

Nature poetry of Romantic period

Sukhsam Ahluwalia

*Associate Professor
Department of English,
Arya College Ludhiana*

Abstract :

Romantic poets love nature and celebrate in its various dimensions. They wrote about the beauty of green meadows, thick forests, thin flowers, high hills, river banks, rural scenes, wild wind, fresh air, sun rises and sets etc Almost every romantic poets touched every scene of natural beauty. The romantics poets substituted love, emotions, imagination, beauty. They viewed several perspectives of nature and its greatness. One writer stated in his introduction to a romantic anthology: the variety of this catalogue implies completeness; surely not phase or feature of the outer natural world is without its appropriate counterpart in the inner world of human personality.

Keywords: Natural Scenes, emotions, imagination and Inner Peace.

William Wordsworth approaches nature as a power of beauty and balm for happy, peace and calm. It is to say where William Wordsworth's imagination isolates and focuses and John Keats fills in and enriches, Percy Bysshe Shelley's dissolves and transcends. These three romantic poets have tried their best to bring happiness to humanity and shake all their sorrows through natural beauty and rural setting in their poems.

William Wordsworth drew attention of the readers toward hills and mountains, skies and stars, rivers and trees. Poetry is the image of man and nature," wrote William Wordsworth in his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*.¹ The beauty of nature. Modern life has made man to forget this beauty of nature. Urbanization, globalization, gradually swallow rural, natural beauty of the village which also sways mirth of men and women. He urges human beings to understand nature in order to get happiness. He personifies nature and natural objects in a most imaginative way. He feels sad about the gulf between nature and humanity. He is not only against the unhealthiest civilisation but also against the drop brutality of the machine world. William Wordsworth depicts nature in "Daffodils" "Besides the lake, beneath the tree Fluttering and dancing in the bridge".

Wordsworth believes that "nature is a teacher whose wisdom we can learn, and without human is vain and incomplete". Another poem wordsworth stress on how modern life is divorced from nature in *Tintern Abbey*. He writes : through a long absence, have not been to me As is a landscape to a blind man's eye: But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din of towns and cities, that owned to them. In hours of weariness, sensation sweat² Wordsworth expresses the power of remembrance of beautiful scenes to console amid weariness, to affect and humanise the life and to lift man above his bodily needs and perplexities of the concrete world. "The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse The guide, the guardian of my heart, soul."³ Wordsworth moralise nature; he acknowledge Nature as his great Guru. He treats nature as a friend, guide and guardian. Knowing that nature never did betray the heart that loved her; tis is her privilege, Through all the years of this our life, lead from joy to joy.

Wordsworth believes nature never betray her sister. This nature will bring happiness to his sister to lead a better life after his demise in the world. This hope is not only for his sister but also for entire mankind. William Wordsworth understand that nature has capacity to heal if a man treats her as a friend nature will cure all ailments of him. Nature works as a source of treatment to all the ailments of human beings.⁴

John Keats expresses the beauty of both real and artistic forms of nature. Everything in nature for him is full of wonder and mystery-the rising sun, the moving cloud, the growing bud and the swimming fish. His love for nature is purely sensuous and he loves the beautiful sights and scenes of nature for their own sake. He believes that "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever". He looks with child-like delight at the objects of nature. In his poem ode to a Nightingale, he writes:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
my sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains⁵

Keats is astonished to see happiness of the Nightingale. Before the hearing of song of the bird, he tried many ways of forgetting worries Keats believed he has either been poisoned or is influenced by drug. But Keats felt a tranquil and continual joy in the song of Nightingale and makes him completely happy. It indicates to unite with nature gives eternal happiness for the mankind. Nature works as a source of generating happiness and is a best guide for human beings to live a happy life. Another poem of Keats, he praises the artistic beauty of nature.

He yearns for eternal beauty: He portrays the artistic beauty of nature in his poem Ode on a Grecian urn. He addresses the Grecian Urn as "unravished bride of quietness and a foster-child of silence and slow time". He also calls the Grecian urn a "Sylvan historian" because of the rural and forest scenes carved on its surface. Keats also goes on to say that music which is imagined is much sweeter than music which is actually heard. Ah happy, happy boughs! That cannot shed leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu; And, happy melodist, unwearied, Forever piping songs forever new; More happy love! more happy, happy love! Forever warm and still to be enjoyed, Forever painting, and forever young. Keats presented the artistic beauty of nature through his poems which can also enlighten humanity. This work of art has created immortal figures. Nature in any form like art will bring happiness to the world.

Shelley looks upon Nature, as Wordsworth does, as a never-ending source of solace and inspiration. Like Wordsworth, he believes that there is in Nature a capability for communicating with the mind and emotions of man. Yet there is a fundamental difference between these two poets in their treatment of Nature. Wordsworth endows Nature with a spirit, Shelley goes much further to provide it with intellect. He also lends a dynamic quality to the forces of Nature in a way that the other Romantics have never been able to do. J. A. Symonds remarks: "Shelley is one with the romantic temper of his age in ascribing to Nature a spiritual quality and significance and in regarding man's life as dynamic and progressive. But he goes beyond romanticism in his idea of a vigorous dynamic life of Nature." Shelley loves Nature and can extract joy in its company and rid himself of his sufferings and feelings of loneliness. His admiration for Nature thus finds expression in his essay On love: "There are eloquence in the tongue less wind and a melody in the flowing brooks and the rumbling of the reeds beside them, which by their inconceivable relation to something within the soul awakens the spirit to a dance of breathless rapture and brings tears of mysterious tenderness to the eyes, like the enthusiasm of patriotic success, or the voice of one's beloved singing to you alone." While Wordsworth is fond of the static and quiet aspects of Nature, Shelley is fascinated by the dynamic. He himself has admitted: "I take great delight in watching the changes of the atmosphere." This explains his great love for the sky and the resultant composition of his sky-lyrics- Ode to the West Wind, The Cloud, and To A Skylark. the West Wind never rests and it moves speedily and continuously to perform its functions over land and sea and in sky. The cloud and the skylark show an equally intense restlessness. Shelley is ever conscious of the changes in Nature and her periodic regeneration; these lines in Adonais may be quoted as an illustration: Ah, Woe is me! Winter is come and gone, But grief returns with the revolving year: The airs and streams renew their joyous tone; The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear. Images drawn from Nature are abundant in Shelley's Poetry. His images often produce a pictorial quality not to be derived even from paintings. His portrait of the Cloud is more vivid, more picturesque than the cloudscapes painted by Constable or Turner. The image of the sunrise in The Cloud is unequaled in its splendor :

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes Outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead.

Conclusion: Romantic poets are predominantly nature poets for they explore nature in its entirety, not just in an organic sense, but also in a theological and philosophical reflection on nature's creative powers that lead to an ultimate consideration of the state of society and man's relationship with the universe

References:

- [1]. William Wordsworth, "Preface To Lyrical Ballads," In: The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Romantic Period, 10th ed., edited by Stephen Greenblatt, (London: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2018), 311.
- [2]. William Wordsworth, Tintern Abbey, 22-27
- [3]. William Wordsworth, Tintern Abbey, 109-111
- [4]. Graham Hough, "The Romantic Poets" Routledge Library Editions: Romanticism <https://bookdepository.com>
- [5]. John Keats, Ode To A Nightingale