

Paper X: British Literature- Nineteenth Century

Lesson: Tennyson and His Selected Poems

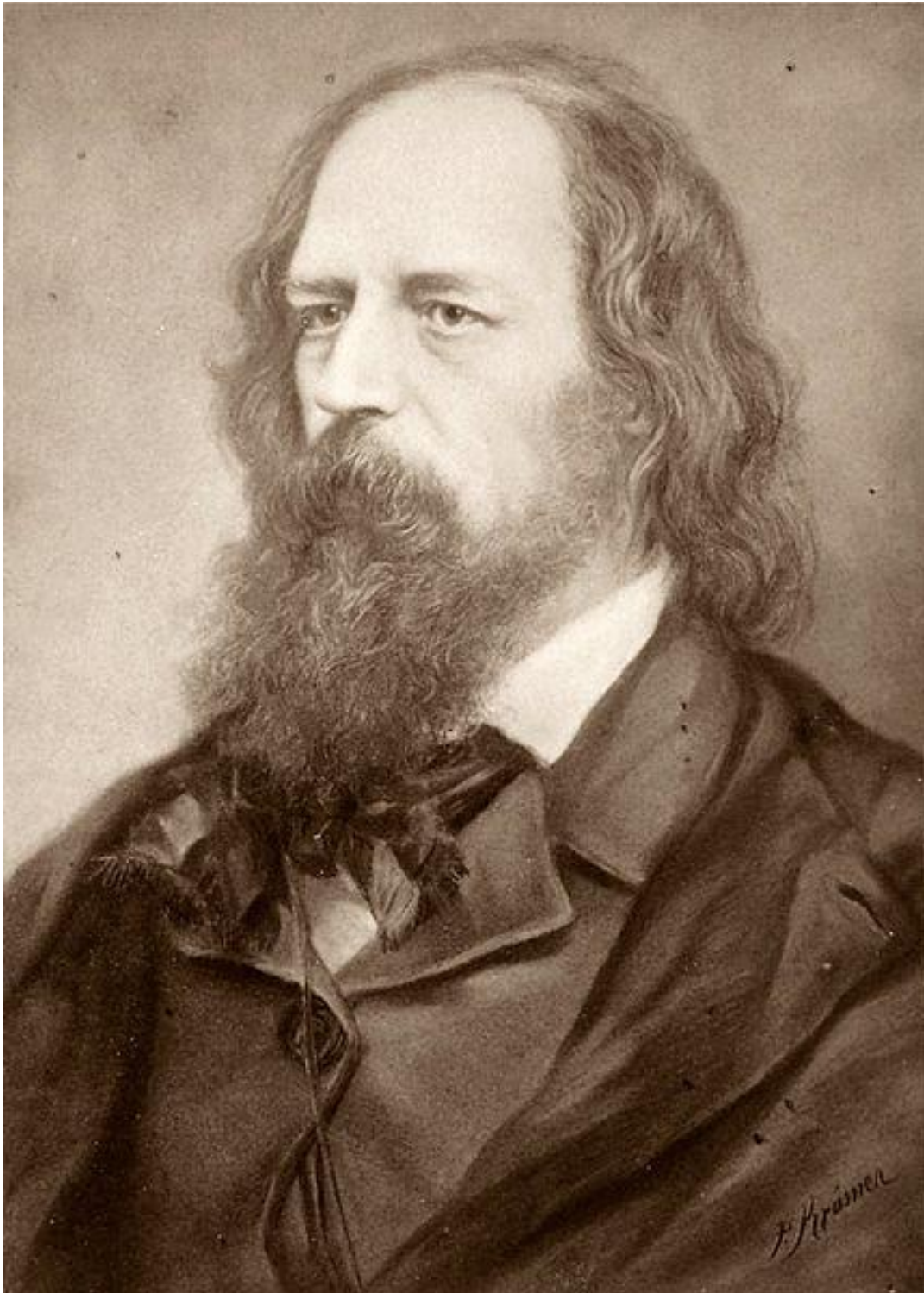
Lesson Developer: Shivani Jha

College/Department: Bharati College, University of Delhi

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Alfred Lord Tennyson 1809-1892, Courtesy: Wikimedia Commons

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Grand daughter of King George III when Victoria became queen in 1837 at the tender age of eighteen it was due to the death of her uncle William IV. The death of all the male heirs in the family had put her in line for the throne. She was the longest reigning queen in the history of British Monarchy to have ruled so long being second only to Queen Elizabeth II.



**File:Queen Victoria taking the Coronation Oath by George Hayter 1838.jpg,
commons.wikimedia.org**

With the accession of Victoria to the throne the long struggle of the Anglo Saxons for personal liberty was rewarded. Monarchy became a figurehead only with the divine right of rulers becoming a thing of the past. Democracy was firmly established with the extension of

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suffrage to the common man to choose his representatives. Education became accessible to all, a general feeling of harmony prevailed along with social unrest. There was a growing realization of ameliorating the condition of women and children employed in factories and mines deserving a better life.

Slavery had already been abolished in 1834 and in the year 1838 through 'The People's Charter', a product of the political and social reform protest movement demand was made for the right to vote with suffrage being extended to men age 21 and older; for annual elections; for equal representation and voting by secret ballot. The ideal of peace and harmony to prevail worldwide, the desire for an egalitarian society and a peaceful world were harboured by the society. W.J Long opines, 'Tennyson, who came of age when the great Reform Bill occupied attention, expresses the ideals of the Liberals of his day who proposed to spread the gospel of peace. Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furled/ In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world.' (ENGLISH LITERATURE, www.gutenberg.org)

The spirit of Industrial revolution, political reform and social change informed the age. There was rapid progress in arts and sciences with spinning looms, steam boats, matches and electric lights being some interesting ones. Railways as an established means of transport was ruling the day. The Victorian empire was one of the biggest global empires commanding almost one fourth of the global civilization in its sixty three year of dominion from 1837-1901 The era saw the end of the rural way of life with rapid growth and expansion of cities, mushrooming of industries and cities with long working hours. At the political front the Crimean War had begun.

This was an age of innovation and human progress in all walks of life. In 1837 the first electric telegraph was sent between English inventor William Fothergill Cooke and scientist Charles Wheatstone. The year 1838 saw the introduction of the steam engine revolutionizing transport. Communication received a boost with the world's first postage stamp, the Penny Black being sold in 1840 and 70 million letters sent within next year. A number that would triple in two years.

In 1840 the royal family saw expansion with Queen Victoria marrying her first cousin Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

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In 1843 Charles Dickens, one of the era's most celebrated writers, published *A Christmas Carol*. Other works from the author during this period: *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield* and *Nicholas Nickleby*, among others.



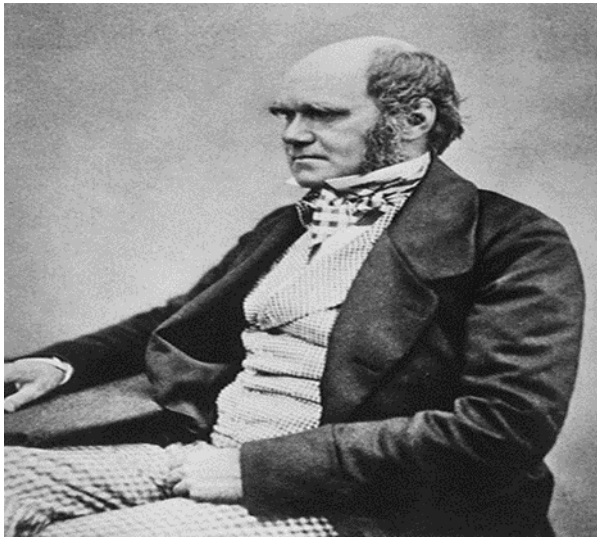
The royal family would see the birth of nine children in the next seventeen years till Albert's death in 1861. The Irish Potato Famine that was to last a period of our years began with the rotting of potato crops in 1845 leading to one million deaths and exodus of people from Ireland to North America and Great Britain. With Prince Albert's encouragement the Great Exhibition took place in London where thousands of exhibitors displayed their technological innovations ranging from farm machinery to telescopes. The exhibition was attended by six million visitors.

Portrait of Charles John Huffman Dickens
- Charles Dickens – Wikipedia, en.wikipedia.org

The field of medicine took a giant leap with vaccination act of 1853 making it mandatory for children to be vaccinated against small pox. Strict compliance was sought. At the political front in 1854 France and Britain declared war on Russia, launching the Crimean War. The war also gave to the world its most famous nurse, Florence Nightingale, who was actively involved in improving hygiene in camps and saving lives. Charles Darwin published *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 presenting his theory of natural selection. Conservative candidate Benjamin Disraeli to become the prime minister, a position that he was to hold for four terms. Gladstone successfully introduced reform for Ireland. He also established an elementary education program and strengthened democracy by instituting the secret ballot voting system. Under the direction of Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli in 1876 the British colony India, being governed since 1858, declares Queen Victoria its empress. In 1876

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Alexander Graham made the first phone call in the annals of history. It was to his assistant, Thomas Watson.



Charles_Darwin_seated.jpg: Henry Maull (1829–1914) and John Fox (1832–1907) (Maull & Fox) [3] derivative work: Beao - Charles_Darwin_seated.jpg, en.wikipedia.org

The Victorian Era ended with the death of the queen at the age of 81 in 1901. She was succeeded by her son Edward VII.

Adapted from: Victorian Era Timeline, History.com Editors, HISTORY,
<https://www.history.com/topics/19th-century/victorian-era-timeline>, Accessed on May 7, 2020.



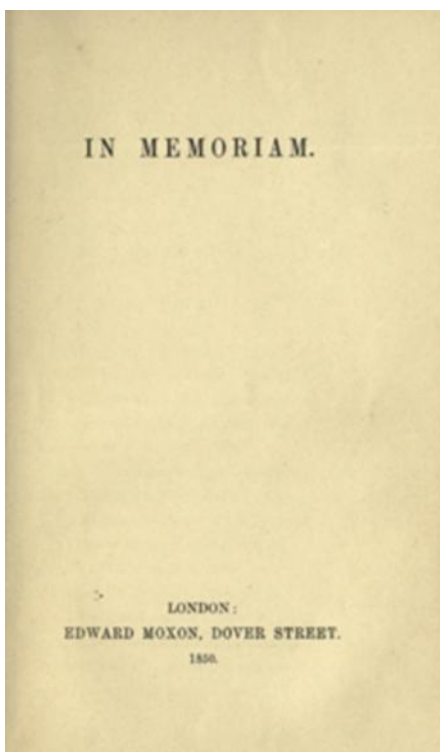
Victoria's family in 1846 by Franz Xaver Winterhalter. Left to right: Prince Alfred and the Prince of Wales; the Queen and Prince Albert; Princesses Alice, Helena and Victoria.
en.wikipedia.org

Works of Tennyson

When he was seventeen years old Tennyson collaborated with his elder brother Charles in *Poems by Two Brothers* (1827) *His Poems*, (1830), chiefly Lyrical was published while he was an undergraduate

His volume of *Poems* (1833), which is often referred to as *Poems*-(1832), because, in spite of its official title, it appeared in December of the earlier year contains notable poems as *The Lady of Shalott*, *Enone*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, and *The Palace of Art*. In 1842 he produced two volumes "of poetry. The first volume consists mainly of revised forms of some of the numbers published previously, the second is entirely new. It opens with *Morte d'Arthur*, and contains *Ulysses*, *Locksley Hall*, and several other poems that stand at the summit of his achievement.

The later stages of his career boast much longer poems as *The Princess* (1847) which is a serio-comic attempt to handle the theme that was then known as 'the new woman



This is the cover of the first edition of *In Memoriam* by Alfred Tennyson (He wasn't Poet Laureate nor in the House of Lords when this was published), picture circa 1850. <In Memoriam A.H.H. – Wikipedia, en.wikipedia.org>

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In Memoriam (1850) is a very long series of meditations upon the death of Arthur Henry Hallam, Tennyson's college friend, who died at Vienna in 1833. Tennyson brooded over the subject for years; and upon this elegiac theme he imposed numerous meditations on life and death, showing how these subjects were affected by the new theories of the day. *Maud and Other Poems* was published in 1855.

In 1859, 1869, and 1889 Tennyson issued a series of Idylls of the King, which dwelt King Arthur and the Round Table. The only other poem of any length is *Enoch Arden* (1864), which became extremely popular and was translated into many foreign languages. Among the shorter poems, *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After* was published in 1886 and *The Death of Enone* in 1892.

Tennyson's dramas were the product of his later years. His three historical plays--*Queen Mary* (1875), *Harold* (1876) and *Becket* (1884) are well remembered. *The Falcon* (1879) and *The Cup* (1881) also were a big success. *The Foresters* published in the year 1892 dealing with the Robin Hood theme was produced in America.

Note: Adapted From the History of English Literature by Edward Albert

The Lady of Shalott



The Lady of Shalott (painting) – Wikipedia, en.wikipedia.org

The Lady of Shalott is pictured in an ornately adorned wooden boat. She sits upon an embellished tapestry, likely the one she is weaving in Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem, "The Lady of Shalott". The most visible image on the tapestry pictures Sir Lancelot, whom the Lady of Shalott has seen in her mirror and with whom she has immediately fallen in love. The crucifix and candles affixed to the front end of the boat provide a motif of religious sacrifice. The single dead leaf which has fallen upon her dress foreshadows her impending doom; a fatal curse has fallen upon her. Her tower window which she has just abandoned can be found in the upper left-hand corner of the scene. The painting gracefully captures the moment before she releases the chain that keeps her connected to her island, after which she will float down the river while she dies.

For more see the source- Feminae: Details Page, inpress.lib.uiowa.edu

A lyrical ballad "The Lady of Shalott" is based on the medieval legend Donna di Scalotta as penned by the British author Thomas Malory in his fifteenth century text, *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Sir Thomas Malory in his text recounts several stories related with the medieval king Arthur and his knights. Lancelot du Lac was one of the celebrated knights of King Arthur and also the lover of Arthur's wife, the queen, Guinevere. As the king gets suspicious of their affair he starts avoiding the court and as a result is banished from the kingdom by the queen.

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Lancelot, however keeps himself busy in disguise taking part in jousting activities against King Arthur's court. Lancelot also goes to the court of Sir Bernard of Astolat following which he participates on Bernard's behalf in one of Arthur's tournaments. Sir Bernard's daughter Elaine falls in love with Lancelot almost immediately and requests that he wear a white token in her honor. He obliges as he is in disguise. Wounded in the tournament by King Arthur's men he is taken by Sir Bernard's son to a hermit to be healed but is tended by Elaine till he recovers completely. His health restored Lancelot leaves against Elaine's wishes for his heart is with Guinevere. Ten days hence Elaine dies of sadness and leaves her family specific instructions to the effect that she should be laid in a rowboat, with a lily in one hand and a letter she'd written in the other, and floated down the Thames River. The river, flowing through Westminster, is discovered by King Arthur and Queen Guinevere. Lancelot gets a chance to read the letter and upon doing so realizes his role in her death.

The first four stanzas establish a pastoral setting in the poem. The Lady of Shalott lives in an island castle in a river which flows to Camelot, but the locals know little about her. It is implied that she suffers from a mysterious curse and must continually weave images on her loom without ever looking directly out at the world. However, she transgresses and looks into a mirror that reflects the busy road and the people of Camelot who pass by her island. The reflected images are described as "shadows of the world", a metaphor drawing attention to the fact that they are poor substitute for seeing the world directly. The lady catches a glimpse of Sir Lancelot riding by she stops weaving and looks out of her window toward Camelot. Her transgression activating the curse. The lady of Shalott leaves her tower, finds a boat upon which she writes her name, and floats down the river to Camelot. Leaving the tower she gets into a boat and floats towards Camelot, robed in virginal 'snowy white'. Sir Lancelot gazes down upon her corpse. She dies on the way to the palace and her dead body is seen by the knights and ladies and Lancelot, who thinks she is lovely. It is ironical that he does not realise the extent of her yearning for him.

Here Tennyson creates a balance between elegy and pastoral presented through action and description. Veronica Forrest-Thomson interprets the poem as 'an allegory of Tennyson's own problems as poet in trying to reconcile imagination and action. The poet who must live indirectly through the activity of weaving an imaginative web, and who may see life only

through a mirror, resembles the Lady of Shalott' accounting the same for the poem's remarkable fascination and power. 'The narrative', she points, provides an 'objective

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES



William Holman Hunt, *The Hireling Shepherd*, 1851, Wikipedia, en.wikipedia.org

The Pre-Raphaelites were a loose and baggy collective of Victorian poets, painters, illustrators and designers whose tenure lasted from 1848 to roughly the turn of the century. Drawing inspiration from visual art and literature, their work privileged atmosphere and mood over narrative, focusing on medieval subjects, artistic introspection, female beauty, sexual yearning and altered states of consciousness. In defiant opposition to the utilitarian ethos that formed the dominant ideology of the mid-century, the Pre-Raphaelites helped to popularise the notion of 'art for art's sake'. Generally devoid of the political edge that characterised much Victorian art and literature, Pre-Raphaelite work nevertheless incorporated elements of 19th-century realism in its attention to detail and in its close observation of the natural world.

For more see: *The Pre-Raphaelites* - The British Library, www.bl.uk

correlative of its own function: to present the clash between pastoral seclusion and the world of action.' (Forrest-Thomson 60).

Usually action is minimal in pastoral given its predominantly contemplative mode, however as in "The Lady of Shalott," with the appearance of other figures there is a temporal progression. The first description of the Lady is static and provides a contrast to the activities in Camelot, reaping, going to and from Camelot. The lady is seen perturbed by her isolation as evident in her response, 'I am half sick of shadows,' the Lady's state being analogous to

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that of the poet. Also, by direct utterance the Lady prepares for the move from pastoral to the external world of elegy, the tension between these two modes used by the poet for balancing action and description. The important event—death—occurs, and the pastoral recedes to the background giving in to the elegiac. The poem now centers around this crucial event with the only direct elegy contained in Lancelot's closing words. The sense of doom carefully built, from a vague threat in the pastoral beginning, to that of the curse actualized, to the Lady's sailing to Camelot. Tennyson's device of elegy before death takes on a new dimension by introducing action into the world of pastoral (Forrest- Thomson 64).

Tennyson's engagement during the 1830s with 'questions of female character, achievement, and heroism' are similar to questions raised by his women friends and writers in his extended Cambridge circle and were debated widely in books and periodicals (Peterson 39). His concern as mentioned find reflection in the poem.

In her essay "Say That I Had a Lovely Face": The Grimms' "Rapunzel," Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott," and Atwood's *Lady Oracle Shuli Barzilai vis a vis Joseph Chadwick* remarks that despite the feudal setting of the poem it is Tennyson's own social order, excluding 'the one from which he drew the Lady and Lancelot, that makes autonomy and privacy fundamental conditions of femininity and of art.... the Lady's isolation and gender define Shalott as a private, domestic domain (the domain which was becoming increasingly important to the social structure of nineteenth-century England)'. Chadwick as pointed out by Barzilai, demonstrates, the Lady's situation as emblematic of the specific historical contingencies, particularly the gender divisions, that inform the Tennysonian trope of Woman as Muse or isolated (male) Artist. Such a woman remains 'cut off from all useful social activity... And this separation is fundamentally a denial of the Lady's substantiality, of her participation in material exchange, even of her corporeality'. The resultant emptiness arising not from being inadequately loved and nurtured in the familial setting but from estrangement in the public sphere. The Lady's "safe house"-the tower that imprisons her on the outskirts of a town- symbolically defines women's "seemly place." Having grown accustomed to exclusion, the Lady is unseen and rarely heard.

Escape for fairy-tale heroines usually means a tale of rescue However, Barzilai notes that In Margaret Atwood's reading, the same fairy tale suggests a very different type of narrative pattern. The four chief components of what Atwood identifies as the "Rapunzel Syndrome"

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are: "Rapunzel, the main character; the wicked witch who has imprisoned her, usually her mother . . . ; the tower she's imprisoned in-the attitudes of society, symbolized usually by her house and children ... ; and the Rescuer, a handsome prince of little substantiality.... in the Rapunzel Syndrome the Rescuer is not much help."2 When this syndrome is operative, the romance ending is suspended. "Rapunzel is in fact stuck in the tower," Atwood writes, "and the best thing she can do is learn how to cope with it" (209). More disturbing than the mechanisms of coping with or adapting to societal constraints, in some instances, "Rapunzel and the tower are the same. These heroines have internalized the values of their culture to such an extent that they have become their own prisons" (209).

Barzilai also draws attention to the Victorian iconography where another favored image of the Lady of Shalott depicts her borne down river in her boat with long hair hanging loosely over her shoulders or trailing with abandon in the water. The disarray of her hair is noted as a symbolic equivalent of her disobedience insinuating wantonness and/or madness, which in the first place led the lady of Shalott to leave her loom and look out at a passing knight. In the Lacanian lexicon of the scopic drive, she returns the gaze to which she has been subjected. A transgression that invites punishment as her demise swiftly follows her daring, however minimal in nature it may be. The Lady disregards the Law of the Father and turns to see, through a forbidden opening, what has been expressly denied to her. The "punishment of curiosity," in women (like Eve and Lot's wife, too), is hard labor and/or death (2000: 37).

Ulysses



File:Mosaïque d'Ulysse et les sirènes.jpg - Wikimedia Commons, commons.wikimedia.org

“Ulysses” the blank-verse poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was written in 1833 and published in the two-volume collection *Poems* (1842). an aged Ulysses is frustrated with domestic life and yearns to set sail again and continue exploring the world.

A dramatic monologue Tennyson wrote "Ulysses in 1833 and published it in 1842 in An oft-quoted poem. Ulysses old but not spent, is discontent and restless having returned to his kingdom, Ithaca, after his various glorious travels and battles including the siege of Troy fought for ten years. The reunion with his wife Penelope and son Telemachus does not keep the discontented Ulysses from yearnings to explore again. Attuned to the life of adventure and importance the sedentary domestic life seems a depressing prospect and he fears stagnation, of rusting like the sword which is not in use, 'unburnish'd, not to shine in use.' Ulysses longs to add meaning to his life. Keenly aware of his mortality he desires to make the most of his time. He is confident that his son Telemachus shall rule his kingdom well thus can move on with his adventures. He asks his former fellow mariners, to accompany his new adventurer though dangerous but better than ennui. 'The "enemy" is now within his

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country, and within his psyche. Tennyson may be illustrating the death-in-life of a once-revered ruler who has lost his social niche, and is consequently suffering a loss of identity, a kind of psychic injury which is more damaging than the wounds inflicted in battle. (O'Brien : 174)'

In his essay "Tennyson at Two Hundred" James Nohrnberg opines that As Tennyson wrote "Ulysses" and "Tithon," the East India Company was transforming itself into the British Empire's crown-jewel, and that the English were exploring the world for new places and spaces to colonize. 'If the diptych voices the plight of the retired colonialist stuck at home while dreaming of past glories abroad, and the exiled colonialist stuck in some god-forsaken place abroad while dreaming of a happy retirement to the scenes of his youth in the old country- where it would always be his April- then "The long day wanes" may also predict the gradual and mournful demise of the British Empire over the course of the two centuries since "Ulysses" was written' (112). Nohrnberg goes on to elaborate the idea by citing that there was a succession of heirs like Telemachus of the English sahibs in places like Calcutta and Singapore and the West Indies including Ithaca, Their operations endorsed by a series of English apologists from Edmund Spenser and Captain John Smith to John Stuart Mill who in their discourses used vocabulary like 'civility' and 'savagery' to 'serve as euphemistic codewords for the colonial policy of taking pos-session: occupation, subjugation, pacification, conversion, and administrative hegemony (113).'

Dwelling on Ulysses' sense of alienation and the prevailing gender stereotypes as in Ithaca Lynne B. O'Brien suggests that 'Tennyson seems to question this narrow conception of heroism in "Ulysses" through his creation of the morally equivocal hero who is deficient in those qualities which are essential for social living' (173). Tennyson seems to have believed in the need for men to model their behavior on the heroic mold lest they become imprisoned and attenuated by the feminine and also that 'Tennyson posited the need for man to move back and forth between the male world (represented by fighting the "just" war) and the feminine sphere.' (174). O'Brien maintains that as the Victorian heroism was based on the grandeur of male aggression and in the absence of the latter quality of being able to move between both the male and female worlds, Ulysses ultimately alienates himself from his society, which demands of him compromise and humility.

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Tennyson stated that the poem "was written soon after Arthur Hallam's death, and gave my feeling about the need of going forward, and braving the struggle of life perhaps more simply than anything in 'In Memoriam' (Hughes 192). In her essay "'Ulysses" Revisited' Linda K. Hughes argues that the nonironic readings of "Ulysses" are expressions of the need to move forward 'to forge a continuum of his life by undertaking his voyage, the need for continuity, hence wholeness'. Ulysses' pride as given his heroic mold is 'fully consonant with his heroism' and as Tennyson 'needed precisely this will to keep braving the struggles of life after Hallam's death, this school of thought argues, Tennyson would inevitably identify with, not undermine, Ulysses' position.' (1979: 194).

The Defence of Lucknow



The Relief of Lucknow, by Thomas Jones Barker, The Defence of Lucknow

"The Defence of Lucknow" dramatizes the traditional ballad theme of wartime bravery, while emphasizing the importance of national strength and unity, but it also highlights...the great risk associated with foreign campaigns. (Sylvia 36). As is evident in the opening lines, "Banner of England, not for a season, O banner of Britain, hast thou / Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-cry!" (1-2). The poem rooted in Victorian imperial history is spoken by a survivor of the defense of Lucknow against Indian mutiny. The survivor unravels the ballad theme which is the unwavering adherence to a moral code as represented by the flag of England. The British unity, however is not strong enough to prevent the blood shed of the mutiny. 'Between the graphic details of battle in the beseiged fort and mutiny, 'the poem subtly suggests that on Indian soil, the British troop is dangerously out of place' (Sylvia 36). Tennyson catches the tone of wistfulness with which the familiar, but distant

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breezes of the English countryside are remembered as a contrasting locale in the following lines:

' Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying alarms .Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in the ground/Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract skies/Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment of flies/Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an English field/Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that would not be healed (75-84)'

The Defence of Lucknow is a war poem set in the background of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 that saw the siege of Lucknow, sustained assault and eventual relief of the British "Residency" i.e British governmental headquarters in India's northern city of Lucknow, part of 1857–58 Indian Mutiny against British rule. The relief of Lucknow entailed two attempts by the British to rescue Sir Henry Lawrence and a contingent of British and Indian troops, along with several hundred British civilians, from the center of Lucknow where they held out under siege conditions for six months. With widespread mutinies underway, Commander Lawrence ordered all the British women and children of Lucknow to take cover in the Residency, the city's chief fortress, on May 25, and Lawrence himself retreated there on June 30. Though protected by the battery positions the Residency was vulnerable as the surrounding buildings were occupied by rebel snipers and artillery.

The first relief attempt took place on September 25 when a force under the command of Major General Sir Henry Havelock fought its way to Lucknow only to realize that he had lost so many troops that it was evacuating the civilians was a risky idea. On November 16, a much larger force approached Lucknow, led by Lieutenant General Sir Colin Campbell. It ruthlessly stormed the Secundra Bagh, a walled enclosure blocking Campbell's route to the Residency. The British reached the Residency on November 19 and began evacuations. By November 27, the residents had been relocated to safe destinations. Campbell would return in March to recapture Lucknow. In the process 2,500 British and 8,000 Indian army men would lose their lives with an, unknown number of casualties of around 30,000 Indian rebels.¹

At this point of time Lucknow was the capital of Awadh. It had been annexed by the British East India Company and the state's Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah, was exiled to Calcutta. There

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was a widespread resentment among Indian soldiers during this period working under the British commandment who were outraged with the introduction of new cartridges apparently greased with beef and pork hurting religious sentiments of both Hindus and Muslims.

On May 1857, the 7th Oudh Irregular Infantry declined to bite the cartridges and on May 3, the Infantry was neutralized by other regiments. The disarmament could not pacify the angry soldiers and on May 10, they attacked Meerut and moved towards Delhi. When the news reached the Commissioner of Awadh, Sir Henry Lawrence, he began fortifying the Residency.²

In his essay "Reading Tennyson's "Ballads and Other Poems" in Context" Richard A. Sylvia opines that British society was shocked by reports of the atrocities perpetrated by Indian 'sepoys' against British people in India. The Victorians as a society were incensed by the brutality and ruthlessness of an 'ungrateful' and 'unpredictable' Indian population against what was believed to be a benevolent overlordship. The violence of the British response was widely seen as a fitting response to the actions of those who, employed and trusted by the British, had proven themselves treacherous (82).

Indian difference and unknowability were also themes for Augusta Becher, whose memoirs of Anglo-Indian life were published posthumously in 1930. Becher had gone to India in 1849 with her army officer husband, Septimus, and remained until she was repatriated, along with her children, to Britain during the revolt of 1857 (Allbrook 90).

In Britain India of 1857 to 1859 and its people were described using polarised and racially determined depictions of 'good', 'innocent', 'just', 'moral' and 'civilised' British, against 'evil', 'guilty', 'lawless', 'depraved' and 'barbaric' Indians. British literature on India underwent a fundamental change after 1857, assuming the flavour of 'self-conscious, drum-beating jingoism' popularly associated with British militarism and superiority in the Victorian period (Allbrook 94)

Ironically the duality of Tennyson's perspective is revealed in "Locksley Hall," where the speaker having been disappointed in love, curses the materialistic society and 'imagines a future in which nations are peacefully united, 'In the Parliament of man, the Federation of

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the world.' But this vision, the speaker emphatically tells us, is a dream from his youth, from an "earlier page. . . before the strife." (Sypher 107).



A Twickenham residence of the Poet Alfred Lord Tennyson - panoramio.jpg,<https://web.archive.org/web/20161021122330/http://www.panoramio.com/photo/54856918>, This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license. Attribution: Maxwell Hamilton

GLOSSARY

Victorian Age: The 63-year period from 1837-1901 that marked the reign of England's Queen Victoria.

Imperialism: The policy, practice, or advocacy of extending the power and dominion of a nation especially by direct territorial acquisitions or by gaining indirect control over the political or economic life of other areas.

Pre Raphaelites: A loose collective of Victorian poets, painters, illustrators and designers existing from 1848 to roughly the turn of the century.

Materialism: A preoccupation with or stress upon material rather than intellectual or spiritual things

Ithaca: Kingdom of Ulysses.

Eponymous: Of, relating to, or being the person or thing for whom or which something is named

Unrequited: Not requited : not reciprocated or returned in kind

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the developments of the Victorian Age.
2. How do the developments of the age influence the poetry of Tennyson?
3. With reference to “The Defence of Lucknow” and “Ulysses” can Tennyson be described as an Imperialist poet?
4. How Does the Poem “The Lady of Shallot” reflect the gender roles prevalent during the Victorian period.
5. Discuss the character of “Ulysses” as reflected in the eponymous poem.
6. Discuss “The Lady of Shallot” as an instance of unrequited love.
7. Discuss “The Defence of Lucknow” as a war poem.

Note:

1. See Siege of Lucknow | Summary | Britannica, www.britannica.com
2. See Siege of Lucknow, Lucknow Siege History, Lucknow Seige Aftermath, www.lucknowonline.in

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