

Assignment British Literature 19th C
Even Sem 2020

Reference to Context

Explain with reference to context and give a critical analysis of the following lines:

What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me?

Key:

Identify the poem and the poet: Last Ride Together by Robert Browning

Explain the lines: The narrator's heart is broken as his hopes of winning his beloved's heart have all been in vain. In the given lines the lover is saying why lament over the endeavours to win the beloved. He does not want to repent his past actions, that had he acted differently consequences could have been different. To think about the past is useless because it cannot be changed. Context : The poem is about unrequited love. The lover is happy with the one last ride the beloved has acquiescence to after dashing the lover's hopes of spending a lifetime with her. The lover is so happy in the present moment that he does not want to contemplate about the past or waste time thinking that had he behaved differently the consequences could have been different. He is enjoying bliss of the last ride with the beloved and thinks that this moment can become eternity if the world was to come to an end then.

Analysis : Lover's response to his failed efforts in love is extraordinary, because instead of fretting and fuming he is blessing her and is happy in his last wish being granted. He feels his life is better than the statesman and musicians because their glory is only briefly recognised. Even the poet sings praises of love that he was experiencing so he is better than the poet. Most importantly Browning makes two points, one, he is not the first one to fail in his efforts because there is always a difference between what the mind thinks, and the hands execute. Two, it is better to die with a wish unfulfilled because then one looks forward to being in heaven. If all wishes were to be realised in this life, there would be nothing to look forward to in heaven. The last ride together is sometimes associated with sexuality.

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Assignment Hard Times

Q1. Thesis Statement: In the novel Hard Times Dickens criticises inflated language, attacks ideas, and exposes attitudes he dislikes. Elaborate (25)

Tips:

Criticises inflated language:

Mrs. Sparsit and Slackbride's language

Attack ideas:

Mr. Gradgrind's theory of education

Mr. Bounderby's attitude toward his employees

Harthouse Philosophy

Expose attitudes:

Mr. Bounderby's upstart attitudes

Mrs. Sparsit's family pride

Q2. Dickens means Coketown to stand for the negative aspects of industrial society as a whole. Discuss (25)

Tips:

Pollution, physical description of the town and the sameness.

Bounderby's residence and his attitude towards workers.