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Relocating Nature in the Selected Poems of William Wordsworth

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Abstract: ***William Wordsworth is one of the eminent poets of nature from England. English literature is deeply indebted to the contribution of Wordsworth in the field of poetry. Wordsworth thinks nature as a teacher and a source of spiritual guide. To him, nature is the storehouse of vitality and energy and it has the capability of healing power. Wordsworth often associated childhood with an instinctive connection to nature. Nature and human beings are closely associated that Wordsworth highlights. The influence of nature in Wordsworth's poetry can be traced back in ancient "Rigveda". In "Rigveda", the natural elements like rivers, mountains, the sun, the wind, the rain are celebrated. The interconnectedness of humans and natural world is age-old and sound. Wordsworth believed the divine presence in nature. His theory of "pantheism" is popular in romantic nature poems. He found the presence of divinity in the poem "daffodils". The sense of peace and serenity was prioritized in his nature poems. In "Upon the Westminster Bridge", Wordsworth expressed the calm and peaceful atmosphere in nature. Wordsworth often represented nature as an integral part of human development, especially during childhood. He believed the inevitability of the bond with nature that formed in his early years. It profoundly shapes one's character and perception. In "The Prelude", Wordsworth reflects on how his childhood experiences in nature. It influences his imagination and moral sensibilities. Wordsworth believes that nature brings a kind of joy and pleasure that is spiritually unique. Nature helps human beings to come out from the chaos and stresses of the modern world. In the poem, "Daffodils", the sight of daffodils brought joy and continues to uplift his spirit through memory: "And then my heart with pleasure fills, / and dances with the daffodils" (Daffodils, line 23-24). This paper highlights the concept of nature in William Wordsworth's select poems such as "Tintern Abbey", "Composed Upon Westminster Bridge" and "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud".***

Keywords: Nature, Poetry, Human relationship, Romanticism, Spirituality, Pantheism

I. INTRODUCTION

On April 7, 1770, William Wordsworth was born in the lake district of England. He began writing poetry in early age from grammar school and he visited Europe before graduating from college. From early age, he loved nature and became sympathetic for the common man. In 1798, Wordsworth, with his friend S.T. Coleridge, published the path breaking text on Romanticism "The Lyrical Ballads". Wordsworth was one of the most celebrated and prominent poets of the Romantic era. Romantic era is a literary and cultural movement that emerged in the late eighteenth century as a reaction against the Industrial Revolution's mechanization. 'Return to Nature' is a central issue of Romanticism. Romantic movement emphasized emotion, individualism, and a deep connection to nature. The writers of this time thought to provide greater value to the 'individual sensibility' and to the 'individual consciousness'. Romantic movement came to influence the European literary world with a new and fresh steam of air. It speaks the nature with its calm and serene temperament. It was an era where the romantic writers represented the importance of nature and the closeness of human beings with their emotion, imagination, feeling and perception. Wordsworth is always a 'glittering star' in the sky of romanticism. P. B. Shelley called Wordsworth a 'poet of nature'. As a true worshipper of Nature, he believed in his heart that nature has the spiritual ability to enlighten the kindness and universal brotherhood of human beings that only exist in harmony with nature, where man can get the true spirit of happiness. Wordsworth insists on the influence of nature and the interrelationship of a love of nature and a love of humanity. Wordsworth's poems represent nature in a very sublime and palpable way. In "Preface to Lyrical Ballad", William Wordsworth is purely honest in explaining the nature of poetry. In the definition of poetry, Wordsworth opines that overflowing of powerful feelings will be spontaneous, and that feelings originate from emotion that recollects in tranquil manner. Wordsworth's poetry is empirical in nature. His attitude to nature is 'inward' rather than 'outward'. He is a celebrator of the spirit of man that lies in harmony with his natural environment. In Wordsworth, the 'essence of poetry' lies not in the description of this world of nature but rather in the development of the 'inner mind'.

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II. NATURE IN WORDSWORTH'S POETRY

A. Tintern Abbey

William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" is generally known as "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey". In this poem Wordsworth delves deeply into the concept of nature and its profound impact on the human soul. The poem conveys Wordsworth's core Romantic beliefs, celebrating nature as a source of beauty, spiritual renewal, and personal insight. Wordsworth looks nature as a force of restoration and spirit. Nature has the capability of healing the mind and spirit. He delineates on how the memory of the natural landscape around Tintern Abbey has pervaded him during critical situations:

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
(Tintern Abbey, line 23-25)

Nature plays the role of a moral and spiritual guide. The poem focuses the mysticism in nature. The poem presents nature beyond the mundane world and it transcends to the spiritual world. Wordsworth expresses that people can get inspiration and comfort from nature. The memories that are related to nature, provide comfort and solace. According to Wordsworth, nature is a friend, philosopher and guide. Nature educates man and makes companions. A close bonding is established between nature and humans. A sense of sublimity in nature is conveyed where beauty and grandeur evoke deep emotional and intellectual responses. In "Tintern Abbey", the whole landscape, through the interplay of sight and sound, creates a splendid experience that transcends ordinary perception. This poem notably reflects a 'pantheistic' view of nature. It is a belief that God or the divine is immanent in nature and that nature is the manifestation of divine entity. This perspective aligns with Wordsworth's romantic philosophy, which emphasizes the transcendental and spiritual power of nature. Wordsworth feels the spiritual presence in nature. He refers this presence that animates all living things. He finds this presence in this line- "A motion and a spirit" (Tintern Abbey, line 102-104). He believes the interconnectedness of finite with infinite. To the poet, the humans, animals, plants and the earth are all part of a greater spiritual whole. In "Tintern Abbey," Wordsworth eloquently articulates a sight of nature that is integrally connected to his philosophical and poetic worldview. To the psychology of William Wordsworth, Nature is not just a backdrop but a dynamic, living presence that shapes and enhances human life, providing relief, wisdom, and a profound sense of association. In this poem, Wordsworth's deep sense of reverence for nature is established and it continues to resonate with readers, giving space to timeless insights into the transformative power of the natural world.

B. Composed Upon Westminster Bridge

In sonnet "Composed upon Westminster Bridge", William Wordsworth highly glorifies the charisma of nature. It was written on September 3, 1802. The poet sketches a stunning view of nature intertwined with the urban landscape. This poem focuses Wordsworth's romanticism and its ideals, representing his deep appreciation for the beauty of the natural world, even within the commotion of the city. At early morning, the poet, standing alone on the Westminster bridge, feels ecstatic and romantic. To him, nature catches his heart and soul with its power of serenity. Wordsworth is marvellous through the representation of the tranquil beauty of the city of London. The city London is usually associated with noise and activity but it is depicted as calm and peaceful. He romantically describes-

Earth has not anything to show more fair
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty.
(Upon Westminster Bridge, Line: 1-3)

The poem highlights the close relationship between the elements of nature and the man-made architectures of the city. Wordsworth's description of the beauty of nature is mind blowing. He glorifies the beauty of the morning that the morning light bathes the buildings and the river Thames. Ultimately, the city, the river and the sky are mingled with unified beauty that touches the very soul of the human beings, especially to the poet. As Wordsworth is 'inward' rather than 'outward' towards nature, nature calls to human soul. According to the poet, nature, with its spiritual spirit, purifies the human soul. Thus, the scenic beauty of nature connects to human soul. Further, the sense of timelessness and infinite pleasure is perceived in finite and fleeting moments of beauty. The early morning with its calmness is a temporary phenomenon, yet it leaves a lasting impression on the poet. In "Composed upon Westminster Bridge," Wordsworth welcomes readers to appreciate the beauty of nature even in unexpected places.

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He considers that beauty is everywhere and the human beings have to feel that. The delineation of serene morning over London bridges, breaks the gap between the natural and urban worlds. The poet focuses the nature's splendour and grandeur that can be available everywhere and can deeply affect the human spirit. The poem succinctly encapsulates the Romantic ideal of finding and valuing beauty in the everyday world, evoking a greater appreciation of the harmony between nature and human creativity.

C. I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" is generally referred to as "Daffodils". In this poem, William Wordsworth is slightly divergent besides the glorification of nature. The concept of nature is depicted with plenty of vivid imagery and a deep sense of emotional and spiritual association. The poem expresses Wordsworth's ideals of romanticism, celebrating the beauty and a healing power of nature. A sense of joy and inspiration is felt in nature while describing the lovely sight of a field of daffodils with vibrant visual imagery. It captures the soul and movement of the poet. The daffodils have not only the quality of visual appeal but also have a tremendous emotional influence on the poet. The sight of daffodils transcends his spirits and brings him spiritual blessings and joy. He expresses his joy in this way- "And then my heart with pleasure fills, / And dances with the daffodils". **(Daffodils, line 23-24)**

Nature comes close to the poet to make friendship. When the poet wanders lonely as a vagabond and goes through the world of solitude, nature suddenly welcomes him by the sight of daffodil flowers. Here nature responses as a core companion to the poet. He beautifully shares the experience of solitude and companionship. In "Daffodils", Wordsworth eloquently expresses the idea that nature has the ability to transcend, inspire, and provide lasting joy. The poem succinctly celebrates the profound beauty of the natural world and its capability to reverberate deeply with the human spirit. Wordsworth portrays the daffodils as a source of happiness and peace that continues to resonate with readers, reflecting the enduring appeal of his romantic vision.

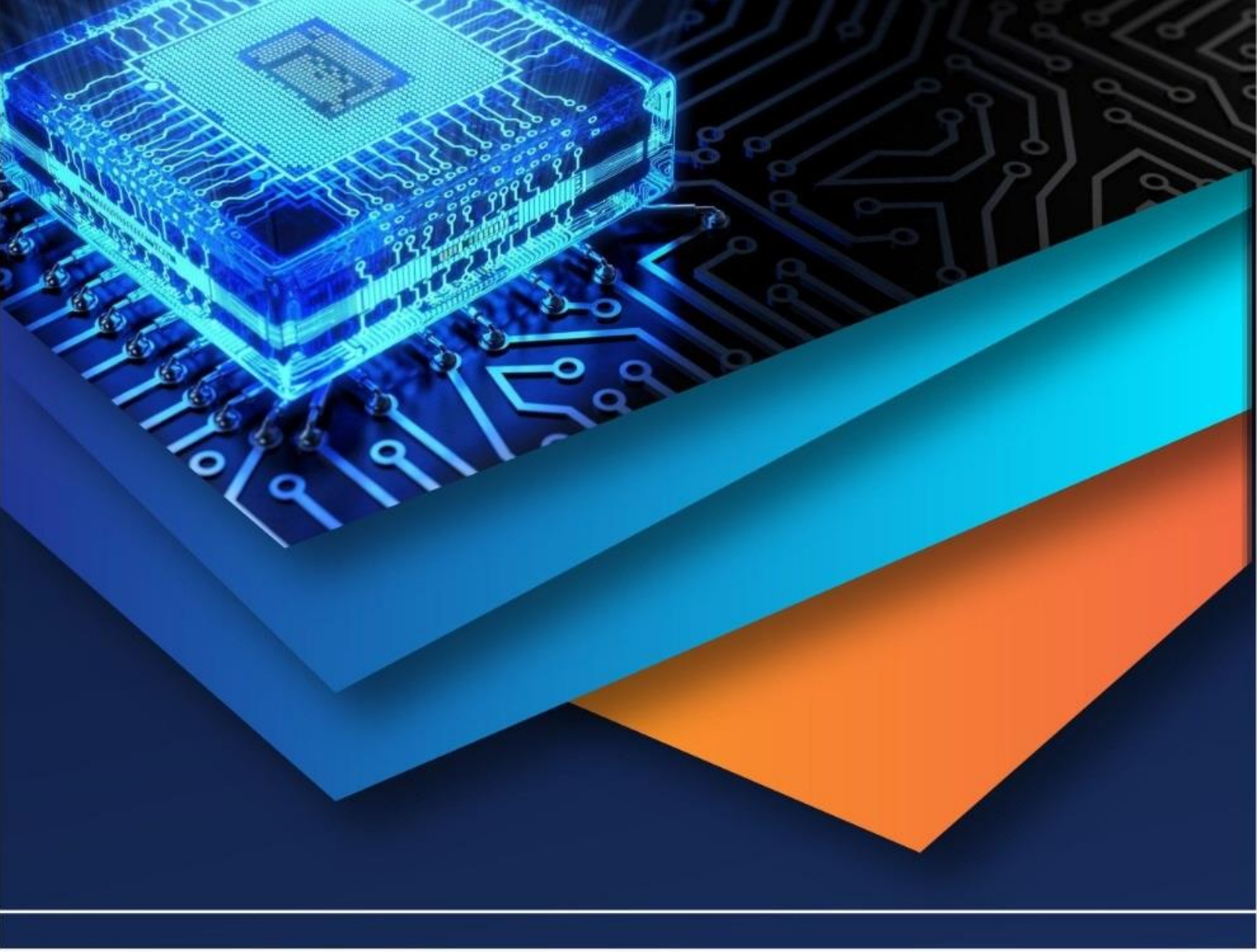
III. CONCLUSION

In the conclusion, through the study of these poems, it is established that William Wordsworth expresses the utmost importance of nature in human life. Wordsworth's nature poems embody his deep reverence for nature and its spiritual, emotional and intellectual significance. His nature poems invite the readers to reconnect with nature, not as mere observer but as participant in its emotional and spiritual richness. The poet immortalizes nature as a source of eternal inspiration and guidance for humanity.

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