



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## The Symbolic Significance of Using Birds in English Romantic Poetry: “Ode to a Nightingale by John Keats” as a case study

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: Apr 26, 2024 Accepted: Aug 22, 2024</p> <p><b>Keywords</b></p> <p>British poetry Catcalls John Keats literary device Romantic poetry Symbolism</p> <p><b>*Corresponding Author:</b> alsadighssn@yahoo.com</p>	<p>This study aims to investigate the established understanding of catcalls in English poetry, specifically in British poetry, and how it has been a consistent theme throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It aims to address the primary aspects of romantic poetry concerning the symbolism of raspberries. The majority of romantic muses expressed their opinions and ideas through symbolism in their poetry. It is difficult to locate a literary work devoid of symbolism. To convey important information without explicitly stating effects, symbolism is a valuable literary device in the creation of complex narratives. Because they stand for an important aspect of nature's beauty that romantic muses appreciate, catcalls are among the symbols that have appeared in romantic poetry. In any case, romantic muses find solace in catcalls as a means of connecting nature to various elements such as desires and convictions. The experimenters in this study employed logical methodology and identified one of the most well-known romantic muses, John Keats. In summary, Keats's symbolism has been applied to convey sophisticated and aesthetically pleasing symbols for delving into important subjects.</p>

### INTRODUCTION

Since February 14 was thought to be the day those birds mated in medieval France and England, poems honoring the day have featured birds as a romantic symbol. Symbols are not always restricted to just one or two obvious meanings. For instance, Irish writer James Joyce employs birds as symbols in his 1916 portrait *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. An interpretation that oversimplifies Joyce is that the birds stand for the idea of escape. The Greek mythological figure Icarus, whose prosthetic wings broke off when he flew too close to the Sun, is also associated with the symbol of the birds. Icarus fell into the ocean as a result. The concepts of beauty, creativity, religion, and sexual desire are also associated with birds.

Novelists and poets alike employ a wide range of other specialized techniques in their writings besides point of view, style, and symbolism. Irony, which is the reader's realization that what is expected from a statement, situation, or action is different from what occurs, and imagery, which is a collection of descriptive details that appeal to the reader's senses and emotions by creating a sense of real experience, are two of the most crucial. Through imagery, the writer attempts to embody in images all abstractions and generalizations about character and meaning. Japanese author Kawabata Yasunari's work is renowned for its striking imagery. The protagonist on the train in *Yukiguni* (1948; *Snow Country*, 1956) notices a girl's face reflected in the window as the mountainous scenery outside passes by:

*Shimamura had the illusion that the evening landscape was passing over the face, and the flow did not stop ... It was a distant cold light. As it sent its small ray through the pupil of the girl's eye, as the eye and the light were superimposed one on the other, the eye became a weirdly beautiful bit of phosphorescence on the sea of evening mountains.*

Symbolism and imagery are different in that the former seeks to evoke a sense of reality through sensory stimulation, while the latter does the opposite. However, an image can also function as a symbol if it holds a particular significance and symbolizes a different idea for the reader or the characters in the book. The letter A that Hester Prynne wears in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) is one of the novel's images that gives the reader a better understanding of her character. The letter represents her adultery in the town where she resides in the book.

Poems use symbolism to evoke strong emotions in the reader with fewer words. This movement began in France, Russia, and Belgium during the mid-19th century shift from romanticism to modernism and surrealism.

Poetry often uses symbolism to conceal its true meaning, especially when it deals with taboo subjects. The use of symbolism in poetry began in Western societies during the emergence of mechanization and the commercialization of physical science.

A characteristic of romanticism in England was its exquisite lyric poetry, which brilliantly conveyed the poet's identity in all he wrote. English poets employed cosmic symbolism, fantastical visions, and parables to express their observations and opinions. Symbolic objects and emotions

## **1.2. Statement of the Study**

The versatility of symbolism, which enables authors to present a range of interpretations in their work, is what makes it such a significant literary device. Symbolism has provided literary protagonists with a feeling of recognition and universality. It serves as the impetus for the reader to ponder deeply and consider the author's worldview as well as his thoughts on various objects mentioned throughout the story. The growing number of readers who were drawn in by the deft use of this enchanted literary device is indicative of the significance of symbolism in the field of literature. Particularly in their romantic poetry, Renaissance writers delighted in utilizing avian imagery. Men who were in love were likened to nightingales, perpetually singing of their unfulfilled love.

Numerous birds have profound symbolic meanings. For Christians, blackbirds would conjure up terrible imagery. They stand for the fleshly temptation. Islam holds that while believers' souls ascend to heaven, those of unbelievers pass away.

The poets of the next generation, such as C. Day Lewis, Stephen Spender, and W. H. Auden, expressed their horror at totalitarianism and bourgeois society through the use of esoteric symbolism in their poetry. Their writings developed into contemplative pieces such as "The Double Man" and "City Without Walls," which described in prose the modern poetic ideals. Poet laureate Sir John Betjeman was later awarded.

As a result, and taking into account the various variations and influences, the symbolism of birds in romantic poetry is seen as a multifaceted phenomenon that necessitates careful and in-depth investigation to arrive at a desired interpretation.

Welsh poet Dylan Thomas played a significant role in the poetic movement of the mid-1900s. A new generation of British poets, including Ted Hughes, Thom Gunn, John Wain, Philip Larkin, and D.J. Enright, emerged in the wake of his 1953 death and founded The Movement, an organization dedicated to commonplace, sentimental poetry. Hughes was named a poet laureate for his depiction of life's harsh reality.

British poets of the late 20th century, including Seamus Heaney, Craig Raine, Wendy Cope, and James Fenton, explored various subjects in their works. Raine's 1979 collection, Cope's 1986, Fenton's 1994, and Heaney's 1995 Nobel Prize in Literature, showcased intricate language and structure.

One of the most notable poems in British literature will be discussed in this article: Keats's well-known poem *Ode to a Nightingale*. The nightingale's song in "*Ode to a Nightingale*" represents the beauty of both art and nature. Keats was captivated by the contrast between life and art—humans pass away, but their creations endure. In the poem, the speaker makes multiple attempts to let his imagination follow the bird's song, but he is never able to lose himself in the process fully. He abruptly recalls what death means in the sixth stanza, and the idea of it brings him back to earth and his humanity. The bride and groom depicted on the Grecian urn in "*Ode on a Grecian Urn*" do not pass away. They can never stop kissing and cuddling, but their love also will never fade. By the poem's conclusion, the speaker no longer finds the world of art to be welcoming but rather chilly.

### **1.3. Questions of the Study:**

The following queries are addressed in this study:

1. In *Ode to a Nightingale*, how does John Keats use symbolism wisely?
2. How much has John Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*'s bird symbolism been skillfully enhanced by the various literary elements?

### **1.4. Significance of the Study:**

The purpose of the paper is to discuss symbolism's influence on English poetry in general and British romantic poetry in particular. It offers a comprehensive understanding of the references to birds used as metaphors for real-world objects, abstract ideas, and interpretations of human thoughts from the perspective of literary scholarship. Furthermore, when intricate concepts like symbolism are identified, analyzed, and clarified, it provides a platform for beginning poetry readers to satiate their curiosity. In summary, it advances the field of literary criticism of poetry by offering diverse perspectives and creating avenues for further poetry research.

## **2. Symbolism:**

### **2.1. Symbolism as a significant literary device:**

In literature, symbolism is a device used to indicate that certain things should not be taken literally. An item, person, circumstance, event, or action that takes on a deeper meaning in context can all be considered symbolic. Writers frequently use it to improve their work and provide the reader with understanding. It can deepen the meaning of the literary work and give it more color and richness. Symbolism can manifest in various ways. Usually, one object is used to represent another, giving it a completely new, deeper, and more profound meaning. On the other hand, sometimes a person's words, deeds, or actions have symbolic meaning. For example, the "smile" represents friendship. In a similar vein, the act of someone grinning at you could represent their sentiment of love for you. Symbolism allows the author to create works with multiple levels of meaning. There are two types of meanings: the obvious literal one and the much deeper symbolic one.

Therefore, a work of literature's symbolism lends its characters and themes a universality. In literature, it piques readers' interest because it gives them a chance to see inside the writer's head and learn how he perceives the world and common objects and actions with wider implications. Ideas are conveyed indirectly in symbolism using a variety of symbols. The poet arouses in the readers an emotion or reaction that goes beyond ordinary awareness. Symbolist poets firmly believe that the fleeting objective world is merely a reflection of the unseen absolute rather than a true reality. Because of this, they defied naturalism and realism, which seek to capture the fleeting. Instead of explicitly defining or describing emotions or ideas through metaphors and similes, they do so subtly.

Metaphors, similes, personification, hyperboles, and other figures are employed to employ images and symbols.

According to Peirce (1931), "A symbol is a sign which refers to the object that denotes by law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object". In Peirce's theory, a symbol is understood by a convention or a long-standing relationship. The idea of the symbol using the mind creates the connection between the symbol and its object; without the mind, this connection would not exist (Chandler, 2002: 38).

According to Marshal (2006), symbolism as a literary school refers to three stages of a crucial part of the evolution of literary modernism: first, an artistic movement in France and Belgium during the last five years of the nineteenth century; second, and perhaps most importantly, a look back at its direct sources in French poetry starting in the 1850s; and third, the impact that both of these had on European and American literature during the first part of the twentieth century. According to Cirlot (1971), a symbol is a clear and defined form of expression that fundamentally corresponds to the inner life in contrast to the outside world.

Symbols are arbitrary indicators of something else, according to Finnegan (1992). Worldwide, common symbols include national flags, flashing blue lights on police cars, traffic lights, railway crossing indicators, and wedding rings. One of the best ways to influence people is probably through the use of symbols, such as traffic signs. Individuals will automatically follow the signs; if they don't, they may experience unexpected consequences, especially for drivers. A purely symbolic indication is arbitrary and can exist independently of the thing it indicates.

## **2.2. Types of Symbols in Literature:**

Symbols are generally classified into three categories in literature: private, natural, and conventional. This categorization is espoused based on the source of the associations that provide their meanings. Symbols occur in different situations causing different interpretations. The author plays a central role in the employment of the symbols in expressing his ideas and feelings appropriate to his or her literary work. Peirce (1931) classifies symbols into three kinds: private symbols, conventional symbols, and natural symbols.

### **(I) Private Symbols**

In essence, this category refers to a meaning that is understandable to individuals. Because it relies on the author's decision, readers frequently find Private symbols to be confusing. There are several reasons why the writer chose to use the private symbol in that particular way. Abrams (1993) asserts that private or personal symbols take advantage of commonly held connections between an item, event, or action and a specific idea. Another meaning of a private symbol is words that express a symbol created and used especially by the poet to convey their style in composing a poem (Fannie, 2000:101). Because of this, the author-governed choice is the meaning of the private symbol. It is very difficult for the reader to grasp the meaning of the symbol, for example, in Robert Burns's poem "It is a Red Rose". The color is a symbol used by Robert Burns. For instance, when someone is listening to a depressing song, they cry because the song brings to mind a loved one who has passed away.

### **(II) Conventional Symbols**

A conventional symbol is one whose meaning is understandable to members of the social context. Different people will interpret traditional symbols differently depending on where they are. Additionally, traditional symbols are employed occasionally. Consequently, they have distinct meanings depending on when they are used; this implies that the choice of conventional symbols can be made by the general public.

According to Brurto (1993), the conventional symbol is one that people have come to accept as representing something other than themselves. Furthermore, the traditional symbol is also mentioned as a placeholder. Words that convey symbols with universal meanings are known as blank symbols because they make it easier for readers to understand what they mean. People's agreement, according to Fananie (2000:100), standardizes the meaning of symbols and facilitates comprehension for the reader. For instance, the red color of the Indonesian flag signifies bravery, the red traffic light indicates stopping, and Indonesia is an agricultural nation.

### (III) Natural Symbols

Natural symbols are understood by people from various cultures to "stand for something in the particular event," according to Brurto (1993). As a result, the word associated with nature is typically used in the natural symbol; for instance, a forest frequently represents mental chaos or darkness, a mountain represents stability, a valley represents a place of safety, and so forth.

Furthermore, natural symbols have the same meanings as words that describe natural reality and directly relate to an object found in nature, such as a waterfall, forest, plant, wind, animal life, phenomenon, etc. Fannie (2000) asserts that the existence of natural symbols does not grant us the freedom to disregard the context of the piece and search for items that are found in the natural world.

### 2.3. Meanings of Symbols:

Poets typically use symbols, as demonstrated in the following examples, when they want to express specific ideas and insights in a better or finer quality:

#### Miscellaneous Examples

Sign	Signifier (Symbol)
Sleeping	Often related to death
Night	Suggests darkness, sadness, or grief
Dreams	Lined to the future of fate
Water	Associated with the idea of birth or purification
Snakes or Gun	Linked with Phallic

#### Seasons: Seasons often represent ages:

Sign	Signifier (Symbol)
Winter	Old age or death
Spring	Youth
Summer	Prime of life
Fall or Autumn	Middle age

#### Colors:

They are often linked to emotions. They also refer to or represent states of being:

Sign	Signifier (Symbol)
Red	Passion or anger
Blue	Happiness or Calm
Green	Jealousy or evil
White	Purity or innocence
Red	Blood or Danger
Green	Growth
Purple	Royalty or Privilege
Yellow	Violence or Decay

## Nature:

The first images that spring to mind when we think of nature are leaves, trees, and forests. It is a fundamental symbol and among the most prevalent ones found in the natural world.

Trees are significant in many mythologies and religions and provide us with a mystical connection to our spirituality. The tree is associated with life itself in ancient cultures all over the world, signifying the entirety of a universe where spirit permeates everything.

Water can represent profound depth, shifting emotions, or melancholy on an emotional level. As no plant or animal can exist without water, water is also a universal symbol of life. Water evokes spiritual concepts of transformation, renewal, and purification spiritually.

Stones and rocks represent the past lives they have had on this planet. They resemble miniature historical novels filled with memories. Numerous cultures also view rocks as symbols of longevity, energy, and good fortune.

Caves and underwater images are often womb-like, nature imagery, in general, is often associated with the mother or the female.

## Flowers

Flowers are also linked to emotions and or states of being: The cycle of natural growth—birth, degeneration, death—often suggests the cycle of love (e.g., a poem may trace a rose from bud to bloom to withered vine).

Sign	Signifier (Symbol)
Rose	Romance and Love
Violets	Shyness
Lilies	Beauty or temptation

## Objects

They are often used to suggest images

Sign	Signifier (Symbol)
A ring	Faithfulness and fidelity
A ladder	Ascension or connection between heaven and earth
a chain	union or, conversely, imprisonment
a mirror	the sun;
a broken mirror	Separation

## Animals

Numerous associations exist between animals: horses and phallic sexuality; doves, lambs, sleeping animals, and peace; cats, predatory birds, conflict, danger, and war; snakes and serpents and evil, phallic sexuality, and fall from virtue and magic. Forests are frequently challenging or testing environments. Wind is frequently connected to transformation, change, or destructive force. Light sources like the sun, moon, stars, and candles frequently stand for goodness, freedom, and hope. The moon is connected to various concepts; it can be a feminine symbol, a sign of insanity, or a sign of resurrection. Rainbows are thought to represent rewards or hope. Darkness evokes images of magic, evil, or the unknown.

### 3. Birds' Presence in Romantic Poetry:

The natural world has always been essential to human existence and development, providing resources for knowledge, research, creativity, and sustainable development. Animals such as birds and animals have shaped human thought; birds are studied for their ecological significance and relationship to plants. Since birds are accurate, stealthy, and can navigate various environments, poets have utilized nature to express their ideas and emotions. Various bird species are employed for various purposes when using birds in poetry as a means of expression. As one poet has explained, another method of examining and distinguishing birds exists.

Birds have long been used as symbols in English poetry. The Holy Bible was one of the most significant sources of images, ideas, and symbols used by the Romantic poets, in addition to the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic epics and ballads, from which they also borrowed language and ideas. Refer to Abrams, page 153.

The first instance of this type of reference is found in Genesis, the book of the Old Testament, in the Second Verse, where the word "bird" connotes an action, as in "The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." In this instance, the Spirit of God is depicted as a bird since, presumably, birds typically hover.

Poets often use nature to express emotions and feelings, focusing on birds' eye color, eating habits, and human perceptions of them, often as a main theme or subject for poetry. They used birds as metaphors for life, the mind's marvels, forgiveness, hope, and despair. They can draw inspiration from birds to comprehend and connect with nature in various ways, such as through feelings, signs, beliefs, and messages. Birds are frequently utilized as messengers to convey messages to remote locations. One of their most well-known symbols is a bird, which represents the soul. Certainly, the myth of the Phoenix, the purple bird of fire, which is composed of living strength, is the oldest evidence of the belief in bird souls. Among the frequent avian species that one may encounter are wolves, eagles, vultures, sparrows, and roosts. Doves are frequently described as having poise and color. In the Bible, the dove is described as a representation of the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus Christ before his baptism.

Looking at some of the poetic allusions, we can see that the dove has been associated with love. For example, in John Keats's poem "I Had a Dove and the Sweet Dove Died," the lines "And I have thought it died of grieving; O, what could it grieve for?" run through the poem. It had its feet bound. Here, the dove is identified in the poem as a symbol of a loved one for whom he is grieving. It's possible that, despite the dove's frequent association as a symbol of peace, the poet is using it to symbolize love in this instance.

In his poem "The Doves Flew High," poet David Krieger conveys another emotion: peace. By releasing the doves, he hopes that others will experience and comprehend what freedom is like. This is mirrored in the poem's lines: "The President, devoid of options, chose peace." The doves also soared high.

Michael J. Warren's book "Birds in Mediaeval English Poetry" explores the significance of birds in five poems: *Confessio Amantis*, *The Seafarer*, *the Exeter Book Riddles*, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, and *The Parliament of Fowls*. He argues that birds' unique characteristics link them to religious and secular themes, such as seabirds inspiring Anglo-Saxon pilgrims and their amazing flights and vocalizations influencing human actions and perceptions.

In contemporary poetry, birds frequently appear as decorative elements and potent symbols. Hawk in the Rain by Ted Hughes represents his worries, while "Whim" by Paul Muldoon and Heaney's Blackbird of Glenmore represents longing and sorrow. Birds can be interpreted as portents in certain situations, but they also symbolize desire and grief.

Instead of the more general plot and character elements found in drama and fiction, birds are often used in poetry because they are simple to incorporate into the basic imagery. In their poems "The Shrike" and "The Ambition Bird," Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton challenge the idea of birds that are free and peaceful, focusing instead on vengeful beings that are restricted to marginalization and discontent. They use birds as a representation of violence, jealousy, and captivity.

Finally, I can say, that birds are prominent in English poetry, particularly from the Romantic age, with their origins in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic epics and The Holy Bible. These birds are presented as spiritual beings and emissaries from Heaven, serving as functional and organic symbols in the poetry. The bird's symbol survived the Romantic Period to the Post-Romantic years, expressing corruption without provoking popular discontent. Other poets like Shelley, Tennyson, E.A. Poe, G. M. Hopkins, and Ted Hughes also use birds, with Christianity playing a significant influence. The bird's symbol is connected to the Biblical and Romantic theme of Appearance versus Reality.

#### 4. Symbolism in "Ode to a Nightingale by John Keats:

"Ode to a Nightingale" is a romantic poem by John Keats, written in 1819. It is the longest of Keats's odes, focusing on a speaker in a dark forest listening to the nightingale's beautiful song. The speaker meditates on time, death, beauty, nature, and human suffering, finding comfort in the song. It is set in a lush forest during spring, with the poem referencing blooming flowers, the seasonable month, and mid-May's eldest child. The forest is green and gloomy, with the moon suggesting it may be night or day. Nightingales, a bird species, sing at night, and the poem feels like it takes place in a dark atmosphere. The setting is fantasy, with references to mythology and the enchanting effects of the nightingale's music. The poem emphasizes that listening to the nightingale's song is not tied to a specific time, stretching back to biblical times.

"Ode to a Nightingale" is a poem that explores the relationship between human-made beauty and nature's beauty. The speaker, a poet, considers whether nature, represented by the nightingale's song, represents a purer and eternal beauty than anything humans can create. The poem begins with the speaker delighting in the bird's song, viewing it as an eternal perfection that human art struggles to match. However, the speaker's contemplation of the nightingale deepens and undoes this self-confidence. The speaker perceives the bird's song as immortal, imagining its voice unchanged for millennia—interpersonal rivalry and competition, on the other hand, corrupt human art. The speaker rejects "fancy" as a cheat, arguing that the pure beauty of the nightingale cannot match the creative imagination. The poem suggests that art and nature exist in two distinct categories, with the speaker's contemplation of nature's beauty highlighting their limitations.

In media res, or amid the action, the poem begins. The speaker hears the lovely song of the nightingale while by themselves in the forest. The speaker uses a simile to describe his or her mood, comparing it to "drowsy numbness" with "aches" and "pains," or to the inebriating effects of consuming hemlock, a toxic plant, or "opiate[s]," a class of drugs that includes heroin and opium. However, the reader is not immediately able to determine the exact cause of this state of mind (and body).

The "drunk" and "drowsy" atmosphere of the opening is created by the soft /m/, /n/, /s/, and /l/ consonance and /d/ alliteration in these four lines:

*My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pain*

*My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,*

*Or empty some dull opiate into the drains*

*One minute passed, and Lethe-wards had sunk:*

Keats explores the depressing world of illness, describing it as a place where sudden involuntary movements shake the grey-haired man's head. He confronts his favorite enemy, time, which causes



young and beautiful people to turn old, pale, thin, and eventually dead. Time is seen as a bad enemy, causing death and bad consequences.

In these lines, he expresses the world's depressing thoughts and worries are caused by thinking itself, causing eyelid pain and difficulty staying awake, causing people to tire out and experience sadness. Keats uses natural imagery in his poems, such as a forest, brook, and garden, to symbolize purity and untainted nature. In "Ode to Psyche," he personifies nature to reflect the human inner world. The Grecian urn symbolizes immortality, as its stories have lasted centuries, giving hope for poetry to endure after death. In "Ode to a Nightingale," the bird's song teaches immortality, and the speaker wishes to join the nightingale to gain immortality. Keats' poems continue to be revered even after his premature death.

Keats explains that the human world is a bad place, with Beauty and Love struggling to survive. Beauty loses lustrous eyes due to depression or old age, while new Love cannot fawn over them.

*Where but to think is to be full of sorrow*

*And leaden-eyed despairs*

*Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,*

*Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.,*

The nightingale's singing conveys an imagined happiness that Keats cannot quite get his hands on, and this makes him uncomfortable. His imagination does just as well as his desire for a draught of wine to enter his life with the bird. Though he is only a glimmer of light in physical form, he is lifted above the trees and can see the moon and stars. As the nightingale's song echoes through the darkness, Keats finds himself thinking of death as a rich experience. The bird's singing stops, but he is unable to flee, and Keats is left wondering who he is and how he is feeling.

Keats suffered from tuberculosis, unstable finances, and an unsatisfactory family life. He struggled financially, had no steady job, and had unstable finances. The ode's death wish could be a response to his problems and annoyances. He rejects the power of imagination in favor of poetry as the third major idea. He compares himself to the contented nightingale, but poetry can't offer a permanent reprieve from the problems of everyday life. His suggestion in stanza 3 that the nightingale is immortal could be interpreted as a metaphor for poetry's enduring quality. In stanzas 2 and 3, he links wine to sunny France and the sunburned laughter of harvesters, demonstrating the ode's evocative power.

*Darkling I listen; and, for many a time*

*I have been half in love with easeful Death*

*Still, wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—*

*To thy high requiem become a sod.*

*Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,*

*Where youth grows pale, and specter-thin, and dies;*

John Keats employs strong, recognizable symbolism and imagery in his poem "Ode to a Nightingale." For example, many people see the nightingale as a representation of Keats' sense of poetic fulfillment and inspiration. The striking details Keats provides about the nightingale reveal this symbolism. But there are undoubtedly other symbols in "Ode to a Nightingale" besides the nightingale itself. Keats seems to have become skilled at symbolizing something he longs for in a brief work of art by combining a variety of objects, expressions, and clever, evocative metaphorical writing. His wishes

for immortality, the capacity to transcend reality and enter a different state of consciousness, and the bliss and tranquillity of the nightingale's song are all made clear in numerous passages of the poem.

The themes that Keats tackles in his poems and "odes" are pertinent to "Ode to a Nightingale." The author wishes there was a way out of the challenges of reality and human existence, as it is an incredibly imperfect and discordant world. Keats ventures into the life of the nightingale in an attempt to pull off his escape. To escape the harsh realities of life, he draws strength from the world and the nightingale's symbolic meaning. To give the bird immortality, John Keats even changes it in the poem. Keats is regrettably forced to acknowledge that there is no way for him to escape reality and join the nightingale in its "song" for eternity, despite investigating several avenues.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Romantic poets revolted against the poetic tradition of the eighteenth century. They turned to the nature. Symbolism has been used to convey visual and literary symbols for exploring significant themes; they disliked the set rules and orders of the neo-classical poets. They used symbolism to convey specific meanings to the audience as a means of artistic expression.

Romantic poets placed too much focus on emotion, imagination, originality, and freedom and symbolized them in their poetry besides using simple and commonly used natural language in their poetry to enhance their writing and give insight to the reader hence symbolism gives literary works more richness and color and deepen the meaning of the work. Birds were considered symbols, whether as bringers of bad luck and death, as something sacred, or as a coat of arms. In terms of entertainment, birds of prey were used to hunt falcons. While cage birds were kept for their tunes.

In romantic poetry, birds are frequently employed as representations of youth, innocence, and purity. They add layers of meaning and enhance the universality of poetic messages. Romantic poets are inspired to connect with nature in a variety of ways by the beauty of birds. Symbolism gives romantic poetry emotional weight and positive dimensions by allowing readers to interpret it in their own ways.

Themes of human mortality and creative expression are covered in Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale". Numbness, a symptom of detachment from reality, is replaced by the speaker's wish to become a nightingale. He first tries to enter the bird's state with alcohol, but after realizing how short life is, he rejects the idea that he is "charioted by Bacchus and his pards" and instead accepts Poesy's viewless wings, embracing the beauty of life. His poem delves into the enigmatic and eternal qualities of the nightingale, signifying both perpetuity and immortality. The poem also laments the fact that people are not immortal like nightingales. Keats' primary goal is to convey his admiration for and outlook on nature.

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