



Research Paper

The Sov'reign Shrine of Veiled Melancholy- The Shadow of Consumption on La Belle Dame Sans Merci

* Abhik Maiti M.A (Double)

Received 10 August, 2017; Accepted 12 August, 2017 © The Author(S) 2017. Published With Open Access At www.questjournals.org

ABSTRACT:

"Youth grows pale and spectre thin and dies" – John Keats, (*Ode to Nightingale*) Tuberculosis was one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented diseases of all times. Hailed as Consumption's Poster Child, Keats' life, like Beethoven's, served as a pattern for the Romantic artist. In acute distress and emotional turmoil, in 1819 masterpiece followed masterpiece. In Keats' poems we see a concreteness of description of the object he contemplates. All the senses - tactile gustatory, kinetic, organic, as well as visual and auditory combine to give the total apprehension of his experience. His experiences often accord closely with his personal, life and the disasters he had. Keats is austere in poetry and yet he keeps high colouring and variety of appeal to the senses and the mind. Tuberculosis remains with us today, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia where more than a million people die of this disease each year. It is worth recalling its history and its association with literature with special reference to John Keats and his poetry- and specially *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* that shows a dominant foreboding over man's mortality from it. *La Belle* becomes a representation of the disease in Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* and reflects the poet's struggle with tuberculosis.

Contents:

1. Introduction: death and the romantic sensibility
2. Times and tides of tuberculosis
3. "Consumptions' poster child"- Keats's tryst with tuberculosis
4. *La belle dame sans merci* and tuberculosis
5. The sov'reign shrine of veiled melancholy- the shadow of consumption n other works of Keats
6. Conclusion

I. INTRODUCTION: DEATH AND THE ROMANTIC SENSIBILITY

Romanticism is essentially the emphasis upon the individual effort to escape from the world of conventions and social control. Romanticism is associated with vitality, powerful emotions, dreams like ideas and unusual individualism. The key word for romanticism is freedom to give reign to one's emotions and dreams and is often foreshadowed by a brooding premonition of death and the brevity of life. Charles Baudelaire, the French romanticist, expressed his own point of view saying "one should always be drunk ... it is time to seek intoxication. That you may not be the slave of time, drink without ceasing ... of wine, of poetry, of virtue, as you may wish." Death was one of the main problems occupying the romantic sensibility.

Romantic poetry showed an acute struggle with the notion of life and death, and an attempt to penetrate the problem of the mystery of eternal partings and death. Wordsworth in *Intimations of Immortality* finds this problem the subject of the *Ode*. Death, as the poet explained in this poem, is then nothing but a return to a more complete and more satisfactory existence. Life is an existence of isolation, and of no intrinsic value, whereas death is perfection, and man can submerge himself again in nature, and become part of the universe. With Shelley the obsession of death was extraordinary. He saw in it the perfect state, the stage of ultimate and peaceful happiness, and his short life saw him occupied with the thought of death in every poem he wrote. In his *Ode to the West Wind* this longing for death -is one of the chief motives. Death promises what life cannot give, a submerging into nature, complete disintegration with it, and thus a return to the true sources of life. Shelley being a deeply sensitive poet; at times being heart-sick and hopelessly weakened and discouraged; hates life and conventional societies and quits even faith in God. The poet, radically enough, allows free range for his wild uncontrollable spirit driving him to madness and impracticality. He is on his way of almost committing suicide

being haunted by an intense feeling of a "death-urge". He wishes to lose all his senses, all attachment with life, all communications with society and accompany the wind panting "beneath thy power and share the impulse of thy thought". In such a mood, Shelley is quite aware of the consequence: "I fall on the thorns of life; I bleed ". It is an extreme and savage love of self - torture that drives us to pity the poet's emotional status. It is an expression of deep hatred to life in general. Man, in his life-time, suffers from the loneliness of his isolation, and while all other things in nature perish and revive, he alone seems to be doomed to die and disappear; only his thoughts remain invisible heritage to the world. Frustration may be felt through the writings of the majority of the romantic poets. Some consider the element of melancholy to be a result of the many disappointments through which some of the romantic poets passed. The new world that Wordsworth, Byron, Coleridge, Shelley and John Keats dreamt of, was one full of mysterious dreams.

Life is not at its best when it can combine both extremes in one situation- the simultaneous coexistence of life and death; when moonlight shines on the ruins of a castle or when flowers give "Thought that often lie too deep for tears".

In another poem deploring the untimely death of Keats, who died on year before Shelley, the poet calls life a "dome of many-coloured glass" which "stains the white radiance of eternity". It is death which is pure and perfect, while life, and even art which transcends it, are "stains" in this perfection. Keats poetry again and again returned to the subject of death-to him the invalid to whom death was a constant presence, death had two contradictory aspects. One is described in the Ode to a Nightingale, where the dismal effects of age and the threat of death are seen, but then there was that other form of death which meant freedom from suffering, the escape from the effects of time, which seemed the only ideal state to the poet. Romantic poetry is born out of the sense of imperfection, and the poets who were influenced by the ideas of romanticism, could never free themselves from the obsession of death that promised an escape from the imperfection of life. They regretted the limitations that were imposed, and death appeared to them as the ideal state. In the Bright Star Keats likens himself to a bright star in his steadfastness in love and written shortly before the poet's death in Italy. Keats was in the last stages of consumption when he wrote it, and it is an expression of his burning desire for a consummation of life, his hunger for experience, which is strengthened by the sensuous elements. It is a melancholic music of the longing of man is in it who knows that most of his dreams are unattainable, and that his death was inevitable.

Gotho said of Lord Byron: "he is the greatest talent of our century, but the moment he begins to reflect he is a child". His poem On Reaching my Thirty -sixth Year was written right before the poet's death in Greece. In it he intuitively speaks of the end but does not regret his past life for now he has the rare opportunity of dying for the cause of liberty. The romantic poet sought an escape from the actual world to a world of vision once seen. Being an individualistic he believed in liberty and freedom. It was George Lord Byron who praised the:

"Eternal spirit of chainless mind
Brightest in dungeons, liberty, thou art
For there they habitation is the heart
The heart, which loves of three alone, can bind."

This paper aims at analyzing the brooding shadow of death in Romantic Poetry with special reference to the one brought about by tuberculosis and more specifically, the treatment of La Belle as a representation of the disease in Keats's La Belle Dame Sans Merci that reflects the poet's struggle with tuberculosis.

II. TIMES AND TIDES OF TUBERCULOSIS

"Diseases manifest multiple personalities just as do living creatures and social institutions he various moods which they display in different circumstances and at any given time reflect the dominant aspect of the relationship between the disease process and the life of man in society."

— René and Jean Dubos (The White Plague: Tuberculosis, Man, and Society)

Over the course of human history tuberculosis has affected and killed hundreds of millions of people. It was carried across the globe by early humans as they migrated from Africa, and evidence of it exists worldwide in early archeological sites. Slowly mounting to reach epidemic proportions in Europe, this flood of disease peaked in the early nineteenth century. At the time in 1819, when John Keats developed tuberculosis, the disease may have been responsible for as many as one in four deaths in Europe. Since then, the tide of tuberculosis has slowly ebbed. The history of the great epidemic of consumption can be divided into three time periods. At the time of its peak and during most of the nineteenth century, it was a disease evoking despair. Physicians could offer nostrums relieving some symptoms, but no meaningful solace. With the discovery of the

cause of tuberculosis and the openings of sanatoria devoted to its treatment at the end of the nineteenth century, there was some hope for improvement, if not complete recovery. Tuberculosis was one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented diseases of all times. Tuberculosis, often called Consumption, the White Plague, and the White Death, was believed to be linked to poetic and aesthetic qualities. This belief was reflected in both the literature and the medical field of the time, this interconnectedness allowed "*literature [to affect] consumption's reality, just as consumption shaped literature to a hitherto unrecognized extent*" (Lawlor, 190). As science progressed, the literature adjusted to accommodate this change, and through these changes tuberculosis went from being characterized as romantic and mysterious, to being an infectious bacterial disease.

Prior to the advancements in medicine, the pale, slender figure, and rosy cheeks that were caused by tuberculosis were highly desirable features. This can be seen in different contemporary ladies' magazines that perpetuated this ideal. The reverence of the outward manifestations, and the disease's association with the poetic and aesthetic meant that tuberculosis was revered rather than feared. During the nineteenth century, tuberculosis was associated with "*a markedly romantic sensibility, which was spreading about, especially among intellectuals and artists*" (Pôrto, 1). This perpetuated the association of the poetic and aesthetic with tuberculosis and resulted in its association with the Romantic poets, particularly John Keats who is sometimes thought of as Consumption's Poster Child. In part this was due to Keats' own illness and his resulting deterioration in physique, but it also stemmed from the belief that tuberculosis was a disease that afflicted intellectual and poetic persons.

The advent of curative drugs in the mid-twentieth century ushered in an era of cure and expectations of recovery. This era with its expectation of the recovery of health and well-being dates to a series of drug discoveries in the latter half of the twentieth century. They began in 1944, with the discovery of streptomycin and continue to the present.

III. CONSUMPTIONS POSTER CHILD- KEATS'S TRYST WITH TUBERCULOSIS

When Keats was still a child, his father was killed by a fall from a horse and his mother died of tuberculosis which later caused the death of Tom Keats, his brother, and John Keats himself. Even when his health was good, Keats felt a foreboding of early death and, applied himself to his art with a desperate urgency. In early 1818 it became apparent that Tom, Keats's brother, was ill, probably with tuberculosis, and the two brothers went to the Devon coast at Teignmouth, hoping that the sea air would foster a recovery for Tom. Indeed, Tom did improve, but dreary, rainy weather soon convinced them to abandon the shore and return to London. The rain did, however, provide ample time for Keats to retreat to seclusion and complete *Endymion*. Tom's health waxed and waned. He had several episodes of hemoptysis (coughing of blood). On reaching London, he seemed in much better health, and Keats determined to set off on a long planned and much-delayed walking tour with Charles Brown, embarked on the same.

During the trip, Keats was recurrently plagued with a sore throat. On return in August, he found his brother to be much worse, and much of his time and effort during the next three months was devoted to caring for his dying brother. Tuberculosis claimed the life of Tom Keats on December 1, 1818; he was nineteen years old.

Following his brother's death on December 18, 1818, Keats moved in with Charles Brown. After meeting and falling in Love with Fanny Brawne, the months of late 1818 and early 1819 were among Keats's happiest and most productive; a number of his poetic works were published and well received. On February 3, 1820, Keats had his first episode of hemoptysis, and he made his own diagnosis of tuberculosis. His friend, Charles Brown, described the events in the following, often-quoted passage from his early biography of the poet.

"One night, at eleven o'clock, he [Keats] came into the house in a state that looked like fearful fierce intoxication. Such a state in him, I knew, was impossible; it therefore was the more fearful. I asked hurriedly, "What is the matter,—you are fevered?" "Yes, yes," he answered, "I was on the outside of the stage this bitter day till I was severely chilled,—but now I don't feel it. Fevered!—of course, a little." He mildly and instantly yielded, a property in his nature towards any friend, to my request that he should go to bed. I followed with the best immediate remedy in my power. I entered his chamber as he leapt into bed. On entering the cold sheets, before his head was on the pillow, he slightly coughed, and I heard him say,—"hat is blood from my mouth." I went towards him; he was examining a single drop of blood upon the sheet. "Bring me the candle, Brown; and let me see this blood." after regarding it steadfastly, he looked up in my face, with a calmness of countenance

that I can never forget, and said,—“I know the colour of that blood;—it is arterial blood;—I cannot be deceived in that colour;—that drop of blood is my death-warrant;—I must die.” I ran for a surgeon; my friend was bled; and, at five in the morning, I let him after he had been, some time, in a quiet sleep”.

Keats was confined to bed in a room with all windows closed, as fresh air was thought to be deleterious to health. Later, he was seen by Robert Bree, a specialist in chest diseases, who recommended continuation of the regimen of enforced confinement, bed rest, and bleedings. Keats also took calomel, a mercury-containing medication frequently used for patients with tuberculosis at that time. Keats poured out his soul in daily love letters to Fanny Brawne. Periods of improvement alternated with further progression of his illness.

Extraordinarily sensitive to the mingling of pleasure and pain, to the destructiveness of love, and to the erotic quality of the longing for death, Keats's poems have little concern with contemporary social and political events. He is in his glory in the fields. The humming of bees, the sight of a flower and the glitter of the sun seem to make his soul tremble.

In his effort to find a more perfect universe, the romanticist shunned actuality and sought an escape to a different world, a world where dreams create perfection, where faith is real and no pretence prevails, where nature heals the wounds and restores health to mind and body. The romantic poets were of the belief that society had contaminated man -that what man needed most was to live simply and naturally as a son to mother, as Robert Burns says:

Give me a spark of Nature's fire

That is the learning I desire

In the early 19th century, not only was the cause and transmission of tuberculosis misunderstood, it was considered to be a sort of extension of hypochondria in its modern sense. The popular opinion seemed to be that consumption was the “*physical result of psychological and emotional disorder*” and that “*literary over-production, derived from over-stimulation led to medical consumption because it consumed vital energy*” hence, ‘consumption.’ The mental strain of composition burnt up a person's vital force, something that an individual only had a limited amount of. Of course, there was also the fact that the “*idea of consumption as a disease of genius grew even more common in medical texts as well as in popular opinion*” - these romantic and erroneous ideas were reinforced by the public and by the medical experts of the time. Considering, as mentioned before, Keats witnessed tuberculosis on the personal level it is highly doubtful that he was ignorant of this. One can also assume that he didn't question the common medical opinions on consumption as “*Keats and his doctor did agree that his malady was as much mental as physical. Nervous over-excitement was the danger for young men of a consumptive and creative disposition*”. While hypochondria is always a factor in sickness, it is clear that—at least in the case of artists like Keats—the malady was considered more of a psychological disruption than anything and endemic to the male creative population. Of course, if tuberculosis affected Keats's life at such a personal level, then it would naturally filter into his poetry.

IV. LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI AND TUBERCULOSIS

In La Belle Dame sans Merci, the specter of tuberculosis shows itself more in the poet-figure of the knight-at-arms than in the Muse-figure of la Belle Dame—his condition being the rather physical effect of his night with la Belle Dame. The “Alone and palely loitering” image of the knight would remind readers acquainted with the poet's life evocations of the first sign of consumption. The poem becomes a narrative of a gradual prognosis of tuberculosis from a deathly pallor to the final reconciliation in the soothing fingers of death reflected in the latter half of the poem. From the beginning, the knight-at-arms is introduced to the audience as “alone and palely loitering” (Keats), and that the atmosphere reflects his rather depressing state. According to both the knight and the anonymous narrator of the first three stanzas, the “sedge has wither'd from the lake./ And no birds sing” (2-3), and “the squirrel's granary is full./ And the harvest's done” (7-8). It is, obviously, Autumn; a very cold, barren Autumn to match the knight, “haggard and woe-begone” (6). However, the setting is merely a lead-in for the more obvious sickness imagery in the third stanza. The anonymous narrator has this to say to the knight-at-arms: “I see a lily on thy brow/ With anguish moist and fever dew./And on thy cheeks a fading rose/ Fast withereth, too” (12-15).

The flower imagery here is twofold. The immediate affect is that the knight-at-arms is proven to be literally pale—hence the lily—and that there is a color fast-fading in his cheeks. It is also worthy of note that

“flower imagery was closely associated with the poetry of consumption, its major function being to symbolize the poignancy of (early) death juxtaposed with beauty” (Lawlor 132). It also brings to the mind Sir John Everett Millais’s *Ophelia* where the flowers depict Ophelia’s floral communion with nature. The painting is known for its depiction of the detailed flora of the river and the riverbank, stressing the patterns of growth and decay in a natural system. It would be prudent to remind attentive readers in this context of the use of the imagery of roses and posy as a depiction of the Bubonic Plague in the well known nursery rhyme *Ring-a Ring-a Roses* that bears a latent reflection of the Plague Years. Considering Keats’s “first dramatic symptom of consumption appeared in early February [1819], after Tom’s death,” the flower imagery takes on another morbid level—in this case, a veiled comment about his own impending demise. As a student of medicine, Keats would have known the warning signs of tuberculosis well in advance and, after watching his brother slowly die of the same disease only a few short months before, the idea that he was soon to follow most likely weighed heavily on him. This would explain his preoccupation with the knight-at-arms who is wasting away in *La Belle Dame sans Merci*. It is the tinge of sickness - be it supernatural or psychosomatic - and the aspect of misery, and of suffering, and more importantly the idea that *la Belle Dame*’s victims waste away.

Despite the deathly pallor that hangs over much of Keats’s work, there are hints that *la Belle Dame* might be his Muse. During the romantic period, the pale, slender figure, and rosy cheeks that were caused by tuberculosis were highly desirable features and associated the disease with the poetic and aesthetic and associated consumption with “a markedly romantic sensibility, which was spreading about, especially among intellectuals and artists” (Pôrto, 1). It also stemmed from the belief that tuberculosis was a disease that afflicted intellectual and poetic persons, particularly John Keats who is sometimes thought of as Consumption’s Poster Child. His inspiration comes not only from the trials and tribulations of his professional life, but from his knowledge of his early and impending death. Though *la Belle Dame* is a many-leveled symbol, it must be said that she is not just the embodiment of his Muse, she is the embodiment not of an anxiety toward women, but an anxiety toward the knowledge of his impending death. *La Belle Dame sans Merci* is little more than frustration with a Muse-figure rather than with women as a whole. This same idea that *la Belle Dame* is a Muse-figure leads to the question of what exactly his muse-figure was—what exactly (or as exactly as one can be in this situation) inspired Keats to write much of what he did. Considering Keats’s obviously melancholy tone through a number of his poems and his odes, one could imagine the source of much of inspiration came from an equally melancholy source. That is to say, it is widely acknowledged that Keats took some of his inspiration from the specter of consumption that had loomed over his life from childhood.

Having watched his mother die of tuberculosis while he was very young, not to mention his time as an apothecary and the fact that he personally nursed his brother Tom until his death of the very same disease, the presence of what he would have known as consumption was constantly asserting itself in his life in some way or another. One of the ones most applicable to his career is the fact that tuberculosis—consumption—had certain connotations and it was, in fact, considered a ‘romantic disease.’

To understand this poem as it is connected to the idea of consumption and the Muse, one must not look solely at the aforementioned flower imagery, but at the fact that Keats is discussing his Muse as a fickle figure, as well reflecting the undetectable symptoms and related diseases that consumption often produced. In general, Keats viewed a poet and the Muse (his own included) as one of minor antagonism, which gives a bit of a poet-muse dynamic to the knight-at-arms and *la Belle Dame* in the poem itself. When speaking about another person and their personal Muse, Keats comments that “if he libels his own Muse how can he expect to write—either [the writer] or his muse must turn [tail]” (Letters 2:159). One of them must chase the other, strangely, giving this relationship a strange sort of hunter-hunted quality. The knight-at-arms, after cavorting with *la Belle Dame*, is left high and dry “on the cold hill’s side”(Keats 47) where he is “alone and palely loitering,” (49). Her flight from her grotto, in turn, ties into the strangely welcoming attitude of this strange, fairy creature—the Muse has ‘turned tail,’ quite literally at the end when she supposedly abandons the knight-at-arms in his sleep, thus outsmarting the poet-hunter who has, if we put it in the context of Keats’s ideas, slighted her in some way. This hunter-hunted dynamic isn’t the most important aspect of the Muse and Keats’s inspiration, though. The idea of suffering and beauty with the undercurrent of sickness and death are ever-present with phrases and words like “haggard and so woe-begone” and “anguish moist and fever dew” all reflect the symptoms and effects of the disease.

In the vein of Charlotte Turner Smith, the Romantic idea of sensibility extended to both sides of the spectrum. For both the poet in question and Keats, the poetry tended to fall on the melancholy end. However, the more pertinent of the information tends to focus on the idea of sensibility and how Keats showed this desirable poetic quality. This, in turn, circles back to the question of what inspired Keats—what compromised a fraction of his Muse. Keats, his Odes falling into the category of melancholy poetry, drew inspiration from his

own miseries, one of which was the presence of tuberculosis in his life especially in 1819 when both his Odes and La Belle Dame Sans Merci were composed. With the death so recent, and the first symptoms of his own sickness showing themselves in February, it is quite safe to say that this death sentence—as, indeed, tuberculosis was in the 19th Century—could be a very logical source of anxiety for him. In fact, as Keats mentioned in one of his letters to Fanny Brawne, he had “two luxuries to brood over in my walks, your loveliness and the hour of my death” (Letters 2: 178). This fixation of the darker side of sensibility also shows in Keats’s Ode on Melancholy. The poem itself is “neither an intimate narration, nor an invocation, but rather an exposition...it apparently addresses us” (Smith 681). Keats—or, rather, the narrator—gives his reader the exact directions on how to glean inspiration from their misery. The audience is advised to “go not to Lethe, neither twist/ Wolf’s-bane...nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss’d/ by nightshade” (Keats 474, lines 1-4) and goes on to continue a catalogue “morbid thoughts and morbid props” (Smith 686), such as death’s-head moths, and deathwatch beetles. These things, however, are not the point—they are what one avoids. The ‘moral’ of this story is that one must avoid dwelling on death in order to fully feel and be inspired by Melancholy (like la Belle Dame, personified as female). This is mildly ironic coming from someone who was so haunted by death from illness. Instead, “when the melancholy fit shall fall” (11), one must “glut thy sorrow on a morning rose” (15)—focus on something beautiful. Strangely, though, Keats even suggests that “if thy mistress some rich anger shows...let her rave” (18-9) and, instead, “feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes” (20)—seize the opportunity and, in a typically Keatsian eating metaphor, take this as an opportunity to gain inspiration. The metaphor of consuming could also be related to the gradual waning of the physical body wasted through consumption.

This is the kind of beauty and inspiration that the knight-at-arms experiences in La Belle Dame sans Merci, and—as one can surmise from the dramatic emphasis Melancholy receives in this particular Ode—the same sort that Keats used as he drew from the miseries that abounded in his own life.

Of sorrow, Keats had this to say in his letters: “Byron says, “Knowledge is Sorrow”; and I go on to say that ‘Sorrow is Wisdom’” (Letters 1:80). In Ode on Melancholy, he goes on to say that sorrow (of a sort) is beauty, or even enhances already-present beauty. Melancholy, itself—or, as it is personified here, her—“dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die” (Keats 21), where Joy is forever “bidding adieu” (21), where everything is transient. However, just as this is fading beauty and parting joy, this pleasure also turns “to poison while the bee-mouth sips” (22). In fewer words, this is a bittersweet sort of inspiration—a poisonous Muse, if one would. Much like how the knight-at-arms is possibly trapped by the wild foods offered by la Belle Dame, so is the poet faced with the same hazards. However, despite this poison and this dying beauty, this is the feeling one needs to embrace. No poet can reach this hallowed place, save for “him whose strenuous tongue/Can burst Joy’s grape against his palate” (27-8) and “taste the sadness of her might./And be among her cloudy trophies hung” (29-30). Eating and negative capability are combined in the closing stanza and lines of the ode in a decidedly morbid and somewhat violent end. Joy’s grape must not only be consumed, it must be “burst,” and those poets who are able to take advantage of what Melancholy can give are not poets—artists—but “trophies.” They have become victims “of poetry, or rather, of the muse that melancholy became for poetry” (Haverkamp 703). These are not trophies of failure (703), per se, but trophies of the poets who have sacrificed themselves and their careers—much like the knight-at-arms and the “pale kings, and princes too, /pale warriors” (Belle Dame 41-2)—for this painful beauty. Of course, the only thing, as far as the modern reader can tell, that held more of bittersweet taste for Keats than his rather disastrous career and personal life, was his own battle with tuberculosis and the idea that he could fall victim to it at any time “And sure in language strange she said “I love thee true.” becomes the deathly love of consumption taking sway of the poet’s mortality.

The point of the poem seemed to be that, when faced with such a misery that would send a person running for oblivion one developed a “heightened awareness of beauty or vitality, and...the fragility of that beauty”. This is why, in the second stanza, one’s mistress shows “rich anger” —rather than negative, this is something beautiful—and there are rainbows in the ocean spray, and why one must “glut thy sorrow on a morning rose”, a thing of beauty to focus on during one’s melancholy fit. While it is best not to automatically conflate Keats with the speaker of Ode on Melancholy, it would be irresponsible to disregard this ode as merely a work of art as opposed to an explicit statement of this melancholy philosophy—as it very well is. Naturally, he had quite a bit of experience with his mistress, Melancholy, and the shadow of deadly sickness that she often represented during late 1818 and 1819. Such is obvious in both his attitude toward consumption and what the reader can see in La Belle Dame sans Merci itself.

It has since been established that the knight-at-arms was the one to initiate with la Belle dame. While it is unclear who was responsible for the sexual part of their encounter, it is the knight who does everything else—he decorates the object of his desires with flowers in flattery/worship, he is the one that put her on the horse and,

of course, he accepts her food without a second thought. It was not until they arrived at the home of this strange creature that la Belle Dame took obvious control. She was the one who “took [him] to her elfin grot” (Keats 32) and she “lulled [him] asleep” (36). Though she was the orchestrator of whatever had happened between them on the hillside, there has been speculation that the figure of the knight-at-arms and, indeed, Keats, “could be seen as a willing victim to consumptive creativity” (Lawlor 140). The fact that la Belle Dame as the Muse is portrayed as female is only following the conventions of the time—what is more important is the fact that she drains her victims. Or, one could argue, her victims let her drain them. There is a level of helplessness beyond negative capability involved—just as there is helplessness in sickness. However, the lines “She look’d at me as she did love./ And made sweet moan./ I set her on my pacing steed,/ And nothing else saw all day long” bear within them a sensuous connotation of the poet’s consummation of his love with death as life and death blend into a seamless body of everlasting youth depict a transcendence from the notion of being entrapped by death into moving beyond.

During the sleep after their dalliance, the knight-at-arms has a warning dream—“the latest dream [he] ever dream’d” (Keats 38)—by what seem to be the loitering shades of la Belle Dame’s past victims. The narrator “saw pale kings, and princes too, /Pale warriors, death pale were they all” (41-2)—pale just as he had become in the present. This is a word with a number of contexts, though the one that could be most logically associated with Keats’s poet figure could be the one with connotations of sickness and death. While these shades are pale, they are also somewhat withered figures. The knight-at-arms describes them as having “starv’d lips” (44) that “gaped wide” (45) while they gave their dream-time warning. Attention, then, is turned to what these ghosts are starved for—the obvious answer of ‘life’ aside. Just mighty and toxic creative force of Melancholy, so must the poet (more specifically, the knight-at-arms) waste away under her influence as his life-energy is burnt away—even if she is ethereal and supposedly absent. Since these great men don’t waste away until they have had their encounters with la Belle Dame herself, she acquires the connotation of pestilence. She is only beautiful because, as Keats has explained, the misery of the situation has heightened her beauty in her role as the Muse. The wasted figures of past victims also offer a rather graphic look at a victim of consumption in the physical sense. Medical science in the early 1800’s can offer one example of an allusion. The lines “I saw pale kings and princes too,/ Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;/ They cried- “La Belle Dame sans Merci Hath thee in thrall!” bear within them the unmistakable melancholic melody of reviving within poetry the dead souls lost to tuberculosis with “I saw their starv’d lips in the gloam,/ With horrid warning gaped wide” being a vivid description of the disease stricken individuals that Keats witnessed in a threefold manner- from his medical experience, from his own family tragedy involving his mother and his brother and finally in reference to his impending death from consumption.

At the time, as mentioned before, treatments such as “indiscriminate bloodletting” (White Death 14)—which occurred “every time he [Keats, in his own treatment] coughed up blood” —as well as special (starvation) diets and strenuous exercise while sick. While, during the composition of La Belle Dame sans Merci, Keats had not gone through any of these treatments himself, he would’ve been more than conscious of their existence. He might even have used or have seen them used on his brother (though this is unclear and entirely conjecture). On top of these rather strange and decidedly counterproductive applications of ‘medicine,’ tuberculosis is a wasting sickness in and of itself. Looking at the pale men through a medical lens, the pallor ties even more in with the flower imagery discussed before. These are kings, princes, warriors—great men who have gone before their time. Not only that, but the knight-at-arms himself is pale and feverish, the universal sign of sickness. The line about ‘starved lips’ takes on a new meaning as an image of the tuberculosis victim who is wasting away from both sickness and what the world has since seen as counterproductive medical measures of bleeding and starvation diets.

Though some readers claim the story in this ballad symbolic of the plight of the artist, who is always in love with beauty, can never fully accept the mundane; it seems much logical to maintain that the poem is really about Keats's feelings about his impending death coupled with his unrequited love for, his fiancée, Fanny Brawne; to whom he could not commit fully. The La Belle Dame or the beautiful woman who has no mercy upon her lovers can be equated with the icy coldness of tuberculosis which felt in love with Keats.

This poem was first penned by Keats on April 21, 1819, and then altered for its publication on May 20, 1819 when the foreshadow of tuberculosis enslaved him just as the beauty of the mysterious woman, La Belle Dame, enslaved the knight in the story of the poem, as well as kings, princes, and warriors. For him, the slowly all consuming effect of tuberculosis is as mysterious and merciless as the beauty of that woman in the story of the poem:

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful - a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.
I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan. -
She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said -
'I love thee true'.

That deadly- like condition enabled them to discover the sorrowful and reality of being enslaved to her:

And there she lulled me asleep
And there I dreamed - Ah! woe betide! -
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.
I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried - 'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

When the knight, together with Keats, wakened up they discovered that what happened was a nightmare then they both realized their miserable condition:

I saw their starved lips in the gloom,
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.
And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Given his experience with poetic, medical and social misfortune, Keats very logically took the route of the melancholy poet. Drawing on personal experiences as well as on his own imagination, of course, echoes of his problems haunt his writing, both fiction and non-fiction alike. The specter of tuberculosis, of course, hung heavily around his shoulders after his brother's death of the same disease. To add insult to a sort of injury, both *Ode on Melancholy* and *La Belle Dame sans Merci* were composed only a month or so after he first exhibited symptoms of the disease himself. Of course, with this in mind and Keats's subscription to the genre of melancholy poetry to begin with, one of the most obvious sources for his inspiration would come from this imminent and decidedly horrible sickness. Just as the knight-at-arms was pale yet flushed with fever, so too did he know he would meet the same fate—marched farther and faster on by his consumptive Muse as his vital force was burned away in chase. It is likely that even during the Romantic Era the positive view of tuberculosis was predominately seen in the affluent due to its association with the aesthetic and poetic. In addition, the urban poor would have been unable to support themselves as they contracted tuberculosis and any medical aid would have been financially out of their reach. The affect that tuberculosis had on the urban poor can be seen in its escalation to an endemic disease, which caused widespread public concern in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The advancements in medicine that allowed for tuberculosis to be seen for its true devastation led to an overwhelming change in its portrayal in literature. These forces combined and helped change the societal perceptions of tuberculosis. No longer was it seen as the romantic, poetic, aesthetically pleasing consumption of the Romantic Era, instead it evolved into a feared disease that could not truly be treated during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Even in the present, the problem remains with combating the various forms of tuberculosis, due to the increasing number of drug resistant strains.

V. THE SOV'REIGN SHRINE OF VEILED MELANCHOLY- THE SHADOW OF CONSUMPTION ON OTHER WORKS OF KEATS

Apart from a plethora of poems, even Keats's letters show an incredible longing for life and a desire to live while in the lap of the deathly disease. About Fanny, he expresses the view that she was like a lily, though beautiful yet pure. By her love, he thinks, the joys of spring will come back and he will be able to make love with his sweetheart, Fanny. Then he will be cured of his disease and will have full vitality to enjoy her youth:

Save it for me, sweet love! though music breathe
Voluptuous visions into the warm air;
Though swimming through the dance's dangerous
wreath,
Be like an April day,
Smiling and cold and gay,
A temperate lilly, temperate as fair;
Then, Heaven! there will be
A warmer June for me.

Bright Star was written by Keats perhaps on a voyage to Italy in an attempt to try a common treatment for tuberculosis. When he wrote this poem he was aware of the fact that he was dying. Bright Star has been theorized to be addressed to Fanny Brawne, connecting it to Keats' May 3, 1818 letter to her. In this poem he envies the bright star i.e. the Pole Star, not for its loneliness but for its constant and steadfastness:

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art--
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,

In it, the poet extols that if he possesses the constancy the Pole Star has, he would be able to enjoy a sort of immortality i.e. the immortality he can gain when he rests his head on the well-developed breast of his lover; feeling- forever its gentle rise and fall; but even then he will be always awakening to a sweet but restless feeling. This feeling is aroused by hearing the sound of her breathing which would remind him of the shortness of his life. This case of joy-pain condition seems to add more to his suffering and tantalization, which force him to wish either to be immortalized or to die soon. Both choices seem to be better than being tortured by a temporary joy that is always spoiled by pain and sorrow:

Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear tender taken breath,
And so live ever-or else swoon to death.

The Keatsian odes are on the irreconcilable conflict in basic human desires. The subjects of these odes show variations, and yet they have common characteristics: each presents an idea, an intellectual determination, and they are all written with the principle of artistic economy - "infinite riches in a little room."

Four of his poems stand out for their motifs of death and their references to consumption: Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode to a Nightingale, Ode on Melancholy, and On Seeing the Elgin Marbles. Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode to a Nightingale, and Ode on Melancholy were all written in 1819, shortly after Thomas Keats died of consumption. On Seeing the Elgin Marbles was written in 1817, at a time when John Keats would have been caring for Thomas. The first stanza of Ode on a Grecian Urn begins with the speaker addressing an ancient Grecian urn, completely focused on how the images on the urn are frozen in time. For the speaker, the urn acts as a historian that can tell a story from the past. Though the urn acts as a historian, the speaker is still left curious as to what the figures are depicting, the time they were from, and what their story is. The second stanza focuses on a second image on the urn; that of a young man and his lover laying beneath the trees; in the third stanza the speaker examines how the trees are permanently new, a state which echoes the lovers' never ending love. In these stanzas, Keats emphasizes the paradox of life and lifelessness by describing how the lover and the fair lady "cannot fade" their looks and actions unchanging as they exist in an eternally still and "silent form". In the

fourth stanza, the speaker examines the image of a group of villagers leading a heifer to be sacrificed. In this stanza, the speaker wonders where they are going to and coming from, and imagines what these places might be like now that they are forever abandoned.

The speaker, in the final stanza, speaks to the urn about its permanence and knowledge. Keats uses the Grecian urn to exemplify the immortality of beauty and the brooding shadow of death in the context of the brevity of human life. His aim is to communicate his delight in the shape of a Grecian urn. So, out of his imagination and with the magic of words, he shapes a Grecian urn, etches it with scenes of men and maidens dancing and playing and of a priest leading a procession to an outdoor altar. Ode on a Grecian Urn can be called the embodiment of his ideas about the influence of beauty upon life; its fragility and the mortal vessel's inevitable susceptibility to death. To Keats, beauty is not a passing thing but immortal. In this ode, he affirms the immortality of beauty through an urn created centuries ago. As with the scenes on the urn, in Keats' view, beauty is permanent as well as being the means of arriving at the truth about life. This aspiration to escape fallibility by recapturing eternity is derived from living a life overshadowed by the melancholia of death. In the urn, which captures moments of intense experience and freezes them into marble immortality - Keats finds the perfect correlation for his persistent concern with the longing for permanence in a world of change. He captures the immortal beauty through a 'sylvan historian' which is the urn itself. He likes the idea of something being there, something which cannot be changed forever :

'Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare.'

Keats is filled with envy at the immortality of the scenes described on the urn, while generations one after the other have been wasting away:

'When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain . . .'

In these lines, we feel the fear of an early death which Keats' father and his brother had already suffered. The poet seems to put an underlying meaning into 'old age' but the suffering from foreboding death restrains him from terming 'old age' as 'tuberculosis'. In the treatment of a simple thing, in an urn which is presented to us in an unusual aspect, Keats seems to weep that human beings are not immortal like the men, gods, and maidens on the urn. In Ode on a Grecian Urn, Keats focuses on the dichotomy between the earth and the ethereal, and between mortality and permanence. The themes of this poem reflect on Keats' ideas that his poetry would not be remembered. Ode on a Grecian Urn was written after Thomas had died, the themes of the poem reflect on the impermanence of the human body and the escape of the soul after death. In Ode on a Grecian Urn, Keats writes "when old age shall this generation waste"; written in consideration of the deaths through diseases such as consumption, war and famine. Keats uses the urn as a symbol for the ways in which the arts can offer consolation during times of suffering.

Ode to a Nightingale centers on the speaker's heartache, and how the nightingale's song makes him happy and gives him a feeling of euphoria and numbness. Through this poem, the speaker discusses how he wants to forget his troubles and desires, and follow the nightingale's immortal song even to the speaker's death. The main theme of Ode to a Nightingale is Keats' desire to die, if he can die in an easy and pain free manner. There are two other main thoughts in Ode to a Nightingale: Keats' evaluation of life and the power imagination holds. In Ode to a Nightingale, Keats is able to use the nightingale's song as a manifestation of creative expression. The speaker in the poem places his faith in the nightingale's song, which "fades[s] far away, [and] dissolve[s]" into the night. Ode to a Nightingale draws from Keats' pain after the death of his brother Thomas. In 1819, when Ode to a Nightingale was written, it is likely that Keats was already experiencing the painful manifestation of tuberculosis. During his illness Keats would have become increasingly aware of his own mortality, and would likely have wanted to find a way to end his suffering. In this poem, Keats uses emotions to emphasize the suffering felt from heartache and the reality of human mortality. Keats' Ode to a Nightingale begins with a change of aspect in the natural scene. The poet feels as though he has drunk hemlock or opiate. This serves only as stimulus to raise an emotional problem or personal crisis. At the time when Keats wrote this ode, the personal problem was his brother Tom's early death. He finds consolation when he pours out his feelings called up by the nightingale. The nightingale is regarded to be a source of consolation. The predominant mood in the poem is the enjoyment of death. Keats feels the highest intensity of love for the nightingale as an approximation to death or the longing for death. Every stanza has either a direct reference to death or some term associated with death. In the first stanza for instance, Keats implies death by longing for hemlock or opiate which will sink him to Lethe, to the waters of forgetfulness. In the lines 18 - 20, there is an almost direct implication of death: he wishes to drink the beaker of wine to leave the world without being seen. Away from

the troubles Keats cannot find a spiritual home in his own flesh, bone and soul. He is seeking a region which is capable of providing the proper environment for his passionate melancholic and isolated soul. The voyage he longs for in Ode to a Nightingale is away from the known, conventional and dull environment - away from the troubles of his own soul and the dominant shadow of deaths he witnessed in his family and his eventual surrender to tuberculosis - toward an exotic and mysterious place: the 'Warm South of France' with its sunburned mirth and provincial songs and dances. He wants to go to a place where his exhausted and the troubled soul might discover peace and find a haven. He wishes he would be like the nightingale to disappear in the forest of peace, joy and true beauty, but he cannot fly as the nightingale can so he urgently needs a beaker of wine with 'beaded bubbles winking at the brim' to disappear and be with his nightingale.

In Keats' world, sadness predominates over happiness and his world is full of misery and heartbreak. Like many Romantics, Keats finds melancholy in delight and pleasure in pain, in Ode to a Nightingale, in the heart of the moonlight; he sees no light at all. He is so wrapped up in his dark mood that he cannot see the flowers at his feet. All his senses seem to have failed. Keats yearns for immortality and immortal beauty. He reveals his envy for the nightingale's immortality in these lines: 'Thou wast not born for death immortal bird', and 'The voice I hear this passing night was heard in the ancient days by the emperor and the clown.' Keats reaches his aim and now both the nightingale pouring out her song and Keats embodying his poetry in lines which will be enjoyed forever are immortal.

As mentioned before, Keats believes the world is full of misery, heartbreak, pain and oppression. Like the other Romantics, he rarely laughs. For the Romantics, "there is only one way to be happy, but there are millions of ways to be miserable." But even that 'only way' has hardly ever been experienced by any one member of the Romantic writers. Keats, who is not able to see and enjoy the beauty of the flowers at his feet, is now under an acute emotional sensibility and feels melancholy everywhere. The melancholy pours down like a 'weeping cloud', it fosters 'the droop headed' flowers, but once the flowers 'hide the green hill'. Keats still broods over melancholy and calls the flowers 'April shroud'. For Keats depression exists in the same way as beauty does. Wherever we have delight, we will have melancholy disguised:

'Aye, in the very temple of Delight
Veiled Melancholy has her sov'reign shrine . . '

If we search for it, melancholy is there waiting to envelop everybody but only someone who is very sensitive and has a 'keen tongue' will taste melancholy. In other words, melancholy wins over the sentimental person and adds him to her collection as a trophy. It is obvious that Keats himself is such a person, as he tastes the sadness of melancholy when he squashes the grape against his sensitive palate.

Longing for Eternal Beauty: Keats' persistent theme, 'longing for eternal beauty' is reintroduced in Ode on Melancholy but only to weep for not being able to stop the inevitable end: "the tragic human destiny that beauty, joy and life itself are transitory and turn into their opposites." Melancholy dwells with Beauty - 'beauty that must die.' The grape of joy turns into melancholy when bursted. Ode on Melancholy addresses how to cope with sadness. The first stanza focuses on what the sufferer should not do, and end with reminding the sufferer not to forget their grief. The second stanza picks up with what the sufferer should do to help with the grief. In the third, and last, stanza, the speaker explains how these rules are linked, and that joy can only be found through sadness. In Ode on Melancholy, Melancholy acts as the consolation during suffering. Her anthropomorphized character embodies the dichotomy of pleasure and pain. Keats shows the pain and suffering that those still living feel upon the death of a loved one. However, he emphasizes that those still living must not forget their sadness, but rather should remember the beauty of the deceased. Rather than dulling one's senses, or committing suicide, the living must take comfort in the pleasure of memories. Keats was likely drawing on his own experience of grief after the sickness and death of his brother in order to portray pain and pleasure, like life and death, as coexistent entities that rely on each other in order to exist.

In On Seeing the Elgin Marbles, Keats uses the images of beauty and art as a way of examining human mortality. The main theme of this poem draws on human mortality, and the heaviness that humans feel when this mortality is made more obvious. This poem was written in 1817: at this time, Keats was caring for his dying brother. He would have become increasingly aware of human mortality, particularly his own and his brother's. As his brother's suffering increased and his death became more imminent, Keats would have felt helpless to ease his brother's suffering and pain. These feelings of helplessness and awareness of human mortality come through in On Seeing the Elgin Marbles. The overwhelming presence of these likely came across due to occurrences in Keats' life at the time and his inability to ignore the fact that his brother was dying. John Keats

is a prime example of the metaphors associated with tuberculosis. His life is reflected in his poems through the pictures of the beauty in early deaths, and the necessity of dichotomies such as melancholy and delight, and pleasure and pain. Through his poems a clear vision of the positive metaphors used by the Romantics is seen. Keats repeatedly holds on to the image of the beauty that can be found in death. This image holds with many of the English Romantics, who used the disease to shape the literature and poetry of the time.

For the first time, with the Romantics, nature is no longer taken for granted. It is valued as something which might be lost. The subjects that are the meanest and most unpromising are the best subjects for poetry. Keats is one of the Romantics who experimented in the simple treatment of the simple subjects -about nature. To Autumn has an abundance of these simple incidents and situations, but they are described with an accuracy of observation: the gourd swelling, the hazel shells plumping, the wheat sitting carelessly on a granary floor with its chaff soft - lifted by the winnowing wind, and the smell of the poppies making the uncut wheat drowsy, and amidst the motif of fulfillment and plenty, lingers the shadowy veils of death for all things attaining maturity are subject to inevitable decay.

VI. CONCLUSION

When Shelley learned that Keats had developed tuberculosis with a major hemoptysis, he wrote to Keats on July 27, 1820, urging the ailing poet to come to Italy and stay with him in Pisa.

“My Dear Keats, I hear with great pain the dangerous accident that you have undergone, and Mr. Gisborne who gives me the account of it, adds that you continue to wear a consumptive appearance. This consumption is a disease particularly fond of people who write such good verses as you have done, and with the assistance of an English winter it can often indulge its selection;—I do not think that young and amiable poets are at all bound to gratify its taste; they have entered into no bond with the Muses to that effect. But seriously (for I am joking on what I am very anxious about) I think you would do well to pass the winter after so tremendous an accident, in Italy, and if you think it as necessary as I do so long as you could find Pisa or its neighborhood agreeable to you, Mrs. Shelley unites with myself in urging the request, that you would take up your residence with us.”

Keats was determined to go to Rome. In August 1820 the despairing Keats wrote to his beloved Fanny Brawne expressing distress at the parting this would bring:

“I see nothing but thorns for the future—wherever I will be next winter in Italy or nowhere.... suppose me in Rome— well, I should see you there as in a magic glass going to and from town at all hours.... I wish I was either in your arms full of faith or that a thunder bolt would strike me.”

On September 17, 1820, Keats embarked on the Maria Crowther bound for Naples. Keats took with him a lock of Fanny Brawne’s hair in a locket. Early in the voyage while on board the Maria Crowther, Keats wrote his last sonnet.

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature’s patient, sleepless Eremite,
He moving waters at their priest-like task
Of pure ablution round earth’s human shores,
Or gazing on the new-sot-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors —
No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow’d upon my fair love’s ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

The image of death “pillowed on my fair love’s ripening breast” becomes a romantic image of death for the poet who knew what awaited him. After a few days in Naples, Keats traveled to Rome where he sickened further, suffering from abdominal complaints that led Clark to be concerned more about those symptoms than about his pulmonary tuberculosis.

Keats was trained in medicine, and his attitude towards his tuberculosis and impending death reflected that training. His romantic poetry dealt with beauty and love and only rarely death; his letters with reality.

Above all, there was a tone of submission to the inevitability of death. stanza VI of Ode to a Nightingale, written in May 1819, three months after his portentous blood-spitting, greeted death as "easeful." It may represent the most romantic image of inescapable death written by Keats and was one of a very few such.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

A letter to Charles Brown written from Naples on November 1, 1820, dealt with his grief at separation from his beloved Fanny Brawne. He clearly anticipated his demise in Italy: "o that I could be buried near where she lives!" his was followed later in the letter by: "Remember me to all. I will endeavor to bear my miseries patiently." here was nothing in this or other letters to suggest that Keats viewed death with any attitude other than resignation.

Keats longed for "easeful death." in his medically trained yet romantic mind there could be no outcome to tuberculosis other than death. While he surely was pained by this fatal prognosis, he equally surely accepted it. Resignation and acceptance were the only options for consumptive persons in Keats's era. References to death in his poetry were romantic, to be sure, but they also bespoke the certainty of life's end as the only outcome for the sufferer from tuberculosis. as the end neared, Keats asked and was denied by Severn, laudanum (tincture of opium), with which he intended to end his life. On Friday afternoon, February 23, 1821, the twenty-five-year-old Keats died in his friend's arms. An autopsy confirmed the presence of extensive pulmonary and widely disseminated tuberculosis. John Keats was buried in a Protestant cemetery, a letter from Fanny Brawne placed over his heart.

Lamenting his death, Shelley wrote, "I weep for Adonais is dead! Oh, weep for Adonais! Through our tears Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head! And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers, And teach them thine own sorrow, say: "With me Died Adonais; till the Future dares Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be An echo and a light unto eternity! In conclusion, it may be said that the poet's triumph over consumption rings true in his lines: "If I should die, I have left no immortal work behind me. Nothing to make my friends proud of my memory; but I have loved the principle of beauty in all things, and if I had time, I would have made myself remembered." John Keats

Works Cited:

Martinez Gabriela. Romanticizing Tuberculosis: Poetry, Prose, Opera, And Society Of The Romantic Era. Texas State University-San Marcos. 2013. Web. Thomas M. Daniel. Times And Tides Of Tuberculosis. Fithian Press, California. 2013. Print. Caroline Bertonèche. On The Role Of Medicine In John Keat's Life And Art. Web. Doç. Dr. Yüksel. John Keats And The Romantic Elements In His Odes. Web Bloom, Harold. The Anxiety Of Influence. Oxford University Press. Print William B. Ober. Drowsed With The Fume Of Poppies: Opium And John Keats. Web

Dr. Salah Mahajna. The Problems of Life and Death in Romantic Poetry. <http://www.qsm.ac.il/mrakez/asdarat/jamiea/7/salahmahagneh-final.pdf> Anna Burwell . Ouroboros: La Belle Dame as the Shadow of Consumption. Ohio State University at Lima. 2012. Print.