CHAPTER – III

Dream, Mystery and Enchantment
Endymion, composed between April – November 1817, is saturated in a feminine mood. Keats’s hero is pitted against nature, beauty and sexuality. According to conventional western thought, passivity is associated with the feminine. Endymion is acted upon by the Moon-Goddess. He is thus feminized in order to be made receptive and creative. Led by Cynthia, Endymion is caught in a whirl of ardent pursuits, entanglements and self-destroying enthrallments. Traditional male power structures are discarded in favor of the pale, melancholy, tearful hero.

In the year of 1817, Keats frequently interacted with Wordsworth, Hazlitt and Hunt. The patriarchs influenced both his philosophy and his poetry. The feminized male in their view, was a distortion of nature’s dictates. Keats’s instinctive decoding of life’s experiences led him to hitherto unexplored territories. The feminized hero’s negation of the masculine self can be deconstructed as the affirmation of the spiritual self that ultimately helps him to sift the visionary from the illusory.

At this juncture Keats’s friends at Teignmouth became acquainted with a widow who had four daughters. The young people were of the opinion that Keats was a fit companion for one of the girls. Keats’s brothers perceived attraction of Keats to the Jeffery girls. Keats wrote to Misses Jeffery in a playful mood:
How do you like John? Is he not very original? he does not look by any means as handsome as four months ago, but is he not handsome? I am sure you must like him very much, but don’t forget me. I suppose Tom gets more lively as his health improves. Tell me what you think of John.

The mood may have been inspired by George’s plan to marry Georgiana Wylie and migrate to America. Georgiana was twenty years old and she impressed Keats with her kind, warm-hearted nature and appreciation of his work. As Sidney Colvin records, ‘He had a warm affection and regard for his new sister-in-law, and was in so a delighted for George’s sake. But at the same time he felt life and its prospects overcast.’ Keats described her ‘of a nature liberal and high spirited’ (Letter, 3 May, 1818).

In the spring of 1818 Keats published *Endymion* and shortly after that made his walking tour through Scotland with Charles Brown. The trip had a beneficial effect on the poet. It diverted his mind somewhat from his personal problems and it also made the friendship between him and Brown more intense. During this tour, Keats’s perception of life matured. Sidney Colvin writes:

A change, besides, was coming over Keats’s thoughts and feelings whereby scenery altogether was beginning to interest him less and his fellow-creatures more. In the acuteness of childish and boyish sensation, among the suburban fields or on the sea-side holidays, he had unconsciously absorbed images of nature enough for his faculties to work on through a life-time of poetry, and now, in his second chamber of Maiden-thought, the appeal of nature yields in his mind to that of humanity.
But the effect of this exhausting trip to Scotland and particularly to Mull was very harmful. For the first time, the symptoms of failing health became evident. At the same time when Keats came back from his Northern tour, the attacks on him in 'Blackwood's Magazine' and the 'Quarterly Review' appeared. The 'Blackwood's Magazine' published an article on the 'Cockney School of Poetry' under the anonymous signature 'Z' in the August number, in which both Hunt and Keats were badly criticized and attacked.

Tom's condition became worse in Keats's absence. Now, nursing Tom was Keats's main task. But Tom died on December 1, leaving Keats completely alone. After his death, Brown invited Keats to live with him in Wentworth Place at Hampstead. Keats now completely absorbed himself in his writing.

Keats started Hyperion in September 1818 while nursing Tom. He finished it in April 1819. During August and September 1819, Keats was engaged in remodeling the fragment in the form of a vision, The Fall of Hyperion. But the subject was in Keats's mind as early as September 1817. In his letter to Haydon he informed him that he was going to write a 'new Romance' after completing Endymion. In another letter to Haydon of January 23, 1818 he compares Endymion and Hyperion:
[... ] in Endymion I think you may have many bits of the deep and sentimental cast—the nature of Hyperion will lead me to treat it in a more naked and grecian Manner—and the march of passion and endeavour will be undeviating—and one great contrast between them will be—that the Hero of the written tale being mortal is led on, like Buonaparte, by circumstance; whereas the Apollo in Hyperion being a fore-seeing God will shape his actions like one.

The Fall of Hyperion is a reconstruction of Hyperion, begun in July in the Isle of Wight. Its major part was completed by 21 September, 1819 while Keats was staying at Winchester. He described its progress to Fanny Brawne. He was busy in writing a ‘very abstract poem’. This abstract poem most probably has been referred to The Fall of Hyperion because those days Keats was working on ‘Lamia’ and the play Otho the Great, none of them was an abstract poem and Hyperion has been abandoned earlier.

Endymion begins by generalizing ‘a thing of beauty’:

A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness, but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
(End. Bk.I.II.1-5)

But this generalization of ‘thing of beauty’ is not limited to abstractions rather he talks in terms of concrete reality. Keats gives a whole list of shapes which represent the concrete and natural phenomena:

[... ] Such the sun, the moon,
Trees, old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; [...] 
(End Bk.I. ll. 13-18)

Keats’s obsession with the perfect shape is indicative of his appreciation of beauty both god–given and man-made. ‘Never pass into nothingness’ suggests immortality of the thing of beauty. As we move further we come to know that ‘a thing of beauty’ particularly the beauty of the moon, is dealt with throughout the poem. The Moon-Goddess falls in love with the Shepherd-Prince Endymion. The beauty of the moon represents feminine beauty which ‘keeps a bower quiet for us’. It gives us shelter, protection and also sleep which is full of ‘sweet dreams’. It has the power to soothe and delight.

*Endymion* has an abundance of women characters. Among them Cynthia is the central figure. The power of the feminine is strongly present in this poem. Keats comments that in the midst of the gloomy world and its sufferings where there is a ‘dearth | Of noble natures,’ ‘some shape of beauty’ gives life to our dark soul, suggests her creativity and capacity to provide life to us. Keats says that these beautiful objects not only give immediate delight but they remain in our memory for a long time and give happiness to our soul. Further the moon has been called ‘The passion poesy’ possessing ‘glories infinite’. Keats conceives of poetry as a woman.
The idea is expressed again while talking about the Mount Latmos, traditionally associated with Endymion. Keats tells us that on its sides, there is a mighty forest. The earth represents the mother who fulfils her maternal role as she provides sap and greenery to the plants:

Upon the sides of Latmos was outspread  
A mighty forest, for the moist earth fed  
So plenteously all weed-hidden roots  
Into ov’r-hanging boughs and precious fruits.  
(End Bk.1. ll. 63-66)

On Mount Latmos, the Festival of Pan is being celebrated; there is a marble altar with lush greenery. A troop of little children are gathering around it. Endymion provides a sharp contrast to the ongoing procession. He is sensitive isolated and alienated from the ‘fair faces’ and ‘garments white’. ‘Fair faces’ are suggestive of women and ‘garments white’ suggest their purity and chastity. The ‘damsels dancing’ along with the shepherds represent equal participation.

‘Nervy knees’, ‘trembling lower lip’, ‘forgotten hands’, ‘wan’, ‘pale’, ‘awed face’, ‘gentleness’ and ‘sighing’ are traditional symptoms of a woman in love. Thus Endymion by experiencing these symptoms has been effeminized. He is not the conventional epic hero rather an effeminate one. In spite of the Keats’s claims to working under the influence of great masters, his projection of Endymion is not manly but of a lover pining in love. Sidney Colvin comments:
In Keats's conception of his youthful heroes there is at all times a touch, not the wholesomest, of effeminacy and physical softness, and the influence of passion he is apt to make fever and unman them quite as indeed a helpless and enslaved submission of all the faculties to love proved, when it come to the trial, to be a weakness of his own nature.4

Colvin's inability to appreciate Keats's inherent feminism is shared by many other critics of the period like Robin Mayhead. The traditional maternal role as the provider of nourishment is highlighted in the following lines:

Mothers and wives, who day by day prepare
The scrip with needments for the mountain air,
And all ye gentle girls who foster up
Udderless lambs, and in a little cup
Will put choice honey for a favoured youth.
(End. Bk.I. ll. 207-11)

The animal to be sacrificed is a heifers or a female calf, and the sheep have been called ‘fearful ewes’.

Keats compares the unhappiness of Endymion to Niobe. She represents the ultimate sorrow of maternity. Endymion’s sadness is like Niobe’s, it envelops his entire being.

Endymion’s sister Peona attempts to remove his problems through animated conversation. Peona is not only a sister to him but his dearest friends, and confidante. She is a guide, leading towards a ‘bowery island’. ‘She is a vehicle to more than beauty, as her predecessors were not; she is the channel to Endymion’s own knowledge and immortality.’5 The bower
provides shelter, protection and symbolizes the womb. A child remains safe inside it.

The bower image is a recurrent one in this poem and it plays a significant role for Endymion. Peona leads Endymion:

So she was gently glad to see him laid
Under her favorite bower’s quiet shade
On her own couch, new made of flower leaves
Dried carefully on the cooler side of sheaves
When last the sun his autumn tresses shook
And the tanned harvesters rich armfuls took.
Soon was he quieted to slumberous rest,
But, ere it crept upon him, he had pressed
Peona’s busy hand against his lips,
And still a - sleeping held her finger-tips
In tender pressure. [...]
(End Bk. I. ll. 436-446)

The bower gives freshness and life to the troubled soul of Endymion and he is ‘calmed to life again’. Peona is sensitive to her brother’s feelings:

[...]'Brother, ’tis vain to hide
That thou dost know of things mysterious,
Immortal, starry; such alone could thus
Weigh down thy nature. Hast thou sinned in aught
Offensive to the heavenly powers? Caught
A Parham dove upon a message sent?
Thy deathful bow against some deer-head bent
Sacred to Dian? Haply thou hast seen
Her naked limbs among the alders green-
And that, alas! is death. No, I can trace
Something more high- perplexing in thy face!’
(End Bk. I. ll. 505-15)

Endymion now eases the burden ‘Of secret grief, here in this bowery nest’ by sharing it with Peona:

Guidance rather than the admonition that will come with the later females characterizes Peona’s primary relationship to her brother. Peona is the only type of imagination in Keats’s grasp at this point in his career – gentle, healing, and inspirational,
she represents the imagination that must be a "friend" to man – in this case, Endymion's dearest friend.  

The moon-goddess appears in his dream and enchants him for the first time. He says:

\[
\text{[...]} \text{Ah, can I tell} \\
\text{The enchantment that afterwards befell?} \\
\text{Yet it was but a dream – yet such a dream} \\
\text{That never tongue, although it overteem} \\
\text{With mellow utterance like a cavern spring,} \\
\text{Could figure out and to conception bring} \\
\text{All I beheld and felt.[...]} \\
\text{(End Bk. I. ll. 572-78)}
\]

The appearance of the moon for the first time is described in these words by Endymion:

\[
\text{And lo! from opening clouds, I saw emerge} \\
\text{The loveliest moon, that ever silvered o'er} \\
\text{A shell for Neptune's goblet. She did soar} \\
\text{So passionately bright, my dazzled soul} \\
\text{Commingling with her argent spheres did roll} \\
\text{Through clear and cloudy, even when she went} \\
\text{At last into a dark and vapoury tent.} \\
\text{(End Bk. I. ll. 591-97)}
\]

The moon appeared to him as the idealized form of a woman and is referred to as 'that completed form of all completeness' and 'high perfection of all sweetness'. Endymion's soul seemed to soar with the moon and to participate in her being, highlighting the phenomenological viewpoint. He is enraptured by her:

\[
\text{[...]} \text{yet she had,} \\
\text{Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad;} \\
\text{And they were simply gordianed up and braided.} \\
\text{(End. Bk. I. ll. 612-14)}
\]
Keats gives a long description of her physical beauty. The circular pattern of his experience reflects phenomenology. Her feet appeared to him like the ‘sea born Venus’. She acted like a common maid and pressed him by her hand. His dream was a ‘dream within dream’. The male could not resist the female touch and he fainted:

[...]

She took an airy range,
And then, towards me, like a very maid,
CAME blotting, waning, willing, and afraid,
And pressed me by the hand. Ah, ’twas too much!
Methought I fainted at the charmed touch.

(End. Bk.I. ll. 633-37)

She even lulled and lapped him and he sighed again to faint once more. Thus Endymion appears like a child lulled and lapped by the moon goddess. Then he sleeps.

When Endymion wakes up from his sleep, he feels sad at the loss of his dream. After coming back to reality he finds everything unpleasant. Peona provides help. She encourages him and does not want him to pine for his love and die in this way with sighs and laments like the roses which are destroyed by the northern blast. She wants him to be rather in the trumpet’s mouth. She tells him that he should not spoil his life which is high and noble, just for a dream. According to S.M. Sperry ‘Endymion’s affirmations of the truth of his visionary experiences are directly opposed by the counter arguments of his sister, Peona, who warns him against deceiving fantasies.’ She is more rational than
Endymion who remains in the world of fantasies and dreams. Her words appeared to him as heavenly dew which brings color of life upon his troubled face.

The third time he sees the face of the moon in the well and he recognizes her face. But the moon disappears again. The appearance disappearance cycle represents phenomenology. This is attested by Merleau-Ponty’s view, ‘We grasp external space through our bodily situation…. Our body is not in space like things; it inhabits or haunts space. It applies itself to space like a hand to an instrument.’ Endymion disconnects himself from theoretical knowledge of the moon and plunges into its entity and attempts to perceive its essence.

Book II of *Endymion* begins with Keats’s defense of love as the ‘sovereign power’ providing both grief as well as the balm. He emphasizes its importance by describing the love of Troilus and Cressida and calls history ‘gilded cheat’. In this context he makes a reference to great historical figures like Alexander, Ulysses and Cyclops but he gives more importance to lovers as compared to warriors:

[*...*]

Juliet leaning
Amid her window- flowers, sighing, weaning
Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,
Doth more avail than these. The silver flow
Of Hero’s tears, the swoon of Imogen,
Fair Pastorella in the bandit’s den,
Are things to brood on with more ardency
Than the death-day of empires.[...]

*(End. Bk. II. ll. 27-34)*
He recollects women like Juliet, Hero, Imogen and Pastorella and celebrates them more than warriors.

Endymion, ‘the brain-sick Shepherd Prince’ is wandering on confused paths in search of his love in the forest. He reaches a ‘shady spring’ and stops to rest. His eye is caught by a wild rose bud. He plucks it, dips its stem in water, it flowers and a golden butterfly emerges. He imagines he is soaring with it in the sky and ultimately reaches a fountain side which is near a ‘cavern’s mouth’. Thus he identifies with a butterfly and participates in her being. This is the phenomenology of the perceiver and the perceived. As the butterfly touches the water, vanishes and a nymph emerges. She feels sorry for his ‘bitterness of love’, calls him soft names and consoles him. She advises him to undertake another search. Endymion sits besides the pool and gazes into the water. The present world of realities is not pleasing to him and he wishes for death.

Endymion calls his ‘thrice-seen love’ the ‘meekest dove of heaven’. She is ‘divine’, ‘keen in beauty’ and provides brightness to the world but her light is being contrasted with the darkness of Endymion’s heart. He asks her to be favorable to him:

Oh, be propitious, nor severely deem
My madness impious; for, by all the stars
That tend thy bidding, I do think the bars
That kept my spirit in are burst—that I
Am sailing with thee through the dizzy sky!

(End. Bk. II. ll. 183-187)
He calls her meekest and at the same time asks her favor contradicts each other and shows disunity in the text. Here Endymion participates with the moon in the journey of the sky and asks for her help. ‘Dear goddess, help, or the wide-gaping air | Will gulf me’ (ll. 194-95).

Endymion journeys down into the deep regions of the earth in search of his love. When he asks the help of the goddess, a voice echoing from the deep caverns, turns him into ‘senseless stone’. That voice says to Endymion to descend into the ‘sparry hollows of the world’. Keats further gives a description of the under ground regions he passes through, into the ‘fearful deep’ which was neither dark nor light but a mixture of the two. The echo sound in the cave is like the sound of heavy rain. He passes through a ‘mimic temple’, near which is a ‘fair shrine’ and just beyond is Diana in the role of a huntress. Endymion is feeling lonely and solitary. He invokes her and asks her favor which brings a gradual change in the atmosphere. Once again the female entity provides comfort to the lonely male. He requests her:

Young goddess, let me see my native bowers!
Deliver me from this rapacious deep!

(End. Bk. II. ll. 331-32)

After passing through many ‘winding alleys’ he at last reaches the bower of Venus and Adonis:

With its accumulated store of cream and ripened fruit, the Bower represents a perfectly self-contained world of sensuousness and imaginative luxury, idealized beyond all
threat of interruption, where the sleeper dreams of his coming joys with Venus [...] . Although grown to a man, the sleeping Adonis resembles, as much as anything, the infant in the womb or cradle whose every need is gratified.

Adonis possesses beauty as well as 'Apollonian curve | of neck and shoulder' (ll. 399-400). Thus he possesses the characteristics of both the male as well as the female. Apollonius also figures in 'Lamia' as orderly, sober and conservative in character. We find Adonis now in the company of a woman amidst sensual pleasures:

[...] Sideway his face reposed
On one white arm, and tenderly unclosed,
By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth
To slumbery pout, just as the morning south
Disparts a dew-lipped rose. [...] 
(End. Bk. II. ll. 403-07)

Adonis meets Endymion there. He offers him wine, which is cool and purple more than the wine of Ariadne. We find a reference to Pomona, a wood nymph who is associated in classical mythology with gardens and fruit-trees, rejected Vertumnus, Roman deity of spring. The picture of sad Vertumnus appears who is fearful of losing his love. He offers him cream which is more rich and sweet than nurse Amalthea gave to the young Jupiter. Amalthea in classical mythology is a nymph who brought up the infant Zeus on the milk of a goat. The poet highlights the traditional motherly aspect of nursing. Further he offers Endymion manna which is taken from Syria from the daughters of Hesperus. Once again
the poet catalogues numerous females. Adonis relates his story of love to Endymion but he says:

And thus: 'I need not any hearing tire
By telling how the sea-born goddess pined
For a mortal youth, and how she strove to bind
Him all in all unto her doting self.

(End. Bk. II. ll. 457-60)

Venus’s love for Adonis was so intense that Jupiter allowed him to return to life for six months every year. Venus’s devotion is visible. She is loyal, confident and has strong will power that even the high-throne Jove is moved by her petitions. Venus also possesses a reviving power. Even her shadow makes Endymion’s heart tumultous and provides new life to his eyes. Venus asks her son Cupid to look after Endymion. She sympathizes with Endymion:

[...] I saw him throw
Himself on withered leaves, even as though
Death had come sudden; [...] 
(End. Bk. II. ll. 564-66)

S.M. Sperry Jnr comments:

Nevertheless from our first glimpse of him in the poem he seems pale and wan, alienated from the healthful pursuits of his fellow Laotians by his strange fits of abstraction. Indeed it is not long before Keats himself addresses him as ‘Brain-sick Shepherd-Prince’ [E. II. 43].

Phoebe or Cynthia provides the backbone to the narrative. Endymion, unlike traditional epic heroes never take initiative but is guided or ‘led’. This may be defined as maternal subtext in patriarchal literature.
Endymion in spite of his loneliness is optimistic. With unusual happiness he wanders through caves and palaces, chasm with foam and streams and fountains where the sound of the water is compared to the sounds of dolphins. He sees there 'naiads fair', thousand jutting shapes and a 'vaulted dome'. He is comforted with the appearance of the Cybele. She 'revives' and brings him back to life and thus shows that she is true to the maternal principle. An eagle carries him to 'Jasmin Bower' which is filled with 'golden moss'. Endymion feels exalted with pleasure. To his capable ears even the 'silence was music from the holy spheres'. On casual reading these passages appear confusing and even unnecessary. J. Hillis Miller writes:

The “unreadability” (if there is such a word) of a text is more than an experience of unease in the reader, the result of his failure to be able to reduce the text to a homogeneous reading. It is also always thematized in the text itself in the form of metalinguistic statements. These may take many different forms. The text performs on itself the act of deconstruction without any help from the critic.11

Attended to in the light of Miller’s theory we find that the bewilderment is an expression of Endymion’s inability to recognize his love. He calls her his ‘breath of life’, asks her whereabouts but assumes that she is either a ‘maid of the waters’ or one of the ‘bright-haired daughters’ of Triton, ‘a nymph of Dian’s’ or an ‘impossible’. Endymion wants to be in her arms at that very instant and woo her among ‘fresh leaves’. But he also realizes that it is not possible because of his earthly ‘powerless self’.
In a dream he relishes the consummation of his love upon a ‘smoothest mossy bed’:

He threw himself, and just into the air
Stretching his indolent arms, he took – oh, bliss!-
A naked waist: ‘Fair Cupid, whence is this?’
A well-known voice sighed, ‘Sweetest, here am I!’
At which soft ravishment, with doting cry,
They trembled to each other. [...]  
(End. Bk. II. ll. 711-16)

Keats addresses the muse to give him poetic inspiration so that he can sing properly for ‘this gentle pair’. The poet once again takes support from the female. Endymion talks to Cynthia and fears a separation again. Once again, the male appears weak and fearful and the female confident and the comforter. The poet uses the paradox ‘known unknown’ for her identity because it is not clear. J. Hillis Miller says:

The heterogeneity of a text (and so its vulnerability to deconstruction) lies rather in the fact that it says two entirely incompatible things at the same time. Or rather, it says something which is capable of being interpreted in two irreconcilable ways. It is “undecidable.”

Cynthia consoles Endymion that they won’t be separated and assures him that he would be blessed and immortalized after his quest is over. The periodic interruption of the quest by the appearance of the ‘quested’ is the ‘irreconcilable’ factor.

Endymion constantly enquires about her identify. He even calls her an enchantress. He swears by her beauty and she also confesses her love for him. Endymion swoons and the goddess says:
Revive, dear youth, or I shall faint and die;
Revive, or these soft hours will hurry by
In tranced dullness; speak, and let that spell
Affright this lethargy! [...]  
(End. Bk. II. ll. 766-69)

She accepts that she will not be happy being away from him and her soul
will not find rest in his absence. She reveals her inability to take him to
her ‘starry eminence’. She is ashamed of accepting her love before every
body but she loves him deeply. She forbids him:

[...] Ah, dearest, do not groan
Or thou wilt force me from this secrecy,
And I must blush in heaven. [...]  
(End. Bk. II. ll. 779-81)

She is afraid to reveal her secrecy in heaven because she is known there
for her chastity. Dorothy Van Ghent compares this sort of secrecy with
Keats’s own, that ‘in all the love sequences in Keats’s poems there is the
same need for intense secrecy. It is a need that Keats observed, to an
extreme, in his own love affair.’

But later on, she bewails her loss of authority as the chaste
goddess. She says that earlier she was like a ‘solitary dove’ chaste and
pure and was unaware that ‘nests were built’. The word nest reminds us
of family, home and the role of a woman in the making up of a home is
very important. Cynthia assures to give him immortality. Then the
complete union of lovers is seen:

Oh, let me melt into thee, let the sounds
Of our close voices marry at their birth.
Let us entwine hoveringly- [...]
She will be a heavenly muse to teach him ‘lisping’, ‘lute breathing’. Cynthia is an embodiment of physical as well as heavenly love. Endymion finds control and solace in her presence, so sleeps. But as he awakes, he finds himself alone in sadness. He realizes ‘love’s madness’. Often he used to groan for his love like a lion. He says:

[...] Oh, he had swooned
Drunken from pleasure’s nipple, and his love
Henceforth was dove-like. [...]  
(End. Bk. II. ll. 868-870)

Here we find the breast-feeding imagery from the word ‘pleasure’s nipple’ and Endymion appears as an infant. Cynthia’s motherly role is also evident. She is ‘dovellite’.

There is a shift in focus from Endymion-Phoebe story to another parallel story of river god Alpheus and Arethusa, a water nymph attending Diana. Again, like Endymion, the male Alpheus is a wooer and wants her favor, asks Diana to help him to get his love. Arethusa says that if the moon goddess has suffered the same pang of love, she would have no fear to break her vow of chastity. It reality, she was in love with Endymion but no one was aware of it. Arethusa calls Alpheus an enchanter. Earlier Endymion calls Diana as ‘enchantress’. In this way female only is not an enchanter, male is also an enchanter. Arethusa recalls her past days when she was happy and carefree in the woods, but
the day she took bath in his 'deceitful stream,' a 'panting glow' has arisen in her. In the same way Endymion also in Book I (II.529-38) recalls his past days when he was bold and manly but after falling in love, he 'sinks low'. Thus we find the element of deconstruction where there is a lament for past rather than present showing the shift of time also. Arethusa blames Alpheus for cheating her in his 'deceitful stream'. He asks her to sigh no more and be patient:

[...] Innocent maid!
Stifle thine heart no more, nor be afraid
Of angry powers—there are deities
Will shade us with their wings. [...] 
(End. Bk. II. ll. 978-81)

Arethusa is fearful of Diana because she is going against the norms of chastity. But the irony is that Diana herself is involved in love affair forgetting her norms of chastity.

We find development in Endymion's character. From his own love and its pangs for the first time, he moves to the genuine love for humanity. He even weeps for these lovers, feels their sorrow deeply and is moved for them. But he is unable to do anything for them himself and wants his wish to be fulfilled by the gentle goddess:

[...] On the verge
Of that dark gulf he wept, and said, 'I urge
Thee, gentle Goddess of my pilgrimage,
By our eternal hopes, to soothe, to assuage,
If thou are powerful, these lovers' pains,
And make them happy in some happy plains.'
(End. Bk. II. ll. 1012-1017)
The power of the moon is elaborated upon in Book III of *Endymion*. She has been described as the ‘gentlier mightiest of them all’. She is an embodiment of feminine power and beauty. She blesses everybody and everything, ‘She sits most meek and most alone’. She revives things. Every object of nature, little birds, shellfish, mountains, oceans, gets benefits from her. With all her power she is benign and benevolent to every one without discrimination:

[...] Thou art a relief
To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps
Within its pearly house. The mighty deeps,
The monstrous sea is thine – the myriad sea!
O Moon! Far-spooming Ocean bows to thee,
And Tellus feels his forehead's cumbrous load.
(End. Bk. III. ll. 66-71)

The moon is known as Cynthia and her abode is unknown. She experiences panic and her cheek is pale for Endymion who is in the same mood. She is a good guide and knows every route. The poet addresses the moon goddess as his love:

O love! How potent hast thou been to teach
Strange journeyings! Wherever beauty dwells,
In gulf or eyrie, mountains or deep dells,
In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun,
Thou pointest out the way, and straight 'tis won.
(End. Bk. III. ll.92-96)

She has been generous and helpful to men like Leander, Orpheus and Pluto when they experienced difficulties in love. Endymion too has been sent her beam in the ‘deep-water world’. In this way she is not only
helpful to nature and its objects but also to the powerful men. We find Keats’s feminist attitude clearly in attributing power to women.

Cynthia appears to Endymion and ‘soothed her light’ to his pale face. He ‘felt the charm to breathlessness’ and his heart glows with warmth. He tastes the ‘gentle moon’ by putting his head upon a ‘tuft of straggling weeds’. During his sea-journey Endymion sees many deadly things. At this time only Diana has saved him. She provides him comfort and joy and ‘chased away that heaviness’, highlighting the protective nature of women. Surprised by the fascinating power of moon, Endymion asks:

‘What is there in thee, Moon, that thou shouldst move  
My heart so potently? When yet a child  
I oft have dried my tears when thou hast smiled.  
Thou seem ’dusty my sister. Hand in hand we went  
From eve to morn across the firmament.  
(End. Bk. III. ll. 142-46)

With moon, he keeps moving in his past and present, a romantic attitude. We find the element of deconstruction in this shift of time. Romantic poetry is an open invitation to deconstruction. They deconstruct their own writing by showing that the presence they desire is always absent, always in past or future. In his boyhood time also she was with him in his ‘every joy and pain’. But as he grew in years his fascination for her beauty increased and her role also widened. She is the ‘charm of women’ also.
Endymion’s ‘strange love’ which is the ‘felicity’s abyss’ is one aspect of the moon-goddess. With her appearance, the moon fades away partly. He begins to feel her ‘orby power’ over him. He requests her to be merciful and asks her forgiveness:

[...] O, be kind,
Keep back thin influence, and do not blind
My sovereign vision. Dearest love, forgive
That I can think away from thee and live!
Pardon me, airy planet, that I prize
One thought beyond thine argent luxuries!
(End. Bk. III. ll. 181-86)

He asks pardon for his infidelity and will no more think about any one except her.

In the Glaucus-Circe episode, the story of Scylla is told by Glaucus and we hear his male voice in narrating it. He interprets it in his own way. He depicts her as a shy and ‘timid thing’ and declares his love for her ‘to the white of truth’ but she is not reciprocating it. Rather she is escaping from him. He has no consideration for Scylla’s likes and dislikes. Without considering whether she is interested in him or not, he starts chasing her. Her swift escape like a bird suggests her unwillingness but he interprets it as her timidity and shyness, the typical male tendency. As ‘Representation of the world’, Catherine Mackmnon quotes Simon de Beauvoir, ‘like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with the absolute truth.’

His passion for her grows intense as he sees her beauty. He consults Circe
to find the love favors of Scylla. But his declaration to love ‘Scylla to the white of truth’ is deconstructed when he swooned dead-drifting to that ‘fatal power’ the moment he sees her. He is unable to resist her charm:

Who could resist? Who in this universe?
She did so breathe ambrosia, so immerse
My fine existence in a golden clime.
She took me like a child of suckling time,
And cradled me in roses. [...]  
(End. Bk. III. ll. 453-57)

Glaucus finds himself ‘in a twilight bower’ but this bower is not going to soothe Glaucus for a long time. He is not guilty of his infidelity for Scylla but he is concerned for his own ill treatment by Circe. Circe’s first appearance is contrary to his later image. She appears to him ‘the fairest face that morn e’er look upon’. According to Glaucus she weaves a net with ‘honey words’ and tears and smiles. The tone of Circe’s speech changes from the soft and rich speech to the cruel, the moment he sees her real form.

His early comparison for Circe appears of a mother and he a child shows Keats’s fascination for his mother. He bows before her as a ‘tranced vassal’ and she takes the initiative of taking him like a child of ‘suckling time’ and cradled in roses. But she has been compared with snake, basically an evil creature. Her looks are fierce wan and tyrannizing. As Glaucus tells the story, Circe came near Glaucus, hovered over him. She takes the initiative in lovemaking. He is a passionate man
desiring and thirsting for her love. The moment she leaves, he is 
disappointed and desirous of her ‘smooth arms and lips’ in ‘greedy thirst’.

The representation of both these women Scylla as well as Circe is 
two extremes. One is shy and ‘timid thing’, the other one is the ‘angry
witch’. Circe’s role of a nurse, mother with cradle and lullaby is unlike
the conventional mother. Her ‘tenderest squeeze’ is a ‘giant’s clutch’. She
is angry and seems merciless. He calls her ‘sea flirt’. Glaucus was not
guilty of his disloyalty for Scylla that is why he suffers at the hands of
Circe. But poor Scylla was a victim of death without any fault of hers.
Thus we find that innocent one suffers and the guilty one prospers.

In the case of Circe as a ‘fatal power’ and ‘witch’ we find the
patriarchal treatment of women. She is the ‘cruel enchantress’ who
entraps the innocent male in her sexual trap. He is a victim in the hand of
woman. On the other hand Glaucus as well as Endymion are shown
gentle-hearted, benign and helpful for humanity.

Endymion is no more different from Glaucus. The voice of his
lovely mistress is enough to make him giddy. He is unable to bear it,
closes his eye and imagines her. He says ‘I die – I hear her voice- I feel
my wing’. The power of female leads him near death in ecstasy. He wants
to reach her through his imagination. There is a complete merging of the
perceiver in the perceived. The role of the Nereids also provides the
maternal aspect of a woman and the male gets comfort from her. The place they lead him to is a bower suggestive of the womb of a woman. At the end of his adventure under the sea Endymion hears the voice of his beloved. We find the imagery of the mother dove hatching her eggs, suggest the creativity in woman.

Book IV of *Endymion* opens with an invocation to the muse calling her ‘Loftiest Muse’. The Indian-maid is introduced. She is grief stricken and laments for her ‘native land’. Endymion hears her voice and searches for her like an ‘anxious hind toward her hidden fawn’. The comparison invokes mother-child affinity typical to Romantic poetry. The Indian maid succeeds in catching the attention of Endymion:

[...] For canst thou only bear
A woman’s sigh alone and in distress?
See not her charms! Is Phoebe passionless?
Phoebe is fairer far – oh, gaze no more.

(End. Bk. IV.II.54-57)

He says that he cannot help loving a lovely woman. He is helpless before her beauty, remembers his first love Phoebe and dizzily attempts to sort out tangle of emotions. Endymion’s dilemma results in a pricking conscience:

Upon a bough
He leant, wretched. He surely cannot now
Thirst for another love. Oh, impious,
That he can even dream upon it thus!
Thought he, ‘Why am I not as are the dead,
Since to a woe like this I have been led
Through the dark earth and through the wonderous sea?
Goddess, I love thee not the less! From thee
By Juno's smile I turn not-no, no, no.
(End. Bk. IV. 11. 86-93)

But at another moment he contradicts his own statement by saying:

I have at triple soul: Oh, fond pretence –
For both, for both my love is so immense,
I feel my heart is cut for them in twain.'
(End. Bk. IV. ll. 95-97)

The very word ‘surely’ suggests that he is not going to ‘thirst for another love’ anymore but his declaration to love both equally deconstructs the word surely. As J. Hillis Miller says, ‘In a deconstructionist reading, the two meanings are asymmetrical and irreconcilable, like rhetoric and logic. Such doubleness is only one of the things deconstruction finds in texts.’ On beholding Cynthia, Endymion ‘groaned as one by beauty slain’. Serenading in his patriarchal mode he calls himself her servant to ‘Kneel here and adore’ her. Her closeness makes him giddy and drowsy.

When Endymion awake, he finds the Indian-maid as ‘bed fellow’. She is so beautiful that he kisses her. Then he thinks about Phoebe for a while forgetting about the Indian-maid. He turns again to the sleeping maid and ‘all his soul was shook’. He asks her forgiveness but repeats the same thing. Bewildered, he laments:

[...] As it is whole
In tenderness, would I were whole in love!
Can I prize thee, fair maid, all price above,
Even when I feel as true as innocence?
I do, I do. What is this soul then? Whence
Came it? It does not seem my own, and I
Have no self-passion or identity.
(End. Bk. IV. ll. 471-77)

Endymion’s identity represents the poet and the beloved represents poetry. The double manifestation causes major complication in the poetic process. He seems to lose his own identity by merging in female.

Endymion goes to sleep in a dark cave which is suggesting the womb:

There anguish does not sting, nor pleasure pall.
Woe-hurricanes beat ever at the gate,
Yet all is still within and desolate.
(End. Bk. IV. ll. 526-28)

He sees a vision of the marriage of Diana and the constellations are joining the marriage festivities. From the airy regions, Endymion comes back to the earth and realizes that for heavenly beings there is no sorrow or grief. Now, in reality he sees the grass and ‘feel the solid ground’. His return to reality makes him realize that he has seen nothing or felt but a great dream. He prefers the world of reality to the dream. He says:

[...] My sweetest Indian, here,
Here will I kneel, for thou redeemed hast
My life from too thin breathing. Gone and past
Are cloudy phantasms. Caverns lone, farewell,
And air of visions, and the monstrous swell
Of visionary seas! No, never more
Shall airy voices cheat me to the shore
Of tangled wonder, breathless and aghast.
(End. Bk. IV. ll. 648-655)

But he does not forget her totally and says:

Adieu, my daintiest dream, although so vast
My love is still for thee. The hour may come
When we shall meet in pure elysium.
(End. Bk. IV. ll. 656-58)
He also expects her to shine on him and her ‘damsel fair’. He kneels before his Indian-maid and shows his indebtedness towards her. He promises to talk ‘no more of dreaming’. He plans his future life with her. The picture of Endymion appears before us of a helpless man persuading to restore his love. He urges heaven to protect her beauty and loveliness. He is ready to live with the Indian maiden. But she refuses that she may not be his love. She is forbidden and she cannot tell the reason.

Through Indian-maiden’s refusal of Endymion’s proposal we find that Keats has shown women capable to take such a bold step. Disappointed by her rejection, he decides to live the life of a hermit in his mossy cave where only Peona can meet him. Once again Peona fulfils her role as a nurse and friend. Endymion’s condition is really to be pitied. He appears as a frightful dreamer rejected by a woman. But his dilemma is finally resolved when he finds that the two women are one. The Indian maiden is transformed into the golden-haired maiden. Her black hair turns golden and her eyes turn blue. She was no more the Indian maiden but Phoebe herself and she tells the reason of her delay:

[...] But foolish fear
Withheld me first; and then decrees of fate;
And then ’twas fit that from this mortal state
Thou shouldst, my love, by some unlooked-for change
Be spiritualized.[…]

(End. Bk. IV. ll. 989-993)
The picture we get of Endymion at the end is very submissive and gentle. He kneels down before his goddess into a ‘blissful swoon’ and vanishes away. Thus he is giving woman a higher place like a goddess. Endymion’s final choice is the Indian-maiden. She is an embodiment of reality. In Keats’s preference for reality we find he phenomenological viewpoint clearly. But later on we find that Keats by uniting the two women has shown a unification of the two, both ideal as well as real.

The Indian maiden represents a more realistic and emancipated version of womanhood. She has the power to reject a male proposing her for marriage unlike the traditional woman. On the other hand the golden-haired maiden represents the ideal woman and the motherly aspect of a woman. The Indian maiden gives way to a new kind of emergence to society based on independence of the female and also projects a society where women have equal right as their male counterpart. Thus Keats emerges as a feminist in his role to provide the high status to women as goddess, worthy to be adored.

Hyperion opens with a tabloid of defeated patriarchy. Saturn sits in absolute quietness like a statue. An overwhelmed Naiad presses ‘her cold finger closer to her lips’ and participates in his sorrow. His large foot prints trace his enormous stature. He has lost his ruling position and
reduced to this pitiable condition, he turns to his mother for comfort and
kneels before her. She is Mother Earth symbolic of nurturing maternity:

> While his bowed head seemed listening to the Earth,
> His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

(Hyp. Bk. I. ll. 20-21)

Thea, the consort of Saturn, stretches her ‘kindred hand’ to his wide
shoulders to awake him:

> She was a Goddess of the infant world;
> By her in stature the tall Amazon
> Had stood a pigmy’s height; she would have ta’en
> Achilles by the hair and bent his neck,
> Or with a finger stayed Ixion’s wheel.

(Hyp. Bk. I. ll. 26-30)

Her physical strength is greater than that of the Amazons and of Achilles.
She serves as a contrast to the fallen image of Saturn. In her role as the
matriarch, she imbibes the pain of eternity. She is not the traditional,
meek, submissive woman of Keats’s early poem who ‘bleats | For man’s
protection’ (‘Ah, who can e’er forget so fair a being’ (ll. 3-4) but
powerful and fearless. Her comparison with the Sphinx shows her strong
body. Her Beauty also is per excellence. Her beautiful face depicts
sorrow. She has intuitive powers and knowledge of the coming trouble is
visible in her face and demeanor. Thea is a partner in Saturn’s sorrow.
The term ‘bended neck’ shows Saturn’s total breakdown. She utters
consoling words to him in ‘a feeble tongue’. Thus she is humble and
emotional also:
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet;
Until at length old Saturn lifted up
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,
And that fair kneeling Goddess;[...]
(Hyp. Bk. I. ll. 87-92)

Her face serves as a mirror to him. Saturn has lost his identity but wants
to regain it with the help of Thea. The poem is an epic yet the female
dominates the poem giving wisdom, knowledge, and teaching humanity
to the male. Saturn is moving his hands in the air as if fighting in a
battlefield, showing his might and power. According to Newell F. Ford
'Saturn and his ruined brethren understand only one law in the universe –
the law of might.'¹⁶ Thea serving as an anchor to the sorry visage of
patriarchy encourages Saturn to continue and regain his courage and
impart it among other Titans. She assumes the role of a guide who 'turned
to lead the way' whom Saturn 'followed'.

The Titans who were once fierce are now shedding tears, groaning
for their old power. Hyperion has his sovereignty and majesty but is also
feeling insecure. His picture comes royal and full of wrath which was to
certain extent responsible for their present condition. Hyperion represents
evolved masculinity. Apart from Thea, we meet other feminine characters
like Cybele, Themis, Thetys, Clymene, Asia, Ops and Mnemosyne in
Book II of Hyperion. This cluster of women represents different aspects
of womanhood. Mnemosyne, the ancient Greek goddess of memory is presented as bold, free and ‘straying in the world’.

Asia, born of the Caf ‘though feminine than any of her sons’ is the only one of the Titans except Oceanus who is not a victim of sorrow. She possesses more thought than woe unlike the desperate male Titans:

More thought than woe was in her dusky face,
For she was prophesying of her glory;
And in her wide imagination stood
Palm-shaded temples and high rival fanes,
By Oxus or in Ganges’ sacred isles.
(Hyp. Bk. II. ll.56-60)

Thus ‘She is the very figure of Hope, strikingly contrasted with the dejection and misery surrounding her.’

Encleadus, one of the Titans, ‘tiger-passioned, lion thoughted’ represents the untamed aspect of patriarchy. He is full of wrath and going to wage a war against the new gods by using only physical powers. Oceanus’s wife Tethys and daughter Clymene, Themis, and Ops the ancient Roman goddess of plenty, also appear on the scene. The Muse also has been invoked and her high imaginative and inspiring quality has been accepted. Thea is a leader with initiative unlike the traditional patriarchy-bound follower:

For when the Muse’s wings are air-ward spread,
Who shall delay her flight? And she must chant
Of Saturn and his guide, […]
(Hyp. Bk. II. ll. 82-84)
Oceanus is sensitive enough to accept the reality that the new gods are more powerful, strong and beautiful. He clarifies his point by giving the example of earth which is the ‘dull soil’ that feeds and nourishes huge forests. He focuses on the maternity, generosity, sacrificing and nurturing qualities of Mother Earth. In the same way, he says, the tree on which the dove coos and has golden wings is not jealous of its freedom. Thus the male accepts the sacrificing nature of female. Oceanus says that in the same way this new race is more beautiful. ‘Oceanus is thus a kind of inchoate poet among them, the first recognizer of the power of beauty in the world, and also of the prefigurative veracity – and possible creativity – of the imagination.’ Oceanus equates beauty with might by saying that ‘first in beauty should be first in might’. Clymene, the daughter of Oceanus is presented as ‘over-foolish’ and Oceanus ‘over-wise’ by Encleaus. Her words are termed ‘baby words’.

Apollo and Mnemosyne appear together. She is solemn and serious and represents the eternal woman:

Goddess! I have beheld those eyes before,  
And their eternal calm, and all that face,  
Or I have dreamed.’ […]  
(Hyp. Bk. III. ll. 59-61)

In reply to his question, she says:

‘Thou hast dreamed of me; and awaking up  
Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,  
Whose strings touched by thy fingers all the vast  
Unwearied ear of the whole universe
Listened in pain and pleasure at the birth
Of such new tuneful wonder. [...]  
(Hyp. Bk. III. ll. 62-66)

Mnemosyne is depicted as one who has observed the growth of Apollo 'from the young day' till his arms 'could bend that bow heroic to all times'. 'She is the creative mother of the muses,' a source of inspiration to Apollo and gives the power of creation to him which gives pleasure to humanity. She tries to know the reason of his sorrow and feels sad about it. She says, 'for I am sad | When thou dost shed a tear'(ll. 69-70). Thus she is affectionate and has compassion for others. She is like a caring mother who looks after her child, knows about her growth since childhood, and has an intuitive character. He says:

[...] 'Mnemosyne!
Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how;
Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest?
Why should I strive to show what from thy lips
Would come no mystery? [...]  
(Hyp. Bk. III. ll. 83-86)

She is full of knowledge. To him, she is the 'Goddess benign' and her silent face is an object of lesson to him. He says:

Mute thou remainest-mute! Yet I can read
A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:
Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.  
(Hyp. Bk. III. ll. 111-13)

In her face, Apollo is able to read knowledge that gives him the place of god. Thus she is the mother of the Muses who provides inspiration to Apollo, the god of poetry. She gives him the essential knowledge. She
prophesies him. 'If she is eternal beauty and truth, it is the beauty and truth always to be attained. She sanctions the struggle toward an ultimate perfection.'

The Fall of Hyperion is a reworking of Hyperion. It has been recast in the form of a vision in which the defeat of the Titans is narrated by a priestess Moneta through the dream mechanism. Keats thus endows Moneta with oracular and prophetic properties.

The narrative opens with highlighting the power of poetry. In Keats, poetry is generally seen as a female as he says that 'poetry alone can tell her dreams'. She has the liberating function because poetry gives us power, enables us to express ourselves. The poet finds himself cocooned in nature. A sacramental feast is being served which has been tasted by the 'mother Eve'. The drink makes him swoon. This imagery of sacramental feast and 'arbour with a drooping roof' is replaced by the old palace, cathedrals and marble. But the maternal image is more dominant than before.

The poet sees an image huge like the cloud at whose feet is an altar with steps on both sides. He proceeds toward the altar with reverence slowly and finds the image of Moneta ruling majestically whose voice is threatening and commanding:

[...] If thou canst not ascend
These steps, die on that marble where thou art.
Thy flesh, near cousin to the common dust,
Will parch for lack of nutriment- thy bones
Will wither in few years, and vanish so
That not the quickest eye could find a grain
Of what thou now art on that pavement cold.
(The Fall of Hyp. I. ll. 107-13)

This ordeal of the stairway represents the rebirth. It is not an easy flight but a laborious and tortured climb. He requests Moneta, the 'veiled shadow':

[...] 'High prophetess,' said I, 'purge off,
Benign, if so it please thee, my mind's film.'
(The Fall of Hyp. I. ll. 145-46)

He wants Moneta's help to understand things clearly, to bestow on him truth and knowledge as she possess. She provides him the basic knowledge of his own identity both as a poet and as a human being through the journey of pain and suffering. Her being in veil suggests her mysterious personality and depth of vision. She is benign and merciful as well as threatening as Dorothy Van Ghent asserts that 'Moneta embodies "the dangerous aspect of the presence," with her terrifying deathly pallor, her tyrannous attitude and fierce threats.' Thus in Moneta, we find the picture of complete womanhood.

According to Moneta, the poet and the dreamer are distinct and have different functions. The poet has knowledge and understanding through which he tries to remove the suffering and problems of people. A 'poet is a sage | A humanist, physician to all men.' He puts balm upon the
world, 'The other vexes it'. He enquires about himself as well as about her:

Majestic shadow, tell me where I am,
Whose altar this; for whom this incense curls;
What image this whose face I cannot see,
For the broad marble knees; and who thou art,
Of accent feminine, so courteous?'
(The Fall of Hyp. I. ll. 211-15)

Though she is majestic, she is courteous also with feminine accent. Thus she is a combination of both these aspects suggestive of perfect woman. She has a 'tall shade', 'majestic shadow' and she is the goddess of eternal sorrow. She is sad over the lost glory of the Titans. She is the 'sole priestess of his desolation'. Her personality sometimes terrifies the poet:

But yet I had a terror of her robes,
And chiefly of the veils, that from her brow
Hung pale, and curtained her in mysteries.
(The Fall of Hyp. I. ll. 251-53)

Seeing him in terror, the goddess parted the veils with her 'sacred hands'.

Her face is wan, and reflects the tolerance and permanence of suffering.

According to Robin Mayhead:

She is both tender and frightening, serene in her sad authority and also profoundly disquieting. 'Not pined by human sorrow', she yet stands as an embodiment of the very idea of sorrow itself, as an 'immortal' level far above the incidental sorrows of the individual human being.21

Her eyes have an arresting quality, a 'benignant light'. They are free from all 'external things,' have been compared to the light, splendor of the mild moon who 'comforts' everyone without knowing about them all. Her
eyes are of the same type who soothes even those whom she does not know. She has selfless love for humanity.

The sad picture of Moneta made the poet inquisitive ‘to see what things the hollow brain behind enwombed.’ The image of her hollow brain reminds us of the womb as Dorothy Van Ghent says, ‘Moneta’s brain is conceived of as the “entails” of an earth cavern, as a womb.’ He calls Moneta ‘shade of memory’ and Mnemosyne also signifies memory. Thus he has combined both of them. Mnemosyne can offer only the past to Apollo while Moneta derives its strength from the future as well as the past. He again asks her the cause of her sorrow and she relates the tale to the poet as described in Hyperion. Her role here is like a historian and interpreter. The whole thing is described again by the Moneta to the poet. The fallen Titans are not described again individually. In this part we find Saturn’s loss of power, hope and strength. His voice is not as commanding and authoritative as before in Hyperion. His voice is feeble, poor and sickly. Canto II of The Fall of Hyperion is not described in a new theme but a recast of the first part of Hyperion. The description of the Hyperion ends abruptly leaving the poem fragmentary.

In both the books the male persona gets wisdom, knowledge and comfort out of the female who is not a meek and weak person but a source of inspiration. ‘She is to be distinguished from the merely coy and
mute forms of loveliness of earlier poetry by virtue of her role as a sage, warning the poet that he no longer be a dreamer, but a “humanist, physician to all men.” Thus the power of Keats’s women is found at its height in this poem.

Through the 1818 letters, Keats emerges as a mature person in comparison to his self of 1817. His love for his brothers and sister is not affected by the passage of time, rather it remains the same. His concern and love for his sister is revealed in the letters to George and Tom Keats, Haydon and also to Georgiana. This year is very important from the viewpoint of his experience and his understanding regarding women. He realizes his mistake in judging and making his opinion of them but often his views appear contradictory to each other. Most of his views about women are expressed in his letters to Benjamin Bailey whom he became acquainted with at the Reynolds’s in London in 1817. He came close to him during his stay at Oxford in the same year. Through these letters, a whole picture of women is visible. He talks at length about particular women among them Georgiana is praised and admired in high terms as the most ‘disinterested woman in the world’. Mrs. Isabella Jones and Jane Cox also attracted him.

Keats was fully aware of his duties towards his sister Fanny and tried to fulfill them to his capacity. He was the eldest one in the family so
he was to play the role of both mother and father for his younger brothers and sister. Fanny was to Keats a person whom he has to protect and treasure. The picture of Fanny appears as meek, dependant, helpless under the supervision of an authoritative person Mr. Abbey. This aspect of woman is sometimes visible in Keats's poetry. In this letter to Tom and George 5 January 1818 Keats informs them about his sister with whom he is very concerned and caring. Being an elder brother he also instructs his brothers to keep contact with her:

[...] I have seen Fanny twice lately- she enquired particularly after you and wants a Co-partnership Letter from you – she has been unwell but is improving – I think she will be quick – Mrs. Abbey was saying that the Keatses were ever indolent – that they would ever be so and that it was born in them – Well whispered fanny to me 'If it is born with us how can we help it- She seems very anxious for a Letter-I asked her what I should get for her, she said a Medal of the Princess.

The responsibility of Fanny is felt by Keats constantly. He cannot ignore her and gives her preference over other people. The pang of being away from her always pricks Keats. Keats further talks about his sister in his letter to B.R. Haydon 10 January 1818:

I should have seen you ere this, but on account of my sister being in Town: so that when I have sometimes made ten paces towards you, Fanny has called me into the City; and the Xmas Holyday[s] are your only time to see Sisters, that is if they are so situated as mine.

Keats gives an account of Scotland and Ireland to Tom, his younger brother:
[...] yet I can perceive a great difference in the nations from the
Chambermaid at this nate Inn kept by Mr Kelly – She is fair,
kind and ready to laugh, because she is out of the horrible
dominion of the Scotch kirk–A Scotch Girl stands in terrible
awe of the Elders–poor little Susannas – They will scarcely
laugh–they are greatly to be pitied and the kirk is greatly to be
damn’d. These kirkmen have done scotland good (Query?) they
have made Men, Women, Old Men Young Men old Women,
young women boys, girls and infants all careful [...].

(Letter, 3-9 July 1818)

He really feels sympathetic toward the fate of Kirk women at Scotland.
The picture he draws of these women is really to be considered. He has
an inherent sympathy for women. He perceives the difference in the
treatment of female by male. From these points Keats’s real feminist
feelings emerge. He further continues his point regarding them in the
same letter of 3-9 July:

[...]
The present state of society demands this and this
convinces me that the world is very young and in a verry
ignorant state – We live in a barbarous age. I would sooner be
a wild deer than a Girl under the dominion of the kirk, and I
would sooner be a wild hog than be the occasion of a Poor
Creatures pennance before those execrable elders [...]

The picture he draws of them is really pathetic and shows Keats’s deep-
seated reverence and sympathy for womankind. In the same letter Keats
stresses that experience is necessary to enjoy a work fully:

No Man in such matters will be content with the experience of
others – It is true that out of suffrance there is no greatness, no
dignity; that in the most abstracted Pleasure there is no lasting
happiness: yet who would not like to discover over again that
Cleopatra was a Gipsey, Helen a Rogue and Ruth a deep one?

E.C. Pettet expresses the same philosophy when he says that, ‘Pure
experience, which is the sole source and kernel of all our knowledge of
reality, can never be sought elsewhere than in our simple, original perceptions. 24

On his return from Bellfast Keats met a ‘Sadan – the Duchess of Dunghill’. Her picture we see is really pathetic. Keats seems to participate in her being:

[...]It is no laughing matter tho – Imagine the worst dog kennel you ever saw placed upon two poles from a mouldy fencing- In such a wretched thing sat a squalid old Woman squat like an ape half starved from a scarcity of Buiscout in its passage from Madagascar to the cape, - with a pipe in her mouth and looking out with a round-eyed skinny lidded, inanity – with a sort of horizontal idiotic movement of her head - squab and lean she sat and puff’d out the smoke while two ragged tattered Girls carried her along-What a thing would be a history of her Life and sensations.

(Letter, 3-9 July 1818)

Thus these letters show Keats’s inner concern for women which he got from his early experience. Marjorie Norris says about him:

His mode of apperception, viewing the world around him by participating in its being, reflects a phenomenology, the study of which illumines the structure of Keats’s poetry. Unlike Shelley, for example, who rises up from nature into a mystical flight, or Wordsworth’ who seeks a mysterious, saving force in nature or the memories of nature, Keats, like Wallace Stevens, wants to see the truth or reality of being. They both want to penetrate, by sharing its essence, into the core of reality. 25

Most of Keats’s personal views about women are expressed in his letters to Benjamin Bailey. The letter to him of 23 March, 1818 shows his deep concern for women. He remembers one of the sayings of Bailey while his stay at Oxford where he says “Why should Woman suffer?” and

From his heart Keats was sensitive and caring for women. He feels pain to see a woman suffering. His innermost feelings about them were sympathetic and concerning.

Keats is very much concerned for his brother George. He tells Bailey that his brother has an independent and liberal mind. He is dissatisfied with the place ‘[...] in which a generous Ma<n> with a scanty recourse must be ruined’ (Letter, 21-25 May 1818). That is why he has decided to immigrate to America. Further Keats tells Bailey more about him and his would be wife Georgiana in the same letter that ‘[...] he will marry before he sets sail a young Lady he has known some years – of a nature liberal and highspirited enough to follow him to the Banks of the Mississippi.’

Keats is a sensitive person, feels more of his brother’s separation. After George’s departure to America, he is planning to go on a walking tour with Brown through the North of England and Scotland.

With the concern and love for his brothers his attitude toward women is evident through this letter to Benjamin Bailey of 10 June 1818:

[…] My Love for my Brothers from the early loss of our parents and even for earlier Misfortunes has grown into an affection ‘passing the Love of Women’–I have been ill temper’d with them, I have vex’d them – but the thought of them has always stifled the impression that any woman might
otherwise have made upon me – I have a sister too and may not follow them, either to America or to the Grave[…]

He realizes what he is doing. He is conscious of his bad temper towards them. In the same letter about Georgiana, George’s wife, Keats says:

I had known[n] my sister-in-Law some time before she was my Sister and was very fond of her. I like her better and better – she is the most disinterested woman I ever knew - that is to say she goes beyond degree in it – To see an entirely disinterested Girl quite happy is the most pleasant and extraordinary thing in the world –[…]

Keats was extremely fond of Georgiana and he himself admitted that his affection for her gradually increased with time. He was also impressed by her intelligence, disinterestedness and character. He noticed that Georgina had “something original” about her; though not strictly handsome, “she had the imaginative poetical cast”. After praising Georgiana a little further he says:

Women must want Imagination and they may thank God for it – and so m[a]ly we that a delicate being can feel happy without any sense of crime. It puzzles me and I have no sort of Logic to comfort me – I shall think it over.

(Letter, 10 June 1818)

Here he considers woman a ‘delicate being’ and does not want her to possess imagination to be away from any sense of crime. He seems considerate towards them but it also shows his attributing superiority to men by providing them imaginative faculty and power. Keats sometimes seems to be under the social pressure to adopt the norms of masculinity.
But he accepts that he is not clear and has no logic to assert his point, depicts his ambivalence towards women.

In letter to Benjamin Bailey 18, 22 July 1818, he expresses his views regarding women:

I am certain I have not a right feeling towards Women – at this moment I am striving to be just to them but I cannot – Is it because they fall so far beneath my Boyish imagination? When I was a Schoolboy I though[t] a fair Woman a pure Goddess, my mind was a soft nest in which some one of them slept though she knew it not – I have no right to expect more than their reality. I thought them ethereal above Men – I find then [for them] perhaps equal-great by comparison is very small – Insult may be inflicted in more ways than by Word or action – one who is tender of being insulted does not like to think an insult against another – I do not like to think insults in a Lady’s Company – I commit a Crime with her which absence would have not known-Is it not extraordinary?

(Letter, 18, 22 July 1818)

Keats here clearly states that his feelings regarding women are not positive and right. With the ripening of his mental faculty, his conception of women also seems to be matured but not completely. In his childhood his feelings were good and even to the point of idealization and adoration but with the unpleasant experience he encounters with them, his feeling shift from equality and goddess hood to their reality as he says ‘I have no right to expect more than their reality.’ In reality he finds their picture different as in the case of his mother. He adored her but she left him for a second hasty marriage. Things like these made a bad impression upon the young mind of Keats. He tries to overcome these feelings but finds himself unable to do so.
His greatest fear is to be insulted in the company of ladies. He is a sensitive person and susceptible to perceive things easily because 'without man’s subjectivity no affirmation of reality has meaning and without any affirmation of reality all words and formulas are empty shells.' He even does not want to think about it.

In the company of women Keats feels uncomfortable, shy and hesitant. But quiet contrary to this, the company of men does not affect him. He feels comfortable and free to communicate with ease. Keats's anxiety and instability in the company of opposite sex is clearly revealed when he says in his letter to Benjamin Bailey 18, 22 July in these words:

> When among Men I have no evil thoughts, no malice, no spleen – I feel free to speak or to be silent – I can listen and from everyone I can learn – my hands are in my pockets I am free from all suspicion and comfortable. When I am among Women I have evil thoughts, malice spleen – I cannot speak or be silent – I am full of Suspicions and therefore listen to no thing – [...] for an obstinate Prejudice can seldom be produced but from a gordian complication of feelings, which must take time to unravell and care to keep unravelled – [...] for after all I do think better of Womankind than to suppose they care whether Mister John Keats five feet hight likes them or not.

This sort of unease, discomfort and shyness made Keats label the brand of effeminate and exclude him from the domain of masculinity. He accepts that his feelings and attitude towards women earlier was not normal but it is not so easy to remove and a lot of care is needed to do away with it. Now he says that his feelings are good about womankind without caring for their response. Thus we find contradictory opinion
here which shows that a text can be used to support two contradictory points. In the letter to J.H. Reynolds, 19 February 1818 Keats supports the role of woman over man. He says:

... Now it appears to me that almost any Man may like the Spider spin from his own inwards his own airy Citadel — the points of leaves and twigs on which the Spider begins her work are few and she fills the Air with a beautiful circuiting: man should be content with as few points to tip with the fine Webb of his Soul and weave a tapestry empyrean — [...]

We find Keats imploring men to take inspiration from the female spider. She is patient and satisfied with what she has and utilizes her inner capacity to make her own ‘airy citadel’ without any outward help or support. Thus with the preference for woman Keats’s feminist feelings are evident. The creation of the poet is compared to a spider’s spinning a web. It is an internalization of the experiential world and a living in its “thingness” to which Keats, like Wallace Stevens, constantly returns. Further in the same letter of 19 February 1818 Keats appreciates the role of the female when he says:

It has been an old Comparison for our urging on — the Bee hive — however it seems to me that we should rather be the Flower than the Bee— for it is a false notion that more is gained by receiving than giving — no the receiver and the giver are equal in their benefits — The Flower I doubt not receives a fair guerdon from the Bee — its leaves blush deeper in the next spring — and who shall say between Man and Woman which is the most delighted? Now it is more noble to sit like Jove that [for] than to fly like Mercury — let us not therefore go hurrying about and collecting honey-bee like, buzzing here and there impatiently from a knowledge of what is to be arrived at: but let us open our leaves like a flower and be passive and receptive — budding patiently under the eye of Apollo and taking hints from
Keats stresses on the value of being passive and receptive like women, the attributes which are conventionally associated with femininity. But the association of passivity is made with a masculine figure Jove that seems contradictory. Thus Keats follows Derrida’s subversion of binary oppositions. After this subversion, Derrida leaves these appositions in a state of undecidability, without fixing on anyone but Keats here indirectly seems to prefer the role of Jove as a model of masculinity but deep inside, Keats feels comfortable being the Mercury or humble bee.

Keats’s letter to J.H. Reynolds, 3 May 1818 reveals that during these days he has been upset because of his brother Tom’s illness. Now he feels a bit relieved. He says, ‘[...]one would think there has been growing up for these last four thousand years, a grandchild Scion of the old forbidden tree, and that some modern Eve had just violated it; [...]’ Keats makes Eve whole sole responsible for the act of violation and Adam has been excluded.

Keats in the same letter talks about Milton and Wordsworth compares them and says that we cannot understand their work fully until we have gone through the same experience. While saying this ‘Keats reflects the phenomenological method of getting back to phenomena, a return to things themselves, and of suspending or “bracketing” what we
presuppose about the object. He seems to disconnect the theoretical knowledge of a thing to plunge into its being by experiencing it, by “gearing” himself to his world.\textsuperscript{27} We find the phenomenological viewpoint very clearly in these words of Keats which is similar to the theory of Merleau Ponty that ‘perceived space is orientated and rooted in the experience of the body. Perceived space is “lived space” rather than objective, Euclidian space.’\textsuperscript{28}

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\text{[\ldots] for axioms in philosophy are not axioms until they are proved upon our pulses: We read fine ---- things but never feel them to thee full until we have gone the same steps as the Author. – I know this is not plain; you will know exactly my meaning when I say, that now I shall relish Hamlet more than I ever have done}-[\ldots]
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\textit{(Letter, 3 May 1818)}

Keats finds the same similarity with Hamlet in his mother’s immediate marriage after his father’s death. It suggests that Keats has gone through the same experience as Hamlet in his life as Gittings clearly says that, ‘The clear parallel between Keats and Hamlet is his mother’s remarriage after only two months’ widow hood, and this implies something more if he has really proved upon his pulses, as he claims, the situation of Hamlet.’\textsuperscript{29}

In the letter to J.H. Reynolds 11, 13 July 1818, Keats talks about his marriage:

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\text{[\ldots] I have spoken to you against Marriage, but it was general-the Prospect in those matters has been to me so blank, [\ldots] but believe me I have more than once yearn’d for the time of your}
\]
happiness to come, as much as I could for myself after the lips of Juliet.

His attitude toward marriage now seems to change. He is not against marriage now but supports Reynolds. He realizes his earlier immaturity and inexperience regarding this matter. He even desires the same happiness for himself. He suggests for marriage. His suggestion to marry depicts his growing awareness of women. In his letter to J.H. Reynolds 22 September 1818, Keats says:

[...I never was in love – Yet the voice and the shape of a woman has haunted me these two days – at such a time when the relief, the feverous relief of Poetry seems a much less crime – This morning Poetry has conquered – I have relapsed into those abstractions which are my only life- [...]

Keats has an admiration and an especial fascination for Georgiana Keats. He declares that his admiration for her is maximum in the world. He also talks of his sister Fanny but she does not affect him more than Georgiana. In his letter to George and Georgiana Keats, 14-31 October 1818, Keats says:

– Your content in each other is a delight to me which I cannot express- the Moon is now shining full and brilliant – she is the same to me in Matter, what you are to me in Spirit- If you were here my dear Sister I could not pronounce the words which I can write to you from a distance: I have a tenderness for you, and an admiration which I feel to be as great and more chaste than I can have for any woman in the world. You will mention Fanny – her character is not formed, her identity does not press upon me as yours does. I hope from the bottom of my heart that I may one day feel as much for her as I do for you –
Keats mentions of their company and content in each other as a delight for himself but it shows his deep yearning for a partner like Georgiana. Georgiana appears perfect to Keats and even Fanny, his sister, does not possess those characteristics which he expects for her in future. He considers her not only a sister but a ‘glorious human being’. Further he says:

She is not a Cleopatra; but she is at least a Charmian. She has a rich eastern look: she has fine eyes and fine manners. When she comes into a room she makes an impression the same as the Beauty of a Leopardsess. She is too fine and too conscious of her Self to repulse any Man who may address her – from habit she thinks that nothing particular. I always find myself more at ease with such a woman; [...] They think I dont admire her because I did not stare at her – They call her a flirt to me – What a want of knowledge? she walks across a room in such a manner that a Man is drawn towards her with a magnetic Power. This they call flirting! they do not know things. They do not know what a Woman is.

(Letter, 19-31 October 1818)

He says that he feels ease in her company because she is different and thinks nothing that particular. She is not conscious of the male company like other woman. So Keats also feels comfortable in her company. Keats’s letter shows that he was not in love but almost near to it. He has little conversation with this charmian because of the Miss Reynoldses on the look out.

Further Keats says in the same letter, ‘As a Man in the world I love the rich talk of a Charmian; as an eternal Being I love the thought of you.
I should like her to ruin me, and I should like you to save me’ (Letter, 14-31 October 1818).

Keats was deeply impressed by Georgiana’s intelligence. Here he categorizes both these women, treating one as an object of pleasure and satisfaction and other as an ideal form of maternal love and protection. He likes both these aspects of a woman equally.

Another woman came into Keats’s contact is Isabella Jones. She seems to impress him for a short while. Keats talks about her to George Keatses in the letter of 14-31 October 1818, ‘She has always been an enigma to me - she has new been in a Room with you and with Reynolds and wishes we should be acquainted without any of our common acquaintance knowing it.’ But Keats clarifies his point about her in the same letter:

[...] I have no libidinous thought about her - she and your George are the only women à peu près demon age whom I would be content to know for their mind and friendship alone – I shall in a short time write you as far as I know how I intend to pass my Life [...] Though the most beautiful Creature were waiting for me at the end of a Journey or a Walk – I cannot think of those things now Tom is so unwell and weak.

Keats is impressed by their mind as well as friendship. Thus uplifting the position of women but the same treatment will not be given to all women according to him. Keats is occupied by his family problems. He announces his decision not to marry. He says that the chances for his marriage seem less but the fascination for women is not finished and they
are waiting for him at the end of Journey or a walk. In the same letter the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity is blurred:

[...,] The roaring of the wind is my wife and the Stars through the window pane are my Children. The mighty abstract Idea I have of Beauty in all things stifles the more divided and minute domestic happiness – an amiable wife and sweet Children I contemplate as a part of that Beauty. [...]-These things combined with the opinion I have of the generallity of women – who appear to me as children to whom I would rather give a Sugar Plum than my time, form a barrier against Matrimony which I rejoice in.

(Letter, 14-31 October 1818)

Though earlier Keats said that he will never marry but the desire for a wife and children are not away and indispensable from him. In nature and its objects he identifies his wife and children, considers them amiable and sweet. There is an ‘organic relatedness between the perceiver and the perceived. Perception is a “meaning-giving” act which relates the self and the not-self through the motility of the body.’

But in the same letter a little further Keats seems to contradict himself which depicts Keats’s male chauvinism where he generalizes women for their ‘generality’ suggests that they do not possess any individuality. They have no identity of their own according to him. They are all alike like masses and compare them with children, not worthy to pay proper attention and take seriously. His conception of women of this sort makes a hindrance in his decision to marry.
In his letter to J.A. Hessey 8 October 1818 Keats says that the real genius is not dependent upon anybody. It does not need any external thing or law but needs inner ability and worth:

[...]The Genius of Poetry must work out its own salvation in a man: It cannot be matured by law & precept, but by sensation & watchfulness in itself-That which is creative must create itself- In Endymion, I leaped headlong into the Sea, and thereby have become better acquainted with the Soundings, the quicksands, & the rocks, than if I had stayed upon the green shore, and piped a silly pipe, and took tea & comfortable advice.

Through this letter Keats's similarity with Cassirer is evident where he says, 'We do not apprehend the real by attempting to attain it step by step over the painful detours of discursive thinking; we must rather place ourselves immediately at its center.'

Critics like Sir Sidney Colvin, Robert Bridges and Earnest de Selincourt considers Endymion as a deliberate allegory in which the poet is longing for a union with the spirit of the beauty. Sidney Colvin also finds that 'in the main body of the work, beauties and faults are so bound up together that a critic may well be struck almost as much by one as by the other.' But its allegorical character has been attacked by the critics like Newell Ford and E.C. Pettet. They 'have drawn attention to a notable discrepancy between Keats's supposed allegorical intention and the discursiveness and incoherence of his narrative.' To them Endymion is a 'frank love poem, powerfully energized by Keats's adolescent desires.'
S.M. Sperry opines that *Endymion* is 'not fully coherent as an allegory for the reason that it embodies new truths and insights Keats discovered only in the course of composition which could not be perfectly expressed within its old design.'

Edward E. Bostetter asserts that ‘*Endymion* is Keats’s most elaborate and optimistic development of the dream pattern.' Susan J. Wolfsan considers that ‘the larger plot of Endymion equates quest romance with erotic adventure.' To Walter Jackson Bate, ‘Endymion was Keats’s most serious early attempt to answer fundamental questions about the relation of the artist to his art and to the world.' While Karla Alwes considers that ‘Endymion is the prototype of the speaker who will emerge in Keats’s later poetry, especially in the odes where the ‘dream becomes an obstacle rather than a channel to immortality.'

The two poems, *Hyperion* and its revision *The Fall of Hyperion* are considered important works by John Keats. Although both are unfinished, these poems are the projections of Keats’s most powerful women. *Hyperion* is often considered Miltonic in style and theme while *The Fall of Hyperion* has been compared to Dante’s *The Divine Comedy* in terms of its structure as a dream-vision and in its use of a Muse figure. Even Robin Mayhead claims that ‘Hyperion gives us a blend of Spenser and Milton.’
Kenneth Muir finds that 'in the first two books of *Hyperion* we are given to understand that Apollo is superior in beauty and wisdom to the old gods but on his first appearance in Book III we find him overcome with sorrow.'^41 Stuart M. Sperry views the poem as an allegory for poets and poetry. Walter Jackson Bate views that 'the lines in *Hyperion* have less of nature and of self, and more of the rise and fall of nations, the whole chaotic story of man’s troubled past.'^42 While *The Fall of Hyperion* according to him is 'Keats’s last effort to integrate his poetic faculties and impulses.'^43 Marjorie Levinson ‘binds ‘Hyperion’ and ‘The Fall’ by their common subject matter and distinguishes them with respect to their antithetical ways of framing this material.’^44

Edward E. Bostetter looks at Keats’s focus on the female figures in both the poems. He asserts that the ‘difference in the conceptions of the two poems is dramatically represented by the difference between the two goddesses, Mnemosyne and Moneta.’^45 Karla Alwes finds ‘Moneta as an active rather than passive force as Mnemosyne was.’^46 Christoph Bode characterizes the ‘Hyperion poems as a developing expressions of Keats’s poetics and of his understanding of his “negative capability.”’^47
NOTES AND REFERENCES


28. *Ibid*, p. 44.
33. Sperry, *op. cit.* p. 82.
34. *Ibid* p. 83.
42. Bate, *op. cit.* p. 38.

47. Hyperion John Keats