist John Henry Fuseli, early and William Godwin, Blake had high hopes for both the French and American revolutions. And he also wore a Phrygian cap in solidarity with the French revolutionaries, however, despaired with the rise of the Reign of Terror and Robespierre in France. In 1784 Blake made his unfinished manuscript, *An Island in the Moon*. Blake illustrated the *Original Stories from Real Life* (2nd edition, 1791) by Mary Wollstonecraft. They also seem to have shared some views on the institution of marriage and sexual equality, but there is no proof which says that they met. Blake criticized the cruel absurdity of the enforced chastity in 1793's *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*. And, also the marriage without love and defended the right of women to complete self-fulfilment.

From 1790 to 1800, William Blake also lived in North Lambeth, London, at 13 Hercules Buildings, Hercules Road. The property got demolished in

1918, but the site is now marked with a plaque. There is a series of 70 mosaics celebrating Blake in the nearby railway tunnels of Waterloo Station. The mosaics primarily reproduce the illustrations from Blake's illuminated books *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, *The Songs of Innocence and Experience*, and the prophetic books.

Relief Etching

When at the age of 31 in 1788, Blake started experimenting with relief etching. It is a method which he used to produce most of his paintings, books, pamphlets and also, his poems which included his longer 'prophecies' and the "Bible," his masterpiece. The process is also specified as illuminated printing and final products as illuminated books or prints. Illuminated printing involves the writing of the text of the poems on the copper plates with pens and brushes which use any acid-resistant medium. Illustrations can appear alongside the words in the manner of earlier illuminated manuscripts. He also then etched the plates in acid to dissolve away from the untreated copper and after that, leave the design standing in the relief (hence the name).

It is a reversal of the normal method of etching, wherein the lines of the design get exposed to the acid and the plate gets printed by the intaglio method. Relief etching, which Blake had invented, the later which became an important commercial printing method. The pages which were printed from these plates then had to be hand-colored in watercolours and stitched together to make up a volume. Blake also used the illuminated printing for most of his well-known works which included *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *Jerusalem* and *The Book of Thel*. Later life and career Blake's marriage to Catherine was close and was devoted until death. Blake also taught Catherine to write. Further, she helped him colour his printed poems. Gilchrist also refers to the "stormy times." In the early years of marriage. Some biographers have also suggested that Blake tried bringing a concubine into the marriage bed with regards to such beliefs of the various radical branches of the society of Swedenborgian.

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However, other scholars have dismissed such theories as conjecture. In his Dictionary, Samuel Foster Damon suggested that Catherine might have had a stillborn daughter due to which *The Book of Thel* is considered as an elegy. That is how he rationalizes his Books unusual ending, but also, the notes that he is speculating.

Felpham

Blake later moved to a cottage at Felpham, in Sussex in 1800. Blake took up a job which illustrated the works of William Hayley, a minor poet. It was also in this cottage that Blake started *Milton*. The preface to this work also consists of a poem beginning with "And did those feet in ancient time," which further became the words for the anthem "Jerusalem." Over time, Blake started to resent his new patron, believing that Hayley was not interested in true artistry, and thus, was preoccupied with "the meer drudgery of business." Blake's disenchantment with Hayley has also been speculated to have got influenced *Milton*: a poem, in which Blake also wrote that "Corporeal Friends are Spiritual Enemies."

Blake's trouble with the authority came across in August 1803, when he got involved in a physical altercation with a soldier who was named John Schofield. Blake was also charged not only with an assault but also, with the uttering seditious and treasonable expressions against the king. Schofield claimed that Blake had exclaimed the "Damn the king. The soldiers are all slaves." Blake cleared in the Chichester assizes of the charges. As per the report in the Sussex county paper, "The invented the character of [the evidence] was ... so obvious that an acquittal resulted". Schofield was later depicted wearing "mind-forged manacles" in an illustration to *Jerusalem*.

Return to London

Blake returned to London in 1804. And, then he started to write and illustrate *Jerusalem*, one of his most excellent work. Having come up with the idea of portraying the characters in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Blake approached the dealer Robert Cromek, intending to market an engraving. Cromek promptly commissioned, as he knew Blake too was eccentric to

produce a popular work, Blake's friend Thomas Stothard to execute such a concept. When Blake further learned that he got cheated and then, he broke off the contact with Stothard. He then built an independent exhibition in his brother's haberdashery shop which was at 27 Broad Street in Soho. The exhibition was designed for marketing his own version of the Canterbury illustration which was titled as The Canterbury Pilgrims, along with many other works. As a result, he also wrote his Descriptive Catalogue (1809), which consists of what of Anthony Blunt which is called as a "brilliant analysis" of Chaucer and his regularly anthologized as a classic of Chaucer criticism. It also had detailed explanations of all his other paintings. The exhibition was not attended nicely, selling any of the temperas or watercolours. It's only the review, in The Examiner, was hostile. Also, around this time, Blake gave a vigorous expression of his views on the art in an extensive array of polemical annotations to the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds, denounce the Royal Academy as a fraud and proclaiming, "To Generalize is to be an Idiot." In 1818, he got introduced by the George Cumberland's son to a young artist whose name was John Linnell. A blue plaque commemorates that Linnell and Blake at Old Wyldes' at North End, Hampstead. Through Linnell, he met Samuel Palmer, who also belonged to a group of artists who called were called as the Shoreham Ancients. The group which was shared due to Blake's rejection of modern trends and his belief in a spiritual and artistic New Age. Aged 65, Blake began to work on the illustrations for the Book of Job. Also, later on, he was admired by Ruskin, who compared Blake favourably to Rembrandt, and by Vaughan Williams, who based his ballet. In later life, Blake started to sell several great works which are particularly the Bible illustrations to Thomas Butts who was a patron who saw Blake more as a friend than as a man whose work held the artistic merit; this was typical of the opinions held of Blake throughout his life.

Dante's Inferno

Dante's Inferno commission came to Blake only in 1826 through Linnell, with the aim of producing an array of engravings. Blake's death in 1827 had

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cut short the enterprise, and only a handful of the watercolours got completed then, with only seven of the engravings arriving at proof form. Even so, they have evoked praise:

The Dante watercolours are amongst Blake's richest achievements which are engaging fully with the problem of illustrating a poem of this complexity. The mastery of watercolour has also reached an even higher level than before, and is further used to give any extraordinary effect while differentiating the atmosphere of the three states while being in the poem. Blake's illustrations from the poem are not merely accompanying the works. However, rather it seems to revise, or furnish commentary critically on any certain spiritual or moral aspects of the text. In illustrating *Paradise Lost*, for example, Blake seemed to be intent on revising Milton's focus on Satan as the primary figure of the epic; for instance, in *Satan Watching the Endearments of Adam and Eve* (1808), Satan also occupies an isolated position at the picture's top, With Adam and Eve being centered as below. As if to emphasize the effects of the juxtaposition, Blake has also shown that Adam and Eve were caught in an embrace, whereas Satan might only annalistically caress the serpent, the identity of whose is closed to assuming.

In this instance also because the project was never completed, Blake's intent may itself be obscured. Some of the indicators, however, bolster had an impression that Blake's illustrations in their totality would themselves take the issue with the text that they accompany: In the margin of *Homer Bearing the Sword and His Companions* as per the Blake notes, "Everything in Dantes Comedia shows that for the Tyrannical Purposes he has made This World the Foundation of All & the Goddess Nature & not only the Holy Ghost." Blake also seems to have a dissent from Dante's admiration of the poetic works of the ancient Greeks, and also from the apparent glee with which Dante allots punishments in Hell which was as evidenced by the grim humour of the cantos. At the same time, Blake also shared Dante's distrust of the materialism and the corruptive nature of power and relished the opportunity to represent the atmosphere and imagery of Dante's work which is pictorial. Even as he seemed to have reached near to death, Blake's central

preoccupation was also his feverish work on the illustrations of Dante's *Inferno*; he is also said to have spent one of the very last few shillings which he possessed on a pencil to continue sketching.

Politics

Blake was not at all active in any well-established political party. His poetry has consistently embodied an attitude of rebellion against the abuse of the class power which was documented in David Erdman's, "Blake: Prophet Against Empire: A Poet's Interpretation of the History of His Own Times". Further, Blake was also concerned about senseless wars and the blighting effects of the Industrial Revolution. Much of the poetry further recounts in symbolic allegory the effects of both the French and American revolutions. Erdman also claims that Blake was disillusioned with them. He is also believed that they had simply replaced the monarchy with the irresponsible mercantilism and notes that Blake was also deeply, which is opposed to being as the slavery and believes some of the poems which are read primarily as championing "free love" have had their anti-slavery implications of the short-changed. One of the most recent and very short study, *William Blake: Visionary Anarchist* by Peter Marshall is classified as Blake and his contemporary William Godwin as forerunners of the modern anarchism. British Marxist and historian E. P. Thompson's last finished the work, "Witness Against the Beast: William Blake and the Moral Law," shows how far he got inspired by the dissident religious ideas which were rooted in the thinking of the most radical opponents of the monarchy during the English Civil War.

Development of Blake's views

However, later Blake's poetry contained a private mythology with the complex symbolism. His late work got less published than his previous work which was more accessible. The *Vintage anthology of Blake* was edited by Patti Smith which focuses heavily on the previous work, as do many other critical studies such as *William Blake* by D. G. Gillham. The previous work has been primarily more rebellious and can be seen that as a protest

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against the dogmatic religion is which especially notable in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Also, in which the figure was shown by the "Devil" is virtually a hero who has rebelled against the authoritarian deity of the imposter. In his future works, such as *Milton and Jerusalem*, further, Blake also carves out a distinctive vision of a humanity which is redeemed by the self-sacrifice and the forgiveness while retaining the previous negative attitude towards what he felt was then the rigid and morbid authoritarianism of the traditional religion. Not all the readers of Blake would agree upon how much continuity exists between Blake's earlier and later work.

Psychoanalyst June Singer had written that Blake's late work got displayed a development of the ideas which were first introduced in his earlier works, namely, the humanitarian goal of achieving the personal wholeness of body and spirit. The final parts of the expanded edition of Blake's study *The Unholy Bible* which recommends that the later works are the "Bible of Hell" promised in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Regarding Blake's final poem, "Jerusalem," she also writes:

"The promise of the divine in man, made in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is at

last fulfilled." John Middleton Murry further notes that the discontinuity between the *Marriage* and the late works, in that while the early Blake could focus on a "sheer negative the opposition between the Energy and Reason," later on, Blake emphasized the notions of self-sacrifice and also, forgiveness as the road to interior wholeness. This renunciation of the sharper dualism of the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* which is also considered in particular by the humanisation of the character "Urizen" in his later works. Murry further characterizes the later Blake, as having found "mutual understanding." and "mutual forgiveness."

Death

Blake's last years of life were spent at Fountain Court off the Strand. The property which was demolished in the 1880s when the Savoy, The hotel which was built. On the day of his death i.e. 12th August 1827, Blake further worked relentlessly on his Dante series. Eventually, it is reported, he

stopped working and turned to his wife, who was also in tears by his bedside. Holding her, Blake had said to have cried, "Stay Kate! Keep just as you are – I will draw your portrait – for you have ever been an angel to me." Having then completed this portrait, Blake laid down the tools and started to sing the hymns and verses. At six on that evening, after promising his wife that he would be with her as always, Blake died.

Gilchrist further reports that a female lodger in the house, was also present at his expiration, who said, "I have been at the death, not of a man, but a blessed angel."

Since 1965, the exact location of William Blake's grave got lost and was also forgotten, while gravestones were also taken away to make a new lawn.

Nowadays, Blake's grave is decorated by a stone that reads 'nearby lying the remains of William Blake and his wife, Catherine Sophia.'

The memorial stone which is situated some 20 metres away from Blake's grave. The actual location of Blake's grave is not yet marked. Nevertheless, members of the group of friends of William Blake have also rediscovered the location of Blake's grave and also, intend to place a permanent memorial at the site. George Richmond gave the following account of Blake's death in a letter which was sent to Samuel Palmer. "He died ... in a most glorious manner. He said, he would be going to that Country which he had all his life wished to see & expressed Himself as Happy, hoping for Salvation through Jesus Christ - Just before he died. His Countenance became fair. His eyes further Brightened, and he burst out Singing of

the things he saw in Heaven." Catherine also paid for Blake's funeral with money which was borrowed by her from Linnell. Blake was buried within five days after his death - on the eve of his forty-fifth wedding anniversary - at the Dissenter's the burial ground in Bunhill Fields, where his parents were also interred. Present at

the ceremonies were Catherine, Edward Calvert, George Richmond, Frederick

Tatham and John Linnell. Following Blake's death, Catherine moved in as a housekeeper into Tatham's house. At the time of this period, she also believed that she was regularly being visited by Blake's spirit. She continued

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selling all of Blake's illuminated works and paintings but would entertain no business transaction without first "consulting Mr. Blake." She was very calm and cheerful as her husband on the day of her own death, in October 1831. Also, she asked him "as if he were only in the next room, to say she was coming to him, and it would not be long now." On the death of Blake's wife, manuscripts of Blake which got inherited by Frederick Tatham, who then burned many of those which he deemed heretical or to apolitically radical. Tatham had become an Irvingite, out of the many other fundamentalist movements from the 19th century, and was severely opposed to any work that smacked of blasphemy. The sexual imagery in a number of Blake's drawings were deleted by John Linnell. Blake is now recognized as one of the saints in the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica. The Blake Prize for Religious Art which was founded in his honour in 1949 in Australia. In 1957, a memorial which was erected in Westminster Abbey, in memory of him and his wife.

Check your progress -2

1. Where was Blake born?

2. When did Blake die?

11.3 LIST OF WILLIAM BLAKE'S WORK

The following is the list of William Blake's work across his lifetime:

- America: A Prophecy
- Auguries of Innocence
- The Book of Thel
- Eternity
- Europe: A Prophecy
 - The Gates of Paradise
 - I Heard an Angel
- I saw a chapel all of gold
- An Island in the Moon
- The Marriage of Heaven and Hell
 - i. The Argument
 - ii. The Voice of the Devil
 - iii. A Memorable Fancy
 - iv. Proverbs of Hell
 - v. A Memorable Fancy 1
 - vi. A Memorable Fancy 2
 - vii. A Memorable Fancy 3
 - viii. A Song of Liberty
- Milton
- Mock on, Mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau
- Poetical Sketches:
 - i. Song: How sweet I roam'd from field to field
 - ii. To Autumn
 - iii. To the Evening Star
 - iv. To Morning
 - v. To Spring
 - vi. To Summer
 - vii. To Winter
 - Silent, Silent Night
 - The Smile

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- Songs of Innocence and Experience:
- Song of Innocence:

- i. The Shepherd
- ii. The Echoing Green
- i. The Lamb
- ii. The Little Black Boy
- iii. The Blossom
- iv. The Chimney-sweeper
- v. The Little Boy Lost
- vi. The Little Boy Found
- vii. Laughing Song
- viii. A Cradle Song
- ix. The Divine Image
- x. Holy Thursday
- xi. Night
- xii. Spring
- xiii. Nurse's Song
- xiv. Infant Joy
- xv. A Dream
- xvi. On Another's Sorrow

- Songs of Experience:
 - i. Earth's Answer
 - ii. The Clod And The Pebble
 - iii. Holy Thursday
 - iv. The Little Girl Lost
 - v. The Little Girl Found
 - vi. The Chimney-Sweeper
 - vii. Nurse's Song
 - viii. The Sick Rose
 - ix. The Fly
 - x. The Angel

- xi. The Tiger
- xii. My Pretty Rose Tree
- xiii. Ah, Sunflower
- xiv. The Lily
- xv. The Garden Of Love
- xvi. The Little Vagabond
- xvii. London
- xviii. The Human Abstract
- xix. Infant Sorrow
- xx. A Poison tree
- xxi. A Little Boy Lost
- xxii. A Little Girl Lost
- xxiii. A Divine Image
- xxiv. A Cradle Song
- xxv. The Schoolboy
- xxvi. To Tirzah
- xxvii. The Voice Of The Ancient Bard

- Tiriel
- To the Accuser Who Is the God of This World
- To Nobodaddy
- Visions of the Daughters of Albion

Check your progress – 3

1. Name any two of Blake's work?

11.4 WILLIAM BLAKE'S CONTRIBUTION AS A ROMANTIC

Entirely unknown during his lifetime, Blake is now treated as a seminal figure in the history of both the poetry as well as the visual arts of the Romantic era. His prophetic poetry has been considered to form "what is in proportion to its merits the least read body of poetry in the English language." Blake's visual artistry has also led to one contemporary art critic to proclaim him "far and away from the greets artist Britain has ever produced." Although Blake lived in London all his life except for those three years when he stayed in Felpham, he created a diverse and symbolically rich corpus, which embraced the imagination as of "the body of God," or "the Human existence itself." Though Blake was always a well-read and intelligent man; he left his school at quite an early age of ten for attending the Henry pars Drawing Academy for five years. The artists, he admired as a child were Giulio, Romano, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Durer. He also started writing poetries at the age of twelve. In 1783, his friends also paid for his first collection of verses to get them printed, which was named as "Poetical Sketches." And, it is now seen as a significant poetical event from the 18th century. Even though he had an undeniable talent as a poet, his official profession was as an engraver as he could not afford to do a painter's apprenticeship. Therefore, he started his apprenticeship with the engraver James Basire in 1772. After completing his apprenticeship, i.e., six years later, he then joined the Royal Academy of Art. His art and engraving at this point of time remained separately. He also wrote and drew for the pleasure and also, simply engraved to earn a living. In 1784, he also opened his shop, and in the same year, he completed "Island in the Moon," which was ridiculed as his contemporaries of the art and literature social circles which he mixed up.

Blake says very proudly and also prophetically:

"This world of Imagination is the world Eternity; it is the divine bosom into which we shall all go after the death of the Vegetated body. This World of

Imagination is Infinite and Eternal compared to the world of Generation, or Vegetation is Finite and Temporal. There Exist in that Eternal World the Permanent Realities of Every Thing which we see reflected in this Vegetable Glass of Nature. All Things are comprehended in their Eternal Forms in the divine body of the Saviour, the True Vine of Eternity, and The Humane Imagination."

For Blake, Imagination is no lesser than God as he has been operating in the human soul. It also follows that any act of creation, which is performed by the imagination, which is divine. And that in the imagination, a man is spiritual by nature is fully and finally realized. Since then, what has mattered to the Romantic poets was also an insight into the nature of things. They always rejected Locke's limitation of perception of the physical objects, because it is robbed to the mind of its most important function, which is also at the same time to perceive and to create. On this, Blake speaks with prophetic scorn:

"Mental Things are alone Real; what is called Corporeal, Nobody Knows of its Dwelling Place: it is in Fallacy, and its Existence an Imposture. Where is the Existence Out of Mind or Thought? Where is it but in the Mind of a Fool?"

Blake is so strict on the view that art which deals with such general truths. He has none of Samuel Johnson's respect for the "grandeur of generality," and would also disagree that violently with him when he says, "nothing can please many and please long, but just representation of general nature." Blake thought quite otherwise:

"To generalize is to be an idiot. To particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit. General Knowledges are that Knowledge that idiots possess."

"What is General Nature? Is there Such a Thing? What is General Knowledge? Is there such a thing? Strictly Speaking, All Knowledge is Particular."

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Blake also believed this because he lived in the imagination. He knew that nothing had complete importance for him unless it appeared in a very particular form. And with this, the Romantics are in general agreed. Their art is aimed at presenting as forcibly as possible and the moments of vision which are given to even the vastest issues the coherence and simplicity of single events. Even in "Kubla Khan," which has so many qualities of the dream in which it was born, there is also a very high individual presentation of a remote and that of the mysterious experience, which is, in fact, the central experience of all the creation in its Dionysiac delight and its enraptured ordering of many elements into an entrancing pattern. Coleridge, may not have been fully conscious of what he was doing while he was writing, but the experience which he portrays is of a creative mood in its purest moments, when boundless possibilities have been open before it. No wonder he felt that, if he could only realize all the potentialities of such a moment, he would be like one who has supped with the gods:

"And all should cry, Beware! Beware!

His flashing eyes, his floating hair!

Weave a circle round him thrice,

And close your eyes with holy dread,

For he on honey-dew hath fed,

And drunk the milk of Paradise."

It was in such experience, remote and strange and beyond the senses, that the Romantics sought for poetry, and they saw that the only way to convey it to others was in particular instances and examples. The invisible powers that are sustained by the universe work through and in the visible world. Only by what we see as and hear as and touch can be brought into relation with them. Every poet once has to work with the world of the senses, but for the Romantics, it is the instrument which sets their visionary powers in action. It

also affected them many times in such a way that they seemed to get carried beyond it into a transcendental order of things, but this would never have happened if they had not looked on the world around them with attentive and loving eyes. One of the main advantages which they gained by their deliverance from abstractions and general truths was the freedom to use their senses and to look on nature without conventional prepossessions. More than this, they were all also gifted with a very high degree of physical sensibility and also sometimes, so they are enthralled by what they saw that it completely dominated their being. This is obviously true of Wordsworth and of Keats, who brought back to the poetry a keenness of eye and of the ear which it had hardly known since the Shakespeare. But it is no lesser true of Blake and Shelley and Coleridge. The careful, observing eye which is made by Blake as a cunning craftsman in line and also the colour was at work in his poetry. It is true that he was seldom content with a mere description of what he saw, but, when he used the description for an ulterior purpose to convey some massive mystery, his words are exact and vivid and make his symbols shine brightly before the eye. Though Coleridge also found that some of his finest inspiration in dreams and trances, he gave in to the details a singular brilliance of outline and character. Though Shelley lived amongst the soaring ideas and impalpable abstractions, he also was fully at home in the visible world, if only because it was a mirror of eternity and worthy of attention for that reason. There are many poets who have lived completely in dreams and hardly notice the familiar scene, but the Romantics are not of their number. Indeed, their strength comes largely from the way in which they throw new and magic light on the common face of nature and lure us into looking for some explanation for the irresistible attraction which it exerts. In nature, all the Romantic poets find their initial inspiration. It was not everything to them, but they would have been nothing without it; for through it, they found those exalting moments when they passed from sight to vision and pierced, as they thought, to the secrets of the universe.

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Though all the Romantic poets believed in an ulterior reality. And, based on which their poetry on it, they found it in different ways and made different uses of it. They varied in the degree of importance which they attached to the visible world and in their interpretation of it. At one extreme is Blake, who held that the imagination is both divine power and that everything really comes from it. It operates within a given material, which is nature, but Blake also believed that a time would come when nature will disappear completely, and the spirit is free to create without it. While it is there, a man takes his symbols from it and further uses them to interpret anything that is unseen. Blake's true home was in the vision, in what he saw that when he gave full liberty to the creative imagination and transformed the sense-data through it. For him, the imagination also uncovers the reality, which is masked by many visible things. The familiar world gave hints which must be taken and pursued and developed:

"To see a World in a Grain of Sand

And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,

Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand

And Eternity in an hour."

Through these visible things, Blake also reached that transcendent state which he can call as "eternity" and further feel free to create a new and living world. He was not a mystic who would strive in the dark and laboriously towards the God, but a visionary who could say of himself:

"I am in God's presence night and day,

And he never turns his face away."

Of all the Romantics, Blake is the most rigorous in his conception of the imagination. He could actually confidently say that, "One Power alone makes a Poet: Imagination, The Divine Vision," because for him the imagination also creates reality, and this reality is the divine activity of the

self in its unimpeded energy. His attention is turned toward an ideal, spiritual world, which with all other-selves who obeys the imagination he helps to build.

Though Blake had a keen eye for the visible world, still his special concern was only with the invisible. For him, every living thing was considered to be as a symbol of the everlasting powers, and it was these which he wished to grab and to comprehend. Since he was also a painter with a very remarkably pictorial habit of mind, he then described the invisible in the language of the visible. And, no doubt he really saw it with his inner vision. But what he saw was also not, so to speak, an alternative to the given the word, but a spiritual order to which the language of physical sight can also be applied only in the metaphor. What concerned him the most deeply and which drew out his strongest powers was that the sense of a spiritual reality at work in all the living things. For Blake, even the commonest event would be fraught with lessons and meanings. How much he had found and which can be seen from his "Auguries of Innocence," wherein epigrammatic, oracular couplets which he displays his sense of the intimate relations which exist in reality and binds the world of sight and of spirit in a single whole. His words looked very simple enough, but every word needs attention, as when he proclaims:

"A Robin Redbreast in a Cage

Puts all Heaven in a Rage."

Blake's Robin Redbreast is in itself a very spiritual thing, not merely a visible bird, but it also has the powers which such a bird embodies and symbolizes, the free spirit which further delights in song and in all that the song also implies. Such a spirit should never be repressed, and any such repression of it is a sin against the divine life of the universe. Blake was also visionary who then believed that ordinary things are unsubstantial in themselves. And, that they are yet rich as symbols of many greater realities. That time he was so at home in the spirit that he was not troubled by any

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apparent solidity of matter. He saw something else i.e., a world of eternal values and living spirits.

Check your progress - 4

1. With whom did Blake start his apprenticeship in 1772?

11.5 LET US SUM UP

- William Blake was born on November 28, 1757, in London. Except for some few years in Sussex, he spent his entire life in London. From his earliest years, he saw visions. He would also see trees full of angels or similar sights. If these were not the true mystical visions, they were the result of the artist's intense spiritual understanding of the world. From his early teens, Blake wrote poems, which were often a setting them up to melodies of his own composition.
- When he was 26, he wrote a set of entitled Poetical Sketches. This volume William Blake was the only one of Blake's poetic works which were seen in conventional printed form. He also later invented and practiced a new method.
- After his father's death, Blake set up a print shop just next door to the family shop. In 1787 his beloved brother Robert died; thereafter, William claimed that Robert communicated with him in visions. It was Robert, William said, who inspired him with a new method of illuminated etching. The words and or design were drawn in reverse on a plate covered with an acid-resisting substance; acid was then applied. From these etched plates, pages were printed and later hand-

colored. Blake used his unique methods to print almost all of his long poems.

- In 1787 Blake produced *Songs of Innocence* as the first major work in his new process, followed by *Songs of Experience*. The excellent lyrics in the two collections carefully compare the openness of the innocence with the bitterness of the experience. They are treated as a milestone because they are a rare instance of the successful union of the two art forms by one man.
- Blake spent his years of 1800 to 1803 in Sussex while working with William Hayley, who was a minor poet and man of letters. With good intentions, Hayley further tried to cure Blake's from his unprofitable enthusiasms. Blake finally also rebelled against such criticism and rejected Hayley's help. In *Milton*, Blake wrote an allegory of the spiritual issues involved in this relationship. He also identified with the poet John Milton in leaving the safety of both heaven and returning to the earth. Also, during this time in life, Blake was also further accused of uttering seditious sentiments. He was later found not to be guilty, but the incident had affected much of Blake's final epic.
- Back in London, Blake also worked hard for his poems, engraving, and painting. But, he also suffered several reverses. He was treated as the victim of fraud in connection with his designs for Blair's poem *The Grave*. He also received an insulting review of that project. And, also of an exhibition, he gave in 1809 to introduce his idea of decorating public buildings with portable frescoes.
- Blake also had become a political sympathizer with both the American as well as the French Revolutions. He also produced *The Four Zoas* as a mystical story which predicts the future showing how evil is rooted in a man's basic faculties—reason, passion, instinct, and imagination. Imagination was the hero.
- The next ten years of Blake's life are sad and private. He did some important work which included the designs for Milton's poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* and also, the writing of his own

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poem *The Everlasting Gospel*. He also wrote for others sometimes. And, no one purchases or read such divinely inspired predictions and visions of him. After 1818, however, his conditions improved. His last six years of life were spent at the Fountain Court, which was surrounded by a group of admiring young artists. Blake also did some of his best pictorial work. In 1824 his health deteriorated, and he died singing on August 12, 1827, in London.

- Blake's history does not end even after his death. In his own lifetime, he was almost considered to be as unknown except to a few of his friends and faithful sponsors. He was even suspected of being mad. But interest in his work grew only during the middle of the 19th century, and since then very committed reviewers had gradually shed light on Blake's beautiful, detailed, and difficult mythology. He has also been considered as one who shares common ideals held by psychologists, writers, extreme students of religion, rock-and-roll musicians, and also people who are studying in Oriental religion. His works have also been used by the people who rebel against an array of issues like war, conformity, and almost every other kind of repression.

11.6 KEYWORDS

- Prophetic
- Contemporaries
- Visionary
- Sympathizer
- Manuscript

11.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. List down the works of William Blake.
2. Explain William Blake's Contribution as a Romantic.

3. Explain about the early life and death of William Blake.

11.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

- The Unholy Bible, June Singer, p. 229.
- Blake, William. Blake's "America, a Prophecy"; And, "Europe, a Prophecy". 1984, p. 2.
- Blake, William and Rossetti, William Michael. The Poetical Works of William Blake: Lyrical and Miscellaneous. 1890, p. xi.
- Wilson, Mona (1978). The Life of William Blake (3rdEd.). London: Granada Publishing Limited. p. 2. ISBN 0-586-08297-2.
- G.E. Bentley, The Stranger in Paradise, "Drunk on Intellectual Vision" pp500, Yale University Press, 2001.

11.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. William Blake was born on 28th November, 1757(answer for check your progress – 1 Q. 1)
2. William Blake's poetries and paintings are characterized as a part of Romantic Movement. November (answer for check your progress – 1 Q. 2)
3. Blake was born at 28 Broad Street in Soho, London.(answer for check your progress – 2 Q. 3)
4. Blake died on 12th August 1827.(answer for check your progress – 2 Q. 4)
5. The works of William Blake are The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and Milton. (answer for check your progress – 3 Q. 5)
6. Blake started his apprenticeship with engraver James Basire in 1772. (answer for check your progress – 4 Q. 6)

UNIT – 12: BLAKE- THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL

STRUCTURE

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Interpretation
- 12.3 Summary
- 12.4 The Argument
- 12.5 A Memorable Fancy (1)
- 12.6 Proverbs of hell
- 12.7 A Memorable Fancy (2)
- 12.8 A Memorable Fancy (3)
- 12.9 A Memorable Fancy (4)
- 12.10 A Memorable Fancy (5)
- 12.11 A Song of Liberty
- 12.12 Chorus
- 12.13 Influence
- 12.13 Let us Sum up
- 12.15 Keywords
- 12.16 Questions for Review
- 12.17 Suggested Readings
- 12.18 Answers to Check your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- learn about “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell” by William Blake
- and also, you will be able to go through its interpretation and summary.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is a book which is written by the print maker and the English poet William Blake. It is originally a series of texts which are written in imitation of the biblical prophecy but it also expresses Blake's very own intensely personal Romantic and revolutionary beliefs. Just like his other books, this one was published on the printed sheets from the etched plates which contained a prose, poetry and illustrations. The plates were later on coloured by Blake as well as his wife Catherine.

It starts with an introduction of a short poem "Rintrah roars and shakes his fires in the burden'd air".

William Blake claims that John Milton has been a true poet and also, his epic poem the Paradise Lost was "of the Devil's party without knowing it." He also claims that Milton's Satan was also truly his Messiah.

The work was composed in between the years 1790 and 1793, which was a period of radical ferment and political conflict immediately after the French Revolution. The title is an ironic reference to the Emanuel Swedenborg's theological work the Heaven and Hell, which was published in Latin 33 years earlier. Blake has cited and criticized Swedenborg at many places in the Marriage. Though Blake was influenced by his grand and mystical cosmic conception, Swedenborg's conventional moral strictures and his Manichaeic view of good and evil led Blake to express a deliberately depolarized and unified vision of the cosmos in which the material world and physical desire are equally part of the divine order; hence, a marriage of

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heaven and hell. The book is written in prose, except for the opening "Argument" and the "Song of Liberty". The book describes the poet's visit to Hell, a device adopted by Blake from Dante's Divine Comedy and Milton's Paradise Lost.

Check your progress -1

1. Who is Rintrah in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell?

2. When was a marriage of heaven and hell written?

12.2 INTERPRETATION

Blake's theory of contraries was not a belief in opposites but rather a belief that each person reflects the contrary nature of God, and that progression in life is impossible without contraries. Moreover, he explores the contrary nature of reason and of energy, believing that two types of people existed: the "energetic creators" and the "rational organizers", or, as he calls them in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the "devils" and "angels". Both are necessary to life according to Blake.

Blake's text has been interpreted in many ways. It certainly forms part of the revolutionary culture of the period. The references to the printing-house suggest the underground radical printers producing revolutionary pamphlets at the time. Ink-blackened print workers were comically referred to as a "printer's devil", and revolutionary publications were regularly denounced from the pulpits as the work of the devil.

Check your progress -2

1. What is Blake's theory of contraries?

2. What are the two types of people who exist as per Blake in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell?

12.3 SUMMARY

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell commences off with a section called "The Argument." No, it doesn't. Yes, it does — oh sorry, we got carried away by the title. At any rate, in this section, we have been introduced to a character named Rintrah, and the dude is not at all happy about it. He's raging it out, while a "just man" keeps walking along the "Vale of Death."

We also have a "villain," who has been leaving an easy path to walk the more dangerous road. In doing so, he is also pushing our just man to a gloomy area, where the just fella begins to rage out, too. The section ends with an announcement: a new Heaven is the beginning, kind of like a grand new opening. Then it sets out a few points which seem worth keeping in our mind: a) there is no progress without any contradiction and b) being suitable means passively obeying, irrespective of being an evil means being active with energy.

Next section says that "The Voice of the Devil," which we have imagined as a cross between James Earl Jones and Bobcat Goldthwait. This section also

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gives us a list of "errors," which the speaker blames on the Bible and the other "sacred codes." Essentially, the gist is that of the notion that the body is separate from its soul and is a bunch of bunk. The body and the soul, both are one (according to the speaker, at least).

Then the speaker appreciates John Milton's *Paradise Lost* for getting the idea right, as well as for illustrating how the resisting temptation makes it as a weak person. As per our speaker's view, the real heroes of Milton's book is—wait for it—Satan. The Devil, which then followed his desire, which to our speaker, makes him the Messiah. The speaker gives props to Milton for his portrayal.

Our next section is further entitled to "A Memorable Fancy." It's a travelogue of our speaker's trip to Hell, which leads to the next section of the "Proverbs of Hell." Here, in this section the speaker lists out to us a whole new list of short sayings which he picked up in the Hell, like "Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires" (4.67)—okay. In general, these sayings are pro-desire, pro-temptation, pro-creativity, and anti-repression.

After this, four sections are usually being followed — each of them who are now familiar with the title of "A Memorable Fancy." In the first part, the speaker has dinner with the Biblical prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel. He then interviews them and learns about how they knew that God was speaking to them. Then they speak to him about the origin of the religion: poetry. In the next section, the speaker then visits a "printing-house in Hell" (5.1), and, it also describes the inner workings of the equivalent of an Amazon warehouse in Hell.

The speaker then goes on to mention the Giants who then formed the earth. He also makes a differentiation between a group of people called the Prolific, and another group called the Devouring. The Prolific are considered to be as the creative folks who gain energy from the following temptation, whereas the Devouring is the tamed, obedient, and oppressed. These groups should be treated as enemies with each other, says our speaker.

In the third "A Memorable Fancy" section, the speaker is visited by an angel, who says that the speaker is cruising for the damnation. For some reasons, instead of being terrified, the speaker wants to know what that might look. So the angel shows him a flaming abyss where the giant spiders chase him for eternity once the angel takes off, though, the scene changes to a pleasant riverbank, complete with a Harper.

The speaker then offers to return to the favour of the angel. They open up a Bible, which later on turns into a bottomless pit, and they both dive in it. They winded up in a brick house, within which a bunch of monkeys has been chained up. And, do such unspeakable things to one another (e.g., rape and cannibalism). The angel is annoyed by such an action, just as the speaker was annoyed by his vision of the spider abyss. The speaker then goes on to discuss both the Aristotle and Swedenborg—the latter of whom "has not written one new truth" (7.16).

In the final "A Memorable Fancy" section of the poem, the speaker sees a devil talking to an angel. He then tells the angel that to worship God is to love "the greatest men best" (8.1). He also further says that you have to break the ten commandments if you want to be truly virtuous and that Jesus Christ did exactly the same. Initially, he was peeved by the devil's arguments, the angel after a period of time becomes just like the way Jesus Christ thinks and—presto change-o—he then turns into a devil. We also learned that this angel was Elijah.

"A Song of Liberty" is the next section, which provides us with around twenty lines which are based on the politics of the day, and which also includes the situations in both France and America. The upper half of this section has our speaker who calls out for an empire to end and the freedom for all the oppressed people. The final part, "Chorus," calls one last time for an end to all the religious repression and wrapping everything up with a famous last line: "For everything that lives is holy" (10.2).

Check your progress – 3

1. Which section does The Marriage in Heaven and Hell starts with?

12.4 THE ARGUMENT

- This Marriage starts, well, not like an ideal marriage but as if somebody's fuming.
- Rintrah, on the other hand, is on the warpath with the gang. Thus, the "shakes his fires in the burden'd air" (1.1), that admittedly sounds like he has got at pretty big bee in the bonnet.
- Anyway, who is the actual Rintrah character? We are not being told directly. However, luckily for you, though, we can use the extra-Shmoopy powers of the research to reveal that this character was originally an invention of the Blake's. He was also meant to personify the righteous anger of the true prophet.
- Next, we learned about a "just man," who was once a "meek." He's walking along with "The Vale of Death," who is probably not as famous for the pedestrian crossings.
- However, still, the scenery is beautiful: we have the roses now where there used to be thorns which grow, and bees are singing where the land was usually barren.
- We learned that a path was planted, although it was considered to be as "perilous" (1.9).
- As well, the rivers and streams were placed "On every cliff and tomb" (1.11). Also, there was a red clay "on the bleached bones," which further "brought forth"... something (1.12). We were not being told exactly what that might be.
- This is also an excellent time to note that, if you are having any troubles imagining how all the landscaping works, you are not alone. These lines—the few of which are written in original poetic form—are pretty much ambiguous. It is upshot, though, is that the land

which is used to be the desert-like, but now it's making a comeback with the signs of life (like water and nourishing clay).

- After we are being told about the clay, the speaker specifies a "villain" who then left an easy path to take up a more risky one.
- Doing so, it seems, pushed that the just man who is into this desert-like land. We are not being told as to how exactly, though.
- However, before we have any time to ponder that too much, though, we are moving into any "sneaking serpent" (1.17). It is walking around "In mild humility" (1.18).
- Now, if you are just like us, you are going to have a very hard enough time picturing the humble snake which is much lesser one than that which walks.
- Meanwhile, the just man is still in the wilderness. And, now it is his turn to get angry.
- Not to be outdone, we are still reminded of Rintrah's original anger party (1.1), and also, led to making the connection which this Rintrah is is very just—and angry—man.
- At this point in the section, we have a form change (see "Form and Meter" for more). We shift from poetic lines to prose ones, which tell us that "a new heaven is begun" (1.23).
- It has been 33 years since it all began revived by the "Eternal Hell" (1.23). Hmm—a Heaven which was started by a Hell? That is quite a paradox.
- Someone who was named as Swedenborg and is sitting on a tomb. Next, to the tomb are the writings of Swedenborg which are folded up like a bunch of laundries. Translation of the cold burn—this guy's words were like a bunch of the undergarments which are soiled.
- The speaker then tells us that now Edom is in the charge, and Adam has returned to Paradise.
- We are also being told to read the Book of Isaiah, Chapters XXIV, and XXV.
- After such a piece of helpful advice, the speaker laid down that: "Without contraries is no progression. Attraction, repulsion, reason

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and energy, love, and hate are necessary to human existence" (1.24). It seems to be very important. What we think of as the opposites are actually both the vital to being human, says our speaker.

- From there, he continues, we get the religious terms "Good" and "Evil."
- Good means passive and listens to the reason. Evil is an active, and springs is the "from Energy" (1.25).
- The part ends with a reminder that the "Good is heaven. Evil would be hell"—just in case if you were confused (1.26).

Check your progress - 4

1. What does The Argument part ends with?

12.5 A MEMORABLE FANCY (1)

- As it turns out, it is neither. These sections are considered to be as the joking references to the "Memorable Relations" which are entered in one of the other Emmanuel Swedenborg's books, *Apocalypse Revealed*. But as of now to know that this is Blake taking another such a dig at the dude.
- In this first fancy, the speaker mentions to us all about the trip to Hell, which sounds like having a blast.
- The speaker did have a perfect time. He then enjoyed taking the experience of the local "Genius" (which the angels hated), and he also got some souvenirs as well, some of the proverbs.
- He then tells us that all the sayings of a country say to a lot about the character of its inhabitants; thus, he decided to collect some of the sayings to get a good sense of Hell.

- When the speaker returned from his trip, he then found a fearsome devil which was surrounded by the black clouds which were looking down on the world of humanity. He also wrote down a question about the "corroding fires" (3.2).
- The primary gist of the question is, how do you know that every single bird that we see flying through the air is not a whole world full of delight that we are just not able to sense?
- Thinking that while we will tell you that the reference to the "corroding fires" is a sly reference to the Blake-meister himself. He used a copper engraving technique to produce the original plates of this book, which employed his version of corroding fire to sketch the illustrations—pretty sneaky, there, Mr. B.

Check your progress -5

1. What does A Memorable Fancy (1) speak about?

12.6 PROVERBS OF HELL

- This section starts with a list of all the proverbs which our speaker brought back from the Hell.
- The list is very long—70 proverbs which are very long, to be precise. So we would not be going through every single one (you are probably very happy to read).
- We should also explain, though, that a proverb is a truthful saying. Something that your grandma would call the "words to live by," if she was a reflective sort of the person.
- Thus, in this case, we get a whole slew of words to live by, but we'll tackle a few representative examples.

Notes

- The third proverb is very much famous: "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom" (4.3). Here again, the speaker is reminding us of all the importance of the desire to the human experience. It is also something to say to your parents when they ask you why you ate your sister's entire birthday cake.
- We also get a set of many animal-themed proverbs. They say that "The wrath of the lion," "The lust of the goat," "The pride of the peacock," and "The nakedness of woman" are all the examples of "the work of God" (4.22-25). Our speaker sees God's handwork in every aspect of the experience—not just the restrained and devout parts.
- We are also told, "The cistern contains, the fountain overflows" (4.35). In other words, motion and energy are produced. Containment and restraint are not.
- These are not all that are straightforward, though. We got a few like the one: "The eyes of fire, the nostrils of air, the mouth of water, the beard of the earth" (4.48). Our best idea is which the speaker is also very encouraging us to use all the senses to take into the full range of the world around us, but... well, maybe he is just envisioning a weird face which he likes to call "Ol' Earthbeard."
- Thereafter, we learned that "The crow wished everything was black; the owl that everything was white" (4.63). It can be a metaphor to mean that your original colouring can influence the way you see the world around you.
- Or, it could just be the story about a crow and an owl and their shared hatred of plaid.
- Again, these proverbs were very bit scattered in focus. In general, though, if they reinforce the speaker's idea which desire and freedom is an important part of life.
- The speaker wraps up this section up by commenting on the role of the poets in first describing and thereafter, naming everything in the world—lakes, cities, mushrooms, the works. Only the poetry was up to the challenge of putting the world into words.

- And thus, then along with it came the religion. It also added another level of abstraction that gave deities all the credit for ordering the world.
- As a result, as per the speaker, people forgot that all those gods live in the human imagination.

Check your progress -6

1. What does Proverb of Hell speak about?

12.7 A MEMORABLE FANCY (2)

- In this next section, the speaker is having a meal with both Isaiah and Ezekiel, the biblical prophets
- In between the bites, he also asked them how they knew that God was the one who was talking to them.
- Isaiah further tells him that, while he never saw or heard from God ever, he was still able to sense that infinite nature of the world. Once that happened, Isaiah did not care if the folks believed in whatever he wrote or not.
- Our speaker further wants to know if this is good enough. Does believing that something is right or not to make it true actually?
- Isaiah further tells him that this is what the poets usually believe. That the faith which is used to be enough to move mountains, but these days the folks have lesser conviction.
- Now it's Ezekiel's turn to speak up. He says that all the people of Israel believed that all such belief came from the "Poetic Genius" (5.5), which made them feel that all the other gods and forms of worship were out of the mark.

Notes

- Thus, the fact that now "all nations believe the Jews' code," Ezekiel continues and illustrates that they were right about this (5.6).
- The speaker thinks that Ezekiel also makes a good point.
- Then he asked that the pair which lost the work they would want to share with him, but they both told him that they are not holding back anything as relevant as what they've already written and published.
- Then the speaker hits Isaiah with a hard-hitting question: what made Isaiah walk around barefoot and naked for three years?
- Isaiah has a straightforward answer: it's the same thing that likewise, which is affected by the Diogenes of Greece. They asked a simple question and got a simple solution.
- Then the speaker is curious as to why Ezekiel used to eat the dung and lay down for a very long time on his right and left side.
- Ezekiel says he got an idea from the "North American tribes" (5.9). Thus, he did so to help and encourage others to see the infinite in the same way as he did. Yeah... thanks a lot to Eze, but we will pass on the bad.
- Next, the speaker lets us know that it is true that, after 6,000 years, the world would be destroyed in a fire. He heard that it would just like as in Hell.
- The angel who is in charge of protecting the tree of life shall be commanded to take up a step aside. When he does so, the world will later be destroyed.
- On the plus side of it, it will seem that the "infinite and holy," as opposed to the "finite and corrupt" just like it does now (5.11).
- Also, once the angel steps aside, the folks would be able to enjoy their senses more—party time, for all.
- The speaker further reminds us that the idea that the body and the soul are separate is all a total nonsense. He is going to stamp out that idea through the printing methods, which he picked up in the Hell. Thus, they have an effect of revealing the infinite, which sounds very useful.

- Is it the speaker or us, who is starting to sound a lot like William Blake?
- The speaker also feels like, if the "doors of perception" were cleaned up, everything would be seen as infinite (5.13).
- Trivia note: In 1954, the writer Aldous Huxley wrote a book about his drug use, which is called *The Doors of Perception* and which is based on this line. After that, in the 1960s, the psychedelic rock band "The Doors," which was named themselves after the Huxley's book. So, Blake's poem was indirectly influenced by Jim Morrison, almost 200 years after what he wrote it.
- The speaker ends with the point that people these days have closed themselves off the reality of the world which is around them. They only see the small portion of it, as if they are looking at it through a very narrow cavern.

Check your progress -7

2. What does *A Memorable Fancy* (2) speak about?

12.8 A MEMORABLE FANCY (3)

- In this section, the speaker visits a printing press in Hell, which sounds like a pretty special field trip.
- He also explains the method of printing the finds there:
- In the first, the cave-like room, we have is a "dragon-man," who is cleaning up all the trash while the other dragons are working on hollowing out the chambers. So far, that is very much common.

Notes

- In the next section, he sees a snake which is twisting around a rock while the others decorate it with the silver, gold, and jewels. How else do you expect a printing press to work?
- The third section speaks, "an eagle with wings and feathers of air" (6.4). Got it.
- The eagle is making the room "infinite," whereas the other "eagle-like men" build palaces on huge cliffs. This all seems just perfectly reasonable.
- The next room was that of the "lions of flaming fire"—oh my—which are melting metals into liquid (6.5).
- The chamber five has the "unnamed forms," which have been pouring the liquid metals into the huge casts (6.6.).
- In the six-chambers, these casts taken the form of books. Some of the guys take them and also, organize them into libraries.
- And that, the Shmoopers, is how the Amazon-in-Hell makes its books.
- After the description, we are being told about the Giants who made this world.
- They were also responsible for giving it "its sensual existence," however, now it is like they are all chained up—thanks to "weak and tame minds" (6.7).
- The speaker divides up the existence into two of the parts: the Prolific and the Devouring. A very helpful way to think of these guys is as that the Prolific is very creative and energetic whereas the Devouring is very fearfully repressed.
- Devourers think that the Prolific is in chains, but that is because they don't fully experience life.
- Thus, all the same, the Prolific would always be prolific because the devourers usually take away all "the excess of [their] delights" (6.9).
- It is a bit confusing. However, the idea is that there is a lot of productive, energetic force in humanity (i.e., the Prolific) and a very restraining, denying force (i.e., the Devourer). And it seems that they both need each other so that they can exist.

- If you ask the speaker if God is Prolific, he'll tell you that God only acts in existing beings.
- Even though they both need each other, the speaker says that the Prolific and the Devouring should be enemies.
- The religion tries to put them both together, but Jesus Christ himself wanted them to be at odds.
- The last note is that Satan was once thought to be as one of the founding Giant "Energies" (6.13).

Check your progress – 8

1. What does A Memorable Fancy (3) speak about?

12.9 A MEMORABLE FANCY (4)

- In this section, the speaker gets a visitor—which sounds good.
- It's the angel who comes to him, to warn him about the sad end that he is heading into (i.e., hell and damnation).
- Rather than being afraid, the morbidly curious speaker wants a sneak in at his future punishment, so the angel is obliged.
- They go through stability first and then through a church (that doesn't speak very highly of the churches), and finally gets down into a vault, which has a mill in it.
- They go through the mill and then come to a cave. And, then they make their way to a cavern till they come face to face with "avoid boundlessly" (7.3).
- The speaker and the angel both hang on to the tree roots, drooping over the void—sounds like a good time.

Notes

- The speakers are impatient to see if the Heaven is around or not, but the angel tells him that he is doing to see what is coming to him very soon.
- Then, slowly, an abyss comes into its view—black and shiny.
- The giant spiders are down there which are chasing after the corrupted shapes of various animals, who are running around everywhere. The speaker thereafter calls these "Devils" and "powers of the air" (7.4).
- The speaker also wants to know where he is going to end up with, and the angel then points out a space right between the black and white spiders—sounds cozy.
- The speaker then also sees a giant serpent which moves through the blackness below. Its the forehead which is striped like that of a tiger, only in purple and green. It also opens its mouth and moves toward the speaker and the angel.
- The angel then heads got back towards the mill. When he did so, and the speaker is alone, the scene changes.
- The speaker is now sitting on the moonlit riverbank and is listening to a Harper who is playing a theme called "The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water and breeds reptiles of the mind." It sounds catchy.
- The speaker also goes in search of the angel, who is surprised that the speaker managed to escape from the giant serpent.
- The speaker later tells him as to what happened when the angel left and then suggested that they go and take a look at the angel's face.
- The angel laughs and then also tries to brush off him, but the speaker then grabs the angel and flies west.
- They head towards the sun, and the speaker puts on white clothes. He broke out all of the Swedenborg's books and then lead to a spot in the universe just to past through Saturn. This is where the angel is going to end up, says the speaker.
- They see a stable and the church both, and the speaker heads to the altar.

- He goes through the Bible, which then becomes a "deep pit," and also, they both go down into it (7.10). Don't worry; it's not only you. Things are getting weird here—even for Blake.
- They see the seven brick houses in the pit and then go into one of those.
- In a house, there are a bunch of monkeys, chained up and trying to attack each other. The weak ones that got caught suffer pretty horrible fates (like being raped and eaten).
- Some monkeys are even eating their tails. The place gets stinkier, so they take off into the mill. Wait—that's why you leave the room?
- The speaker had a skeleton in his hand, and it turns out to be *Analytics* by Aristotle.
- The angel got very annoyed with the speaker. Further, the speaker got annoyed with the angel. He says that it is a waste of time to talk to someone who is into Aristotle's *Analytics*.
- Also, the speaker also thinks that angels are full of themselves. They think that they know everything.
- His next point is that Swedenborg further thinks that he is up to something new, but it is just a tired old rehash of other books.
- Swedenborg is like a man who also had a monkey as a pet. No, this is not a Ross from *Friends* comparison. The idea is that, since he is smarter than a monkey, he thinks he's smarter than everyone else—not so.
- Swedenborg also had "not written one new truth," as said by the speaker himself. Also, "he has written all the old falsehoods" (7.16).
- Swedenborg only consulted with the angels only while writing his books. He also never bothered to get the devils' side of things.
- Swedenborg is, thus, only restating its superficial ideas. In the right metaphor, he "only holds a candle in the sunshine" (7.20).
Ooo—take that, Swedie.

Check your progress – 9

Notes

2. What does A Memorable Fancy (4) speak about?

12.10 A MEMORABLE FANCY (5)

- In the final "Memorable Fancy," the speaker speaks to us about a devil which he saw once.
- The demon dude then rose up before the angel and told the angel that the way to worship a God is to honor the gifts and the talents that God has given to all of us.
- To love God is also to enjoy "the greatest men best" (8.1).
- The angel that freaks out for a second on this idea, then replies that Jesus Christ is the greatest man, and he is so worthy of this honor.
- Now it is the devil's turn to throw up. He tells that, if Jesus is the greatest, then, yes, he should be loved appropriately.
- Nevertheless, the devil is not yet done with the speech. He goes into the point out many examples of how Jesus broke the ten commandments, and so he ends with the notion that you can't have virtue without breaking the commandments.
- Jesus, says that the devil was a man of virtue because he was a man of impulse. He was not a stickler for their rules.
- The angel is also agreed by the devil so that he throws up his hands and is changed into a devil on then and there —neat tricks.
- We can thus, learn that this angel was formerly—waiting for it as said by Elijah (8.4).
- We also learn that, after he got converted to a devil-dom, this ex-angel is "my particular friend" (8.5). Given that the language, then, we assumed that the devil in this story had been the speaker all along—tricky, fella, very tricky.

- Elijah-devil and speaker-devil both hang out together, reading the Bible "in its infernal or diabolical sense" (8.6). In other words, they have their interpretation of the Good Book.
- The speaker ends the section with a tease: the world will get this infernal take on the Bible if it behaves. Mind your P's and Q's world.
- No, never mind—the speaker is just joking. You're going to get this book irrespective of whether you like it or not.
- The speaker concludes with a reminder about greatness: "One law for the lion and ox is Oppression" (8.7). In other words, it doesn't make sense to hold everyone accountable to the same rules. It gets back to the earlier point about the importance of honouring "great men."

Check your progress – 10

2. What does A Memorable Fancy (5) speak about?

12.11 A SONG OF LIBERTY

- While some of the versions of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell end after the last Memorable Fancy, the others also include two more sections at the end.
- The first out of these is the ninth section overall—is "A Song of Liberty."
- Also, remember when we told you about Blake's interest in politics, back in "In a Nutshell"? Well, let's go read that if you still haven't.
- In such a case, the section is considered to be as a list of 20 sentences or short paragraphs with regards to the various revolutions going on around the world at the time when Blake was writing this.

Notes

- The speaker thus, describes how "The Eternal Female groan'd" (9.1), which also seems to symbolize various countries that are demanding to be free.
- The speaker also said that the things are too quiet in "Albion," or England (9.2).
- After that, he also calls all the citizens of France and Spain to get rid of the rules of the monarchy and the Catholic Church, respectively.
- The speaker also further describes the "new-born fire," which is located at "the Atlantic sea" (9.8). It is more symbolic to the reference and is newly-independent (i.e., when the Blake was writing, anyway) in America.
- The speaker then calls on to the citizens of London to open their eyes ("enlarge they countenance") (9.12). Then and there is no other way to put this—he calls for the Jews to stop counting the gold. He also called for the "winged thought" to "widen [the] forehead" of the African.
- So... yeah—the speaker has got some backward, racist views going on here.
- The gist of what he is calling for, though, it is that the rest of the world wakes up to the energy of the recent revolutions which took place in France and America.
- What follows is a pretty detailed fantasy in which both "the jealous king" and his buddies are forced to run away, and after that, they are buried in the ruins that they have created (9.12-9.17).
- The king then tries to push through a wasteland with his ten commandments, but his world has changed.
- The speaker also ends with the image of the dawn: "Morning plumes her golden breast" (9.19). The revolution is complete, as per the speaker: "Empire is no more! And the now the lion and the wolf shall cease" (9.20). Any good times are all around, gang.

Check your progress – 11

1. What does the section "A Song of Liberty" speak about?

12.12 CHORUS

- The final section is of the "Chorus," and it is short and sweet.
- The speaker also calls for three things to happen:
- Thing 1: The "Sons of Joy" would get cursed in hoarse voices by "The Priests of the Raven of Dawn" (10.1). In other words, the forces of all the conventional religion (the priests) should mock the new revolutionaries, but that was not possible.
- Thing 2: Tyrants shall no longer be able to set any borders or roofs on anything.
- Thing 3: The religious figures shall stop calling the people that they are virgin if they have any sexual urges, but choose not to act on them.
- In other words: it is down with all your repression, man.
- The speaker still ends on with a positive: "Everything that lives is holy" (10.2). He also celebrates all the creation, not just the people that follow religious rules.
- And with those last famous words, our speaker's tale ended.

Check your progress - 12

1. What is the final section all about of The Marriage between Heaven and Hell?

12.13 INFLUENCE

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is considered to be as one of the most powerful works of Blake. The theologians, aestheticians, and psychologists are very impressed by the vision of a dynamic relationship between a stable "Heaven" and an energized "Hell."

The Doors of Perception by the Aldous Huxley also inspired the name of the most known American rock band The Doors. Huxley's contemporary C. S. Lewis wrote The Great Divorce about the divorce of Heaven and Hell, in response to Blake's Marriage.

According to Michel Surya, the writer Georges Bataille threw pages of Blake's book into the casket of his friend and lover Colette Peignot on her death in 1938.

An allusion from The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, depicting Aristotle's skeleton, is present in Wallace Stevens's poem "Less and Less Human, O Savage Spirit."

Benjamin Britten included several of the Proverbs of Hell in his 1965 song cycle Songs and Proverbs of William Blake.

Infinite Jest by David Foster Wallace features in it an avant-garde film called 'The Pre-Nuptial Agreement of Heaven and Hell.'

Allusions to the work have been considered within the aspects of the popular culture, notably in the counter culture of the 1960s. The avant-garde metal band Ulver had released an album which was a musical setting of this book, named Themes from William Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. The American black metal band Judas Iscariot massively quotes the sections of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in the song "Portions of Eternity Too Great for the Eye of Man" (the title of which itself was taken from a quote from the work of Blake). The band Virgin Steele, the American power metal then released two albums based on the work of Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Part I in 1995 and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Part II in 1996. "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom" has been printed out and got shown in one of the scenes of the film Shivers by David Cronenberg in 1975.

Check your progress – 13

2. What are the theologians, aestheticians, and psychologists impressed by?

12.14 LET US SUM UP

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is considered to be as a guided tour of Hell; wherein Blake sets out to correct the incorrect notions that we have. It is a short and straightforward book of 27 pages and is a collection of brief texts and is accompanied by the engravings which are done by Blake.

The first two sections of the poem are The Argument and The Voice of the Devil. These are the opening pieces, wherein Blake tells us about the good and evil which are not what we think they are. They are different kinds of energies. And both of it is needed to keep the world going. The bible and other religious texts, he says, have been responsible for a lot of the misinformation we've been given.

A Memorable Fancy explains how Blake went on a visit to Hell. He is not the first writer to come up with this idea; both Dante and Milton wrote first-person accounts of their supposed trips to the netherworld. Blake has a very different view of the place, though. To stuffy religious outsiders, he says, Hell might look like it's full of torment, but it's a place where free thinkers can delight and revel in the whole experience of existence. He dines with prophets and receives more information about how philosophers and religious leaders have misinterpreted the truth of Heaven and Hell. Humans also have the capacity for greatness; he further claims that if only they could shed their stodgy and fearful ideas and embrace who they are, both good and bad.

Notes

While he was going around, Blake says that he collected some of the Proverbs of Hell. A proverb is a little catchy saying, usually one with a pithy moral that's supposed to help people remember to do right. The bible has a whole new book of proverbs, and Blake knew that his 18th-century audience would be familiar with them. He uses these little verses to turn the established world on its head, espousing his new vision. For example, while the traditional Christian doctrine had advised people to be humble and also, embrace poverty, as written by Blake. The road of excess also leads to the palace of wisdom. These sayings are satirical or blasphemous, which depend on who is doing such reading.

The book ends with the Song of Liberty, which is a prose poem wherein Blake uses apocalyptic imagery to encourage his readers to embrace change.

12.15 KEYWORDS

- Prolific
- Devouring
- Ezekiel
- Devil
- Shmoopers

12.16 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

4. Describe in detail the Proverbs of Hell.
5. Write a brief summary of The Marriage between Heaven and Hell.
6. How has The Marriage between Heaven and Hell influenced the works of other writers and poets?
7. What is the interpretation of The Marriage between Heaven and Hell by William Blake?

12.17 SUGGESTED READINGS

- Morris Eaves, Robert N. Essick, and Joseph Viscomi (eds.). "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, copy D, object 1 (Bentley 1, Erdman 1, Keynes 1) "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell"". William Blake Archive. Retrieved November 8, 2013.
- Nurmi, 558-562
- William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

12.18 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Rintrah is a character in William Blake's mythology, representing the just wrath of the prophet. (answer for check your progress – 1 Q. 1)
2. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell was composed between 1790 and 1793, in the period of radical ferment and political conflict immediately after the French Revolution. (answer for check your progress – 1 Q. 2)
3. Blake's theory of contraries was not a belief in opposites but rather a belief that each person reflects the contrary nature of God, and that progression in life is impossible without contraries.(answer for check your progress – 2 Q. 3)
4. The two types of people who existed as per the Marriage between Heaven and Hell are the "energetic creators" and the "rational organizers".(answer for check your progress – 2 Q. 4)
5. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell starts off with a section called "The Argument."(answer for check your progress – 3 Q. 5)
6. The Argument part ends with a reminder that the "Good is heaven. Evil would be hell" (answer for check your progress – 4 Q. 6)
7. A Memorable Fancy (1) speaks about the trip to Hell, which sounds like having a blast.(answer for check your progress – 5 Q. 7)

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8. Proverbs of Hell section starts with a list of all the proverbs which our speaker brought back from the Hell.(answer for check your progress – 6 Q. 8)
9. A Memorable Fancy (2) speaks about having a meal with both Isaiah and Ezekiel, the biblical prophets. (answer for check your progress – 7 Q. 9)
10. A Memorable Fancy (3) speaks about the visits to a printing press in Hell, which sounds like a pretty special field trip.(answer for check your progress – 8 Q. 10)
11. A Memorable Fancy (4) speaks about the part wherein it gets a visitor—which sounds good. (answer for check your progress – 9 Q. 11)
12. A Memorable Fancy (5) speaks to us about a devil which he saw once. (answer for check your progress – 10 Q. 12)
13. A Song of Liberty describes how "The Eternal Female groaned", which also seems to symbolize various countries that are demanding to be free. (answer for check your progress – 11 Q. 13)
14. The final section of The Marriage between Heaven and Hell is all about the Chorus. (answer for check your progress – 12 Q. 13)
15. The theologians, aestheticians, and psychologists are very impressed by the vision of a dynamic relationship between a stable "Heaven" and an energized "Hell." (answer for check your progress – 13 Q. 15)

UNIT – 13: KEATS – THE SPRING ODES, TO AUTUMN, LETTERS(1817- 1819)

STRUCTURE

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Ode on a Grecian Urn
- 13.3 Ode on Indolence
- 13.4 Ode on Melancholy
- 13.5 Ode to a Nightingale
- 13.6 Ode to Psyche
- 13.7 To Autumn
- 13.8 Critical Reception
- 13.9 Letters by Keats
- 13.10 Let us Sum up
- 13.11 Keywords
- 13.12 Questions for Review
- 13.13 Suggested Readings
- 13.13 Answers to Check your Progress

13.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- learn about “The Spring Odes, To Autumn” by John Keats.
- and also, about his various letters written by him to his friends and family.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Notes

In 1819, John Keats wrote six odes, which are among his most known and well-regarded poems. Keats wrote the initial five poems, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode on Indolence," "Ode on Melancholy," "Ode to a Nightingale," and "Ode to Psyche" in a quick succession of the spring, and thereafter, he composed "To Autumn" in September. Whilst the claim that they form a thematic whole if they are arranged in a sequence. As a whole, the odes represent the Keats's attempt to make a new type of short lyrical poem, which is influenced by the later generations.

In 1819 early, Keats left his job as a dresser which paid him quite less at the Guy's Hospital, Southwark, London to entirely devote himself to a career in the poetry. In the past, he also relied on his brother George for some financial assistance, however now, when his brother asked to him for the same help, the cash-strapped poet was not able to help and was then overwhelmed with guilt and despair. He then decided to forsake life as a poet for a more profitable career – but not before allowing himself some months of poetic indulgence.

It was only during the months of spring 1819 that he wrote most of his odes. Following the month of May 1819, he started to tackle the other forms of poetry, which included a play, some longer pieces, and also, a return to his unfinished epic, *Hyperion*. His brother's financial woes further continued to loom over him, and thus. As a result, Keats had little energy or an inclination for composition, but, on 19 September 1819, he managed to create *To Autumn*, his last and important work and the one that rang the curtain down on his career as a poet.

After writing the "Ode to Psyche," Keats further sent the poem to his brother and explained his new ode form. Writing these poems had a specific influence on the Keats, as explained by Walter Jackson Bate:

However, felicitous he may have been in writing them, these short poems of one of the greatest of the English lyrists are the by-product of his other efforts; and those habits of both the ideal and practice left him more dissatisfied than he would otherwise have been with the pressure of the most lyric forms toward quick, neat solution [...] The new ode form further appealed also because it was sufficiently confining to challenge his

conscience as a craftsman. Finally, the union of amplitude and the formal challenge offered unique opportunities as well for the concentrated intensity and concreteness of idiom that he had begun to master in Hyperion.

In "Ode to Psyche," Keats further incorporated a narrative structure that sets the scene, gives background information, and thereafter it ends with a conclusion. Out of these structural elements, the preface was later on discontinued in his next odes, and the setting is then reduced within the other odes until the scene is merely implied.

The exact chronological and interpretive orders of these six poems are still unknown, but "Ode to Psyche" was probably the first one which was written by Keats and "To Autumn" was the last one. Keats also simply dated the others as May 1819. However, he also worked on the spring poems together, and thus, they form a sequence within their structures.

13.2 ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Summary

In the first verse, the speaker stands before an ancient Grecian urn and then addresses it. He is further preoccupied with its depiction of pictures which are frozen in time. It is the "still unravish'd bride of quietness," the "foster-child of silence and slow time." He also mentions the urn as a "historian" which can tell a story. He further wonders about the figures on the side of the urn and after that, asks what legend they depict and from where did they come. He looks at a picture which seems to describe a group of men who are asking a group of women and wondering what their story could have been: "What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape? / What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?"

In the second verse, the speaker further looks at another picture on the urn; this time, there is a young man who is playing a pipe and lying with his lover beneath a glade of trees. The speaker then says that the piper's "unheard" melodies are much sweeter than the mortal melodies because they are not affected by the time. He tells that young man that, although he cannot kiss his lover because he is frozen in time, he should not be sad,

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because her beauty would never fade. In the third verse, he looks at the trees surrounding the lovers and feels happy that they will never shed their leaves. He is pleased for the piper because his songs will be “for ever new,” and glad that the love of both the boy and the girl will last till Eternity, unlike the mortal love, which also lapses into a “breathing human passion” and slowly disappears, leaving behind only the “burning forehead, and a parching tongue.”

In the fourth verse, the speaker examines another picture on the urn, this one of a group of villagers which are leading a heifer which is to be sacrificed. He also wonders where they are going (“To what green altar, O mysterious priest...”) and from where they have come in. He also imagines that their little town, empty of all its citizens, and tells it that its streets would “for evermore” be silent, for those who have already left it, frozen on the urn, would never return. In the final verse, the speaker again mentions the urn itself, saying that it, like Eternity, “doth tease us out of thought.” He also thinks that when his generation is long dead, the urn will remain, telling future generations its enigmatic lesson: “Beauty is the truth, truth beauty.” The speaker further says that it is the only thing the urn knows, and the only thing it should know.

Form

“Ode on a Grecian Urn” also follows the same ode-stanza structure as that of the “Ode on Melancholy,” though it is different than the rhyme scheme of the last three lines of each verse. Each of the five verses in “Grecian Urn” is ten lines long, metered in a relatively specific iambic pentameter, and divided into a two-part rhyme scheme, the last of the three lines of which are variable. The first seven lines of each verse follow an ABABCDE rhyme scheme, but the second occurrences of the CDE sounds don't follow the same order. In verse one, lines seven through ten are rhymed DCE; in verse two, CED; in verse three and four, CDE; and in verse five, DCE, just as in verse one. As in other odes, the two-part rhyme scheme makes sense of a two-part thematic structure as well. The first four lines of each of the verse

are roughly defined in the subject of the verse, and the last six roughly explicate or develop it.

13.3 ODE ON INDOLENCE

Summary

In the first verse, Keats's speaker narrates a vision which he had one morning of the three strange figures which were wearing white robes and the "placid sandals." The figures which are passed by in the profile and the speaker relates their passing by comparing them to the figures which are carved into the side of a marble urn, or vase. When the last figure which was passed by, the first figure then reappeared, just as it would have happened if one turned a vase carved with figures before one's eyes.

In the second verse, the speaker mentions the figures directly by asking them how it was that he could not recognize them and how they managed to sneak upon him. He also suspects them of trying to "steal away, and leave without any task" his "idle days," and also, goes on to explain as to how he had passed the morning before their arrival: by enjoying lazily, the summer day in sublime numbness. He further asks the figures why they did not disappear and leave him to this indolent nothingness.

In the third verse, the figures pass by for the third time. The speaker feels a powerful urge to wake up and follow them, because he now can identify them: the first is a "fair maid," Love; the second one is a pale-cheeked Ambition; and the third one, is whom the speaker seems to love despite himself, is the unmeek maiden, the demon Poesy, or poetry. When the figures disappear in the fourth verse, the speaker again aches to follow them. However, he now says that the urge is folly: Love is fleeting, Ambition is mortal, and Poesy has nothing to offer that compares with an indolent summer day untroubled by "busy common-sense."

In the fifth verse, the speaker laments the figures' third passing again, narrating his morning before their arrival, when his soul seemed to have a green lawn sprinkled with flowers, shadows, and sunbeams. There were clouds in the sky, but there was no rainfall, and the open window let in the

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warmth of the day along with the music of the birdsong. The speaker further tells the figures they were right to leave, for they had failed to rouse him. In the sixth verse, he then bids them adieu and thereafter asserts again that Love, Ambition, and Poesy are surely not enough to make him raise his head from its pillow which is in the grass. He then bids them adieu and also tells them that he has a lot of supply of visions; then he further orders them to vanish and never return.

Form

Similar to all the other odes but “To Autumn” and “Ode to Psyche,” “Ode on Indolence” is also written in ten-line verses, in a relatively specific iambic pentameter. Just, like the others (again, with the exception of “Ode to Psyche”), its verses are made up of two parts: an opening four-line sequence of alternating rhymed lines (ABAB), and a six-line sequence with a variable rhyme scheme (in verses one through four, CDECDE; in verse five, CDEDCE; in verse six, CDECED).

13.4 ODE ON MELANCHOLY

Summary

The three verses of the “Ode on Melancholy” address the subject of how to cope with sadness. The first verse tells us what not to do: The sufferer should not “go to Lethe,” or forget their sadness; also, should not commit suicide (nightshade, “the ruby grape of Proserpine,” is a poison; Proserpine is a mythological queen of the underworld); and should not become obsessed with any objects of the Death and misery (the beetle, the death-moth, and the owl). For, the speaker also says, that will make him the anguish of the soul drowsy, and the sufferer would do everything that he can to remain aware of and alert to the depths of his suffering.

In the second verse, the speaker tells the sufferer what to do in place of the things he forbade in the first verse. When further afflicted with “the melancholy fit,” the sufferer would instead overwhelm his grief with the natural beauty which is overloading it on the morning rose, “on the rainbow

of the salt sand-wave,” or in the eyes of his beloved. In the third verse, the speaker further explains these injunctions, saying that the pleasure and the pain are both inextricably linked: Beauty must die, joy is fleeting, and the flower of pleasure is forever “turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips.” Also, the speaker further says that the shrine of the melancholy is inside in the “temple of Delight,” but that it is only then visible if one can get overwhelmed with the joy until it shows its center of sadness, by “burst[ing] Joy’s grape against his palate fine.” The man who can do this will “taste the sadness” of melancholy’s might and “be among her cloudy trophies hung.”

Form

“Ode on Melancholy,” is the shortest of Keats’s odes, is written in a very regular form that matches its logical, argumentative thematic structure. Each verse is ten lines long and metered in a relatively precise iambic pentameter. The first two verses, offering an advice to the sufferer, who follows the same rhyme scheme, which is ABABCDECDE; the third, which further explains the advice, vary the ending slightly, also following a scheme of the ABABCDEDCE, so that the rhymes of the eighth and ninth lines are also reversed in order from the earlier two verses. As in some other odes, the two-part rhyme scheme of each verse makes sense of a two-part thematic structure as well, wherein the first four lines of each verse define the verses subject to and the latter six develop it.

Check your progress – 1

1. What do the three verses of the “Ode on Melancholy” address?

13.5 ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Notes

Summary

The speaker further comes up with a declaration of his own heartache. He further feels numb, as though he had taken up a drug only some time ago. He is also addressing a nightingale which he hears singing somewhere in the forest and then says that the “drowsy numbness” is not from the jealous nightingale’s happiness, but rather from sharing it too completely; he is also “too happy” that the nightingale also sings the music of the summer from amidst some unseen plot of green trees and shadows.

Also, in the second verse, the speaker gets long for the oblivion of the alcohol, expressing his wish for a wine, “a draught of vintage,” that would taste like the country and also, like peasant dances, and let him “leave the world unseen” and disappear into the dim forest with the nightingale. In the third verse, he further explains his desire to fade away, saying that he would like to forget all the troubles the nightingale had ever known: “the weariness, the fever, and the fret” of the human life, with its consciousness that everything is mortal and that nothing lasts. Youth “grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies,” and “beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes.”

In the fourth verse, the speaker further tells the nightingale to fly away, and he will then follow, not through alcohol, but through poetry, which will give him the “viewless wings.” He says that he is already with the nightingale and then describes the forest glade, wherein even the moonlight gets hidden by the trees, except the light which breaks through when the breezes blow away the branches. In the fifth verse, the speaker says that he is not able to see the flowers in the glade, but can also guess them that “in embalmed darkness”: white Hawthorne, eglantine, violets, and the musk-rose, “the murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.” In the sixth verse, the speaker also listens in the dark to the nightingale which is saying that he has seems to be “half in love” with the idea of a dying and called Death soft names in many of the rhymes. It is surrounded by the nightingale’s song; the speaker also thinks that the idea of Death also seems much richer than ever, and also, he longs to “cease upon the midnight with no pain” while the nightingale further pours its soul ecstatically forth. If he was to die, the nightingale

would also continue to sing, he says, but he would love to “have ears in vain” and be no longer able to hear.

In the seventh verse, the speaker further tells the nightingale that it is immortal, that it was not “born for death.” He says that the voice which he hears singing as always has been heard, by ancient emperors and clowns, by homesick Ruth; he also even says that the song has often charmed the open magic windows looking out over “the foam / Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.” In the eighth verse, the word forlorn tells like a bell to restore the speaker from his preoccupation with that of the nightingale and back into himself. As the nightingale flies away from him, he also groans that his imagination has further failed him and further says that he can no longer recall whether such nightingale’s music was “a vision or a waking dream.” Now since the music is not there, the speaker is not able to recall whether he himself is awake or asleep.

Form

Just like the other odes, “Ode to a Nightingale” is also written in ten-line verses. However, just like most of the other poems, it is metrically variable—although not so much as the “Ode to Psyche.” The initial seven and last two lines of each verse are written in iambic pentameter; the eighth line of each verse is written in trimeter, with only three accented syllables instead of five. “Nightingale” also varies from the other odes in that its rhyme scheme is the same in every verse. Each verse in “Nightingale” is rhymed with ABABCDECDE, Keats’s most basic scheme throughout the odes.

Check your progress – 2

1. How is each verse in “Ode to a Nightingale” rhymed?

13.6 ODE TO PSYCHE

Summary

Keats's speaker starts the poem by addressing to the goddess Psyche, and urging her to hear his words, and also, asking that she should forgive him for singing to her, his own secrets. He says that while wandering in the forest that very day, he bumped upon "two fair creatures" which were lying side by side in the grass, under a "whisp'ring roof" of leaves which were surrounded by the flowers. They hugged one another with both their arms and wings and although their lips did not touch, they were really very close to one another and ready "past kisses to outnumber." The speaker also says that he knew the winged boy, but also asks who the girl was. He then answers his own question: She was Psyche.

In the second verse, the speaker mentions the Psyche again, narrating her to be as the youngest and the most beautiful of all the Olympian goddesses and gods. He further believes this, he also says, that despite the fact that, unlike other divinities, Psyche had none of the trappings of worship: She had no temples, no altars, no choir to sing for her, and many other. In the third verse, the speaker provides this lack to Psyche's youth; she has come into a world which is too late for "the antique vows" as well as the "fond believing lyre." But also, the speaker says that even in the fallen days of his own time, he would like to pay the homage to the Psyche and become her choir, her music, and also her oracle. In the fourth verse, he further continues with these declarations, saying that he will become Psyche's priest and also, build her a temple in an "untrodden region" of his own mind, a region which is surrounded by the thought which resembles the beauty of the nature and tended by "the gardener Fancy," or imagination. He also promises Psyche that "all soft delight" and says that the window of her new abode will be kept open at night so that her winged boy can have "the warm Love" and can come in.

Form

The four verses of the "Ode to Psyche" were written in the loosest form of any of Keats's odes. The verses change in the number of lines, rhyme scheme, and metrical scheme, and also, convey the effect of spontaneous rhapsody, which is rather than considered form. The lines are more iambic, but also vary from diameter to pentameter; the most common of the rhymes are in alternating lines (ABAB), however, there are many exceptions, and there are also many even unrhymed lines. The number of the lines in a stanza are simply organic and also irregular; verse one has 23 lines, verse two has 12, verse three has 13, and verse four has 18.

In the first verse, every line is written in iambic pentameter except lines 12, 21, and 23. The whole rhyme scheme is ABAB CDCD EFGEEGH IIJJ KIKI. It can also essentially be broken into 5 parts: two pairs of four-line, alternating rhymes (ABAB CDCD), a looser seven-line sequence which includes rhythmic irregularity and also, two unrhymed words (EFGEEGH, with the trimeter inline 12 and further the unrhymed words "roof" at the end of line 10 and also, the "grass" at the end of line 15), two couplets (IIJJ), and also a final four-line section which are alternating rhymes (KIKI), differing then the first in that the "I" rhyme-lines (which matches the rhymes of the first couplet as mentioned above) are much shorter than the "K" lines, with the trimeter of line 21 and the diameter of line 23.

The second verse is shorter and is much simpler. It also follows a very strict alternating rhyme scheme: ABAB CDCD EFEF and the only irregularities are further metrical, with the two trimeters, lines 6 and 8. The result is that the CDCD part of the verse varies a little from the others; the D-lines are much shorter. The third verse has trimeters in lines 10, 12, and 13; other than that, the verse which is written in iambic pentameter. Its rhyme scheme is the ABAB CDDCEF GHGH. This is much more relatively self-explanatory, except the "moan" and "hours," the E- and F-lines (lines 9 and 10) do not have specific matches; "moan" rhymes are roughly with the "fans" and the "Olympians," and the "hours" which rhymes roughly with the "vows" and the "boughs," but neither of such matches is as certain as the

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other rhymes in the verse if these rhymes "count," the rhyme scheme of the verse would be written as ABAB CDDCDA EFEF.

The final verse has trimeters in lines 16 and 18 and also follows a relatively very simple and a natural rhyme scheme: ABAB CDCD EE FGFG HIHI. In other words, each of the section is of four lines long, and it alternates the rhyming lines, except for the EE couplet in lines 9 and 10.

It is essential to note that a large number of irregularities and long algebraic rhyme schemes in this ode would not be taken as signs of great formal complexity. "Ode to Psyche" is more freely and loosely written by than any of the Keats's other odes, and the fact that it is very difficult to schematize the testifies to this spontaneity and freedom which is rather than to an elaborate preconceived formal scheme. The other odes, although their verses and rhyme schemes are much easier to explain in terms of the form, are much more strictly ordered and make much deeper use of strict form than does the "Ode to Psyche." There is little to gain from the long formal analysis of the Psyche ode; its form is better than the understood in the loose and general terms in which it seems to have been planned.

13.7 TO AUTUMN

Summary

Keats's speaker starts his first verse by addressing the Autumn, and narrating its abundance and also, its intimacy with the sun, along with whom the Autumn ripens the fruits and also, causes the late flowers to bloom. In the second verse, the speaker relates the figure of the Autumn as a female goddess, which is often seen sitting on the granary floor, her hair "soft-lifted" by the wind, and also, often seen sleeping in the fields or watching a cider-press which squeezes the juice from those apples. In the third verse, the speaker says to Autumn not to wonder where the songs of spring have gone, but rather to listen to her own music. At twilight, the "small gnats" sing among the "the river shallows," or willow trees, lifted and dropped by the wind, and "full-grown lambs" bleat from the hills, the crickets sing, the

robins whistle from the garden, and the swallows, gather for their coming migration and sing from the skies.

Form

Like the "Ode on Melancholy," "To Autumn" is also written in a three-verse structure with a variable rhyme scheme. Each verse is eleven lines long, which is as opposed to ten in "Melancholy," and each is further metered in a relatively precise iambic pentameter. In terms of both the thematic organization and the rhyme scheme, each verse is divided roughly into two parts. In each verse, the first part is made up of the first four lines of the verse, and the second part is made up of the last seven lines. The first part of each verse goes on as an ABAB rhyme scheme, the first line which rhymes with the third, and the second line which is rhyming with that of the fourth. The second part of each verse is even longer and varies in the rhyme scheme: The first verse is arranged CDEDCCE, and the second and third verses are arranged in CDECDDE. (Thematically, the first part of each verse provides to define the subject of the verse, and the second part further gives room for musing, development, and speculation on the subject; but, this thematic division is very general.)

Check your progress – 3

2. How is "To Autumn" written?

13.8 CRITICAL RECEPTION

Keats' utilization of the odal song in his six odes, alongside his utilization of the odal psalm with a response voice in "Ode to a Grecian Urn" and "Ode to a Nightingale," made, as indicated by Walter Jackson Bate, "a new tone for the English lyric." Bate, when talking about the 1819 odes, expressed: "The

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productivity of the three and a half weeks that starts on April 21 is difficult to parallel in the career of any modern writer. Yet to Keats it was not even a new beginning. It was rather a matter of becoming more alive in preparation for the next beginning" what's more, Bate contended that "It is on the grounds that "To Autumn" is so extraordinarily a refining, and at a wide range of levels, that every age has thought that it was one of the most almost ideal sonnets in English. We need not fear to proceed to utilize the descriptive word [...] The 'Ode to a Nightingale,' for instance, is a less 'impeccable' however a more noteworthy poem." Charles Patterson contended the relationship of "Ode on a Grecian Urn" as the best 1819 ode of Keats, "The seriousness and scope of the lyric, alongside its controlled execution and capably suggestive symbolism, qualifies it for a high place among Keats' extraordinary odes. It does not have the even completion and extraordinary flawlessness of "To Autumn" however is much better in these characteristics than the "Ode to a Nightingale" regardless of the enchantment sections in the last mentioned and the similitude of the general structure. Truth be told, the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" may have the right to rank first in the gathering whenever saw in something moving toward its actual multifaceted nature and human wisdom." Later, Ayumi Mizukoshi contended that early crowds did not bolster "Ode to Psyche" since it "ended up being excessively reflexive and disguised to be delighted in as a legendary picture. For a similar reason, the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" drew neither consideration nor esteem. Herbert Grierson accepted "Nightingale" to be better than different odes since it and "To Autumn" was increasingly legitimate and contained more grounded arguments. Although the writer is looking around the outside of the urn in every verse, the sonnet can't promptly be devoured as a progression of 'idylls.'"

13.9 LETTERS BY KEATS

Keats' letters were first decoded in 1848 and 1878. During the nineteenth century, pundits esteemed them dishonourable of consideration, diversions from his wonderful works. During the twentieth century, they turned out to

be nearly as appreciated and concentrated as his poetry, and are profoundly respected inside the ordinance of English abstract correspondence. T. S. Eliot depicted them as "unquestionably the most outstanding and most significant at any point composed by any English poet." Keats invested a lot of energy thinking about verse itself, its builds and effects, showing a profound premium strange among his milieu who were all the more effectively diverted by mysticism or governmental issues, styles or science. Eliot composed of Keats' decisions; "There is not one articulation of Keats' about verse which ... won't be observed to be valid, and what is progressive, valid for more prominent and more develop verse than anything Keats ever wrote."

Maybe a couple of Keats' letters are surviving from the period before he joined his artistic circle. From spring 1817, in any case, there is a rich record of his productive and noteworthy abilities as a letter writer. Keats and his companions, artists, pundits, authors, and editors kept in touch with one another day by day, and Keats' thoughts are bound up in the normal, his everyday messages sharing news, spoof and social critique. They sparkle with cleverness and basic intelligence. Born of an "unself-conscious stream of consciousness," they are incautious, loaded with the consciousness of his inclination and his frail spots. When his sibling George went to America, Keats kept in touch with him in incredible detail, the group of letters is turning into "the real diary" and self-revelation of Keats', just as containing a work of his way of thinking, and the primary drafts of lyrics containing a portion of Keats' best composition and thought. Gittings portrays them as likened to a "spiritual journal" not composed for a particular other, to such an extent concerning synthesis.

Keats additionally pondered the foundation and synthesis of his verse, and explicit letters regularly match with or foresee the sonnets they describe. In February to May 1819, he created huge numbers of his best letters". Writing to his sibling George, Keats investigated the possibility of the world as "the value of Soul-making," envisioning the incredible odes that he would think of certain months later. In the letters, Keats instituted thoughts, for example, the Mansion of Many Apartments and the Chameleon Poet, ideas that came

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to increase basic cash and catch the open creative mind, in spite of just showing up as expressions in his correspondence.

Keats has almost 240 surviving letters that were sent to family and friends. These letters were the typify the predominant nineteenth-century means of communication which contained his everyday inquiries about social planning, health and arrangements, and some general gossip. His poetry also had many passages of literary interest which were often seen in the drafts of these poems—some of these are written in verse. He also discusses his personal relationship with the poetry, the theories of Beauty and Truth, Negative Capability, the Imagination, and Soul making. He shows a talent for the literary criticism while discussing Wordsworth, Milton, and Shakespeare. The latter is his favourite writer, which explains the many quotations from his plays, and the biblical and classical references in his letters. The surviving letters of him which are written mainly over the last five years of his life, show his loving family connections, his joyful comradeship with his friends, and also, his passion for the Fanny Brawne. Unfortunately, many family deaths, money problems, ill-health, and quarrelling friends were also present. When we read about Keats' reactions to the poetic criticism, we get an idea of the "ardours" of writing along with some sharp comments on women.

Selected recipients include:

Benjamin Bailey

George and Thomas Keats

John Hamilton Reynolds

George and Georgiana Keats

Fanny Brawne

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Charles Brown

John Taylor

Richard Woodhouse

The Importance of the Letters

Keats' contemporaries also wrote certain essays and the prefaces in defence of poetry, but Keats did not. He is also known for the luxurious and very sensational quality of his poems. Such works of "art for art's sake" leave an impression of a very young sensual poet who lacks the depth. When the biography was first published almost 30 years after his death, the letters showed the depth to which he had thought about poetry and life. Norton also claimed that Keats had explored every seed of thought that he and his friends Cole and Hazlitt had discussed, and these letters do indeed show that no examination of any subject was final. He was always pursuing new meaning.

T. S. Eliot also believed that his judgment of poetry to be "genius" for a man so young. His 'philosophic mind' had allowed him to shed his ego and also, "let the mind be a thoroughfare for all thoughts." Walter Jackson Bate further believed that this saved him from not having to reject any thought which cannot be "wrenched into a ...systematic structure of one's own making." Lionel Trilling also wrote that in Keats, "We have the wisdom of maturity arising from the preoccupations of youth." Keats spent his short life in discussing and pursuing the "burden of the mystery."

On Being a Poet

"I have asked myself so often why I should be a Poet more than other Men, – seeing how great a thing it is, – how great things are to be gained by it – What a thing to be in the Mouth of Fame – that at last the Idea has grown so monstrously beyond my seeming Power of attainment that the other day I nearly consented with myself to drop into a Phaeton – yet 'is a disgrace to fail even in a huge attempt, and at this moment I drive the thought from me."

Poet was also clearly the dominant power and driving force behind Keats' very short life. He also writes passionately to his friends about his ambitions, poetry and death, and his dedication towards literary achievement. At one point of time, he also writes, "I read and write about eight hours a day." and also expresses his dedication for perfection while he states, "...truth is I have been in such a state of mind as to read over my Lines and hate them."

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In the letters to his colleagues and his brother, the poetic outlook on life and nature is outstanding and also shows that it is possible to get the perfect representation of a poetic existence. On June 25-27, 1818, John Keats also writes to his brother that: “I shall learn poetry here and shall henceforth write more than ever, for the abstract endeavour of being able to add a mite to that mass of beauty which is harvested from these grand materials, by the finest spirits, and put into ethereal existence for the relish of one’s fellows.” Keats is very seemingly aware of his gift and also, strives to be perfect for his existing talents in order to achieve and also, to exude what it truly is to be, in the mind of an enlightened poet.

Negative Capability

Keats also explains negative capability as “when a man is capable of being in Mysteries, doubts, uncertainties, without any irritable reaching after the fact and reason.” On a very personal level, the poetry is shaped by a writer’s personal interests and also the beliefs. Objectively, however, the poet is very receptive to the “uncertainties” of experience, like death, sickness or unknowing. Any contrariness can be overcome by Beauty. He also believed that Shakespeare was also a master of seeing the truth in all the honesty of its contradictions. In a letter to Richard Woodhouse in October 1818, Keats exclaims that the poet is a “(camelion... is it supposed to be chameleon?),” relishing the dark side along with the bright “because of they both end in speculation.” He has “as much delight in conceiving an Iago as an Imogen.” “A poet needs to show some of the truth and pleasure and also, can overcome any unpleasant aspect,” and just as a philosopher or the scientist arrives on a conclusion, a poem must also be a conclusive work, and Beauty is what enables him to arrive at a complete work of art.

“Truth is Beauty”

As per The Norton Anthology, this expression could also be known as “beauty is a reality” or “beauty is real,” which actually brings down to the fact that Beauty is all around us. “O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts!” Since the publication of the “Ode to Grecian Urn,” in 1819, it is one of the most widely and deeply discussed lines which has been, “Beauty

is the truth, truth beauty,' -that is all/ Ye know on earth and all ye need to know." The statement also becomes "true" for every person when beautiful moments take place. These instants of Beauty are always associated with live actions and are consequently interpreted in an infinite amount of ways. The message that Keats wishes to convey is that poetry can be a mode for the expression of Beauty. In a letter to both his brother as well as the sister in 1819, he wrote, "The great beauty of Poetry is, that it makes everything every place interesting." A few years before "Grecian Urn," Keats also wrote a letter to Benjamin Bailey which documented the beginnings of the Beauty or truth theology, "What the imagination seizes as Beauty must be the truth." If Beauty is true, it also raises a good question. What is Beauty? It is no definitive thing. We may be able to find instances of the Beauty, but Beauty itself is merely a concept. The concept is very truthful to each human individually. This transcendent view of Beauty is something that marked the Romantic period of British literature.

Keats further believed that experience was the key in finding our souls, that our hearts and minds arrive at the divinity in this world. He didn't believe that we struggle in the "vale of tears" and that we are taken to heaven by God. "What a little circumscribed and straightened notion," he further writes to his brother and sister-in-law in 1819. Our intelligence is "sparks of the divinity..atoms of perception" that know, see our God. They 'become' souls "by the medium of a world like this." The world is also like a school of the learning wherein our heart through circumstances learns to have a soul. Man's heart is checked by his experience, and his altered nature is his Soul.

13.10 LET US SUM UP

"Ode on a Grecian Urn" is a meditation on the perfect and timeless ideal versus the imperfect which lived in reality. Keats also addressed the urn directly and also, wondered aloud what real scenes the illustrations on it describe.

In "Ode to a Nightingale," Keats described his dismay of not being able to live in the ideal world as that of the nightingale. The nightingale's song

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further has been heard by people across millennia, is ageless and perfect; Keats concludes that the bird, unlike the human race, "was not born for death."

In "Ode to Psyche," Keats described his fictional encounter with Psyche and her lover, Cupid/Eros, during a forest walk. Psyche also having been considered as one of the last goddesses to join the Greek Pantheon, does not have a temple. Keats also promised to build her one in his mind.

In "Ode on Melancholy," Keats advised those who experience the melancholic states. Also, rather than avoid melancholy, such individuals should embrace it as a means of encountering "the Beautiful."

"Ode on Indolence" described his' encounter with three mystical female figures: Love, Ambition, and Poesy. These three further try to convince him to abandon the summer indolence, but he wishes them away, convinced that he would find more enjoyment in laziness than in any contentment they could give him.

"To Autumn" is considered to be as homage to the season named in its title. Keats also personifies autumn in various ways -- as a gleaner/sower, reaper, and cider-presser - and assures the season that, though it may not possess the fresh songs of spring, it does have its own music.

In the Letter to J.H. Reynolds, Keats described his theory of knowledge and of the human experience of the world. The intellect is also a "Mansion of Many Apartments." The first chamber (room) is the Infant Thought, in which one does not learn or analyze anything deeply. In the second chamber, the suffering of the world has been exposed. After the door open to the other hallways, one is drenched in darkness and does not know where each hallway leads.

In the Letter to Richard Woodhouse, Keats described the nature of a poet that a poetic artist is a "Cameleon" (chameleon) who can blend into any environment where he finds himself. The "poetical nature" is a lack of nature itself; poets are blank slates, pure speculation.

In the Letters to George and Tom Keats, Keats described "negative capability," which is, the capacity of an artist to observe the amazing without trying to situate it in any of the logical or philosophical structure.

The pursuit of knowledge always detracts from an artist's work rather than beauty.

13.11 KEYWORDS

- Philosophical
- Psalm
- Couplet
- Thematic
- Argumentative

13.12 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- Explain the summary and form of “Ode to a Nightingale”.
- Write a summary of “Ode to Psyche”.
- Explain the summary of “Ode on Melancholy”.

13.13 SUGGESTED READINGS

- Bate (1963), 63.
- Keats, John; Gittings, Robert (1970). The odes of Keats and their earliest known manuscripts. Kent State University Press. ISBN 978-0873380997.
- Motion (1997) pp204-5.
- A preface to Keats (1985) Cedric Thomas Watts, Longman, University of Michigan p90.
- Keats' letter to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817.

13.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Notes

- The three verses of the “Ode on Melancholy” address the subject of how to cope with sadness.(answers to check your progress – 1 Q. 1)
- Each verse in “Ode to a Nightingale” is rhymed with ABABCDECDE.(answers to check your progress – 2 Q. 2)
- "To Autumn" is written in a three-verse structure with a variable rhyme scheme. (answers to check your progress – 3 Q. 3)

UNIT – 14: SHELLEY- PROMETHEUS UNBOUND [SELECTIONS AS IN FIFTEEN POETS]

STRUCTURE

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 About Prometheus Unbound
- 14.3 Act I
- 14.4 Act II
- 14.5 Act III
- 14.6 Act IV
- 14.7 Themes
- 14.8 Let us Sum up
- 14.9 Keywords
- 14.10 Questions for Review
- 14.11 Suggested Readings
- 14.12 Answers to Check your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVES

Once you go through this unit, you should be able to:

- learn about “Prometheus Unbound” by Percy Shelley and its various Acts and also, about its themes.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Born on 4th August 1792, Percy Shelley has been one of the major English Romantic poets, who is considered by some as amongst the most beautiful lyric and philosophical poets in the English language, and

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also, as one of the most important ones. A radical in the poetry as well as in his political and social views, Shelley did not see the fame during the lifetime, but the recognition of his achievements in poetry grew over the period steadily after his death. Shelley was an essential member of a close circle of visionary poets and writers which also included John Keats, Leigh Hunt, Lord Byron, Thomas Love Peacock and his second wife, Mary Shelley, who was the author of *Frankenstein*. Shelley is known for the classic poems like "Ode to the West Wind," "Ozymandias," "Music, When Soft Voices Die," "To a Skylark," "The Cloud" and "The Masque of Anarchy." His other significant works also consist of a groundbreaking verse drama, *The Cenci*, and long, visionary, philosophical poems like *Queen Mab* (which was later reworked as *The Daemon of the World*), *The Revolt of Islam*, *Adonais*, *Alastor*, *Prometheus Unbound* which were widely considered to be his

Masterpiece –, *Hellas: A Lyrical Drama* and his final, unfinished work, *The Triumph of Life* (1822). The close circle of friends of Shelley included some of the most significant and progressive thinkers of the day, which included his father-in-law, the philosopher William Godwin, and Leigh Hunt. Though Shelley's poetry and prose output also remained steady throughout his life, most publishers and journals denied publishing his work for fear of being arrested either for blasphemy or sedition. Shelley's poetry sometimes also had only an underground readership during his day. However, his poetic achievements are widely known today, and his political and social thought had an impact on the Chartist as well as the other movements in England, and which reached down to the present day. Shelley's theories of economics and morality, for instance, also had a profound influence on Karl Marx; his early – perhaps initial writings on non-violent resistance influenced Leo Tolstoy, whose writings on the subject, in turn, were influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, and through him the Martin Luther King Jr. and others practicing the nonviolence during the American civil rights movement.

Shelley became a lodestar to the subsequent three or four generations of the poets, which included important Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite poets

like Robert Browning as well as Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He was admired by Thomas Hardy, George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Leo Tolstoy, Bertrand Russell, W. B. Yeats, Upton Sinclair, and Isadora Duncan.[3] Henry David Thoreau's Civil Disobedience was influenced by Shelley's writings and the theories on nonviolence in protest and political action. Shelley's popularity and influence continued to grow in contemporary poetry circles.

Check your Progress – 1

1. When was Percy Shelley born?

ss14.2 ABOUT PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

Prometheus Unbound is a four-act lyrical drama by Percy Bysshe Shelley which was first published in 1820. It is also concerned with the torments of the Greek mythological figure Prometheus, who defies the gods and also, gives fire to humanity, for which he is also, subject to eternal punishment and suffering at the hands of Zeus. It is also inspired by the classical Prometheia, a trilogy of plays which was attributed to Aeschylus. Shelley's play also concerns Prometheus' release from captivity, but unlike Aeschylus' version, there is no reconciliation between Prometheus and Jupiter. Instead, Jupiter is further abandoned by the supportive elements and falls from power, which allows Prometheus to be released.

Shelley's play is a closet drama which means it was not intended to be produced on the stage. In the tradition of Romantic poetry, Shelley also wrote for the imagination, designing the play's staging to stay in the imaginations of the readers. However, the play is filled with the suspense, mystery, and other dramatic effects that make it, in theory, performable.

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Mary Shelley, in a letter on 5th September 1818, was the first to describe her husband Percy Shelley's writing of the *Prometheus Unbound*. On 22nd September 1818, Shelley, while in Padua, also wrote to Mary, who was at Este, requesting that "The sheets of 'Prometheus Unbound,' which would be found as numbered from one to twenty-six on the table of the pavilion."

There is also a little other evidence as to when Shelley further began *Prometheus Unbound* while he was living in Italy, but, Shelley first mentioned his progress in a letter to Thomas Love Peacock on 8th October 1818: "I have been writing – and indeed have just finished the first act of a lyrical and classical drama, which is going to be called as 'Prometheus Unbound.'" Shelley also stopped working on the poem following the death of his daughter Clara Everina Shelley which took place on 24th September 1818. After her death, Shelley also began to travel across Italy, and would also not progress with the drama until after 24th January 1819. By April, the majority of the play got completed, and Shelley wrote to Peacock on 6th April 1819:

"My Prometheus Unbound is just finished, and in a month or two, I shall send it." Also, Shelley further wrote to Leigh Hunt to tell him that the play was all finished. However, the play was not yet printed; Shelley would also be delayed in editing and finishing of the work by another death, that of his son William Shelley, who died on 7th June 1819. On 6th September 1819, Shelley wrote to Charles and James Ollier to say, "My 'Prometheus,' which has been long finished has now being transcribed, and will soon be forwarded to you for publication."

The play was also delayed in publication, because John Gisborne, whom Shelley trusted while going to England with the text, delayed his journey. It was also not until December 1819 that the manuscript with the first 3 acts of Prometheus Unbound was sent to England. The fourth act was further incomplete by this time, and on 23rd December 1819, Shelley also wrote to Gisborne, "I have just finished an additional act to 'Prometheus' which Mary is now transcribing, and which will be enclosed for your inspection before it is transmitted to the Bookseller."

While in Italy, Shelley became more concerned about the progress of publishing *Prometheus Unbound*. He wrote several letters to Charles Ollier from March till April asking about the drama's progress. And, also wanted to know if the text was accurate because he was not able to check the proofs himself. Both the Percy and Mary Shelley was eager to hear when the book was published and also, inquired Gisborne's wife, Thomas Medwin, and John Keats about its release throughout July 1820. It was not till late August that they received word that the book got published. They were also eager to read the published version and obtained one by November 1820. After they procured a copy, Shelley also wrote to the Olliers on 10th November 1820: "Mr. Gisborne has sent me a copy of the 'Prometheus,' which is certainly the most beautifully printed. It is to be regretted that the errors of the press are so numerous and in many respects so destructive of the sense of a species of poetry which, I fear, even with this disadvantage, very few will understand or like." A corrected edition was sent on 20th January 1821 along with a letter from the Shelley that explains "the Errata of Prometheus," which is supposed to have sent along since – a formidable list, as you will see." Also, Shelley also did not forget the printing errors and even criticized Charles Ollier later when Shelley sent *Adonais* to be published.

Æschylus

Shelley's introduction to the play explains his intentions behind the work and defends the artistic freedom he has taken in his adaptation of Aeschylus' myth:

The "Prometheus Bound" of Æschylus supposed to the reconciliation of Jupiter with his victim as per the price of the disclosure of danger which was threatened to his empire by the consummation of his marriage with Thetis. Thetis, as per this view of the subject was given in marriage to Peleus, and Prometheus, by the permission of Jupiter which was delivered from his captivity by Hercules. Had I framed up the story on this model, I should have done no more than having attempted to restore the lost the drama of Æschylus; an ambition which, if my preference to this mode of treating the

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subject had also incited me to cherish, the recollection of the high comparison. Such an attempt would challenge the might well abate. But, in truth, I was also averse from a catastrophe so that feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the oppressor of the mankind. The moral interest of the fable that is powerfully sustained by all the sufferings and the endurance of Prometheus would also be annihilated if we could conceive of him as unsaying his high language and thus, quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary.

When Shelley also wrote Prometheus Unbound, the authorship of the Prometheus and also its connection was a trilogy and was not in question. Of the three works, Prometheus Bound is considered to be as the only tragedy which survived intact, although fragments of Prometheus Unbound remained which allowed a reasonably, detailed outline which is based on the Prometheus myth and which is told by Hesiod and the extensive prophesying in the first work. It is this assumed trilogy, which includes Prometheus' reconciliation with Zeus, thought to occur in the final part of the cycle, which Shelley considered as the introduction.

14.3 ACT I

Act I starts in the Indian Caucasus where the Titan Prometheus is also bound to a rock face, and also, the Oceanides Panthea and Ione surround him. As morning breaks, the Prometheus cried out against the "Monarch of Gods and Daemons," Jupiter and his tyrannous kingship. From his bound position, the Prometheus also claims to be higher than Jupiter before relating the suffering which he has to the conditions of nature, including the Earth, Heaven, Sun, Sea, and Shadow. He also turns to how quality which has helped in his torture along with the constant tearing at his flesh by the "Heaven's winged hound," the Hawks of Jupiter. As he accounts his sufferings all the more, he further reaches a peak of declaring that he should remember "The curse / Once breathed on thee..." Four voices, from the springs, air, mountains, and whirlwinds, respond to Prometheus through

describing that how they see the world and, how that "we sat back: for dreams
of ruin / To frozen caves our flight pursuing / Made us keep
silence." The Earth then joins in to describe the parts of the world cried
out "Misery!"

Prometheus further reflects on the voices before returning to his suffering at
Jupiter's hands and recalling his love for Oceanid Asia. Very soon after that,
he demands to hear his curse against the Jupiter, and the Earth tells that
the Prometheus "I dare not speak like life, lest Heaven's fell King / should
hear, and link me to some wheel of pain / more torturing than the one
whereon I roll" and also that he is "more than God / Being wise and
kind." Prometheus asked who he is talking to, and the Earth further admits to
being the mother of all who suffers under Jupiter's tyranny. Prometheus also
praises her but demands that she recalls the curse which he laid upon Jupiter.
The Earth responds by describing the Zoroaster and that there are two
realities: the current and the shadow reality which exists "Till death unite
them, and they part no more." She then mentions the Demogorgon, "the
supreme Tyrant" of the shadow realm, and asks the Prometheus to call upon
the "Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter, / Hades, or Typhon or what
mightier Gods / from all-prolific Evil" if he also wishes to hear his curse
which is spoken again.

Taking her advice, Prometheus also calls upon the Phantasm of Jupiter and
Ione and Panthea describes the phantasm's appearance soon after that. The
phantasm first also asked, "Why have the secret/powers of this strange world
/ Driven me, a frail and empty phantom, hither / On direst
storms?" Prometheus further commands
that the phantasm should recall the curse against Jupiter, and the phantasm
obeys:

Friend, I defy thee! With a calm, fixed mind,
All that thou canst inflict I bid thee do;
Foul Tyrant both of Gods and Human-kind,
One only being shalt thou not subdue...
Thou art omnipotent.

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O'er all things but thyself I gave thee power,
And my own will...
I curse thee! let a sufferer's curse
Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse;
'Till thine Infinity shall be
A robe of envenomed agony;
And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain,
To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain.

After hearing such words, Prometheus further regrets and claims that "I wish no living thing to suffer pain." The Earth laments that the Prometheus is angry, and it alone responds by such claims that he has not been, but both were interrupted by the appearance of the Mercury.

With him appeared a group of Furies who hoped to torture Prometheus, but Mercury also keeps them from interfering as he brings the message from the Jupiter: "I come, by the great Father's will drive down, / To execute a doom of new revenge." Although Mercury further admits pitying the Prometheus, he is bound to oppose the Prometheus who also stands against the Jupiter. He asks the Prometheus to reveal the secret of Jupiter's fate only for the Prometheus further knows, and Prometheus refuses to submit as per Jupiter's will. Mercury tries to barter with the Prometheus, offering him the pleasure of being free from bondage and being welcomed amongst the gods, but the Prometheus refuses. At the refusal, Jupiter also makes his anger known to the thunder to ring out across the mountains. Further Mercury also departs at the omen and the rages, which started to taunt Prometheus by saying that they can attack people from within before they strike the Prometheus. After all of the furies but just one left, the Panthea and Ione despair over the Prometheus's tortured body. Prometheus further describes his torture as a part of his martyrdom and also tells the remaining anger, "Thy words are like a cloud of winged snakes; / and yet I pity those they torture not," to that the rages depart. Soon after, Prometheus further mentions that peace comes only with death, but that he would never want to be mortal.

The Earth also mentions to Prometheus, "I felt thy torture, son, with such mixed joy / as pain and virtue give." At that moment, a Chorus of Spirits has appeared and celebrated that Prometheus's secret knowledge, which breaks into accounts of dying the individuals and the ultimate triumph of good people over Evil. The spirits together told the Prometheus that it would quell the same to the horseman grim woundless though either in the heart or limb and an act that will occur because of Prometheus's secret. The spirits depart, leaving alone and Panthea to discuss the spirits' message with Prometheus, and Prometheus which recalls the Oceanid Asia, and the Act that ends with Panthea telling the Prometheus that Asia awaits him.

14.4 ACT II

Act II Scene I starts in an Indian Caucasus valley wherein the Oceanid Asia reveals that "This is the season, this day, the hour; At sunrise thou should come, sweet sister mine" and thus, so that the Panthea enters. Further, Panthea describes to Asia how life for her and alone has changed since the Prometheus's fall and how she got to know of the Prometheus's love in a dream. Asia also asks Panthea to "lift / Thine eyes that I may read his written soul!" to which Panthea agreed, and that the dream of Prometheus was also revealed to Asia. Asia further witnesses another dream in the Panthea's eyes, and the two discuss the many new images of the nature that both of their minds are filled with and that the words "Follow! Follow!" are repeated in their minds. Their words are soon repeated by the Echoes, which join in telling the two of them to follow. Asia questions that the Echoes, but the Echoes only beckon them further that, "In the world, unknown / sleep a voice unspoken; / By thy step alone / Can its rest be broken," and both of them begin to follow the voices.

Scene II took place in a forest with a group of spirits and the fauns.

Although such scene transitions to the next quickly, the spirits also describes Asia's as well as Panthea's journey and that how "There those enchanted eddies play / Of echoes, music-tongued, which draw, / By Demogorgon's

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mighty law,/ With melting rapture, or sweet awe,/ All spirits on that secret way".

Scene III took place in the mountains, to which Panthea declares, "Hither the sound has borne us – to the realm/ Of Demogorgon." After Asia and Panthea are overjoyed by their surroundings and witness the acts of both the nature around the mountains, a Song of Spirits begins, calling them "To the deep, to the deep,/ Down, down!" Asia and Panthea both descend.

Scene IV starts in the cave of the Demogorgon. Panthea mentions Demogorgon on his ebon throne that: "I see a mighty darkness/ Filling the seat of power, and rays of gloom/ Dart round, as light from the meridian sun,/ Ungazed upon and shapeless; neither limb,/ Nor form, nor outline; yet we feel it is/ A living Spirit." Asia questions that Demogorgon about the creator of the world, and also Demogorgon declares that God created all, which included all of the good as well as all the bad. Later on, Asia becomes upset that Demogorgon would not give the name of God, first demanding, "Utter his name: a world pining in pain/ Asks but his name: curses shall drag him down." Asia also continues to question the Demogorgon and accounts the history of Saturn and Jupiter, as rulers of the universe. She also declares that "Then Prometheus/ Gave wisdom, which is a strength, to Jupiter,/ And with this law alone, 'Let a man be free,/' Clothed him with the dominion of wide Heaven. To know nor faith, nor love, nor law; to be/ Omnipotent but friendless is to reign". She criticizes the Jupiter for all of the problems of the world like famine, disease, strife, and death. Prometheus, she continues, gave man fire, the knowledge of mining, speech, science, and medicine. Demogorgon also simply responds to, "All spirits are enslaved which serve things evil:/ Thou knows if Jupiter be such or no", and, when Asia continues to press Demogorgon for answers, Demogorgon claims that "Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance and Change?—To these/ All things are subject but eternal Love". Asia also specifies that Demogorgon's answer is the same as that of her own heart had given her and then asks when Prometheus should be freed. Demogorgon cries out "Behold!" and Asia also watches as the mountain opens up and the chariots move out across the night sky, that Demogorgon also explains as being driven by the Hours. One Hour stays to

talk to Asia. And, Asia questions him further as to who he is. The Hour also responds, "I am the shadow of a destiny/ More dread than is my aspect: ere yon planet/ has set, the darkness which ascends with me/ Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's kingless throne." Asia also questioned as to what the Hour means, and that Panthea further describes how Demogorgon has risen from the throne to join the Hour to travel across the sky. Panthea further witnesses another Hour come, and that Hour also asks Asia and Panthea to ride along with him. The chariot takes off, and Scene V took place upon a mountaintop as the chariot stops. The Hour also claims that his horses are tired, but then Asia encourages him onwards. Nevertheless, Panthea asks the Hour to stay and also to "tell whence the light is/ which fills the cloud? The sun is yet unrisen", and that the Hour also tells her "Apollo/ is held in Heaven by wonder; and the light... Flows from thy mighty sister." Panthea further realizes that Asia is changed and that described how her sister had radiated with the beauty. A song which fills the air singing the "Life of Life," a song which is about the power of love. Asia tells of her present state and specifies, "Realms where the air we breathe is love, Which in the winds on the waves doth move,/ Harmonizing this earth with what we feel above." It is through her love that she witnessed how people move through time, and ends with the idea of a coming paradise.

Check your progress – 2

2. Where did scene 2 in Act II took place?

14.5 ACT III

Act III Scene I took place in Heaven, with the Jupiter upon his throne before the other gods. Jupiter also speaks to the gods and calls them to rejoice over

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his omnipotence. He further claims to have conquered all except the soul of the mankind, "which might make/ Our antique empire insecure, though built/ On eldest faith, and hell's coeval, fear." Jupiter also confronts that "Even now have I begotten a strange wonder,/ That fatal child, the terror of the Earth,/Who waits but till the distant Hour arrive,/ Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant throne/ The dreadful might of ever-living limbs/ Which clothed that awful spirit unbeheld,/ To redescend, and trample out the spark." He further commands to the gods to drink before saying that, "even then/ Two mighty spirits, mingling, made a third/ Mightier than either, which, unbodied now,/ Between us floats, felt, although unbeheld,/ Waiting for the incarnation, which ascends... from the Demogorgon's throne/ Victory! Victory! Feel'st thou not, O world,/ The earthquake of his chariot thundering up/ Olympus? Awful shape, what art though Speak!" Demogorgon then appears and also answers – Eternity. He also proclaims himself to be Jupiter's child and more powerful than Jupiter. Jupiter pleads for mercy and further claims that not even the Prometheus would have him to suffer. When Demogorgon did not respond, Jupiter also declared that he would fight Demogorgon, but as the Jupiter moves further to attack, the elements refuse to help him and so the Jupiter falls.

Scene II took place at a river on Atlantis, and then the Ocean discusses Jupiter's fall with the Apollo. Apollo also declared that he would not dwell on the fall and the two-part. Scene III took place on the Caucasus after the Hercules had unbound Prometheus. Hercules also tells the Prometheus that: "Most glorious among spirits! thus doth strength/ To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering love,/ and thee, who art the form they animate,/ Minister like a slave." Thus, Prometheus is grateful to Hercules. And, then it turns to Asia and also describes to her a cave in which they all could call it as a home and be with each other forever. Prometheus also requests the Hour to take alone, with the conch of the shell of Proteus, over the Earth so she can then "breathe into the many-folded shell, Losing its mighty music; it shall be/ As thunder mingled with clear echoes: then/ Return, and thou shalt dwell beside our cave." He also calls upon the Earth, and she replies that she feels life and joy. She then mentions, "And death shall be the last embrace of her/ who

takes the life she gave, even as a mother/ folding her child, says, 'Leave me not again.'" Then Asia further questions Earth as to why she mentions the death, and the Earth also responds that Asia would not understand that because she is immortal. Shethen describes the kind of death, of war, and faithless faith. She then calls forth a spirit, her torchbearer, who would also guide the Prometheus, Asia, and the others to a temple which was once dedicated to Prometheus and will become their cave to dwell in. Scene IV took place in a forest around the cave, the place the spirit which guided them. Prometheus describes how the spirit was once close to Asia, and Asia and the spirit begin to talk to each other about nature and love. The Hour comes and tells of a change: "Soon as the sound had ceased whosethunder filled/

The abysses of the sky and the wide Earth,/ There was a change:the impalpable thing air/ And the all-circling sunlight were transformed,/ Asif the sense of love dissolved in them/ Had folded itself around the sphere world." He then explains a revolution within mankind: thrones wereabandoned, and men were treated each other as equals and also with love. Mankind no longer feared the Jupiter, the tyrant, men no longer acted as a tyrants themselves, and "The painted veil, by those who were, called life,/ Which mimicked, as with colours idly spread,/ All men believed and hoped, is torn aside;/ The loathsome mask which has fallen, the man also remains/ Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man/ Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,/ Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king/ Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man/Passionless; no, yet free from guilt or pain".

14.6 ACT IV

Act IV opens up as a voice which fills the forest near the Prometheus's cave as Ione and Panthea sleep. The voice explains the dawnbefore a group of darkness forms and the shadows, who claim to be the dead Hours, start to sing of the King of the Hours' death. Ione wakes up and asks Panthea who they were, and then the Panthea explains. The voice breaks in as to ask,

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"where are we" right before the Hours explain their history. Panthea also further describes the spirits of the human mind, which are approaching, and these spirits soon join in with the others who are singing and rejoice in love. Eventually, they also decide to break their song and go across the world to proclaim love. Ione and Panthea notice a piece of new music, which Panthea also explains as if the deep music of the rolling world is kindling within the strings of the waved air, and in Æolian modulations. Panthea then specifies how the two melodies get parted, and also, Ione interrupts by describing a very beautiful chariot with a beautiful winged infant whose "two eyes are heavens/ Of liquid darkness, which the Deity/ Within seems pouring, as a storm is poured/ From jagged clouds" and "in its hand/ It sways a quivering moon-beam". Panthea also resumes describing a dimension of music and light which contains a sleeping child who is the Spirit of the Earth.

The Earth also interrupts and explains "The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness!/ The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,/ The vaporous exultation not to be confined!" The Moon responds by explaining a light which has come from the Earth and then penetrates in to the Moon. The Earth further explains how all of the world "Laugh with vast and inextinguishable laughter." The Moon also then describes how the Moon is awake and also, singing. The Earth also sings of how the man has restored and united:

"Man, oh, not men! A chain of linked thought,/ Of love and might bedivided not,/ Compelling the elements with adamant stress".

The Earth further continues by declaring that the man now controls even the lightning and that the Earth has no such secrets left from the man. Panthea and Ione interrupted the Earth and the Moon by describing the passing of the music as a nymph rising from the water. The Panthea then claims, "A mighty Power, which is as darkness,/ Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky/ Is showered like night, and from within the air/ Bursts, like eclipse which has been gathered up/ Into the pores of sunlight."

Demogorgon also appears and also speaks to the Earth, the Moon, and "Ye kings of suns and stars, Dæmons and Gods,/ Ætherial Dominations, who possess/ Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes/ Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness."

The Demogorgon talks to all of the voices, and thus, the final lines of the play are:

This is the day, which down the void abysm
At the Earth-born's spell yawns
for Heaven's despotism,
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep:

Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dead endurance, from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.
Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
These are the seals of that most firm assurance
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his length;
These are the spells by which to re-assume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.
To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, this seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

14.7 THEMES

Satanic hero

Shelley compares the Romantic hero Prometheus to Milton's Satan from *Paradise Lost*. The only imaginary being is the resemblance in any degree Prometheus is Satan; and Prometheus is, in the judgment, more poetical character other than Satan, because, in addition to the courage, and majesty, and firm and the patient opposition to an omnipotent force, he is unsusceptible of being described as an exempt from the taints of the envy, revenge, ambition, and a desire for personal aggrandizement, which, in the hero of *Paradise Lost* interferes with the interest. The character of Satan engenders in mind a pernicious casuistry which also leads us to weigh the faults with his wrongs and also to excuse the former because the latter exceeded all the measures. In the minds of such who consider that beautiful fiction with a religious feeling, it also endangers something worse. But also Prometheus is, as it was the type of the highest the perfection of any moral and intellectual nature, further constrained by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends. In other words, while Milton's Satan embodies further a spirit of rebellion, and, as that Maud Bodkin claims that "The theme of his heroic struggle and also, the endurance against the hopeless odds and also wakens in a poet and a reader a sense of his state as against the odds of his destiny," his character is flawed because of his aims are not only humanistic. Satan is just like the Prometheus in his struggle against the universe, but also Satan loses his heroic aspect after being turned into a serpent who also desires only the revenge and further becomes an enemy to humanity. But Bodkin, unlike Shelley, also believe that humans could view the Prometheus and Satan both together in a negative way: We must also similarly recognize that within our actual experience, the factors we further distinguish are more hugely intangible, more mutually incompatible and also, more insistent than they can further appear as translated into a reflective speech. Take, for instance, the sense of sin imaginatively revived as we respond to Milton's presentation of Satan, or to the condemnation, recommended by Aeschylus' drama, of the rebellion of

Prometheus is affecting the 'progress' of any man. What as per our analysis, we might express as the thought that progress is evil or sinful, would, in the mind of the Aeschylus, Abercromer comments that 'more likely be a shadowy relic of loyalty to the tribe' – the vague of fear of anything that would weaken such social solidarity. Not in the mind of Aeschylus only then but also in the mind of the reader of today. If the reader sympathizes with the Prometheus or Satan, he views both the Jupiter and God as omnipotent and not challengeable beings that rely on their might to stay in power. Also, Aeschylus's Jupiter is the representation of Destiny. And, also it is a force that is constantly at odds with the individual's free will. In Milton, God is able to overthrow Satan easily.

Although both divine beings represent something which is opposed to the human will. Both will represent something inside of the human mind, which asks to limit the uncontrolled free will: reason and conscience.

However, Shelley's version of the Jupiter is unable to overwhelm the will of Prometheus, and further Shelley also gives the power of reason and conscience to his God: the Unseen Power of Hymn to Intellectual.

Beauty

The character of Demogorgon also represents, as per Bodkin, the Unconscious. It is "the unknown force within the soul that, after extreme conflict and utter surrender of the conscious will, by virtue of the imaginative, creative element drawn down into the depths, can arise and shake the whole accustomed attitude of a man, changing its established tensions and oppressions." The Demogorgon is the opposite of Jupiter who, "within the myth is felt like such a tension, a tyranny established in the far past by the spirit of a man upon himself and his world, a tyranny that, till it can be overthrown, holds him straightened and tormented, disunited from his own creative energies."

Apocalyptic

In Prometheus, Shelley asks to make a perfect revolutionary in an ideal, the abstract sense. Shelley's Prometheus would be loosely based upon the Jesus of the Bible and orthodox Christian tradition, as well as Milton's character of

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the Son in Paradise Lost. When Jesus or the Son sacrificed himself to save humanity, this act of sacrifice did nothing to overthrow the type of tyranny which was embodied, for Shelley, in the figure of the God Father. Prometheus also resembles Jesus in that both uncompromisingly speak truth to power, and also, in how the Prometheus overcomes the tyrant, Jupiter; Prometheus further conquers Jupiter by "recalling" a curse that the Prometheus had created against Jupiter in a period before the play starts. The word "recall" in this sense also means both to remember and also to retract, and thus, Prometheus, by forgiving Jupiter, further removes Jupiter's power, which all seems to have stemmed from the opponents' anger and will to violence. However, in Act I, Shelley completely relies on the Furies as the image of the crucifixion of Jesus. When the Prometheus is tortured by the furies, Panthea explains that Prometheus as "a youth/ With patient looks nailed to a crucifix." Soon after, Prometheus asks a fury "Remit the anguish of that lighted stare;/ Close those wan lips; let that thorn-wounded brow/ Stream, not with blood" and "So thy sick throes shake not that crucifix." Further, the regeneration of humanity and the world is symbolized by the union of Prometheus and Asia. To achieve this, Shelley further relies on a classical myth to draw upon the idea of the Saturn's Golden Age, and also, then he combines it with the Biblical ideas of the fall and the millennium.

Political

Prometheus, then, is also Shelley's answer to all the mistakes of the French Revolution and its the cycle of thus, replacing one tyrant with that of another. Shelley also wished to show how the revolution could be conceived which would avoid doing just that, and at the end of this play, there is no further power in charge at all; it is an anarchist's paradise.

Shelley further finishes his "Preface" to the play with an evocation of the intentions as a poet: My purpose was to hitherto been to familiarize the highly refined image of the more selected classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of the moral excellence; aware that, until the mind can love, admire, trust, hope, endure and reasoned principles of moral conduct as the

seeds which have cast upon the highway of life and which the unconscious passenger trample into dust, though they would have to bear the harvest of his happiness. Essentially, Prometheus Unbound, as re-wrought in Shelley's hands are one of the fiercely revolutionary texts championing goodness, hope, free will, and idealism in the face of oppression. The Epilogue is spoken by Demogorgon, expresses Shelley's tenets as a poet and as a revolutionary:

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
 To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
 From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

Shelley's Prometheus Unbound responds to the revolutions and economic changes affecting his society, and the old views of good and evil needed to change to accommodate the current civilization.

Technical aspects

Later editing Shelley further continued working on the play until his death on 8 July 1822. After his death, Shelley's father refused to allow Mary Shelley to publish any of his poems, which were kept any immediately changed the editions of the play from being printed. Although a little unwilling to help the Parisian publishers A. and W. Galignani with such an edition of Shelley's works, she eventually sent an "Errata" on January 1829. The Galignanis also completely relied on most of the punctuation changes. However, only a few of her spelling changes were accepted. The next critical edition was not launched until 1839 when Mary Shelley made her own edition of Shelley's work for Edward Moxon which also included the edition of Mary Shelley's notes on the production as well as the history of Prometheus Unbound. Before his death, Shelley also completed

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several corrections to the manuscript edition of his work, but many of such changes were not carried over in the edition of Mary Shelley. William Rossetti, in 1870's edition, questioned Mary Shelley's efforts: "Mrs. Shelley had brought deep affection and unmeasured enthusiasm to the task of editing her husband's works. But ill-health and the pain of reminiscence curtailed her editorial labors: besides which, to judge from the result, you would say that Mrs. Shelley was not one of the persons to whom the gift of consistent accuracy has been imparted". Later, Charles Locock, in the 1911 edition of Shelley's works, also speculated that:

"May we suppose that Mrs. Shelley never made use of that particular list at all? That what she did use was a *preliminary* list, – the list which Shelley "hoped to

despatch in a day or two" (10 November 1820) – not the "formidable list"... which may in the course of nine years have been mislaid? Failing this hypothesis, we can only assume that Shelley's 'formidable list' was not nearly so formidable as it might have been".

Although Prometheus Unbound's editing by Mary Shelley has its detractors, her version of the text was also completely reliable on for several later editions. In 1845, G.G. Foster published the first American edition of Shelley's poems, which completely relied on both the Mary Shelley's edits as well as her notes. Also,

Foster was very attached to Mary Shelley's edition that, when Edgar Allan Poe further suggested in changing some of the text, Foster further responded that:

"But I have not felt at liberty to change the text which is sanctioned by Mrs. Shelley – whom I regard as the evangelist of her transfigured lord."

However, he, like Rossetti also tended to change from Mary Shelley when it came to the punctuation and capitalization. Also, Rossetti went beyond Foster, and, then concluded his edition with:

"I have considered it my clear duty and prerogative to set absolutely wrong grammar right... and to set absolutely wrong rhyming right... and to set absolutely the wrong meter right..." but made sure to point out that his purpose was to respect Shelley's original poetic intent.

Allegory or myth

Earl Wasserman believed that Prometheus personified "One Mind" among humanity, and thus "the drama is the history of the One Mind's evolution into perfection."

Critical response

Melvin Solve believed that the Prometheus Unbound is so highly idealized and so remote that from the conditions of life that the ethical lesson is not important to the enjoyment of the piece, and is, also, in fact, so well disguised that such critics have differed widely as to its interpretation". William Butler Yeats also famously called it "among the sacred books of the world."

Characters

- Prometheus
- Demogorgon
- Jupiter
- The Earth
- Ocean
- Apollo
- Mercury
- Hercules
- Asia (Oceanides)
- Panthea (Oceanides)
- Ione (Oceanides)
- The Phantasm of Jupiter
- The Spirit of the Earth
- Spirits of the Hours
- Spirits
- Echoes
- Fawns

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- Furies

Check your progress – 3

3. With whom is the Romantic hero Prometheus compared to?

14.8 LET US SUM UP

The play opens with Prometheus bound to the rock where Jupiter left him to have his flesh torn and eaten by birds, day after day. He said that Jupiter, the king of the gods, could not subdue Prometheus, no matter what he did.

Mercury arrives to tell him to make peace with Jupiter; the Furies show him that now, instead of only being tortured by the birds, he has to live with knowing that Earth is under siege by evil from within men. They call Prometheus the "champion of Heaven's slaves" because he loves humanity.

This is mental torture instead of physical torture and one that is much harder for him to endure. Still, he believes he can endure and insists that he doesn't want anything living—including Jupiter—to suffer.

Asia, Prometheus's love, and her sister, Panthea, discuss dreams that Panthea had. In one of them, Prometheus was set free, and this resulted in love coming back into the world. The two travel together until they reach the cave of the Demogorgon. When the Demogorgon asks what they want to know, it tells Asia and Panthea that Prometheus only wanted Jupiter to not only rule over men but give them freedom as well. Jupiter, however, released a series of ills into the world. Prometheus gave man fire—knowledge—and they were able to do a variety of things with this. This is why Jupiter punished him. The Demogorgon, Asia, Panthea, and the Spirit of Destiny go into a cloud; at this point, Asia grows in beauty and love until she is like a goddess.

Jupiter is holding court and explaining that he has finally gained all the power in the universe. He's won everything but the souls of men. The Demogorgon—a child of Jupiter—arrives and pulls Jupiter down from Heaven. To those watching, it looks like Jupiter fell in the embrace of an eagle. This restores free will to mankind.

Hercules unchains Prometheus. Once free, he declares that he, Asia, and her sisters will watch over mankind yet remain separate from them. He predicts that men will only grow in love and utility. The world becomes more lush, softer, warmer, and kinder now that Jupiter is dethroned. The moon is even thawed. The Demogorgon announces that Love rules all now, because Prometheus was freed and the world is better for it.

14.9 KEYWORDS

- Revolutionary
- Rebellion
- Satan
- Mankind
- Idealism

14.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- Explain the Act I of Prometheus Unbound.
- Describe the themes of Prometheus Unbound.
- Explain the Act IV of Prometheus Unbound.

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14.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Percy Shelley was born on 4th August 1792. (answer to check your progress – 1 Q 1)
- Scene II took place in a forest with a group of spirits and the fauns. (answer to check your progress – 2 Q 2)
- Shelley compares the Romantic hero Prometheus to Milton's Satan from *Paradise Lost*. (answer to check your progress – 3 Q 3)