

MODULE - I

1

THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL (1798-1832): BACKGROUND PART - I

Unit Structure

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction to English Romanticism

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit the learners will be able to:

1. Romanticism as a artistic and literary movement of the 19th century English literature
2. Identify the general causes of English romanticism
3. Examine the contribution and impact of various movements on the romantic revival movement
4. Distinguish between the contrasting characteristics of the romanticism and neoclassicism

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH ROMANTICISM

The romantic age is an important era in English literature that believed to have been started in the late 18th century, historically with the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 in France, however some literary scholars are of the opinion that it started with the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's 'Lyrical Ballads' in 1798 and ended in 1832 when the famous

Reform Bill was passed in the British parliament or sometimes 1837 when the queen Victoria ascended the throne of England. The Romantic Movement is in fact the revival or renaissance of England's early literary traditions of romantic enthusiasm and zeal during Elizabethan period that shares many characteristics of the 19th century romantic literature.

In England this period is known for its artistic, literary and intellectual movement called romanticism which spread across the European countries through late 18th century and reached America in 1820s. In England, the Romantic Movement caused a lot of upheaval in the socio-economic and political spheres of life and created new aesthetics of literature. There was a rapid migration of rural population from countryside to the industrial cities and as a result major cities of England became over populated during this period that naturally transformed the very fabric of the English society.

19th century English romanticism was recognized as the Romantic Revival Movement as it fall back on its own literary traditions, themes, styles and nationalistic enthusiasm which was very much alive in its own land during the period of Elizabethan age.

1.1.1 General Causes of Romanticism:

Generally Romantic age in England is conceived to be the reaction against preceding age of Neoclassicism with its stringent rules, the age of Enlightenment in Europe with its aristocratic socio-political norms, scientific attitude towards nature, over emphasis on decorum, common sense, rationalism and morality.

The Romantic Movement in England was especially influenced by two forces called Agricultural revolution and Industrial revolution. Agricultural revolution transformed English society from agrarian to industrial; while Industrial revolution replaced the traditional handicraft industry with the machine operated industry. These movements brought palpable transformations in the contemporary society that resonated in the romantic literary output.

Though French Revolution was not the immediate cause of romanticism in England, it influenced contemporary socio-economic and political thinkers as well as literary intellectuals in many ways. The romantic poets were greatly influenced by the radical ideas of the French revolution. Especially William Wordsworth was very fascinated by the revolution. In his famous autobiographical poem 'The Prelude' he thus recounts his experience, "bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!".

The English society was divided into three estates i.e. First Estate (Clergy-priestly class), Second Estate (Nobility- Aristocratic class) and Third Estate (Commons- Working class). The working class people were terribly suppressed by the nobility and clergy together which created a major rift in the society. The intellectuals and literary writers vividly expressed the angst of these working people through essays, poetry and fiction.

1.1.2 Industrial revolution:

Industrial revolution brought a major shift in manufacturing methods in the late 18th century and early 19th century Great Britain. The hand production methods were replaced by machine industries owing to the great deal of development in new technological inventions and scientific discoveries. The greater usage of machines, machine instruments and machine operated factories, new chemicals, steam engine, and water energy led to the production in surplus amount. With the invention of spinning machine textile industry became one of the major sources of employment in England. With the increasing economic development England became the leading power across the world having spread many of its colonies in America, Africa and Asia including India. Industrialization resulted in increased per capita income, over population in the cities due high living standard and low rate of mortality, amplified leisurely activities and high rate of literacy. With the advanced facilities of transportation such as railways and steam boats the long distance mobility of the large number of people and goods became possible. However, on the other hand urbanization and industrialization aggravated environment related issues like pollution and social issues like poverty, child labor and insanitation.

1.1.3 Agricultural Revolution:

Agricultural revolution in Britain was resulted due to new developments in farming technology, improved road facilities and transportation, implementation of modern land laws, increase in farm size, cultivating selective breeding and crop rotation. Increasing agricultural produce and food supply led to the rapid growth of population in England and wales. It is believed that agricultural revolution caused the industrial revolution as larger number of farming labor migrated to urban cities which provided work force to the industries.

1.1.4 American Revolution:

The period between 1765 and 1791 is known for the American Revolution that created United States of America and the separate constitution to govern its states. Before the revolution it was recognized as British colony which would levy heavy taxes on the goods and services even though America had no direct representatives in the British parliament. The Americans formed the Continental Army under the leadership of George Washington and defeated the British army in the war and achieved independence from Great Britain in 1776. It was the earliest revolution in the Atlantic world which inspired many colonial countries across the globe for their independence. "The American revolution impacted Great Britain to a large extends. The American Declaration of Independence influenced the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789". (Wikipedia) Thus American Revolution heralded the new era of liberal democracy, republicanism and ended several unequal laws like slavery.

1.1.5 French Revolution:

The primary causes of French Revolution included the failure of French Monarchy in handling contemporary socio-political and economic issues such as social inequality, economic stagnation, unemployment, poverty, over population, inflation, over taxation, increasing exploitation of the farmers and poor people, resistance to reformations etc. The French Revolution started with the meeting of the Estates General of the French kingdom which represented the clergy, the nobility and the commoners later converted to National Assembly and the subsequent uproar that resulted in the storming of the Bastille prison in 1789 and ended when the French Consulate was established in 1799. The underlying principles of the French Revolution i.e. liberty, equality and fraternity were so inspiring that later they influenced many liberal democratic movements across the world. Moreover, it influenced many intellectuals and literary writers of the contemporary world so much so that the romantic English poets like William Wordsworth actively participated in the movement in its early phase. French Revolution established the new social order, repealed many unjust laws, abolished feudalism, imposed control of the state over the Catholic Church of France and extended the right to vote. Thus, French Revolution and its aftereffects reverberated worldwide in every walk of human life.

1.1.6 Influence of Rousseau and French Revolution:

The influence of political theorists of the Enlightenment - a philosophical movement of Europe - such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and Montesquieu (1753-1794) was quite evident in the upsurge of French revolution (1789-99) which promoted ideas of equality, liberty and fraternity that later formed the fundamental principles of today's democracy across the world. Rousseau published his famous book on political theory called 'The Social Contract' in 1762 which stirred the contemporary socio-political landscape of the entire Europe. Rousseau advocated that the people of the state are sovereign power and not the Monarchy. He further asserted that the people be granted all the political power and they must be free to exercise their 'general will' while making the laws for public wellbeing. The opening line of his book is still relevant in today's context: "*Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.*" Rousseau's ideas on 'general will' were later incorporated in the U.S. Constitution and indirectly embodied in the preamble of the Indian Constitution as 'We the People...'

Rousseau's political theory in 'The Social Contract' was strongly criticized by many for its ambiguity and inappropriateness for the bigger states like America and France, yet it inspired many revolutionary political parties and democratic ideologies worldwide including contemporary French revolutionaries under the leadership of Robespierre.

1.1.7 Disillusionment with the Enlightenment Values of Reason:

In the early 19th century England Romanticism as an artistic and literary movement achieved impetus with its growing emphasis on imagination

and emotion. It began as a reaction against the disillusionment with the enlightenment values of reason, common sense and order. As against the didacticism of the neoclassicism, romantics were greatly fascinated by the exotic and imaginary subjects, sublime forms of natural phenomena, medieval supernaturalism and gothic setting etc. The Romantic literature was marked by the irrational world of the writer and his inquisitiveness towards nature, which was against the tendencies of the enlightenment values of rationality.

1.1.8 Influence of German Romanticism:

The German romanticism of the late 18th and early 19th century in fact preceded English Romanticism. It emerged in German speaking countries and greatly influenced contemporary art, literature, philosophy and criticism. The leading figures of the German romanticism were Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Novalis, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Friedrich Holderlin, Schiller, Heine, Kant, Hegel etc. The influence of German writers was quite discernible on the writings of Coleridge, Byron and other romantic English writers.

1.2 ROMANTICISM AS A REACTION TO NEO-CLASSICISM

1. The Neoclassicists deeply respected literary traditions and conventions laid down by the classical Greek and Roman predecessors and hence they have developed a strong sense of disrespect towards any revolutionary innovations whereas Romanticists adhered to the innovations in terms of themes, subject, literary genres and style. In 'Lyrical Ballads', which is considered as the manifesto of the romanticism, William Wordsworth denounced the aristocratic subject and poetic diction and favored rustic life and real language spoken by men and women. In short, romantic poets rejected the Neo-classical norms of *decorum* in literature. According to romantics, poets were prophets and visionaries. They vehemently believed in supernatural ideas, far-fetched images and transcendentalism.
2. 18th century Neo-classical writers believed that literature is an art and that it requires a special innate talent which can be achieved by persistent study and practice. In order to create a perfect art one must be deliberately adapting to the tested means developed by the classical writers. The Neoclassical writers were strongly influenced by Horace's work *Ars Poetica* which they used as an authoritative text for the creative writing. On the contrary, for romantics poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility" and therefore they preferred organic laws of nature over neoclassical rules and decorum.
3. For Neoclassicists great poets like William Shakespeare and Homer are rare phenomenon of natural genius which is in fact a grace beyond the reach of art and such geniuses are born occasionally. They

respected classical writers and the rules deduced from their works for they have survived the test of time. It was assumed that writers can achieve perfection through strict adherence to classical rules. Romantic writers on the other hand believed in nature and its sublime forms which became the subject of their poetry. They viewed nature as a major source of creativity and stimulus of human mind.

4. In 18th century the major subject matter for literature was human being, their concerns, imperfections and mannerism. Literature was conceived to be the imitation of nature and life and the main goal of literature was to instruct and provide pleasure to the mankind. The Neoclassical writers pursued 'art for humanity's sake. Neoclassical poetry was about the other people whereas; romantic poetry was more individualistic and autobiographical in nature. The central character in romantic literature is often identified with the author who most of the times is a solitary figure or nonconformist by faith.
5. Neoclassical poetry emphasized on whatever was common, general and representative in nature. It captured widely shared experiences, emotions, tastes and attitudes of mankind. They viewed man as a limited agent therefore, celebrated man's imperfections in literature, preached evading of extremes and promoted middle path. Romantics however believed in infinite human possibilities and potentials. For them it was a great age of new beginnings, opportunities, dreams and aspirations so they believed that the supreme art lies in an endeavor beyond human capacity.

1.3 CONCLUSION

Thus, English Romantic movement heralded a new era of literary sensibility characterized by a sense of wonder, awe and imagination. Besides being reactionary against the preceding age of reason and enlightenment, it was influenced by many internal and external socio-political and artistic movements that left long lasting impact on English life such as Industrial revolution, American revolution, Agricultural revolution, French revolution, German romanticism etc. These influencing factors have been reflected in the contemporary English literature in the form of poetry, novel and prose.

1.4 QUESTIONS

1. When did the Romantic Movement emerge in English literature?
2. Discuss the general causes of romantic revival movement in English literature.
3. Assess the impact of various internal and external socio-political and literary movements on English romanticism
4. Explain English romanticism as a reaction against neoclassicism?

1.5 REFERENCES

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THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL (1798-1832): BACKGROUND PART - II

Unit Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Survey of Literature: Novel, Poetry and Prose (Types, Trends and Characteristics)
 - 2.1.1 The Romantic Poetry
 - 2.1.2 Salient Features of Romantic Poetry
 - 2.1.3 Major Romantic Poets
 - 2.1.4 The Romantic Prose (Essay and Novel)
- 2.2 Rise of Women Writers in the Period
 - 2.2.1 The Romantic Women Novelists
- 2.3 Conclusion
- 2.4 Questions
- 2.5 References

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit the learners will be able to:

1. Identify the writers in proper historical context
2. Understand the historical perspective of the romantic age literature
3. Explain the major historical, socio-political and literary movements and their impact on the contemporary literature

2.1 SURVEY OF LITERATURE: NOVEL, POETRY AND PROSE (TYPES, TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS)

The beginning of 19th century romantic literature can be traced back in the preceding literary traditions of the gothic fiction, novel of sensibility as well as graveyard poetry of the late 18th century England. The gothic genre of fiction is often considered to be developed out of Graveyard poetry. The well-known graveyard poetry of the time comprises Thomas Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard (1751), Robert Blair's poem 'The Grave' (1743), Edward Young's long poem 'The Complaint: or Night-Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality' (1742-45), Thomas Parnell's 'Night-Piece on Death' etc. The major theme of graveyard poetry is obviously death and immortality surrounded by the chilling setting of the graveyard. Undoubtedly, the graveyard poetry has influenced the 19th century gothic fiction in particular and romantic literature in general.

Another important precursor of the romantic literature is the novel of sensibility or sentimental novel which developed in the form of reaction against rationalism of the Augustan age. Some of the prominent examples of the novel of sensibility are: Samuel Richardson's 'Pamela' or 'Virtue Rewarded' (1740), Laurence Sterne's 'Tristram Shandy' (1759-67), Oliver Goldsmith's 'The Vicar of Wakefield' (1766) etc. The credit for creating the first gothic novel called 'The Castle of Otranto' (1764) goes to Horace Walpole. Other notable gothic novels are Ann Radcliffe's 'The Mysteries of Udolpho' (1795), William Beckford's 'Vathek' (1786) and Matthew Lewis' 'The Monk' (1796).

The above pioneering poets and novelists have given further impetus to the romantic literature which was primarily dominated by the poetry.

2.1.1 The Romantic Poetry:

Romantic English poets can be grouped as pre-romantics, first generation romantics and the second generation romantic poets. William Blake belonged to the pre-romantic group of poets, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, Dorothy Wordsworth etc. belonged to the first generation romantics who were also known as Lake poets as they lived on the borders of the Lake District, while John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron belonged to the second generation of romantic poets.

2.1.2 Salient Features of Romantic Poetry:

The romantic poetry was primarily concerned with the poet's self-expression. In the Preface to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads (1800), William Wordsworth argued that poetry is 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings'. Thus, his definition of poetry became the fundamental guiding principle of romanticism. The subjectivity in poetry acquired preeminence over objectivity. The nature and its sublime forms became the essential elements of the romantic poetry. The poetry of this age was recognized for its strong power and passion. The poet's heightened imagination became the key source of creativity and moreover, its literary manifestations were not considered less than the divinity. Romantic poetry is also known for its allusions to medieval elements of chivalry, adventure and supernaturalism.

2.1.3 Major Romantic Poets:

1. William Blake (1757-1827):

William Blake was known as a preromantic poet, painter and printmaker. Could not achieve popularity while alive but in present time he is recognized as one of the most influential poets of the romantic literature. Blake believed that his poetry was prophetic in nature. His ideas were so unintelligible and quirky that contemporary poets and critics considered him mad. In his life time, he created immortal works of art which were so varied and symbolically powerful. His poetry is known for their vitality and imagination in fact, Blake considered imagination as the body of god

or human existence itself. He was a staunch Christian by faith but equally critical about all forms of organized religion and very hostile towards the Church of England. His works are spiritualistic yet offers social commentary on the contemporary issues. Like William Wordsworth, initially he supported the cause and ideals of French revolutionaries but later in life he rejected most of their ideas and beliefs as the movement took towards bloodshed and horror.

His notable work 'Songs of Innocence and of Experience' is a collection of poems known for their themes such as two contrary states of human soul, childlike innocence, religiosity and social criticism. These poems appeared in two parts, the first part appeared in 1789 and the second part in 1794, later both parts were compiled together along with some new poems. In his significant work 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell' (1790-93) he discovered the opposite characteristics of reason and energy, energy as angel and reason as devil however he maintained that progression is impossible without these contraries and therefore both are necessary for life.

'The Four Zoas' or 'Vala' is an unfinished and very complicated work about Blake's unique mythology. It was supposedly a set of nine books called 'nights', Blake started composing them in 1797. The main characters are of course Four Zoas i.e. Urthona, Urizen, Luvah and Tharmas. Later he lost confidence in this work and was also going through depression. So disappointed he was with his mythical creation that he couldn't continue further and abandoned the project in 1807.

His next long and prophetic work 'Jerusalem' (1804-1820) is now considered as one of the best known epic poems and most accessible to the reader. Blake himself considered it was his best work.

William Blake's poem 'Milton' (1804-10) is yet an important epic poem which consists of John Milton as his epic hero who returns from heaven. He accompanies the poet and explores the present living writers and their ancestors and also corrects his own spiritual mistakes. William Blake etched and illustrated almost all his poems on copper plates and later he would color them with the help of his wife Catherine.

2. William Wordsworth (1770-1850):

William Wordsworth is known as one of the chief proponents of the Romantic revival movement. In 1798, Wordsworth and Coleridge published 'Lyrical Ballads' which is considered as a milestone in the history of English literature. In his second edition of the Lyrical Ballads in 1800, Wordsworth proposed the romantic poetics which advocated rustic life as a subject of poetry and the language spoken by common people as the poetic diction. He is primarily known as a romantic poet who exerted tremendous influence on his contemporaries and the posterity alike. His notable works include 'The Prelude' (1850), which is an autobiographical long poem about his personal experiences. It was intended to be the introduction to his unfinished philosophical poem called 'The Recluse'. His other significant works are 'London' (1802), 'The World Is Too Much

with Us', 'French Revolution' (1810), a poem from Lyrical ballads 'Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey' (1798), 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality' (1804) and many more.

3. S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834):

Coleridge was regarded as the most philosophical poet among the romantics and one of the founder members of the Romantic Movement in English literature. He was a versatile person widely known for his poetry, criticism, philosophy and theological ideas. Coleridge's critical essays and lectures on William Shakespeare have been so popular until present time. Though he didn't equally contribute in Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Ballads', his longest major poem titled 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' was hugely appreciated by all. His immense influence on his contemporaries especially William Wordsworth, Robert Southey and other romantics and later poet-critics including modern literary critic I. A. Richards is quite evident through their works. Coleridge, during his early life, developed radical political and theological ideas and along with his friend Robert Southey he planned to establish a Pantisocratic utopian society however later this plan was abandoned. Coleridge spent most important time of his writing while in close association with William Wordsworth, together they published 'Lyrical Ballads' in 1798 which supposedly started a new era in the history of English literature. His major works include 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' the longest major poem written in 1797-98 and published in 1798 in the first edition of Lyrical Ballads, 'Christabel' (1816) in which a central female character of the same name and her encounter with a stranger called Geraldine, who claims to have been abducted from her home by a band of rough men. It remained unfinished and unpublished poem, 'Kubla Khan' (1816) was composed one night after he experienced an opium-influenced dream after reading a work describing Xanadu, the summer palace of the Mongol ruler and Emperor of China Kublai Khan. It was believed that these three major poems would have tremendously influenced the contemporary gothic fiction. His other notable poems are 'The Eolian Harp' (1795), 'Frost at midnight' (1798), 'Dejection: An Ode' (1802) and the work of literary criticism called 'Biographia Literaria' (1817)

4. P.B. Shelley (1792-1822):

Percy Bysshe Shelley was yet another great poet of the age however; he belonged to the second generation of the romantics. He was also considered as one of the greatest lyrical and philosophical poets of his time. He was known for his revolutionary social and political ideas. Though Shelley could not achieve fame while alive, he increasingly became popular among successive generations after his death. His noteworthy works include 'Ozymandias' (1818) a sonnet which argues that even the great kings, empires and histories are subjected to decay and impermanence, 'Ode to the West Wind' (1819) explores the traditions of Pindaric and Horatian odes. In this poem he asserts that the poet is the main catalyst who can bring socio-political and moral transformations in the society. According to him poets are the unacknowledged legislators of

the world, 'To a Skylark' (1820) this poem is about the power of nature that inspires the mankind. His 'The Mask of Anarchy' (1819) is a strong political ballad. Shelley's other notable works include a verse drama titled 'The Cenci' (1819), 'Hellas' (1821) a lyrical drama, 'Adonais' (1821) a widely well-known pastoral elegy, and 'Prometheus Unbound' (1820) a lyrical drama which alludes to the classical Greek mythological character Prometheus.

5. John Keats (1795-1821):

Like Shelley and Byron he was also a very great poet of the second generation of romantics. He lived very short life but was an exceptionally genius poet of his time. Even today he continues to inspire varied types of poets and writers across the world. His poetry especially series of odes are known for their vivid natural imagery and sensuality that heightens extreme emotional responses in his readers. Beside poetry his letters are most popular and widely analyzed by the scholars and readers of English literature. His notable works include 'Ode to a Nightingale' (1819), 'Ode to Autumn' (1820), 'Sleep and Poetry' (1816), and the famous sonnet 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer' (1816) which celebrates the great pleasure and wonder while reading George Chapman's English translation of Greek poet Homer. John Keats was severely criticized by his contemporary critics. This genius poet died of tuberculosis at the age of 25. He desired these words to be inscribed on his tombstone: 'Here lies One whose Name was writ in Water'.

6. Lord Byron (1788-1824):

George Gordon Lord Byron was one of the leading poets of the romantic English literature. Though very influential poet and politician he constantly underwent through series of controversies which made him leave England in 1816 not to return again. He was also actively involved as a revolutionary in the Greek war of independence.

His notable work 'Don Juan' (1819-24) a satiric poem based on the legend of Don Juan, which Byron reverses, portraying Juan not as a womanizer but as someone who is easily seduced by women. The poem is recognized as a variation of the epic form, Byron himself called it an "Epic satire". The poem runs through 17 cantos. It was strongly criticized for its "immoral content" yet became immensely popular poem. In this poem he has showed his hatred towards the contemporary poets like William Wordsworth and S. T. Coleridge.

His 'Prometheus' (1816) is about a Titan, culture hero, and trickster figure who was credited with the creation of humanity from the clay, and the one who defies the gods by stealing fire and giving it to humanity as civilization. He was known for his intellect and support to the humankind. He was also referred to as the author of human arts and sciences.

His next prominent work 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' (1812-1818) describes the travels and reflections of a world-weary young man, who is

disillusioned with a life of pleasure and revelry and looks for distraction in foreign lands. In a wider sense, it is an expression of the melancholy and disillusionment felt by a generation weary of the wars of the post-Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras.

In most of the works his protagonist known as 'Byronic hero' displays unique personality traits that often resembles to Byron's own characteristics of personality. "The Byronic hero presents an idealized, but flawed character whose attributes include: great talent; great passion; a distaste for society and social institutions; a lack of respect for rank and privilege (although possessing both); being thwarted in love by social constraint or death; rebellion; exile; an unsavory secret past; arrogance; overconfidence or lack of foresight; and, ultimately, a self-destructive manner". (Wikipedia)

2.1.4 The Romantic Prose (Essay and Novel):

The essay was one of the popular forms of English literature during the romantic age. The main objective of which was to spread social awareness and entertainment. The prominent essayists of the time were Charles Lamb, Thomas De Quincey and William Hazlitt; their writing was imaginative and personal in nature yet very influential and varied in subject and themes. The most romantic among them was Charles Lamb (1775-1834) who started publishing his essays in 1820 in the London Magazine. He collected these essays and published them as 'The Essays of Elia' in 1823. Lamb's essays are known for his heightened sensibility, vivid impressions and candid revelation of personal life and experiences. These essays are filled with candid and quiet revelations of his miseries, romantic fantasies, childlike innocence, striking blend of facts and fiction, emotional pathos, and humor all of which reflects on his compassionate and sensible side of personality. Charles Lamb showed a real character of courage and loyalty when a very tragic incident occurred in his life in 1796, his sister Mary killed their mother in one of the recurrent fits of madness yet he looked after her for the rest of his life. Lamb's essays are also known for his outstanding mastery in portraying very briefly yet vividly character sketches such as Sister Mary, Brother John, contemporary poet-friend S. T. Coleridge etc. He was rightly regarded as 'the prince of English essayists' and the most romantic writer among his contemporaries for his beautiful treatment of elements like gothic, supernatural and fantasy. His other notable prose works include 'Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Who Lived about the Time of Shakespear' (1808); along with his sister Mary he published retelling of the stories for children called 'Tales from Shakespear' (1807) and 'The Adventures of Ulysses' (1808).

William Hazlitt (1778-1830) was recognized as an outstanding English essayist, literary critic and social thinker. As journalist he started writing varied essays for the periodical called 'The Examiner' in 1813, and later for 'Chronicle' and 'The Champion' which include his essays on literary and political criticism respectively. He was strongly inspired by the English poet John Milton and utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham and

wrote extensively about them. He even contributed to the prestigious periodical of the time called 'The Edinburgh Review' which earned him name and fame. His notable collection of essays called 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays' was published in 1817. It was received as one of the best criticism on Shakespeare ever written that reviews all his plays with greater comprehensiveness. Hazlitt is also known for his lecture series called 'The English Poets' delivered in the year 1818. In this successful series he critically delivered lectures on the poets ranging from Chaucer to present time. His next prominent book of essays called 'The Spirit of the Age' (1825) was in fact about the sketches of 25 eminent men of his time, the list includes William Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge, William Godwin Lord Byron and Jeremy Bentham etc., and other poets, philosophers, politicians, critics and grammarians. According to Ralph Wardle, these 25 character sketches combine to "form a vivid panorama of the age". (Wikipedia) William Hazlitt was the devoted admirer of Napoleon Buonaparte who was to him a great heroic leader; he wrote a biography of Napoleon called 'The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte' but could not publish it in his life time.

Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859) was yet another important English essayist, critic and translator of the romantic age. His opium experiences were first appeared in 1821 in 'The London Magazine' which became so popular among the readers that it superseded Charles Lamb's 'Essays of Elia' which were then being published in the same magazine. These essays were later collected and published as an autobiographical book called 'Confessions of an Opium Eater' (1821) which includes very candid revelations about his drug experiences and its aftereffects. His next important book was called 'On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth' (1823) which is considered as the finest piece of literary criticism in English literature.

The novel was not the dominant genre of literature during romantic age however few notable writers tried their hands in fiction writing such as Sir Walter Scotts (1771-1832) who published his famous series of Waverley novels and historical romances. His major novels are 'Waverley' (1814), 'Guy Mannering' (1815), 'Rob Roy' (1817), 'Ivanhoe' (1819) etc. His fiction was known for its medieval European setting, humorous social observation and sense of romanticism.

Yet another influential English novelist, journalist and social philosopher was William Godwin (1756-1836) who published his radical prose work 'An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and Its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness' in 1793 which believed to have inspired the philosophy of communism and anarchy. He also published a collection of essays called 'The Enquirer' in 1797 and the significant novel titled 'The Adventures of Caleb Williams' in 1794.

2.2 RISE OF WOMEN WRITERS IN THE PERIOD

The late 18th century and early 19th century English literature witnessed a modest but steady rise of women writers in the male dominated

romanticism which Anne K. Mellor termed as “masculine romanticism” that comprises canonical writers like William Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge, Lord Byron, P. B. Shelley and John Keats. Mellor further argues that “feminine romanticism” (Mellor 3) emerged to rediscover the erased and neglected voices of the women writers within this movement. The French revolution helped reorganize the socio-economic and political structure of the European society and England was not untouched by that turmoil. Under these circumstances Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) carved her path and challenged the contemporary male dominated norms of gender inequality prevalent in English society by publishing her radical political and educational tract titled ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Woman’ (1792) which strongly argues that women are not naturally inferior to men but they appear so only because of lack of education. She vehemently suggested that both men and women should be treated as rational beings and imagined a social order based on reason. Her writing was very revolutionary for the time and believed to have been inspired many contemporary and subsequent women writers. She is rightly called as the earliest feminist English writer, her life and works have been so inspiring for the women writers across the world till date.

2.2.1 The Romantic Women Novelists:

Ideologically more radical novelist Mary Wollstonecraft, pioneer of feminism, published her novel ‘Maria’ or ‘The Wrongs of Woman’ in 1798, one of the pioneers of gothic and terror novel in English Ann Radcliff (1764-1823) published her outstanding novel called ‘The Mysteries of Udolpho’ in 1794, P. B. Shelley’s wife and Mary Wollstonecraft’s daughter Mary Shelley (1797-1851) published her remarkable gothic novel that is also recognized as the first science fiction called ‘Frankenstein’ or ‘The Modern Prometheus’ in 1818, and most significantly the novels of Jane Austen (1775-1817) such as ‘Sense and Sensibility’ (1811), ‘Pride and Prejudice’ (1813), ‘Mansfield Park’ (1814), ‘Emma’ (1816), posthumously published ‘Northanger Abbey’ (1818) and ‘Persuasion’ (1818) were published during the peak of romanticism. The novels of Jane Austen are known for their conservatism and strict observation of Augustan principles of objectivity, rationality, common sense, mannerism as against the new romantic values of imagination, subjectivity and self-expression.

2.3 CONCLUSION

Thus, Romantic age is considered as one of the most influential and flourishing periods in the history of English literature. It was emerged as a reaction to the rigid notions of neoclassicism and Augustan age. Liberal Poetry was of course the dominant form of literary expression during this time however the prose (novel and essay) didn’t remain far behind in guiding the contemporary English society. English romanticism immensely contributed in generating liberal ideas of democracy and gender equality.

2.4 QUESTIONS

1. What are the salient features of romantic English poetry?
2. Who are called the precursors of romantic age literature?
3. Comment on the contribution of major romantic poets to the 19th century English literature.
4. Write an essay on main essayists of the romantic age.
5. Assess the contribution major women novelists to the romantic age English literature.

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THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL (1798-1832): CONCEPTS PART - I

Unit Structure

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Romanticism: Features

3.1.1 Introduction

3.1.2 Features of Romanticism

3.1.3 Renascence of Wonder

3.1.4 Imagination-The Mainspring of The Romantic Revival

3.1.5 Return to Nature

3.1.6 Revolt Against The Neo-Classical/Augustan School Of Poetry

3.1.7 Passion for Medievalism And The Remote In Time And Place

3.1.8 Heterogenous Group of Tendencies

3.1.9 An Exuberant Intellectual Curiosity

3.1.10 Abundant Literary Output

3.2 Romantic Imagination

3.3 German Transcendentalism

3.4 Conclusion

3.5 Questions

3.6 Bibliography

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will make the students aware of:

1. The historical and socio-political background of the Romantic Period of British Literature.
2. Features of the age.
3. Literary tendencies, literary contributions to the different of genres such as poetry, prose and drama.
4. The important writers and their major works.

With this knowledge the students will be able to locate the particular works in the tradition of literature, and again they will study the prescribed texts in the historical background.

Part – I:

3.1 ROMANTICISM: FEATURES

3.1.1 Introduction:

Romanticism has been defined as the expression, in terms of art, of sharpened sensibilities and heightened imaginative feeling. While Classicism hails order, clarity and tranquillity, romanticism involves the addition of strangeness to beauty. The Neo-classical age engendered satire and invective while the Romantic age witnessed a plethora of lyrics, odes, ballads and essentially nature poetry. The Neo-classical age critiqued the absence of values and the snobbishness of the aristocrats while the Romantic age depicted changing attitudes towards standards of beauty and ideals and a radical change in modes of expression.

The latter part of the eighteenth century marked a significant shift in the literary taste and attitudes towards life. This shift generated a movement called Romanticism. For reasons of chronological accuracy, one may say that the movement encompasses the period beginning from 1798 (the year in which William Wordsworth published *The Lyrical Ballads* in collaboration with Samuel Taylor Coleridge) to 1837 (the year in which Queen Victoria ascended the British throne). The Romantic movement may thus be seen as a deliberate and sweeping revolt against the literary principles of the Augustan Age or the Age of Reason in its desire for imaginative freedom, passion for nature and its yearning for the past. The publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 by Wordsworth and Coleridge was a landmark event that brought out the principles on which romantic poetry rested. The Romantic Revival Movement that started during the latter half of King George III's reign and ended five years before the accession of Queen Victoria to the British throne saw England undergo an intellectual upheaval because of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. Both these influences caused not just the social structure of England to change, but also changed its physical appearance. The Romantic Movement was also impacted by the development of new ideas in psychology and metaphysics.

Let us understand the major characteristic features of the age.

3.1.2 Features of Romanticism:

The following are the characteristic features of the Romantic Revival Movement:

1. Renascence of Wonder
2. Imagination as the mainspring of the Romantic Movement
3. Return to Nature
4. Revolt against neo-classical/Augustan school of poetry
5. Passion for medievalism and the remote in time and place
6. Heterogenous group of tendencies

7. Exuberant intellectual curiosity
8. Abundant literary output

3.1.3 Renascence of Wonder:

The Romantic Revival Movement was marked by a renascence of wonder. The wonder implies the perception of objects in the magic garb of the creative impulse, that is, the imagination. It celebrated the excitement of discovery by individuals of a heightened sensibility and plumbed the possibilities of the imaginative faculty which goes beyond the limitations of consciousness. The phrase 'Renascence of Wonder' thus implies a childlike wonder which had been repressed by reason and common sense during the eighteenth century but was present in the Elizabethan age, that is the sixteenth century. The period is called the Romantic Revival because it witnessed a revival of the impetuous passion and spontaneity especially evidenced in the poetry of the age. Romanticism was an active re-awakening of a creative impulse, of intense emotion coupled with an unprecedented intensity that displayed itself in the imagery used by the poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats.

The Renascence of Wonder was inspired by two forces:

1. The literary and artistic discovery of the Middle Ages: its faith, its picturesqueness and its simplicity
2. The revival of interest in the supernatural.

Many artists found in medievalism a richer inspiration for their literary output. They turned therefore to the folklore and legends of the Middle Ages. As a result, an element of mysticism was introduced in the romantic spirit. One can see this fascination for the Medieval times in poems such as Keats' 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci', for instance, where he celebrates medievalism with its daring love, chivalry, romance, adventure, superstitions, mystery, pomp and pageantry.

3.1.4 Imagination-The Mainspring of The Romantic Revival:

The chief characteristic that differentiates the English Romantic Revival poets of the early nineteenth century from the neo-classical poets of the eighteenth century is the importance which the Romantics attached to the Imagination and the special view that they held of it. For Augustan poets such as Dryden and Pope, imagination had little importance. For them, the poet was more an interpreter than a creator. They were not interested in the mysteries of life. However, for the Romantics, imagination was fundamental because they believed that without imagination, poetry is impossible.

3.1.5 Return to Nature:

An ardent passion for nature is another characteristic of Romanticism. This love for nature was stimulated by Rousseau's clarion call to "return to nature" wherein he expected man to return not only to the sights and

sounds of external nature but also to the elemental simplicities of life found among the people who live in hills and places cut off from the currents of sophisticated civilized life. The poets of the Romantic Revival took up Rousseau's call to return to nature as a challenge to the urbane and artificial traditions of the Augustan school of poetry in the eighteenth century. The neo-classical poetry of the eighteenth century was a poetry of city life and of nature 'methodised'. Nature in its wildest aspects shocked the refined taste of the eighteenth century because Neo-classical poetry had dealt only with the acquired manners of the elegant and fashionable townsfolk who cared solely about the etiquette and decorum of social conventions. Rousseau's call to return to nature embodied the revolt against the attitudes of the eighteenth-century poets towards nature. Apart from marking a return to the elemental simplicities of life, it also marked a return to childhood because the primary instincts and impulses in the child are untainted by the sophistications of civilization. The child represents the quintessence of nature. This is beautifully brought out in some poems such as Wordsworth's 'Ode: Intimations to Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood'. The attraction for the remote and the return to medieval life is also a variant of this desire to return to nature. During the Middle Ages, life was free from the complexities and artificialities of the modern civilized life.

3.1.6 Revolt against The Neo-Classical /Augustan School of Poetry:

Victor Hugo termed Romanticism as "liberalism in literature" thereby highlighting its impatience with formulae and its generosity and tolerance in every other respect. Romanticism, as an artistic movement, insists upon spontaneity and the principle that every person has a right to express thoughts in their own unique way.

The Romantic Revival Movement of the early nineteenth century registered a revolt against the neo-classical tradition established by Dryden and Waller in the seventeenth century and perfected by Alexander Pope in the eighteenth century. It therefore liberated the unconscious life from the tyranny imposed by Reason and Decorum. The watchword for the eighteenth century was Reason and not Fancy. It only wished to understand and not imagine. If there was any emotion that seemed suspicious to it, as bordering on insanity, it was inspiration. The literature of the eighteenth century therefore came across as chillingly mannered and artificially attired with the frost of etiquette and decorum. As Alexander Pope worded it in his Essay on Criticism:

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan

The proper study of mankind is Man.

The Romantics, however, believed in inspiration, in a divine drunkenness. They revolted against the dominance of Reason and responded to the phenomenal world with a heightened sensibility and extraordinary spontaneity. This resulted in making them escapists which in turn, took different forms with different writers. Wordsworth turned to nature and to the common man, Coleridge sought it in the supernatural and the Middle

Ages, Shelley found it in the form of dreams and Keats escaped into the world of beauty, art and romance which he found abundantly in the Middle Ages. In Byron, escapism took the form of an escape into his own soul.

The Romantic Revival Movement was thus a revolt against authority and custom. Individualism therefore became the keynote of nineteenth century romanticism.

3.1.7 Passion for Medievalism and The Remote in Time and Place:

Another characteristic feature of Romanticism was the attraction for the remote in time and place. This found expression not just in poetry but also in the flowering of the Romantic Gothic Novel. The German poet and critic Heine defines Romanticism as the reawakening of the Middle Ages. H.A. Beers also considers romanticisms to be much concerned with the revival of medievalism. The art and culture of the Middle Ages as well as their primitive morality fascinated some of the Romantics, notably Sir Walter Scott, Coleridge and John Keats. The Middle Ages offered them a spiritual home, remote and mysterious. They were attracted to the world of chivalry and pageantry presented by the Middle Ages. Not all Romantic poets were attracted to the Middle Ages, however. Wordsworth, Shelley and Byron found more inspiration in the east rather than the Middle Ages. It is the yearning for the past, for the remote in time and place rather than just the Middle Ages that characterizes English Romanticism.

3.1.8 Heterogenous Group of Tendencies:

The first generation of Romantic poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey were also called Lake Poets and the second generation of Romantic poets were younger poets such as Byron, Shelley and Keats. Both generations of poets were inspired by the French Revolution and affected by the industrial revolution as well. They made a conscious effort to revolt against traditions that had dominated the poetry of the eighteenth century. However, each poet had his own way of manifesting these influences in their poetry. Wordsworth philosophized about Nature, Coleridge used supernatural elements, Shelley used a mystical approach and Keats used a sensuous approach towards Nature. They autonomously chose their subject matter and gave it a treatment that they liked.

3.1.9 An Exuberant Intellectual Curiosity:

With the importance given to the imaginative faculty came a sense of awe, wonder and an exuberant intellectual curiosity that manifested itself in the poetry and the prose of the Romantic period. Wordsworth's poetic theory, Shelley's transcendentalism, Coleridge's critical poetic thought embodied in the *Biographia Literaria* all reveal the intellectual side of the Romantic movement. The period witnessed a burgeoning of literary criticism and scholars such as Hazlitt, Lamb, Coleridge wrote on Shakespeare's works. The speculative and inquisitive nature of the prose of the period also manifested itself in the periodicals that were published during this time. The Morning Chronicle, The Morning Post, The Times Edinburgh

Review, The Quarterly Review, Blackwood's Magazine, The London Magazine and The Westminster Review are notable examples. Romantic criticism became both intellectual and imaginative. To put it in other words, it was intellectual in its form and imaginative in its vision.

3.1.10 Abundant Literary Output:

Another notable feature of the Romantic Movement is the abundant literary output that characterized the period. The freshness of the French Revolution, its new ideas as well as the accompanying social unrest and economic changes due to industrialization inspired poets and prose writers alike. The English novel as well as the Personal Essay registered a great advancement along with the poetry of the period that experimented with several forms such as songs, odes, ballads and lyrics making it at once musical, sensuous and impassioned.

Part - II:

3.2 ROMANTIC IMAGINATION

3.2.1 The Romantic Imagination:

The romantic writers were conscious of a wonderful capacity to create imaginary worlds and they found that the power of poetry was strongest when imagination worked without any checks. It helped them realized the possibilities of the human self optimally and they expressed themselves with an abandon and freedom that was inspirational.

Let us understand the two considerations that strengthened this emphasis on the imagination:

i. Religious considerations:

The eighteenth century with its emphasis on scientific reasoning concluded that God existed in the universe. But to the Romantics of the early nineteenth century, religion was a matter of feeling rather than of reason, of experience rather than of argument.

ii. Metaphysical considerations:

The eighteenth century because of its emphasis on reason and common sense did not believe in matters which went beyond the physical reality. They were realists and therefore could not appreciate the spiritual reality of existence. However, the Romantics were interested in looking through the film of familiarity and believed in the mystery of even familiar objects.

For the poets of the eighteenth century therefore poetry was merely a matter of wit and expression, and language was only a dress for thoughts. But to the romantics, poetry was a product of imagination, which they realized, was the source of spiritual energy. Imagination for William Blake, one of the most famous pre-romantic poets, was nothing less than God as he operated in the human soul.

The Romantics were therefore concerned with the things of the spirit. All romantic poets, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats, maintained that the creative imagination was closely connected with a peculiar insight into an unseen order behind visible things. Each one of the Romantic poets used their imagination differently and uniquely even as they returned to nature. Compton-Rickett observes, "Wordsworth spiritualises, and Shelley intellectualises Nature, Keats is content to express Nature through the senses".

Thus, we can see that the Romantic Revival Movement was a great attempt at discovering the world of spirit through the efforts of an individual's imagination. Through imagination, it aimed at discovering a transcendental order which explained the world of appearances.

Part - III:

3.3 GERMAN TRANSCENDENTALISM

German Romanticism laid great stress on supernaturalism and mythology. Pure fantasy swept its literature and it synchronized with the awakening of the German national spirit. Outstanding German romantics such as Goethe, the scholarly Schlegel brothers, Novalis the Mystic and Brentano the romancer were huge influencers. William Taylor, through translations of German texts and literary criticism became a vital connecting link between German Romanticism and English Romanticism. Germany had made great progress in poetry as well as drama under Goethe and Schiller. In philosophy, the transcendentalism of Kant and Schelling made them reject the materialistic interpretation of the universe and embrace Reality as a spiritual essence that transcended sensual experience. The study of German literature and philosophy came to be favoured by the English Romantics because they had been disillusioned by the French Revolution which around 1793, under revolutionaries such as Robespierre, entered its second phase - the Reign of Terror. The German transcendentalists caught the fancy of Coleridge and also De Quincey. Goethe's works that were translated by Taylor inspired Sir Walter Scott and Byron. In fact, Byron's long poem 'Don Juan' was greatly influenced by Goethe's 'Sorrows of Werther'. Schiller's plays also influenced Coleridge. Gradually the German Transcendentalists' influence on English life and literature increased until by the middle of the nineteenth century, German, became, next to English, recognized as a dominating language.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this unit we have studied the importance of the Romantic Movement which exercised a great impact on the development of English literature. We have also understood the social, political, and cultural milieu of the age as well as the features of Romanticism. Further, we have looked at the Romantic Imagination as a cornerstone of the literature of the period and you have also been introduced to some of the major poets and prose writers of the age. The unit has also introduced you to influences such as the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and German

Transcendentalism, all of which went on to shape the literature of the Romantic Revival.

3.5 QUESTIONS

1. What is Romanticism?
2. What are the characteristic features of English Romanticism?
3. What were the major influences on the Romantic Revival?
4. What do you understand by the Romantic Imagination?
5. Write short notes on:
 - a. German transcendentalism
 - b. The Romantic Imagination
 - c. Romantic Poets
 - d. The Return to Nature
 - e. Major influences on the Romantic Movement

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THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL (1798-1832): CONCEPTS PART - II

Unit Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 The Gothic Revival
- 4.2 Medievalism
- 4.3 Pantheism
- 4.4 Conclusion
- 4.5 Questions
- 4.6 Bibliography

4.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will make the students aware of:

1. The historical and socio-political background of the Romantic Period of British Literature.
2. Features of the age.
3. Literary tendencies, literary contributions to the different of genres such as poetry, prose and drama.
4. The important writers and their major works.

With this knowledge the students will be able to locate the particular works in the tradition of literature, and again they will study the prescribed texts in the historical background.

4.1 THE GOTHIC REVIVAL

Introduction:

The Gothic Revival in British Literature is basically one that comes from the field of architecture. Gothic architecture now denotes the medieval form of architecture, characterized by the use of the high pointed arch and vault, flying buttresses, and intricate recesses, which spread through western Europe between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries (Abrams and Hartpham 152).

Some stock devices, also called by critics such as Robert Hume as "Gothic trappings" characterized the Romantic Gothic novel such as "haunted castles, supernatural occurrences (sometimes with natural explanations), secret panels and stairways, time-yellowed manuscripts, and poorly

lighted midnight scenes” (Hume 282). Some of the typical early novels in this genre dealt with aberrant psychological states and sometimes revolved around the appearances and disappearances of characters. Often these works were known for the horror or terror that they generated among the readers as well as for the depictions of cruelty, melodrama, and violence. Some of the early nineteenth century exponents of this form include Percy Bysshe Shelley, who is known for his Gothic novel *Zastrozzi* (1810) which was about an outlaw obsessed with revenge against his father and half-brother. His second Gothic novel in 1811 was called *St. Irvyne or The Rosicrucian*. The inspiration from the Gothic provided the archetype of the Byronic hero. Byron features, under the codename of Lord Ruthven, in Lady Caroline's own Gothic novel, *Glenarvon* (1816).

4.1.1 Etymological Origin, Plot and Setting:

The word “Gothic” originally referred to the Goths, who were an early Germanic tribe. Later the word came to signify “Germanic” and then “medieval” (Abrams and Hartpham 152).

The Gothic Romance, according to Abrams and Harpham, is a type of:

“...prose fiction which was inaugurated by Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story* (1764) -The subtitle denotes its setting in the Middle Ages – and flourished through the early nineteenth century. Some writers followed Walpole’s example by setting their stories in the medieval period; others set them in a Catholic country, especially Italy or Spain. The locale was often a gloomy castle furnished with dungeons, subterranean passages, and sliding panels; the typical story focused on the sufferings imposed on an innocent heroine by a cruel and lustful villain, and made bountiful use of ghosts, mysterious disappearances, and other sensational and supernatural occurrences...The principal aim of such novels was to evoke chilling terror by exploiting mystery and a variety of horrors. Many of them are now read mainly as period pieces, but the best opened up to fiction the realm of the irrational and of the perverse impulses and nightmarish terrors that lie beneath the orderly surface of the civilized mind. Examples of Gothic novels are William Beckford’s *Vathek* (1786) – the setting of which is both medieval and Oriental and the subject both erotic and sadistic; Ann Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and other highly successful romances; and Matthew Gregory Lewis’ *The Monk* (1796), which exploited, with considerable literary skill, the shock effects of a narrative involving rape, incest, murder, and diabolism...The term “Gothic” has also been extended to a type of fiction which lacks the exotic setting of the earlier romances but develops a brooding atmosphere of gloom and terror, represents events that are uncanny or macabre or melodramatically violent, and often deals with aberrant psychological states. In this extended sense, the term “Gothic” has been applied to William Godwin’s *Caleb Williams* (1794), Mary Shelley’s remarkable and influential *Frankenstein*, and the novels and tales of terror by the German E.T.A. Hoffmann.” (Abrams and Hartpham 152)

According to Hume, by bringing these elements together, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) became the first Gothic novel and led to three distinct strains of Gothic fiction. The Gothic-Historical School consisted of the works of Walpole's successors, viz. Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* (1777), Sophia Lee's *The Recess* (1785) and Charlotte Smith's *The Old Manor House* (1793). The School of Terror, the second category is represented by Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and it concentrated on supernatural phenomena. The third category was the School of Horror, which began with Matthew Gregory Lewis' *The Monk* (1796). This novel was influenced by both German and French literature and was inspired by the works of Friedrich Schiller and Marquis de Sade. However, these categories often overlap. One of the last Gothic novels, Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) combines terror and horror. Several works had elements of the Gothic but could not be classified as such. For instance, William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) combined satire with sensation, and the year 1818 saw the publication of both Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the best-known Gothic novel and Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, a parody that brought the curtain down on Romantic Gothic fiction.

4.1.2 The Evolution of The Romantic Gothic Novel and The Influence of The Gothic Revival on Romantic Poetry:

As a historical form the Gothic novel flourished between 1764 and 1820. Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* are its limits of demarcation (Hume 282).

Mrs. Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* and Lewis's *The Monk* are some other notable examples. With Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* the Romantic Gothic novel came into its own as a popular form. *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) by Charles Maturin, which combines themes of anti-Catholicism with an outcast Byronic hero, is a late example of this type of fiction.

The Romantic Gothic novel was born in an atmosphere of increased scientific inquiry, which had led to the weakened hold of religion on the masses. It represented both an assault on the repressed aesthetics of the Augustan period and an attempt at coming to terms with the excesses of Romanticism. As Gilbert Phelps puts it, the stature of the Gothic novelists as creative writers "is to be measured by the degree to which they refused to surrender to these forces".

In poetry, one sees evidence of the Romantic Gothic influence in poems such as Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner', a ballad and in his 'Christabel' as well as in John Keats' 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' and 'Isabella or the Pot of Basil.'

4.2 MEDIEVALISM

Medievalism is essentially characterized by attraction for the remote in time and place. There are certain psychological reasons for this fascination

for the remote. The Romantic imagination was taken by the picturesque and the marvellous and as it was basically a revolt against customs and traditions held supreme by the neo-classical age, the Middle Ages began to be regarded with fresh sympathy. This is evidenced in the poetry of Keats and Coleridge. *Ivanhoe*, a historical novel by Sir Walter Scott, first published in 1820 in three volumes and subtitled *A Romance*, is credited with increasing interest in romance and medievalism. Scott's overwhelming influence over the Gothic revival is based primarily on the publication of this novel. *Ivanhoe* was set in 12th century England.

The main goal of the literature of the age was to entertain and excite its readers with a tale of heroism set in the high Middle Ages, evoking the atmosphere of a vanished era. The etymological origins of the word medievalism can be traced to Latin. The words *medium aevum* mean the middle of the ages.

As we have already seen in the earlier unit, the attraction for the remote in time and place was one of the characteristics of the Romantic Movement. The critic H.A. Beers considers romanticism to be much concerned with the revival of medievalism. The romantics of the early nineteenth century turned away from the present and became enamoured with the remote. They desired an escape from familiar experiences and from reality. Thus, they took great delight in all that was Medieval. Although the word medieval has some negative connotations today, during the Romantic revival it was synonymous with the picturesque and the marvellous. The art and culture of the Middle Ages as well as their primitive morality fascinated the romantics. They regarded the Medieval with fresh eyes and sympathy. Medievalism provided poets such as Keats and Coleridge with a spiritual home that was at once remote and mysterious. Sir Walter Scott was also fascinated by the chivalry and pageantry of the Middle Ages and this is displayed in his famous historical novel, *Ivanhoe*, set in the England of the twelfth century. Not all Romantic poets, however, were attracted towards the Middle Ages. William Wordsworth, P.B. Shelley and Lord Byron felt no attraction towards medievalism. In fact, Wordsworth found his spiritual home in Nature, Shelley in his Platonic Idealism and Byron in the world of his own make believe and also in the east rather than in the Middle Ages. It is the yearning for the past, for the remote in time and place rather than only the Middle Ages that characterizes English Romanticism.

Romanticism was a complex artistic, literary and intellectual movement that gained strength during and after two of the most landmark events in world history i.e. the Industrial and the French Revolutions. While the Romantic movement did revolt against the political norms of the Age of the Enlightenment which sought rationalize nature, it also embodied nature most evidently in literature as well as the visual arts and music. Romanticism sought to go beyond the rational and therefore has been seen as a revival of the life and thought of the Middle Ages. Romanticism as a movement took it beyond the classicist models and sought to elevate medievalism by embracing the exotic, unfamiliar and distant and by escaping the confines of the urban industrial sprawl that was burdened by

the exponential rise in population. The term “romanticism” was itself derived from the medieval genre of chivalric romance. The movement immediately conjures up images such as the knight in shining armour, a distressed damsel, a dragon or a castle. These images can be seen in the illustrations of the pre-romantic poet William Blake as well as in the work of Sir Walter Scott. Under the influence of medievalism, the Romantic age witnessed greater freedom, spontaneity and a richer play of fancy.

4.3 PANTHEISM

The tendency towards pantheism became explicit among the Romantics in the nineteenth century and this was evidenced in the works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was acquainted with German culture. In many ways, German transcendentalism was the conduit through which pantheism came to Britain. Coleridge, however, was described as pantheistic for only a few years, and eventually reverted to Christianity. Pantheism is derived from the Greek words pan (which means all) and theos (which means God), thus suggesting that Nature or the Universe is identified with divinity. To put it simply, pantheism may be understood as the belief that everything comprises an all-encompassing, immanent God.

William Wordsworth was a major Romantic poet who was looked upon as a nature-worshipping pantheist, but as the years passed and his fame grew, he introduced more theistic tones into his work and revised the Prelude in this spirit too.

The younger generation of Romantics were more openly unorthodox. Keats expressed his pantheist views in a letter to his brother and sister: it was a melancholic, dualist kind of pantheism, of which little is openly visible in his poetry.

Shelley is better known as an atheist than as a pantheist, but in his atheist tracts he is careful not to exclude the idea of a universal spirit - an idea that makes his ‘Ode to the West Wind’ one of the most powerful poetic statements of pantheism.

In the early nineteenth century, the German theologian Julius Wegscheider defined pantheism as the belief that God and the world established by God are one and the same. The Romantic poets were strongly influenced by pantheism as a philosophy, and this is amply demonstrated in their work. Each one of the romantic poets however, approached nature in their own unique manner. Wordsworth philosophized nature, Keats presented natural landscapes through the senses, Shelley approached nature mystically while Coleridge was fascinated by the supernatural aspects of nature.

4.4 CONCLUSION

We have looked at the development of the Romantic Gothic Novel as well as the influence of the Gothic Revival on poetry and fiction on nineteenth century British Literature. This unit has also introduced you to the influence of Pantheism and the Middle Ages, thus giving you a broad

overview of all the major influences that shaped the literature of this period.

4.5 QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on the influence of the Gothic Revival on the development of the Romantic Gothic Novel.
2. Trace the development of the Romantic Gothic Novel.
3. Short Notes:
 - a. Medievalism
 - b. Pantheism
 - c. The major proponents of the Romantic Gothic Novel
 - d. The stock devices used by the Romantic Gothic Novelists

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SELECTED VERSE FROM THE ROMANTIC PERIOD PART - I

Unit Structure

5.0 Objective

5.1 Introduction to the Romantic Age

5.2 William Blake

5.2.1 The Divine Image from Songs of Innocence

5.2.2 The Human Abstract from Songs of Experience

5.3 William Wordsworth

5.3.1 Lines Written in Early Spring

5.3.2 Lucy Gray

5.4 Samuel Taylor Coleridge

5.4.1 Kubla Khan

5.5 Let's Sum Up

5.6 Questions

5.7 References

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we have provided a brief summary of the various aspects of the Romantic Period along with some of the famous romantic poets and their selected poems. We shall be briefly discussing William Blake and his two poems in detail that is “The Divine Image” from Songs of Innocence and “The Human Abstract” from Songs of Experience, William Wordsworth and his poems “Lines Written in Early Spring” and “Lucy Gray”, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s poem Kubla Khan.

Therefore, learners are advised to examine the poems carefully in order to understand the poetic nature of their works, and Romantic elements like human emotions such as love, life and nature that are discussed in their poetry.

5.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE ROMANTIC AGE

According to many academics, William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge's "Lyrical Ballads" appeared in print in 1798, marking the start of the Romantic era. These two writers' most well-known works, including Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and Wordsworth's "Lines Written a Few Miles from Tintern Abbey," were included in the volume.

A Vindication of the Rights of Women by Mary Wollstonecraft, William Blake's "Songs of Innocence," and other works show that a change in political thought and literary representation has already occurred. Of course, other literary scholars position the start of the Romantic period fairly early (around 1785). Charles Lamb, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott are examples of other "first generation" Romantic authors.

The Second Generation:

A consideration of the time is also a little more difficult because a second generation of Romantics existed (poets Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and John Keats). Of course, the majority of this second generation's geniuses passed away early and were outlived by the Romantics of the first generation. Of course, Mary Shelley, who is still well-known for her 1818 novel "Frankenstein," belonged to this so-called "second generation" of Romantics. While there is some debate over the exact start date, it is generally accepted that the Romantic period came to an end with Queen Victoria's crowning in 1837 and the onset of the Victorian Period. Following the Neoclassical era, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats appear. With Pope and Swift, we witnessed incredible wit and satire from the previous era, but the Romantic Era began with a new lyric in the air.

We are on the edge of the Industrial Revolution, and writers were impacted by the French Revolution as these new Romantic poets wrote their way into literary history. The Wordsworth school of poetry "had its genesis in the French Revolution... It was a period of promise, a regeneration of the world—and of letters," according to William Hazlitt, author of the book "The Spirit of the Age." The Romantics turned to nature for self-fulfillment rather than adopting politics as writers of earlier eras may have (and in fact, some Romantic writers did). They were eschewing the beliefs and ideals of the preceding age and embracing fresh means of expressing their creativity and emotions. They preferred to depend on oneself, on the radical notion of individual freedom, as opposed to concentrating on the "head," the intellectual emphasis of reason. The Romantics favoured "the splendour of the imperfect" over aiming for perfection.

5.2 WILLIAM BLAKE

William Blake, an English poet, painter, engraver, and visionary, lived from 1757 to 1827. James Basire mentored him in the art of engraving, and he later studied at the Royal Academy. In 1784, Blake established a print shop in London after being married in 1782. With the use of his new "Illuminated Printing" process, he created an inventive way for creating coloured engravings and started creating his own illustrated poetry books, such as Songs of Innocence (1789), The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (1790), and Songs of Experience (1794). His most elaborately designed work is Jerusalem, an epic that discusses humanity's fall and salvation. His other notable works include "Milton" and "Vala, or The Four Zoas". He

was disregarded by the public of his time but is now regarded as one of the most important and influential Romantic figures.

Songs of Innocence was published in its entirety for the first time in 1789. It is a thematic collection of 19 poems that have artwork engraved on them. The majority of the stories in this collection depict joyful, naïve perception in peaceful settings, but occasionally, as in "The Chimney Sweeper" and "The Little Black Boy," they subtly highlight the potential risks associated with this vulnerable and naïve state.

The second section of William Blake's Songs of Innocence and of Experience, Songs of Experience is a collection of 26 poems. 1794 saw the publication of the poems. Blake added some of the poems to Songs of Innocence and regularly switched them between the two works to align his works according to the themes suitable to the collection of other poems.

Songs of Experience was originally published in 1794, after Songs of Innocence appeared in print in 1789.

5.2.1 The Divine Image from Songs of Innocence:

The Divine Image's first line lists the virtues of Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love. "To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love/All pray in their distress", these qualities are capitalised as they are personified. The interaction between supernatural entities and humanity is portrayed in this personification. Additionally, these qualities become objects of prayer in times of need and should therefore be treasured and appreciated. It's important to note how The Divine Image's style in this and the subsequent stanzas emphasises the visuals being conveyed rather than the language itself.

The virtues are related to both God and man in the second stanza. The narrator makes a second connection to the virtues, this time linking them to God: "For Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love/Is God, our father dear." The same attributes are then linked to man in the next line: "And Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love/Is Man, his child, and care." The repetition of the virtues' and how they link divine and mankind. The father/child relationship that is formed after the introduction emphasises the bond between God and man. Thus, a significant point is made for the relationship between divine and humanity.

The Divine Image's third verse explains each of the qualities and how they apply to people. The virtues are separated for the first time in this stanza, as you may have noticed. "Mercy has a human heart," "Pity has a human face," "Love, the human form divine," and "Peace, the human dress," the narrator asserts, assigning each virtue to a human form. This transition in the poem highlights the traits of each virtue and how they relate to man. Additionally, the word "human" is used frequently, with a focus on its connection to the virtues and its personification.

The connection between the virtues and humanity is elaborated upon in the fourth stanza. These attributes are always present in the prayers of "every man, of every clime," according to the narrator. Once again, this

emphasises the human factor of these qualities and the bond between humanity and god. Particularly when the narrator states that all prayers are "to the human form divine," this is apparent. The virtues mentioned in The Divine Image's earlier stanzas are all grieved in the quatrain's final line.

The Divine Image's concluding verse highlights the need of cherishing all kinds of humankind. "All must love the human form/In heathen, Turk or Jew," the narrator says. This is due to the fact that all forms of mankind are connected to divine and so have equal value. Three of these virtues—Mercy, Love, and Pity—coexist with God, the narrator concluded, writing, "Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell/There God is dwelling also." This emphasises the notion of the interconnectedness of God and man that was expressed in the preceding quatrains.

Four traditional Christian virtues—Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love—that reside in human hearts and link them to God are presented by the poet in the poem. The personification of these virtues as characteristics of God is followed by an explanation of how they also characterise men. Furthermore, The Divine Image shares a similar theme with A Cradle Song, which also examines the link between God and Man, and it also emphasises the need to honour all variations of the human form. These themes are also shared with The Little Black Boy.

The relationship between people and God is one of The Divine Image's central topics. The narrator connects divine and mankind while praising them both. The values that are praised by the narrator contain both a divine and a human side. Seeing as God and Man are interwoven, mankind likewise transforms into something praiseworthy.

5.2.2 The Human Abstract from Songs of Experience:

The Human Abstract was first printed in Songs of Experience in 1794. Traditional Christian virtues and human reason are criticised in the poem. William Blake's metaphysical writing can be seen in works like The Human Abstract. The Human Abstract explores several qualities to depict the conflict between mankind and God. The Human Abstract from Songs of Experience, a later poem by William Blake, was written in contrast to The Divine Image. In reality, The Human Abstract's initial title was The Human Image. A significant difference between these two titles will be observed in this section. The Human Abstract's first stanza discusses the virtues of pity and mercy. The narrator introduces itself by mentioning Pity. Both nouns are capitalised in this instance as in the case of Mercy because they are personified and serve as the focal points of the poem. The narrator examines the noble concepts of Pity and Mercy and discovers that they both assume unpleasant things. In particular, Mercy needs unhappiness and Pity needs poverty. Thus, the two virtues have unavoidable drawbacks that go hand in hand with their advantages.

The criticism of the first quatrain is expanded upon in the second stanza. Since fear is the only thing that may bring about peace, the narrator keeps talking about these false virtues. The Human Abstract's narrator also emphasises Cruelty, which is capitalised just like in the previous stanza.

Because of "selfish loves," cruelty flourishes and finds a method to expand: "Then Cruelty knits a snare,/And spreads his baits with care." It can be observed how the narrator utilizes hunting metaphors to discuss cruelty. Thus, the activities connected to the word increase the personification of the capital letter ("Cruelty").

The Human Abstract's third stanza continues to develop the idea of cruelty and also makes reference to humility. The first word of the quatrain is "He," which refers to Cruelty. Once this happens, cruelty "sits down with holy fears" and "waters the ground with tears." As it performs two actions that are accompanied by sentiment in this way, Cruelty is still personified. Then, another illusory virtue appears as Humility stands at Cruelty's feet. Cruelty leads to humility, as stated in the poem "Then Humility takes its root/Under his foot." Yet another virtue that is embodied is humility.

The third and fourth stanzas are similar in that the fourth completes and introduces the preceding stanza's depiction of a false virtue. We should take note of how, starting with the second quatrain, the stanzas create a narrative across the lines while maintaining the same personification approach and maintaining consistent rhythms because of the stanza's structure and rhyme. Two insects feed on mystery as humility spreads. It can be observed how the narrator of The poem presents another false virtue in the last lines by using natural materials.

More imagery elements of nature are developed in the poem's fifth stanza. The previous quatrain's reference to mystery says that it "bears the fruit of Deceit," which is described as being "Ruddy and sweet to eat." This fruit consequently develops from the tree that has grown out of the previous false virtues. This list of false virtues is a subsequent addition that creates a negative image of nature that ends with the phrase "his nest has made/In its thickest shade". We need to consider the fact that "Raven" is capitalised within a personification device in the fourth verse as "Caterpillar and Fly."

The development of the five quatrains is completed in the sixth stanza. The narrator says that the "Gods of the earth and sea" searched through nature to discover the tree that was being described, but that their efforts in search were futile because the tree is not present there. We need to take note here that from the second to the fifth stanza, the list of false virtues consisted of illustrations of trees. However, this only expands "in the Human Brain." Therefore, all of these false virtues are only human beliefs and perceptions that have nothing to do with what nature actually is. Because of this, every demerit associated with these false virtues is fully human.

The Human Abstract comprises twenty-four lines overall, six quatrains. The rhyme has an AABB structure. This straightforward rhyme pattern recreates pure sonority, emphasising the words' meanings. In order to draw the reader's attention to "Mystery," the fourth stanza breaks the rhyme scheme. Additionally, The Human Abstract's six stanzas are didactic in tone and convey its lesson in a broadly applicable way. The

poem primarily focuses on addressing the reader in the manner of a lesson, but from a critical point of view.

The Human Abstract has two basic themes. These are associated with the opposition of nature, divinity, and mankind. The first is the human construct of virtue and religion. The opening stanzas offer a critical perspective on the virtues that are customarily connected with Christianity. These are eventually thought to be erroneous since they are prejudiced by human reasoning and are not fully desirable. Additionally, the final stanzas introduce the second theme, which is humanity's entrapment. We understand through this poem how mankind is surrounded by more "false" virtues like humility and deceit because it is unable to escape these negative sides of its "virtues".

The poem examines how virtues are closely intertwined with pain. Without poverty, pity would not exist, mercy would presuppose unhappiness, and the root of peace would be fear. Cruelty, humility, and deceit are some other virtues that are born out of sin. The narrator claims that, in contrast to what occurs in nature, all these negative or erroneous values develop and spread "in the Human Brain".

5.3 WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

William Wordsworth was born in Cockermouth, Cumberland, England, on April 7, 1770, and passed away at Rydal Mount, Westmorland, on April 23, 1850. Wordsworth, who was orphaned at the age of 13, attended Cambridge University, but he was completely penniless and rootless until 1795, when a bequest made it possible for him to reunite with his sister Dorothy Wordsworth. He became acquainted with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, with whom he collaborated on the anthology *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), which is frequently cited as the catalyst for the English Romantic movement. Among Wordsworth's works are "Tintern Abbey" and other verses that have caused controversy due to their usage of commonplace vernacular. He wrote *The Prelude* (1850), an enormous autobiographical poem that would fill him sporadically for the following 40 years, in 1798. *Poems, in Two Volumes* (1807), his second collection of verses, has many of the rest of his best poems, including "Ode: Intimations of Immortality." His poetry had mostly lost its impact by the time he was well admired by critics and the general public, and his political activism had given way to conservatism. He was named England's poet laureate in 1843. He is thought to have played a key role in the founding of English Romanticism.

5.3.1 Lines Written in Early Spring by William Wordsworth:

While out on a stroll close to the village of Alford, Wordsworth composed "Lines Written in Early Spring." Wordsworth was an avid walker and frequently penned his poetry while on the go or while he observed natural scenes. He was a proponent of the French Revolution and worried about the state of society and what people were doing to one another. William Wordsworth's poem "Lines Written in Early Spring" is a stunning example of a landscape poem that emphasises nature. William Wordsworth, poet of

"Lines Written in Early Spring," and his then-friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge planned to publish a collection of poetry titled "Lyrical Ballads" in 1798. They reprinted this volume in 1802, but this time it included a prologue written by William Wordsworth himself in which he made an effort to justify the motivation behind his poetic creations. What is a poet, he asked? Moving away from the idealistic concept of the poet as having some greater purpose in life and some God-ordained ability to write to teach others, he is a man speaking to men. William Wordsworth's poem "Lines Written in Early Spring" is a landscape that focuses primarily on the natural world. The unidentified narrator ponders the social changes taking place all around him while relaxing under a tree in the wilderness.

While there were other poetry of nature that were popular throughout the Romantic era, Wordsworth is the one who comes to mind most immediately. Wordsworth believed that to be close to nature was to be close to God. The line "a thousand mingled notes" in the first quatrain, which alludes to the natural world's near-pervasive presence and is comparable to God's omnipotence, refers to the divinity of Nature. The second quatrain temporarily departs from nature to reflect on the suffering that people have inflicted upon one another throughout history, by the concept of a soul; that Nature's soul is similar to that of humanity; and that, despite what the rest of the world has forgotten, it is man's natural state to be close to Nature. One of Wordsworth's fundamental beliefs was that man's innate state was to be near to nature. The idea of nature as a living entity is brought up once more in this quatrain, this time in the verbs used to describe movement: "trailed" for the periwinkle and "breathes" for the flowers. Wordsworth makes an effort to convey the concept of a live, breathing environment that is only a small distance from humans throughout "Lines Written in Early Spring." The reader is drawn to nature, which has been discussed so much that the speaker-poet is reduced to almost nothing by the movement, which contrasts sharply with the immovable poet. He doesn't appear in the poem at all; he has no thoughts, no personality, and no ideas. His world is absorbed by nature's more powerful realm. "Have I no reason to regret what man has made of man?" Wordsworth asks at the end of "Lines Written in Early Spring."

The poet-wounded speaker's soul was attempted to be healed by nature throughout the poem, but near the end, despite nature's best efforts, the poet-speaker's are still sad and depressed, undermining the purported healing power of nature. The book concludes on a depressingly melancholy note; the natural world, unaffected by human suffering, goes on with its existence, while the human soul, imprisoned in its iron cage of mortality and reason, is left behind to endure the suffering of the human world. The poem "Lines Written in Early Spring" is composed of six quatrains, which are groups of four lines.

The three main themes of Wordsworth's poem "Lines Written in Early Spring" are tranquility, spirituality, and nature. The speaker of this poem, who is almost certainly the poet, keeps track of his surroundings as he reads. He talks about the effect that seeing photos of nature has on him. In a "nice mood," he was. However, this positive state of mind prompts him

to think more deeply about human nature and the state of the human soul and spirit. He laments what mankind has done to mankind in the presence of Nature, which is home to all of us. The speaker is aware that despite the fact that he lacks the answers to many of his questions, he may still enjoy the environment around him.

5.3.2 Lucy Gray by William Wordsworth:

Anyone who has studied William Wordsworth's poetry, including "Lucy Gray," knows that the loss of a child frequently appears in his works. Wordsworth lost his own son and daughter, and those losses seem to have haunted him for the rest of his life. Poetry by Wordsworth frequently deals with death-related issues. He occasionally finds solace in ideas about death. Sometimes he feels hopeless. He expresses the paralysing fear of losing the one he loves in his poetry, "Strange Fits of Passion have I known." Nearly often in his poetry, the name Lucy designates a person he loved and lost. Depending on the situation, Lucy may represent a lover or the innocent, unadulterated love a father has for his daughter. Many commentators have disagreed about who Lucy is, but the majority have come to the conclusion that she does not reflect just one individual. Instead, she is a character made out of every person Wordsworth has ever loved and lost. Wordsworth lost his own son and daughter, and those losses seem to have haunted him for the rest of his life.

Nearly often in his poetry, the name Lucy designates a person he loved and lost. Depending on the situation, Lucy may represent a lover or the innocent, unadulterated love a father has for his daughter. Many commentators have disagreed about who Lucy is, but the majority have come to the conclusion that she does not reflect just one individual. The first quatrain establishes the scene and foreshadows what will come later in the poem. The reader is aware of how frequently and before whom Lucy Gray has been mentioned. The speaker continues by saying that he witnessed "the lone child" just before "break of day." The reason the speaker first heard of Lucy Gray is still a mystery at this moment. He also doesn't explain why seeing her is significant. The first verse just piques readers' interest in Lucy and establishes her as a key character. Further piquing interest in Lucy is the second stanza. She claims to have "no partner" and "no comrade," the speaker continues. This fits with his description of her as a "solitary child" in the verse before this one. Then he continues, "She lived on a huge moor." Consider a youthful child living alone and outside, without any family or friends. One may start to believe that he is portraying a certain type of feral child, but line three of this stanza completely refutes that notion. She is "the nicest thing that ever bloomed by a human door," the speaker claims. The readers can now appreciate Lucy's sweetness and cuteness. She was born "beside a human door," according to the final line. Given that she is a human child, it appears odd that she did not develop inside of the door. She "dwelt among the moor," the speaker has already said. The readers are left wondering about Lucy and her peculiar identity as a result of these two descriptions. Here, in the third stanza, the speaker addresses the audience directly and declares that while they might "spy the fawn at play" and "spot a hare

upon the green," "the sweet face of Lucy Gray will never again be seen." The speaker reveals that Lucy has experienced a setback in this stanza. According to these quotations, the speaker is now narrating a story. He may have heard this tale from someone else. He starts speaking in terms of someone else. This guy allegedly sent the youngster looking for her mother in the snow with a lamp.

Lucy's response, "That, Father!" does not come as a surprise because the speaker has already called her "the sweetest thing." Will I do gladly: Additionally, it is made clear that the speaker is Lucy's father by this. At two in the afternoon, the father sends his daughter out. He requests that she bring her mother a lamp. Lucy goes willingly. The narrative is continued in this stanza from the viewpoint of the first speaker. He claims that as Lucy left with "the lantern in her hand," the father went back to his job. In the seventh verse, Lucy is described as ambling along lazily and carelessly while kicking up "powdery snow" and observing it rise "like smoke." These details about Lucy continue to depict her as a kind and innocent youngster. The reader becomes more concerned about Lucy as he learns more about her because the speaker had earlier said that she is not to be seen again. The illustration of a young child walking in the snow while obeying her father helps readers identify with Lucy. The speaker gives away Lucy's fate in the first line of the eighth stanza.

In the next stanza, the speaker refers to dawn once more. This section of the poem is important. The speaker first mentions seeing Lucy Gray at this time of day. At this time of day, the parents also come to the conclusion that Lucy most likely did not survive the winter storm. The parents start to cry and give up trying to find Lucy at this point in the eleventh quatrain. They return home and hold onto the faith that their daughter may one day join them in paradise. "The mother spied the print of Lucy's feet" at that precise moment. She has been in the storm all night. It's unlikely that she would have lived. However, spotting her footprint inspires optimism. The parents started to follow her footprints in the eleventh grade. They can see that she travelled They carry on in her footsteps with hope in their hearts. The reader is probably now completely sympathetic to the parents. Readers can either connect to or at least comprehend the sentiments of frantically looking, mourning and accepting her death, and renewed hope upon discovering her footsteps. The next stanza demonstrates her footprints are followed by her parents until they reach a bridge after crossing a field. Readers can see the parents' emotions as they tracked their daughter's footprints and had to picture her trekking through the snowstorm, scared and bewildered. An overwhelming sense of loss is evoked in the fourteenth stanza. There is optimism that the child will be found alive at the end of the parents' footsteps as they follow in her footsteps. Instead, the parents followed the tracks until they reached the "middle of the plank" on the bridge, when they abruptly stopped. That Lucy fell off the bridge is the only logical conclusion. The readers are informed in the fifteenth verse that tiny Lucy's body was never located. People would still not assert that "she is a living child" if it had been discovered. Additionally, it sheds more light on the opening stanzas, where the speaker claims to have seen her and described her as a "solitary

child." He claims to have seen Lucy Gray's ghost, who he had heard about frequently.

The speaker reconfirms in the sixteenth stanza that he has seen Lucy Gray and describes the person she is right now. He claims that when she "sings a solo melody," "she trips along and never looks behind." This paints a serene picture of Lucy and suggests that she may have been singing and skipping before the storm swept her away. It seems that rather than being afraid by the storm, she was quickly and unexpectedly taken by it.

5.4 SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, an English poet, critic, and philosopher, lived from 1772 to 1834. Robert Southey and Coleridge were good friends while they were both students at the University of Cambridge. The classic "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and "Frost at Midnight" from *Lyrical Ballads* (1798; with William Wordsworth) marked the start of English Romanticism. The unfinished "Christabel" and the popular "Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan" are his other known poems. He wrote "Dejection: An Ode" (1802), in which he laments the loss of his ability to compose poetry, while in a miserable marriage and addicted to opium. He afterwards authored *Biographia Literaria*, 2 vol. (1817), the most important piece of broad literary critique of the Romantic era, partly restored by his renewed Anglican faith. Coleridge had a restless life full of turbulence and unrealized potential because he was imaginative, complicated, and gifted with a special brain.

5.4.1 Kubla Khan:

In a semi-conscious state, Coleridge wrote the poem "Kubla Khan," which was first published in 1816. The entire poem has a dreamy tone and is still in the format of a vision. Kubla Khan's viewpoint was influenced by the reading of the travelogue, *Purchas His Pilgrimage*. When Coleridge read the words, "At Zanadu Kubla Khan built a pleasure palace," in the book, he had just taken an opium dose as an anodyne. However, this inspired his artistic vision, and he wrote the 200-line poem while still awake. When he was completely awake, he recorded the poem. The poem's subject matter is unimportant. It portrays the palace that Kubla Khan, the great ruler of central Asia and Chengis Khan's grandson, constructed.

In the poem *Kubla Khan*, Samuel Tayler Coleridge describes how Kubla Khan gave the order to build a majestic pleasure castle and what was done to make it happen. On the banks of the sacred river "Alph," which flowed underground for a great distance via inconceivable caves into a sea where the sun's rays could not reach, Kubla Khan commanded the construction of a beautiful pleasure palace. As a result, a ten-mile-long area of fertile land was surrounded for this reason by walls and towers on all sides. There were gardens full of fragrant trees and fragrant flowers blooming on one side of this land. The gardens were exceptionally attractive due to the scenic waterways that ran through them. The opposite side of the land was covered with dense ancient trees that were as old as the hills and contained

patches of grassy land that were warmed by the sun's rays. Coleridge therefore creates a lovely castle that is vague but intriguing.

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The poem has received a lot of praise for its skillful blending of sound and rhythm with the various sections of the descriptions. The poet seemed to have been drawn to the most amazing unknown gap that stretched across the hill covered with cedar trees while describing the lovely gardens. It simply defied all descriptions, was a really picturesque location, and had a sinister atmosphere. Under the light of the fading moon, it appeared to be a magical location that was inhabited by fairies and demons as well as a heartbroken lady-love who was lamenting the loss of her demon-lover. As witchcraft and its practise are connected with such surroundings, the obscurity and mystery of this location indicated both. Every instant, a fountain burst forth from this abyss with such force that the earth around it appeared to be dying and breathing heavily. Momentarily, it shot up enormous chunks of rock that flew about like chaff when a flail was used to crush it, before falling on the earth in all directions.

The sacred river Alph also emerged from this gap, flowing zigzag through forest and valley for five miles before plunging into the serene ocean through mysterious tunnels. There was a loud roar as it hit the water and plunged into the ocean. In the middle of this commotion, Kubla Khan overheard the voices of his forefathers telling him that the moment had come for him to pursue ambitious wars. Kubla Khan developed a luxury addiction while spending time at the pleasure palace, therefore his forefathers pushed him to abandon this way of life and prepare for a life filled with adventures and battles. Kubla Khan's palace was a very beautiful and attractive place to spend time. According to the poet, the reflection of the pleasure-dome that dropped between the fountains combined with the echoing sound emerging from the caves gave the viewer the impression that the music was actually rhythmic. The palace, which united a summer and a winter palace into one, was a structure of exceptional design and an amazing achievement of architecture. Because it was exposed to the sun, the building's top was heated, while ice that never melted kept the lower chambers chilly.

Coleridge then reveals a lovely maid who has been fetched from a far-off place to complete the romantic mood. He claims that once in a dream, a female who had been brought from Abyssinia appeared to him. She was singing in praise of Mount Abora and her beloved Abyssinia. The poet wants to imply that the singer's song demonstrated homesickness. She had been transported from her native nation to the faraway country of China, and she yearned to get back there so she could play freely and joyfully with the other girls from her native country. When the poet observed an Abyssinian girl performing an exquisite melody on her dulcimer and singing a lyrical song at Kubla Khan's pleasure palace, his imagination was captured by the immense power of music. In the concluding lines, he declares that he would create the magnificent castle of Kubla Khan in the air if he could remember or learn the alluring song of the Abyssinian girl. His notes would fill him to the brim.

He would be able to recreate the entire incident with the assistance of his sharpened imagination. He will be able to recreate the entire palace in the air, complete with the palace of Kubla Khan's sunny dome and cold caves, with the help of his extensive training in this divinely inspired music. The readers would believe that the complete glory of the palace had been captured for them due to his creative imagination, which would induce a willing suspension of disbelief. His sparkling eyes and burning hair and lips would make them gasp in admiration.

They would be so frightened by his hysterical state that they would avoid physical contact with him. They would lock him three times in a magical circle, protecting themselves from being contaminated by his magical spell. The poet has experienced the honey-dew of divine lyrical inspiration, and music which has begun to impact his appearance. They would close their eyes to protect themselves from the effects of his spell.

The best illustration of poetry that is pure and devoid of any intellectual content is "Kubla Khan." It charms with the beauty of its colour, artistic elegance, and pleasant harmony since it is fundamental to the character of a dream. Its worldview is crafted from the broadest range of sources, including romance and travel publications. It is particularly charming because of its isolated location and delicate creative realism. The main methods for dreaming up the uncanny atmosphere are suggestion and association. The poem has the best musical impact ever. The poem's sound effects are what really make it interesting. To create subtle harmonies, the rhythm and even the length of the lines are changed. A network of onomatopoeia, liquid consonant usage, and alliteration connects the entire poem. Hard consonants can occasionally be used carefully to create the impression of force and harshness.

5.5 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit, we have defined and discussed the Introduction to the Romantic Age and some of the famous romantic poets, William Blake and his poems; The Divine Image from Songs of Innocence and "The Human Abstract" from Songs of Experience. William Wordsworth, and his poems, "Lines Written in Early Spring", and "Lucy Gray" and Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his poem Kubla Khan. Throughout the course of this unit, we have discussed the summary and analysis of the above poems as well as some of the major characteristics of these poems.

5.6 QUESTIONS

1. Write a critical analysis of The Divine Image from Songs of Innocence?
2. William Blake as a romantic poet with reference to his poems studied above.
3. Comment on the central theme of Lines Written in Early Spring by Wordsworth.

4. Write a detailed note on themes and the plot of Lucy Gray.
5. Write a detailed note on the themes in Andrew Marvell's A Dialogue between The Resolved Soul and Created Pleasure.
6. Comment on the plot and features of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan".

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SELECTED VERSE FROM THE ROMANTIC PERIOD PART - II

Unit Structure

- 6.0 Objective
- 6.1 George Gordon, Lord Byron
 - 6.1.1 Darkness
- 6.2 P. B. Shelley
 - 6.2.1 Ozymandias
- 6.3 John Keats
 - 6.3.1 On First Looking into Chapman's Homer
 - 6.3.2 Ode to Psyche
- 6.4 Let's Sum Up
- 6.5 Questions
- 6.6 References

6.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we have provided a brief summary of the various aspects of the Romantic Period along with some of the famous romantic poets and their selected poems. We shall be briefly discussing George Gordon, Lord Byron and his poem in detail that is "Darkness", P. B. Shelley and his poems "Ozymandias", and John Keats and his poems "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" and "Ode to Psyche".

Therefore, learners are advised to examine the poems carefully in order to understand the poetic nature of their works, and Romantic elements like human emotions such as love, life and nature that are discussed in their poetry. Students are advised to refer to scholarly articles and suitable study materials that will help them prepare better for the examination.

6.1 GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

George Gordon, Lord Byron, the most brilliant and famous of the prominent English Romantic poets, was also the most popular poet in the early 1800s. For many, he appeared to be the prototype of the wildly popular, defiant, melancholic, and haunted by deep guilt Romantic hero he created.

His multifaceted personality was reflected in satire, verse narrative, odes, lyric, speculative drama, historical tragedies, confessional poetry, dramatic monologue, seriocomic epic, and voluminous letters written in Spenserian stanzas, heroic couplets, blank verse, terza rima, ottava rima etc. Few

writers have ever captivated the Western mind and heart like Byron did through his dynamism, sexuality, self-revelation, and demands for the freedom of oppressed people everywhere. His name and image as the face of Romanticism were imprinted on 19th-century literature, art, politics, and even fashion trends.

6.1.1 Darkness:

Lord Byron's terrifying poem of doom and sorrow is titled "Darkness." In this narrative poetry, the speaker imagines a time when the sun has burned out and the world is completely dark. In their panic, the catastrophe's survivors eventually exterminate all surviving life in an effort to survive. This poem makes the argument that humanity is helpless against a large, heartless universe as well as its own violent, evil, and selfish instincts. The Prisoner of Chillon, Byron's 1816 collection, contained this poem. Let us take a look at the brief summary of the poem.

Lord Byron's poem "Darkness" acts as a cautionary tale against the escalating inequalities of the period as well as a forecast of what would happen to the world if humankind did not evolve. This poem opens with a description of the sun, stars, and moon disappearing, leaving the earth to fumble aimlessly through space. The entire population of the planet is destined to live in darkness. They set fire to everything in their vicinity, including palaces, huts, and eventually holy literature. Any form of light to see by is desperately needed. By creating an atmosphere of total darkness, kings are reduced to the status of commoners, and everyone suffers in unison. As they leave, the men grieve and set fire to the woodlands. Some people's impending and actual famine drives them insane. In order to "sate" themselves for what will be one of the last occasions, the men tame the woodland animals but kill them. To the point where just two guys remain and they start to fight, many men die of starvation.

At the same "altar-place," these men discover themselves amidst the ashes of sacred objects. They succeed in starting a tiny fire, and when they are shocked to see one another, they both instantly perish in fear. All flora, all animals, and the human race are now extinct. Because the moon has long since "extinguished," all water is quiet and there are no longer any tides. The Universe is now the absence of clouds, which are useless to it.

Byron makes a remark at the start of this poem that the reader must keep in mind as they read the rest of it. The speaker claims that his experience wasn't entirely a dream. The dream has a poignant message to convey concerning the condition of the human race, which can either be ignored as just that or taken as a prophecy. The speaker's dream centres on the idea of "darkness" as a whole.

The dazzling sun has been extinguished in the dream, which has strong religious, end-of-the-world overtones, and the stars in the night sky are roaming darkling, which refers to their absence of light as a result of their own extinguishment. They are allegedly Rayless and Pathless. Just as humanity has become lost, there is nothing to lead them. The arrival of "Morn" does not end this night's darkness; rather, it only lengthens it. The

sun has also been turned off, so the day doesn't offer any light. In the terror of this awful misery, men are said to have lost "their passions." All desire for earthly things has been lost, and the only thing left to live is the fear of the darkness. The entire universe was "chill'd" or "frozen" "into a selfish prayer for light." In order to restore their lives as they had been before, men and women prayed for light for themselves rather than for the good of humanity. But it won't be so simple to go through this test, which was probably sent by a God who was bringing about the end of the world.

People all around the world were able to see in the dark and various kinds of buildings, including "palaces," "huts," and "The habitations of all things which dwell," were utilised as kindling to make beacons. No monarch or peasant has anything the other does not have, and all of the dwellings have been destroyed. At this point, the apocalypse has achieved its desired result of reducing kings to peasants and palaces to huts. The men "were gathered round their smouldering homes" as the homes of humanity burned in order to finally meet one another. It seems that this is the first opportunity since the darkness descended for people to actually see one another. The poem continues, and the speaker describes that aside from darkness, "A fearful hope" was all that the world contained, a hope to be rid of the dark by whatever means necessary. The world's forests were burned, but they "fell and faded," plunging everything back into darkness.

Finally, the third type "hurried to and fro" in an effort to rekindle the fires as they were being put out. These individuals look upward with "mad disquietude," or uneasiness, as these "funeral heaps" of burning trees and houses begin to fail.

The guys tilted their heads to the sky as their madness grew, saw a "pall" of the past world, a tiny echo, a shadow of what once was, and then turned their heads back to the ground. It is obvious that the populace of this evil society is becoming more and more insane. They became even more enraged by the "pall" of the previous world and "gnashed their teeth and howled" like wolves lost in the night, angry at what had happened to them. The "wild birds" are frightened by their howls and "flutter" from the trees to the ground. The speaker in Byron's poem now spends several lines elaborating on the forest's inhabitants. The men are reported to have "slain for food" the vipers, which are said to hiss but not bite. This idea of equality is quickly dispelled.

All creatures, including men, animals, and birds, were barred from the body of his former master, which he guarded. He remained on guard until all of the hungry monsters started looking for other creatures that were "falling dead." One dog remained beside the dead and gave out a "piteous and constant moan," refusing to attack his human companion or go in search of food. The last of the good in this world is represented by this lone, devoted dog. He is the lone animal that hasn't abandoned those he loved. Until he passed away, he lay by the body and licked "the hand / Which answered not with a caress." He refused to succumb to the immorality that came to the rest of the world far too quickly, and the darkness did not alter him. The only two guys who survived were "Of a

large city," while everyone else perished. The men are able to start a small flame out of the ashes and are finally able to see one another. They both pass away as a result of being shocked by the other's appearance or perhaps just from having seen another being in the same depressing condition.

The men will never learn the truth about each other or what exactly made them adversaries. The speaker claims that it was not just their "shared hideousness" on the surface that caused them to perish. They were unable to resolve their rivalry as a result of the starvation that the darkness brought about. Byron describes how the ships were rotting in their own bodies of water as he concludes this poem. Although their masts broke off and fell to the ground, they did not float away. "Sleeping on the abyss without a surge," they said. The tides stopped flowing in and out, and there were no longer any waves in the water because the moon had long since "expired." The Darkness did not require the assistance of the clouds because "She" had already transformed into the entire cosmos. As was already said, this poem functions as both a cautionary tale about the rising inequality in Byron's day and a prophecy about what would happen to the planet if humans did not evolve. Only the savagery of an Old Testament God can compare to the apocalypse that Byron has envisioned. A religious and moral end to the world is implied by references to religious symbols and events found throughout this poem.

"Darkness" Themes: Greed and selfishness in humans:

The speaker of Byron's poem "Darkness" has a terrifying dream in which humanity rips itself apart when the sun goes out and the world is left in the dark. The survivors of this catastrophe almost soon resort to murder and cannibalism because they are starved and desperate in the never-ending night. The poem implies that the literal darkness of a gloomy world is not the true horror of this apocalypse. It represents the figurative darkness that dwells in people's souls the greed, violence, and selfishness that lurks just beneath the surface of civilised society, waiting to burst out the minute someone feels that their own survival is in danger.

The poem implies that this innate, self-centered desire to survive at all costs is never truly far away and that individuals may readily turn against one another in order to protect their own life. Human selfishness and greed destroy not only lives but also the ecosystem. In order to create some temporary light and warmth after running out of fuel, the survivors set fire to every building and forest in the entire world. The poem implies that when people feel threatened, they will act quickly to destroy everything nearby in an effort to survive. Therefore, it is only fair that the final two inhabitants of the planet, two long-time "enemies," pass away together, not in a struggle, but in utter fear at the sight of one another's withered, diabolical features.

Additionally, the fact that the entire poem takes place in the speaker's "dream" shows that the speaker is aware of their own inherent evil and

selfishness. According to this poem, true horror lies within each and every person rather than in any impending doomsday.

Selected Verse from The
Romantic Period
Part - II

Human Corruptibility and the Vulnerability of Civilization:

The poem "Darkness" offers a clear-cut, unwavering statement about how helpless humanity is in the end. No human institution, from monarchy to religion, survives the enormous "darkness" in the speaker's dream of a post-apocalyptic Earth with a burnt-out sun. This poem makes the argument that civilization is far more fragile than people would like to think and that ultimately all human capabilities will be subdued by the immense expanse of space. Humanity must face its frailty and fragility almost as soon as the poem's sun sets. Without the sun, people would have to burn their own houses to provide heat and light, which represents the end of civilisation as we know it. Notably, not even the "holy" artefacts of temples or the "thrones" of monarchs are spared. The poem implies that even great human institutions like monarchs and religions are ultimately impotent.

Furthermore, all human attempts to reclaim power eventually serve the purpose. For example, when people burn down forests around the world to create a little transient warmth, they only leave the earth even more "lifeless" than before. The poem ultimately implies that "Darkness" is the essence of the "Universe." Even the most impressive human abilities will always be swallowed up and defeated by the endless, lightless nothingness of the cosmos; people forget how little and feeble they truly are at their own peril.

6.2 PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Percy Bysshe Shelley's life and writings serve as a prime example of English Romanticism, which can range from jubilant ecstasy to haunting sorrow. Shelley embodied the key elements of Romanticism, including restlessness and brooding, rebellion against authority, interaction with nature, the power of poetry and the visionary imagination, the pursuit of ideal love, and the unbridled spirit perpetually seeking freedom. These themes continue to be present in the substantial body of work he left behind after his infamous drowning death at age 29. The very name of Shelley has elicited either the utmost vehemence or the warmest admiration, verging on devotion, since the start of his writing career at the age of 17 and continuing throughout his life. Shelley's life and reputation have had a history and life of their own apart from the reputation of his various works, perhaps with the exception of his friend George Gordon, Lord Byron. This is more than any other English Romantic writer, and it continued to develop even after his drowning death at the age of 29.

6.2.1 "Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley:

Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote the sonnet "Ozymandias." As part of a poetry competition, Shelley and a friend wrote "Ozymandias" in 1817. They submitted it to The Examiner, where it was printed under the pseudonym

Glirastes in 1818. The name "Ozymandias" is a nickname for Ramesses II, an ancient Egyptian king. In order to illustrate the fleeting nature of political authority and to laud art's capacity to preserve the past, Shelley used a crumbling statue of Ozymandias in the poem. The poem is a 14-line sonnet, but despite this, it deviates from the standard sonnet structure and rhyme scheme. This is a strategy that shows Shelley's concern in questioning traditions, both political and poetic. Let's take a look at the poem.

The speaker remembers meeting a tourist "from an antique region," who told him a tale about the statue's remains in his country's desert. A gigantic, decaying stone skull is nearby and two enormous stone legs stand alone in the sand, "half-sunk." The traveller informed the speaker that the statue's frown and "sneer of frigid authority" show that the sculptor was aware of the subject's emotions well. Despite the fact that both the sculptor and his subject have since passed away, the memory of those feelings is still "stamped" on the lifeless statue. "My name is Ozymandias, monarch of kings: / Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" are written on the pedestal of the monument. However, everything has vanished around the crumbling wreckage of the statue, leaving nothing but the "lone and level sands" that surround it. Although the line rhymes do assist to remind the reader that this is not prose, "Ozymandias" reads more like a story than a poem. The poem's speaker, who may be Percy Bysshe Shelley, uses the personal pronoun "I" to relate the tale from his point of view. He describes meeting a traveller from a distant nation in the opening line. This statement initially raises the question of whether the traveller is from "an antique land" or whether he has recently returned from one. The place where the speaker first encountered this wanderer is also unknown to the reader. The title identifies the country the traveller has been to Greeks referred to Ramesses II as Ozymandias, a strong Egyptian king. As a result, it is clear to the reader that the "antique land" is Egypt, one of the world's earliest civilizations. The traveller talks about his adventures in Egypt in the remaining lines of the poem, which are actually written in dialogue. The traveller describes a statue he saw in Egypt in lines two through four. The reader sees two enormous stone legs lying in the sand of the desert via the eyes of the traveler. The statue's face is obscured in the area. The tourist can still make out the sculpture's grimace and sneer despite the damaged face. He can infer from this that the monarch in question most likely exercised total power and did so with an iron fist. The tourist then focuses his attention on the statue's artist. Whoever the sculptor is, he had a strong understanding of his subject, the author observes. One could agree that the artist did a remarkable job of capturing the ruler's passions. Even though the king is long dead, he still survives thanks to the work of a simple sculptor. So, in this situation, who is more powerful? It is without a doubt the sculptor.

In line seven, he also appears to be making the observation that, in contrast to living things, art endures and is everlasting. The elegant carvings and the master's hand endure past the traces of the past. The traveller offers some intriguing details on the leader in this situation in the following line. First, the pharaoh's hands demonstrate that he made fun of

his subjects, yet despite this, he also provided them with food and care. More information about the sculpture is provided in lines nine through eleven, the last of which also has inscriptions etched into the pedestal of the ruler. The leader's pedestal has words etched onto it that also describe Ozymandias' character. He is telling others who are around him to admire everything he has made even though they do not understand what he has accomplished. Instead, the speaker is forced to feel hopeless and terrified of it. These exact phrases capture the leader's arrogance. But the tone changes in the final three lines. The leader has since passed away, along with his empire. Shelley uses irony in these lines to illustrate how, despite the damaged statue's persistence, the leader's culture has vanished. Similar to the statue, it fell and was reduced to dust. These sentences have a lot of impact. Nearly as if the tourists were making fun of the sovereign. Furthermore, Shelley's use of language is crucial here. He conveys the King's diminished strength by using words like "decay" and "bare." There is nothing at all left. The leader has fallen, just like his country and just like the shattered statue that formerly stood in his place.

Themes in Ozymandias:

The Transience of Power:

In "Ozymandias," one of Shelley's most well-known poems, the remnants of an old king's statue in a strange desert are described. A pompous inscription referring to the monarch as the "king of kings" whose enormous accomplishments inspire awe and despair in all who witness them, coupled with two "huge" stone legs standing upright and a head partially buried in sand, are all that remains of the statue. In the poem, the speaker recounts a tale a traveller told him about the ruins of a sculpture described as a "colossal wreck" whose deteriorating physical state symbolises the loss of Ozymandias's power.

The poem's portrayal of Ozymandias' downfall and his tyranny isn't totally made up: Ramesses II, an Egyptian pharaoh who significantly enlarged Egypt's dominion and had several statues of himself constructed all around Egypt, was known by the Greek name Ozymandias. In reality, an inscription was found on the base of one of Ozymandias' sculptures, according to the ancient Greek author Diodorus Siculus: "I, Ozymandias, am King of Kings. Overcome one of my works if someone wants to discover how magnificent I am and where I fall short." The poem serves as a reminder to readers that civilizations have risen and fallen throughout history by making references to an actual ancient kingdom and a real king. No authority, however omnipotent a dictator thinks himself to be, is ever lasting. Even the "king of kings" may one day be a forgotten relic of an "antique land."

The Power of Art:

"Ozymandias" famously describes a ruined statue of an ancient king in an empty desert. Although the king's statue boastfully commands onlookers to "Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair," there are no works left to examine: the king's cities, empire, and power have all disappeared over

time. Even though the poem claims that the broken statue and its pedestal are the only things left, art is one thing that has endured the ages. Since the words etched next to the statue and the skillfully rendered monument itself have endured long after Ozymandias and his empire vanished into oblivion, Shelley's poem presents art as arguably the most durable means of preserving humanity's heritage. Although the statue is a "wreck" in a state of "decay," its individual pieces show the skill of the sculptor and preserve the story of Ozymandias. The fragments interpret and preserve the king's personality and show onlookers throughout history what sort of a man and leader Ozymandias truly was.

Man Versus Nature:

Shelley was a romantic poet who held nature in the highest regard and was unconvinced by human endeavours to control it. It is appropriate that his "Ozymandias" asserts both humanity's powerlessness in comparison to the natural world and the fleeting nature of political power. The "colossal Wreck" that the poet describes has most likely happened precisely because of the desert's unrelenting sand and wind erosion pressures. This, together with the fact that the statue is now surrounded by "lone and level sands," shows that nature is an uncontrollable force to which humans are eventually subject. The natural world is seen by Shelley as having much more power than humans. Possibly the king of kings is Ozymandias, but even kings can be toppled by mere grains of sand.

6.3 JOHN KEATS

John Keats was born in London on October 31, 1795. Despite passing away at the young age of 25, Keats had arguably the most accomplished career of any English poet. In three compact volumes and a few journals, he only released fifty-four poems. However, over the course of his brief career, he took on the difficulties of a variety of poetic forms, including the sonnet, the Spenserian romance, and the Miltonic epic, defining for the first time their potentialities with his own unique fusion of earnest energy, control of opposing perspectives and forces, poetic self-consciousness, and, on occasion, dry ironic wit.

Although he is now seen as part of the British Romantic literary tradition, in his own lifetime Keats would not have been associated with other major Romantic poets, and he himself was often uneasy among them. Aside from his acute awareness of the challenges he faced in his own literary-historical era, Keats developed a rich, potent, and meticulously controlled poetic style in a relatively small number of extraordinary poems. This ranks Keats alongside William Shakespeare of the sonnets as one of the greatest lyric poets in English.

6.3.1 On First Looking into Chapman's Homer:

John Keats, wrote the sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" when he was only 20 years old. It is essentially a poem about poetry itself, describing a remarkable reading experience in which a whole world seems

to come to life. The poem explicitly discusses a translation of Homer by George Chapman, an Elizabethan poet whose translations were more concerned with the reader's experience of the text than fidelity to the original form. Soon after it was composed in 1816.

Keats has extensive experience reading poetry and is familiar with Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, but he hasn't yet experienced the unique aesthetic pleasure of reading Homer in George Chapman's translation. His joy at Chapman's translation of Homer is comparable to that of an astronomer who discovered a new planet or Cortez's when he first beheld the Pacific Ocean from a mountaintop in Central America. Keats had relatively little experience writing sonnets when he wrote his most famous sonnet at the age of twenty. The poem is an excellent example of how poetry influenced Keats. The vivacious language of the Elizabethans thrilled Keats, who thought Chapman talked "loud and bold."

He employs two grins that are both lovely and appropriate to show the reader the sense of discovery he felt after hearing his friend Clarke read to him from Chapman's Homer. When a new planet enters his field of vision, I "felt like some watcher of the skies" at that point. Between ancient times and 1781, when Sir William Herschel discovered the planet Uranus, just one new planet had been identified. Keats obviously didn't have Herschel in mind, but what mattered was the rarity of the finding and the emotions that would overwhelm the finder. Nothing less would adequately convey to the reader what occurred when Keats "heard Chapman shout out loud and bold."

Without a doubt, Keats' second simile is the sonnet's most stunning passage. It is made up of various components that come together to form an aesthetically appealing whole. Cortez has "eagle eyes" and is "stout," which both refer to his lack of fear. He is the only man to find the Pacific Ocean. His guys encircle him in silence as they exchange wild guesses with each other. Their imaginations are overflowing with a dizzying array of theories about what lies beyond the horizon, possibly new Americas rich with gold and priceless jewels as well as endless potential for fresh discoveries. They are unable to speak because they are so overcome with emotion. As he becomes more familiar with the world of poetry, Keats bravely appropriates this historical moment to portray his own thoughts of having made a thrilling discovery that may be followed by countless more similar discoveries.

The two metaphors that "swam into his ken" as the poem took shape in his mind are consistent with the language of exploration and travel that he employs in the sonnet's octave. In addition to being cohesive, as in any other poem, a Petrarchan sonnet also requires the thought to "turn" at the start of each sestet. Keats' two parallels from astronomy and expedition are his turn. His use of the linking words "Much" and "Oft" to start the two parts of his octave and the word "Then" to start his sestet ensures both unity and coherence. He also carries the theme of discovery throughout the entire poem.

Themes on First Looking into Chapman's Homer:

The Power of Literature:

In his sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," John Keats makes a case for the ability to write to transport readers. Reading George Chapman's translation of Homer, a classical Greek poet, allows the reader to virtually visit the Greek setting in which Homer wrote. This has a strong impact on the speaker, who then sings the praises of literature in general. The poem makes the case that literature has a significant role in society and also enables a sort of imaginal journey through time and place.

Thus, the poem also demonstrates that literature is not a fixed, unalterable thing. It also has to be maintained with care and attention because it is alive. Homer's literary world is now more accessible to readers, especially those who would have found it challenging to read it in the original language because of Chapman's translation work. In other words, the impact of literature depends on the creative efforts of the authors themselves. The speaker is so utterly in awe of literature's power by the poem's conclusion. Because of this, the speaker has the impression of an explorer who has been rendered "speechless" by the scene in front of them; Chapman's Homer appears to be a real, physical world rather than just words on a page.

6.3.2 Ode to Psyche by John Keats:

In this poem, the poet imagines that when he was ambling through a grove, he either saw or dreamed of seeing the winged goddess Psyche. She was lying on the grass in Adonis' embrace in a grotto made of flowers and leaves. The "latest born and loveliest vision far / Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy," he calls her. She is more beautiful than all other deities, yet she doesn't have a temple with an altar and virgins singing songs to her. No one burns incense or performs a musical instrument in her honour.

Keats wrote a number of odes between April and May 1819, the first of which is "Ode to Psyche." Despite being one of Keats' best and most important poems, "Ode to a Nightingale" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn" have become more popular among readers. Venus was envious of the merchant's daughter named Psyche, so Venus sent her son Cupid the task of making Psyche fall in love with a repulsive, horrifying being. However, Cupid fell in love with her as well and began visiting her every evening. But eventually, Jupiter succeeded in giving Psyche immortality, and as a result, Cupid was reunited with her for all time.

Keats undoubtedly saw replicas of paintings of Cupid in Psyche's bedroom after reading the account in Apuleius. The myth's claim that Psyche, a mortal, attained immortality through love particularly attracted Keats. Romantic love was the embodiment of Keats' dream of perfect love. Psyche had attained erotic love's immortality. She had fulfilled Keats' romantic adolescent fantasy. He had to write his "Ode to Psyche," it was only natural. Because it was unaware of Psyche until Apuleius created her, classical antiquity did not revere her. However, Keats was able to

accomplish what classical antiquity had not in a poem on a smaller scale. In the narrative related by Apuleius, the god of love, Cupid, entered Psyche's room every night to share the pleasures of love with her. He could construct her a shrine in his mind and keep one window open for love to enter in.

The "Ode to Psyche" is a significant poem in Keats' body of work because it captures his ideal of love, which is unattainable in this life but maybe attainable in the afterlife and is unquestionably feasible in the imagination. This imagination is capable of creating a shrine to Psyche with a window through which Keats may enter and experience a perfect union with the ideal woman. Keats discovered the perfect medium for the expression of one of his deepest longings in the tale of Psyche. The "Ode to Psyche" is a poem about young, warm Keatsian love, much like that in *The Eve of St. Agnes*.

In addition to what the "Ode to Psyche" reveals about Keats, the poem is filled with vivid imagery that is skillfully written. The roots of flowers are "cool." A brief description of the fate that has befallen the Greek and Roman religions can be found in "Olympus' faded hierarchy." The wind makes the pines "murmur." A botanist and gardener named Fancy claim that "breeding flowers, will never breed the same." The wings of Psyche in the ode ("thy lucent fans") are explained by the fact that Psyche is the Greek term for soul, and the soul was frequently shown as having butterfly-like wings. Traditionally, Cupid had wings as well.

Themes in "Ode to Psyche":

The Imagination's Beauty and Power:

The goddess of the soul and the mind, Psyche, is found resting in a woodland by a travelling speaker in "Ode to Psyche," who then swears to erect a temple to her. But he won't build it by hand; this temple will only exist in his mind. The poem seems to be saying that doesn't make it any less beautiful or true. This speaker views the creative potential of intellect as an extraordinary force deserving of adoration. The poem creates an inner shrine to the goddess of inner life by using the power of imagination to honour the power of imagination. The speaker is already wandering through his own mind before he ever meets Psyche. He asserts that sometimes imagination is a more powerful force than reality because dreams can seem just as real as the outside world. The speaker is lost in thought while wandering through a forest when she comes across Psyche and her lover Eros sleeping. She then wonders, "Surely I dreamt today, or did I see The Winged Psyche with awakened eyes?" His skepticism reveals the depth of his inner vision: his imagination is so potent that he is unsure of whether or not what he is seeing is real.

The speaker's imagination is also so potent that it can resurrect extinct gods and change the speaker into a variety of other forms. The speaker bemoans the loss of true belief in gods and goddesses while admiring Psyche's beauty. The speaker completes a temple that contains Psyche using this very strong imagination. This implies that Psyche, a

representation of the mind and soul, can reside in a stunning temple created by the speaker's thoughts and situated in a mental forest.

So, in the end, this is a poem that praises the power of the creative mind by using that capacity. When the speaker apologises to the goddess at the opening of the poem for singing into her "own soft-conched ear," he is absolutely justified in blushing a little because this is the creative, imaginative mind singing in honour of its own beauties and joys.

6.4 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit, we have defined and discussed the introduction to the poets, George Gordon, Lord Byron, P. B. Shelley, and John Keats with their poems, *Darkness* by Lord Byron and "*Ozymandias*" by Percy Bysshe Shelley, *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer* and *Ode to Psyche* by John Keats. Throughout the course of this unit, we have discussed the summary and analysis of the above poems as well as some of the major themes of these poems.

6.5 QUESTIONS

1. What is your estimate of *Darkness* by Lord Byron as his masterpiece?
2. Write an essay on P. B. Shelley as a romantic poet with reference to his poems.
3. Comment on the central theme of *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer* by John Keats.
4. Write in detail about "*Ode to Psyche*" and the major themes in the poem.
5. Write a detailed note on the themes in George Gordon, Lord Byron's "*Darkness*".
6. Comment on the features of John Keats's poetry.

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CRITICAL STUDY OF JANE AUSTEN'S EMMA PART - I

Unit Structure

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Setting
- 7.3 Plot
- 7.4 Themes
- 7.5 Conclusion
- 7.6 Questions
- 7.7 References

7.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims to study Jane Austen's *Emma* as a novel of growth and self-knowledge, the power of imagination, and social and class relations in 19th Century England. In the guise of a narrative about match-making and the attendant misadventures Emma, the eponymous heroine, encounters, Austen reveals the fallacies of pride, being blind to others' motives and feelings and the subtle gradations of class and social hierarchy in contemporary England with intuitive understanding and her customary wit. In this unit, the student will learn about setting, plot and the major themes in Austen's *Emma*.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Jane Austen's *Emma* was published in three volumes in 1815, a year after *Mansfield Park* (1814), and at the height of Austen's popularity. The novel regales us with the story of 20 - year old Emma Woodhouse, who lives in the little town of Highbury, only 16 miles away from London, and considers herself to be an excellent matchmaker. The rest of the text deals with the issues caused by Emma's blindness to people's true natures and desires and the pain that her interference causes in their lives. The novel ends with several marriages taking place, all between the right romantic partners, including the remorseful heroine's to Mr. Knightley.

About the author:

Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775 at Steventon, Hampshire. She was the daughter of a clergyman. She grew up in a close-knit and loving

family. Her father died in 1805. In 1809 the family shifted to Chawton in Hampshire, a small village where most of Austen's novels were written and published. Both she and her older sister Cassandra remained unmarried. She died at the age of 41, on 18 July 1817. Other than Emma, her popular published novels are: *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, the two last ones published posthumously in 1818. Emma is widely regarded as one of Austen's best works. Her novels portray a realistic picture of upper and middle-class Victorian society with astute observation, wit and irony.

7.2 SETTING

The setting of the novel is Highbury, a small town in England, only 16 miles away from the city of London in the 19th century. Most of the action is centred on drawing rooms of large estate houses: Hartfield, Donwell Abbey, and Randalls. Since Austen deals with community, class and matters related to love and marriage, most of the setting is indoors. The story begins in the month of September with the widower Mr. Weston's wedding to Ms. Taylor, Emma's governess and companion, continues on in December with the Christmas festivities, the picnic at Box Hill in spring and ends with the three weddings in September of the following year. Highbury is a rural pocket but Austen only mentions the pastorality of the setting in relation to the professions of Mr. Martin and Mr. Knightley. Both are gentleman farmers, though Mr. George Knightley is the biggest landowner in the area and belongs to a higher social class. Emma does undertake walks to visit the poor in her village but Austen uses the natural setting to focus on romantic interests rather than pure nature description. Mr. Woodhouse, Emma's health conscious and widowed father, takes walks in the front garden of his house but only for a few minutes at a time. Jane Fairfax walks as she cannot afford carriages. Mrs. Goddard's boarding school, where Harriet gets an education is mentioned several times, though the inside of it is not described. So the plot is set in drawing rooms, dining rooms, parlours and gardens as befits a novel of manners.

7.3 PLOT

The novel begins with 20-year old Emma Woodhouse, whose governess and companion, Miss Taylor, has just married the widower, Mr. Weston, claiming that she made the match herself. 17-year old Harriet Smith, who lives at Mrs. Goddard's boarding school, catches Emma's fancy and she befriends her. Emma decides that Mr. Elton would suit Harriet perfectly as a husband and encourages them to meet on various occasions. Mr. George Knightley, who is 16 years older than Emma and is a friend of the family advises her against interfering but she ignores his advice. When Harriet receives a proposal from Mr. Robert Martin of Abbey-Mill Farm, she subtly influences Harriet to turn down the proposal, because she considers Harriet to be a superior person to Mr. Martin. Mr. Knightley and Emma have a difference of opinion, as it was he who had encouraged Robert Martin to propose to Harriet, considering him to be socially superior to

Harriet (who is illegitimate), as well as a gentleman. Emma decides to do everything in her power to encourage a match between Mr. Elton and Harriet although Mr. Knightley is against it. She encourages Mr. Elton's visits to Hartfield, paints a portrait of Harriet and when Mr. Elton goes off to London to frame it she considers it as proof positive that her matchmaking is becoming successful.

Mr. Knightley's brother, John, who is married to Emma's older sister Isabella, visits Hartfield with his wife and their five children, from London, over the Christmas break. Mr. Woodhouse laments the shortness of the visit as he loves to have his house filled with his grandchildren. His evenings are otherwise spent playing bridge with his neighbours, the Bates', Dr. Perry, his physician, Mrs. Goddard and Mr. Knightley. On Christmas Eve, the Woodhouses and the Knightleys along with Mr. Elton are invited to dine at Randalls with the recently-wedded Westons. During the dinner they are told the news of the arrival of Frank Churchill. Frank is the son of Mr. Weston by his first marriage. He was adopted and raised by Mr. Weston's brother-in-law and his wife. Frank is held in high estimation by everyone in the gossipy village of Highbury although no one has met him. They were all surprised that he was not present at his father's wedding to Ms. Taylor. Emma is happy that she will at last meet Frank, who is of her own age. During the dinner party it snows heavily, Mr. Woodhouse becomes anxious and everyone leaves early. On the way, in the carriage, Emma is accompanied by Mr. Elton, who ardently proposes marriage to her. She is extremely surprised and so is he when Emma reveals that she thought he was going to propose to Harriet. Emma refuses Mr. Elton's proposal, after which he leaves for Bath. Emma blames herself for her wrong reading of the situation. When she tells Harriet of the proposal, Harriet is affectionate and consoles Emma with promises of her continuing friendship. John Knightley and Isabella return to London with their children. Emma is disappointed that Frank Churchill is not visiting Highbury as his aunt is ill. Mr. Knightley thinks Frank is a spoilt and immature young man.

Jane Fairfax, an attractive and educated young lady, is the niece of Miss Bates. She comes to visit her aunt for two months. She is an orphan, too. When she and Emma meet, Emma is not impressed by her. In fact she considers Jane to be cool and reserved. Emma is further displeased to learn that Jane and Frank Churchill knew each other from the time they met at Weymouth. Mr. Elton in the meantime is engaged to a Miss Augusta Hawkins, a rich young woman, whom he meets in Bath.

The village's expectations are met when Frank Churchill finally visits his father and his bride in Highbury. Everyone is pleased with him as he is a cheerful and friendly young man. The Westons hope that Emma and their son should marry each other. Emma, too, hopes that Frank proposes to her but she cannot imagine accepting his proposal. Frank and Emma plan to throw a dance at the Crown Inn but it is cancelled as Frank's aunt falls ill and he rushes to be with her. Because she enjoys his company on many social occasions and she likes him, Emma convinces herself that Frank is in love with her and she with him.

Mr. Elton, meanwhile has married Augusta Hawkins and they come home to Highbury. Emma hosts a party for the newly-wedded couple at Hartfield. She dislikes Augusta whom she regards as a talkative and managing woman. Jane has extended her stay at Highbury. At the dinner Augusta offers to find a post as governess for Jane and is refused politely. Mr. Knightley is impressed with Jane and this makes Emma wonder if he is falling in love with her. Mr. Weston announces at the party that Frank will be visiting them again soon.

When Frank returns, the party they had planned before his leaving, at the Crown Inn takes place and Emma realizes that she is not in love with him. At the dance, Mr. Elton behaves rudely towards Harriet and Mr. Knightley steps in to dance with her, thus saving her from embarrassment. While on a walk the next day, Harriet is saved by Frank from some gypsies. And Emma regards this as a positive sign of affection for Harriet. Emma decides not to interfere overtly this time. Harriet tells Emma that she is in love with a man who is her social superior and Emma assumes that the man is Frank. George Knightley shares a suspicion with Emma that Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax are closer than anyone imagined, but Emma ridicules the idea.

At a party held in the summer at Donwell Abbey, Knightley's home, Emma sees George and Harriet walking together. At an outing to Box Hill, Emma is rude to Miss Bates. The next day when she visits the Bates' to apologize for her behaviour, she learns that Jane will be leaving Highbury soon to take up the post of governess. She feels sorry for Jane and tries to be nice, but Jane does not respond with the same cordiality. Frank also leaves as his aunt, Mrs. Churchill falls ill and then dies. Mrs. Churchill had not consented to the marriage of Jane and Frank but now that she was dead Frank informs his father, Mr. Weston that he and Jane were getting married. They had been engaged at Weymouth but had to keep it a secret because of Mrs. Churchill's disapproval. Harriet informs Emma that she likes Mr. Knightley, not Frank. This revelation shocks Emma into a consideration of her own feelings for George Knightley. Harriet then leaves for London to visit Isabella. It is revealed that Harriet is the daughter of a tradesman. Mr. Knightley is happy to learn that Emma is not in love with Frank and proposes marriage to her. Emma accepts the proposal but she cannot marry him as Mr. Woodhouse would then have to live alone. Mr. Knightley suggests that he will come to live at Hartfield after marrying Emma. After some persuasion, but mostly the robbery that takes place at a 'turkeyhouse' close by, convinces him of the security of having Mr. Knightley living with them, Mr. Woodhouse agrees to the marriage. Emma marries Mr. George Knightley; and Harriet marries Mr. Martin after he proposes to her again.

7.4 THEMES

a. Vanity and self-delusion:

“[Emma] walked on, amusing herself in the consideration of the blunders which often arise from a partial knowledge of circumstances, of the

mistakes which people of high pretensions to judgment are forever falling into...." (113). Austen expresses irony in these lines, as it is not other people, but Emma herself who is mistaken in her judgement of situations and people. Her ego and vanity lead her to create issues in her friends' romantic lives which causes them embarrassment and hurt. Emma's self-appointed role as matchmaker to the eligible young men and women of Highbury is undertaken light-heartedly, without any thought to the damage she might cause with her unnecessary interference in the natural destinies of her acquaintances. Mr. Knightley who is much older and wiser than her, frankly shares his opinions with her about her ill-advised actions, but she ignores his advice. Moved by vanity and eager for flattery, Emma is quick to judge others by their admiration for her. One reason she was not particularly fond of her brother-in-law, John Knightley, was because he did not praise her.

Harriet Smith, whom Emma befriends in an attempt to alleviate her loneliness in the activity of walking, is the first beneficiary of her acts of kindness. "She would notice her; she would improve her; she would detach her from her bad acquaintance" (30). Emma assumes that Harriet is in need of rescue and improvement, and when Harriet gets a proposal of marriage on her own merits Emma's influence and unspoken disapproval cause her to reject the offer.

Simply because Frank Churchill spends time in her company and plans the party at the Crown Inn, they both are of the same age and he is charming and attentive to her, Emma assumes that he is in love with her. She cannot see that he is using her company to hide the truth of his secret engagement to Jane Fairfax whom he loves and esteems highly. Their true relationship escapes her completely.

Mr. Elton who has been in the parish of Highbury only for two years is also the victim of Emma's matchmaking. Because he is charming, good-looking and visits Hartfield often Emma plans to marry him off to Harriet. But that plan falls apart when Mr. Elton expresses his interest in Emma instead.

Although she is acquainted with Mr. Knightley all her life, Emma is also unaware of her true feelings for him. She realizes it only when Harriet says she likes him. She misjudges Jane, too, because Jane is of a reserved nature. Emma's preconceived notions also blind her to the good qualities in Mr. Martin, only because he is a farmer, and not her social equal. Her rudeness to the harmless Miss Bates at Box Hill and her slighting of the thoughtful Martin family are indications of her feeling of superiority.

Emma assumes an air of superiority and condescension because of her wealth, social standing and the uncritical acceptance she has always enjoyed from her father, sister and Miss Taylor. "The real evils indeed of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think too well of herself..." Austen warns the reader thus on the first page itself. Though young, charming, vivacious, witty and financially independent, Emma lacks self-awareness.

b. Society and class consciousness:

Although the novel is set in the fictional village of Highbury, the social tensions portrayed in it are real. As befits a novel of manners, Emma highlights the social inequalities and proprieties inherent to each class. Ownership of land bestows a superior status. The Knightley family owns most of the land in and around Highbury so their social status is doubtlessly very high. But with such a status come responsibilities toward those who depend on them. Mr. Knightley is actively involved in the farms he owns and discusses improvements with his brother. He prefers to walk rather than use his carriages as he can then meet the villagers while walking. His younger brother, who is a lawyer lives in London and is married to Emma's sister, Isabella.

Emma, herself, is unmarried and confesses to her friend Harriet that she plans to stay a spinster. She has no obligation to marry as she is financially independent. This is very revealing of the status of women in 19th century England. They could only hope to elevate their social status and secure their futures by an advantageous marriage. Miss Taylor, Emma's governess, marries Mr. Weston who was a trader in London. He buys Randalls, an estate in Highbury and selects Miss Taylor to be his second wife. His first marriage to a wealthy heiress, though it gave him social status was not a happy one, as she spent more than they could afford. She dies young, leaving behind a son, Frank, who is raised by his wealthy but extremely class-conscious uncle and aunt. Miss Taylor is considered to have made a good marriage as she escapes the life of a governess.

Mrs. Churchill's objection to Jane Fairfax is her orphan status and her lack of social connections. Frank knows his aunt's attitude well enough to keep his engagement to Jane a secret till his aunt dies and then he is free to marry Jane with his uncle's approval. Jane is beautiful, intelligent and sensitive but she is regarded as Frank's social inferior due to her lack of wealth and family connections. Wealth need not be an assurance of breeding as exhibited by the Coles and Mrs. Elton.

Mr. Elton is shocked that Emma ever regarded him as an equal partner for the illegitimate and impecunious Harriet. He proposes marriage to Emma as he considers her to be his social equal. Upon being rejected by her, he proceeds to marry Augusta Hawkins, a wealthy but sneering young woman.

Emma too displays all the snobbery of her class consciousness when she snubs Mr. Martin and is rude to Miss Bates. Her objection to Mrs. Elton reveal her attitude of superiority "She brought no name, no blood, no alliance. Miss Hawkins was the youngest of the two daughters of a Bristol merchant"(177). Mr. Elton is happy to have married a woman who could claim 10,000 pounds a year. He considers himself lucky 'not to have thrown himself away' (176).

Emma is conscious of class divisions as she thinks to herself: 'She would have given a great deal, endured a great deal, to have had the Martins in a higher rank of life' (180). Harriet's illegitimacy is overlooked by Emma

due to her affection, just as she is affronted by Mrs. Elton's insult to Miss Taylor. Emma angrily defends Mrs Weston when Mrs Elton expresses her surprise at her ladylikeness. "I was rather astonished to find her so very lady-like! But she really is quite the gentlewoman".

Inherited land and wealth is considered as superior to recent wealth and status. Emma's dislike of the Coles stems from their recently acquired wealth. When their income from trade improves the Coles throw lavish parties in their home to which everyone is invited. Social mobility is possible in the early 19th century England due to the rise of the rich middle class caused by the Industrial Revolution. The Martins too are an upwardly mobile family as Mr. Knightley points out to Emma that Mr. Martin is a true gentleman farmer.

Austen focuses on the social and financial advantages that men and women gain by marrying the right partner rather than on the romantic aspect.

7.5 CONCLUSION

Austen's Emma much like her other novels centering on women's constricted lives focuses on the concept of marriage as a means of advancing up the social ladder or escaping the limited avenues their lives have to offer. From the kindly and sympathetic spinster Miss Bates to the governess Miss Taylor, from economically independent Emma to the wealthy and vulgar Augusta Hawkins, all the women characters are aware that their social class will dictate their marital opportunities. The boredom of their daily lives in a village community where no one is a stranger is alleviated only by planning for weddings and the event itself. Parties, balls, picnics, games are all organized for eligible men and women to find their socially appropriate mates. Emma's attempts at matchmaking are met with utter failure due to her utter ignorance of her own nature as well as her wilful blindness to the natures of those close to her. It is the awakening to her own romantic nature which removes the misunderstandings between her view of people in her world and the way they truly are. Emma is vain enough to think she knows best where other people's love interests lie but she is proved wrong when her attempts at matchmaking fail and in fact she causes embarrassment and pain by her needless interference. Her hubris, though, paves the way for her self-awareness.

7.6 QUESTIONS

1. Describe the role that class consciousness plays in the formation of social and marital relationships in Jane Austen's Emma.
2. Trace the growth and maturity of Emma's character to awareness and self-realization.
3. Discuss Emma as a novel of manners.

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CRITICAL STUDY OF JANE AUSTEN'S EMMA PART - II

Unit Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Character Analysis
- 8.2 Courtship, love and marriage
- 8.3 Women's circumstances
- 8.4 Conclusion
- 8.5 Questions
- 8.6 References

8.0 OBJECTIVES

The aim of this unit is to provide a brief analysis of the important characters in Jane Austen's Emma. Two important themes, love and marriage and the issues faced by women in 19th century England will also be elaborated on. At the end of this unit, learners will have gained a deeper understanding of the background and motives of each character and the social and economic circumstances which control their lives.

8.1 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

a. Emma Woodhouse:

'Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her'(1). Thus Austen introduces her heroine Emma to the reader. Emma's mother passed away when she was young and she was raised by her father and her governess, Miss Taylor. Once Miss Taylor is married to Mr. Weston, Emma finds time hang heavily on her hands. She befriends 17 year old Harriet Smith and decides on a course of improvement for her. She also selects Mr. Elton, the young parson of Highbury as the perfect match for Harriet. Emma plays matchmaker without considering either birth, breeding or the personal preferences and nature of the two young people involved. She simply assumes that she knows best and they will do what is expected of them. She gets a rude shock when Mr. Elton instead of falling in love with Harriet, proposes to Emma instead. Emma's problem is her active mind and the limited scope that Highbury offers in the way of mental activity. The topics of conversation are usually marriages and other social events. Throughout the novel the words 'whim' and fancy are used in connection with Emma. Mr.

George Knightley speaks of Emma as being "under the power of fancy and whim." (101). Being raised by an indulgent father and a governess who was more a friend than a disciplinarian, Emma is used to getting her own way and has a very good opinion of herself. Her attitude of superiority is visible in her treatment of Mr. Martin and his proposal to Harriet. She influences Harriet to reject him on the basis of his social inferiority. She assumes that the Martins "must be illiterate and unpolished"(40).

She is not a reader, nor is she an accomplished painter nor a pianist. She lacks the self-discipline to apply herself to any activity consistently. Her critical attitude towards Jane Fairfax stems from her jealousy of Jane's accomplishments and the approval Mr. Knightley bestows on her. Emma's visit to the poor in her village reveals her lack of true charitable spirit. She approaches them as a superior rather than as an equal. Emma's denial of humanity to the poor family is suggested by the fact that she does not even think of them by their name, but she considers them a social problem, "a poor, sick family" which she will help to solve.

Next, Emma fixes on Frank Churchill as the perfect mate for Harriet. Frank, however prefers to spend time with Emma. This ruse is a cover for his secret engagement to Jane. Emma fixates on people's behaviour and lacks the wisdom to probe deeper into their motives and intentions. On several occasions Mr. Knightley rebukes Emma for her snobbery and advises her about the real nature of people, like Mr. Martin, Mr. Elton and Jane Fairfax. Emma disregards his advice, and continue to arrange others' lives. She awakens to her own folly only when Harriet reveals that she likes Mr. Knightley. It suddenly bursts upon Emma that Mr. Knightley must not marry anyone other than herself.

It is to her credit that she cannot see ill in Mrs. Weston and Harriet. She considers both to be her friends and therefore deserving of respect from everyone else. Harriet's questionable parentage and Mrs. Weston's profession of governess do not make them any less favourable in Emma's eyes. She also apologises to Miss Bates for her rudeness at Box Hill and tries to make amends for her coldness towards Jane. Worry about her father makes her postpone her wedding plans. At the end of the novel Emma wishes for 'nothing, but that the lessons of her past folly might teach her humility and circumspection in future' (455).

b. George Knightley:

George Knightley is a country squire with the largest land holdings in Highbury, thus, the highest-placed in the social pyramid. He is around 36 years old, a rational, logical and benevolent man. His younger brother John is married to Emma's older sister Isabella. He is a frequent visitor to Hartfield and is a good friend of Emma's father. Emma respects him but ignores his timely and astute advice about their acquaintances. He is the only person other than his brother John who does not flatter Emma. In fact, on many occasions he is critical of Emma's behaviour. He rebukes

her for her unnecessary rudeness to Miss Bates and cautions her against encouraging Mr. Elton.

His affection for Emma is evident, but she is blind to it. His criticism of Frank Churchill's haircut, his behaviour and manners is provoked by his jealousy of the young man. In the absence of fatherly guidance in Emma's life, it is Mr. Knightley who plays the role of advisor. He proposes marriage to Emma only after he is assured that she does not love Frank Churchill. He also offers to move to Hartfield after his marriage to assuage Mr. Woodhouse's anxieties about being alone.

c. Harriet Smith:

Harriet is a 17 year old girl whom Emma befriends after Miss Taylor's marriage to Mr. Weston. She feels lonely and her lively mind takes on the task of 'improving' young Harriet. Her parentage is unknown till the end of the novel when it is revealed that her father is a trader in London. She boards at Mrs. Goddard's school for young woman and becomes friends with the Martin girls. She is a guest at their house for six weeks and during this period Mr. Robert Martin falls in love with her. She is a kind-hearted, humble and simple girl who is given a sense of superiority by Emma. She refuses Mr. Martin's proposal and is hurt when she hears of Mr. Elton's proposal to Emma. Her regard for Emma does not abate even after that incident. Harriet can be compared to a pawn in a game of chess whom Emma moves around at will. She does find happiness in the end and marries Mr. Martin.

d. Mr. Philip Elton:

Mr. Elton is the handsome, charming vicar of Highbury whom Emma selects as a suitor for her friend Harriet. On his visits to Hartfield he praises Emma's painting of Harriet, agrees with her ideas and is kind to Harriet. Emma assumes he would be happy to marry Harriet, a penniless girl with no social standing. Mr. Knightley advises Emma about Mr. Elton's true nature and intentions which he reveals in the company of men only. He tells her that Mr. Elton is aware of his own worth and will marry an heiress, which Emma refuses to believe. She is thus shocked when Mr. Elton proposes marriage to her, instead of to Harriet. He is miffed and leaves for Bath immediately afterwards after informing Mr. Woodhouse by letter. In Bath he meets Miss Augusta Hawkins, a young woman with ten thousand pounds income annually and gets engaged to her. He is extremely pleased at his good fortune. In his behaviour towards Harriet and Emma after his marriage he reveals himself to be a shallow and unmannered person.

e. Frank Churchill:

Frank Churchill is the biological son of Mr. Weston. But he is adopted and raised by his wealthy maternal aunt and uncle at Enscombe. He is expected to attend his father's wedding but makes his excuses via a charmingly worded letter to Mrs. Weston. Highbury village looks forward to his visit but he keeps delaying. Frank Churchill is a somewhat shallow,

pleasure-loving, easy-going young man whom Mr. Knightley finds spineless. He is handsome, charming and vivacious. He is secretly engaged to Jane Fairfax but keeps it secret because he knows that his wealthy aunt would disapprove. He spends time with Emma and uses her to hide his true intentions. In this sense, he is just as manipulative and selfish as Emma. On the positive side, he realizes the moral and intellectual superiority of Jane and marries her with his uncle's approval.

f. Jane Fairfax:

Jane Fairfax was born to Mrs. Bates' youngest daughter, whose husband died in war. Jane's mother died of consumption and left her an orphan. She was raised by her father's friend Colonel Campbell who felt indebted to Jane's father as he had served him well in the army. She is sensitive to the poverty of the Bates' and eats very little at their table. She refuses to call in Dr. Perry when she feels unwell as she fears that would add to their expenses. She is the same age as Emma, is equally talented, handsome, charming and well-regarded, a fact that turns Emma against Jane. She meets Frank Churchill in Weymouth and gets engaged to him. Although Jane is full of good qualities she is penniless and lacks social connections so the only future she can look forward to is the profession of governess, as she is well educated. She marries Frank in the end thereby improving her destiny.

g. Mr. Woodhouse:

Emma's father is a widower. He is a gentle man who worries about his own health and that of others. He is fond of giving advice about diet and Mr. Perry, the local GP is his close friend. He does not guide Emma in any way so this task is left to Mr. Knightley. He plays bridge with his regular friends most evenings and dislikes any change to his life and routine. He loves his daughters and his grandchildren but opposes Emma's marriage as he would be left alone then. In this he displays selfishness and dependence on Emma, like a child rather than a father.

h. Miss Bates:

Miss Bates is an extremely talkative woman. She utters banalities and can talk for hours about trivial matters, which suits Mr. Woodhouse. She often makes up the bridge foursome at Hartfield. She is not young, good-looking or wealthy. In fact she struggles to make ends meet on a very small income, but she is invariably cheerful and well-liked by everyone in Highbury. Emma insults her at the picnic at Box Hill and later apologises to her. Miss Bates is the antithesis of the bitter thwarted spinster of the Victorian gothic, she is effusive and thankful for her small blessings.

i. Mr. and Mrs. Weston:

They are the first married couple we encounter in the novel. Mr. Weston was a Captain in the army who married a wealthy heiress in his youth. His wife is disinherited after their marriage, so although it was a love marriage, it was not a happy one. The first Mrs. Weston is a spendthrift

and the couple live beyond their means. She dies young. Frank Churchill is their son. After her death Mr. Weston moves to London and becomes a trader like his brothers. He settles in Highbury and settles at Randalls estate. He is an amiable and sociable man, and well-regarded by everyone in the village. He marries Miss Taylor in his fifties. This second marriage is hopefully a happier one for him as Miss Taylor is grateful to him rather than the other way round. Mrs. Weston (nee. Taylor) is a sensible woman in her thirties. She is Emma's governess and later, her companion. A cheerful and sensible woman she makes a suitable wife for Mr. Weston. She is aware of her good fortune in marrying Mr. Weston and gaining a secure life.

j. Mr. John and Mrs. Isabella Knightley:

Isabella is Emma's older sister and Mr. John Knightley is Mr. George Knightley's younger brother. They have five children and live in London where John is a lawyer. To all appearances, it is happy marriage in which both partners are well-suited to each other. Isabella is a doting mother and has a tendency to worry about her children's health. She is a loving daughter and has a cheerful personality as evidenced by all the invitations she gets to lunch and dinner during her visit to Highbury. She refuses her father's invitation to extend her stay at Hartfield and returns to London with her husband as she cannot bear to stay apart from him. Theirs is an example of a happy marriage in the novel: one between social equals and personalities which complement each other. He is blunt in his appraisal of people and treats Emma in a non-partisan manner. He is content in his domestic circle and she is content to take care of him and her family.

8.2 COURTSHIP, LOVE AND MARRIAGE

The novel begins with a discussion of Emma's companion and former governess, Miss Taylor's marriage to the widower Mr. Weston. Mr. Woodhouse who does not like any change in his daily routine considers it an inconvenience, though Emma is happy that Miss Taylor is married and living close-by. Mr. Weston is described as being in trade in London, an amiable man who loves being in society. His first marriage to wealthy Miss Churchill, in his youth, was for love. She lived beyond their means as he was only a Captain in the army, and could not afford many of the luxuries his wife was used to. The marriage ended when she died young. His only son by that marriage, Frank, was raised by his wife's family. His courtship of Miss Taylor begins some four years before their wedding when he rescues Miss Taylor and Emma from getting wet in a sudden downpour by borrowing two umbrellas. Emma takes the credit for encouraging their relationship, which culminates in their marriage. Emma is well aware of the advantages this marriage brings to Miss Taylor, who gains a better social position and financial security. This happy occurrence encourages her to search for mates for all her eligible friends and acquaintances. Matchmaking becomes her pastime.

The first person to enter her radar is Miss Harriet Smith, a young woman of 17, who lives at Ms. Goddard's boarding school. She befriends her and

tries to improve Harriet in all the social graces. Harriet is friends with the young ladies at Abbey-Mill farm, the Martins, who have a brother, Robert. He notices Harriet on her visits and proposes marriage to her after consulting Mr. Knightley. Emma influences Harriet's refusal of the proposal as she considers Mr. Martin to be socially inferior to Harriet, ignoring all his many virtues of kindness, intelligence and general good nature. Mr. Knightley is furious on hearing this and tells Emma a few truths about the disadvantages of Harriet's securing a better proposal: her parentage (no one knows who her parents are), her lack of financial support and an indifferent education. He warns Emma of the folly of encouraging Harriet to aim higher than her social position entitles her to marry into. Mr. Martin is a gentleman farmer, and a perfect match for Harriet, according to Mr. Knightley.

Emma, meanwhile encourages the attentions of Mr. Elton, the parson, on behalf of Harriet. In Austen's times, it was usually the younger son's belonging to good families who entered the clergy. Mr. Elton is respectable, if not wealthy. He is good-looking and well-mannered. So, Emma decides that he is a good match for Harriet. He becomes a frequent visitor at Hartfield. They take long walks together, Emma visits the Vicarage with Harriet and Mr. Elton praises the portrait of Harriet that Emma has painted. He even takes it up to London to be framed. He visits Harriet when she is suffering from cold and throat-ache. To Emma, all this attentiveness affirms the idea that Mr. Elton is in love with Harriet. Unfortunately matters go awry when one cold snowy evening in the close confines of a carriage Mr. Elton proposes marriage to Emma. She is shocked and refuses his proposal. The miffed young man then leaves for Bath. Mr. Knightley had warned Emma that her behaviour in encouraging Mr. Elton could be misconstrued but she had ignored his warning. He had also warned Emma about the true intentions of Mr. Elton: "He knows the value of a good income as well as anybody. Elton may talk sentimentally but he will act rationally...I have heard him speak with great animation of a large family of young ladies that his sisters are intimate with, who have all twenty thousand pounds apiece". (71) This reveals that marriage is not only the escape route for women to a better financial and social standing, but also for men. This can be seen in the case of Mr. Weston who married a wealthy heiress the first time and Mr. Elton who marries Miss Augusta Hawkins, from a rich family, whom he courts in Bath.

Jane Fairfax, the granddaughter of the impoverished Mrs. Bates, visits Highbury for three months. Her parents died when she was three years old and she was raised by her father's friend and his family in London as if she was their own daughter. Their biological daughter gets married to an excellent young man Mr. Dixon, who is their family's equal in wealth and social standing, almost as soon as she is introduced into Society. Jane, lacking both, but beautiful and well-educated can hope, at the most, for a job as governess in a well-to-do family. She, however, meets Mr. Frank Churchill, in Weymouth and the two get engaged. They have to maintain secrecy as Mrs. Churchill, Frank's wealthy aunt who raised him, would disapprove his marrying a penniless girl. Both Jane and Frank meet again in Highbury but do not reveal their closeness.

Dinner parties, dance parties, picnics and casual visits are organized for the young people of the village of Highbury to meet and find a suitable match. But Emma, forever the matchmaker, manages to pair the wrong couples. She fancies herself in love with Frank Churchill as he is handsome, friendly and close to her in age. Also, she knows the Westons would be pleased at the match. Emma assumes he is in love with her too as he likes spending time with her and agrees with her critical remarks regarding Jane Fairfax. It is clear-eyed Mr. Knightley who guesses that there might be affection shared between Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax.

Mr. Knightley is the largest land-owner in that area and beneath him in status and wealth are the Woodhouses. Mr. Knightley's younger brother, John is married to Isabella, Emma's older sister. They live in London with their five children. It is a socially appropriate match as well as an affectionate one. Mr. Knightley, who is older than Emma by sixteen years, has a better understanding of human nature and advises Emma when she is wrong in her judgement. His counsel is mostly ignored. Emma realizes her own true feeling regarding him only when Harriet tells her that she likes Mr. Knightley. This shocks Emma into self-reflection. Mr. Knightley does not share Emma's high opinion of Frank Churchill and because they spend so much time in each other's company he assumes that Emma is in love with Frank. When Emma reveals to him that she regrets flirting with Frank Churchill and does not need any comfort because he is engaged to Jane, Mr. Knightley is relieved and proposes marriage. Emma happily accepts but worry for her father's loneliness makes her reluctant to marry at once. Mr. Knightley offers to move into Hartfield after the marriage and this sacrifice on his part assuages Mr. Woodhouse's anxiety. Emma's engagement to Mr. Knightley is welcomed by the entire village of Highbury as a marriage between equals. In spite of Emma's needless interference Harriet marries Mr. Martin in the end. Three marriages are celebrated at the end of the novel: Mr. Knightley and Emma, Frank Churchill and Jane and Harriet Smith and Mr. Martin.

Frank marries Jane only after his aunt's death and Mr. Churchill gives his approval, Harriet with the blessings of Emma and Mr. Knightley, and Emma herself after her father agrees to the union. The status quo is maintained in the end. Marriages are arranged between social equals. In the novel Austen provides a realistic picture of the lives of young women in a society which is class conscious and marriage is seen as the only way to change their destiny.

8.3 WOMEN'S CIRCUMSTANCES

That 19th century England is undoubtedly patriarchal is exposed in Emma, much as it is in Austen's other novels. Except for the heroine, Emma, all the other women in the novel are financially dependent on their male relatives for their financial security. Miss Taylor is worried about her future when she meets Mr. Weston and marries him, thus securing her financial position. Miss Jane Fairfax for all her beauty, intelligence and accomplishments is dependent on the kindness of Colonel Campbell and his family for her future prospects and eventually accepts the job of

governess. Jane maintains a quiet exterior countenance and is affable to everyone she meets, including Emma as she is aware that her social and financial status would not allow her to create a flurry wherever she goes. She too marries wealthy Frank Churchill thereby escaping drudgery and an uncertain future. Miss Augusta Hawkins is a woman with an annual income of ten thousand pounds or thereabouts a year, though she vastly exaggerates her income to be twenty-thousand to Mr. Elton. Her father is in trade, setting her socially among the nouveau riche who formed the rising middle class in England. Miss Bates is unmarried and lives with her mother in straitened circumstances. Her neighbours are very kind and provide gifts to them often. They are invited frequently to Hartfield for dinner and Mr. Perry does not charge them for his medical advice. Miss Bates' constant stream of gratitude could stem from her awareness of the fact that she lives on the kindness of her friends and neighbours. Harriet Smith is the illegitimate offspring of a London trader who finances her stay and education in Mrs. Goddard's school but does not acknowledge her as his daughter in society. This limits her chances of marrying well. It is fortunate that Mr. Martin is enamoured of her and marries her despite her first rejection of him. Emma, for all her talk of financial independence, toes the line and marries Mr. Knightley, her social equal. The autonomy she imagines is a chimera, she is just as representative of young women in those times as all the others in the novel. She lives with a hypochondriac father whose gentle control is not visible till she informs him of her marriage plans. Although she tells Harriet that she does not need to marry in order to secure her future because she is wealthy, Emma marries a man who is sixteen years older than her. He epitomises rationality and clear thinking, critiques Emma's actions throughout the novel and tries to reform her. The reader would not be mistaken in assuming that she marries a father figure, rather than a romantic partner. To a lesser or greater extent, marriages are entered into for convenience, for social betterment or economic considerations and to fulfil ones social and familial obligations.

8.4 CONCLUSION

In Emma, unlike in her other novels Austen has presented a heroine who enjoys financial autonomy. She uses this standpoint to compare women from every status of British society, the wealthy, the middle class, the impoverished, the working poor and the married. She presents various types of marriages too. As such, the novel portrays a realistic picture of society undergoing rapid change, from feudal to industrial. Emma tries to hang on to outmoded ideas but has to learn to treat people as her equals under the guidance of Mr. Knightley. In a sense, the novel is a bildungsroman as it traces the growth of the heroine from vanity and pride to self-awareness.

8.5 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the theme of love and marriage in Jane Austen's Emma.

2. Compare the characters of Emma and Jane Fairfax as foils for each other.
3. Analyse the relationship between Emma and Mr. George Knightley.
4. Discuss the issues faced by women in the 19th century British patriarchal society portrayed in the novel.
5. Describe the various marriages in the novel.

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CRITICAL STUDY OF CHARLES LAMB'S ESSAYS OF ELIA

Unit Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 'Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago'
- 9.3 'The Dream Children: A Reverie'
- 9.4 'Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading'
- 9.5 Conclusion
- 9.6 Questions
- 9.7 References

9.0 OBJECTIVES

The aim of this unit is to introduce learners to the works of the 19th century popular essayist Charles Lamb. The essays are full of charm, humour, sympathy, astute observations about London and its people and sometimes, pathos. Although Lamb takes on the persona of Elia the essays contain autobiographical information about the writer's own life. At the end of this unit the learners will have a better understanding of the themes and style in the essays selected for study.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Charles Lamb was born on 10th February 1775 in London and died on 27th December 1834. He is a popular essayist and co-wrote "Tales from Shakespeare" with his sister Mary Lamb. In the essays chosen for study Lamb writes as Elia, a name he adopted as nom de plume when he wrote the first essay 'The South Sea House' published in The London Magazine in 1820. All his essays published in the magazine were later printed as a collection Essays of Elia in 1823. The essays explore various topics but the unifying factor is the conversational writing style he employs, and the thin line he treads between fiction and non-fiction.

The Personal Essay:

During the Romantic period three essayists became famous for their personal, informal style and subjective discourses: Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt and Thomas de Quincey. Like the Romantic poets these writers established new styles and principles of writing. The essay form evolved from Bacon to Lamb in subject: objectivity to subjectivity; and in style, from formality to a more familiar conversational style of writing. They reveal their whims and fancies, their opinions and experiences without reservations or fear.

In his essay 'Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago', Lamb as Elia reveals his experience of school life, in 'The Dream Children: A Reverie' his sentimentality and pathos, and his affection for his sister in 'Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist'. Various members of his family are introduced to us in 'my Relations'.

William Hazlitt had a rare command over words, understood their full significance, and could define them accurately and precisely. His expository style is seen at its best in the opening of his essay "On poetry". He was an energetic writer and his concept of 'gusto' which he applied to the criticism of the arts can be seen in his essay writing style also. His model was Montaigne and his hero Napoleon. He used the personal pronoun 'I' in his essays and this made the essays seem very personal and confessional. Lamb and Hazlitt were good friends and came under the influence of their contemporaries like Wordsworth and Coleridge. Nature, imagination and memory are common topics in the essays of both Lamb and Hazlitt.

9.2 'CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO'

Summary:

In this essay Lamb focuses on the brutal treatment meted out to the students, aged between 10 and 18 years of age, boarded at Christ's Hospital, which is a charitable school. The food was meagrely distributed, it was tasteless and the nurses ate the portion meant for the students in the school and the authorities were indifferent. In the summer months, they swam in the New River and in the winter holidays they went innumerable times to the Royal Menagerie (the zoo) as the entry was free. Elia suffered intense loneliness as his family lived far away and his few relatives in London quickly grew tired of his frequent visits during his school breaks. The homesick boy had no friends in the school. He describes the cruelty meted out to the younger children by the older ones, especially, the 'monitors'. They would be woken up in the middle of the night and beaten up for minor faults. They were placed in fetters or locked up in a basement room for a day and a night or whipped and then expelled if they did not behave well. The school was divided into two sections: upper and lower. The Rev Matthew Field was in charge of the lower-section. He was a scholarly master and did not believe in harsh punishments. The students enjoyed their free time busy in their own boyhood pursuits as he was often absent for long periods of time. The Rev James Boyer was in charge of the upper form, who although he was a good teacher, was a strict disciplinarian who whipped his students.

Analysis:

Christ's Hospital was established in 1553 by the order of King Edward VI as a private charitable boarding school for the better education of the children belonging to poor families. It is run by a board of governors and many benefactors. Its original location was at New Gate Street in London.

Leigh Hunt and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, both of whom were students at Christ's have written about their experiences there. Coleridge and Lamb formed a life-long friendship while they were students together at Christ's. Seven years before the publication of this essay Lamb had published an essay under his own name about his memories of being a student at Christ's-'Recollections of Christ's Hospital'. Under the assumed name of Elia he describes his years at Christ's from the perspective of Coleridge-"a poor, friendless boy" (23). Lamb's family resided in London so he visited them during the holidays and very often got food sent to him from home. These advantages were not available to a majority of the students. Along with the mention of corporal punishment the essay focuses on various foodstuff-sugar, ginger, hot loaf, bread and butter, roast veal, griskin-which were available to Lamb because they were brought to him 'daily by his maid or aunt' (23) but denied to the other students, who had to consume scanty mutton crags, boiled beef with marigolds floating on them, and milk porritch'(22). Another advantage was the presence of his benefactor who was also his family's neighbour in London. This provided a protection against the cruelty of the older students and the meanness of the staff. In spite of the saga of cruelty and deprivation related by Elia, Lamb's irresolute attitude towards the school authority is revealed through the incident where there was a fair inquiry into a student's theft of food by the Governors and the praise heaped on the boy when the real situation was found out. James Boyer, too, is later praised in the essay for breeding academic excellence. Though the point of view is that of Elia, a young home-sick boy, Lamb's more just voice peeps through sometimes in his fairer attitude towards the school.

9.3 'THE DREAM CHILDREN: A REVERIE'

Summary:

'Children love to listen to stories of their elders, when they were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame whom they never saw' (139). So begins Lamb's imaginatively nostalgic essay 'The Dream Children: A Reverie'.

Elia's children, Alice and John, gather around him to hear stories about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a mansion of which she acted as caretaker. The wealthy family which owned the house lived in another mansion. She lived in it as if the mansion belonged to her and kept up the dignity of the old place which was full of antiques. At her funeral, Elia says, everyone praised her goodness and religious faith: she could recite Psalms and parts of the New Testament from memory. Even though she suffered from Cancer she maintained her cheerful spirits. Though Elia never came across the two ghosts of babies who haunted the house, Grandmother Field not only saw them, she was happy to have them around for company as they did not bother her. As a child Elia had complete freedom of the grounds around the mansion and ate the fruits off the trees admiring the marble statuary.

At this point Elia breaks off his telling and notices that his children are eating a shared plate of grapes.

Grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren but she loved John the best. He was a big, good-looking boy who used to carry Elia around on his back when Elia became lame. Elia regrets that was unable to care for John in his last days as John cared for him in his youth. At this point in the telling, Elia's children start to cry, asking not to hear about their uncle, but to hear about their dead mother instead. Elia recounts his courtship of their mother, for seven years she rejected him but he persevered. As he looks at his daughter Alice and thinks that she is the image of her dead mother, Alice disappears. A ghostly voice informs Elia that Alice and John are not his children but they belong to a man called Bartrum whom Alice married. Elia jerks awake to realize that he had been dreaming.

Analysis:

In this essay the dreaming Elia tells a nostalgic tale of a carefree boyhood and young love leading to marriage. However, Lamb's life was a tragic one which did not include marriage. His proposal to Ann Simmons was rejected and he spent some time in an asylum. A few years later he proposed to the actress Fanny Kelly and was rejected again. His sister suffered from manic episodes and during one such period of mania stabbed their mother to death. Lamb took responsibility for her and they moved out of London. This essay is, therefore full of the pathos of unrealized domestic bliss.

9.4 'DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING'

Summary:

This essay begins with a few lines from Lord Foppington: 'To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain' (235). Then Elia confesses that he spends a lot of time with other's thoughts. He likes to read all kinds of works. 'I have no repugnances', he says (236). History and some Latin classics like those of Hume and Gibbon, are not books at all. He goes on to praise books which look well used. According to him, the contents of a book must be magnificent, not the covers. The more dog-eared a book, the more worth reading it would be. He gives the reader examples of the works of Milton and Fuller whose original works do not exist. Only reprints are available and this is a testament to their readability and eternal quality.

There are certain books which must be enjoyed at leisure, like the Faerie Queene or Milton's works. They are enjoyable to read aloud. However, he finds it annoying when newspapers are read aloud, especially in banks, barber shops and public houses. Newspapers, magazines and pamphlets, according to Elia, must be skimmed over with one's own eyes. Novels are also not considered appropriate for shared reading, but a solitary enjoyment. The best readers, according to him, are the 'street-readers'-the

poor who cannot afford to buy or borrow books so snatch some learning from open roadside stalls, till they are shooed away by the owner.

Analysis:

This essay was published in *London Magazine* in 1822 and later in a collection *Last Essays of Elia* in 1833.

Since Lord Foppington is a character from the Restoration play *The Relapse* by John Vanbrugh and the quote is taken from the play, the reader knows immediately that those lines need not be taken seriously. From this essay the reader gathers the impression that for Lamb reading as an activity was a private indoor one rather than a public one meant for an audience. He does not like hearing people reading aloud from newspapers as such readers are mostly slow. Out of the circle of his friends Lamb finds reading in public to be embarrassing as it attracts unwanted attention to his preferences in reading. Once he was reading the novel *Pamela* in the park when he met a lady friend and she began reading with him and Lamb found this incredibly embarrassing. Since the essay expresses his opinion, the word 'detached' in the title is ironic.

Analysis of Style:

Virginia Woolf remarks that to bring "personality into literature [is] the essayist's most proper but most dangerous tool" (46). The style in which Lamb presents his memories of his school years as Elia is unique. In the mode of the Romantic essayists, Lamb's essays are self-reflective and express his feelings, desires and fantasies. The essay by definition is a piece of non-fiction, but Lamb looks back on the memories of his childhood from the view-point of another person and this change alters the perspective of the institution in 'Christ's Hospital'. As against the more formal essays, Lamb's tone is friendly and humorous. This was a major reason for the popularity of his work. In 'The Dream Children' he reminisces about his childhood and youthful love with the real people who populated his life-his brother John and his grandmother, his sister Mary, and Ann Simmons, who rejected him, but they are presented to the reader in the guise of his great-grandmother, dead wife Alice, the children's uncle James and Bridget, the maid. This blending of the autobiographical and the fictional makes the essays very personal and gives the reader a glimpse of the sadness and regret that underlie his life. Although the essays are filled with many characters it is Lamb's personality which stands out as memorable. In 'Christ's Hospital' his shame and guilt at not being able to share his special home cooked and tasty food with six hundred students makes him more human to us. The last line in 'The Dream Children' - "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The Children of Alice call Bartrum, father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams" (143) is filled with melancholy. This essay is also unique for the short story format it follows, with a proper beginning, middle and twist in the tail ending. Dyson and Butt comment on Lamb's style: "His style is like himself, allusive, whimsical, remote, familiar and almost wanton" (96).

9.5 CONCLUSION

Lamb's essays are a mirror into the personality of the man. His warmth of spirit and friendly nature are visible in the humour with which he presents his own flaws and opinions. The informal, conversational style of the essays make them highly readable. He felt deeply the lack of a University education- "I can here play the gentleman,

enact the student. To such a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks"(17). His sadness at not being able to attend Oxford as a student is expressed in his essay 'Oxford in the Vacation'. His favourite place to visit was Oxford, especially its libraries. Lamb is not reluctant to share his feelings, thoughts, opinions or flaws with his readers and this makes his essays highly readable and personal.

9.6 QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the themes in the Essays of Elia.
2. Discuss the writing style of Charles Lamb in the Essays of Elia.

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CRITICAL STUDY OF WILLIAM HAZLITT'S TABLE-TALK: ESSAYS ON MEN AND MANNERS

Unit Structure

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10.0 OBJECTIVES

The aim of this unit is to introduce learners to the selected works of the English essayist William Hazlitt. Hazlitt, along with Charles Lamb, is regarded as the foremost personal essayists in English. The essays selected for study cover varied topics but are united by the author's astute observations, lucidity of expression and outspokenness. By the end of this unit the students will learn to appreciate the themes and writing style of Hazlitt.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

William Hazlitt was born on April 10, 1778 in Maidstone, Kent. He grew up in rural Wem, Shropshire and developed an interest in nature. In 1793 he joined a Unitarian academy at Hackney for training to join the ministry but dropped out in 1796. After that he spent some years reading and learning to paint. In 1798 he heard Coleridge speak in the Unitarian Chapel and this proved to be a turning point in Hazlitt's life. He met Coleridge who advised him to study literature and through Coleridge he met Wordsworth too. This meeting is the topic of the essay 'My First Acquaintance with the Poets'. The influence of both Romantic poets can be seen in his essays.

Hazlitt was the author of many essays and pamphlets on political as well as philosophical subjects: 'An Essay on the Principles of Human Action' (1805), 'Free Thoughts on Public Affairs' (1806), 'A Reply to the Essay on Population' (1807) and 'A New and Improved Grammar of the English Tongue' (1810). In 1812 he began working for The Morning Chronicle and in 1817 he became drama critic for The Times. Characters of

Shakespeare's Plays (1817) was dedicated to his friend Charles Lamb. His essays began appearing regularly in *The London Magazine*, *New Monthly* and *The Liberal*. Many of his best essays are collected in two volumes- *Table Talk* (1821) and *The Plain Speaker* (1826). His *Spirit of the Age* published in 1824 was a collection of the profiles of major writers of the age like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron and Lamb, who were his contemporaries.

His personal life was unhappy, he married twice but both times it ended in separation. He died on September 30, 1830.

10.2 ON THE PLEASURE OF PAINTING-ESSAY 1

Summary:

In the first essay "On the Pleasure of Painting," Hazlitt compares the pleasure of painting with the act of writing. Although both are art, their goals are not the same. The purpose of writing is to struggle with the world. In the act of painting the painter has 'only to carry on a friendly strife with Nature' (164). But for a writer, writing is not just an act of revealing what he observes in nature. His words have the inherent power to challenge the world. According to him our ideas and thoughts cannot be sufficiently expressed in words. 'The ideas we cherish most, exist best in a kind of shadowy abstraction' (165). Painting on the other hand is a truly creative activity. Having experience as a writer and painter, Hazlitt thinks that painting is the more pleasurable activity. He tells us that when he paints: "The hours pass away untold, without chagrin, and without weariness; nor would you ever wish to pass them otherwise. Innocence is joined with industry, pleasure with business; and the mind is satisfied, though it is not engaged in thinking or in doing any mischief" (164). Painting is also, not a sedentary activity. It requires continuous and steady exertion of muscular power. If a person paints for a whole morning, he develops an excellent appetite for dinner. The act of writing is not such a pleasurable one because the search to express our ideas in words can become difficult and frustrating. He ends the essay with a description of his experience of painting the portrait of his father.

Analysis:

The measure Hazlitt applied to art was 'gusto' or passion defining any object. His critique of the art of painting reveals his belief in the creative power of the individual genius. Art is produced by "individual and incommunicable power" (32). These ideas place Hazlitt firmly among the Romantic and personal essayists. He considers painting as a superior activity as it is a synthesizing activity. It requires a harmonious blending of mind and body- "It is a mechanical as well as a liberal art" (170). Even to contemplate a well-executed painting restores one's sense of harmony. Each stroke of the brush leaves traces of a unified sensibility and the work is to be viewed as a continuum, "who would ever wish to come to the end of such work", he asks (170).

10.3 WHY DISTANT OBJECTS PLEASE

Summary:

What pleases the viewer about seeing distant objects is the awareness of space and magnitude. What lies between the observer and the view he watches can only be guessed at as the imagination gets free rein to fill it with adventures and hopes and wishes. Anything that is beyond the scope of our sense and knowledge and is not seen perfectly is reconstructed by our fancy. When we view a hill far away it tempts us to go closer but when we do see it, the closer inspection is disappointing as it reveals only lumps of discoloured earth. Hazlitt goes on to say that 'the distance of time has much the same effect as the distance of place' (226). Man has the tendency to fancy his future as good. It is only with the passage of time and in retrospect he feels the 'meanest incidents' (226). However the passing of time soothes the hurts of the past, even softens those recollections. In youth we strive for adulthood, but in old age we look back and yearn for our 'thoughtless childhood' (227).

He goes on to reminisce about his childhood visit to the Montpelier Tea Gardens at Walworth with his father. Though he did not visit again the memory of that visit is indelibly etched with brighter hues and glossier beauty than it was.

Smells, sounds and tastes linger longer in our memory than objects that we sight, including faces of people. 'The sudden hearing of a well-known voice is more affecting than the sudden sight of a face' (144). The reason for this is, according to Hazlitt, we see things constantly, but hear, feel and smell only intermittently. These senses work upon our imagination just as much as if not more than the sense of sight. Once on a walk in a rural road near Salisbury Plain he heard the sudden peal of a church organ and it struck him like the calm beauty of death.

Analysis:

This essay has the clearest enunciation of the Romantic credo. The important role that the senses play in invoking our imagination to the richness in nature and thoughts recollected in tranquillity remind us of Wordsworth's ideas enumerated in his Preface. Here, Hazlitt is lauding the power of human imagination. What the eye cannot see our mind's fancy fills with something wonderful. Although he does not consider nature as a deity, he acknowledges the importance of natural surroundings and solitude in the development of individual thought.

10.4 ON GOING A JOURNEY

Summary:

According to Hazlitt, the most pleasant thing in the world was going on a journey alone. Amidst nature, he never felt alone. A friend accompanying him on such a journey would be a disturbance as Hazlitt would then have to talk and walk at the same time. He liked solitude and to be with his own

thoughts. He needed only the clear, blue sky, the green turf, a winding road and a three hour walk before dinner. He would be happy in such surroundings. At such times, past memories would come crowding in and he would begin reflecting on his past. Although Hazlitt liked puns, alliteration, antithesis, argument and analysis, this was not the right occasion for expressing them because he could feel the sweetness of the rose, without any need to comment on it. When he was alone and in a reverie, he did not like to have company. As Cobbett said, an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time. Sterne wanted a companion only to remark on the beauty of the lengthening shadows. But Hazlitt preferred the 'synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical' (81). When he is traveling alone he gets immersed in the experience and ideas float freely in his mind. Poets like Coleridge could do both: experience deeply and also make others grasp the wholeness of that experience, which Hazlitt is unable to.

The only kind of conversation one can have with a companion on a journey is about what he would like to eat for dinner at the end of the walk. An outdoor conversation like this serves to improve the appetite and every mile he walks intensifies the anticipation. As night approaches it is pleasant to enter a village inn and rest there. Such moments are not meant for sharing with others. If companionship is forced upon him, he would much rather speak to a complete stranger as that person would be of that place and time only and would be ignorant of Hazlitt and he could easily forget himself. In an inn Hazlitt would be known just as the gentleman in the parlour, he could easily lose his identity there. Hazlitt reminisces about all the good books he spent reading at inns.

Travel reveals the capriciousness of our imagination: we change our ideas and thoughts when we travel. Our perceptions are enlarged and there is a shift in our point of view. As we approach the familiar inn our past associations, feelings and circumstances come rushing back and we are able to forget the world.

The mind registers what the eyes see so it is impossible to think of a cultivated piece of land when one is traveling through barren deserts. Sir Fopling Flutter's statement 'Beyond Hyde Park all is a desert' becomes relevant in this sense. When one is in the town, one cannot visualize the countryside and the mind believes that there is no world beyond that seen by the eyes. China, with its physical territory and population, means nothing more than a name on a map or inches of pasteboard on a globe. Things that nearby appear life-size while things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding.

Hazlitt makes certain exceptions to his rule for solitary journeys: he likes having company while visiting places of historical interest, aqueducts, pictures, because the sentiments aroused by these are communicable and overt, not tacit. On a pleasure trip the discussions usually center around what places to visit but on a lonely walk one wonders what one might see on the way.

While traveling abroad he shares with his fellow countrymen the feeling of antipathy towards foreign ideas and manners, and needs the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. Also, he likes to hear the sound of his own language when he is far away from his own country. The only exception to this was his visit to France. He felt at home there. But with Napoleon dead the country was left with the Bourbons and the French people under them. The glory had fled France. There is no doubt immense pleasure in foreign travel but they are not lasting. It cannot be associated with one's daily life because of their foreign nature and so remain like a dream. Dr. Johnson said that a person who travels abroad was not necessarily a better conversationalist than one who had never travelled beyond the borders of his own country. But it has to be said that travel alters a person. It is a joyful and at the same time instructive experience.

Analysis:

Although this essay is about walking, it enunciates a philosophy: walking is an exercise for the mind as well as for the body. It allows one to think, remember and imagine. The relationship between nature and the observer is being celebrated in this essay. William Wordsworth, the Romantic poet, with his sister Dorothy used to take long walks in the countryside and this influenced their sensibilities and their writing. "I wandered lonely as a cloud", this line from Wordsworth's most famous poem can be applied to Hazlitt's love for walking alone.

Analysis of style:

Hazlitt is an intensely personal essayist, much of what he writes is autobiographical. He was not a believer in following rules and formalities and set down his opinions without fear. He was a man of deep feeling and independent thinking. The single idea which can be called a personal philosophy is enunciated in his concept of 'gusto'. "Gusto in art is power or passion defining any object." (1) He goes on to observe that all objects contain "some character of power ... some precise association with pleasure or pain: and it is in giving this truth of character from the truth of feeling, whether in the highest or the lowest degree, but always in the highest degree of which the subject is capable, that gusto consists"(1). He spoke about gusto in relation to painting first, and then applied it to sculpture, art and drama: Michael Angelo, Titian and Shakespeare are mentioned in the essay 'On Gusto'. Here, Hazlitt is referring to the inherent qualities of an object and the manner in which the artist perceives and reproduces them. This concept is similar to Wordsworth idea of passion and truth of feeling. Hazlitt was influenced by the Elizabethan and Restoration writers and dramatists as well as his contemporaries like Coleridge and Wordsworth. His writing style is conversational rather than literary and since he uses common words to express his ideas his essays are highly readable.

10.5 CONCLUSION

Hazlitt's essays have a rich variety because of his interest in painting, art, literature, philosophy and travel. He was a political commentator, an admirer of Napoleon, a critic, philosopher and a well-read and erudite man. He had a wide social circle, yet he was a quarrelsome man and made enemies of friends. In his essay 'On Genius and Common Sense', he writes a fine estimate of Wordsworth. His solitary rambles and the insight he gained during his walks revealed in the essays speak of his profound wisdom and fertile imagination. There is logic, energy and emotion in his writing.

10.6 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the themes in Hazlitt's essays prescribed for study.
2. Analyse the Romantic elements in Hazlitt's essays.
3. Comment on the pastoral elements in Hazlitt's essays.

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