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Literary

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Literary Texts 3.8

AYDI 2022/ T1

HELLO EVERYONE!

Last time, we looked at a poem by our first poetess Catherine Phillips. We will skip Alexander Pope.

Note: Alexander Pope is not required for the exam. Pages 44, 45, and 46 are not required for the exam.

Today, we will talk about the Romantic period.

Romanticism

Romanticism is a movement in arts and literature. It celebrates emotions and feelings over logic and reason. It embraces individuality and imagination in contrast to logic, reason, rules, etc. It focuses on nature. Poets and thinkers who embraced Romanticism looked up to nature as a source of inspiration. They wanted to run away from civilization. They wanted to run away from the industrial revolution and its outcomes. They wanted to go back to the innocence and to the raw material because they believed that outside society, it's only in nature where you can experience the true meaning of freedom.

Professor: who knows more about Romanticism?

Student: it was a reaction to the French revolution and the industrial revolution.

Student: it happened during the revolution of the United States of America.

Student: it started at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century.

Student: there are many famous Romantic poets and novelists like Lord Byron, John Keats, etc.

➤ Personally, I like to translate Romanticism as (الرومانتيكية) rather than (الرومنسية).

This is because Romanticism is not merely about falling in love; it is more than that.

➤ It was a movement in art, literature and music.

➤ It started at the end of 18th century.

➤ In opposition to the famous quote by Rene Descartes "I think therefore I am", Romanticism celebrates "I feel therefore I am".

Let's read from the book.

Three revolutions shaped European consciousness in the late eighteenth century, and ushered what many thinkers, intellectuals and literary critics call "the birth of the modern." These were the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution.

The first started as an act of rebellion by the English speaking colonies, subjects of the King of England in the New World. Its spark was a protest against taxes levied by the Crown. It soon became a war of "independence" by the inhabitants of these colonies; a war that led to the birth of the United States of America.

The second was the French Revolution which brought to a gruesome end the most powerful monarchy in Europe. The French Revolution was the first successful popular revolt against a reigning monarch in the modern age.

New World refers to America.

The Crown: the king.

The French Revolution was a rebellion against monarchy represented by the King Louis the 16th and Marie Antoinette. It was a revolution by the people of the middle class and the lower classes. These people were asking for many things like food.

By the way, it was a myth that Marie Antoinette said that people should eat biscuits instead of bread; she never said that.

People at that time were very hungry. There was a scarcity of flour. There was heavy taxation on everything. Eventually, the rebellion just broke out.

I recommend that you watch movies about the French Revolution like *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Les Misérables*.

Its initial slogan of **Liberty, equality, and Fraternity** was a source of inspiration for all of Europe before the atrocities of the first few years disillusioned many of its enthusiasts.

The French Revolution called for:

- *Liberty* which means freedom,
- *Equality* for all people.
- *Fraternity* which means brotherhood.

Atrocities (فظائع) means massacres and violence.

There were many people who were very passionate about the French Revolution because it was totally out of the box to rebel against the monarchy which was so powerful and unquestionable. No one was able to question the orders of the monarch or the queen at that time.

It was really an opening for revolution not only in France but also in Europe in general. Everybody from every European nationality was very passionate about the French Revolution to the extent that some people went from different European countries to France in order to encourage the French Revolution.

Some of these people wrote poems about the revolution. However, the

course of the revolution was not really white as people wished it to be. It turned out to be *a blood bath*. That's why many people who were enthusiastic and sympathetic about the French Revolution turned their backs to it. One of those people was the famous British Romantic poet William Wordsworth. He was very sympathetic towards the French Revolution. He wrote poems celebrating the slogan of the French Revolution. He also wrote poems that encouraged the rebel against the monarchy. Later on, because of the bloodshed, he turned his back to the French Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution was a process of transmutation that changed the methods of production and its tools in ways that invariably affected the world in which we live today.

Transmutation (التحول) means change or transformation.

The third revolution was the Industrial Revolution (الثورة الصناعية).

The Industrial Revolution took place in England. England was countryside. Everything was about farming, animals, peasants, etc. Suddenly, people had all these inventions. The railway, the steam engine and other things were invented. Cities began to grow bigger and bigger. As a result, people of the countryside found themselves forced to move to the city where there were many job opportunities. That made those cities grow bigger. The factories expanded. As a result, there was a huge gap between people who owned the factories and the workers or the laborers. There was a lot of exploitation of women and children because the lower classes needed money. The rich became richer and the poor became poorer.

New inventions and technologies changed forever the relationship between man and machine, and between human beings and their natural environment.

The relationship between technology and people changed because of the Industrial Revolution.

Romanticism came to existence, some may argue, as a reaction to these three momentous events. The Romantic Age was marked by an increased awareness of the changes that were taking place in Europe and the world at large. Authors of that period reflect the hope, aspirations, and anxiety that resulted from the tremendous challenges to the "modern" man.

So, there are three events that shaped the birth of Romanticism:

- ✓ The American Revolution.
- ✓ The French Revolution.
- ✓ The Industrial Revolution in Britain.

Romanticism also exhibited an increased interest in the individual quest for meaning. Disillusioned by both the traditional forms of authority (church/monarch) and by the alternative (demagogy), the Romantic poet sought an ideal wherein the individual soul seeks to find its own answers to troubling questions of existence. Romanticism also exhibited a tendency to humanize religious narratives and establish a counter theology of existence.

Exhibited means showed, demonstrated.

Quest means search.

People were disillusioned by traditional forms of authority such as the church and the monarchy.

Romanticism exhibited interest in the purpose of existence.

Unlike their Augustan predecessors, Romantics were more often than not **uninterested in poetic forms and decorous behavior.**

Romantic poets were not interested in the rules of writing poetry. They reacted against strict forms of poetry. For the Romantics, one plus one does not equal two. This means that you cannot teach how to write poetry.

Poets such as Coleridge found "**organic form**" to be more meaningful to the questing soul than the external forms upon which the Neoclassicists insisted.

Coleridge was a Romantic poet.

Questing means searching.

The Neoclassicists insisted on following rules, patterns and specific logic in order to be inspired to write poetry. However, the Romantics wanted to free themselves from social norms and traditions and from rules of writing.

➤ **Samuel Coleridge's organic form:**

What is the "organic form" that Coleridge invented?

In Arabic, organic form means (الشكل العضوي أو الوحدة العضوية).

✓ The organic form is the opposite of the mechanical. It is the raw. It means going back to the natural and the basic elements in contrast to the artificial and the mechanical.

✓ The organic also means the innate. It means the inner or the inside world rather than the outside world. It develops from within the text.

✓ A work of art according to Coleridge is "a living organism like a plant." It is the structure of a work that has grown naturally from the author's subject and materials as opposed to that of a work shaped by and conforming to artificial rules.

✓ The organic form comes from within the material that the poet is working on rather than the outside material or the artificial rules that were put down to many generations by other thinkers.

✓ The concept was developed by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. It viewed the poem as an organic whole (وحدة عضوية). The form is determined by the content. In other words, the form of the poem is inseparable from the subject matter. Thus, meter and rhyme are not merely added for pleasure. They are not superficial which can be dispensed with.

✓ From Samuel Coleridge's perspective, adding rhyme and meter to a poem is not merely superficial decoration.

Note: Mary Wollstonecraft is not required for the exam. Pages 51, 52, 53, 54, and 55 are not required for the exam.

Before moving to William Wordsworth, I want to tell you something about Romanticism.

> The five I's of Romanticism

Romanticism is characterized by:

- 1) Imagination
- 2) Idealism
- 3) Inspiration
- 4) Intuition
- 5) Individuality

▪ Imagination:

- Imagination was emphasized by Romantic thinkers and poets over logic. Romantic poets and writers placed value on intuition, feelings and instincts versus reason.

- Poets, painters and musicians were no longer trying to make their expression fit conventional forms, but carving out new forms to capture their feelings and thoughts.

- The Romantics were no longer interested in following traditions from the past. They were no longer interested in already made conventional forms that were created by their predecessors. Instead, they were interested in creating new forms and in capturing imagination, feelings and emotions.

▪ Idealism: (المثالية)

- Idealism is the concept that we can make this world a better place.

- The Romantics were very passionate about this idea, that's why they

were very attractive to the French Revolution.

- The French Revolution was thought of by the Romantics as the beginning of a new world.

▪ **Inspiration:**

- The Romantic poets were inspired by nature. Nature for the Romantics was a constant companion and teacher both benign and tyrannical. *Benign* means *merciful* or *compassionate*. By *tyrannical* we mean *wild* and *out of control*.

- The Romantics looked up to nature as a teacher and as something out of control, they thought of nature as something beyond their ability to be subdued.

- Being inspired by nature, the Romantics embraced the uncivilized, the wild, the savage and the pure. Nature for them is pure because it is untouched by people; it's not corrupted.

- The Romantics also had an interest in fantasy and the supernatural such as magic, gods, demons, etc.

- They were also interested in strangeness in beauty; they were generally interested in the unfamiliar.

These elements are found in Edgar Allan Poe's short stories and poems. I advise you to read his short stories. He wrote horror tales. He is well-known for his poem The Raven. When you read Edgar Allan Poe, you will absolutely find the elements of the supernatural, of fantasy, and of strangeness in beauty.

▪ **Individuality:** (الفردية أو الفردانية)

- Romanticism is the cult of individual; the cultural and the psychological birth of the (I); i.e. the self.

- It celebrated the individual over society and the individual liberty (social liberty) over traditions and social norms.

- Romanticism also focused on the individual as well as her/his inner world as well as on the desire for freedom and escape from authority.

This is all about the five I's of Romanticism.

➤ **Romantic figures:**

When we study the Romantic poetry, we see a repetitive pattern of figures. These figures are:

1) The Hero

2) The Wanderer (the traveler): The wanderer is important for the

Romantic poets because they loved to travel on foot from one place to another.

3) The Genius: a scientist for example.

4) The Alien

These Romantic figures journey to new lands literally and figuratively; they defy limitations and overcome obstacles.

> The Romantic motifs:

(*Motifs mean repeated ideas*)

1) Exotic lands: these are weird and strange lands that weren't explored or visited before. The famous poem by Samuel Coleridge Kubla Khan is an example.

2) World of dreams: this is thoroughly found in Edgar Allan Poe's works.

3) Dark terrors of the psyche: by the psyche I mean the human psyche. The word "psyche" means (النفس). They were interested in the psychology of the human being; they explored our complexes and hidden fears. They explored the things that we don't really talk about explicitly.

4) They explored dissing heights in both nature and human creativity. An example of this is the novel "Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley.

> Major Figures of Romanticism:

• In Germany:

We have the writer Gautier, who is famous for his novel "Faust".

Some well-known German composers are Beethoven and Richard Wagner.

• In France:

We have the famous French Romantic author Victor Hugo, who is well-known for his novels "Les Misérables" (البؤساء) and "The Hunchback of Notre-Dame" (أحدب نوتردام).

• In Britain:

We have William Blake, William Wordsworth, Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Robert Burns, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, Percy Shelley and Mary Shelley.

The famous Romantic painters in Britain are William Blake, John Constable and Joseph Turner.

• In America:

We have Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Wordsworth is considered the father of English Romanticism. After getting an excellent education at the prestigious St. John's College, Cambridge, he took a walking tour of Europe in his early twenties, which brought him into contact with the throes of the French Revolution, whose ideals he supported until the onset of the "Reign of Terror."

Onset: beginning.

This is the idea that we mentioned earlier. Romantic poets were interested in traveling and the figure of the wanderer.

Because of the explorations that he made and the walking tours that he took, he was close to the French Revolution and he lived in France for a while during the revolution.

He supported the ideas of the French Revolution until the beginning of The Reign of Terror when he turned his back to the revolution.

The Reign of Terror (عهد الإرهاب) was a time when the revolutionaries decided to kill everybody who supported the monarchy. There were no trials; they just executed people supporting the monarchy. It was genocide; thousands of people were killed just because they had some connections with the monarchy. Actually, before the French Revolution, everybody had to support the monarchy.

Unfortunately, everything changed to the worse during The Reign of Terror. Thousands of people were guillotined. A guillotine (المقصلة) was a machine composed of sharp blades that fall on a person's head and kill him/her. People used to come from everywhere to public squares in order to watch how those people were killed.

Upon returning to England, he settled in the Lake District where he remained for most of the rest of his life with his sister Dorothy.

His sister Dorothy was also a poet.

In 1795 he met the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the two became the most famous literary friends in the history of English literature. Together, they published *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) which is considered one of the most important works in English literature, both for its innovative poetry, and for the preface which Wordsworth wrote to its second edition (1800). Many critics consider 1798 the inaugural year of Romanticism because of the tremendous impact of the *Lyrical Ballads*.

Innovative (مبتكر) means creative.

Inaugural means (افتتاحية).

Lyrical; can be sung.

Ballad comes from the French chanson balladée or ballade, it means "dancing songs".

- Lyrical Ballads were dancing songs about nature and the countryside.
- They were written in a very simple language and they were written to simple ordinary people.
- They talked about everyday activities.

Later in life, Wordsworth retracted from the radical ideas of his youth, and grew increasingly conservative. Many of his former devotees accused him of apostasy.

Apostasy means (ارتداد).

William Wordsworth renounced his faith in the French Revolution.

His poetry, however, remained influential and formative of modern ideas about poetry that the scope of his achievement is easily overlooked. **In his preface to the Lyrical Ballads, he attacked the poetic diction and elaborate figures of speech characteristic of 18th century poetry.**

He advocated for poetry to use the "language really used by men."

Advocated: defended, supported, encouraged.

"Language really used by men." means language of the ordinary people.

This is what we see in the Lyrical Ballads; a very simple language that is not sophisticated or complicated.

Wordsworth also **rejected poetic hierarchy** ranking epic and tragedy over the subjective mode of the lyric, and **declared "incidents and situations from common life" as fit subjects for arts.**

Poetic hierarchy means (التراتبية الشعرية).

According to William Wordsworth, there should be no poetic hierarchy; there should be no classification of which poem is better than the others. We can't use this scale to measure poetry according to William Wordsworth.

The last line is about his Lyrical Ballads which are about incidents and situations from common life which is the life of ordinary people, especially those who live in the countryside.

William Wordsworth was a poet of nature, innocence, childhood and memory. The poem we are going to study today is a poem that I teach for the first time. It is entitled **Nutting**.

Nutting is about collecting and harvesting hazelnuts (البندق). It's about journey into the forest; a little boy goes to the forest to collect hazelnuts.

Hazelnuts (البندق)

Chestnuts (الكستناء)

Walnuts (الجوز)

Pistachio (القستق)

Nutting: the act of collecting hazelnuts.

Actually, William Wordsworth wrote this poem when he was in Germany with his sister Dorothy.

Nutting

----- It seems a day
(I speak of one from many singled out)
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth
With a huge wallet over my shoulder slung,
A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps
Toward some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds
Which for that service had been husbanded
By exhortation of my frugal Dame
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, - and, in truth,
More ragged than need was! Over pathless rocks,
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,
Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation; but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,
A virgin scene! -A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet; --or beneath the trees I sate
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;
A temper known to those, who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye;

Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
 For ever; and I saw the sparking foam,
 And- with my cheek on one of those green stones
 That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
 Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep-
 I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
 In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
 Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
 Wasting its kindness on stocks and stones,
 And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
 And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
 And merciless ravage: and the shady nook
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
 Their quiet being: and, unless I now
 Confound my present feeling with the past,
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
 The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky. -
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades
 In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand.

Notice the space in the first line; this is called *indenting*. We don't actually indent in poetry.

Why did William Wordsworth indent the first line of this poem?

He wanted to break away from the rules; this is one reason. There is another reason for this indentation. He did so because he is telling us a story; this poem is similar to a narrative. The indentation means "once upon a time". This is a "once upon a time" poem. It is a narrative poem.

Let's start paraphrasing the poem:

- ----- It seems a day

(I speak of one from many singled out)

One of those heavenly days that cannot die;

This is a different and a special day. It's not an ordinary day.

It's a heavenly day that cannot die. It's a day to remember. He cannot forget this day because it was very special.

It was not the only day; it was one of many other days. But this day in

particular is stuck in his memory. There were many other heavenly days to remember but I am telling you about one day.

- **When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,**
Eagerness: longing, excitement to do something.

When he took this journey, he was a boy full of hope. Boyish hope is innocent, pure, naive, immature and idealistic.

The speaker is telling us about a special day of his life when he was a boy full of hope. He was very eager and passionate to do things.

- **I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth**

Cottage: a house in the countryside.

Threshold: the entrance.

Sallying forth: going out for a trip.

He left his house for a long journey.

- **With a huge wallet over my shoulder slung,**

Wallet: bag.

He had a huge bag slung over his shoulder.

- **A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps**

Toward some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint

Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds

Crook: a staff (العصا).

Quaint: unusual, strange.

Tricked out: dressed.

He went to the forest; a distant forest.

He looked like a strange figure. He was dressed up in disguise which was made of weeds or grass.

Weeds here refer to clothes. His clothes were made up of natural materials. That's why he looked strange. He collected his outfit from raw materials of the forest. He looked very strange but he was proud.

- **Which for that service had been husbanded**

Husbanded: collected, harvested.

This funny, strange, and unusual disguise that he is wearing was collected for a particular purpose.

- **By exhortation of my frugal Dame**

Exhortation: encouragement.

Frugal: careful about how things are used.

Dame: a woman, a lady.

Frugal Dame: reference to the woman with whom he stayed when he was at grammar school.

His disguise which he collected in pride was encouraged by this mother

figure Frugal Dame.

- **Motley accoutrement, of power to smile**

Motely: a bunch of items, a mixture of items.

Accoutrement: additional items of dress or equipment.

He is talking about this disguise that he was wearing in pride. It was a collection of items from everywhere.

- **At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, - and, in truth,**

Thorns: (أشواك).

Brakes: a group of short trees (شجيرات).

Brambles: blackberry (التوت الأسود).

He is still talking about the outfit that he is wearing which he collected from a bunch of items. There's no harmony among these items. That's why he looks funny.

- **More ragged than need was! Over pathless rocks,**

The outfit he is wearing is ragged, it is very old.

He set off and went to the forest. He is walking on "pathless rocks" which means that the road is not paved.

- **Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,**

Mat: a thickly tangled mess.

Fern: a plant that grows in wet areas (السرخس).

Tangled: (متشابك).

Thickets: shrubs, small trees.

He is making his way through a mess of fern and the tangled thickets.

- **Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook**

Nook: an empty space, a clearing.

He had to force his way into the forest; it was not an easy road. Suddenly, appeared before him an empty space in the forest.

- **Unvisited, where not a broken bough**

Bough: branch.

That nook was unvisited by any human before. There was not even a broken branch there. The land was untouched by humans.

- **Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign**

Drooped: sinking, hanging downward (متدلي).

Gracious: beautiful.

All the branches were healthy; not damaged, not destroyed.

- **Of devastation; but the hazels rose**

Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,

Devastation: damage, destruction.

Erect: reaching upwards (منالصفة).

There was not even a sign of destruction or corruption there because this land was not visited by humans.

In that empty space, he noticed the hazels. He was looking for the hazels to collect them. These hazels were tall and reaching upwards. There was not only one or two; there were clusters of them. These hazels were tempting him to collect and eat them.

Actually, the use of the word "erect" indicates a sexual and sensual meaning.

- A virgin scene! -A little while I stood ,
It was a virgin land and he was the first explorer.

So far, what do you think of this little adventurer and wanderer in the forest?

Student: everything is fine till now.

Professor: that's correct. What else?

Student: he is overreacting; chasing hazelnuts is not a big deal.

Professor: but he is a little child. All children overreact; they are chasing a butterfly and it's a big business for them.

Student: he encourages the reader to use his/her imagination.

Professor: he is forcing the reader to use imagination because the poem is very detailed. You feel that we are in the forest with this little boy. He is telling us a narrative poem from the perspective of a child.

Note: there are a lot of expressions that refer to sexuality and sensuality in the poem such as: tall and erect, tempting clusters, a virgin scene.

We said that the Romantics focus on emotions and feelings. Feelings and emotions cannot be separated from sexuality and sensuality.

Figures of speech:

✓ Line number 2: Alliteration => (speak, singled).

✓ Line number 3: Alliteration => (days, die).

Personification => "days that cannot die".

✓ Line number 8 : Anastrophe => " a figured quaint ". It should be "a quaint figure".

✓ Line number 13: Alliteration => (brakes, brambles).

Polysyndeton: The repetition of the word "and".

Actually, this line is grammatically incorrect. It's not correct to repeat "and" like this.

Why did the poet do this? What effect does this repetition have?

He is emphasizing every item. He is also repeating the "and" in order to

make the reader slow down as they are reading; he wants us to pay attention.

- Polysyndeton is the repetition of conjunctions where they can be omitted.

Example: he ran, and jumped, and laughed for joy.

✓ Lines 19+20: Personification => "the hazels rose tall and erect," The hazels are personified.

Personification => "tempting clusters". The clusters of hazelnuts are personified.

That's all about today. Think about this poem and read it at home please.

About the exam:

- You are NOT really required to memorize the biography of these poets. Rather, you are meant to understand what we read.

- You will not be asked about dates in the exam because these are very stupid questions.

- I really recommend that you watch documentaries about Romanticism especially a documentary entitled The Romantics; it's available on YouTube.

Thank You

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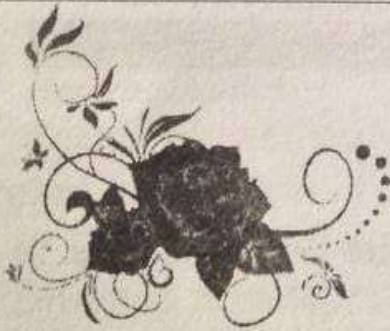


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