

LITERARY CONTRIBUTION OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH IN ROMANTIC POETRY

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ABSTRACT

This Research paper attempt to elaborate the literary contribution of William Wordsworth in Romanticism. The aim of this paper is to show the literary contribution of William Wordsworth in English Romantic poetry of 19th century and the brief discussion on what is romanticism. William Wordsworth is known as the master of romantic poetry. According to him romanticism is depictions of emotions, personifying human life with nature, and propagation of a way of living which called everyone back to nature. He believes that individual can best understand themselves and their world when they are isolated from it, apart from it. 'Romanticism is an important literary movement which began in west Europe during 17th century against Neoclassical, the age preceding the Romantic Movement. The Neoclassical age was also called the 'The Age of Enlightenment', which focused on reason, logic and scientific facts. Romanticism saw the birth of new genre of poetry ,which glorify the delicacy and beauty of nature , emotions, and past, imagination , which was later christened as the 'Romantic poetry'. The 'Romantic Age' was defined as the period between the late 1780s and 1790s and the 1850s. The famous poets, apart from William Wordsworth, of the Romantic age include Samuel Taylor Coleridge, john Keats, Percy Shelley etc. The first instance of 'Romantic poetry' as a distinct genre dates from 1798, when William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge published their famous collection of poetry named 'Lyrical Ballads'. From then until the 1850s, the genre enjoyed a flamboyant reign, and a number of great poets emerged, William Wordsworth is still the most well – know of them all.

KEYWORDS: *Romanticism, Imagination, Beauty, Nature, Poetry*

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INTRODUCTION

This Research paper attempts to elaborate the literary contribution of William Wordsworth in Romanticism. The aim of this paper is to show the literary contribution of William Wordsworth in English Romantic poetry of 19th century.

William Wordsworth Early life – French Revolution (1770-1850): William Wordsworth was born in Cumberland town of Cockermonth on April 7, 1770, the second of five children of John Wordsworth, who worked for Sir James Lowther as an agent and rent collector. Although his father was frequently abroad on business, he encouraged Wordsworth's reading and in particular required him to memories significant section of poetry, including Million's, Shakespeare's, and Spencer's; in addition, William was permitted to utilise his father's library. When Wordsworth's

mother died in 1778, he was transferred to Hawkshead Grammar School as a boarder. Sir James owed his father £4000 at the time of his father's death in 1783, but he refused to pay it. Christopher Cookson, William's mother's brother, was entrusted with the care of William and his siblings. Christopher Cookson, his mother's brother, took over responsibility for William and his brothers, which was an unsatisfactory arrangement for the kids, who regarded their guardian uncaring. When Wordsworth visited France in the midst of revolutionary instability in 1787, he attended St John's College, Cambridge. His zeal for the French Revolution led him back to France in 1791, when he had an affair with Annette Vallon, who gave birth to Caroline, his illegitimate daughter, in 1792. Wordsworth returned to England the following year after running out of money, and the Anglo- French conflict that followed the Reign of Terror prevented him from returning for nine years. However, he grew increasingly distant from the revolution's goals. When French troops took Switzerland, which Wordsworth admired, his distancing transformed into resistance in 1798, and Wordsworth became recognised for conservatism.

Literary Contribution of William Wordsworth in Romantic Poetry

Wordsworth's writing career began with Descriptive sketches (1793) and culminated with Lyrical Ballads just before the turn of the century. With poems in Two Volumes (1807), his powers peaked, his renown grew; even his sharpest critics recognise his popularity and uniqueness. Tintern Abbey is one of Wordsworth's literary credits, and his poetry is arguably most original in its view of man's relationship with the natural world – a vision that culminated in the metaphor of nature as indicative of god's thought. Wordsworth, along with Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley, contributed to the development of a more spontaneous and emotional poetry. It aimed to capture both the natural beauty and the quintessential depth of human emotions. Wordsworth received a government stipend in 1842 and the honorary title of Poet Laureate in 1843. Wordsworth died of an acute case of pleurisy on April 23, 1850, at the age of 80, and was buried in Grasmere churchyard. Wordsworth's widow Mary published his long autobiography poem to Coleridge as *The Prelude* a few months after his death. The poem drew little attention at the time, but it is now widely considered Wordsworth's masterpiece.

Wordsworth and Coleridge

“I have said that poetry is that spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: It takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity.”

- William Wordsworth, Lyrical Ballads (1798- 1800), preface.

An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches, Wordsworth's first book of poems, was published in 1793. He was reunited with his sister Dorothy a year later, and she became his companion, personal friend, spiritual supporter, and housekeeper until she fell ill in the 1830s. Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy moved to Dorset after receiving a bequest from close cousin in 1795. Wordsworth met Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a poet who admired Wordsworth's work, and the three of them became close friends, meeting daily to discuss poetry and plot *Lyrical Ballads*, which was published in 1798. This Collection of poetry, largely by Wordsworth but including Coleridge's 'The Rime of Ancient Mariner,' is widely regarded as the start of the Romantic Movement in English poetry. The poetry was met with scepticism by the majority of commentators. In the same year, they travelled to Germany with Dorothy Wordsworth, Wordsworth's sister. Wordsworth began writing on his autobiography poem, *The Prelude*, at Goslar.

In the fall of 1799, the three friends travelled to Germany, where Coleridge found intellectual stimulation and Wordsworth experienced homesickness. Following their return, William and Dorothy established Dove cottage in Grasmere in his favourite Lake District. Coleridge and his family lived in the neighbourhood. 'I wandered Lonely as a Cloud', Wordsworth's most famous poem, was penned at Dove Cottage in 1804. Wordsworth's personal life became increasingly tough during the next few years. Dorothy had a nervous collapse after two of his children died, his brother drowned at sea, and he suffered a mental breakdown. Around the turn of the century, his political beliefs shifted, and he became more conservative, disillusioned by the event in France that culminated in Napoleon's Bonaparte's war.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

*I wander lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o're vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;*

This poem is a beautiful literary piece of nature description written by William Wordsworth. It was initially published in poems in two volumes in 1807. It was composed as a lyric poem to reflect the poet's deeper feelings and emotions while capturing the seductive beauty of the wildflowers. It has become a timeless classic when it comes to describing nature and its breathtaking beauty. This poem was written from a subjective point of view because it is about the enchanting beauty of view because it is about the enchanting beauty of nature. It describes the poet's meetings with the magnificent daffodils in the lake's field. Throughout the poem, there is a sense of wonder. The sensation of admiring nature's enthralling beauty and its effects on human psyche may make the reader want to spend more time in nature.

The **Major Theme** of this poem is nature and human involvement in natural beauty. Second theme is the impact of nature on a humans and admiration and affection of him towards the peacefulness of nature.

The poem depicts an adult's views on why he wanders over the hills and how this unexpected event is a godsend in his loneliness. The never-ending row of those stunning flowers has such an impact on him that he compares them to the galaxy's glittering stars. The breathtaking beauty of nature has attracted him. When the poet is down or lonely, this permanent impression, generated by nature, is often a source of delight for him.

William Wordsworth Considers himself as a Poet of Nature or Rather a Pantheist

His poem, Tintern Abbey, an autobiographical poetry, elucidates the poet's affection for the natural world. He depicts his frame of mind and experience of nature, as well as the plain beside the River Wye in Tintern Abbey. He expresses his dedication and affection for Nature without any barriers or restraints in the way. Nature brings out the poet's best qualities. He feels a sense of freedom and sublimity when he sees the "sportive woods run wild". Nature, according to the poet, is an all encompassing phenomenon, and he considers himself a naturalist. Tintern Abbey paints a vivid picture of his journey in his quest for love. Its description persuades and has a strong impression on the reader. He also considered Nature as a Living Soul: we can see In Tintern Abbey, he portrays the ability of nature to combat the bad of a superficial "dreary interchange of existence", a phrase linked to city life, especially in this case, London, in Tintern Abbey. Wordsworth display his confidence in the spirit of the cosmos, which is nothing more than the soul of the earth, in his master work , The prelude, which also happened to be a biographical picture of his own life.

“The day is come when I again repose Here, under this dark sycamore, and view These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts, Which at this season, with their unripe fruits, Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves ‘Mid groves and copses.”

These verses demonstrate how important it for Wordsworth to learn from nature. He even goes on to say that nature, rather than sages, can teach us the difference between good and wicked moralities, which was a radical remark at the time.

After considering all these elements, one gets a sense of Wordsworth’s great depth in his poetry, particularly for nature and love for it that forms the primary foundation of Romanticism. William Wordsworth’s greatest contribution to Romantic poetry was to provide perceptions of seeing, observing, and understanding nature and its many secrets. As a result, Wordsworth is rightly acknowledged as the father of poetry.

Indeed, if we look closely, Wordsworth may be seen as promoting simple living away from the rush and bustle of cities. This kind of thought was prevalent in the later generation of romantic poet’s writings, not only in the United Kingdom, but also throughout Europe and the Americans. In this sense, it is not incorrect to call William Wordsworth the father of Romanticism.

The Lyrical Ballads: Greatest Poems of the Romantic Age

“Lyrical Ballads” is unquestionably one of the best collections of poems of all time, not just of the romantic era. The collection was first published anonymously in 1798, followed by a second edition under Wordsworth’s name in 1800, a third edition in 1802, and a fourth edition in 1805. Because he also authored a preface for the second edition, it became known as the “preface “to Lyrical Ballads”

Lyrical Ballads was, in fact, a collection of poems by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. However, Wordsworth’s renown skyrocketed following the premiere, and it continues to this day. Wordsworth’s poems, which were later discovered to his work, have become the apex of romantic poetry, especially in terms of their expression, structure, style, conceptualisation, and emotions.

In reality, Wordsworth’s Lyrical Ballads encouraged a generation of poems to create love poetry, and the glorification of nature, emotions, human relationship, and spirituality, which is prevalent in Wordsworth’s work , is also prevalent in the work of other romantic poets. Though poets like PB Shelley and Lord Byron took a different approach to Romanticism, they appear to have been influenced by Wordsworth because their writings, like Wordsworth’s, focus around nature, albeit in different approaches.

The impact of “Lyrical Ballads ” was such that it prepared the way for the birth of romantic poetry, which says eloquently about Wordsworth’s influence and contributions to the genre.

CONCLUSION

William Wordsworth’s contributions to Romantic poetry can be divided into two categories. The first is his impact on literary excellence, and the second is his influence on his contemporaries and future poets. For his literary genius, representation of emotions, personification of human life with nature, and dissemination of a way of life that brought everyone back to nature, William Wordsworth is renowned as the maestro of Romantic poetry in the first section. Wordsworth is perhaps the greatest poet of the Romantic Age because of his influence on Romanticism. Second, he had a

huge influence on his contemporaries and future generation of romantic poets. Almost all Romantic Age's great poets were impacted by Wordsworth's works, style of thinking, and degree of creativity, either directly or indirectly. This resulted in an oceanic flow of poetry that was associated with nature, beauty, earthen life, and natural living.

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