

COVENANT UNIVERSITY  
NIGERIA

*TUTORIAL KIT*  
*OMEGA SEMESTER*

PROGRAMME: LANGUAGES

COURSE: ENG 326

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## ENG326: STUDIES IN POETRY

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1. Why do we refer to Keats and Osundare as 'simple' and 'sentimental' poets, respectively? Discuss this in relation to their poems: "Bright Star" and "Human in Every Sense".
2. Discuss the use of symbols and imagery of the 'past', 'present' and 'future' in Osundare's 'Preface to The Eye of the Earth'.
3. Enumerate who and what influenced Keats' poetry, and examine "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" as a significant proof of early poets' influence on his poetic vision and creativity.
4. Briefly discuss the main characters in Keats' mythic narrative poem: "Lamia".
5. Discuss the use of imagery and symbols in Keats' "Bright Star."
6. Compare and contrast Keats' "Grasshopper and the Cricket" and Osundare's "The Road and the River".
7. Examine Keats' "Bright Star" and Osundare's "The Rocks Rose to Meet Me".
8. Make an extrinsic comparism of Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn".
9. Discuss how the use of symbols, allusion, imagery and metaphor in "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" help to adduce how early writers/poets inspired the persona/poet?
10. John Keats' is a Romantic poet of beauty. Discuss?
11. Explore the social and aesthetic imperatives in any two poems of Keats and Osundare.
12. Love for poetry, art and life are what qualify Keats and Osundare as nature poets. Discuss.
13. Explore Keats' and Osundare's sources of poetic inspirations.
14. Early classical writers and poets, neo-classical and contemporary Romantics Arts, paintings, sculptures (Grecian), and mythology influenced Keats' poetic creativity. Discuss.
15. Compare and discuss Osundare's "XXII" in *Moonsongs* and "Songs of Ajegunle".
16. What is the significance of 'Mortality/Immortality/Permanency/Impermanency' in Keats' poem "When I Have Fears"?
17. Examine the terms 'poetic Inspiration', 'poetic vision' and 'poetic forms' and poetic techniques.
18. Reconstruct Osundare's folk poem: "The dream, the dream is a moon 'XV'"
19. Make a visual construction of Taban Lo Liyong's concrete poem: "Architecture"
20. Construct a poem from Chong Ju's prose poetry in *Midang*: 'At the foot of the mountain'

1. Why do we refer to Keats and Osundare as 'simple' and 'sentimental' poets, respectively? Discuss this in relation to their poems: "Bright Star" and "Human in Every Sense".

Answer: Mensah (2003) referred to Keats as 'simple poet' because his period is relatively untouched by industrialization and thus took the natural environment for granted. In contrast, he qualifies Osundare as 'sentimental poet' and his poems minatory, because he lives to witness the impact of exploitation and its destructive impact on the natural environment.

3. Enumerate who and what influenced Keats' poetry, and examine "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" as a significant proof of early poets' influence on his poetic vision and creativity.

Answer: Keats': Sources of poetic inspiration

1. Early writers and poets: classical; neo-classical; contemporary (Romantics).
2. Arts: paintings, sculptures (Grecian), mythology.
3. Contemporary writers/poets.
4. Self (imagination); experience from nature watch.

The poem "OFLCH" is a poem written by Keats' when he read Chapman's translation of Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey*. This is an example of literary influence.

5. Discuss the use of imagery and symbols in Keats "Bright Star."

Answer: There is the use of images of nature expressed from the position of the 'star': "The moving waters at their priestlike task", "earth's human sores", "soft new fallen mask of snow", "the mountains and the moors"

'Star' in this poem is a symbol of permanency and constancy, while the poet and the restless images of nature symbolize impermanency.

7. Examine Keats' "Bright Star" and Osundare's "The Rocks Rose to Meet Me".

Answer: 'Star' in this poem is a symbol of permanency and constancy, while the poet and the restless images of nature symbolize impermanency.

While Osundare's "The Rocks Rose to Meet Me" is a poem of home coming and personification of nature symbolized by the rock 'Olosunta' who is presented as a part of the human community endowed with the power of speech, reasoning and ability love: "Like passionate lovers on a long-awaited tryst/ The rocks rose to meet me". Keats expression of love is restricted to love for human kind alone.

9. Discuss how the use of symbols, allusion, imagery and metaphor in "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" help to adduce how early writers/poets inspired the persona/poet?

Answer: Early writers like Homer and Chapman inspired poets like Keats through their contribution to literature. Homer for example wrote *Iliad and Odyssey* and Chapman translated these from Greek to English, making it possible for Keats to read the translation. The impact of this work in Keats' poetic creativity is vividly expressed in his poem "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer".

11. Explore the social and aesthetic imperatives in any two poems of Keats and Osundare.

Answer: In his letters (Gittings, 88), he speaks of the life he purposed for himself:

"I am ambitious of doing the world some good: if I should be spared that may be the work of mature years – in the interval I will assay to reach to as high a summit

in Poetry as the nerve bestowed upon me will suffer. The faint conceptions I have (poetry) of Poems to come brings the blood frequently into my forehead – All I hope is that I may not lose all interest in human affairs – that the solitary indifference I feel for applause even from the finest Spirits, will not blunt any acuteness of vision I may have...I feel assured I should write from the mere yearning and fondness I have for the Beautiful...”.

Keats vision of his greatness as a poet is spelt out in his poem “When I Have Fears”, alluding to the natural environment as he foresaw his death before his poetic accomplishment. In “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, he concludes on a note of Permanency of art and Impermanency of human life, and the uniqueness of art as a thing of ‘beauty’ and ‘truth’:

Keats and his generation are dead but his poetry remains up to Osundare’s generation, immortalized. And on the first and the ninth lines of “On the Cricket and the Grasshopper” Keats celebrates the universality and immortality of poetry as the life in nature: “The poetry of earth is never dead/ the poetry of earth is ceasing never:” activities in the natural environment symbolizes poetry of life.

Osundare’s view is that “In retaking the traditional responsibility to speak for the people, the contemporary Nigeria poets are aware of the public duty of an artist. He argues that “this oracular responsibility finds resonance in their technique, which mirrors the socio-economic and politico-cultural practices of the day.” An eco-poet, Niyi Osundare further contends that: “art has a purpose. I believe in the social status of art... It must be used to advance the cause of humanity... I believe that if art has any sake at all, it is human. A container without content is empty. As concerned, committed artists, the basis of all art is justice.”

13. Explore Keats’ and Osundare’s sources of poetic inspirations.

Answer: Keats’ sources of poetic inspiration include:

1. Early writers and poets: classical; neo-classical; contemporary (Romantics).
2. Arts: paintings, sculptures (Grecian), mythology.
3. Contemporary writers/poets.
4. Self (imagination); experience from nature watch.

Osundare’s sources of poetic inspiration include:

Art: (Oral literature (Weaving)/Written literature, Praise and performance poetry, Total drama);

Poetic forms: Praise poetry, performance poetry, proverbs

Natural environment: ‘Sentimental’, Landscape Seasons, flora and Fauna.

Writers/poets: Parents (oral poetry & weaving), Coleridge (fancy/imagination, Journalistic writing, Political philosophy) and Okigbo (musicality & ‘return’), Longinus.

Self-Inspired: response to issues of communal life in the context of situation that is work seeks to address; the obligation to give aesthetic form to his mode of response. (Na’Allah, 2000:p.xvii).

15. Compare and discuss Osundare’s “XXII” in *Moonsongs* and “Songs of Ajegunle”.

Both poems focus their themes on social stratification and disjuncture on one hand and the geographical setting in Ikoyi and Ajegunle, in Niigeria.

17. Examine the terms ‘poetic Inspiration’, ‘poetic vision’ and ‘poetic forms’ and poetic techniques.

Poetic inspiration as to do with supernatural influence, that promotes creativity and creative output in a poet. Poetic vision is the dream and desire of a poet to meet and contribute to arts and

society through the poetic creative endowment. Poetic technique is the method, the means and style employed by a poet to express his/her poetic creativity. It could be in form of language, diction, mood etc.

19. Make a visual construction of Taban Lo Liyong's concrete poem: "Architecture"

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