

Implication of Eco-Centered Literature in the Poems by the Select Romantic Poets

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Abstract

The poems of the romantic poets exhibit the importance of eco-centric literature. This paper foregrounds that the poems like 'the Tiger' by William Blake, 'Ode on the Grecian Urn' by John Keats and 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' by William Wordsworth portray the minute description of nature and how the literature should take stand on saving nature. The romantic poets have given life to the nature. They have awakened the people to the purview of nature and its conservation. Tiger has become an endangered animal and the loss of tiger disturbs the ecological balance. The Tiger is a highly symbolic poem based on Blake's personal philosophy of spiritual and intellectual revolution by individuals. The speaker in the poem is bewildered at the sight of a tiger in the night, and he asks it a series of questions about its ferocious facade and the creator who made it. The other famous Romantic poet John Keats wrote the poem 'Ode on a Grecian Urn,' which is considered one of the greatest odes ever written. In the poem, Keats has a surprisingly emotional response to staring at an old piece of pottery. The third poem in the research is I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud by William Wordsworth. The poet is of the opinion that, wandering like a cloud hovering above hills and valleys will mystify the expanse of the nature. He came across a field of daffodils beside a lake. The dancing and fluttering flowers extended eternally along the shore, and though the waves of the lake danced beside the flowers, the daffodils outdid the water in glee. These poets are of the view that nature alone is beautiful and peaceful. Hence it is the responsibility of the contemporary writers to give more importance to produce eco-centered literature.

KEYWORDS: Nature, Ecology, Romantics, Animals, eco-centered literature

Introduction

In the simplest probable vocabulary, 'Eco Criticism is the study of the connection between literature and the physical setting.' It was planned by the pioneer or the father of this theory in the USA, Cheryll Glotfelty. The study of nature as presented in the literary writing has become the platform for the critics concerned with the new movement in literary theories. Glotfelty advocated the academics to use this term to refer to the area of studies in place of the study of green literature. It was her attempt in the USA that Eco Criticism became fashionable as a theory with this name.

The traditional theories in literature emphasis either on linguistics or on the cultural background, the Eco-Critics put all their weight behind the 'nature' and are of the view that nature exists as a force which have an effect on our progress unswervingly as a society. However, as it entered into the field of literary theory, a part bifurcated and

recognized itself as solely dedicated wing concerned with the reading of literary texts and bringing out the role of nature, symbol of nature and natural elements in the literature fashioned worldwide. It's a fact that the major focus of green studies intellectuals are the local literature of different places as we know it contains a lot of blend of nature.

Nature and Romantic Poets

Romanticism was a poetic movement of the 19th century, during The French Revolution. The poetry reflected on feelings of everyday events. Keats is relying on Nature in the poem to nurture the fruits and plants. He 'loads' the fruits with goodness allowing them to ripen and 'blesses' the hazel shells allowing them to plump. Keats also describes early autumn as producing later flowers for the bees until the bees think 'warm days will never cease.' Autumn is believed to control nature and these are qualities which only a god would have.

Autumn has also been indicated to 'conspire' with the sun, whom has been describes as a God many times before. This has also added imagery to the poem and makes it simpler for the reader because it gives you a mental image of Nature working in a God's style. The poem also comes across as simpler to understand than former poems because nature is so accessible and to understand the poet's love of nature you only need to look at any living plant.

It is important to stress the fact that according to Romantics, nature in general and all its parts have specific features of the human soul. Though it is important to say that such personalization and conception of nature as subordinate to the "world spirit" is very important peculiarity of romantic literature, because it reflects the problem of man's relationship to the world.

Subjectivity of nature is a broader notion than the natural view of Romantics on nature, as this concept unites a wide range of romantic poets. In English and in German literature subjectivity of nature is expressed more openly than other literatures.

The main feature in the romantic view on the nature is its "subjectivity", the corresponding association of the poet's mood with the natural world. It is a subjective understanding of nature that is extensively used by Romantic poets, and such features as diversity of moral epithets, zeal, and involvement of objects with the persons concerned.

Thus, the Romanticism is characterized by a sense of unity between man and nature, but this is not always expressed in the pantheistic forms, and may be linked with different ideological positions. Moreover, this unity can act in the outlines of dualistic split, when nature exemplifies peace and accord, and is opposed to anguish and dissonance of human affiliation. Zealous experience of bond between the hero and nature is innate to all romantics, though it may be shown in a different way by different romantic poets. On the one hand, in their writings take over the image of landscape, which reflects their search for beauty, for charming images. On the other, they pay more concentration to the state of the human soul and his feelings, and so the image of nature is a protrusion of the state of the soul, and the poet turns from the descriptions of nature to description of feelings, mixing them and showing relationship between them.

Objective to an ideal and the esteem of the ideal beauty of the nature can be found in the beautiful poems of Percy Shelley. The character of pictures of nature by Shelley organically derives from his theoretical views, based on the knowledge of the history of philosophy from olden times, from truly encyclopedic knowledge. Shelley sometimes animates the nature, gives it awareness and characteristics of highest creation – he signs a hymn to the “Spirit of Nature”, by declaring the entire Universe as its temple.

In “Ode to the West Wind” (1819) the representative image of the West Wind is the idea of regeneration of life: the west wind wipes out everything old in its path and helps to create new. The romantic hero-champion is one with the powerful power of the West Wind.

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
A Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver; hear, O hear!
(Shelley P.B., “Ode To The West Wind.”)

Shelley shows the supernatural power of the wind magically, relating its role as “destroyer and preserver”, by powerful natural metaphors the poet states his thoughts about the power and great consequences of the nature. It is obvious that the Romantic poets frequently showed the nature as free, powerful and gorgeous world that is unlike from the human. Especially romantic poets liked to portray the sea in this sense, its never-ending scope and grand power, the wind, which has infinite power and freedom, and the mountains with their splendor and inspirational beauty.

‘The Tiger’ by William Blake

‘The Tiger’ is the symbol of the ferocious forces of the spirit. These forces as the poet thinks are desirable to break the relationship of experience. He states that the breath of the lion is sprung from the knowledge of God. In the poem, we can see the allusion both to the Tiger and the Lamb. Both of these creatures are the two facets of the same soul. The soul is nothing but God. The lamb represents the humbleness, effortlessness, and purity of the soul while the Tiger stands for the rage and harsher side of nature. In God, these two aspects of the soul are found. The speaker of the poem believes that God does not have one face but several faces. The tiger is also thought to symbolize the ‘plentiful life’ which God brought to life.

The poet speculates how God can create such a dreadful creature. He asks if the tiger has been created by the same hand that has created the lamb. So he thinks that the tiger is not created in this world but somewhere in the skies or in the ‘distant deeps’. The poet wonders how the creator has the guts to obtain the fire for the eyes of the tiger. The poet wonders at the achievement of God who, like a blacksmith, sets to work on his most wonderful creation. The poet fails to comprehend why God has created such an intimidating creation. The creation of such an animal must have become necessary a

extraordinary machinery, otherwise, the muscles of the tiger's heart or the poisonous terror of the tiger's brain would not have been created. The anvil, the furnace, the chains and the hammers must have all been astonishing. It may not be God but an unknown, supernatural spirit like Blake's mythological heroes, who have fashioned the tiger.

'Ode on Grecian Urn'- John Keats

The poet does not talk only of the beauty of the urn but also the beauty of art. It delineates the sculpture, who has carved Grecian urn. The poet wonders at the characters on the urn and feels its calmness. 'Beauty lies in the eyes of beholder;' therefore, story of the sculpture is reliant on the minds of visitor and spectator. The sculpture, definitely is narrating a significant story but the subject matter depends on the person, who sees it. It seems that the sculpture makes an impact on the viewer than the poetry; Sculpture is also a form of painting, therefore, the famous quote 'A picture is better than thousand words'. It can communicate a theme, which cannot be expressed in thousand words. The pipers, the lovers and the trees confuse the poet yet he is sure that the sculpture is depicting a rustic way of life.

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter".

The unheard or unsung melodies of day-today life in the village will be better than the hassle buzzed life in the town. On the other hand, reality is barren and boring and it compels a person to react on a situation. Rather than action, reaction is required in real life.

John Keats also emphasizes on the permanence of art and nature. In order to explain the superiority of art and nature, he refers the lovers, painted on the Grecian urn, who are trying to kiss each other. The poet states that their love is enduring and eternal. People may die, old generations will be restored by new generations, centuries can be passed but ardor of love will never become lighter. Similarly, the musician will permanently blow the pipe and the music will be listened perpetually; Grecian urn will go on telling this story to every person, who will visit the museum even after demise of the poet. It is steady. It cannot be moved nor is it changeable, whereas life is supple. Change is the law of nature and so as the life. It is the hotchpotch of pleasures and pains. Sometimes it gives us joys and sometimes sorrows.

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty', -that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' by William Wordsworth

This poem is an example of romantic poetry that states the Wordsworth's principle in the communication between nature and man, and nature's curative power. The poet saw a vast number of daffodils while he was wandering about without any specific purpose. His mind was free from anxiety. The daffodils became visible to him as a crowd of living beings. Like a group of merry dancers, they had been dancing in pleasing breeze. They were making noises like the sounds made by the wings of the soaring birds.

These daffodils, grown along the region between the seashore and the lake water, seemed to laugh mutually in hilarity and joy. The poet who had been walking with empty mind in a inert mood could not but take action to the happy sight. He was stimulated by the happiness of the daffodils. They touched his heart and made a lasting sense of happiness there. The overwhelmed speaker kept on looking at these flowers for a long time without knowing that this sight would help him prevail over mental misery in future. Later on, whenever he becomes lonesome and homesick that happy sight revitalizes in his mind. His heart starts dancing like those dancing daffodils. This memory helps him forget all present apprehensions. It provides him with consolation and relieve.

The poem is, therefore, about the power of nature on human mind. The poet has very cautiously built up a happy and blissful ambiance selecting appropriate objects, colors and temper. The daffodils are of "golden" color and they burnish and shine. The tetrameter rhyme lines make sure the smooth and natural movement requisite for the creation of such a cheerful ambiance. The first fourteen lines have been used to portray the daffodils and create their delighted mood. The last eight lines have been used to depict the control of that happy sight on the mind of the speaker, a man who discovers a relationship between him and nature.

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