

ENGL-H-CC-T9(BRITISH ROMANTIC LITERATURE) SEM -IV

POEM: KUBLA KHAN BY S.T COLERIDGE

I'm sharing some basic information regarding 'Kubla Khan' by S.T Coleridge.

>The poem is subtitled as : A Vision in a Dream: A Fragment.

The poem is consisting of fifty-four lines divided in to three stanzas written/completed in around 1797.

The poem was inspired by the story of Kubla Khan, the Mongol ruler, about whom the poet had read in Samuel Purchans' 'Pilgrimage'. The book contained a brief description of Xanadu.

As the poet was reading Sanghai the city founded by Kubla Khan( which is immortalized as Xanadu in the poem), the poet fell asleep, induced by opium (drug), and in \*dream\* he composed 200-300 lines of a poem of which on awakening he could recall only a part.

So, it is evident from the facts, that, the poem was composed in an unconscious state of being. As a result of this, we find the poem something unintelligible, Fragmented in parts, lacking the oragan whole. As a result, the readers often get caught up and confused by the scattering of informations.

\*Summary\* :

"Kubla Khan" is considered to be one of the greatest poems by the English Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who said he wrote the strange and hallucinatory poem shortly after waking up from an opium-influenced dream in 1797. In the first part of the poem, the speaker envisions the landscape surrounding the Mongol ruler and Chinese emperor Kubla Khan's summer palace, called "Xanadu," describing it as a place of beauty, pleasure, and violence.

The speaker suggests that these qualities are all deeply intertwined and, in the final stanza, announces a desire to build a "pleasure palace" of the speaker's own through song. The poem is one of Coleridge's most famous, and has been interpreted in many different ways. Overall, though, it's possible to think of it as speaking to the creative ambitions of poetry itself—as well as to its limitations.

In a place called Xanadu, the Mongolian leader Kubla Khan ordered his servants to construct an impressive domed building for pleasure and recreation on the banks of the holy river Alph, which ran through a series of caves so vast that no one could measure them, and then down into an underground ocean. So they created a space with 10 miles of fertile earth surrounded by walls and towers.

And in it there were gardens with sunny little streams and fragrant trees, as well as very old forests with sunny clearings in the middle.

But, oh, how beautiful was that deep, impressive gorge that cut through the green hill, between the cedar trees! It was such a wild place and fields, before it reached the incredibly deep caves and sank in a flurry into the much stiller ocean. And in the rushing waters of the caves, Kubla Khan heard the voices of his ancestors, predicting that war would come.

The shadow of Kubla Khan's pleasure palace was reflected by the waves, and you could hear the sound of the geyser mingling with that of the water rushing through the caves. This was truly a miraculous place: Khan's pleasure palace was both sunny and had icy caves.

In a vision, I once saw an Ethiopian woman play a stringed instrument and sing about a mountain in Ethiopia. If I could recreate within myself the sound of her instrument and her song, it would bring me so much joy that I would build Kubla Khan's pleasure palace in the sky above me: that sun-filled dome, those caves full of ice! And everyone who heard the song would look up and see what I had built, and they would cry out: "Be careful! Look at his wild eyes and crazy hair! Make a circle around him three times and refuse to look at him: he has eaten the food of the gods and drunk the milk of Heaven!"

Compiled by : AD