

The Spiritual Aspect of William Wordsworth's Poetry.

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Received: July 07, 2018

Accepted: August 12, 2018

ABSTRACT

William Wordsworth, one of the popular and well known poets of 19th century. In his poems we can find a spiritual aspect of nature, amorality vision and his philosophy of life. Wordsworth loved nature not only for its external beauty but he went beyond it for the inner deeper meaning and found a bond between man and nature which is the only force, which can tie everything together on this earth. In his poems his language is spiritual and divine as nature to him appears as a connecting force between man and God. In this paper I explore his poems for the spiritual existence in nature. Through his poems we will try to understand his devotion and affection towards humanity and nature.

Keywords: William Wordsworth, Nature, Spirituality, Wordsworth's poetry.

Introduction

William Wordsworth in most of his poems got nature as its main plot here light has been shed on two of his most important poems the prelude and Tintern Abbey.

In prelude he intended to show though a long poem a revelation of how his mind grew under the influence of Nature than of books and friends. His life phases like his bright youth, childhood, his boyhood have been poetically described in 'The Prelude'. This personal epic or long poem of Wordsworth shed light on growth of the poet's mind and soul from his childhood days. Wordsworth expressed the theme of 'The Prelude' to be "the story of my life".

The poem is closely related to the poet's personal experiences. It is personal in sense it records the growth of a poet's mind. The Prelude is the longest, noblest and one of the most fruitful illustration of the spiritual frugality of Wordsworth.

In Book XII – XIV, the poet ushered in a gradual restoration of his faith in humanity. The Prelude is his philosophical poem, a comprehensive work containing views on nature man, and society, it is one of the most significant works of William wordsworth and apsycho logical account of the growth of his own mind. The most admirable work of Wordsworth 'The Prelude' is a record of a soul's progress towards the full possession of self.

This revealed in the opening lines of The Prelude Book – II.

"Thus far, O Friend, have we though leaving much

Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace

The simple ways in which my childhood walked,

Those chiefly that led me to the love

Of rivers, woods and fields. The passion

Was in its birth, sustained as might befall

by nourishment that came unsought". 13

The Prelude treats the making of a poet and not just the 'life' of the poet. In the poem 'The Prelude' the main strand running throughout all the fourteen books is the development or growth of the poet's imagination and mind. Thus the aspects of his life which affected the growth of his poetic sensibility are all recorded in this poem. The Prelude is really a voyage of self-discovery, a meditative history and a record of a soul's progress towards its fullest possession.

Tintern Abbey is a poem which records several stages of the development of the poet's attitude towards nature. Wordsworth loved nature not just for its external beauty, manifest in the hills, the rivers, the meadows and the woods, but as the visible embodiment of the sublime glory. This mood came to him not during childhood, but when he grew up as a mature man. This attitude of the poet towards nature is given elaborately in 'The Prelude', which the poet calls 'the Poem of my own Life'; it is also revealed in a condensed form in Tintern Abbey.

At first during his childhood, the beautiful objects of nature fascinated him, he as a child enjoyed the elementary pleasure of living in contact with nature. Natural things around him like the deep caverns, the

chasms and sky high cliffs could produce a feeling of a boy in the poet. The poet during this first stage enjoyed the sensuous pleasures in lap of nature and did not have a matured and a reflective mind, fully ripened.

During second stage, poet looks at nature not as a thoughtless youth, but finds an intimacy with nature and takes shelter in her. Being depressed by the city life and its monotony. He now becomes a mature mind with its reflection and hears from nature the harmonious and cathartically music welling up from the heart of the universe. This harmonious music is so powerful to chasten and subdue a mind that runs wildly enjoying nature just for its sensuous pleasures only. The poet urge men to go towards nature understand the holy power within nature. He says what man has made of man innately sorrowful, and practically ineffaceable (indelible, ineradicable, ineffaceable) sorrow lies deep-rooted in their hearts.

Wordsworth had elevated thoughts and mystical realization and sublime senses more deeply interfused. To Wordsworth, therefore nature is, not a distinct and separate entity having no connection with man who suffers from countless afflictions, but in fact the poet discovers nature responding towards the sadness of Man and empathizes with him. This pantheistic experience that speaks of God being immanent in and transcendent from this universe constitutes Wordsworth's mystical philosophy. Moreover, poet find some bond between man and nature as he heard Nature echoing the sad and still music of humanity, he felt the same reflection, cosmic hence natural spirit present in the mind of man as well.

At this mature stage of life he is still a lover of external beauty of nature, the meadows, the Woods and mountains but also now nature appear to him as a nurse, the guide, the guardian Thus to Wordsworth, nature not only offers sensuous pleasures, but now he discover a bond between nature and man which ties up the whole creation on this earth.

During the final stage nature influenced poet's vision which turned out to be moral now, he felt men should be lessen on the feelings of sorrow and happiness for him and should be inspired to do acts of sympathy and love for society. Thus man according to poet should act selfless and spread harmony on this earth ever after.

That blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened,
that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on, –
Until the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Is almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul.

Conclusion

Wordsworth's poetry shows that it really touched his soul. It becomes clear from his poems that nature is far more important to him than purely its physical form. Nature's motherly aspect molded him from his early years, possibly touching his soul, shaping and composing his thoughts in *The Prelude*. It is well said for him that he is a nature's priest. Nature's significance in Wordsworth's life is similar to the relationship between a human and its creator, arguably God.

Nature has gifted man lavishly but the poet not just loved nature for what nature has gifted him with, but rather for shaping his mind gradually for viewing things mystically now he could discover the presence of a spirit in all things including the mind of man. The poet finally proclaims that he is a worshipper of nature. Who came to visit the place unwearied in that service of worshipping nature with warmer love. This expression that the poet came to visit the place with love and faith toward worship nature would be inadequate; it would be better to say that he came on his mission with a far deeper zeal of holier love.

The Prelude treats not the 'life' of the poet, but the making of a poet. The main strand running throughout the fourteen books of *The Prelude* is the growth or development of the poet's mind and imagination. The prelude is a meditative history, a poetical autobiography. Wordsworth traces the details of the mind with care and tries to show what his poetry is made of. The prelude is a straight forward autobiography is markedly lacking in details which an Autobiographer would generally record. The prelude is really a Voyage of self-discovery, a record of a soul's progress towards the full possession of self. The prelude is the faithful record of his inner life and emotional experiences of the poet's soul.

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