

14th Lecture

General Revision

The Romantic Movement in literature is one of the most influential literary movements. It covered the first half of the nineteenth century, but its influence can still be felt everywhere in literature. The French Revolution with its ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity gave spark to the Romantic Movement.

The main characteristics of Romantic Poetry

- 1-Romantic poetry shows a new faith in man with all his feelings, senses and all the sides of his experiences.
- 2-It rejected rational intellect as the only source of poetry and stressed imagination and intuition as the supreme faculties of the poet.
- 3-The poet of the Romantics was a man speaking to men, but he was endowed with some special insight into the nature of things.
- 4-Poetry to the Romantics is an expression of emotions inspired by the feelings of the individual poet. The Romantic poet is gifted with a strong "organic sensibility."

Literary Terms

1-Personification is giving inanimate objects or abstract ideas human qualities or actions; making non-human things appear as human.

2-Metaphor: a comparison between two objects for the purpose of describing one of them; a metaphor states that the one object is the other.

William Blake (1757-1827)

The Little Black Boy

This is one of the "Songs of Innocence". It was written by Blake as an attempt on his part to help in abolishing slave-trade. It is a plea against "racial discrimination". He believes that people are equal regardless of their color.

Analysis

"The Little Black Boy" consists of seven heroic stanzas, which are quatrains following the ABAB rhyme scheme. The first two stanzas describe the boy's mother and the influence she has had on his life. The third, fourth, and fifth stanzas recall the mother's exact words in her lessons to her son. The final two stanzas describe how the black boy communicates his lesson to the white English boy for whom he has a great affection.

William Blake (1757-1827)-The Tyger

It has two levels of understanding:

1-On the surface, it portrays an image of a tiger which is compared to a fire burning at night.

2-But on **a deeper level**, the tiger here is an embodiment of God's creative ability.

The poem is more about the creator of the tiger than it is about the tiger itself.

"The Tyger" contains only six stanzas, and each stanza is four lines long. The first and last stanzas are the same, except for one word change: "could" becomes "dare."

"The Tyger" is a poem made of questions. There are no less than thirteen question marks and only one full sentence that ends with a period instead of a question mark.

Wordsworth - "Daffodils" (1804)

Title and Theme of the Poem 'Daffodils'

The title, 'Daffodils' is a simple word that reminds us about the arrival of the spring season, when the field is full of daffodils. Daffodils are yellow flowers, having an amazing shape and beautiful fragrance. A bunch of daffodils symbolize the joys and happiness of life.

Commentary

The poem is about the everlasting effect of nature on man: the influence of nature exceeds the limits of a situation and goes far beyond that. In this poem, the poet saw a group of beautiful, yellow flowers, and he was attracted by their beauty. After leaving the scene and returning back to his ordinary life, he recollected the beautiful sight of the flowers and lived in the same situation again, which filled him with happiness.

Wordsworth- THE RAINBOW

My Heart Leaps Up, also known as **The Rainbow**, is a poem by the British Romantic Poet William Wordsworth. Noted for its simplicity of structure and language, it describes the joy that he feels when he sees a rainbow and notes that he has felt this way since his childhood. He concludes the poem by noting how his childhood has shaped his current views and stating that "the child is father of the man".

She Walks in Beauty-Byron (1788-1824)

Theme

The theme of the poem is the woman's exceptional beauty, internal as well as external. The first stanza praises her physical beauty. The second and third stanzas praise both her physical and spiritual, or intellectual, beauty.

Commentary- of Lord Byron's-'She Walks in Beauty'

The poet is describing a woman. He says: her beauty is like the beauty of a clear, starlit night. It is a beauty that combines the most attractive elements of darkness and brightness. It is a gentle, soft beauty like the beauty of night which is more tender than that of the day.

Byron- WHEN WE TWO PARTED INTRODUCTION

This poem is about the love, first, and later the hatred a man feels towards who was his beloved because she left him. It's a very typical Romantic poem, typical of a Romantic writer like Lord Byron, who expresses his feelings of love, a typical issue of Romanticism.

The vocabulary is easy to understand for everybody who studies the English language. The first verse of the poem is also the title of the poem, which means that the writer could not or did not want to find a title for the poem (maybe the damage he felt was so strong that he was not able to find a good title for the poem, as he writes at the end of the third stanza (*Long, long shall I rue thee/ Too deeply to tell*)).

Ode to a Skylark- by Percy Shelley

The Ode to a Skylark is one of the most famous poems in the English language. Shelly in this ode idealizes the singing of the skylark. In the singing of the skylark, Shelly finds an ecstasy and rapture which are unattainable by human beings. The poet contrasts the sorrow of human life with the joy of the skylark.

In this poem , Shelly dwells upon the sweet and rapturous singing of the skylark. The music of the skylark has been idealized by Shelly. The poet wants to know what is that inspires the skylark to sing such melodious and ecstatic strains. He contrasts the sorrow and suffering of mankind with the unspeakable joy of the bird. If it were possible for the poet to experience the gladness of the skylark , he would be able to sing songs as sweet and delightful as those of the bird itself.

The main characteristics of the Victorian Poetry

1-It was an age of drastic changes in the British society as a result of industrialization and rich landowners were turning into businessmen.

2-It was an age of adventure, free enterprise and individual initiative.

3-It was an age of scientific progress in which great scientists and thinkers lived: e.g. Darwin, Huxley, Karl Marx

“My Last Duchess-Robert Browning

Summary and Commentary

.....Upstairs at his palace in October of 1564, the Duke of Ferrara—a city in northeast Italy on a branch of the Po River—shows a portrait of his late wife, who died in 1561, to a representative of the Count of Tyrol, an Austrian nobleman. The duke plans to marry the count’s daughter after he negotiates for a handsome dowry from the count.

While discussing the portrait, the duke also discusses his relationship with the late countess, revealing himself—wittingly or unwittingly—as a domineering husband who regarded his beautiful wife as a mere object, a possession whose sole mission was to please him. His comments are sometimes straightforward and frank and sometimes subtle and ambiguous. Several remarks hint that he may have murdered his wife, just a teenager at the time of her death two years after she married him, but the oblique and roundabout language in which he couches these remarks falls short of an open confession.

Break, Break, Break

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

INTRODUCTION

This is a sad poem inspired by the death of Tennyson’s intimate friend- Arthur Hallam. The sea with its waves breaking against the shore awakens in the poet memories of bygone days and reminds him of happy days that passed never to return. In stanza 1, the poet expresses his inability to describe the thoughts that arise in him.

The main characteristics of Modern Poetry

1-Modern poetry is free from traditional restrictions of rhyme and rhythm.

2-It is greatly affected by modern science and technology.

3-The modern poet is pessimistic about the future of modern man and his world.

4-Modern poetry is affected by modern political , social and economic theories.

Next, Please by Philip Larkin-(1922-1985)

Critical appreciation

The theme of disillusionment and of death.

The theme of this poem is the disillusionment that we experience as a result of the disappointment of all our hopes and expectations. We keep hoping for something good to happen to us, but our hope is dashed to the ground every time. Only one expectation is always fulfilled in human life, and that is the expectation of death.