

## **AFRICAN POETRY**

### **BLACK WOMAN BY LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR**

#### **POET'S BACKGROUND:**

Leopold Sedar Senghor is a poet, philosopher, scholar and statesman. He was born in Joal, Senegal in 1906. Senghor's name is generally linked with the philosophy of Negritude. He died in 2001 at the age of 95

#### **THE BACKGROUND POEM**

The poem "Black Woman" is a poem devoted to praise the beauty of African woman. The white writers had written so many praise poems celebrating white woman, adoring the physical beauty and the colour of the Whiteman which they see in terms of her whiteness, glory, frankness, elegant hands, the face's whiteness which they (the white poet's describe as radiance of the sun, dazzling moon etc. Senghor's Black woman published to adore the beauty of African woman which as of that time no poem has been written in praise of the beauty of African woman. The poem is devoted to all African women

#### **SETTING OF THE POEM**

The poem is set in African. It is set in the 1920 and 1930

#### **THE SUMMARY OF THE POEM**

This poem is devoted to the beauty of the black woman. The black woman is "clothed" with her colour of black which beautifies her.

In lines 1- 10

The black woman is naked but she is "clothed with your colour". The poet's love and adoration for black woman is not mainly for the colour and beauty but also she has been made the source of the life force and guidance of the house. It is in the guardian of this woman that the poetic persona grew up. "The gentleness of your hands" which may have smothered his face, hence he is talking about showing love, care and concern of the black women. The poet is so sure of the confidence is the ability of black woman to sustain and life.

The white mocks the blacks by featuring blackness or darkness, nakedness as ugly and nasty the poet see these as charming. The poet has reached his maturity stage as seen in stanza two when he says that "at the heart of summer /

at the heart of the noon". He comes upon his "promised land". This maturity can refer to the stage when he begins to understand and appreciate the beauty of African woman. In the third stanza, the poet extols his object of admiration. He uses images to describe and evoke emotions and spiritual realities about the black woman he praises. For instance expressions such as "like the flash of an eagle" which evokes the emotions that goes with the beauty and nobility of the eagle. He describes the suddenness of the beauty of the black woman.

The "naked" woman is metaphorically a "firm- fleshed ripe fruit". She is also referred as "somber raptures of the black wine". In lines 20- 28, Senghor refers to the woman`s beauty to "Oil that no breath ruffles". The oil the naked woman is likened to the oil that comes from "the athlete`s flanks" or from the flanks of princes of Mali. The "dark women is compared to gazelle (a small slender antelope) made in "paradise". Her skin is described as pearls and glinting red gold. This naked woman is the delights of the mind "just the same that "red gold" glints and adorns the woman`s watered skin". Her deep black and dark hair adds to her beauty, while her eyes are likened to "suns" which is set side by side face like the way the eyes are located on human."The neighbouring suns o f your eyes".

Line 29-33.The poet sees the beauty of African woman as perfect beauty. Though she is mortal but her beauty "passes" for the form and shape is eternally designed her beauty has gone perfection in the spiritual realm and cannot be killed by white man" criticism Senghor celebrates Africa especially his country, Senegal. He sees African as his "promised land", flowing with milk and honey. To him, Africa is everything good, beautiful and bright.

"Black woman" is a Negritude poem which aims at reviving through literature, the cultural values, identify and beauty of Africans.

## **POETIC DEVICES**

### **1. Language and style:**

The language is not simple one as the poem will pose a problem for an average reader because almost every ward used by the poet is symbolic. Such as "sun- baked" , "tau tom tom" etc. These words which European writers use as insults are used by the poet to showcase the

Beauty of “black woman”. Senghor assesses beauty from nature, stressing that a beautiful woman has to be judged from total nakedness.

Use of symbols and imageries:

The poem has so many images such as “naked woman” which shows that the woman is clothed with her colour.

“The gentleness of your hands” which cares for his eyes

“Any your beauty strike me to the heart like the flash of an eagle”

Others are “firm flashed ripe fruit”, mouth making lyrical my mouth etc.

The poet uses symbols to arouse the emotion of spirituality, beauty, mobility, perfection which he attaches with the black woman such as “black, dark and naked” etc.

Ambiguity/Abstraction which is a word with double meaning.

The poet says that the black woman is naked and clothed with your colour which is life. Does it mean that life has a colour?

“In your shadow I have grown up” can mean I grow up learning from your shadow or “Your shadow has enabled me to grow up.

Again the naked woman is described as my promised land and human being cannot be a land even though it is used here metaphorically.

Abstraction is unrealistic idea. The poet saying mouth making lyrical my mouth’ is this caused by the “raptures of black wine” “Calm oil on the athlete’s flanks on the flanks of princes of Mali” is mean less here so are abstract.

Metaphor \_ The poet uses metaphor almost half of the expression seen in black woman is metaphor.

The black woman being referred as a promised I and “ripe fruits savannah, carved tom-tom, oil sun-baked pass, heart of summoned.

Apostrophe- The whole poem and presented as the black woman is physically present with the speaker.

Simile- The poet uses simile in line 5” And your beauty strike like the flash of an eagle”.

Repetition- Certain words and are repeated to create effect as seen repetition of these naked woman black woman dark woman.

Alliteration- The poet uses alliteration such as a firm-fleshed” mouth making savannah shuddering. This is to make the poem musical.

The structure of the poem “Black woman” has thirty-three lines. It is a free-verse. It is writing in four stanzas of eighteen lines. The poet uses short line for emphasis and each stanza starts with naked woman or black woman.

Themes-

#### 1. African beauty

The poet is a negritude poem that is devoted to the beauty of the black female. Here this woman is naked is adored in by describing her colour, shape, shadow and the gentleness of her hands. Some elements of beauty are used in “sun-baked pass”, the heart of summer, the heart of moon”, “firm- fleshed ripe fruit”, somber raptures of black wine” mouth making lyrical my mouth ,” East wind’s eager caresses, “contralto voice”,” the Beloved”, calm are on the athletes franks, gazelle limbed in paradise”,” pearls, are stars on the night of your skin”.

“Glinting of the red gold “, a watered skin”, etc.

All these words are used to praise.

#### 2 Black is beautiful

Senghor in this poem extols blackness which was not recognized as good. In his poem he lifts blackness and sees it as a pride and worthy of adoration. In the poem the naked woman is “clothed with your colour which is life’. Blackness is seen as the colour of life.”

In contrast to how the white perceive blackness, Senghor recognize its beauty and elegance. The beauty “strikes me to the heart like the flash of | an eagle”. The wine that has “ruptured is black.”

African land scope feature and its vastness which enables “the East winds..... Flow freely.

#### 3 African, the promise land”

The poet is concerned about his country and African. To him Africa is everything good, beautiful and bright. Africa is bestowed of good thing of life by nature. The weather condition is the nature best, so the poet sees Africa as his “promised land’, which flows with milk and honey. The poet uses many images to extol the values and identify of the African continent.

#### 4 The aroma and beauty of African woman

The poet writes about black woman who is naked. He stresses that this woman is beautiful not because of adornments such as clothing or apparel which even can suppress or exaggerate a woman's beauty. Rather black woman is "clothed with your colour (black) which is life, with your form which is beauty". He promises the form and shape of the woman. He marks the gentleness of your hand was laid over my eyes"

This black woman is "firm\_ fleshed ripe fruit" and liked to the "somber rapture of black wine". He does not compare her to red wine but black wine. The poet recognizes the mortality of black woman which is the lot of all both white and black.

#### 5 Rejection of European standard of beauty.

The poet rejects the European standard of beauty. He judges and beautifies woman from her total nakedness. He believes beauty should be assessed from nature contrary to the European writers who cajole and criticize Africa as unworthy and undesirable. Senghor writes to reverse the negative image of Africa. In this poem black is a colour of life / it is the "from which is beauty. The attributes of black woman and of Africa are extolled. Africa and the woman is promised as "shadow," sun baked pass" Africa being the land of sunshine,

The "heart of summer" and the heart of moon". The maturity of Africa is emphasized when he refers to "firm fleshed ripe," somber raptures of black wine "etc.

Senghor reveals that Africa woman's beauty is to be judged by nature, maturity, warmness, fine weather, caring, delight of the mind, peace and friendly neighboring suns".

### **BASIC LITERARY TERMS**

- 1) Rhyme: (often spelt Rime) Involves a comparison between two or more words and means the similarity of sound between the endings of two or more words, beginning at the accented vowel and continuing to the end of the word. Hall rhymes with call: cry rhymes with sky; sill rhymes with still, door rhymes with floor; and so on.
  - 2) Double of Feminine Rhyme: This is when two words rhymes within the same line. Example, spreading and tending, housing and rousing all words being of two syllables.
  - 3) Middle Rhyme: Is when a` rhyme occurs between an accented sound in the middle of a line and sound at the end. Example: All armed\ rides, whatever betides until I find the Holy Grail?
  - 4) Masculine Rhyme: Is when one syllable of a word rhymes with another word (e.g. sound and ground; touch and watch; match and catch- all words are of one syllable each)
  - 5) Triple Rhyme: This is a kind of rhyme involving three syllables, e.g. slender and tenderly or in quivering and shivering.
  - 6) Alternate Rhyme: This occurs when in a group of lines, of poetry, the first rhymes with the third and the second line rhymes with the fourth line. Example:  
Gather ye rose-buds while ye may  
Old time is still a-flying  
And this same flower that smiles today  
Tomorrow will be dying.
- It should be noted that the rhyme scheme of the above alternate rhyme is ab ab, cd cd.
- 7) Rhyme Scheme: This is a pattern or sequence in which the rhyme occurs in poetry.
  - 8) Verse: When we talk of verse in any literary work, it refers to any form of writing or any metrical composition arranged in lines, each conforming to pattern of accented and unaccented syllables. Poetry is mostly written in verse; therefore verse is mostly used as synonym for poetry.
  - 9) Couplet: A couplet is usually two lines of a poem having equal length and rhyming together.
  - 10) Triplet: This is stanza or a poem of three lines.
  - 11) Sestet: A poem of six lines is called sestet.
  - 12) Septet: Is a poem or a stanza of seven lines.

- 13) Octet: Is a group of eight lines of poetry.
- 14) Octave: The first eight line of the sonnet is called the octave.
- 15) Nunullet: Is a poem or a stanza of nine lines.
- 16) Sonnet: Is a poem of fourteen lines of five basically iambic feet.

We have two types of sonnet:

- a) The Italian or patrarchan, and
  - b) The Shakespearean or Elizabethan sonnet
- 17) Rhyme Couplets: Rhymes couplets as their name implies, rhymes in pairs, AA, BB, CC. DD. They are usually four or five basically iambic feet.

## **INTRODUCTION TO WUTHERING**

### **HEIGHTS BY EMILY BRONTE**

#### Author's background

Emily Bronte was born in 1818. She was the daughter of an Irish clergyman and was the fifth child. *Wuthering heights* published a year before death in 1847 at the age of thirty.

#### The background of the story:

*Wuthering Heights* was published in 1847 during the reign of Queen Victoria called Victorian Era. The novels written that era were characterized by formal rules of behavior where love courtship and marriage are concerned. Then woman were not allowed to meet gentleman except when accompanied by some elderly person. Marriage was between couples of the same class but after the industrial revolution, woman began to move outside the home, were education, began to work, and these challenge many of the societal value.

Then the society was mindful of class hierarchy. There were the upper class, the middle class and the working class. Inter- class marriage was not welcomed and when it happened. It created a lot of tension.

The early made use of the convention of realism which Emily used also so *Wuthering Heights* combined realism and romance which made the novel gothic in nature. A gothic fiction evokes terror, horror, mystery through its atmosphere, themes, setting and elements of the supernatural.

#### SETTING:

The action that happen in *Wuthering Heights* takes place in or around two neighboring houses on the Yorkshire moors which are *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrush cross Grange* . It was published in 1847.

#### THE PLOT OF THE STORY

The story is told through the diary of Mr. Lockwood who writes his experiences and the recollection of others.

He rents Thrush Cross Grange, a remote house in the Yorkshire moors of Northern England one day he visits Wuthering Heights a nearby home of his new landlord, Heathcliff. He encounters several strange and unpleasant characters: Cathy, Heathcliff's beautiful but rude daughter-in-law; Hareton; Hareton Earnshaw, an uncivilized yet prideful young man; Joseph, rude and bad tempered old servant and Heathcliff the misanthropic (a person who does not like other people) owner of both Wuthering Heights and Thrush Cross Grange.

Lockwood visits for a second time. He is forced to sleep there because of a snowstorm. He is awakened by a ghostly child who calls herself Catherine Linton who begs him to let her in through the window. Lockwood is afraid and wakes Heathcliff who comes and opens the window, calls and begs the ghost to return. Lockwood is desperate to leave the haunted house and desires to move to Thrush Cross Grange. He returns to Thrush Cross Grange and asks the housekeeper, Nelly Dean if she knows about the strange occupants of Wuthering Heights. Nelly Dean explains that she grew up as a servant at the Wuthering Heights and tells her story of the house beginning that nearly thirty years earlier, Wuthering Heights was owned by the Earnshaw family: Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw and their two young children; Catherine and Hindley. Mr. Earnshaw returns from a trip a certain day with a young orphan boy who was later named Heathcliff. Catherine and Heathcliff become friends. Heathcliff is preferred by Mr. Earnshaw which arouses jealousy and hatred of Hindley. Hindley is sent to college to resolve this problem. When Mr. Earnshaw dies and Hindley returns with his new wife, Frances and takes control of Wuthering Heights,

he reduces Hindley to a servant. Hindley does not care for his sister but devotes his time to his wife and as a result Heathcliff and Catherine's children are unmonitored so wander through the moors misbehaving together.

During such moments they sneak to Thrush Cross Grange, where the refined Linton family lives. Their dogs attacked them while they were spying through the window. Mr. Linton takes Catherine in while he, Heathcliff is chased away.

Catherine stays till the dog bite heals and she returns to Wuthering Heights where Hindley humiliates H Heathcliff asking him greet Catherine as a queen Catherine like other servants. Catherine calls heathcliff dirty and compares him to her new friends, Edgar and Isabella Linton. When Catherine new friend's visit, Hindley humiliates him again and he vows to revenge but Nelly advises him forgive him. Frances gives birth to Hareton but dies; this devastates Hindley who sinks deep into alcoholism so become abusive. Edgar Linton courts Catherine and she is confused about Heathcliff's love and Edgar's love. Catherine, even though has accepted Edgar's proposal, she would have loved to marry Heathcliff but states that it will be degrading to marry his class. Heathcliff over hears it and moves out of Wuthering Heights.

Catherine marries Edgar and lives at Thrushcross grange with Edgar's sister, Isabella. Heathcliff returns and now have mysteriously fortune. He stays at Wuthering Height Hindley has become a gambler, Catherine is happy to see Heathcliff while Edgar hates him and hates his unusual relationship with Heathcliff. heathcliff courts Isabella knowing she is the heir to Edgar's property.

This causes conflict between Heathcliff, Catherine and Edgar. Heathcliff is ordered to leave and he elopes with Isabella. The stress cause Catherine to fall sick and dies soon after giving birth to a daughter called Catherine.

Heathcliff vows to revenge her death on Edgar. Isabella flees to London and gets delivered of a son called Linton Heathcliff whom she raises alone. Hindley dies and Nelly gets to know that Wuthering Heights has been mortgaged to Heathcliff. Edgar trains his daughter, when Isabella dies, he tries to adopt Linton but could not because Heathcliff demands that his son come to live with him at the Wuthering Heights. The young Catherine later discovers about Wuthering Height and her cousin Linton.

Heathcliff succeeds in revenging by forcing Catherine to Mary sick Linton which will ensure that he will gain control of Edgar's daughter and his family home Heathcliff kidnaps Cathy and forces her to Mary Linton. Edgar dies and Linton inherits.

Thrushcross Grange. He forces Cathy to move to Wuthering Heights. Linton dies after leaving all his property to Heathcliff. Heathcliff raises Hindley's promising son.

Hareton a rude, uneducated servant observes how Hindley treated Heathcliff, his revenge on Edgar by gaining ownership of Thrushcross Grange. How he made Edgar's daughter miserable. This story makes Lockwood leave the area. He returns month later to discover that Heathcliff has died. He desires to reunite with Catherine. Nelly revealed to Lockwood that Heathcliff began behaving strangely, saying that he was within sight of heaven".

After his death several villagers claim to have seen his ghosts and Catherine's ghosts walking through the moors. Lockwood is surprised to hear about his plan of Cathy and Hareton to Mary in the New Year. Nelly reveals to him their plan to move back into Thrushcross Grange after wedding. Lockwood wonders over to the graves of Edgar, Catherine and Heathcliff, wondering if they are finally at peace.

### THE THEMES

- 1) Deceit and betrayal: This is portrayed in Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff who appears to be helpless and harmless plays his way to the kind heart of Mr. Earnshaw who shelters and protects him. He takes out revenge on Hindley and extends it to his son, Hareton. He also revenges on Cathy because she marries Edgar. He blackmails Hindley which causes his untimely death. Heathcliff deceives Catherine to marry his son in order to get their inheritances. Even when Edgar discovers his deceit on his deathbed, he bribes the lawyer so that he avoids going to Edgar to avoid him changing his will. Heathcliff betrays the trusts of Mr. Earnshaw.
- 2) Another theme is love: In Wuthering Heights, Catherine and Heathcliff's passion for each other is displayed. It is the source of most of the major conflicts that structure the novel's plot. The first half of the novel centering on the love between Catherine and Heathcliff and the second half features the developing love between young Catherine and Hareton. The love between Catherine and Heathcliff is real, and progressively. They develop strong for each other when they were young even when they became adult and even in death both are buried side by side. So the type

of love that exists between Catherine and Heathcliff is based true love while Catherine and Edgar`s marriage is based on selfishness and on the other hand the love that exists between Isabella and Heathcliff is based on infatuation Catherine Linton`s love to her cousin whom she later married is on infatuation. Catherine Linton`s love to her cousin whom she later married is on infatuation; but she later develops true love.

- 3) Parental responsibility: In Wuthering Height theme of parental responsibility is seen in the life of Earnshaw who cares for his family and spends time with his children, unlike his son Hindley who leaves his responsibility to the nannies. Heathcliff also abandons his parental responsibility to house helps. Edgar is shows an example of good parenting, even as a single parent he raises a well behaved daughter, young Catherine.
- 4) Revenge and retribution: This is a major theme in the novel. Heathcliff hates people and likes to revenge. He exacts his revenge on Hindley and Hareton, his son. He revenges on Catherine because he feels she left him to marry Edgar. This he achieves this by marry Edgar`s sister, Isabella and this causes Catherine`s and Isabella`s death and even Edgar`s death. Heathcliff reaps the fruit revenge when he is struck with a strange illness which eventually kills him. And he suffers from the curse placed on him for destroying her life. Heathcliff is tormented and he suffers sleepless nights for eighteen years so his revenge results in retribution. No one who causes other pain go unpunished.

- a) The narrative techniques in Emily Bronte`s Wuthering Heights. The story uses many symbols. The setting is symbolic, even the climatic conditions, the characters and various object or symbols. The author uses series of enveloping first person narratives. Lockwood who is the first narrator narrates the stories which Nelly dean, the main narrator, the narrating of Isabella, Catherine and Zillah.

Use of verbal and dramatic which the author uses when Heathcliff eavesdrops on the conversation between Catherine Earnshaw (Linton (and Nelly about Edgar`s marriage proposal, he does not wait to hear about Catherine`s talk about her true love for him describing him as her

soul mate but leaves ignorant of her love for him while the readers are aware of her real love for him. It is also ironical for Heathcliff to be obsessed about possessing Wuthering and the Grange when he is the rightful inheritor

#### MAJOR CONFLICT

1. Catherine Earnshaw is thrown in conflict between the love for Heathcliff and her desire to marry from her class (being a gentle woman). To Catherine marry Heathcliff is degrading so her desire to marry Edgar Linton puts almost all the novel's characters into conflict with Heathcliff.
2. The need for Heathcliff to revenge himself for Catherine's betrayal for leaving him to marry Edgar and revenge for all Hindley's abuses humiliations climax. The death of Catherine results to deeper desire for Heathcliff to revenge to Hindley and Edgar.

Foreshadowing: Lockwood's initial visit to Wuthering Heights and the mysterious relationship between the characters create an air of mystery. The ghostly night mares which he had when he spends in Catherine's old bed show many of the events of the rest of the novel.

#### USE OF CONTRAST

There are contrasts between the characters of Heathcliff and Edgar, between Catherine and Isabella and between Linton and Hareton, the contrasts between good and evil, chaos and order, nature and culture revenge and forgiveness etc.

Wuthering Heights is a gothic novel so it is designed to be characterized by an atmosphere of mystery and horror. It creates terror and dread by creating fearful atmosphere, themes, setting and elements of the supernatural. The setting of the gothic novel is usually a haunted castle or mansion. Heathcliff's residence has gothic architecture being an old mansion with a lonely solitary occupant and solitary neighbor who lives in the mansion called grotesque.

Wuthering Heights uses ghosts which appear in nightmares and is superstitions; this is seen in the experience of Lockwood in Wuthering Heights

of having nightmare. The ghost of Catherine visits and she comes in apparition form. The ghosts of Heathcliff and Catherine are also sighted.

Again the mysterious wealth of Heathcliff is an element of gothic as no one knows how he made his money. He is dangerous and vengeful. Again characters are seen wandering the desolate and rugged setting of the novel in harsh weather and circumstances which create gothic consciousness in the novel.

#### Assignments

- 1) Emily Bronte`s novel, "Wuthering Heights" is characterized by complex but deliberate pattern of repetition and contrast. Discuss.
- 2) Examine in detail the process of Heathcliff`s revenge. Is it justifiable? Give your reasons either in support or against.

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of love that exists between Catherine and Heathcliff is based true love while Catherine and Edgar`s marriage is based on selfishness and on the other hand the love that exists between Isabella and Heathcliff is based on infatuation Catherine Linton`s love to her cousin whom she later married is on infatuation. Catherine Linton`s love to her cousin whom she later married is on infatuation; but she later develops true love.

- 7) Parental responsibility: In Wuthering Height theme of parental responsibility is seen in the life of Earnshaw who cares for his family and spends time with his children, unlike his son Hindley who leaves his responsibility to the nannies. Heathcliff also abandons his parental responsibility to house helps. Edgar is shows an example of good parenting, even as a single parent he raises a well behaved daughter, young Catherine.
- 8) Revenge and retribution: This is a major theme in the novel. Heathcliff hates people and likes to revenge. He exacts his revenge on Hindley and Hareton, his son. He revenges on Catherine because he feels she left him to marry Edgar. This he achieves this by marry Edgar`s sister, Isabella and this causes Catherine`s and Isabella`s death and even Edgar`s death. Heathcliff reaps the fruit revenge when he is struck with a strange illness which eventually kills him. And he suffers from the curse placed on him for destroying her life. Heathcliff is tormented and he suffers sleepless nights for eighteen years so his revenge results in retribution. No one who causes other pain go unpunished.

- b) The narrative techniques in Emily Bronte`s Wuthering Heights. The story uses many symbols. The setting is symbolic, even the climatic conditions, the characters and various object or symbols. The author uses series of enveloping first person narratives. Lockwood who is the first narrator narrates the stories which Nelly dean, the main narrator, the narrating of Isabella, Catherine and Zillah.

Use of verbal and dramatic which the author uses when Heathcliff eavesdrops on the conversation between Catherine Earnshaw (Linton (and Nelly about Edgar`s marriage proposal, he does not wait to hear about Catherine`s talk about her true love for him describing him as her

soul mate but leaves ignorant of her love for him while the readers are aware of her real love for him. It is also ironical for Heathcliff to be obsessed about possessing Wuthering and the Grange when he is the rightful inheritor

#### MAJOR CONFLICT

3. Catherine Earnshaw is thrown in conflict between the love for Heathcliff and her desire to marry from her class (being a gentle woman). To Catherine marry Heathcliff is degrading so her desire to marry Edgar Linton puts almost all the novel's characters into conflict with Heathcliff.
4. The need for Heathcliff to revenge himself for Catherine's betrayal for leaving him to marry Edgar and revenge for all Hindley's abuses humiliations climax. The death of Catherine results to deeper desire for Heathcliff to revenge to Hindley and Edgar.

Foreshadowing: Lockwood's initial visit to Wuthering Heights and the mysterious relationship between the characters create an air of mystery. The ghostly night mares which he had when he spends in Catherine's old bed show many of the events of the rest of the novel.

#### USE OF CONTRAST

There are contrasts between the characters of Heathcliff and Edgar, between Catherine and Isabella and between Linton and Hareton, the contrasts between good and evil, chaos and order, nature and culture revenge and forgiveness etc.

Wuthering Heights is a gothic novel so it is designed to be characterized by an atmosphere of mystery and horror. It creates terror and dread by creating fearful atmosphere, themes, setting and elements of the supernatural. The setting of the gothic novel is usually a haunted castle or mansion. Heathcliff's residence has gothic architecture being an old mansion with a lonely solitary occupant and solitary neighbor who lives in the mansion called grotesque.

Wuthering Heights uses ghosts which appear in nightmares and is superstitions; this is seen in the experience of Lockwood in Wuthering Heights

of having nightmare. The ghost of Catherine visits and she comes in apparition form. The ghosts of Heathcliff and Catherine are also sighted.

Again the mysterious wealth of Heathcliff is an element of gothic as no one knows how he made his money. He is dangerous and vengeful. Again characters are seen wandering the desolate and rugged setting of the novel in harsh weather and circumstances which create gothic consciousness in the novel.

#### Assignments

- 3) Emily Bronte`s novel, "Wuthering Heights" is characterized by complex but deliberate pattern of repetition and contrast. Discuss.
- 4) Examine in detail the process of Heathcliff`s revenge. Is it justifiable? Give your reasons either in support or against.

## **THE GOOD MORROW BY JOHN DONNE**

### **POET'S BACKGROUND**

He was born in 1572 in England. He studied at Oxford University and university of Cambridge but his certificates were withheld because he did not denounce his catholic faith. He later read law and became a barrister. He secretly married Anne more. He is a well-known poet. He died on 31<sup>st</sup> march, 1631.

### **POETIC BACKGROUND**

John Donne came from catholic family and the issue of religion affected his life. His certificates were seized because of his catholic faith. His brother was imprisoned and even died in the prison, hence those incidents affected his poetic style. Again John Donne marriage was one of love so it was believed to have affected his love poems and sonnets. He was one of the metaphysical poets who saw poetry as an intellectual Endeavour.

### **SETTING**

The poem's setting is in England ground the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

### **POETIC ANALYSIS**

"The Good Morrow" is a metaphysical poem which explores the joys of love. It is a love poem. The poet uses the poem to assure that the love that exists between him and his lover is true and pure love which can neither change nor die as this love is immortal. In the stanza 1, John Donne uses rhetorical questions to address his loved one asking his lover to flash back to before they were lovers, what their existence was like before they met and loved each other. The poem is a monologue which gives the opportunity for only the poetic persona to be heard. The poem was set in an era when the sociopolitical and cultural values made women to be seen and not be heard.

The poet answers his rhetorical questions by affirming that the joy and pleasures they enjoyed or thought were just a shadow of the joy and love they feel when they are together. The poet is surprised that the lovers had not being together in the past so sees those periods as wasted and unprofitable times. Hence he ponders if the reason the both lovers had not become lover previous

was because they had been sleeping before as in “the seven sleepers den” or whether it was because they were still being weaned (were still too young) so could not decide or think about love. John Donne sees this period as an innocent stage where the beauty of love is missing. He sees his life before meeting this person whom he loves as a waste and unproductive person.

In stanza two, he bids good morning to his love and it is from here the title of the poem “The Good Morrow” comes from. He talks about his souls now walking from their “dream” and enjoying real love. They are really in love and fond of each other. Their experiences, pleasant sights and the bedroom experiences and the time they spend together have become their world. He stresses that there is no fear in their love. Donne believes that real love is not deceitful, but loyal and dependable. Also a person that is genuinely in love must not be distracted from his or her love as true lover will not lust after other people or cheat his lover. The poet personal talks of true love as being blind to the faults of this lover by saying that “for love all love of other sights control”. John Donne sees the whole world as little compared the world that head his lover have created. All that matters to him is the room that he and his lover is while any other world is empty of everything good, so he tells lover we don’t need those other worlds, because our bodies are a world in themselves, ready for the other to explore in “worlds on world and “each hath one and is one” stating that “they (the lovers) should enjoy a bit of “world on – world action” meaning that his body is a new world for his lover to explore and her body is a world for him to possess and explore. In the last stanza the poetic personal talks about the face of his lover and talks about her eyes and the eyes are windows to the soul. The sees his face reflected in his lover’s eye and her face appears eye. He talks about their heart being exposed to each other. The persona compares the spiritual and immortal form of their love to perfect hemispheres and the loss of sunset. He declares that “love so alive, the none do slacken none can die” meaning that he is confident that the love that he and his loved one share is strong and therefore their physical, emotional and spiritual union would ensure that their love would never die. He uses the metaphor of “hemispheres”-half worlds. Donne argues his and her lover’s “hemispheres are better than the hemisphere that make up the Earth, since their love has no cold North pole and no” declining West” which means that the sun will never go down on the love for each other. The poem is a metaphysical poem that is mutual and perfect and we knows that no human love is perfect as humans are subject to change and are always in consistence so he talks about the steadfastness of agape love

comparing the love that he and his lover share with the perfect love that Jesus embodies the expression of God's love for human kind is a love so deep and so constant. Donne is talking about that metaphysical and super sensible God. The poet concludes the poem by saying that if their love for each other is felt equally strongly on both sides, then their love is strong and cannot die.

### POETIC DEVICES | TECHNIQUES

The structure of ``The Good Morrow by John Donne is a poem of twenty-one lines which has three stanzas of seven lines. The poem has the rhyme scheme of ababccc called septet or the rhyme royal. It is iambic pentameter.

### DICTION| LANGUAGE

The language is not all that simple but it can be understood by average reader. The ``Good Morrow'' is a dramatic monologue in poetry where a one sided conversation is delivered by the poet or poetic person. The diction used in the poet march the time setting seventeenth century when the dominant theme of the age was usually love. The poet uses allusion to bible, classical and philosophical meanings. In the poem, John Donne compares himself and his lover to the seven sleepers, who were seven Christians, sealed in a cave by the Roman Emperor Decius in 250 AD.

### ALLITERATION

The poet uses some alliteration such as

``were.. We ---- weaned''

``which watch'

``world on world''

``till then ''

``seven sleepers''.

### HYPERBOLE

The poet uses hyperbole in almost all the lines of the poet just to exaggerate the love between the two lovers. Examples ``if ever any beauty\ did see which I desired and get, it was a dream of thee'' I – wonder by my troth, what thou and I \ did, till we loved? Were we not weaned till then? `` for love, all love of other

sight controls\ and make one little room an everywhere'' ``none can die'' `till death do us part''.

### ANAPLORA

Is used for emphasis and it is the repetition of a word or expression.

Let sea- discovers to new world have gone,

Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown,

Let us possess one world, each hath one, and is one.

### METAPHOR

The poet uses the metaphor of `hemisphere'- half – worlds to stress the idea that his lover is his other half and he hers. He uses metaphor to tell his lover, ``let us possess one world each hath one, and is one''. The worlds he compares to their both bodies. He uses ``walking souls`` to signify the awaking of the two lovers.

### ALLUSION

The poetic makes allusion to historical and classical events when he talks about the ``seven stepper` den\ talking about the seven Christians sealed in a cave by the Roman Emperor Decius who persecuted Christians in around the year AD250. They slept for 200 years and did not die.

An allusion to Shakespeare in his play Macbeth when he states that ``and true plain hearts do the faces rest'. Bible allusions are also made.

### RHETORICAL QUESTION

Did, till we loved? Were we not weaned till then? But sucked on country pleasures, childishly? Or snorted we in the seven

Sleepers, den ? In lines 17 -18, where can we find two better hemispheres without sharp north, without declining west?

### ONOMATOPOEIA

``sleepers``, ``sucked``, ``sharp``. ``slacked``.

### IMAGERY | SYMBOLISM

The poet uses visual imagery if any beauty I did see but a dream of thee`  
`watches images of `sea`, `map`, `new` `words`. The symbols of ``waking souls  
and ``sights``.

### THEMES

The beauty and strengthens of true love. The poet treat this theme is ``Good  
Morrow`` in the poem love is real, true, eternal and pure. It is joyful. His kind of  
love needs to fruitful experiences of life.

The central theme in the Good – Morrow is the nature and completeness of the  
lover`s world. John Donne takes the every ideal that lovers live in a world of  
their own with little sense of reality, and turns it right round, so that is the  
outside world that is unreal. The intensity of their love is sufficient to create its  
own reality. When they watch each other, it is not, as in the outside world, out  
of fear but to complete them, each one is half of the world needing the other  
half. The main theme of the poem is love. It is an ode to love, two persons  
finding each other and seeing themselves while looking at the other`s face.  
Before love, they were childish and lived vainly, until love awakened them.  
Everything else seems unimportant compared to the souls waking next to each  
other. The entire poem is an exaggerated expression of love, of the feeling of  
being in love and finding the perfect soul make. After the he met with his  
beloved, their life changed suddenly. It seemed as if they woke from a deep  
slumber. How they should forget about everything and only love each other.  
They should not be bothered by the expansion of the universe rather this little  
room will be their universe.

True love is a spiritual connection that two people share Donne uses many  
ideas to convey this theme. This is seen in second stanza where the speaker  
suggests that the world shared within the two lover`s is its own universe,  
expansive enough to encompasses the world but it is only shared by them. In  
this setting ``one little room is an everywhere`` indicating that the spiritual,  
connection between both of them is all encompassing. The idea of expansive  
and sprawling compares to the explorers, who said to find new horizons. Those  
shared by poet and his love suggests idea that spiritual connection is not just  
love but a soulful immersion between two, a metaphysical exercise that makes  
two individuals reside in one entity. Oneness in love trumps over all early  
mutability and morality and shines ever in mutual attachment a love which does  
not deal with the body belt in the bond between the bond souls of the lovers.

Other themes are:

- 1) The emptiness of life without love
- 2) The beauty and strength of love
- 3) The futility and vanity of life
- 4) Growth and maturity.

The title of the poem ``The Good- Morrow`` means ``good morning``. It is a form of greeting when one first meets someone in the morning session. The poet greets Good morning to the souls of his and his beloved which have woke up to the realization of love it has a deepening significance as it refers to the awakens of the souls of the lovers after a long slumber and their meeting and falling in love with each other.

In conclusion ``the Good –Morrow`` is a poem of contrasts between gross physical lust and true love,` between the poet`s wasteful past and the lover`s present spiritual awakening, between earthly worlds sought be sea discoverers and the spiritual world discovered by the lovers.

## **THE SONG OF THE WOMEN OF MY LAND BY QUMAR FAROUK SESSAY**

### **POET'S BACKGROUND**

Qumar Farouk Sessay was born in 1960 in Sierra Leone. He studied political science and philosophy. He has written many plays, short stories and poem.

### **POETIC BACKGROUND**

Qumar Farouk Sessay talks about the women and how they are treated as inferior to men across the world. These women have been victims of oppression, suppression, exploitation and other ill treatments. Women are not usually celebrated especially in Africa.

Africa women have continued to suffer and endure unstable conditions by singing away their sorrow and hoping for a new dawn of joy. These rural women have contributed greatly to their families and their countries, yet their sacrifices and efforts are not recognized. Only a few of them are remembered after their death. The poet says that when any of such women is remembered it is a dirge.

### **SETTING**

The poem is setting in Sierra Leone. In his place, women are farmers. They farm to support the families and contribute to both their families and national wealth of their country. The time was in those days.

### **CONTENT ANALYSIS (giving the account)**

“The Song of the women of my Land” By Quma Farouk. The poet uses similes and metaphors to speak on the way that time is able to chip away at memory and experiences women of his land. This time strips away the “lyrics of the song” they used to sing. In the past, their individual experiences came together as a force that helped them fight back emotionally and mentally against the oppression and slavery they were enduring. Time has taken its toll though, and the song is slowly being lost to the ages, just as these women were, now, all that’s left is a tune. In the first stanza, the poet speaks on the way time fades away the contents of the song of the women of his land he compares this wearing away to the a sculptor chips off bits of wood when creating his art, time

caring makes the objects lyrics of the women`s song to be forgotten ``like a sculptor chipping away at bits of wood, time chisels away bit of their memory.

In lines 5-10, the poet person laments that time has caused the memory of the song to be slowly lost just as these women were now all that is left of the tune of the song is able to wander the ``forlorn fields``. We see in 11-18 the women`s songs were about their experiences which were characterized by servitude and hard labour in conditions such as oppression and slavery etc. They only comfort is that they take solace only in their singing. They sang to forget their collective sorrows and pains `` and to celebrate their gain``. They sang to narrate their stories, also to reflect about their future to interpret and understand their history. In lines 19-23, Qumar Farouk insists that even though the women resist the oppression of that time but lose the contents of their songs so their songs leave only distorted tune and ``a dying song``. He compares the death of the songs to the death of the women who died long age and left the song to their sad stories.

In lines 24- 36 , the poet reveals that the tunes of the songs of the women wander the deserted and abandoned plantations just as the souls of the dead women searched for lyrics to tell the stories of their oppressed and painful lives. The tune searches out someone who might hear and appreciate it. Luckily it appears that some do, it is there as inspiration for poets to write new songs based around its sound, just as Farouk writes this one. Lines 37-46, the poet laments his difficulty in trying to capture the story of the women of his land because their stories happened long age. More so the contents of the songs had been forgotten. This poem is a dirge where the poet expresses bitter concern about the way his people have almost forgotten the great deeds of the departed women of his land. Hence he expresses his disappointment over what he considers to be a very unfortunate development in the land. It is about the fact that as time passes by his people are gradually losing memory of the great deeds of the women who once lived and toiled in the land.

#### POETIC DEVICES

The structure of ``song of the women of my land`` by Qumar Farouk is a forty-eight line poem that does not follow a specific rhyme scheme on metrical pattern. The lines have different lengths with the shorts containing one word and the longest twelve language: The poem will pose problem to any average reader.

## POETIC TECHNIQUES

Faruok makes use of several poetic techniques in this poem these include;

**ATTATERTION;** Is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in a line of a poem,

`forlorn fields' |f|

`tune tuning the tenor of my verse`

`soil and soul` |s|

`tyranny of time` |t|

`Song to sing the story of their lives` |s|`

`vast void`|v| `dereliction decapitated` |d|.

**METAPHOR:** the poet uses few examples of metaphorical expressions such as ``forlorn field ``fading tuns``.

``when servitude cuffed the ankle of their soul`` which means that women of the land were mentally and psychologically bound. Again that the women used a song to sponge of their anguish describes the coping strategy of the peasant women. Also the `tyranny of time`, ` a dying song` or dead song and dirge are;

## PERSONIFICATION;

Time is personified by giving him the attribute of a sculptor. Again servitude is personified as a law enforcement agent.

## SIMILE

``Like a sculptor chipping away..... an example of simile. The death of the woman`s song is that of `the woman who died long age``. In line 24-25 the fading ``tuns roams the forlorn field like their souls looking for lyrics. The poet uses simile in line 41-42 when he talks of ``a song that now roams the land \ stripped of lyrics like a scorned ghost.

## REPETITION;

The poet uses this to create effect and to draw attention for us to see and feel the problems and predicaments of the women in ``the song of the women of land``.

``time and song ``

``forlorn field``

`time, strips

``their lives``

“leaving,

``like``

`women`

“Away, song. when, the tune”.

### PARADOX

The dirge of their lives is a paradox because a dirge cannot be sung to celebrate life.

### IMAGES

Visual images such as a sculptor trying to create an image of women ploughing fields, of women singing, of abandoned and deserted fields are used. In the poem, there are auditory [hearing] images evoked by fading tune, singing, echoing song, hollering, stuttering lips, and screeching voices etc which help to increase our understanding of the poem.

### THE MOOD\ TONE

The mood, which is the state of the mind of the poet is that of regret. The tone is that of lamentation.

### THEMES

Long – suffering; the women in the poem endured their pains, miserable and hopeless plight. They comfort themselves in their singing. Though the women were faced with challenging tasks and risk of death yet they still carry on by singing to ``cheat the tyranny of time``.

The importance of songs; the poet shows the usefulness of songs such as song being used to narrate stories of the women’s lives. Songs are useful in helping the women to survive the individual psychological for tune and the collective pains which help to survive the wickedness [tyranny of time]. Songs also

entertain as well celebrate. In spite of the importance of songs still songs suffer loss of lyrics and fading tune. The oppression of women is seen in the poem which threats the condition of most peasant women in rural areas. They work in the fields or plantations owned by rich individuals or companies and received unworthy wages. Some even are slavers who do not get any wage worst still some are killed by their masters when they fail to perform their duties. These women create entertainment for themselves by singing their pains away.

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