

# Stylistic Analysis of the poem “Ode to Nightingale” by John Keats

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## Abstract:

*The study is based upon an in-depth stylistic analysis of the poem “Ode to a Nightingale” by John Keats. Keats is considered to be the romantic of all romantics. The notion of negative capability and the pure concept of beauty are the distinctive features of Keats poetry, which differentiate him from even his peers. For him beauty is valuable in itself. Coleridge tries to search truth for the solution of the mysteries of life, Shelly also intellectualizes beauty, and Wordsworth spiritualizes it. But Keats is against the subjectivity of the art for the propagation of personal ideas. For him beauty is valuable in itself and it can be perceived by the power of imaginations as intellect is handicapped to reach truth. He loved poetry and beauty purely for the sake of beauty. For Keats an ideal poet is like an empty vessel to be filled with some other potential being or object. He is submissive to the things as they are, without trying to change or even explain them. He himself says “I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart’s affection and the truth of imaginations. What the*

*imaginations seize as beauty must be truth, whether it existed before or not.” Thus the present study is not only based upon the dissection of the rich stylistic devices incorporated for the pictorial and emotive function, but also focuses on the combined impact of the stylistic and sound devices embedded in the overall structure of the poem, that how the different parts assembled together give the poem a coherent and balanced look. Thus the poem appears to be the perfect piece of art which also symbolizes the pure concept of beauty. Here **Gadmer** lines seem apt to be mentioned “The experience of the beautiful and particularly beautiful in art is the invocation of potentiality whole and holy order of things wherever it may be found.”*

## Introduction:

According to Lodge, Stylistics uses a “more precise inclusive and objective method of describing style than the impressionistic generalizations of traditional criticism”. (Lodge 1967, P.52) Therefore stylistics is a specific and

deviant use of language to understand the real and hidden intentions of the writer. This specialized use of language makes a literary text emotive, connotative and figurative.

A specific poetic characteristic of Keats poetry is his ideal of **Negative Capability** which he defines as a state of mind in which “man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact and reason”. (Keats in Gittings 1970, P.430) This capability enables a poet to accept the world as it is in its light and shade, pain and joy.

Keats believed that a poet must have the capability to differentiate moral sense from the dramatic sense. According to him fascination of mystery in other things and a sympathetic identification with them was greatly needed by a poet. A poet shouldn't impose his dogmas and doctrines on his art. He should have a wavering temperament than a resolute one.

*“Ode to a nightingale”* was written in the spring of 1819. It was inspired by the song of a nightingale that had built its nest close to the house of a friend in Hampstead. The bird's song had enchanting and captivating impact on Keats and threw him into a sort of trance of tranquil pleasure. The theme of the poem is not so much the bird itself as the poet's intense desire to run away from the oppressing world to the immortal life of beauty, peace and perfection, which is

revealed to him for a moment by listening to the bird's song.

### Objectives:

- 1:** To analyze the pictorial impact of the figurative language.
- 2:** To analyze the emotive effect of sound devices.
- 3:** To analyze the combined impact of the devices and the structure of the poem, for its artistic perfection and as a symbol of beauty.

### Questions:

- 1:** What type of the impression is constructed through the rich stylistic devices?
- 2:** What emotive function is performed through the sound devices?
- 3:** How all the devices embedded in the structure imply the artistic beauty?

### Methodology:

Within the parameters and procedures of stylistic analysis, the opaque style of the poem is deeply analyzed to foreground the hidden intentions of the poet. The figurative language, highly rich and sensuous imagery, romantic allusions, various sound patterns and even the overall structure of the poem make it a perfect piece of art. Thus the methodology is to dissect all the devices implied for emotive and pictorial purpose. Even the choices of devices embedded in the structure as a perfect and balanced piece of art; symbolize the pure concept of beauty.

Thus the methods of deep stylistic analysis will help to dissect the choices for their functional purpose.

### **Literature review:**

According to Sanjai Kumar and Dr. Suman Singh (2012) the recurring images, emotions and ideas in the first six odes composed in 1810, echo and enforce one another. Keats had seen the death of most of his family members when he was quite young; therefore, for him any death or tragedy was just a bad dream that was to end eventually. The repeated deaths made him very aggressive fighter who was least afraid of death. He would welcome death if it came. Keats did not feel like there was no greater pain than to die, he thought life continued and got better. Keats wonderful and very unique technique is that he listened to the sounds a different way than anyone else, Keats never sought meanings in the things around, since the beginning he was sensitive. As all other romantics Keats seeks escape in the past. He travels back into the ancient Greek as well as middle ages. He was the renowned admirer of wonderful sights and scenes of nature. He loved nature purely for its own sake and painted her not with the reason but with imaginations; he neither intellectualize nor spiritualize nature. Keats is content to express her through senses. Keats was certainly nobody's slave but his own; subjecting himself to the influence of the senses and of the past, he saw vividly and memorably but with his own eyes. He is visual poet, a writer of the senses and feelings, but his poems and

letters bear eloquent witness to the quality of his thought.

According to Soria Sikka (1998), Keats poetry is based upon the interpretation of the divine and immortal beauty behind the curtain of separation, loss, conflict, tragedy and death. Behind this dark and depressing reality stands the truth in which these forms of imperfection are healed and resolved. This sense if taken taken seriously is a religious one. It provides a type of an optimism that is religious rather than secular in nature, because it's based on vision on the condition of factual existence. The present article is based upon such type of the romantic concept of beauty which points towards the reality and truth. Keats recognizes the sadness and imperfection of the transient life on one hand, and the consoling and healing impact of the art on other hand. The power of the poetry and imaginations is called into question in the last lines when Keats sadly realizes that with the disappearance of the bird his imaginations also come to an end, and he realizes that aesthetic imaginations evolved by the song is merely deception. The final lines express not disillusion but uncertainty. The doubt is not resolved in the end. But is articulated in the form of question? Which leaves open the question between truth and beauty? Being a poet his task, is not to reach a conclusion but is just registering Impression. It expresses Keats belief that any philosophical and scientific investigation can never yield the truth. And these theories have no room for the mood of quasi religious exaltation. Such uncertainty is not the symptom of sentimentality, but is

an honest and reasonable stance, at least for someone who no longer believes that metaphysics is capable of answering the question.

According to Mukesh Kumar (2014) Keats was a pure poet; his vision of the beauty was never distorted by the theories. His concept of negative capability implies the ability to perceive, think without any presuppositions. According to Keats, Coleridge Sought knowledge over beauty. For Keats beauty is valuable in itself. It implies impersonality and objectivity and rather maintains aesthetic distance. His concept of beauty is totally against those poets or writers who subjectively get involved in their work and use their literary work to present his personal belief. He considers Shakespeare, the man of ability and the master of negative capability. Even there is a lack of objectivity and in Words Worth poetry. Throughout his poetry he finds melancholy in delight, pleasure in pain and excitement in both emotional sensations and intellectual thoughts. He praises beauty but also realizes that everything is fleeting. It is the ability to hold out beautiful truth despite the fact that it does not fit in any intellectual system, it is the kind of the negation of the self which was the capability of Shakespeare; it is the ability to identify oneself with his art, because Shakespeare entered and got merged into his characters which made his dramas great. He creates dark and villainy or pure and innocent with equal perfection. Keats poetry is the conflict between every day world and destiny; the everyday world of sufferings, death and, decay is contrasted with the world of beauty. His odes explore

fundamental tensions and contradictions. He makes the meanings of word less important than their feel. Keats deal with the sensations created by the words rather than the meanings. Keats understood Coleridge as searching for a single, higher order truth which can be solution to the mysteries of the natural world. For Keats it is the ability to be content, with half knowledge. He reveals that in our life of uncertainties where no mystery can be resolved he is satisfied with half truth and reacts against Coleridge.

According to Yi Hsuan Tso (2011). Keats poetry creates a dreamlike deceptive world through which the reader not only temporarily escape from the frets of reality, but also experiences a moment that lifts the reader's mind to a higher level of tranquil mediation. Keats concept of the healing power of poetry can be well perceived in his odes. According to Keats great poet should write poetry that soothes soul. The healing power of these poems is derived from the beauty filled with the dreamlike illusion, which cushions the impact of the final awakening from the dream world. In these poems Keats, through figurative language, sensuous imagery and romantic illusions throws a veil of dream over his description and sets his dreams in Arcadian pastoral landscape. The final awakening and parting form the dream create a sense of deep sorrow. Keats claims that the therapeutic power of poetry is magnified in proportion to a poet's capability to commiserate; Only when the poet has the power to delve into the miseries of life, the high minded poetry can be created.

## A Brief Summary:

When the poem begins, the poet is experiencing the feelings of joyous pain caused by the song of nightingale; he has either been poisoned or influenced by a drug. Soon it is revealed that this state of numbness and unforgettable drowsiness is not because of the envy of the imagined happiness of the nightingale; but because of sharing its happiness. The song captivates the poet and induces in him the desire to forget his self and embrace the feelings that are evoked by the song of the bird. The poet wants to experience more of the feeling and escape from reality. He wants to forget about the feelings of weariness, fever and fret of the stern world of reality. The world of reality is full of pain where young die and the old suffer and just to think about life brings sorrow and despair. He wants to drink wine in order to escape from the dark world, but the very next moment he discards the idea of forgetting his sorrows by drinking wine and decides to go to the abode of the nightingale by the invisible wings of poetry. It is at this moment that the poem moves into a deep, imaginative state, and the poet is impelled to express his deep desire to fly away into the world of imaginations. The state that the poet wants to enjoy is seemingly just as the state of death, but still is full of life. Soon he feels himself with the bird and loses his sense of sight, but his all other senses become so sharp that he can perceive the new world, even though there is dense darkness and he can't see the flowers at his feet. He has entered a new realm of perfection. It is dark in the world below but the poet can imagine the shining moon

reigns as queen rounded by the stars as fairies. The poet describes a world of potential, and empathizes with the creatures of that world. He can soon hear that the sound of nightingale is replaced by the sound of insects'. At this moment he is completely overtaken by his imaginations and the world of reality completely disappears and he is transported to the pure and perfect world of the bird.

Death serves as a savior in the poem. There is no conventional fear of the death, but rather it provides release from the oppression of everyday life. It is soft and comes upon him as he composes the poem. He wishes for death, and wants to be with the nightingale because he has achieved the height of life and after it nothing else would be worth experiencing. And living after that point would be a living death for him. He desires to be like the nightingale, able to constantly give himself up in song and transcend life and death. However, he soon realizes that he is different from the bird as the bird enjoys immortality. In the last the word 'forlorn' reminds him of his sole self and brings him back to the reality, his imagination break, and with the fading sound of nightingale the imaginary world is also destroyed. He has been not only separated from the bird, but also from poetry and imagination in general. The poet ends with the feelings of mourning as he realizes that he has been abandoned by his art.

## Theme:

Nature is the strong theme of romantic poetry, in this poem through the nightingale;



Keats presents great contrast between the immortal world of beauty, peace and love and his own worldly state and nature of mortal life. The contrast between the claims of imaginations and the claims of real life is also one of the major themes of romantic poetry. This conflict is clearly seen in Keats poetry. The bird among the leaves have never experienced the miseries of human life and enjoys immortality. Keats moves from the contemplation of bird's life to the contemplation of his own life, the underlying theme behind this contrastive description is his deep and intense urge to leave the physical world. Keats fundamental problem with the physical world is that nothing lasts forever particularly love, beauty and fame etc. Nightingale's mythical associations with the melancholic feelings of love highlight another romantic's major theme of love. He also emphasizes the power of poetry and imaginations as poetry is more powerful than wine and only imagination have access to truth. The bird is presented as a symbol of freedom, pure joy, imaginations, love and ideal beauty of nature.

### Stylistic Devices:

"I couldn't name", says Bridges, "an English poem of the same length which contains so much beauty as this ode." The poetic style of Keats reaches its peak in this ode. John Keats is known for the vibrant use of imagery in his poetry. At least twenty paintings have been rendered as a result of his expressive imagery. His poem "*Ode to a Nightingale*" is full of emotive figure of speeches, and sensuous imagery which give

emotive and pictorial quality to his poetry. The nightingale has traditionally been associated with live. The influential myth of Philomela, turned into a nightingale after being raped and tortured, stresses melancholy and sufferings associated with love.

### STANZA 1:

It begins with the poet describing his melancholy, inspired by a nightingale's singing - "*My heart aches...*" This heavy sounding word expresses that the song of the nightingale brings him excessive joy which turns into joyous pain and sadness numbs his senses. So it is an intense imaginative experience in which sorrow is fused into joy. He compares this feeling to the condition as of having drunk hemlock, a poisonous European herb, or consumed an opiate. This is opium like a drug which causes dullness but is not poisonous as hemlock. The poet wants to take the drugs to the lees. The images of hemlock and opium are accompanied by the allusion of "*Lethe wards sunk.*" Lethe is an allusion to one of the five rivers of the Ancient Greek underworld, Hades. The Ancient Greeks believed that a soul drank from Lethe before reincarnation to eradicate the memory of their previous life. This allusion expresses the deep desire of the poet for complete forgetfulness and when set beside the images of hemlock and opiate communicates the sense of joyous pain felt by the persona. The repetition of 's' in 'a drowsy numbness pains my sense,' combined with the long 'o' and 'a' sounds,

sonically reflects the speaker's soporific state.

The speaker addresses the nightingale, stating that his sorrow is not the result of envy but of feeling the bird's joy too deeply. He uses a metaphor, comparing it to a 'light-winged Dryad' - a spirit inhabiting forests, suggesting that the nightingale seems mystical, existing on a plane beyond the earthly one. The visual and auditory imagery as (*melodious plots, beechen green, shadows numberless, flora, sunburnt mirth, Provencal song and dance etc.*) perfectly provide the pictorial description of the world of nightingale, and contrasts with his sadness, emphasized by repetition of 'happy'. There is also a transferred epithet in the first stanza. It is not the plot which is melodious but the nightingale, the epithet melodious is transferred from the bird to the plot. The epithets are decorative and extremely fill out a half verse. It is the characteristic style of epic poetry and gives classical romantic touch to the poem. There is a Shakespearean felicity of expression in the telling epithets and picturesque compounds throughout the poem. "*Full throated ease*" expresses the spontaneity and freedom of the bird which again is a contrast with the man chained in the problems of life. Shelley also talks of Skylark as "*pouring its full heart*"

*"In some melodious plots*

*Of beechen green, and shadows  
numberless,*

*Singest of summer in full-throated ease."*

## STANZA 2:

In the second stanza, the poet wishes for the special wine, associated with pastoral images of singing, dancing and cheer. The image of wine is the ever present images in Keats poetry as it stimulate five senses for its rich colour, taste and effect. The Romantic poets idealized the country as a place of pure happiness and considered cities and industrialization as forces which corrupt the innocence and destroy the real happiness. The image, "*Tasting of Flora,*" is an allusion to the Roman goddess of flowers and spring; "*Provencal song*" reflects the music of province located in South-Eastern France, and "*mirth*" implies happiness. The poet longs for a drink from the "*Blushful Hippocrene*". Which is an allusion to the Greek mythological fountain on Mount Helicon, where the Muses lived and is believed to inspire poetry. Keats wishes the very spring to run with wines instead of water and intensely desires a cup full of genuine wine, flowing out of the fountains of the Muses on Mount Helicon. This image also brings before us the rich red colour of the wine. The alliteration of 'b' in "*beaded bubbles winking at the brim*" reflects the image of the bubbles. The poet hopes that drinking might take him away from the real world he might and "*fade away into the forest*" with the nightingale. Here he also uses compound form like "*deep delved*" and "*light winged*" Keats is very fond of compound form and uses it throughout this poem.

*Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,*

***With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,***

In the above line bubbles are personified as winking is human characteristic.

### STANZA 3:

The third stanza of "*Ode to a Nightingale*" expresses the cause for the previous deep and intense desire for escapism. Induct he wants to forget the sufferings of earthly life, which are not experienced by the nightingale. The exhaustion, sickness and anxiety of the dark worldly life give him constant pain. The world is the place where the young die and the old suffer from paralysis and involuntary shaking. The 3<sup>rd</sup> stanza presents a sheer contrast of images to the previous two stanzas. The images as (*groans, palsy, pale youth, grey hair, and spectre thin, leaden eyed, etc.*) reflect the gloomy and dark life of earth.

This contrastive scheme of images reflects the diametrical difference in the stern worldly life and the imaginative world of nightingale. In the stanza's final lines, the poet asserts that youth, love and beauty are fleeting. Thinking causes sadness. In this stanza, he again uses personification for several times. In the beginning of the stanza the nightingale is addressed and

Personified again in the last lines beauty and love are personified as beauty does not have eyes, and love cannot "pine "or ache for something.

***Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes***

***, Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.***

### STANZA 4:

Stanza four opens with the intense desire to run away, as the poet implores the nightingale to depart. The use of repetition, in "*Away! Away!*" Expresses the deep desire of the poet to dissolve and fly away from the real world. The poet wishes to follow the bird, traveling, not by Bacchus, the Roman god of wine, and his leopards but on the "*viewless wings of Poesy.*" Bacchus is a romantic allusion to the Greek Mythology. Keats rejects the idea of forgetting sorrows by drinking the wine and decides to go to the abode of nightingale on the invisible wings of poetry. Poetic inspiration can take him to the realm of enchantment and total forgetfulness. It must be noted that for Keats poetry was something very like wine and even far sweeter and more intoxicating. He was as much addicted to it as others are to wine. The image of wine plays the double role in the poem: on the one hand expresses the feelings of numbness on hearing the song of nightingale and on the other hand reflects the power of poetry far greater than the wine. It also reflects Keats objection to the other poets who intellectualize poetry, as for Keats the intellectual powers have no access to the world of nightingale, and it's only the poetic imaginations through which one can soar to the blissfulness and enchantment where the nightingale has abode.



The exclamation “*Already with thee!*” alerts the reader, as the poet suddenly announces that he is with the nightingale. He metaphorically, compares the moon to a Queen and the stars to her “Fays” or fairies. This also refers to the fairies in the European legends. In contrast, the poet is in a dark forested area, where the only light is being filtered from the sky through the gloom and the trees.

*I cannot see what flowers are at my feet*

#### STANZA 5:

Stanza five is the feast for the senses as it is a rich description of the poets’ surroundings. Just as the second stanza, this stanza greatly stimulates all the five senses of the reader. The flowers with the sweet incense bombard the nose of the reader. It is so dark that he already feels himself with the nightingale; the darkness is the image that reflects the pessimism of the worldly life which doesn’t allow the poet to enjoy the beauty of the flowers but he can enjoy the beauty of the flowers only through the wings of poetry and imaginations. He can identify the plants and flowers around him through their scents, The stanza is rich with the olfactory imagery as “*Soft incense, embalmed darkness, The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild, pastoral eglantine violets, musk rose, dewy wine, and murmurous haunt of flies,...*” These are very sweet and fragrant lines because of the description of various flowers. The appeal of the stanza is to the senses of the sight, smell and touch and hearing. “*Embalmed darkness*” indirectly implies death. The images of “*Fast fading violet*” symbolically expose the fleeting

nature of beauty. Here in the following lines personification is again used, but imagery is really wonderful specially the image of *the*

*“murmurs haunt of flies.”*

*And mid-May eldest child,*

*The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
The mumurous haunt of flies on summer  
eves.*

#### STANZA 6:

This stanza deals with the thematic meal of the poem. In this stanza, the poet again addresses the nightingale – “*Darkling I listen*” - telling that he has often felt the desire to die. He personifies death where he states that he has “*Call’d him soft names.*” Death appears as a caring friend who offers comfort. And especially in such an enchanting moment when he is away from the fever and fret of life, death appeals strongly, as the ecstatic song of nightingale will help to forget the pain of death. In the last two lines, however, the speaker realizes that even after his death the bird would continue to sing as it enjoys immortality but he will be no more there to enjoy its song. Again the bird has been personified by the poet as he directly addresses the bird.

*While thou art pouring forth thy soul  
abroad*

*In such an ecstasy...*

#### STANZA 7:

The seventh stanza develops this idea of immortality introduced in the previous stanza. “*Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!*” The nightingale’s song has been providing consolation, to the generations. It has been heard by emperors

and clowns, and even by Ruth and fairytales. All these images imply the immortality of the bird. Ruth is a biblical allusion. Ruth came from Moab. As Keats hears the nightingale the idea occurred to him that the nightingale, singing today, has lived for thousands of years and had brought consolation to the sad heart of Ruth when she lived in Judah, away from her native Moab, after the death of her husband. **“Charmed magic casements”** is the image for the beautiful maidens who are imagined as sitting in the open windows of enchanted palaces. Here again Keats uses transferred epithet, the enchantment of the maidens is transferred to the windows. And the magic casements are situated in forlorn fairy lands at the brinks of dangerous sea. The consoling impact of the song reminds us **“The Solitary Reaper”** by **Wordsworth**, where the song of cuckoo bird is more enchanting than the song of nightingale to the weary bands in shady haunts of Arabian sands or it’s more thrilling than the song of the cuckoo breaking the silence of the seas of farthest Hebrides. Thus the biblical illusion and the images used in this stanza express deeply the enchanting and consoling impact of the spontaneous song of nightingale.

***Forlorn! The very word is like a bell  
To tell me back from thee to my sole self!***  
**STANZA 8:**

In the concluding stanza, he again addressing the bird, personifies it and bids him farewell. Here he also uses simile when he compares the word **“Forlorn”** with the bell. This word like alarm bell interrupts his imaginations and reminds him of his sole

and alone self. The plaintive anthem of the bird gradually fades into the meadows, glades and valleys. Thus the imaginations of the poet also break with the fading music of the bird. This brings him back to the world of reality and he bids the nightingale farewell – **“Adieu????? Adieu”** The poem ends with the poet wondering and asking rhetorical questions – was he really enjoying the song or was it just a dream and illusion? Did his poetry and imagination really take him to a perfect place or not?

### **Fled is that music: - Do I wake or sleep?**

This suspended condition of the poet and the open ended expression gives his poetry a religious touch. Which implies the mood of quasi religious exaltation not disillusionment, as Keats makes the meanings of word less important than their feel that’s why he doesn’t reach any conclusion.

### **Phonological Devices:**

#### **Form and Meter:**

#### **Form:**

Ode is an ancient Greek song performed at formal occasions, usually in praise of its subject. In **“Ode to a Nightingale”** the poet addresses the bird as a person. It is also considered to be the most personal, as it touches the themes of death, and the harsh and oppressive realities of life. According to Brown. **“Ode to a Nightingale”** having consistent stanza and meter follows the Horatian tradition.

On the structural level this ode presents the combination of lyric and odal hymn which increases the emotive effect of the poem. It

is considered to be one of the greatest lyric in the English language. This combination of structures is similar to that in "*Ode on a Grecian Urn*", which gives dramatic effect to the poem. Even at the stanza level Keats presents a unique combination of elements from Petrarchan sonnet and Shakespearean sonnet.

### Meter and Rhyme Scheme:

The poem has eight separate stanzas written in iambic pentameter except the 8<sup>th</sup> line which is written in trimeter.

E.g.:- Line 2:

My sense/ as **though**/ of **hem**/ -lock **I**/ had **drunk**

The regular pattern of meter throughout the poem and the regular rhyme scheme: **Ababcbdecde**, reflect the spontaneity and the free expression of the song of nightingale, and the spontaneous expression of the feelings of the poet. It also gives balanced structural effect to the poem as perfect piece of art.

At some places, he even adds syllables to certain words in order to fit the rhyme

e.g.:-

Line 44:

but, **in**/ em-**balm**/ -ed **dark**/ -ness **guess**/ each **sweet**

With its intricate rhyme-plan is a beautiful invention of the poet. It has a sustained melody; the rolling music of the lines being

variegated by the introduction of the short line in each verse.

### Vowel patterns:

Keats also enhanced the musical impact of the poem by playing with the short and long vowel sounds in this ode. For example line **18** ("*And purple-stained mouth*") presents the historical alternating pattern of "short" followed by "long" followed by "short" and followed by "long". Line **31** ("*Away! Away! For I will fly to thee*") exhibits five pairs of alternations. Line **3** ("*Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains*") contains the pattern of five "short" vowels followed by "long" and "short" vowel pairings until they end with a "long" vowel. There are patterns of two "short" vowels followed by a "long" vowel in other lines, such as 12, 22, and 59. Thus Keats has incorporated different patterns of vowel sounds which is the characteristic feature of all his odes written in 1819.

### Assonance and Consonance:

The complex and conscious pattern of assonance and consonance is the important feature of Keats's odes which is found in very few English poems. Within "*Ode to a Nightingale*", line 35 ("*Already with thee! tender is the night*"), exhibits the assonance pattern as the "ea" of "Already" is followed by the "e" of "tender" and the "i" of "with" connects with the "i" of "is". Another example can be found in line 41 ("*I cannot see what flowers are at my feet*") where the "a" of "cannot" connects with the "a" of "at" and the "ee" of "see" connects with the "ee"

of "feet". There are also many words beginning with consonants, especially with "b", "p" or "v".

The use of these three consonants can be clearly perceived in the first stanza. Thus the heavy reliance on assonance pattern and consonance give musical tone to the poem.

### Caesura:

Keats also incorporates the double or triple caesuras. Caesura is basically a very short and a silent pause for the rhetorical purpose. It is the most important part of verse and goes back to the old English. Keats also uses masculine caesura for example in the line 45 Line 11:

/	˘	/	/	˘	˘	/	/	˘	/
Cool'd	a	long	age	in	the	deep	delv	Ed	earth

And line 25:

˘	/	˘	/	˘	/	/	/	/	/
Where	pals	y	shakes	a	few,	sad,	last,	gray	hairs

The use of spondees in lines 31–34 creates a feeling of slow and gradual flight, and "in the final stanza . . . the visible use of scattered spondees, together with initial inversion, not only reflect the peculiar spring and bounce of the bird in its flight but also the rise and fall of the emotions of the poet. Thus spondees render double effect to the poem. Besides giving it a musical impact it symbolizes the free and spontaneous

("The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild") the pauses after the commas are a "masculine" pause. Masculine caesura is the pause that follows a stressed syllable. Furthermore, Keats has also reduced the amount of Latin-based words and syntax that he relied on in his poetry, which has shortened the length of the words that dominate the poem.

### Spondee:

Spondee is a metrical foot consisting of two long syllables used in poetry. Keats uses spondee in only 8% of the lines within "Ode to a Nightingale."

expression of the feelings of the poet together with the song of the bird.

### Structural coherence as a symbol of art and beauty:

Theme, idea and emotions implicitly hold all the stanzas together, which is explored through the sound and stylistic devices used to adorn the theme. It shows a perfect

blending of classical balance and romantic inspiration. Every word is in its place and there is a restraint of expression from the beginning to the end; yet it glows with the emotions which are romantic to the extreme. The in depth analysis exhibits that every stanza is developed on the thought of previous stanza. The wish to fade away which is expressed in the second stanza, is developed upon the feelings of intoxication expressed in the first stanza, and the third stanza starts with the very words of 'fade away' which is the theme of second stanza. Even the very first words of 4<sup>th</sup> stanza 'away away' are the continuation of the theme of third stanza. One thought suggest another and, in this way, the poem proceeds to a somewhat arbitrary conclusion. This thematic connection shows the gradual development of the thought and gives thematic coherence to the poem. Even the contrastive schemes of images deployed in the poem for the pictorial description of the gloomy, desperate and fleeting material world, in contrast to the spiritual, dreamlike, everlasting and immortal world of nightingale exhibit the theme, the diametric contrast is the fundamental problem which leads Keats to fade and run away into the intoxicating world of nightingale. In the remaining stanzas he asserts that youth, love beauty is fleeting and the song of nightingale is everlasting. Thinking causes sadness and the wish for the death is expressed. Implying that death has seemed like a friend, offering comfort.

As it is an ode the regular and fluent pattern of rhyme scheme and the use of all sound devices reflect the emotional state and flow

of the feelings of the poet and also the full throated spontaneous song of nightingale and the artistic concept of beauty. The song of the nightingale represents beauty, ideal beauty that never fades the voice of eternity that transcends the boundaries of space and time. *"The Ode to a Nightingale"* is a regular ode. All eight stanzas have ten pentameter lines and a uniform rhyme scheme. The regular form of the poem expresses that Keats is allowing his thoughts and emotions free expression. This regular pattern of rhyme scheme combined with the thematic link between stanzas give the impression that the poet is not only recalling but sharing his experience with the reader. If one analyses the mood of the poem, a fluctuating effect is perceived the first stanza the mood is passive, as the writer has taken hemlock or opiate, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> stanza the intensity increases with the desire to move away while in the 3<sup>rd</sup> stanza again the intensity decreases with the description of the dark and gloomy picture of the world. The shifting of the mood which is the distinctive feature of Keats poetry also reflects the rise and fall of the song of the bird and the feelings of the poet. Thus the development of the thought, the stylistic devices, regular pattern of meter, rhyme scheme and the mood of the poem etc. are assimilated a complete whole structural or global coherence structure appears which not only increases the artistic beauty but implicitly express the pure concept of beauty found in Keats poetry. Thus it strengthens the conclusion that Keats loved beauty and art for its own sake and objected the idea of subjectivity in the art.



## Conclusion:

Ode to a Nightingale is a great poem both in its highly imaginative conception, its keen susceptibility to the beauty, and its mood of despondence contemplation of life, its passionate expression and over all its noble and perfect execution. Thus as a whole it really affirms the value of the ideal. It is considered to be the great work of not only Keats but also as the high watermark in romantic poetry and affirms Keats idea of beauty which is to be worshiped in it and not for any philosophical purpose. In the whole ode Keats focuses on immediate sensations and emotions. All the emotive and figurative devices, the structure of the poem, and even the bird with its song symbolize pure and artistic beauty which is the basic conception of Keats's poetry.

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