

## Original Paper

# Exploring the Impact of Keats's Poetry on *Hyperion*

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### Abstract

*It is an important topic today that how can we draw the essence from the works of excellent writers or artists, then learn their creative methods and ideas, add ourselves innovative inspiration and perspectives to create our own works. And in this paper, we can find out the key answer. This paper first introduces the research background and the significance of the topic selection, then we appreciate the beauty in John Keats poetry. The next part continues to analyze the impact of Keats's poetry on Hyperion from five aspects, including themes, the use of language, religion, eternity and the way to explore the relationship between human and nature. As the representative poet of the second generation of British Romanticism, John Keats did profound influence on later generations of writers, especially Dan. Influenced by Keats, Simon's discussions on themes, religion, writing style and characteristics, as well as the relationship between man and nature have formed his own writing style: the pursuit of beauty; at the same time, he also combines aesthetic elements with scientific elements through grand narration, delicate characterization and rich symbolic meanings. His book Hyperion deeply discusses the topics of aesthetics, philosophy, religion, eternity, and the relationship between man and nature, providing readers with a shocking reading experience.*

### Keywords

*beauty, religion, eternity, The relationship between human and nature*

### 1. Introduction

It is an important topic today that how we can draw the essence from the works of excellent writers or artists, then learn their creative methods and ideas, add ourselves innovative inspiration and perspectives to create our own works. Many scholars have studied Keats's poetic style, but they have not studied the influence of his poems on other writers' works, and I will explore and study this topic through this article.

In this paper, the author first introduces the research background and the significance of the topic selection, then we appreciate the beauty in John Keats poetry. In the next part the impact of Keats' poetry on *Hyperion* will be analyzed from five aspects, including themes, the use of language, religion, eternity and the way to explore the relationship between human and nature.

## 2. Inspiration of Beauty in Keats's Poetry for Later Writers

As we all know, beauty is a central topic in Keats poetry, and it appears in many forms and levels. Through the analysis of Keats' poems, we can deeply explore his understanding and expression of beauty.

First of all, Keats's depiction of beauty is often closely connected with the natural. His poems are full of praise and appreciation of nature, and the beauty in nature contrasts to sadness of poet. Such as "When streams of light pour down the golden west, And on the balmy zephyrs tranquil rest. The silver clouds, far-far away to leave. All meaner thoughts, and take a sweet reprieve". In "O! how I love, on a fair summer's eve". The golden sky, silver sky and the cool west wind make the poet forget his sadness temporarily. Actually, it expresses his melodious sorrow. Other examples are "My heart sings of the beauty of summer" in "Ode to a Nightingale" and "The beauty of Autumn, as picturesque as poetry" in "To Autumn". In these verses, Keats combined beauty with natural scenery, demonstrating his deep love and awe for nature.

Secondly, Keats's comprehending of beauty is also reflected in his depiction of human nature. The figures in his poems are often of noble quality and beautiful appearance, such as Achilles in the Greek hero in the Greek Ancient Ode, and Mrs Elphinstone in To Madame Elphinstone. In these figures, Keats shows his understanding and pursuit of beauty.

In addition, Keats's understanding of beauty is also reflected in his view of art. He firmly believe that art is the creator and disseminator of beauty, as he wrote in "To Sir George Beaumont": "Art is the true reflection of beauty". This view is fully reflected in his poetry creation, which has beautiful language, vivid images and deep emotions, showing his deep understanding and unique expression of beauty.

He has influenced many later writers to use aesthetic elements and imagination to express themselves and form their works.

## 3. The Impact of Keats's Poetry on Hyperion

*Hyperion* has been influenced deeply by Keats' poetry. The impact of Keats's poetry on *Hyperion* includes themes, such as beauty, love eternity and so on. It also contains the way of using language and religion.

### 3.1 Themes

The theme of John Keats's poetry is primarily focused on beauty, and love. The theme of John Keats's poetry is primarily focused on beauty, love, and the transience of life. He often explored the idea of immortality and the desire to escape the limitations of human existence through art and imagination. Keats also delved into themes of nature, spirituality, and the human condition, expressing his thoughts on these subjects in a lyrical and emotional style. For Example, in Keats's "Bright Star", Keats wrote this poem to his beloved Miss Fanny Brawne. Through this poem, he conveyed his sincere feelings to Fanny, longing to be united with her forever, even after death, with their souls never to be separated. However, the impoverished Keats was taken away by illness at the age of 25. Although they were not married, Fanny, who deeply loved him, was emotionally devastated after his death and took a long time to recover. Moreover, Fanny believed that she had already married him. She was willing to wear black for three years to mourn for Keats, reading the love letters he wrote to her repeatedly in her room every day and wandering alone in the area where they once lived. "Bright start, would I were steadfast as thou art", "Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask of snow upon the mountain and moors", "Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast to feel for ever its soft fall and swell" express the theme of beauty and the love to Miss Fanny.

The theme of *Hyperion* is the exploration of the human condition in the face of scientific and technological advancement, identity, mortality, and the meaning of life in the face of rapid technological. So we can came out the result that both works explore the relationship between human and outer world.

### 3.2 The Use of Language

John Keats' poetry is known for its use of vivid imagery, rich language, and musicality. He often employs metaphors, similes, and personification to create a sense of beauty and emotion in his poems. Additionally, he uses alliteration, assonance, and consonance to create a musical effect. Keats also frequently employs enjambment and caesura to create a sense of rhythm and flow in his poems.

In *Hyperion*, it uses a variety of writing techniques to create a vivid and immersive world, engage the reader, and convey its themes and messages. Here are some of the key techniques used in *Hyperion*, such as descriptive writing, imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism, irony, allegory and so on.

Simmons uses descriptive writing to create a detailed and realistic world for the reader. He describes the settings, characters, and events in great detail, allowing the reader to visualize the story clearly. "It had been a warm, rainy day in Keats, *Hyperion*'s capital, and even after the rains stopped a layer of clouds moved slow and heavy over the city, filling the air with the salt scent of the ocean twenty kilometers to the west. Toward evening, as the gray daylight was beginning to fade

into gray twilight, a double sonic boom shook the town and then echoed from the single, sculpted peak to the south” (p. 102).

Imagery is used throughout the book. For example, the writer use his imagination to create a horrify image and atmosphere: Wagner. “Wagner is good only for thunderstorms, he thought. He closed his eyes but the lightning was visible through closed eyelids. He remembered the glint of ice crystals blowing through the tumbled ruins on the low hills near the Time Tombs and the colder gleam of steel on the Shrike’s impossible tree of metal thorns. He remembered screams in the night and the hundred-facet, ruby-and-blood gaze of the Shrike itself”.

Foreshadowing: Foreshadowing is used to hint at future events and build suspense. For example, early in the book, the character of Endymion has a prophetic dream that foreshadows his later actions. At the same time, the seven pilgrims in the novel are each saddled with a mysterious and profound background, and their personal stories are like clues that gradually converge into the grand picture of the entire civilization. These foreshadows are cleverly laid out at the beginning of the story, and gradually revealed as the story progresses, making the reader rethink the trajectory of each person’s life and the fate of the universe in a shock.

Symbolism: Symbolism is used to convey deeper meanings and themes. For example, the rose is a recurring symbol in the book that represents love, sacrifice, and redemption. The Church of Shrike and the mysterious time tomb on the planet Hyperion symbolize the power of religion and the fear and yearning of mankind for the unknown. The image of the Shrike, a fierce bird with a habit of sticking its dead body in the thorns to store and tear food, symbolizes the metal monster Shrike in the book, suggesting the relationship between creation and creator.

All in all, both works used descriptive writing, imagery, a lot of metaphor and simile and so on to explore the relationship between human and nature and reflect on human philosophy.

### 3.3 Religion

#### 3.3.1 John Keats’s Religious View and Religion in his Poetry

Keats poetry has strong religious over tons. Keats’ poetic theory and poetry creation are deeply influenced by Christian thought, which originates from the education he received in his youth and social fashion at that time. Although Keats was devoted to the pagan spirit, the Christian thought was still the core of his religious thought.

In addition, Keats’s life and creative career were influenced by religion from a pluralistic religious thought background, that is, the coexistence of Christian salvation thought and Greek pantheism thought.

For example, in *The Eve of St. Agnes*, the poet uses a series of religious word “pray-er, holy, priest, confession, piety, worship to the gods, cross, lights, saints, angels, apgans, temples,witches” to depict the characters and describe all the activities before *St. Agnes Day*.

In *The night Before St. Mark*, Keats also uses a lot of religious world to introduce what happens before St. Mark Day, such as: Sabbath, believers, prayer, holiness, piety, martyrs etc.

His poem contain profound rational meaning, which are not limited to the material and sensory levels. They embody the poet's religious feelings, present obvious religious images, and apply the Christian model. It can be seen from the poem that Keats was a poet who sublimated his spirit to the sublime realm through the sensory experience of the secular world.

### 3.3.2 Dan Simmons' Religion in *Hyperion*

The religious ideas in the series of *Hyperion series* are quite rich. For one thing, the work is influenced by John Keats's long poem *Hyperion*, whose original story of the Olympian gods replacing the Titans through war echoes science fiction's main line of battle between the ultimate AI and human gods of the future. At the same time, *Hyperion series* have many religious symbols, such as the Time tombs and the Church of Shrike. These elements have strong religious overtones, exploring divinity, destiny, and the crisis of human belief. This is obviously influenced by Keats's deep exploration of mythology, religion and philosophy in his poetry. What's more, each pilgrim's experience explores to some extent the relationship between personal beliefs and religious beliefs.

In *Hyperion*, we see elements of real-world religions such as Christianity, Buddhism and Taoism cleverly woven into the story by Simon. For example, the priest Pauli represents the unyielding spirit, the detective and the consul are both love themes, and the scholar is a family theme. In addition, Kernel perfected the technique of the Cross and made a deal with Holy to supply Holy's Church of the Holy Spirit with the technique of rebirth, on which the church evolved into "Rebirth". The Christian element is embodied in a Christian sect called the Control of the Holy Core. The ideological basis of this sect is Zen Buddhism, and its leader design inspiration comes from Jesus, which indicates that the religious system in *Hyperion* is influenced by Christianity. In addition, some of the titles in the series are also derived from Greek mythology, further enriching the multicultural background of the religious system. Buddhist elements are mainly reflected in the influence of Zen Buddhism. The Zen Spirit Sect is a religious organization under the background of the universe. Its religious belief combines the Zen self-cultivation of Eastern philosophy with the salvation thought of Western Christianity. This fusion reflects the common ground of Buddhism and Christianity in spiritual pursuit and self-salvation, making the Zen Spirit sect a unique religious entity in the *Hyperion*. Buddhist elements are mainly reflected in the influence of Zen Buddhism. The Zen Spirit Sect is a religious organization under the background of the universe. Its religious belief combines the Zen self-cultivation of Eastern philosophy with the salvation thought of Western Christianity, forming a kind of cynical religious belief. This fusion reflects the common ground of Buddhism and Christianity in spiritual pursuit and self-salvation, making the Zen Spirit sect a unique religious entity in the *Hyperion*.

### 3.4 Eternity

#### 3.4.1 The Eternity in John Keats Poetry

John Keats was a romantic poet whose poems are full of explorations of eternity themes. In his poems, Keats not only recorded the relationship between man's inner world and the outside world, but also tried to explore the relationship between reality and ideal, reality and eternity, and soul and the present world. In the poem "Ode to the Ancient Urn" in Greece, Keats gives a double aspect to the instant picture left by the ancient urn: love and eternal loneliness. Keats believes that passionate love and lonely life seem opposite, but they are the true of life. Reality is cruel, art is idealized, only the combination of art and reality, is the true beauty in life, beauty is eternal. In addition, in "Ode to a Nightingale", Keats adopts "bright star", "snow", "the moving waters", "love's ripening breast" and other images combine the thoughts about love, death, love and ideal. In my opinion, the poet uses the song of the nightingale to symbolize the eternal joy of nature and contrast it with the nature of life in the real world.

In short, the eternal theme of Keats's poems goes through his exploration of life, love, death and nature, showing his pursuit of beautiful things and yearning for eternal values.

#### 3.4.2 The Eternity in *Hyperion*

In the science fiction novel *Hyperion*, eternity is a central theme. Keats's poetry image of death and eternity deeply influences the work, and the city of Hyperion in the novel also embodies this spirit of pursuing eternity.

The story of *Hyperion* is set in the future after an event known as the "Great Mistake", in which humanity is forced to leave earth and scattered across the galaxy. With the help of artificial intelligence, humanity has established overlords and established connections using the remote portals provided by the inner core energy. In this context, the need for eternity became a universal human emotion. Both the exploration of the real world and the contemplation of human destiny are filled with the desire for eternity and the fear of nothingness.

Specifically, the eternal theme in *Hyperion* is mainly reflected in two aspects: one is to explore the relationship between human destiny and the universe by depicting the future world and technological elements such as artificial intelligence.

Time travel in *Hyperion* is an important technological element. Through time travel, the characters in the novel are able to travel to different eras and witness the changes of history and the rise and fall of civilizations. This experience across time and space gives the characters a deeper understanding of the universe and the fate of humanity, which leads to thinking about humanity's place and future in the universe.

The artificial intelligence technology in "Hyperion" is highly developed, such as the intelligent robots "Cyberman" and "Overlord" in the book. These AI agents are not only highly intelligent, but

also able to communicate deeply with humans and even influence human decisions. The characters in *Hyperion* undertake a wide range of cosmic explorations, including expeditions to distant galaxies and encounters with unknown civilizations. These explorations have not only expanded the horizons of mankind, but also triggered reflections on the origin, structure and ultimate fate of the universe. The universe in the novel is depicted as a vast space full of wonders and dangers, in which humans are both small and great.

The second is to express thoughts on the eternal themes of life, love and death through the inner monologues and story lines of the characters.

In *Hyperion*, through the experiences of Father Rainer Hoyt, Simon explores the meaning of life and death. Father Holy witnessed firsthand the suffering of his close friend Father Paul Duret due to the cruciform worm, which enables humans to come back to life after death, but has huge side effects that make people lose their minds. This plot deeply touches on the relationship between immortality and human nature, as well as the nature and value of life. In addition, Saul's story further explores the fragility and impermanence of life. His daughter Rachel developed Merlin's disease, a disease that turned back time on her, eventually causing her life to reverse from old age to infancy and then to disappearance. Saul's story is a reflection of parents' selfless love for their children, but also of life's inevitable loss and grief.

These elements together constitute the unique science fiction narrative style and profound philosophical connotation of *Hyperion*.

### *3.5 The Way to Explore the Relationship between People and Nature*

#### *3.5.1 John Keats's Nature Way*

John Keats, as the outstanding representative of 19th century British romantic poetry, his love and praise of nature are fully reflected in his poetry. He is good at using descriptive techniques to create poems, combining a variety of emotions with nature perfectly, and looking for the inspiration of creation from life.

Nature is an important theme in Keats's poems, and he can always find inspiration from nature. He regarded nature as the dwelling place of his soul and the ultimate place of his body to live. Only nature could relieve his loneliness and bring him a homely feeling, as well as his place of residence and ultimate belonging. This kind of deep feeling and nostalgia for nature made his early poems show a deep attachment to nature. Such as "Sleep and Poetry", "I Stood on Tiptoe on the Hill" and *Endymion* etc.

However, Keats was not only a lover of nature, but also a poet who thought deeply about the relationship between human and nature. He believed that the human is the part of nature and should live in harmony with nature. He used the imagination and the mobilization of the sense to depict beauty, he made nature in Keats's poems become not only a vivid landscape paintings, but also a

kind of induction to beauty.

In general, Keats explores the relationship between man and nature in his own unique way, expressing both love and respect for nature and revealing the close connection between human and nature. His poems not only show his deep love for nature, but also his pursuit the idea of human and nature coexist in harmony.

### 3.5.2 Dan Simmons's Way

In Keats's poetry, there are many nature elements. For example, in his poem "Ode to a Nightingale", there is "But here there is no light, Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown Through and winding mossy ways" show the nature way of Keats, While in Dan Simmons' novel *Hyperion*, the relationship between humans and nature is explored through various themes and motifs. One of the central themes is the tension between human civilization and the natural world, which is represented by the contrast between the bustling cities of Earth and the untamed wilderness of Mars.

Throughout the novel, the characters grapple with their place in this relationship, as they confront the challenges and dangers of living in a harsh, alien environment. Some characters, like the Shrike, embody a primal, almost connection to nature, while others, like Endymion, struggle to reconcile their desire for progress and civilization with their respect for the natural world.

Another important aspect of the relationship between humans and nature in *Hyperion* is the role of technology. The advanced technologies that allow humanity to travel to Mars and explore its mysteries also have unintended consequences, such as polluting the environment and disrupting delicate ecosystems. This raises questions about the ethics of technological progress and its impact on the natural world.

Overall, *Hyperion* presents a complex and nuanced exploration of the relationship between humans and nature, highlighting both the potential benefits and drawbacks of our interactions with the environment.

## Conclusion

This paper first introduces the research background and the significance of the topic selection, then we appreciate the beauty in John Keats poetry. The next part we will analyze the impact of Keats's poetry on *Hyperion* from five aspects, including themes, the use of language, religion, eternity and the way to explore the relationship between human and nature.

All in all, John Keats's poetry offered a lot inspiration and writing techniques to the work *Hyperion*. All these could reflect the Dan Simmons' respect and appreciation to John Keats.



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