

Ozymandias - P. B. Shelley

Remains of the ruins of a colossal statue → it portrays Ozymandias
He owns a large empire and says that someone should be afraid of him → but this clashes with the surroundings, which is a desert only → his empire is reduced to a desert

It is a sonnet (lyrical poem) with 14 lines with iambic pentameters
Ozymandias is the greek name of the pharaoh Ramses II → this other name sounds more exotic

Sonnet consists of a dialog → there is a chinese-box (and a dialogical structure): the speaker is talking to a traveller, who is reading the inscription on Ozymandias's colossal statue

The inscription is composed of Ozymandias's words
It is really subjective (because it is romantic) and in fact starts with "I" → it reflects Shelley's political ideas (he believed in democracy → radical idealism)
This poem is a fierce critique of imperialism → O. created an empire (= ethnicity with rules over other ethnicities) → but what remains of this empire? nothing

Analysis

Antique land = Egypt

The statue is in ruins → and parts of it are missing → there are only two legs without a trunk

Three dots = cesura

Visage = face (french origin) → which is shattered → still you can't recognize an arrogant expression, typical of a tyran

Malicious simile full of disgust

The sculpture was good at mocking the expression of Ramses → mocking in the sense of imitating or in the sense of making fun → ambiguous and ambivalent passage

It is like Ozymandias is talking → "ye Mighty" → very ambiguous: it might be referring to god or other emperors, who chose despair → probably because he is going to conquer their empires

"Boundless and bare" → alliteration in B

Of Ozymandias's empire remains only his statue → everything that humans create is ephemeral

Radical idealism → empires are doomed to finish

A lot of signs of punctuation → rhythm is fragmentated, like the statue is

It is also a critique of imperialism

Ode to the west wind - P. B. Shelley

Introduction

It is an ode = long lyrical poem →without fixed number of lines
There are 5 sections, and each one is a sonnet (made of 14 lines):

- 1-2-3: the west wind is presented as a sublime natural element
 - 1: described the effect of the wind on the earth →it is both a destroyer (it causes the shedding of trees in autumn, so leaves are carried away by the wind →compared to people following an enchanter) and a preserver (it carries seeds in the soil covered as if they were corpses)
 - 2: described the effect of the wind on the sky →it causes the moving of clouds and storms →clouds are compared to the locks of an approaching storm
 - 3: described the effect of the wind on the sea →the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean sea are mentioned →the second one is picturesque and adapted to humans (along its coast different civilisations had developed and have left landmarks) →the first one is sublime: rough, full of abysses →at the bottom of the sea there is vegetation and are described as shaking of fear because they perceive the coming of the west wind (personification)
- 4-5: presented as a political symbol

Section 4 starts at line 43

Analysis of section 4

Lyric I →romantic

Dead leaf is referring to the first section →and cloud to section 2 →and wave to the third

There is a cesura with an exclamation mark →and an apostrophe (referring to the wind)

In these five lines →the author is willing of the fusion with the west wind

Line 43 and 44 →there is the anaphora of "if I were"

After a cesura usually there is a change of topic →in fact there is a nostalgic recollection of the speaker's youth →while he was young, he was active and quick as the wind

Line 54: contrast between his active and happy boyhood and the present as an adult man →"thorns of life" is a metaphor for the setbacks of life

On too like thee →the speaker like a young man →now a "heavy weight of hours"

Politically speaking Shelley is an idealist and has optimistique views →but in his life he was pessimistic

Analysis of section 5

He is asking the wind to make him a lyre (musical instrument, symbol of poetry)

The poet is longing for a fusion with the wind, which is defined as spirit

Now he wants the wind to carry around ideas of freedom →to quicken their diffusion

His political ideas are like a prophecy

Last line →there is a rethorical question (it is obious that spring will follow winter)

Thanks to the wind he will be able to change the world