

ENGLISH ROMANTICISM AND ITS DEVELOPMENT: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: *This article aims at giving an overview on the whole romantic period. The start of the romantic period, the way it happened, the poets that helped to make this period shine, the background of the poets and the details of the romantic poetry that ruled this era – all of the aspects are described very elaborately in this article. The romantic age was established at the end of the eighteenth century and it lasted up to the 30's of the nineteenth century. This romantic period replaced the neoclassical period where the classical poets like Alexander Pope made classical poetry famous among readers. Elements such as imagination, emotion, nature were used very passionately in the romantic poetry. There are more than four poets who wrote romantic poems in this period but only the life and poetry of the significant four poets are written in this article who was William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, John Keats, P. B Shelley. Wordsworth and Coleridge were the very first influencers of the romantic period. This article will guide people in knowing even the little things of the romantic era.*

Keywords- *methodology, analytical, critique, explanation, prophetic traditions*

INTRODUCTION

“Romanticism” is a retrospective, 20th-century name for a literary movement created, retrospectively, by critics and historians. During the period in which it supposedly flourished, the authors subsequently seen as its embodiments—William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, John Keats, and Percy Bysshe Shelley (all poets)—did not view themselves as parts of a united movement. Moreover, they wrote under the influence of, and in alliance with, writers not considered “Romantic” at all. Accordingly, this article considers them as part of lively and contested literary culture that in the years 1780–1830 saw the rise of women writers and laboring-class writers to eminence and inaugurated the popularity of the magazine essay, the Gothic novel, and the historical novel. The period also gave rise to political journalism of lasting power, to Orientalist and travel

writing, to antislavery literature, to the cults of sensibility and the picturesque, and to an unparalleled closeness between literary and scientific writing.

LITERARY ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

The Romantic period changed the whole complexion of English literature during the nineteenth century. The Romantic Movement started with 'Lyrical Ballads' in 1798 A.D which was written by Samuel Coleridge and William Wordsworth. This new age of romantic poets broke the traditional classical style of literature writing which was primarily written for the higher class of people. As the people of the eighteenth century experienced only the classic form of literature, the people of the nineteenth century experienced a completely new and refreshing form of the English literature. This so called Romantic period ended in 1837 by covering only one-third of the century. Romantic period poets were very different from the traditional poets of the previous century. They included many new elements in their poetry which were completely neglected in the classical era. The romantic poets induced imagination, individual emotion, sensitivity in their poems and made their poems very reachable to all classes of people. Poems with stories of king, queen and heroes were replaced by emotional and sensible stories of the common people which attracted more audience. Eighteenth century poets did not pay much attention to nature in their poetry but the romantic poets cherished the connection of man and nature in their works. 'Romantic writers saw nature as a teacher and a source of infinite beauty.' Individualism was given the priority in Romantic poetry: stories of individuals regarding their passion, daily deeds were given the upper hand rather than a fully general or objective approach in writing poetry. This kind of poetry had a fair amount of reliability and uniqueness to it. The standard form of poetry was easily recognized by some heroic couplets which the classical poets put in their poems for their heroes or kings whereas the romantic poems had much more to them such as ballads, sonnets, blank verses etc. The poets who made the romantic period popular with their poems are William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, P.B Shelley, John Keats, Lord Byron and a few more. They were the faces of English literature at that time. Among them, William Wordsworth started to write in simple language for the better understanding and enjoyment of all the people around the globe. He neglected the conventionalized language and wrote in a basic and simple manner full of emotional aspects. Foreign politics and the thought process of foreign poets greatly inspired the romantic poets and helped to form their writing style. The French revolution with Napoleon Bonaparte had an

important part to play in Romantic literature. The aspects that rose with that revolution such as liberty, equality assisted the romantic poets to have a humanitarian take in their poetry which was the main theme of that era. The German poets are the reason for the birth of the Romantic Movement in the nineteenth century. At first, they identified the fact that spiritual reality should be the main focus in poetry while materialistic reality should be the less focused aspect. German idealist poet Friedrich Schiller enriched the knowledge of the English Romantic poets with ideas such as individualism and spiritualism which was the basic theme of Romantic poetry. So, German poets like Schiller successfully passed through the significant characteristics of poetry which brought romanticism in the poems. This information makes us realize that English Romantic poetry had to take influences from many different places to shape the Romantic period. From the poets mentioned above, William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge were considered the first generation poets of the Romantic period as they were much older than some of the other romantic poets who were considered the second generation of Romantic poets. The second generation poets are P.B Shelley, John Keats and Byron who were inspired by the writings of Wordsworth and Coleridge. These two first generation poets released a project named 'Lyrical Ballads' which was a collection of their poems. These poems rejected the traditional style and followed the romantic aspects. The poets were afraid of the negative reception that it might get from the audience. So, they published the first edition of 'Lyrical Ballads' anonymously in 1798. The language used in those poems was real language of men which gave vivid sensations to the readers.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

William Wordsworth explained the new styles and themes of poetry in his 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads'. In his preface, he described that incidents that were very much related to the common life or real situations were written in those poems by the language in use. Those situations were uplifted with a touch of imagination which brought out the emotion in the audience and made them excited about the poems. These poems chose to connect with people in a deeper level. So, the poets took inspirations from the humble and rural lives of people. Necessary emotions and passions were evoked when nature was described very beautifully and magically. The simple mannerisms of simple people speaking simple language brought out the raw feelings of readers and helped them to get engaged in those poems. Previous poets shed honor upon themselves in their poems by not caring about the mass people which made their poems very stale. Wordsworth also

said in his preface of *Lyrical Ballads* that all of the poems should have a purpose. The poems should excite those feelings with which the poets wrote them. A very significant line from his preface is mentioned below: 'For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.' He also added these lines- 'For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed representatives of our past feelings; and as by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, our feelings will be connected to important subjects, till at length.' In these lines Wordsworth talks about connecting to past feelings. We can reminisce our past sensations for the usage of real life adapted scenarios. These scenarios and objects have a high chance of somehow having links with our past. These past feelings can get very attached with the subject if we treat the subject sensibly. This natural process of evoking sentiments helps to get into the minds of the people. In this way, the purpose of the poems gets achieved very beautifully and magically. The simple mannerisms of simple people speaking simple language brought out the raw feelings of readers and helped them to get engaged in those poems. Previous poets shed honor upon themselves in their poems by not caring about the mass people which made their poems very stale. Wordsworth also said in his preface of *Lyrical Ballads* that all of the poems should have a purpose. The poems should excite those feelings with which the poets wrote them.

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poem may well be compared to a prose as some of the best lines of poems are often written in the language of a prose. They follow the same language pattern. As for the metrical language of poems, prose writers also use lines and passages of meter in their writings. Romantic poets are able to portray human nature very subtly in their poems.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, Wordsworth, Coleridge started this journey of Romantic poetry with fresh perspectives and open-minded readers. Keats, P.B Shelley finished this journey with elevated writing and overly satisfied readers. They all contributed a lot to make this romantic period valid to all classes of people and showered them with all the emotions, feelings, sensations. The romantic period replaced the neo-classical era very smoothly as the readers started liking the positive vibes rather than just ignoring it.

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