

**History of English Language and Literature**  
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**Indian Institute of Technology Madras**  
**Lecture 15 b**  
**Age of Wordsworth (Continued)**

Good morning everyone. I am happy to welcome you to today's session of our course the history of English language and literature. Today we continue to locate the influence of romanticism and also the age of Wordsworth which was dominated by romantic poetry. We have begun to looking at the major figures and the major influences of this period.

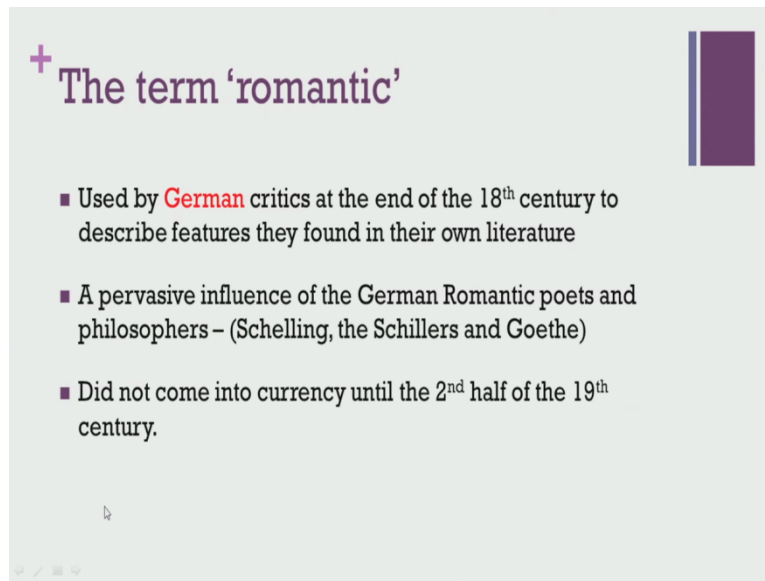
We are already in the middle of discussion and we have taken a look at how Lyrical Ballads played a major role in serving as a manifesto of the new kind of poetry and also that how the life and works of Wordsworth was quite influential and fundamental in laying the foundations of this new era and this new literary genre. As an aside we also need to take a look at how the term romantic came into being. It was first used by the German critics at the end of the 18th century.

They used this term to describe certain particular and peculiar features that they found in their own German poetry at the end of the 18th century. However this term was later adapted by the British writers and the British historians as well because they found that a similar kind of poetry was getting generated within Britain from the end of the 18th century onwards.

So we also find accordingly a very strong and pervasive influence of German romantic poets and philosophers such as Schelling, the Schillers as well as the most well-known poet of the Germans Goethe. However though this term began to be used from the late 18th century onwards it did not gain much currency within the English speaking lane until the second half of the 19th century.

And also interesting it was only at a later point of time from the beginning of the 20th century onwards that a more sustained and a more focused academic interest was getting generated into this form of romantic poetry.

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## + The term 'romantic'

- Used by **German** critics at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to describe features they found in their own literature
- A pervasive influence of the German Romantic poets and philosophers – (Schelling, the Schillers and Goethe)
- Did not come into currency until the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

However interestingly it was only from the later 19th century and from the early 20th century onwards the sustained and focused academic interest on romantic poetry in general was to begin. Having already taken a look at how Wordsworth had influenced the age of romanticism it is very important to now move on to the second most important figure Samuel Taylor Coleridge who lived from 1772 to 1834. He was a most well known contemporary of Wordsworth and also very close friend of Wordsworth.

And we also noted in the earlier session itself that together they had published Lyrical Ballads, the epoch making book which was to become almost like a manifesto for this new poetry. Just like Wordsworth, Coleridge was also immensely influenced by the French Revolution. It instantly appealed to him.

He was still young boy when the fall of Bastille happened in 1789 but however we find that his enthusiasm was quite sustained and he did carry all of these romantic and radical ideas even when he went to Cambridge to continue his higher education. But however the meeting with Robert Southey in 1794 it was to change his life and his world view entirely. And Robert Southey incidently was also to become his brother in law at a later point.

And together Coleridge and Southey, they even wanted to form a utopian kind of society where an ideal form of government and an ideal form of system of government existed. Accordingly we find them talking and even visualising and kind of trying to conceptualize the particular society based on the ideals of pantisocracy. And this was also a very direct

product of the revolutionary zeal that both of them shared and also a very direct influence of the French Revolution could be seen over here.

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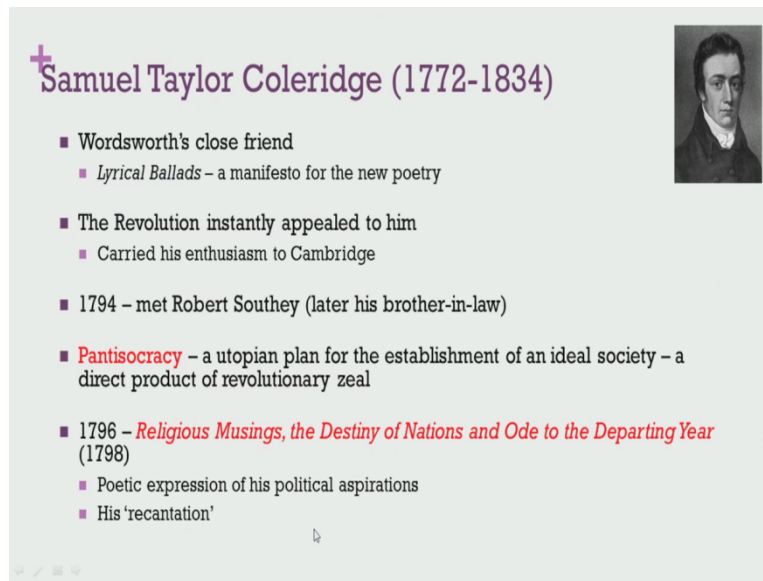
**Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)**

- Wordsworth's close friend
  - *Lyrical Ballads* - a manifesto for the new poetry
- The Revolution instantly appealed to him
  - Carried his enthusiasm to Cambridge
- 1794 - met Robert Southey (later his brother-in-law)
- **Pantisocracy** - a utopian plan for the establishment of an ideal society - a direct product of revolutionary zeal
- 1796 - *Religious Musings, the Destiny of Nations and Ode to the Departing Year* (1798)
  - Poetic expression of his political aspirations
  - His 'recantation'

But however this being a very utopian kind of an ideal we do not find this plan taking off in any way and we do not find any good coming out of it either. But however all of this was to get reflected later on in his poetic renditions. In 1796 he published his first set of poems titled as Religious Musings, the Destiny of Nations and Ode to the Departing Year. And we do find it conceive in 1796 and later published in 1798.

This work was hugely influential also in shaping Coleridge own poetic career because it is in this work that we find the supreme expressions of his political aspirations. And Coleridge himself he in fact talked about this particular work as his own recantation. So this work was influential also in identifying Coleridge as one of the poets who shared this revolutionary zeal along with many other contemporaries.

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### Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

- Wordsworth's close friend
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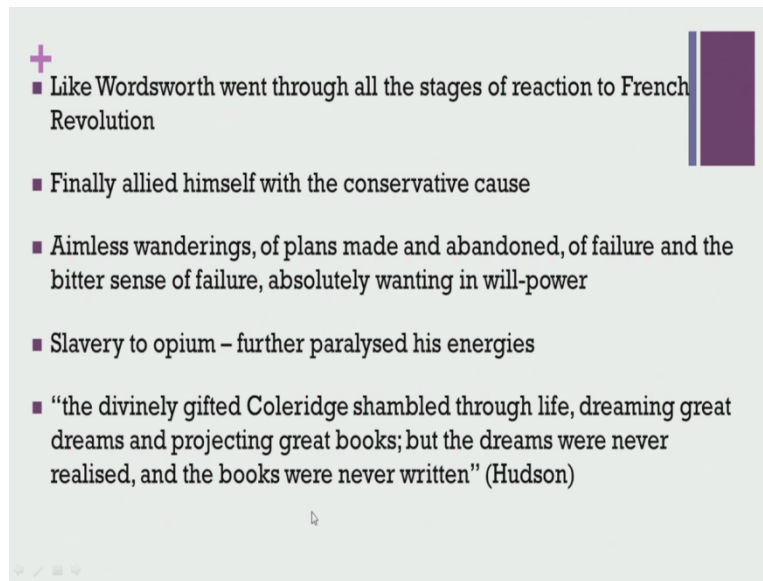
Like Wordsworth we find Coleridge also going through most of the stages of reaction to French Revolution and finally we find him allying himself with the conservative cause just like Wordsworth. And however his life in general it was not very focused. We do not find him focusing entirely on poetry like Wordsworth did. In fact many historians later feel that his life in general was quite aimless and because of this there were lot of aimless wanderings and travels that he undertook which were not really productive in the conventional sense of the term.

And he also used to make a lot of plans and then later abandon them because he could not really focus on anything in particular to bring it to realization. His life in general was characterized by a lot of failures one after the other. And a bitter sense of failure continued to haunt him and also his works in the coming years. And he was absolutely wanting in willpower.

And in spite of the many interesting works and the many influential works that he published and also his collaborative work with Wordsworth bringing him a lot of recognition, in spite of all these things he really failed to make a mark during his own lifetime. It is also said that he was a slave to opium and the drug had also further paralyzed his creative energies.

Hudson makes this interesting remark about Coleridge, this divinely gifted Coleridge shambled through life dreaming great dreams and projecting great books but the dreams were never realized and the books where never written.

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- Like Wordsworth went through all the stages of reaction to French Revolution
- Finally allied himself with the conservative cause
- Aimless wanderings, of plans made and abandoned, of failure and the bitter sense of failure, absolutely wanting in will-power
- Slavery to opium – further paralysed his energies
- “the divinely gifted Coleridge shambled through life, dreaming great dreams and projecting great books; but the dreams were never realised, and the books were never written” (Hudson)

But nevertheless in spite of the very small amount of poetry that Coleridge produced it is said that, that little is of rare excellence. That was the kind of genius that this man possessed and needless to say it was perhaps this visionary element in him that also prompted him to collaborate with Wordsworth and produce the most important and the epoch making book of the century Lyrical Ballads. His creative genius and his romantic and naturalist tendencies could be found in the few works that he had produced.

Most important ones being Dejection - An Ode which is also known as the personal poem of Coleridge. Work Without Hope was structured in a form of a sonnet and in both of these works we do find a sense of his own life dominating his poetic expressions. It is in that sense a little dark and (07:20). It also talks about many failures human beings in general are forced to encounter. In his two very important works The Ancient Mariner and Christabel we find him celebrating the triumph of romanticism.

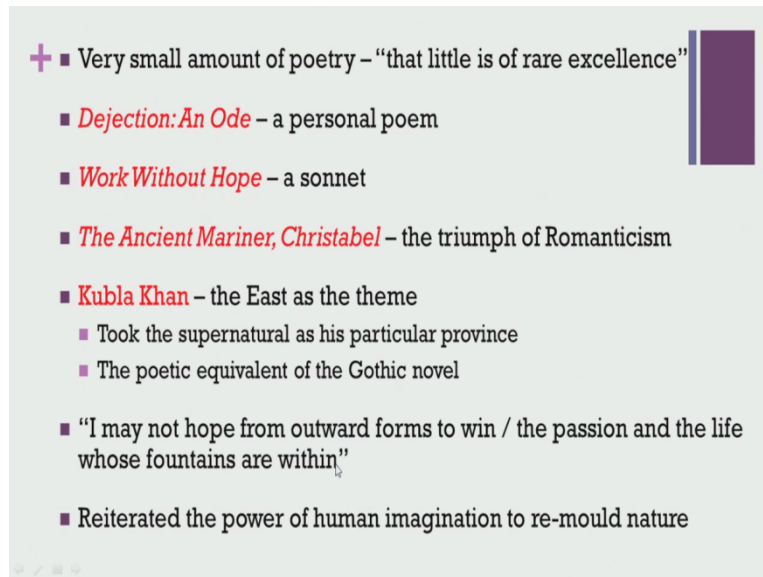
And in Kubla Khan also we find the same romantic stream dominating and also it is in this work that one of the earliest works which has the East as the theme begins to manifest itself. And talking about all these three works The Ancient Mariner, Christabel and Kubla Khan it is said that it could be seen as a poetic equivalent of the Gothic novel because in all of these works the supernatural begins to dominate in a very interesting way.

So in that sense we find a very different kind of romantic poetry getting produced by Coleridge starkly different from that of Wordsworth who turned to his immediate surroundings and the immediate natural elements to produce and to inspire his poetry. And

together we do find that they made it possible for all kinds of new imaginative tendencies to be included into this new romantic poetry which had come into being.

To quote the Coleridge own lines from his poetry, I may not hope from outward forms to win the passion and the life whose fountains are within. Just like in these lines he continued to celebrate and talk about the power of human imagination to remould nature itself.

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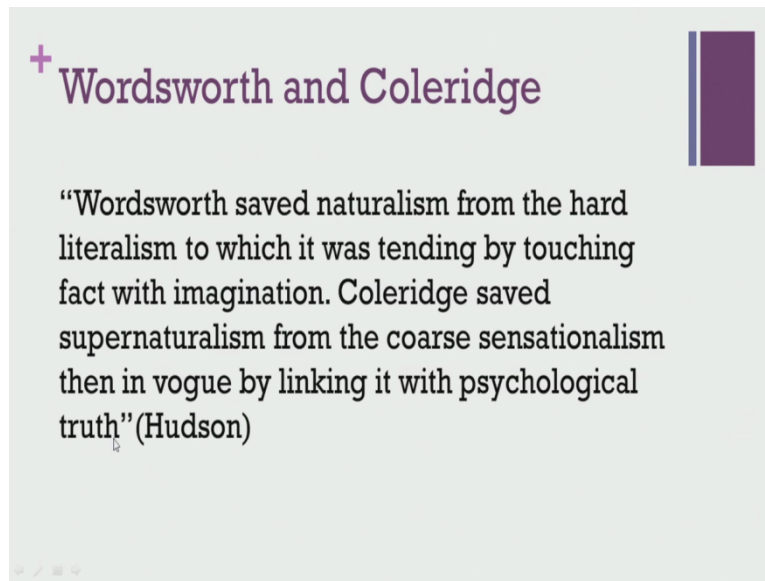


- + ■ Very small amount of poetry – “that little is of rare excellence”
- *Dejection: An Ode* – a personal poem
- *Work Without Hope* – a sonnet
- *The Ancient Mariner, Christabel* – the triumph of Romanticism
- *Kubla Khan* – the East as the theme
  - Took the supernatural as his particular province
  - The poetic equivalent of the Gothic novel
- “I may not hope from outward forms to win / the passion and the life whose fountains are within”
- Reiterated the power of human imagination to re-mould nature

So we continue to emphasize this fact that throughout the romantic age we find this single word imagination dominating all the creative elements and also the reception of the poetry is also quite significant in the sense that the people in general they also began to celebrate the significance of this one element imagination in their own life spell.

Attempting a comparison between Wordsworth and Coleridge, Hudson makes this remark, Wordsworth saved naturalism from the hard literalism to which it was tending by touching fact with imagination. Coleridge saved supernaturalism from the course sensationalism then in vogue by linking it with psychological truth.

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## + Wordsworth and Coleridge

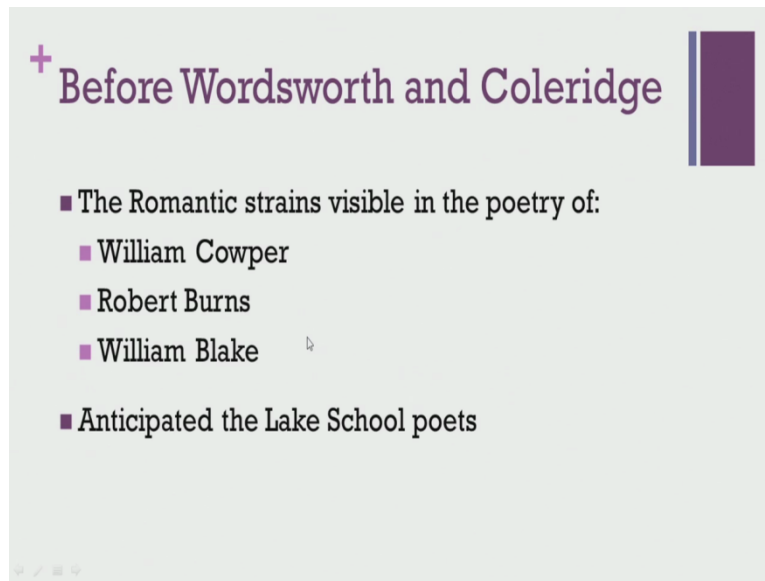
“Wordsworth saved naturalism from the hard literalism to which it was tending by touching fact with imagination. Coleridge saved supernaturalism from the coarse sensationalism then in vogue by linking it with psychological truth” (Hudson)

So we find that taking through different trajectories of poetic renditions, both of them had become the foundational elements in situating what was later to be celebrated as the romantic poetry of the 19th century. As we noted right in the beginning in the previous session it is very important to take a look at some of the writers who paved the way towards this romantic revival.

We had taken a look at the number of works and a number of writers who had begun to talk about the romantic elements even though they were situated chronologically within the age of Johnson and as an extension of the Augustan tradition. So as noted before romantic strains were visible in the poetry of primarily of William Cowper, Robert Burns and William Blake.

The life and works of Cowper and Burns we have already taken a look at and we need it today focus our attention on William Blake who also anticipated the Lake School of poetry. Interestingly most of these writers of the romantic age they were all born in the Lake District and hence this term the Lake School of poetry which got associated with them at a later point.

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Chronologically William Blake lived in the pre romantic period but however he is known as the forerunner of the romantic period and he is also considered as more romantic than the romantic writers themselves. He lived from 1757 till 1827 and his reputation as a painter and engraver further enhanced his reputation of seeing visions right from his childhood.


In fact it is said that many of these visions that he claimed to have been seen from his childhood onwards they all significantly influence the production of his poetry and also the quality of the kind of illustrations that he used to come up with from the late 18th century onwards. Though he was of not very aristocratic or very learned kind of origins he was quite widely read, he was familiar with the works of Dante, Shakespeare and Milton.

They all had a significant in a mass of influence in Blake's life and works. Blake had a very different kind of influence shaping his poetical works. He was influenced by religion, the spiritual world and also the presence of the divine in man.



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## + William Blake (1757-1827)



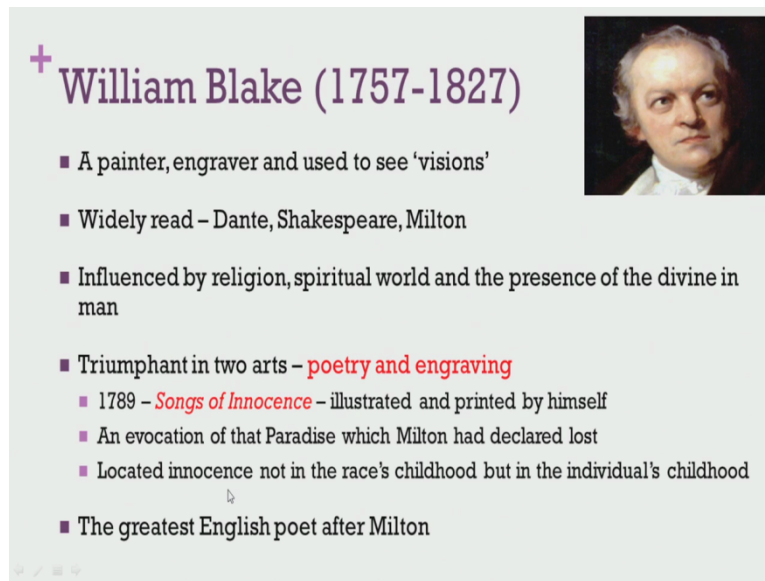
- A painter, engraver and used to see 'visions'
- Widely read – Dante, Shakespeare, Milton
- Influenced by religion, spiritual world and the presence of the divine in man
- Triumphant in two arts – **poetry and engraving**
  - 1789 – *Songs of Innocence* – illustrated and printed by himself
  - An evocation of that Paradise which Milton had declared lost
  - Located innocence not in the race's childhood but in the individual's childhood
- The greatest English poet after Milton

And talking about his career and about his expertise he was triumph in two different kinds of arts in poetry and in engraving. So in that sense he gave a very different shade to the idea of romanticism altogether. In 1789 his Songs of Innocence was published. It was also incidently the year which inaugurated the French Revolution. And this work the Songs of Innocence was illustrated and printed by himself which also added more interest and more rarity to this particular work.

And in the Songs of Innocence we find an extension of Milton in the works of Blake. This was an evocation of that paradise which Milton had declared lost. So in that sense it is a work of redemption as well. However it was different in yet another way as well. Blake locates innocence not in the race's, the race's is in the mankind in general, not in the race's childhood but in the individual's childhood.

And this was more significant because in the romantic age from the late 18th century onwards there is a renewed emphasis on the quality of the individual and on more sense of accountability and responsibility also coming in because it was also the age of liberalism, democracy and rationality.

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**+ William Blake (1757-1827)**

- A painter, engraver and used to see 'visions'
- Widely read – Dante, Shakespeare, Milton
- Influenced by religion, spiritual world and the presence of the divine in man
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And in that sense because of this ways in which he takes off from Milton and also later departs from the poetical traditions of Milton he is also considered as one of the greatest poet after Milton. In 1794 he produced the Songs of Experience. In this one we find him talking about the child experiences and the experiences of a young adult and we also find that they are no longer innocent but they are impeded by social and religious oppression.

We also find a certain biographical element coming into it because we do find a lot of illustrations of death, weeping, menace and desolation which was also characteristics of the age in which Blake was living. We also find him not romanticizing life in general but talking about the real problems and also finding about the way in which they could be manifested in poetry in a very different way.

And in terms of technique also his work was supreme and it was quite distinct from the other works of the period. He printed his own works through a method that he had devised by himself. It was known as relief etching because in his works, it was not just about text, it was not just about writing, it was rich marriage of text and illustration. And the kind of influences and the kind of sources from which he drew that were also quite varied in nature.

In fact we find him appropriating from the mythical works. We find him reworking certain mythical elements and building them into his own works. He had drawn an immense inspiration from the traditions and symbols from Swedenborgian mysticism and from Christianity and also from Renaissance art.

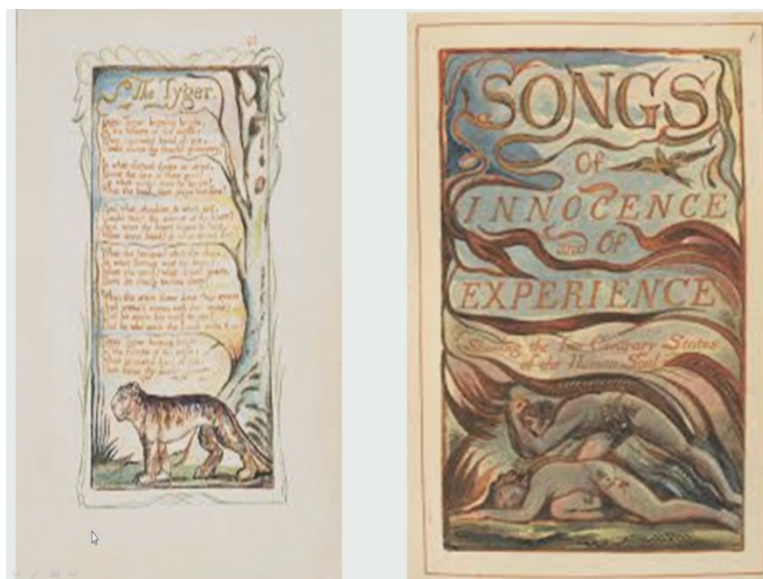
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- 1794 – *Songs of Experience*
  - The child and young adult are impeded by social and religious oppression
  - (illustrations of death, weeping, menace and desolation)
- Printed his own works by a method devised by himself – ‘relief etching’
- A rich marriage of text and illustration
- Appropriates and reworks myths, traditions and symbols from Swedenborgian mysticism, Christianity and Renaissance art, European and English poetry and religious poetry

So in that sense we also find a continuance of tradition in Blake’s works and he just does not break away from whatever was existing in the past but in a way he kind of assimilate all that is useful for him. Useful in the sense all that could be transformed into a new kind of poetry and he uses all of them not just in his writings but also in the illustrations and in the paintings and the engravings that he produced.

He was also immensely influenced by not just English poetry but by European poetry in general. And he was also majorly interested in religious poetry which also dominated the theme and also the subject matter and treatment of his own works. So these are the ways in which he tried to illustrate his own works.

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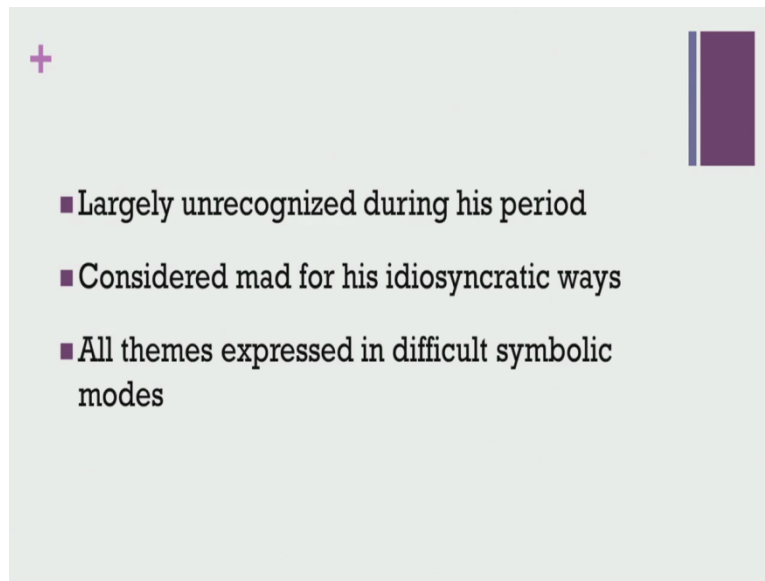
In fact it was quite interesting that this was something the 18th century and the 19th century audience were not used to. And interestingly they continued to fascinate the readers because of its amazing kind of illustrative abilities. Tiger which begins with Tiger Tiger Burning Bright is one of the most famous poems of Blake. It continues to be widely read and even taught from the school curriculum onwards.

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But however in spite of this wide influences that Blake had on the later romantics and also on the formation of poetry and literature in 19th century in general he remained largely unrecognised during his period because he was mostly considered mad for his idiosyncratic ways, the ways in which he broke away from the conventions and the traditional kinds of artistic expressions.

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And also it was considered more esoteric because themes were expressed in difficult symbolic moulds. It also took a more learned kind of mind with a more artistic bend to appreciate the kind of work that Blake was doing and also the kind of things that he was producing. However at a later point we do find it many 19th century scholars and many 19th century historians are more interested than ever in the works and the illustrations produced by the Blake.

And also a number of studies have been produced of late to talk about the kind of influence that Blake had as a founding and a foundational figure of 19th century romanticism. Though the romantic period was dominated by poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge followed by certain other words as well, this was also the time of the lot of minor poets who were not really well known during their time nor were they given due attention in the later period of time.

But however these contemporaries are worth taking a look at and when we talk about contemporaries of the romantic poets we talk about the ones who were mostly born before 1780. They belong to different schools of writing differently influence in varied ways and there are not many ways in which they could be clubbed together hence, this commonality of having born before 1780. We have arranged these set of contemporaries in a chronological order.

William Bowles, his collection known as the sonnets is the most important and the most recognised work by him. This work has helped the growth of love nature in the years

immediately preceding the Lyrical Ballads. So we find this working in two different ways. One William Bowles was significantly influenced by the publication of the Lyrical Ballads and secondly Bowles's sonnet in many ways reiterated the effect and the influence of Lyrical Ballads.

So there are many contemporary poets and many readers found this extremely handy because there was a way in which certain works were continuing the manifesto which was pronounced in Lyrical Ballads. And Coleridge in fact had testified to the great influence that this set of songs had on his life and also we find that these works were much admired by Wordsworth.

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Other contemporaries: born before 1780

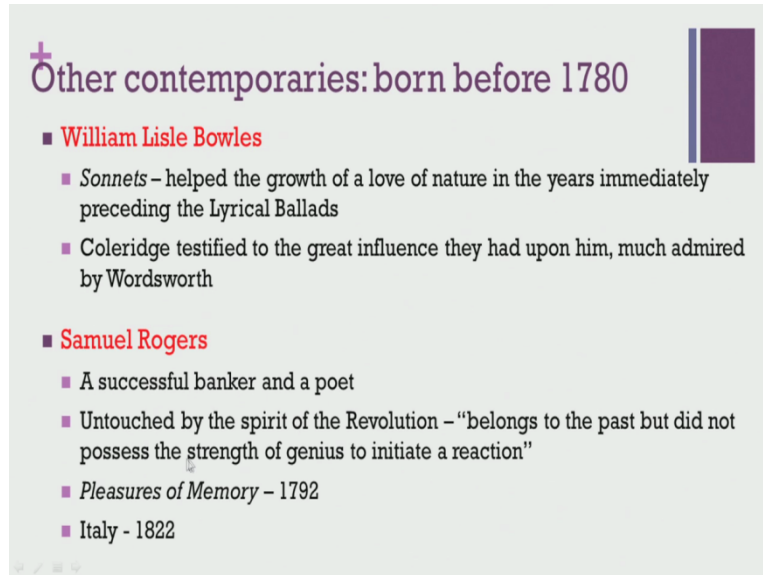
- **William Lisle Bowles**
  - *Sonnets* – helped the growth of a love of nature in the years immediately preceding the Lyrical Ballads
  - Coleridge testified to the great influence they had upon him, much admired by Wordsworth
- **Samuel Rogers**
  - A successful banker and a poet
  - Untouched by the spirit of the Revolution – “belongs to the past but did not possess the strength of genius to initiate a reaction”
  - *Pleasures of Memory* – 1792
  - Italy - 1822

And when we talk about Samuel Rogers he had a very distinctive ability built into him. He was a successful banker and a poet. It was a rare combination even then. He however was quite untouched by revolution. This was very significant to be noted because most of the writers and thinkers who lived during that period they all were majorly influenced by the French Revolution. Their own life and career were shaped by the ways in which the French Revolution was progressing and the turning point that it was taking.

So talking about Rogers one of the historians remark that he belongs to the past but did not possess the strength of genius to initiate a reaction. This is because his influence was mostly from the classical elements and we also find him continuing in certain ways the Augustan tradition of the early 18th century. But however as the historians have noted his work did not

have that kind of energy to move against the dominating reign of romanticism. His two major important works were *Pleasures of Memory* and *Italy* published in 1792 and 1822.

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Other contemporaries: born before 1780

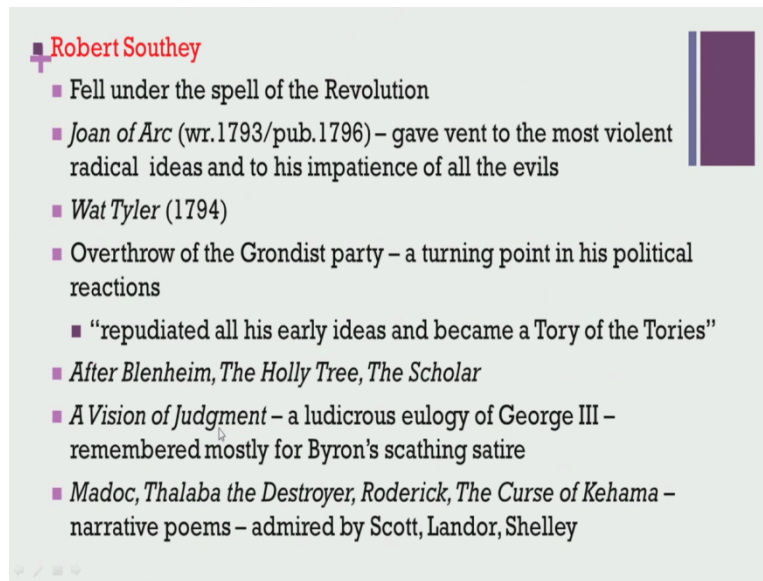
- **William Lisle Bowles**
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  - *Pleasures of Memory* – 1792
  - *Italy* - 1822

Robert Southey deserves a more closer examination. He also, as been noted earlier, he was the poet laureate until Wordsworth took over after his death. And he was also one of the many poets who fell under the spell of the revolution and the immediate poetic reaction to this was the work known as the epic *Joan of Arc*. It was written in 1793 but was published only in 1796.

This work it is said that it gave vent to the most violent radical ideas and to his impatience of all the evils which were dominating the various kinds of society during that period. And we also find him reacting in multiple ways to the ideals of the revolution and also showing signs of disappointment when the Reign of Terror had begun to dominate. The other important work of him also considered as an epic was *Wat Tyler* published in 1794.

And we also find that the overthrow of the Girondist party in the French Revolution it became a turning point in his own political reactions and political beliefs systems as well. So after that we also find him like Wordsworth and Coleridge turning away from these ideals of revolution. It is said that he repudiated all his early ideas and became a Tory of the Tories.

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- **Robert Southey**
- Fell under the spell of the Revolution
- *Joan of Arc* (wr.1793/pub.1796) – gave vent to the most violent radical ideas and to his impatience of all the evils
- *Wat Tyler* (1794)
- Overthrow of the Grondist party – a turning point in his political reactions
  - “repudiated all his early ideas and became a Tory of the Tories”
- *After Blenheim, The Holly Tree, The Scholar*
- *A Vision of Judgment* – a ludicrous eulogy of George III – remembered mostly for Byron's scathing satire
- *Madoc, Thalaba the Destroyer, Roderick, The Curse of Kehama* – narrative poems – admired by Scott, Landor, Shelley

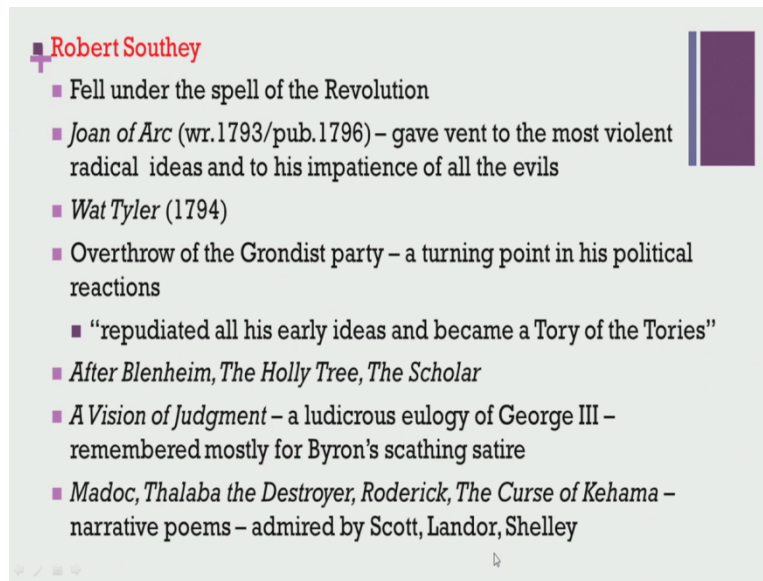
So we do notice that during this period it was almost impossible to not being influenced by the ideals of French Revolution but at the same time we do find a writer or two as an exception as well. The other important poems by Southey include *After Blenheim*, *The Holly Tree* and *The Scholar*. And *A Vision of Judgement* in fact it was a very different kind of work that Southey had written.

It was a ludicrous eulogy of King George the third and this work is most remembered now only because Byron had a scathingly attacked this work through one of his satires at a later point. Southey also wrote narrative poem such as *Madoc*, *Thalaba the Destroyer*, *Roderick* and *The Curse of Kehama*.

He had in fact fashioned all of these works into an epic but however later they did not reach the canvas which was fit enough for an epic so they are generally considered as narrative poems. It was greatly admired by Scott, Landor and Shelley and it also owes significant and representative of the age in which he lived.



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- **Robert Southey**
- Fell under the spell of the Revolution
- *Joan of Arc* (wr.1793/pub.1796) – gave vent to the most violent radical ideas and to his impatience of all the evils
- *Wat Tyler* (1794)
- Overthrow of the Grondist party – a turning point in his political reactions
  - “repudiated all his early ideas and became a Tory of the Tories”
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Walter Savage Landor he published his first volume of poetry in 1795 and the last one in 1863. He never became popular incidently but it is said that he only gained an audience fit though few. And he was also yet another person who continued to be under the influence of the classical Augustan age and though he was writing in a romantic age but however it was not the pseudo classicism of the 18th century. It is said that it was a more genuine kind of classicism that he was interested in.

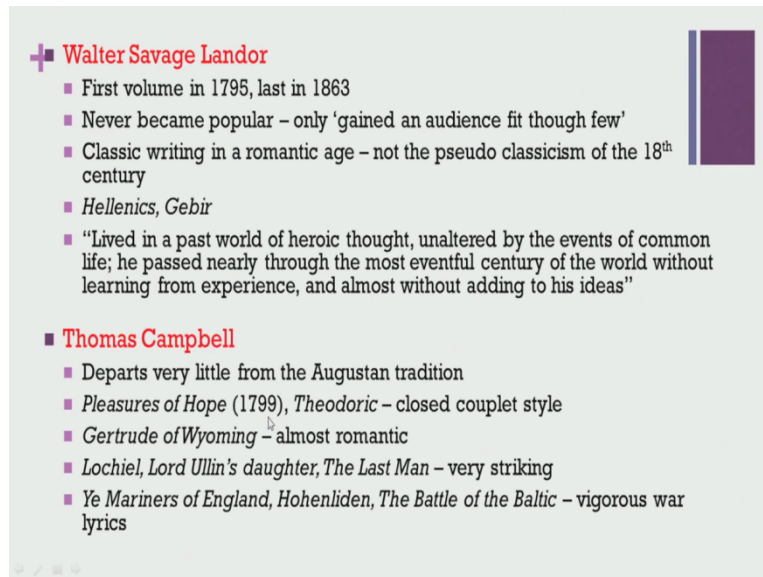
So a direct output of this influence could be found in work such as the *Hellenics* and *Gebir*. It is said that he lived in a past world of heroic thought unaltered by the events of common life, he passed nearly through the most eventful century of the world without learning from experience and almost without adding to his ideas.

This in fact was quite unfortunate given that when many of the other writers such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey and many more others were getting influenced by French Revolution and also responding to the times through their personal and poetical expressions. We find writers such as Landor completely languishing away in a different esoteric world all together, completely uninfluenced by whatever is going on within their country or in the world affairs.

So even during those times it was not really considered as a commendable quality and we do notice that the writers who did not respond to their times either politically or in a different way we do not find their works also living to the posterity with much reputation. Thomas

Campbell was another writer who also choose not to depart much from the Augustan tradition.

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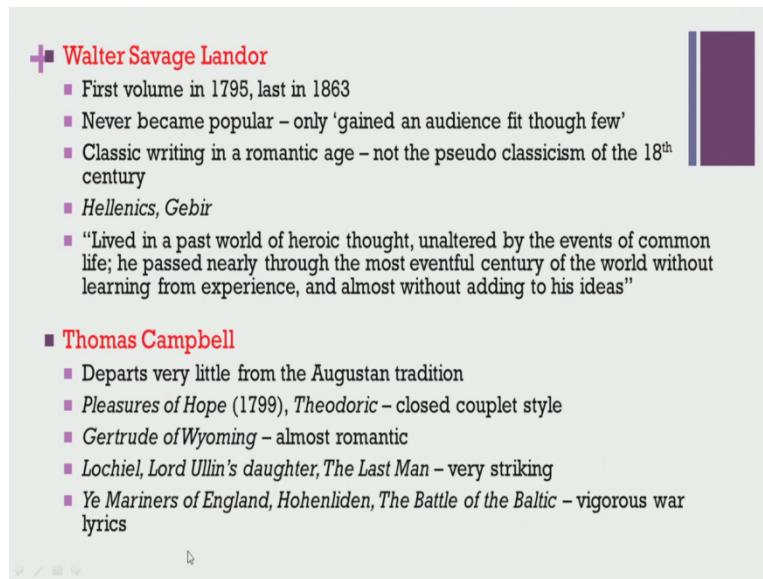


- **Walter Savage Landor**
  - First volume in 1795, last in 1863
  - Never became popular – only 'gained an audience fit though few'
  - Classic writing in a romantic age – not the pseudo classicism of the 18<sup>th</sup> century
  - *Hellenics, Gebir*
  - "Lived in a past world of heroic thought, unaltered by the events of common life; he passed nearly through the most eventful century of the world without learning from experience, and almost without adding to his ideas"
- **Thomas Campbell**
  - Departs very little from the Augustan tradition
  - *Pleasures of Hope* (1799), *Theodoric* – closed couplet style
  - *Gertrude of Wyoming* – almost romantic
  - *Lochiel, Lord Ullin's daughter, The Last Man* – very striking
  - *Ye Mariners of England, Hohenliden, The Battle of the Baltic* – vigorous war lyrics

So in that sense we find a continuation of the Augustan tradition and the 18th century mannerisms and works such as *Pleasures of Hope* published in 1799 and *Theodoric*. And both were written also in the closed couplet style which had almost gone out of fashion by the late 18th century. His *Gertrude of Wyoming* was almost romantic but however his work never reached the full extent of romanticism.

His work such as *Lochiel, Lord Ullin's Daughter* and *The Last Man* were considered very striking and quite influential. And however he is most remembered today for his work such as *Ye Mariners of England* and *Hohenliden* and *The Battle of Baltic* which were also vigorous war lyrics of those times.

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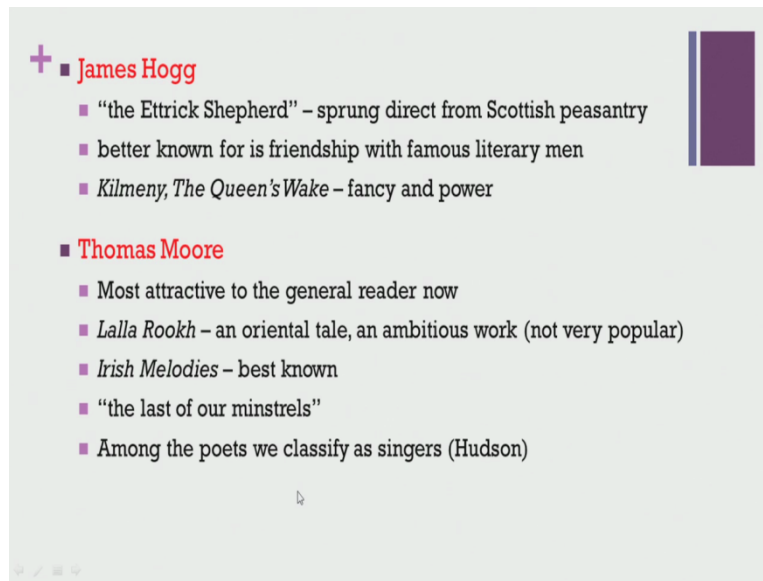
- **Walter Savage Landor**
  - First volume in 1795, last in 1863
  - Never became popular – only 'gained an audience fit though few'
  - Classic writing in a romantic age – not the pseudo classicism of the 18<sup>th</sup> century
  - *Hellenics, Gebir*
  - "Lived in a past world of heroic thought, unaltered by the events of common life; he passed nearly through the most eventful century of the world without learning from experience, and almost without adding to his ideas"
- **Thomas Campbell**
  - Departs very little from the Augustan tradition
  - *Pleasures of Hope* (1799), *Theodoric* – closed couplet style
  - *Gertrude of Wyoming* – almost romantic
  - *Lochiel, Lord Ullin's daughter, The Last Man* – very striking
  - *Ye Mariners of England, Hohenliden, The Battle of the Baltic* – vigorous war lyrics

James Hogg was a Scottish writer who also earned the nickname the Ettrick Shepherd. His work, his experiences and his poetic renditions they sprung direct from Scottish peasantry. In that sense we can also align him up along with poets such as Burns. And he was better known for his friendship with the famous literary man of those times than for his own literary works.

And two of his works which are of notable significance are *Kilmeny* and *The Queens Wake* in which we find him exhibiting the qualities of fancy and power which were also linked with the ideals of romanticism. Among all of these minor writers being discussed Thomas Moore is the most attractive to the general reader in the contemporary world. And his work *Lalla Rookh*, it was a very ambitious project that he had undertaken.

It was conceived as an oriental tale but however it did not achieve the kind of popularity that he had anticipated. And but nevertheless it (consi) continues to be of much interest even to the contemporary reader. And among his works the *Irish Melodies* is the best known. And though he wrote very little and he did not achieve the kind of fame and popularity that he perhaps deserved, he is known as the last of our minstrels from the romantic age. And Hudson says that he is also among the poets that one can classify as singers.

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- **James Hogg**
  - “the Ettrick Shepherd” – sprung direct from Scottish peasantry
  - better known for his friendship with famous literary men
  - *Kilmeny, The Queen's Wake* – fancy and power
- **Thomas Moore**
  - Most attractive to the general reader now
  - *Lalla Rookh* – an oriental tale, an ambitious work (not very popular)
  - *Irish Melodies* – best known
  - “the last of our minstrels”
  - Among the poets we classify as singers (Hudson)

So having taken a look at the major poets and the minor poets of the earlier romantic period it is now important to also take a look at the Canon of this romantic period. So as we have noted right from the beginning, Wordsworth and Coleridge they formed the first generation of the romantic poets and Southey also is included alongside. And they were also collectively known as the Lake School poets because they were all born in the Lake District in England.

And until 1960 when we talk about the canon formation, only five male writers constituted the romantics canon. It was Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley and Byron. These three writers we are yet to take a look at these three writers Keats, Shelley and Byron. And until 1960s the women poets of the romantic period were not studied at all. In fact even poets such as Mary Shelley they begin to get academic and scholarly attention only by the 1980s.

In this sense it would be quite interesting to recall that the patriarchal culture was continuing to dominate the literary scene even in the 19th century. So if you recall the discussion that we had in the contexts of the Renaissance period, how women writers were not given adequate attention, we begin to notice that the case continues to be almost the same when it comes to the formation of the literary canons.

In 1995 Isobel Armstrong wrote a very powerful and influential essay titled *The Gush of the Feminine - How Can We Read Women's Poetry of the Romantic Period*.

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## + The Canon of Romantic poets

- Wordsworth and Coleridge – the first generation of Romantic poets
  - Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey – **Lake School poets** – born in the Lake District
- Until 1960 – only **five male writers** constituted the Romantic canon – Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley and Byron
  - Women poets not well studied or anthologized
- Only by 1980s – poets such as Mary Shelley
- The dominance of **patriarchal culture**
- “The Gush of the Feminine: How Can We Read Women’s Poetry of the romantic Period” (Isobel Armstrong’s 1995 essay)

In that sense it is important to take a look at the women writers of the romantic period which we shall be doing in one of the later sessions. So as we begin to wrap up today's session it is also important to highlight that in the next session we shall be looking at the poets of the later revolutionary age of the romantic period primarily constituted by Keats, Shelley and Byron. So with this we also wind up today's session and look forward to seeing you in the next class.