



**A comparative study of William Shakespeare and John Keats: - the theme of immortality
in "Ode on a Grecian urn" and "sonnet 18"**

Madhusmita Mishra^{1*},

¹Central Sanskrit University, Shree Sadashiv Campus, Puri, Odisha-752001, India,

E-mail: mishramadhusmita20@gmail.com

Abstract

Various critics have guaranteed a complex comparability among Shakespeare and Keats. Also, there are without a doubt specific poem of Keats in which he, somewhat, while possibly not totally, repeated the voice of Shakespeare. This study centers on the voice of Shakespeare as is in Sonnet 18 - "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" harmonize with Keats "ode on a Grecian urn". Both are essentially about the immortalization of beauty. The writer seems to accept that masterpieces and the subjects of that craftsmanship would outlast their makers for an Indefinite period or in any event, for an eternal period. Different things of beauty that are transient by nature might disappear, unlike the beauty of art that continues for time immemorial and shines brighter with each passing year. That is what these two legends, Shakespeare and Keats, attempt to validate in their masterpieces.

Keywords: -Immortality, Eternal, Transient

Introduction

Contrasting John Keats and William Shakespeare, who were both immortal and unfathomable in their universes, is a troublesome undertaking. William Shakespeare is the best speaker of man's thought and a right enthusiastic friend and effectively consolidates further messages in his works, which make major areas of strength between the sonnet's topic and the peruser. John Keats is an erotic, individual voice as he ordinarily utilizes clear symbolism to make a one-of-a-kind climate around his poems. Curiously, John Keats is unequivocally impacted by Shakespeare as he was religious about Shakespeare, not religion. The two writers are recognized as two of England's



most noteworthy artists as they have one-of-a-kind styles of verse that permit the perusers to be profoundly associated with their message by making striking pictures, however, little consideration has been paid to this aspect of him. In a portion of the poems, this positioning is practically indistinguishable. One such model is his nearly the most discussed and talked about and the most famous of all his sonnets," Ode to a Grecian urn'. A reflective investigation of the poem distinctively displays its similitude to the "Sonnet-18". It tends to be trusted that the paper will assist the perusers with having a better understanding of the verse of Keats.

John Keats as a poet and follower of William Shakespeare

"Here lies one whose name is writ on water."

The above line is recorded as a memorial in Keats' grave as his solicitation to be set under a gravestone bearing no name or date just the words. Keats felt that his life was a disappointment however trusted that his successors will consider his name as a part of the significant English poets. Although his poems were not commonly generally welcomed by critics during his lifetime, his reputation developed after his demise and today he had become quite possibly the most darling of all English writers. Keats deserted his apprenticeship at Guy's Hospital in 1815 to study. At that time, he was likewise dealing with his initial poems. In 1816, he was authorized to fill in as an apothecary however passed on the calling to seek after his abstract vocation. It is, in any case, normal for Poets to look to other extraordinary writers for motivation and direction.

In the advancement of Keats' poetic works, the impact of Spenser, Leigh Hunt, Wordsworth, Milton, Dante, and others on style and subject of his works can without much of a stretch be followed. All of Keats' literary role models, however, Shakespeare was preeminent. It is to be noted, nonetheless, that Shakespeare never had such a mindful, discerning, and inventive peruser as Keats whose letters are loaded up with energetic recognition of Shakespeare's accomplishments and fiber with citations from his plays also, sonnets, and remarks upon his words.



Keats's poems are often called Shakespearean, the result of a 'saturation' in Shakespearean texts, and as R.S. White argues, "he had absorbed

the influence so deeply that the word 'sources' is inadequate to describe (in Keats's writing) the omnipresent but transformed ghost of Shakespeare's poetry and language."

Matthew Arnold, the famous Victorian poet, and critic place him with Shakespeare, the central sun in the sky of the English as well as World literature. Arnold in "The English Poets" says, "He is he is with Shakespeare."

Early in his career, Keats expressed the belief that Shakespeare was his 'good Genius' or 'Presider' encouraging and aiding his poetic efforts. There are many critics who find a certain affinity between Keats and Shakespeare. Walter Savage Landor believes that

Keats "had something of Shakespeare in him," wrote of Keats that "in none of our poets, with the sole exception of Shakespeare, do we find so many phrases so happy in their boldness.

A. C. Bradley writes that "Keats was of Shakespeare's tribe."

John Middleton Murry wrote an entire book based on the promise that Keats "was essentially like Shakespeare" and that "a right understanding of Keats is the easiest and perhaps the only possible way to a right understanding of Shakespeare."

Caroline Spurgeon similarly claims that "Keats and Shakespeare had a very unusual, a very close and subtle relationship. They were alike in certain qualities of mind and art, a fact of which Keats himself was fully aware, and in some of these qualities they are unique among English poets."

Theme of transient beauty vs immortality in "ode on a Grecian urn" and "Sonnet 18"

Ode on a Grecian Urn' is John Keats' endeavor to draw in with the excellence of craftsmanship and nature, tending to a piece of earthenware from old Greece. Keats is maybe generally popular for his odes like this one as well as 'Ode to a Nightingale,' in which the writer manages the expressive idea of music. The actual urn is antiquated. It has been ignored during the time to last arrive at Keats' presence and, as far as he might be concerned, appears to exist beyond the customary feeling of time. Imperishable, everlasting, it is practically outsider in its separation from the ongoing age.



It taps on the theme of the immortality of art, beauty, and romanticism. The fundamental subject of this ode is the eternality of workmanship. To portray this theme, Keats utilizes a Grecian urn and the emotive compositions in this piece. The figures on the urn will constantly have the satisfaction to anticipate, forever be exhausted from the pursuit, and forever be youthful. Every one of the interests of the living human world is distant from the figures on the urn — and these interests cause despair, infatuated fevers, and thirst. He offers his viewpoints with respect to the portrayals. By doing this, he attempts to depict the perpetuity of craftsmanship of this exceptional jar. Keats stands out workmanship from people to depict that craftsmanship exists everlastingly regardless of whether the craftsman is no more.

"O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with bredeof marble men and maidens overwrought, With forest branches and the trodden weed;

Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation waste,

Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty, —that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

Likewise, "Sonnet 18" is a poem composed by English poet and playwright William Shakespeare. The sonnet was logically written during the 1590s, however, it was not published until 1609. In the same way as other of Shakespeare's sonnets, this sonnet grapples with the idea of magnificence and with the limit of verse to address that excellence. Commending an unknown individual (generally accepted to be a young fellow), the sonnet evaluates various hackneyed metaphors and similes and finds every one of them needs. It then, at that point, fosters an exceptionally unique and uncommon metaphor: the young fellow's excellence can be best communicated by comparing him with the poem itself.

It is basically a love sonnet; however, the object of its love is not as clear as it might initially appear. The speaker at first attempts to track down a fitting representation to portray his cherished (customarily accepted to be a young fellow) — proposing that he may be contrasted



with a late spring's day, the sun, or "the sweetheart buds of May." Yet as the speaker looks for a metaphor that will satisfactorily mirror his dearest's magnificence, he understands that none will work since all suggest inescapable decay and demise. Where the initial eight lines of the sonnet archive the disappointment of sonnet's conventional assets to catch the young fellow's magnificence, the last six lines contend that the young fellow's everlasting excellence is best contrasted with the actual sonnet.

"But your eternal summer will not fade,
Nor will you lose possession of the beauty you own,
Nor will death be able to boast that you wander in his shade,
When you live in eternal lines, set apart from time.
As long as men breathe or have eyes to see,
As long as this sonnet lives, it will give life to you."

In a strikingly roundabout movement, it is this very sonnet that both reflects and protects the young fellow's magnificence. Sonnet 18 can subsequently be perused as respecting not just the speaker's cherished yet in addition to the force of the sonnet itself, which, the speaker contends, is a way to everlasting life.

Unlike Keats, Shakespeare accepts that a craftsman can deify others. The renowned playwright is immovably persuaded that beauty can keep going forever assuming it is caught by the workmanship. He recognizes two elements of human life: physical and otherworldly. The first will undoubtedly die and transform into cinders, while the subsequent one won't ever fail to exist in the event that it turns into a piece of different people groups' memory. Surely, we need to concede that there is a similitude between these two poems, especially, the subject of death, yet the tone is unique. Keats investigates the open doors that an individual can lose, while Shakespeare sets weight on the possibility that craftsmanship can circumvent maturing and passing on, and subsequently, we can make it happen.



Conclusion

This study shows that Shakespeare and Keats were people off for all intents and purposes a comparable sort. The wonderful works of Keats seemed to be those of Shakespeare. The two awesome pieces of the two legends were checked out and it has risen out of it that recognition for Ode on a Grecian urn seemed to be Sonnet- 18 discourses in various ways. A piece of those different similarities was sorted out in this study.

References:

01. White, R.S., Keats as a Reader of Shakespeare, The Athlone Press, London, 1987, p.15
02. Arnold, Matthew, "John Keats" in The English Poets: Selections with Critical Introductions by Various Writers, ed. Thomas Humphry Ward (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1880)
03. Keats's letter of 10 May, 1817 to Haydon, The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1899, p.260
04. Walter Jackson Bate, "The Endurance of Keats",
05. The Persistence of Poetry: Bicentennial Essays on Keats, ed. Robert M. Ryan and Ronald A. Sharp, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 1998, p.5605. Bradley, A.C,
06. Oxford Lectures on Poetry, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1999, p.2106. Poole, Adrian, Great Shakespeareans: Lamb, Hazlitt, Keats (Vol.4), Bloomsbury, London, 2010, p.109A Critical Guide to Keats and his Famous Odes, Students Store, Bareilly The Wordsworth Poetry Library, The Works of John Keats, 1994 Bhabatosh Chatterjee, John Keats: His Mind and Work, Bombay Orient Language
07. Keats, John. "Ode on a Grecian Urn", The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats,
08. The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1899, p.134
09. Keats's letter of 27 October, 1818 to Richard Woodhouse,
10. The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats,
11. Keats's letter of Feb-May 1819 to George and Gorgiana Keats,
12. The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats,
13. Keats as a Reader of Shakespeare, The Athlone Press, London, 1987, p.28
14. William Shakespeare, · thgirW rekooB siuoL1967 · Snippet view
15. William Shakespeare, rD. A arabraB. tawoM, · enitsreW luaP2015 ·

