



The Romantic Philosophy In The Poetry Of William Wordsworth And Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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ABSTRACT

This research work focuses on “The Romantic Philosophy in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge”. The Romantics focus on landscape because of its natural essence and its spiritual composition. The Romantics aim at fighting for the masses and educating the public on how nature can be better treated and appreciated. They present the beauty and enjoyment of life in which they find themselves as imaginary and visionary. This work examined the theory of romanticism in romantic poetry using William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s poems as our reference texts. Wordsworth and Coleridge own most of their poetic resources and characters to nature as they both strongly believe in the power of nature that brings all that is good to life.

Key words: Romantic philosophy, S.T. Coleridge, William Wordsworth, power of nature

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The early Romantic period coincides with what is often called the “Age of Revolutions” including of course, the American (1778) and the French (1789) revolutions an age of upheavals in political, economic and social traditions. The age which witnessed the initial transformations of the industrial revolution. The take off of Romantic Movement in English Language is set in the year 1798 when William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, publish of their poem called “Lyrical Ballads”. Though, these two lake-side poets wrote the poetic book, they have different view of the way poetry is seen, unlike William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge had an inspiration towards the supernatural, the mystic and the occult. A revolutionary energy was also at

the core of Romanticism, which quite consciously set out to transform not only the theory and practice of poetry (and all art) but the very way we perceive the world. Some of its major precepts have survival into the twentieth century and still affect our contemporary period.

Romantic writers generally see themselves as reacting against the thought and literary practices of the preceding century. The Romantist’s major subject matter is the beauty and satisfactions derive from nature. Romantists believe in naturalism and realism in the place of morality. They believe that man should not be conformed or stereotyped to one norm of code rather derive pleasure from what he derive from nature. Be that as it may, more emphasis is not laid on the thematic study of Romantic poetry rather that the

beauty is derived in its form following the theory of arts for art's sake. "Nature" meant many things to the Romantics, it was often presented as itself a work of art, constructed by a divine imagination, in emblematic language, for example, throughout "song of myself", Whitman makes a practice of presenting common place items in nature... "ants", "heap'd stones", and "poke-weed" as containing divine elements and he refers to the "grass" as a natural "hieroglyphic", "the handkerchief of the lord". While particular perspectives with regards to nature varied considerably; nature is perceived as a healing power, a source of subject and image, a refuge from the artificial constructs of civilization, including artificial language, the prevailing views accorded nature the status of an organically unified whole. It was viewed as "organic", rather than as in the scientific or rationalist view, as a system of "mechanical" laws, for romanticism displaced the rationalist view of the universe as a machine (e.g., the deistic image of a clock) with the analogue of an "organic" image, a living tree or mankind itself. At the same time, Romantics gave greater attention both describing natural phenomena accurately and to capturing "sensuous nuance" and this is as true of Romantic landscape painting. Accuracy of observation, however, was not sought for its own sake. Romantic nature poetry is essentially poetry of meditation.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research work is to introduce to the reader what Romantic poetry is all about. The researcher aims at portraying critically the works of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge as they are both Romantic and emotional writers. The product of imagination and emotion will be showed in their poetry. These two poets championed the values of human being politically and value-wise. The writers store for freedom of thought without any act of selfishness. The Study also focuses on the age of Romanticism and its impact in the society. It showcases the power of nature on man with reference to William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge selected poems.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research work will be limited to the major ideas of the Romantists based on nature, the nature of poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, selected poems of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge will be analysed.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This research work is embarked upon to show the natural essence of the Romantic writers. Romantic writers as it can be seen in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge finds happiness in isolating themselves from this world to the other world of nature full of peace, joy, happiness, health, love and sympathy. To them, the only source of comfort is a nature. There have been researchers on issues and topics relating to nature but this study is showcasing the element of nature in the poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge as they are both lover of nature.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The researcher will source for materials from libraries and internet. The major study is taking a critical look at selected poetry of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge based on the writing of the Romantics and their ideology. The theory to be used for this research work is "The Romantic Theory" as both poets are Romantic writers. Romanticism emphasized intuition, imagination and feeling, to a point that has led to some Romantic thinkers being accused of irrationalism. Romanticism focuses on nature: a place from society's judgement and restrictions. Romanticism blossomed after the age of rationalism, a time that focused on handwork and scientific reasoning. The Romantic Movement developed the idea of the absolute originality and artistic inspiration by the individual genius which performs a "creation from nothingness" this is the so-called Romantic ideology of literary authorship which created the notion of plagiarism and the guilt of derivativeness. This idea is often called "Romantic Originality". The Romantic Poets'

turned their beliefs on originality into "The institution of originality". The English poet John

Milton, which lived in the 17th Century, was part of the origin of the concept.

1.6 AUTHORIAL BACKGROUND OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

William Wordsworth was born in 1770 at Cockermouth in Cumberland. He grew up in the Lake District, the beautiful area of mountains, lakes and streams near the Scottish borders in North West England. The natural beauty and grandeur of this area was a major source of inspiration for Wordsworth throughout his life. His mother died when he was eight and his father died when he was thirteen. Like his friend Samuel Coleridge, Wordsworth was denied the blessing and comfort of a happy home. The considerable sum of money left to the children was withheld for some years for legal reasons, but William Wordsworth was nevertheless able to attend Cambridge University in 1787, where he found the curriculum boring. In 1790, he made a tour through France to the Alps with a fellow student travelling on foot like a peddler. He witnessed the Great Revolution of 1787-1890 in France. In 1802, Wordsworth finally inherited the money left to him by his father and married a childhood friend from the Lake District, Mary Hutchinson. Disaster followed in 1802, his favourite brother, John, a ship captain was drowned at sea. In 1810, the friendship between Wordsworth and Coleridge was broken by an open quarrel. Offsetting the sadness of these middle years however was the steady growth of Wordsworth reputation as a poet.

William Wordsworth's major work was his autobiographical poem titled "the prelude" completed in 1805. He continued to make changes and it was not published until his death. William Wordsworth died by re-aggravating a case of pleurisy on 23 April, 1850, and was buried at St. Oswald's Church in Grasmere. His widow Mary published his lengthy autobiographical poem to Coleridge as the prelude several months after his death.

AUTHORIAL BACKGROUND OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772-1834)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born on 21 October 1772 in the country town of Ottery St. Mary, Devon, England. Samuel's father, the Reverend John Coleridge (1718-1781) was a respected vicar of the parish and headmaster of Henry VIII's Free Grammar School at Ottery. After the death of Samuel's father, he was sent to Christ's Hospital, a charity School founded in the 16th century in Greyfriars, London where he remained throughout his childhood, studying and writing poetry. Throughout life, Coleridge idealized his father as pious and innocent, while his relationship with his mother was more problematic. His childhood was characterized by attention seeking, which has been linked to his dependent personality as an adult. He was rarely allowed to return home during the school term, and this distance from his family at such a turbulent time proved emotionally damaging. He later wrote of his loneliness at school in the poem "Frost at Midnight". He attended Jesus College, Cambridge from 1791-1794. In 1792, he won the Browne Gold Medal for an Ode that he wrote on the slave trade.

In 1798, Coleridge and Wordsworth published a joint volume of poetry, "Lyrical Ballads" which proved to be the starting point for the English Romantic Movement. In 1800, he returned to England and shortly thereafter settled with his family and friends at Keswick in the Lake District of Cumberland to be near Grasmere, where Wordsworth had moved. Soon, however, he was beset by marital problems, illnesses, increased opium dependency, tensions with Wordsworth and a lack of confidence in his poetic powers, all which fuelled the composition of dejection: An Ode and an intensification of his philosophical studies. He died in 1834 on the 25 of July in Highgate.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Romantic period emphasised the self creativity, imagination and the value of art. This is in contrast to the enlightenment emphasis on rationalism and empiricism. Its roots can be found in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant. Philosophers and writers associated with the Romantic movement include Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832) Friedrich Wilhelm, Joseph Von Schelling (1775-1854), and George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) in Germany; Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in Britain. To the Romantic poet, nature is supreme. It is regarded as pure, and therefore capable of communicating perfectly to human instinct. For this reason, nature is capable of moulding man and capable of generating power. Nature means the tangible object of the divine creation, the processes of growth and decay, the developmental stages and dissolution of all created things that helps us to the awareness of the greater power behind all that we see and behold. This leads to the fact that ecstasy which the senses attain in this state of awareness is of inestimable value to the poetic mind. Wordsworth calls himself 'a worshipper of nature' and by this saying he means that he holds the nature in reverential awe, claiming that he can also have power. He says:

In hours of weariness, sensations sweet felt in the blood, and felt along the heart; and passing into only purer mind with tranquil restoration (Tintern Abbey 28-31) 1

This portends that the nature which Wordsworth has in mind is much more than what we normally take for granted. To him, the appreciation of nature goes beyond the surface. Included in this concept of nature are the stages of maturity that the mind goes through. This consists of childhood governed by sensation, maturity governed by thought and sober reflection, and youth governed by emotions or passions.

Additionally, we have the organic theory of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, included in the Romanticist's concept of nature. Nature in all her greatness can impress herself upon our mind with absolute precision in both small and great things of life; the effect of the atmospheric condition of things like "the straggling heap of stones" give rise to whole pastoral poem titled "Michael". This shows that for everything we experience in nature, there is a tail attached to it that broadens our horizon. The poem relates to simple folks called Peasants who have the country side as their abode and have their means of livelihood located in their surroundings.

Romanticism begins at least in the 1770s and continues in the second half of the 19th century basically in American Literature than European, and later in Art like music and painting, than in Literature. This extended chronological spectrum (1770-1870) also permit to recognition as romantic, the poetry of Robert Burns and William Blake in England.

Philosophical Romanticism represents a shift from the objective to subjective science claims to describe the objective world, the world that understands from no particular view point. They move from the objective to the subjective is a result of Kant's idea that human beings do not see the world directly, but through a number of categories. The Romantic emphasis on art and imagination is a direct critical to the mechanical view of some enlightenment figures. The Romantic emphasis on the individual was reflected on ideas of self realization and nature. Wordsworth thought that the individual could directly understand nature without the need for the society and social artifice, salvation is achieved by the solitary individual rather than through political movement.

According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau say "man was born free, and he is every where in chains" Rousseau wrote in 1962. He thought that civilization fills "man" with natural wants and seduces him away from his true nature, and original freedom. Rousseau is credited with the idea of "noble savage" who is uncorrupted by artifice and society.

In "Emile" (1762), he describes the education of the free being who is encouraged to develop through self-expression the natural nobility and liberty of the spirit. In the social contract (1762) he attempts to describe the society in which this natural nobility could be flourished. The society will be based on a direct democracy (where each member has a chance to vote on every issue). As all are involved in decision making, this contract is seen as legitimate. With a broad and deep knowledge of philosophy, literature and political issues, Herman Melville was a quintessential writer of the romantic minor key. Romanticism, a dynamic yet vague condition of revolt against mechanism and overarching. Mechanism continues as an unresolved sub-text of modern and contemporary industrialized cultures, especially since the 18th century. It repeatedly emerges in transient forms and recedes into the undertones from which it came. During certain eras and by certain writers, it is a clarion call to creative action against threats to personal freedom. In the context of American transcendentalism, the summons to awaken was sustained in the active romanticism writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller and Walt Whitman. Less exultant writers of that era especially Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe were no less charismatic and reformative. Romantic resignation, acknowledging the inevitable failures and disappointments that accompany exhilaration is part of romanticism's method and milieu. Many critics who have summarized Melville's quarrel with Romanticism's have defined the term narrowly enough to create for Melville's dark disagreement with transcendental idealism. In part, it was a revolt against aristocratic social and political norms of the "Age of Enlightenment" and a reaction against the scientific rationalization of nature and was embodied strongly in the visual arts, music and literature, but had a major impact on historiography, education and natural history. The movement validated strong emotion as an authentic source of aesthetic experience, placing new emphasis on such emotions as trepidation, horror and tension and awe especially that which is experienced in confronting the sublimity of untamed nature and its picturesque qualities, both

new aesthetic categories. It elevated folk art and ancient custom to something noble, made of spontaneity a desirable character (as in the musical impromptu), and argued for a "natural" epistemology of human activities as conditioned by nature in the forum of language and customary usage.

Romanticism reached beyond the rational and classicist ideal models to elevate a revived medievalism and elements of art and narrative perceived to be authentically medieval, in an attempt to escape the confines of population growth, urban sprawl, and industrialism, and it also attempted to embrace the exotic, unfamiliar, and distant in modes more authentic than Rococo chinoiserie, harnessing the power of the imagination to envisage and to escape. The modern sense of a romantic character may be expressed in Byronic ideals of gifted, perhaps misunderstood loner, creatively following the dictates of his inspiration rather than the moves of contemporary society. Although the movement was rooted in the German Sturm and Drang movement which prized intuition and emotion over enlightenment rationalism, the ideologies and events of the French Revolution bid the background from which both romanticism and the counter enlightenment emerged. The confines of the industrial revolution also had their influence on romanticism, which was in part an escape from modern realities; indeed, in the second half of the 19th century "Realism" was offered as a polarised opposite to Romanticism. Romanticism elevated the achievements of what it perceived as heroic individualists and artists, whose pioneering examples would elevate the society. It also legitimized the individual imagination as critical notions of form in art. There was a strong recourse to historical and natural inevitability, a zeitgeist in the representation of its ideas.

2.1 THE NATURE OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S POETRY

Many scholars have written on William Wordsworth and they have expressed divergent views on his works. However, in this chapter, we shall look deeply at different works that shows the essence of nature with relevance to William

Wordsworth's write-ups. The world book encyclopaedia (Vol. 16, 1990) says;

Wordsworth referred a reflective vacant and pensive mood to a restless research for scientific knowledge. He believed that we learn more by communicating with nature or talking to country people rather than reading books. He believed that harmony with nature is the source of all goodness and truth.²

Nature was the watchword for the romanticists but in a very different way. Samuel Taylor Coleridge says "nature is a religious observer as the art of God" (Roman Selden, 1988). Thomas Hardy believes that everything makes up the universe this includes man and lower animals, the sun, the moon, mountains, rivers and seas. It is an irresistible force (Adewoye, 2010). William Wordsworth was the quint-essential poet, a naturalist, who pays close attention to details of the physical environment around him (plants, animals, geography weather). At the same time, William Wordsworth was a self-consciously literary artist whose works were referred to as Wordsworthian. Wordsworthian 'nature' emerges as much as product of his widespread reading as of his wondering amid the affecting landscapes of the Lake District. His poems often present instances when nature speaks to him and he responds by speaking for nature. William Wordsworth's 'nature' points us away from the closed world of ethnocentric symbol of making towards the unstable world of post modern meaning. Scholars attribute the onset of the period to William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge their work titled "Lyrical Ballads" was published in 1778. That is the beginning of the Romantic period according to some scholars. Romanticism according to them is freedom to give reign to one's emotion and dreams. Salvaseen (1976) says William Wordsworth sees himself as someone, from whom the rest of the world will learn, as a prophet of nature this is how he addresses Coleridge at the end of the 'prelude'. He proves that guilt as an aspect of imagination is also an aspect of nature. It is nature which imposed the discipline of fear on William Wordsworth.

William (1996) also believes that William Wordsworth laid the foundation of the later poets to build on. He asserts;

As a poet, Wordsworth identified early on with contemporary trends and began to write on ways specifically designed to challenge orthodox literary conventions. Producing in consequence poetry guaranteed to make a reading public for his handwork to be retained and established.³

J.R. Watson asserts that:

When he is considered alongside the other romantic poets, what is so extraordinary about Wordsworth is not his evocation of nature, but his insight into the nature of man with individually and in society. His poetry is filled with characters, as sharply defined as those in great tragedy. ⁴

Watson maintains that Wordsworth is a sociological poet, who is concerned with the affairs of man, especially the downtrodden and the spoken of, in the society. Furthermore, in his evaluation and assessment of the person and works of William Wordsworth, Watson believes that Wordsworth is interested in the problems of living in cities, in the relationship between the individual and the state, and the state's responsibility towards its members, and in the way in which certain pressures tend to reduce the individual to a machine, or at least to something less than his or her full individuality.

M.H. Abrams also writes in support of William Wordsworth as being sociological and a writer who is concerned with the situations and vicissitudes of life facing the people of this day. He is of the opinion that when William Wordsworth claims that his task to confront and find consolation in human suffering. He argues "since William Wordsworth has been singled out for holy services in a secular work of man's reputation", he has proved his worth. Abrams goes further, asserting that the "essay" of Wordsworth of 1851, is a "violation of customary, and it's a reversal of status between the highest and the lowest". He sees Wordsworth as violating the custom of the literary works, in that they often

pick on high diction, but Wordsworth uses common man's language, and contrary to what he obtains in his day, he sees common man as worthy of writing on, instead of the rich and influential man. Abrams also asserts that "although, Wordsworth sang of joy and love, he did not avert his eyes from anguish or evil, but often represents a "dark world". He also says that "Wordsworth is pre-eminently the poet of solitude... no poet is more emphatically the poet of community". Wordsworth, therefore, has an acute sense of his own being that sharpens his awareness of other beings, and his intention is to require us his audience to acknowledge the being of his narrative personae and so to bring them within the range of conscience and of natural sympathy.

Going by Watson, Wordsworth's worldview as far as poetry is concerned, is experience based i.e. he had seen and witnessed the vicissitudes of life confronting the peasants He argues:

In his own life, he experienced (during his stay in London) the sudden transition from the moral and agricultural society to a mass society and Wordsworth's experience in London, gave him an insight into these problems, and a life long attachment to the value, which the mass society denied. Individuality local loyalty, the spirit of community 5 .

He further contends that Wordsworth's ability to see these matters clearly and to devise a poetry that expresses his beliefs about human beings in the society is one of the reasons why he is the central poet of the modern tradition. Lionel Trilling sees Wordsworth as a poet who is often obsessed with his Christian faith. He associates is being a devout Christian. He writes, "He seems to me that the marks of Christianity on Wordsworth are so clear and indelible". Just like Lionel Trilling, Watson sees Wordsworth as a Fidel and real Christian. He likens him to a prophet, because of his purposefulness; he is of the opinion that Wordsworth's attitude can be compared to areligious commitment and to a divine call. He asserts that Wordsworth was to live out consciously the life of "a dedicated spirit, prophet teacher", and because his teaching and prophecy were based on his own experience and that

experience was so accidentally and particularly central to the discontents of modern industrial society.

As far as Datches is concerned, Wordsworth also succeeded in bringing a completely new approach to the writings of English poetry; he states "his objection to an over-stylised poetic diction, his attitudes to nature, his choice of simple incidents and humble people as subjects are his devices to achieve this". Datches argues that Wordsworth's diction had little influence on other romantic poets; either in theory or in practice Wordsworth frequently took liberties with his setting, adding, re-arranging and telescoping specific details of an observed or remembered landscape to suit his poetic purpose. Datches says that Wordsworth's poetry which gives profound insight into human nature is influenced by external nature.

To Wordsworth, the world has a divine language and so, he cannot be charged with a lack of passion because some of his poems contain moral passion and a strong pathos. The plainness of Wordsworth's style result from the greatness of his thought (Adewoye, 2006).

Abrams (1992) also perceives Wordsworth as a radical poet who deviates from the 'norm'. He sees Wordsworth's ideology as a violation of the tradition of the literary world in that he chooses to use the language of common man, in his poetry while the classical poets before him often picked high diction. He believes that Wordsworth 'essay' written in 1851 is a violation of customary, and its reversal of status between the highest and the lowest. William (1996) writes in support of Wordsworth being a radical poet who abandoned the high diction of the classical poet and their praise of the upper class in the society for simple diction. He identifies with the middle and lower classes of the society who are the subject of his poetry (Ajibade; 2003).

Mathew Arnold makes a claim for Wordsworth's language that sseems strange to us than it could have seemed to him, he was in a way aware of its strangeness. He presents Wordsworth as a unique figure in the history of writings, a poet who can compose texts that transcend their own textuality,

that is, their status as bearers of multiple meanings. The power of Wordsworth's work is primarily the healing power of its access to joy in nature.

According to Watson (1992), Wordsworth was one of the greatest tragic poets and had a deep indignation and compassion for human suffering. The Romantics withdrew to rural dwellers and made them to appreciate the natural aesthetics given by God to man. Therefore, rural solitude was of great importance to Wordsworth and it brings solace to them. "The world is too much with us" (Ibrahim B. F. and F. F. Akande; 2000) reveals his great concern to man's suffering and sought refuge in nature as a source of inspiration, imagination and creativity. Moreover, in the poem, we hear Wordsworth advocating for a withdrawal from the corrupt society (the sea, in this case striving as an agent). Watson is also of the opinion that Wordsworth has distinguished himself from all other poets before him and among the Romanticist because of his interest in natural essence and rural dwellers. He says; "when he is considered along side other Romantic poets, what is so extra-ordinary about Wordsworth is not invocation of nature but his insight into the nature of man, both individually and the society" (Watson 1992). William Wordsworth's works during the Romanticism era followed little of rules and authors were free to write as they felt. This era began to change during the French revolution and continued through the industrial revolution. In a basic sense, the 'Romanticism' has been used to refer to certain artists, poets, writers, musicians, as well as political philosophical and social thinkers of the late 18th and early to mid 19th centuries. It has equally been used to refer to various artistic, intellectual and social trends of that era. Despite the general usage of the term, a precise characterization and specific definition of Romanticism has been the subject of debate in the fields of intellectual history and literary history throughout the twentieth century, without any great measure of consensus emerging. Arthur Lovejoy attempted to demonstrate the difficulty of this problem in his seminal article "on the discrimination of Romanticism". In his Essays in

the history of ideas (1948); some scholars see Romanticism as essentially continuous with the present, some see in it the inaugural moment of modernity, some see it as the beginning of a tradition of resistance to Enlightenment and still others place it firmly in the direct aftermath of the French Revolution. An earlier definition comes from Charles Baudelaire 'Romanticism is precisely situated neither in choice of subject nor exact truth, but in the way of feeling'. Many intellectual historians have seen Romanticism as a key movement in the counter- Enlightenment whereas the thinkers of the Enlightenment emphasized the primacy of deductive reason. Romanticism emphasized intuition imagination, and feeling that has led to some Romantic thinkers being accused of irrationalism. Although the term 'Romanticism' when applied to music has come to imply the period roughly from the 1820's until around 1900, the contemporary application of 'romantic' to music did not coincide with this modern interpretation. In 1810 E.T.A. Hoffmann called Mozart Haydn and Beethoven "The Three Romantic Composers" and Ludwig Spohr used the term 'good romantic style' to apply to parts of Beethoven's fifth symphony. Technically, Mozart and Haydn are considered classical composers, and by most standards, Beethoven represents the start of the musical Romantic period. By the early twentieth century, the sense that there had been a decisive break with the musical past led to the establishment of the nineteenth century as 'the Romantic Era', and it is referred to as encyclopaedias of music.

In literature, Romanticism found recurrent themes in the evocation or criticism of the past, the cult of 'sensibility' with its emphasis on women and children, the heroic isolation of the artist or narrator, and respect for a new wilder, untrammelled and 'pure' nature. Furthermore, several romantic authors, such as Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne based their writings on the supernatural occult and human psychology. Romanticism also helped in the emergence of new ideas and in the process led to the emergence of positive voices that were beneficial for the marginalized sections of the society. The Scottish poet James McPherson influenced the early

development of Romanticism with the international success of his Ossian cycle of poems published in 1762, inspiring both Goethe and the young Walter Scott.

An early German influence came from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose 1774 novel 'The Sorrows of Young Werther' had young men throughout Europe emulating its protagonist, a young artist with a very sensitive and passionate temperament. At that time Germany was a multitude of small separate states, and Goethe's works would have a seminal influence in developing a unifying sense of rationalism. Another philosophic influence came from the German Idealism of Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Friedrich Schelling, making Jena (where Fichte lived, as well as Schelling, Hegel Schiller and the brothers Schlegel) a centre for early German Romanticism ('Jenaer Romantik') Important writers were Ludwig Tieck, Novalis (Heinrich von Ofterdingen, 1799), Heinrich von Kleist and Friedrich Hoelderlin, Heidelberg later became a centre for German Romanticism, where writers and poets such as Clemen Brentano, Achim Von Arnim, and Joseph Freiherr Von Eichendorff met regularly in literary circles. Important motifs in German Romanticism are travelling, nature and ancient myths.

2.2 THE NATURE OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE'S POETRY

Samuel Taylor Coleridge as a Romantic poet and literary critic changed the nature of poetry. He also had distinctive views on imagination and religion. It is well known that Coleridge helped to change poetry with the publishing of lyrical ballads with William Wordsworth in 1788. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth believed in the restorative powers of nature, but Coleridge was much more a traditional Christian in his beliefs. In chapter 13 of *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge divides imagination into primary and secondary. Primary imagination is universal; it is a part of all human perception, "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I am". The act of creation in the mind of the individual echoes the creative powers of God. Coleridge distinguishes the works of fancy that merely

reorder and organize memories from imagination, which as a vital force creates something new. According to Coleridge's definition, when man uses their imaginative powers, they are acting like God the eternal creator.

Coleridge believed the mind of man understands natural law because it is a part of God. God's essence is found in nature. Coleridge poetically expresses this in "The Eolian Harp" in a "what if" stanza And what if all of animated nature bet but organic harps diversely framed, that tremble into thought, as over them sweeps. Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze. At once the soul of each, and God of all.⁶

This meditative poetry contemplates that God is in nature almost as part of a musical pattern.

Despite not enjoying the name recognition or popular acclaim that Wordsworth or Shelley has had, Coleridge is one of the most important figures in English poetry. His poems directly and deeply influenced all the major poets of the age. He was known by his contemporaries as a meticulous craftsman who was more rigorous in his careful re-working of his poems than any other poet, and Southey and Wordsworth were dependent on his professional advice. His influence on Wordsworth is particularly important because many critics have credited Coleridge with the

very idea of "Conversational poetry". The idea of utilizing common everyday language to express profound poetic images and ideas for which Wordsworth become so famous may have originated

almost entirely in Coleridge's mind. As important as Coleridge was to poetry as a poet, he was equally important to poetry as a critic. Coleridge's philosophy of poetry, which he developed over many years, has been deeply influential in the field of literary criticism. This influence can be seen in such critics as A. O. Lovejoy and J. A. Richards. Coleridge's "conversation poems" are considered by many critics to be among Coleridge's finest verses thus Harold Bloom has written, "With Dejection", "The Ancient Mariner", "Kubla Khan" and "Frost at Midnight"

shows Coleridge at his most impressive. They are also among his most influential poems as discussed further below: “Harper himself considered that the eight poems represented a form of blank verse that is more fluent and easy than Milton’s or any that had been written since Milton”.

In 2006, Robert Koelzer wrote about another aspect of this apparent “easiness”, noting that conversation poems such as Coleridge’s “The Eolian Harp” and “The Nightingale” maintain a middle register of speech, employing an idiomatic language that is capable of being construed as un-symbolic and un-musical language that lets itself be taken as ‘merely talk’ rather than rapturous song. The last ten lines of “Frost at Midnight” were chosen by Harper as the best example of the peculiar kind of blank verse Coleridge had evolved, as natural-seeming as prose, but as exquisitely artistic as the most complicated sonnet. The speaker of the poem is addressing his infant son, asleep by his side: “Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to the whether the summer clothes the general earth....”

In 1965, M. H. Abrams wrote a broad description that applies to the conversation poems: the speaker begins with a description of the landscape; an aspect or change of aspect in the landscape evokes a varied by integral process of memory, thought, anticipation, and feeling which remains closely interwoven with the outer scene. In the course of this meditation, the lyric speaker achieves an insight, faces up to a tragic loss, comes to a moral decision, or resolves an emotional problem. Often the poem rounds itself to end where it began, at the outer scene, but with an altered mood and deepened understanding which is the result of the intervening meditation. In fact, Abrams was describing both the conversation poems and later poems influenced by them. Abrams’ essay has been called a “touchstone of literary criticism”. As Paul Magnuson described it in 2002, “Abrams credited Coleridge with originating what Abrams called ‘greater Romantic lyric’, a genre that began with Coleridge’s ‘Conversation’ poems, and

included, Tintern Abbey, Shelley’s stanzas “Written in Dejection” and “Keat’s Ode to a Nightingale”, and this was a major influence on more modern lyrics by Matthew Arnold, Walt Whitman, Wallace Stevens and W. H. Auden.

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THE ROMANTIC TENETS IN THE SELECTED POETRY OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at analyzing three of William Wordsworth poems namely “My Heart Leaps up when I behold”, “The World is Too Much With Us”, and “The Daffodils” or “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”. The Romanticism theory will be used to analyse these poems as it has been stated in the methodology.

3.1 “MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD”

The romantic poets have reverent attitude to

nature. Whenever they came across any agent of nature, they tend to worship it. William Wordsworth demonstrates such attitude when he comes in contact with the rainbow, therefore, the poem is a kind of nostalgic recollection.

The poem "MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD" is a nine lines, one stanza poem and its brevity contributes to its effectiveness. It is in a form of a narrative poem. The poet recounts his experience with the rainbow, he becomes highly elated and his spirit becomes lifted up. This is shown in line one and two thus:

My heart leaps up when I behold A rainbow in the sky. (Lines 1-2)¹

From there, he goes into a philosophical consideration of the experience saying that the rainbow like other agents of nature is permanent.

So was it when my life began so is it now I am a man so be it when I shall grow old or let me die (Lines 3-6)²

The same lines also suggest the ephemeral nature of man who unlike the rainbow cannot exist forever. He is born, grows old and eventually dies. The poet personae in line 7-9 goes on to say that it is easier for a child to appreciate nature better than an adult who has pre-occupied his mind on worldly affairs.

The child is the father of man And I could wish my days to be Bound each by natural piety (Lines 7-9)³

This preference for worldliness is the subject of "The World Is Too Much with Us", another poem that would be treated by the same poet. The poet personae then conclude by suggesting that man should learn from his childhood reverent regard (a feeling of profound respect) for nature.

3.2 ROMANTIC THEMES IN THE POEM "MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD" BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The beauty of nature can be seen in the poem. Common experience and common sense show us that the rainbow has seven distinct colours which are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and

red. These are said to be the brightest of all colours. Therefore, their combination is exquisite and charming. This beauty is a source of attraction to the poet who finds himself under its spell. Another theme found in this poem is the permanence of nature. Nature is an everlasting phenomenon. It is not limited by time and space. It is continuous. According to the poem, nature is said to possess such a quality. It connives man and continue to exist from generation to generation. Man is a temporary being on the surface of the earth. Therefore, his days are few and filled with sorrow. Nature however, is a source of solace to him.

3.3 THE STYLES, STRUCTURE AND FORM IN WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S "MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD".

The poem is made up of a single stanza in terms of structure. The lines are unrhymed and therefore it is a blank verse in terms of poetic form. Also, it is a lyrical ballad. By Romantic poetry stanza, a lyrical ballad is a short poem in which the poet expresses his personal thought or feeling. The language of the poem is rustically simple. This should not surprise us since Wordsworth has stated in the preface to his lyrical ballad: the principal object, then, which I proposed to myself in these poems was to choose incident and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men.

The word 'rainbow' is a biblical allusion or reference. God destroyed the first world with flood because of violence and all sorts of ungodly practices. However, the bible records it that Noah found favour before the Lord. He and his family were saved, the rest of the world perished. After the destruction, God sent 'Rainbow' as a sign of his covenant with Noah that he will no longer destroy the world with flood again. The rainbow is being used in the poem as an agent of nature. Also, the poem can be said to represent the presence of God and its various colours to represent the attributes of God. Violet for instance, can represent the love of God, just as blue represent God's peace and red being a

symbol of God's judgement.

"My Heart Leaps up When I Behold" in line 1 is a ready example of personification. The act of "leaping" ordinarily belongs to a man as a living object not human heart. The expression "leaps up" is a phrasal verb which has synecdoche in it too as the heart represents the human body as a whole. "The child is the father of man" in line 7 is an example of paradox. Originally, it means that it is a child that grows up to become a father in the future; but in the context of the poem it shows that a child is closer to nature than an adult. The permanence of nature is contrasted to the transient nature of man. Therefore, nature is more valuable than man. Finally, the mood of the poet is an exciting one.

3.4 ROMANTIC TENETS IN "THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US" BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

This poem written by William Wordsworth is essentially a tribute and glorification to nature. According to the poet, nature plays a leading role in the life of every society and should be guided jealously at all cost. It should be treated with great care, respect and admiration. Enough restraint is needed on the part of the individual as regard to the manner they relate to nature and its resources. The society should see nature as their most valuable asset considering the immense benefits they derive from it. It provides us with the basic needs of man; food, shelter, and clothing. It takes care of both the living and dead. Infact, the contributions of nature to human life cannot be over-emphasized. William Wordsworth in this poem says that we dissipate much energy on material or earthly things instead of coming closer to nature where we can find happiness in life. He says we can enjoy life to its fullest only if we can live in harmony and agreement with nature. It is only when we embrace nature that we can reap the immense benefits associated with it. The poet poetically puts it as thus:

The world is too much with us Late and soon,
getting and spending we lay waste our powers,
little did we see in nature that is ours; we have
given our heart away a sordid boon!⁴

The poet compares live in a rural or village setting with our lives in the urban areas or cities. Wordsworth who is a romantic poet (all romantic poet adore nature and worshipped it) prefers the beauty of rural lives to the struggle and pursuit of material gains, referred in the poem as 'getting and spending' hence we can adequately appreciate the beauty of nature because we take active interest on earthly desires.

This sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours and are
gathered now like sleeping flowers for this, for
everything we are out of tune.⁵

In these lines, the poet captures the romantic and fantastic imagery and passionate level of nature that we fail to see. The world is created in God's perfection with an established order. It is because we the inhabitants of the earth is ungodly and have departed from the established rules set by God. To the poet, 'nature is society and society is nature'. But what worries the poet most is that man has abandoned all the natural endowments at his disposal in pursuit of earthly values which cannot last long. We have failed woefully to appreciate and make adequate use of the good qualities of nature: the 'winds', 'sea', 'moon', and 'sleeping flowers'. It is because we have failed to live in accordance and agreement with nature that we are devoid of peace, order and stability; hence we are 'out of tune'.

It moves us not Great God! I' d rather be a pagan
suckled in a creed out worn, so might I, standing
on this pleasant lea, have glimpses that would
make me less forlorn; have sight of Proteus rising
from sea; or hear old triton blow his wreathed
horn.⁶ Progressing in lines 9-11, the poet by his
oath prefers being a pagan bent on primitive
beliefs, to living a life far away from nature. He
says that he might stand on the 'pleasant lee'
(open grassland) and contemplate on his desperate
state of affair, a situation where mankind
bestowed with abundant talents appear so
indifferent, so ungodly and so deceitful that poet
is left with no hope and is completely too tired to
comprehend this sate of affair. The poet settles on
the open place to have wide a view of the whole

situation, from there, he could also sight 'Proteus' (god of sea) or hear old 'triton' (another sea-god) blowing his wreathed horn/trumpet. The message passed in this poem is powerful, clear, didactic, and worthy of emulation, should mankind need to appreciate nature and its natural endowments. It is only when we behold nature that we can enjoy to its fullest.

3.5 THE ROMANTIC LANGUAGE AND FORM IN "THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US" BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The poem is a sonnet (a fourteen lines poem) with its economy of language. It is a petrarchan sonnet. It has an octave (first eight lines) and sestet (last six lines). Its rhyming scheme of ABBA, ABBA, and CDCDCD follows the petrarchan rhyming scheme.

William Wordsworth's poem is written in a very simple, clear and straight forward language. There is hardly any word in the poem that would pose problem to an average reader, except a few words like 'Proteus and Triton', 'lea' (line 11) 'sordid boon' (line 4) and 'wreathed horn' (line 11). The simplicity of language enhances the readers understanding of the poem.

The general mood captures in the poem is that of anger, hopelessness, despair, doom and disaster while the tone is serious, harsh, sharp and that of castigation and condemnation of man's neglect and abandonment to nature.

Two examples of personification are prominent in the poem:

- (a) 'The sea bares her bosom to the moon'
- (b) 'the winds that will be howling at all hours'

Here the 'sea' and the 'wind' do not have any life really but in the poem they are given human qualities.

Alliteration was used in the poem in

- (a) 'bares her bosom'

- (b) 'Great God'

- (c) 'we waste'

The poem has a great moral lesson on human society. The society is being advised to come close to nature. Enough restraint is needed on the part of the individual as regards to nature and its resources. It is only when we embrace nature that we can reap the immense benefits associated with it.

3.6 THE ROMANTIC THEMES IN THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

There is a relationship between man and nature in the poem. Man cannot do without nature. There is a genuine pleasure as seeing, hearing and feeling the freshness of the world. Nature associates with both physical and spiritual health. The landscape and the natural world are not just seen for their beauty, but for their ability to express some of the elusive truth and perceptions of mind.

Another theme in the poem is the failure of man to appreciate nature. Nature has a lot to bestow on man but it is quite unfortunate that man fails to appreciate it. Yet, man and nature combine to make a complete and ideal environment. Man's flimsy excuse for failing to appreciate nature is too mundane and unreasonable. It puts man in a losing end. The beauty of nature is seen in natural objects such as sea, moon, wind and flowers. This constitutes part of the bio-geographical features that make the world what it is.

3.7 AN OVERVIEW OF "I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD" OR "THE DAFFODILS" BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The happenings in the poem is quite simple but the meaning of the incident is however more complex. The poet is alone taking a walk beside a lake. He suddenly comes across a field of beautiful flowers known as 'Daffodils' swaying in the wind. This makes him very excited and happy. The happiness does not stop at the lake side. Any

other time he remembers, he re-captures his mind to the scene and it brings him unlimited joy. William Wordsworth provides us with the details of this simple experience in four stanzas.

The poet wanders alone in stanza 1 and suddenly comes across plenty of golden-coloured Daffodils under the trees beside a lake. The wind blows over them and so they bend from side to side according to the direction of the wind:

I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high o'er vales and hills, when all at once I saw a crowd, a host of golden Daffodils beside the lake, beneath the trees.⁷

In stanza two, the poet is overwhelmed by the uncountable number of the Daffodils. They are 'crowd', a 'host' and as many as the 'stars' in the sky. The poet could not simply believe it Fluttering and dancing in the breeze, continuous as the stars that shine and twinkle on the Milky Way, they stretched in never-ending line along the margin of a bay.⁸

In stanza three, the breeze causes the waves in the lake to also move from side to side. Still, the movement of the Daffodils swaying from side to side is better to watch. The poet is so emotional and happy that he does not know how long this scene is going to be on his mind afterwards and what pleasure it will bring him.

I gazed and gazed – but little thought what wealth the show to me had brought.⁹

The poet discovers afterwards in stanza four that very often when he is alone, he suddenly remembers this scene and his loneliness turns into happiness. You can rightly say that nature represented in this poem by the Daffodils keeps the poet company, so to speak. It thus prevents him from being lonely; "A poet could not be gay, in such a ground company".

3.8 ROMANTIC STYLE LANGUAGE AND THEMES IN "THE DAFFODILS" BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

William Wordsworth combines his narrative

and descriptive skills to write "The Daffodils". The poem has a structure that allows you to hear, to see, to participate and to make up your mind. In this way, it is true to say that even the structure of the poem makes it easier for you to understand the message of the poet. The soft and melodious sounds of the rhyming words combine with the threebeat rhythms that are fairly consistent to make the poem musical – this is soothing and suitable because since everything in the poem seems to be dancing, the mood must be a gay one. The musical quality of the poem provides this mood. Wordsworth uses a skilful choice of words to emphasize this happy mood. You can re-consider the following words in this regard: floods, golden, fluttering, dancing, tossing, sprightly, jocund, gazed, and bliss. All these words are associated with happiness and deep satisfaction.

The poem is four sets of sextet, each sextet deals with an aspect of the experience. The rhyme scheme of the poem is ABABCC, DEDEFF, GHGHII and JKJKII.

The two situations of the poet-personae are contrasted. At first, he was disorderly and later becomes orderly having come in contact with nature. Also, through the use of contrast, we are able to see the Daffodils as better dancers than the waves.

The poet employs the use of comparison to create vivid mental picture and to show the extent of the topic being discussed; "I wandered lonely as a cloud" (line 1).

The poet compares his haphazard movement to that of a cloud that is floating on high over vales and hills.

Fluttering and dancing in the breeze continuous as the stars that shine and twinkle on the Milky Way (line 6-8)¹⁰

The poet compares the continuity of the dance of the Daffodils to the continuous shining star above stretching across the sky: 'the milky way'.

The poet uses exaggeration for the sake of

emphasis and magnitude; “A host of golden Daffodils ten thousand saw I at a glance”.

The poet says that the Daffodils are made of gold, 'Golden Daffodils' to stretch its beauty and preciousness. He also claimed to have seen ten thousand Daffodils at a glance. How is he able to count the number? This is just to exaggerate their quantity.

The major themes in “The Daffodils” are: RURAL SOLITUDE. It has been described as the proper environment or condition for the right contemplation of nature. The Romantic poets prefer the tranquillity and serenity of the rural environment to the contamination and complexity of the city life by implied contrast, the poet, his life in the rural environment makes the poet to think deeply and have a right view of life. The first line of the poem paints the picture of a helpless poet wandering about aimlessly and would have continued the roaming about had it not been his sudden perception of the Daffodils, he stops wandering about, things that are not necessary. This shows that nature is an agent of orderliness. God is not mentioned throughout the poem but is implied. The Daffodils are ‘placed’ beside the lake and beneath the trees. The Daffodils need to survive and at the same time, the Daffodils should not be over-exposed to the scorching sun therefore its placement beneath the trees is ideal. It shows that God of providence is demonstrated in nature.

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THE ROMANTIC TENETS IN THE POETRY OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at analyzing two of Samuel Taylor Coleridge poems namely “Kubla Khan”

and “Frost at Midnight”. The Romantic tenet that made the poem a romantic poem will be showed. Themes, motifs and symbols in the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge will also be looked at in this chapter.

4.1 “KUBLA KHAN”

This poem is one of the famous poems of the romantic period. Samuel Taylor Coleridge became an opium addict and it is thought that “Kubla Khan” originated from an opium dream. The title of the poem, “Kubla Khan” is a name of great power, bearing the title of an Asian ruler. The speaker describes where Kubla resides in Xanadu “stately pleasure - dome” built in Xanadu according to the decree is of Kubla Khan, in the place where Alph, the sacred river, town, area, and country of a great natural beauty and mystery.

The lines go thus:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure-dome decree; where Alph, the sacred river, ran through caverns measureless to man down to a sunless sea. So twice five miles of fertile ground with walls and towers were girdled round and there were gardens bright....Where blossomed many on incense-bearing tree; and here were forests ancient as the hills, enfolding sunny completed.

The speaker insists that if he could only “revive” within him “her symphony and song” he would recreate the pleasure-dome out of music and words, and take on the persona of the magician or visionary. His hearers would recognize the dangerous power of the vision, which would manifest itself in his “flashing eyes” and “floating hair”. But, awestruck, they would nonetheless dutifully take part in the ritual, recognizing that “he on honey-dew hath fed, and drunk the milk of paradise”. The major theme of the poem is the quest for power.

The poem is a spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling. The atmosphere of the poem varies according to the sections (lines 1-5) is mysterious in nature (lines 6-11) is peaceful and pleasant, (lines 12-16) is mysterious and sinister, (lines 17-

28) agitated (lines 37-38) dream like, peaceful, delightful, (line 49-50) awe-inspiring, fearsome and finally (lines 51-54) awe-inspiring and pleasant.

The predominant figures of speech used in "Kubla Khan" are personification, simile and repetition. The use of personification in giving an attribute of living thing to a non-living thing. This can be seen in:-

Line 23 – "... dancing rocks....."

Line 26 – "... the sacred river ran....."

An example of simile is seen in: - Line 18- "as if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing".

The use of repetition is predominant in the entire poem. Elements of landscape re-occur at various points, creating some "unity of space", helping the reader to imagine the scenery and events. This is found in lines 1-36. "Pleasure-dome", "dome of pleasure" is repeated in lines 2, 36, "the sacred river ran" in lines 2, 24, 26. "Dome and Caves" are repeated in 46 and 47, "five miles" lines 6 and 25, "chasm" lines 12 and 17, and "fountain" lines 19 and 34.

4.2 "FROST AT MIDNIGHT"

This poem is one of the most famous poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The poet starts by saying the "performs its secret ministry". In the windless night, an owl's cry twice pierces the silence. The "inmates" of the speaker sits alone, solitary except for the "cradled infant" sleeping by his side. The calm is so total that the silence becomes distracting, and the entire world "sea, hill, and wood, this populous village 1" seems "inaudible as dreams". The thin blue flame of the fire burns without flickering; only the film on the grate flutters, which makes it seem "companionable" to the speaker, almost alive stirred by "the idling spirit". "But o" the speaker declares; as a child he often watched "that fluttering stranger" on the bars of his school window and day dreamed about his birth place and the church tower whose bells rang so sweetly in fair- day. These things lured him to sleep in his childhood, and he brooded on them at school, only

pretending to look at his books unless, of course, the door opened, in which case he looked up eagerly, hoping to see "Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved, my play-mate when we both were clothed alike".

He goes further addressing the "Dear babe, that sleep cradled" by his side, whose breath fills the silences in his thought, the speaker says that it thrills his heart to look at his beautiful child. He enjoys the thought that although he himself was raised in the "great city, pent' mid cloisters dim" his child will wander in the rural countryside, by lakes and shores and mountains, and his spirit shall be moulded by God, who will "by giving make it (the child) ask". All seasons, the speaker proclaims, shall be sweet to his child, whether the summer makes the earth green or the robin redbreast sings between tufts of snow on the branch, whether the storm makes "the eave-drops fall" or the frost's secret ministry" hangs icicles silently, "quietly shinning to the quiet moon" Like many romantic verse monologues of this kind. "Frost at midnight" is written in blank verse, a term used to describe unrhymed lines metred in iambic pentameter.

The speaker of "Frost at midnight" is generally held to be Coleridge himself and the poem is a quiet, very personal restatement of the abiding themes of early English romanticism: the affect of nature on the imagination (nature is the teacher that "by giving" to the child's spirit also makes it "ask"); the relationship between children and the natural world ("thou, my babe! Shall wander like a breeze...") the contrast between these liberating countries setting and city, and the relationship between adulthood and childhood as they are linked in adult memory. However, while the poem conforms to many of the guiding principles of Romanticism, it also highlights a key difference between Coleridge and his fellow romantics specially Wordsworth. Wordsworth rose in the rustic countryside, saw his own childhood as a time when his connection with the natural world was at its greatest, he revisited his memories of childhood in order to soothe his feelings and provoke his imagination. Coleridge, on the other hand was raised in London, "pent' mid cloisters dim", and questions Wordsworth's easy

identification of childhood with a kind of automatic, original happiness; instead, in this poem he says that, as a child, he “saw naught lovely but the stars and sky” and seems to feel the lingering effects of that alienation. In this poem, we see how the pain of this alienation has strengthened Coleridge’s wish that his child enjoy an idyllic Wordsworthian upbringing “by lakes and Sandy shores, beneath the crags of Ancient Mountain, and beneath the clouds...” Rather than seeing the link between the childhood and nature as an inevitable, Coleridge seems to perceive it as a fragile, precious, and extraordinary connection, one of which he himself was deprived.

In expressing its central themes, “Frost at midnight” relies on a highly personal idiom whereby the reader follows the natural progression of the speaker’s mind as he sits up late one winter thinking. His idle observation gives the reader a quick impression of the scene, from the “silent ministry” of the frost to the cry of the owl and the sleeping child. Coleridge uses language that indicates the immediacy of the scene to draw in the reader, for instance, the speaker cries “hark!” upon hearing the owl, as though he were surprised by its call. The objects surrounding the speaker become metaphors for the work of the mind and the imagination so that the fluttering film on the fire grate plunges him to the recollection of his childhood. His memory of feeling trapped in the school house naturally brings him back into his immediate surroundings with a surge of love and sympathy for his son. His final meditation on his son’s future becomes mingled with his romantic interpretation of nature and its role in the child’s imagination and his consideration of the objects of nature brings him back and the icicles, which forming and shining in silence, mirror the world works upon the mind, this revisitation of winter’s frosty forms brings the poem to its full circle.

4.3 THEMES, MOTIFS, AND SYMBOLS IN THE POETRY OF SAMUEL TAYLOR

Coleridge believed that a strong, active imagination could become a vehicle for transcending unpleasant circumstances. Many of his poems are powered exclusively by

imaginative flights, wherein the speaker temporarily abandons his immediate surroundings, exchanging them for an entirely new and completely fabricated experience using the imagination in this way is both empowering and surprising because it encourages a total and complete disrespect for the confines of time and place. These mental and emotional lumps are often well rewarded. Perhaps Coleridge’s most famous use of imagination occurs in “This lime-tree bower my prison” (1797) in which the speaker employs a keen, poetic mind that allows him to take part in a journey that he cannot physically make. When he returns” to the bower, after having imagined himself on a fantastic stroll through the countryside, the speaker discovers, as a reward, plenty of things to enjoy from inside the bower itself, including the leaves, the trees, and the shadows. The power of imagination transforms the person into a perfectly pleasant spot. Coleridge used his poetry to explore conflicting issues in philosophy and religious piety. Some critics argue that Coleridge’s interest in philosophy was simply his attempt to understand the imaginative and intellectual impulses that fuelled his poetry. To support the claim that his imaginative and intellectual forces were in fact, organic and derived from the natural world, Coleridge linked them to God, spirituality and worship.

Coleridge, Wordsworth, and other romantic poets praised the imaginative soul of youth, finding images in nature with which to describe it. According to their formulation, experiencing nature was an integral part of the development of a complete soul and sense of personhood. The death of his father forced him to attend school in London, far away from the rural idylls of his youth, and he lamented the missed opportunities of his sheltered, city-bound adolescence in many poems, including “Frost at midnight” (1798). Here, the speaker sits quietly by a fire, musing on his life, while his infant son sleeps nearby. He recalls his boarding school days, during which he would both daydream and lull himself to sleep by remembering his home far away from the city, and tells his son that he shall never be removed from nature, the way the speaker once was, unlike the

speaker, the son shall experience the seasons and shall learn about God by discovering the beauty and bounty of the natural world. For Coleridge nature had the capacity to teach joy, love, freedom and piety, crucial characteristics for a worthy developed individual.

Talking of motifs, Coleridge wanted to mimic the patterns and cadences of everyday speech in his poetry. Many of his poems openly address a single figure the speaker's wife, son, friend and so on. Who listens silently to the simple, straightforward language of the speaker. Unlike the descriptive, long, digressive poems of Coleridge's classicist predecessors, Coleridge's so called conversation poems are short, self contained, and often without a discernable poetic form. Coleridge's sometimes, wrote in blank verse, unrhymed iambic pentameter, he adapted this metrical form to suit a more colloquial rhythm. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth believed that everyday language and speech rhythms would help broadens poetry's audience to include the middle and lower classes, who might have felt excluded or put off by the form and content of neo-classicists such as Alexander pope and many more.

Like other romantics, Coleridge worshipped nature and recognized poetry's capacity to describe the beauty of the natural world. Nearly all of Coleridge's poems expresses respect for and delight in natural beauty. Close observation, and precise descriptions of colour aptly demonstrate Coleridge's respect and delight. Some poems, such as *Youth and Age* (1834), and *"Frost at midnight"*, mourn the speakers physical isolation from the outside world. Other poems like *"the Nightingale"* (1798), simply praise nature's beauty, poems that don't directly deal with nature including *"Kubla Khan"* and *"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"*, derive some symbols and images from nature. To Coleridge, nature contained an innate, constant joyousness wholly separate from the ups and downs of human experience. Coleridge explores dreams and dreaming in his poetry to communicate the power of the imagination, as well as the inaccessible clarity of vision. *"Kubla Khan"* is subtitled *"A vision in a dream"*. The poem speaks to the

imaginative possibilities of the subconscious. Dreams usually have a pleasurable connotation, as in *"Frost at midnight"*. There, the speaker, lonely as a child at boarding school, comforts himself by imagining and then dreaming of his rural home. In his real life, however, Coleridge suffered from nightmares so terrible that sometimes his own screams would wake him, a phenomenon he details in *"The pains of sleep"*, opium probably gave Coleridge a sense of well-being that allowed him to sleep without the threat of nightmares.

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5.1 SUMMARY

The Romantic Movement which is in contrast to the classical movement is held to signify the demonic, subjective, personal, irrational and emotional feelings and experiences of people of that age. In the preface to the *"Lyrical Ballads"* by William Wordsworth, he summarizes what exactly the romantic poetry is all about:

The principal object, then which I proposed to myself in these poems was to choose incident and situations from life, and to relate or describe them throughout as far as possible, in a selection of language really used by men....1

The above quotation summarise the Romantic Movement. Most of William Wordsworth poetry links man with nature because with nature, man has the peace of mind and sees himself as being complete. He makes us to understand that the world we are in is wicked and polluted, but an embrace with nature gives man inner joy to be

connected with it. He also believes that harmony with nature is the source of all goodness and truth and it is not necessary to search for scientific knowledge, instead one should learn more from nature. If man can take his time to listen to birds singing, feel the breeze and look up at the clouds to have a contact with natural element, then man will be free from complexities of life. From the poems of William Wordsworth, the readers could enjoy the fantasy of returning to nature and a mystical life. Appreciating the philosophy of seeking an existence so close to nature and far removed from the strains of civilization in what romanticism is preaching. It is within this philosophical view that William Wordsworth "The World Is Too Much with Us" comes to be fully appreciated. According to the Romanists, if man is friend with nature then the world will be a better place for us to live in. Calamity which could cause tears, pains and death will cease to exist and nature also possesses healing power to human beings. William Wordsworth who was also one of the greatest tragic poets had a deep indignation and compassion for human suffering. Samuel Taylor Coleridge made himself a name alongside his friends Robert Southey and William Wordsworth and became one of the most important writers in England during the Romantic era. Samuel Coleridge is a poet of imagination, exploring the relationships between nature and the mind as it exists as a separate entity. Poems such as "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan" demonstrate Coleridge's talent for concocting bizarre, unsettling stories full of fantastic imagery and magic; in poems such as "Frost at midnight" and "Dejection: An ode", he muses explicitly on the nature of the mind as it interacts with the creative source of nature. Romanticism was always movement about youth, and today Coleridge is remembered primarily for the poems he wrote while still in his twenties. In summary, like other romantics, Coleridge worshipped nature and recognized poetry's capacity to describe the beauty of the natural world. Almost all of Coleridge's poems expresses respect for and delight in natural beauty.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The very first thing noticeable about the Romantic

era is the focus from the upper class to the common men. The nobles are no longer important because they represent the agents of oppression. Romanticism also marks the conflict between imagination and dialectics Romantics associated with the rejection of imagination and also associated reason with dialectics. City landscape was condemned and regarded to the filled with crimes and materialism.

William Wordsworth as romantics urges that a union with nature is what frees the mind from the stir and thrust of its own dark emotions. William Wordsworth himself felt that whatever is abiding in the composure of the mind attained was the result of its being linked with nature. An embrace with nature and its aesthetics gives man the required happiness and joy.

Obviously, nature's formative control operates most powerfully when the mind is pervious and openly receptive. At this junction, it is good to point out that only when the mind is undisrupted by worldly things, then it can receive the stamp and tone of nature. The scope of the Romantic tenets encompasses genre like lyrical ballads, idylls, sonnets, dream-visions and odes. Lyrical Ballads are another class of genre in the romantic compositions. They are usually folk songs and are popular known. Idylls are sentimental compositions that deal with the description of some picturesque scene or incident. With this definition, two poems of Wordsworth readily come to mind. They are "Tintern Abbey" and "Composed upon Westminster Bridge". These poems give descriptive scenes with natural beauty which touch the mind of the poet.

"Kubla-Khan" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge is a good example of dream vision poetry as a genre in Romantic compositions. The poet narrates sub-conscious experiences when the brain is supposed to be active. While in a state of trance, the images that have been deposited in the poet's sub-conscious become associated with his experiences. The idea behind this exercise is that the human mind, apart from the intellect, can be made use of for compositions and that it is possible to create forms that are more real than lie in the imagination. Finally, Samuel Taylor

Coleridge gives poetic thought to serious, mystical, sober and hidden element in man and nature. Romantic writers generally see themselves as reacting against the thought and literary practices of the preceding century. The Romantists major subject matter is the beauty and satisfactions derive from nature. Romantists believe in naturalism and realism in the place of morality. They believe that man should not be conformed to one norm. Romanticism as a period or movement cannot exist without naturalism which is the centre or major idea of any Romantic work.

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