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Case Study 2 : John Donne

"The Canonization"

- Though "Canonization" is a metaphysical Poem, the basic metaphor itself is a Paradox. It treats Profane love as if it were Divine Love. Paradox in this Poem is not hidden, every metaphor in this Poem is a Paradox.
- It is not the canonization of two Saints but two lovers. It feels like either Donne is not taking sainthood seriously or taking love seriously. But ironically Donne in fact takes both very seriously.
- opening of the Poem with exasperation "for God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love" consider this line if the listener is objecting speaker's love affair then listener belongs to the Practical world that speaker renounced. Speaker says

Great sickness can be cured but for
love cannot be cured.

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that holds their ashes like memorial. Love
says when these lovers are sonnetized,
they become canonized and lovers will
invoke them.

- Final stanza completes the theme. The
lovers gained a new world, the world in
each other, which is more intense than the
world they renounced.

- Phoenix metaphor is a Paradox which
make us accept that this whole poem is a
Paradox. Earlier poet compares lovers with
burning tapers and birds like eagle and dove.

Phoenix is a combination of all these, it is
a bird that burns.

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- It really describes the lover to their best and justifies their renunciation. It is lust for love and life for death. Poet finds consummation as a way to become love Saints. Once that happened, he was ready to die and become canonized like saints.
- Poet had actually created a "pretty room" in this poem for these lovers. The irony and realism in the poem supports paradox.

How Necessary are Paradoxes?

- This poem and its meaning can only be conveyed through paradox. It is the language of love and religion. If paradox, its two associates irony and wonder is removed, this poem will only have facts.
- The lovers in the poem become divine because of the "supernaturalism" conferred upon

them. Shakespeare uses the basic metaphor of "The Canonization". In his Play "Romeo and Juliet", Juliet says "For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch and palm to palm is holy Palmer's kiss".

- Paradox violates science and common sense. It welds together the contradictory things.

- Coleridge describes its nature and power as a balance between "Difference with Sameness", "Group with individual", "General with specific" and "old familiar object with new fresh object".

- It is a statement with series of Paradoxes and Coleridge described about imagination through this.

- Shakespeare had written a Poem that is similar to Coleridge's statements.

case study 3 ? William Shakespeare
 "The Phoenix and the Turtle".

- This Poem was written to honour the marriage of Sir John Salisbury and Ursula Stanley or may be it is an essay on Platonic love.
- This Poem describes the funeral for the deceased Phoenix and turtle dove. Some birds are invited and some are not. Reason Personified says that their love something beyond imagination. With their death "beauty, rarity, grace and truth" have gone but with them it remains in the urn.
- "single natures double name / neither two nor one was called" Precisely nature is something unified and single but today our science has given it multiple names. So poet can neither call it single nor two, hence he uses Paradox to overcome this. This is an issue from the days of Shakespeare.

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- Brooks makes "one further observation" that takes this chapter to a different level. With typical formalist method of analysis, he highlights the features of intertextuality in

3 different periods of English literature

- Donne's urn have phoenix - lovers ashes.

Shakespeare's urn have beauty, truth and

rarity. Keats urn have truth and beauty.

All most every urns in this "well wrought

urn" have ashes of a Phoenix.

- The Phoenix of Poetry will not be reborn

through measuring and chemical testing of

the ashes. The Paradox of imagination is

indispensable for that. In Poetry imagination

makes things real, a Paradoxical situation.

But such a situation is essential for "Beauty

Truth, and Rarity" which otherwise will

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remain as kindness. That we will get only
ashes for all our efforts.