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THE CONFLUENCE OF INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS AND ANCIENT INDIAN WISDOM IN
THE SELECTED POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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Abstract

Various poems of William Wordsworth explore the universal and pacifist ideas that applies to the ages irrespective of socio-cultural changes. Thereby the literary genius, contributed to the collective consciousness which shapes an individual conduct in the vast arena of existence. Studying Wordsworth under the light of the Indian knowledge system will have the multiplier effect for the readers in order to evolve and to learn with wisdom as the aim. The research paper by applying textual and comparative analysis method tries to exemplify the art of life put forth by William Wordsworth under the shadow of the ancient wisdom from India. Apart from it, the paper tried to apply the principles and the modalities tested by these texts on the common problems faced by the men in the 21st century. The issues like depression, anxiety is considered as so common but they are not so. The democracy as the institution of the common men is manipulated that leading to neo-colonial polarities. The same issues are addressed indirectly in the poems of Wordsworth with the farsighted visions. The confluence of the the ancient Indian consciousness for these issues make the research paper as a necessary tool to the further research in the respective area.

Key words: Consciousness, Pantheism, neo-colonialism, reflective thinking, inward-eye.

When Aurobindo preaching the essence of *Bhagavad-geeta*, a devotee asked whether the consciousness is related to mind? Can one find any specialty about the Indian consciousness? Sri Aurobindo ignited the mind of the devotee by defining consciousness as the 'unity of existence far beyond the ignorance and the lower nature of the living beings. Then he continued, Indian consciousness is essentially spiritual in nature which goes beyond the multiplicity of the mortal world. Such abstract ideas has manifested in India concretely in the form of the metaphorical language

over the centuries. It's been called as the 'ancient Indian wisdom'. Such wisdom is different from the western concept of consciousness like American, Canadian, British and so on. These are based on the materialist current that decides the course of life. In case of Indian consciousness which consistently aspires for liberation from the strangle of such material life. Here the path is 'means justifying the end' with full co-operation and solidarity based living. The literary giant William Wordsworth catch hold of such wisdom through his celebrated romantic and nature poems. The research paper

concentrated on his mental productions with the help of textual and comparative methods for the critical analysis.

Few issues that unaddressed or paid little attention by the existing literature to be rigorously put under the scholastic scrutiny by this research paper. They can be summarized as follows.

The psychological problems like depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, are common for men since age old. The education blended without the value system and right channelization of one's inner spirit making an individual hollow and empty. Then the men start to look into what outside rather inward looking as the way of life. Such gap creates a huge blunder regarding the application of the conscience which is continuously either subdued or under-tuned by emotional imbalances, pseudo-ego desperation, instant-gratification and so forth. The existing research paid little attention on these issues of inward-looking habits in the individual.

Today one can see the educated terrorists are increasing. They are in the form of sleeper cells, lone-wolf attackers just like did in Sri Lankan bomb attack. A software techie as the recruitment head for ISIS in Kerala and he was imprisoned by the NIA recently. During the days of Wordsworth 'the Robespierre were called so. The so called qualified individuals are in the illusionary chase of wealth, property and religious fundamental practices. Martin Luther in his book "From strength to love", rightly said, "We have the guided missiles but misguided men" (qtd.spiritualscientist.com). So the question of value and ethics based life should be addressed adequately.

The deep interest developed on the concepts like the ultimatum of 'Individuality and cosmic consciousness' in the ancient to the post-modern knowledge system. Between them which one stands test of the time and gives real happiness for men is the core of the debate. In ancient India as well the heterodox and the orthodox schools of philosophies involved themselves in the same discussion. The individual as a unique and distinct creature should satisfy with the earthly freight or one has to develop the higher consciousness as the ultimate aim of the

life. The literature of Wordsworth take firm stands on it.

Finally, the question of democracy as a life line institution of the common man, relevant since the ancient period till now. The existing research unable to critically prove, the how the literary contributions and the philosophical renderings of Wordsworth contributed to the debate over the democracy?. So the research paper tried to analyze the importance of democracy as put forth by Wordsworth and it essentially has the glimpses of Indian wisdom.

In order to answer the above issues the research paper used the textual and the comparative analysis as the methods. Both the methods help to draw additional findings on the contemporary status of the issues as well. The selected poems of William Wordsworth and the ancient Indian wisdom acted like the lighting house for the results.

Discussion

Consciousness as the state of existence beyond the mind and its ever confluence with the self and the spirit brings new dimension to the personality of an individual. The close reading into the life of William Wordsworth gives a better example. In 1791 at the age of 21, he had visited France and wondered about how the French revolution brought up positive changes in the society. He writes in his poem, "*French revolution as it appeared*" "bliss was that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!." (4) but his opinion on the revolution changed since 1800s, after witnessing the bloodshed and the dictatorial regime. Such reverberated change in Wordsworth directly connected to his matured mind and the flow of consciousness. In the poem "*Daffodils*" he referred the conscience as inward eye and in the "*songs and innocence*" he calls it "the mind's eye". (Wordsworth, 12). The similar analogy can be seen through the text of ancient Indian wisdom. In *Shiva Purana* the anger of Lord Shiva fall upon Cupid who disturbed the lord while in meditation. Here the third eye of the lord Shiva is metaphorically written as the thunder bolt of the individuals having supra-consciousness. Thus the role of one's conscience in

designing ones conduct can be seen in both knowledge systems. Importantly, such knowledge is transferring from generation to generation either religiously or through curriculum for the active learners.

The spirituality as the way for modeling consciousness is abundant in the poems of Wordsworth. The characters like Michael and the Leech-gatherer are so simple and innocent. Its just the understanding of those who have given the surface reading. The textual analysis of the poems, by the same name, clearly indicates the characters are highly weighted in terms of conscious living with possessed the inherent wisdom on their way of life. They are spiritually blended and maintained ethical life with out compromising their duty bonded-ness at any cost. In the poem "*Songs and independence*" Wordsworth intentionally showed how his life is different to that of the leech gatherer. He writes, "We poet in our youth begin gladness, Come in the end despondency and madness". Whereas the leech-gatherer is, "coming together in life's pilgrimage" and in further "Even though his body bent double". Such deformity didn't stopped to be the "decrepit man so firm in speech".

Wordsworth highlighted the proper nurturing and channelization of one's spirit with conscious living will bring an end to anxiety, depression and fear for an individual. In case of Ashtavakara (the man with eight deformities) the moral philosopher and the saint in the ancient India, the limitations of the body didn't stop him to enlighten the whole world through his "Ashtavakra Geeta". The king Janaka of Mithila honored him and patronized to spread his rays of knowledge to the whole world. These are the few examples how an individual can overcome the default problems with higher consciousness and through the practice of wisdom.

Wordsworth had created Michael, as a man who is "stout of heart, strong of limb, The mind keen, intense, frugal; Watchful more than ordinary man".(Wordsworth, 43-47) , to put forth his theory of pantheism in the melodramatic form. The theory reflected in the era of industrial revolution where the demographic composition was under rigorous

change. Michael as a shepherd has to bear the pain of inner and external conflicts where his unreturned prodigal son fall for the crisis of conscience. Even though Michael never break his principle of finding truth and keeping faith in the nature rather he accepts death in sorrowful way.

Thus Wordsworth was influenced by the consciousness as the essential element in making personality of an individual. The similar echoes found in the ancient Indian wisdom as well. This gives message for the people that one should turn to the nature to align ones inner balance to lead the just and honorable life.

Wordsworth attempted to engage the readers by rendering the value based life and righteous decisions as necessary to lead simple and happy life. The macrocosmic view of the quality is exemplified through the inevitable problems that one face in the different stages of life. In "few lines written above Tintern Abbey", he writes, "the courser pleasure if my boyish days, and their glad animal movements all gone by"(74-75). Moreover he tried to get rid of this cycle of inevitability, "that time is past And its aching joys are no more"(84-85). The similar connotations can be seen in *Bhagavad-geeta* where lord Krishna cautioned Arjuna how an individual destroy the own self with unrighteous and valueless life, " from musing on the objects develops attachments which give birth to desire and the anger arises; in turn bewilderment upon the memory causes destruction of intellect. It's a vicious cycle". (Bhagavad-geeta, chap. 2.62-2.63). In case of Wordsworth the value based life can be learn from the nature .In the poem "Tintern abbey" he coals himself as the "worshipper of nature" and consider the nature as the "anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse, the guide, the guardian of my heart, the soul of all my moral being"(110).

Later Wordsworth reflected his experiences with nature to Dorothy, ".....let the moon Shine on thee in the solitary walk; Let the misty mountain winds be free"(135). And in further said, "thy mind shall be a mansion for all lovely forms"(140). Mahatma Gandhi also uttered the similar message, " I want the wind from all direction to be blown about

my house as freely as possible" (Gandhi, Young India, 1921).

Thus the value based life and the effective ethical conducts well reflected in the poems of Wordsworth. Of course, the grace of Indian wisdom in the poems is transparent as a glass facing the sun rays.

Moreover, the relevance of such value based life in the post-modern life is essential to discuss. It's because the youth are facing the crisis of conscience due to dearth of value instilled life. The socio economic and the political under-currents might be different but the ultimate existential question remains same for the living beings at any age i.e mind-body coherence, community living, emotional harmony etc. for that Wordsworth's ideas can be taken as the model. In the poem "Upon west minster bridge" Wordsworth opinion that the people were so lethargic that they unable to witness the beauty of the London city which was like a bride in the early morning. He suggested the people to be active and instill the sense of appreciation being the children of the nature. In the ancient Gurukul system of learning, the teachers prepare their students by practically observing the evolution in the nature and understand it scientifically. For example the estimation of time based to the rotation of the earth. Such active and the simulated lifestyle helps to emanate the environmental ethics and eco critical values along with the knowledge.

Individuality can be defined as the traits of individuals makes him or her unique on par with others. On the other hand, the cosmic consciousness is what the highest form of conscience that rests above the earthly aspects. The eastern and the western philosophers are continuously in debate over whether the highest aim of humans is to attain individuality or cosmic consciousness. Sri Aurobindo's vision of integral yoga is the best example in this regard. In contrast the western philosopher like Thomas Hobbes who put forth his idea of social contract emphasized on the importance of individuality as the necessity to lead a secured and comfortable life. Finally even the western literary and philosophic figures either indirectly supports the cosmic vision or neutralized

about the limitations of individuality. For example in "Macbeth" William Shakespeare writes, "Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing".(qtd. Sparknotes.com).

While examining the stand of Wordsworth on the issue of cosmic vision, it's important to look at his evolution of mind that represented through his poems. In the initial poetic collection he compared his characters to that of flowers, rocks, wind, a devotee, nurse and on maximum to the stars. Here the pantheistic ideology worked behind his mind. Later on, the matured mind of Wordsworth started digging 'what is the position of men in continuous swirling world'. In the poem "ode on immortality" he found the answers and presented with the picturesque effect. "our birth is but a sleep and forgetting"(60) and the poet is slowly drifting the readers towards the cosmic vision, "the soul that raises with us had elsewhere its setting, cometh from afar"(62). And finally the truth revealed, "from god, who is our home"(66). As the role model Wordsworth chose a child, "six year darling of a pigmy size" (87). And the child is "the best philosopher, the eye among the blind"(111). Its clear that Wordsworth too resolved to accept the ultimatum of human life vested with the cosmic vision rather the earthly freight of the individuality.

In the ancient Indian wisdom too, the school of Vedanta emphasized the importance of cosmic reality by creating the questionnaires between a boy and the lord of death, Yama. In the Katha-Upanishad where the lord Yama fulfill the desire of Nachiketa by answering the ultimate source and the destination of human soul is the abode of God that beyond the perception of the senses.(Katha-Upanishad, Ramakrishna mission, 36).

Democracy as an institution of the people has political connotations. The research paper blended the concept in terms of literary and philosophical outlooks to find how the democracy as a true institution of matured and conscious mind? In "the preface to the Lyrical ballads" Wordsworth writes, "my purpose is to imitate and as far as it is possible to adapt the language of men" (qtd. Sparknotes.com). It shows the conviction of Wordsworth to explore the language of the common

man , their heart and soul. In the Vedic age the Sabha and Samithi too acted like the parliaments which open for both male and female but based on certain qualifications. It acted as an active platform for grievance and redress of the people irrespective of the caste and creed. It continued in the age of Guptas as well, called as Parishad. Thus Wordsworth put huge efforts to rationalize the democratic attitude in the society while the era of Napoleon was at its height. The poem "London, 1802" clearly shows the enthusiasm of Wordsworth in bringing a new form of governance, "England.....she is a fen Of stagnant water; altar, sword and pen. Have forfeited their ancient English dower" (5). He invoked Milton to lead England with "manners, virtue, freedom" (8) which are the core values of democratic systems.

In the post truth era of 21st century, the democracy is manipulating in the hands of the selfish leaders. The crony capital forces making the institution as a hidden tool to suck out the natural resources in the name of welfare states. Such attempts is negatively impacting the whole mankind in the form of concentration of wealth, inequality and neo-colonialism. In this regard, the intuitive model of Wordsworth and the conscience model of the ancient Indian wisdom will play a huge role in creating smart citizens for the strong democracy.

The research paper tried its best to explore the new dimensions through the confluence of Indian wisdom with the ideas of Wordsworth. Still the paper has its limitations on its part regarding few issues.

At first, the use of language in the poems of the Wordsworth and the language in the ancient literature showed acute divergence. Wordsworth tried for the language of the rustic people whereas the Sanskrit was considered as the language of the Gods. The research paper unable to take any decisive stands on the usage of language as an impediment or may be a morale booster for emphasizing the ideas. Secondly, the question of salvation and the inevitability of death is unanswered in the paper based on the opposite stands taken by Wordsworth and the traditional knowledge system of India. For Wordsworth the death is the part of life and also the source of piety

and sorrow. For the ancient Indian scholars the ultimate aim of human life is salvation, but the death is the gateway for rebirth.

Conclusion

Finally, one can consider the enduring patience as an essential quality required to penetrate on the grace of ancient Indian consciousness and the wisdom in the poems of Wordsworth. It's like a big tree with deep roots having widely spread branches and sheltered the innumerable species. Still for a zealous learner the tree provides ample food with drenching the spiritual thirst. In between the consciousness as the infinite force stands test of the time since the beginning of the living forms. Such valuable concept should be critically analyzed and utilized for the further research to benefit the whole mankind in suitable ways

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