

Original Paper

Treatment of Rural Life and Nature in Jasimuddin and Wordsworth

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Abstract

This article aims to address William Wordsworth's treatment of nature as a recurring motif in his poems. Wordsworth finds nature as a living thing that provides him with both enjoyment and knowledge. Only a few well-known poems that demonstrate the depth and evolution of his love for nature, his conception of mysticism in nature, joy in nature, universal love in nature, spiritual unity of nature, bond between nature and man, soothing influence and healing power of nature have been taken from the corpus of his literary works. The poet leaves his readers with a plenty of heartfelt and beautiful poems that are the timeless treasures of romanticism. On the other hand, Jasimuddin occupies a significant place in Bangla poetry. Being a poet during the time of Kazi Nazrul Islam and Rabindranath Tagore allow him to have a prestigious position. Due to the beautiful way he portrays rural Bengal, he is regarded as a Palli Kabi (Pastoral Poet). His presentation of nature is very touchy and sensuous. Thus, this article aims to investigate treatment of nature and rural life in some poems of Jasimuddin and Wordsworth.

Keywords

Wordsworth, Jasimuddin, Nature, "Tintern Abbey." and Palli Kabi.

1. Introduction

Jasimuddin (January 1903-14 March 1976) is colloquially referred to as Palli Kabi (Pastoral Poet). He is a poet, lyricist, composer, and writer who gains widespread acclaim for penning pastoral-themed modern ballad sagas. Although Jasimuddin Mollah is his full name, he is commonly referred to as Jasimuddin. *Nakshi Kanthar Math* and *Sojan Badiar Ghat* are regarded as two of the finest lyrical compositions written in Bengali. His contributions to the revival of pastoral literature in Bengal throughout the twentieth-century are pivotal. Jasimuddin composes a wide range of literary works, including poems, ballads, songs, dramas, novels, stories, memoirs, and travelogues. He presents his unique poetic identity. In this paper, an endeavour has been made to analyse Jasimuddin's treatment of nature reflected in his

poems. On the other hand, William Wordsworth (7 April 1770-23 April 1850) is a preeminent English Romantic poet. He does not treat Nature casually or in a passing manner like other poets. He considers nature as a living personality having divine power. Throughout his poetic career, Wordsworth remains devoted to nature. Life and nature go side by side in human life. Both poets present nature and rural life as it is actually found in rural areas. Jasimuddin's *Nakshi Kanthar Math* and "Kabor" as well as Wordsworth's "Michael" are the glaring examples of mingling elements of life and nature.

2. Literature Review

According to Harmon, the theme can be defined as an abstract concept that is given tangible form by its portrayal in individuals, actions, and images (p. 521). Kirszner and Mandell provide a clear definition of the topic and assert that the subject of literature is its primary or prevailing concept. Wordsworth communicates the intended message by carefully choosing and organising specific elements, highlighting particular phrases, events, or images, and depicting the actions and emotions of characters. Nature plays a crucial role as both a character and a motif in Wordsworth's poems.

According to Wordsworth, poetry is the natural expression of intense emotions that arise from reflecting on past experiences in a calm state of mind (p. 213). His description highlights the impromptu nature of emotions and the act of remembering events in a serene state of mind for the sake of poetic diction. Whereas, according to Smith (1968), imagination is the ability that guides man towards truth. Fancy encompasses both vision and reconstruction (p. 16). Moreover, Hudson defines poetry as "the act of interpreting life through the use of imagination and emotions" (p. 80). He connects poetry to a portrayal of existence.

Md. Solaiman and Musrat Sultana Mumu. (2020) point out that poet, writer, lyricist, collector of Bengali folklore, and radio host Jasimuddin is a well-known poet in Bengali culture. The peacefulness, simplicity, and hardships of rural Bengali life are the major themes in his poetry for which he is called the Rural poet or PalliKabi in Bangla literature. The profound melancholy of an elderly man relating the tale of his loved ones' deaths is conveyed in a tragic monologue style that is unsurpassed in its profound melancholic melody. Whereas, Mohammad Kaosar Ahmed (2013) argue that Jasimuddin gains popularity as the Palli Kabi due to his exceptional portrayal of rural Bengal. He clearly shows his religious influence while depicting the lives of rural people. Religious influences on the old farmer's lyrical themes are found in his unwavering conviction in God in "Kabor", in which his deep affection that the residents of Shimultali village have for the Masjid, the way people turn to God in times of need through prayer, and his adept use of Arabic and Persian vocabulary. This is unique research in the sense that Jasimuddin is an ardent supporter of socialism and of Bengali nationalism in one hand; Wordsworth illustrates his profound adoration and fervour for nature on the other hand. Both poets can be comprehended by investigating their portrayal of nature and rural life. However, this is qualitative research because it explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems. Instead of

collecting numerical data points or intervening Wordsworth's and Jashimuddin's treatment of nature to further investigate and understand.

3. Jasimuddin's Treatment of Nature and Rural Life

Jasimuddin is a commentator on rural life in Bengal. He is able to skillfully portray the pastoral society and rural life on the canvas of his poetry. Besides creating portraits of humble life, he nurtures and enriches Bengali cultural heritage and humanity. The life of a Bengali is the simple environment of the village, cultural diversity, simple people, lack of emotions, rural paths, and Hijl forest. A few lines are taken from his famous poem "Invitation"—

You will go, brother - you will go with me, to our tiny village,
In the shadow of the trees, the leaves of the vines are bored in the forest air;
I cling to the illusion of affection
My body is full.

In mother's bosom, sister's care, brother's fondness,
You will go, brother - you will go with me, to our tiny village. (Line-1-6)

In the poem, the poet's longing for invitation is evident in every line. The love-filled form of the village that has been going on for thousands of years has come up. Even if we read his poem "Rakhal Boy" ("Shepherd"), we can behold the beautiful nature of rural Bengal. He writes—

Shepherd boy! Shepherd boy! Please come back
Where to go along the crooked path?
Look at the village surrounded by blue and green
Waving banana leaves, fly-brush washes feet with dew. (Line 1-4)

It can be mentioned here that the poet is only a rural poet. But he writes a small number of literary works. Apart from writing poetry, he writes lots of traditional songs of rural Bengal. He composes poems with multidimensional features. Poems whose appeal is eternal. Again, describing a girl and her village, he writes in the poem "Purnima":

[The abode of Purnima was in Tepakhola village
At one end, the river Padmani becomes turbid.
The wind was blowing in three directions on the lap of the field
The smell of grass flowers was falling. (Lines 1-4)]

Each line of the poem shows the right path to the human world. The passion and longing to get rid of oneself can be seen in the poem "Pradidan" in which the poet expresses—

[Whoever ruined my house, I will build her house,
I am crying for her who is after me.
Who made me go astray,
I am finding her from one place to another,
I am waking up for her; who stole my sleep;

Whoever ruined my house, I will build her house. (Lines 1-6)]

Nakshi Kanthar Math is written in simple language and centers around Rupai and Saju. Rupai is a young peasant, who falls in love with a girl named Saju in his neighboring village. They are married. But after a quarrel and fight with some peasants of another village, Rupai leaves home and flees far away. Saju, the young wife becomes alone. She waits every day with expectation that her husband will return to her, but nothing happens. She becomes tired, and all her hopes go in vain. Thus, the poet presents rural life through the characters of Rupai and Saju.

Jasimuddin's poem "Kabor" ("The Grave") is an elegy where an old village dweller is talking to his grandson about the dead people of his own family. The man is the witness of deaths of his nearest and dearest ones. He loses his beloved wife, his son, daughter in law, daughter and his granddaughter. The poet presents a realistic representation of life in the poem and depicts the thoughts of common people with some bitter experience of life about death through the character of Dadu.

Jasimuddin presents the colours of nature with the lifestyle which keeps his readers fascinated for ages. Sometimes it is suitable for children, sometimes it is funny and sometimes it is like a picture describing a scene through poetry. Among the poet's most notable poems is the poem "Asmani" in which Asmani has been personified as a living character. Jasim Uddin has a significant contribution to writing rhymes. He writes wonderful rhymes, which have been in the mouth of everyone for ages. Every writing of Jasimuddin has a depiction of the nature of the village, a wonderful outline. (Acharya, 2024)

4. Wordsworth's Treatment of Nature and Rural Life

"Tintern Abbey" is based on the concept of reminiscence, particularly the recollections of his early years and the profound connection with the splendour of nature. This subject holds immense significance in Wordsworth's literary works, appearing in his poems as *Intimations of Immortality Ode*. During his childhood, Wordsworth develops a deep appreciation for the various elements of nature, including flowing rivers, vibrant flowers, lush forests, and majestic mountains. Thus, the poem chronicles the evolution of his affection for nature.

When Wordsworth first visits Tintern Abbey and the Wye Valley, the stunning scenery inspires him to write this famous poem at twenty-eight. Five years later, he returns to the same place accompanied by his sister, Dorothy. During his visit, he not only appreciates the natural beauty of the land but also recognises its magnificence. This remote location, far from the hustle and bustle of city life, brings him joy and evokes memories of his boyhood. His renewed understanding of nature leads to his heightened self-awareness. By juxtaposing the two encounters, the poet emphasises his transition from youth to maturity, highlighting the differences and similarities in his emotions and perspectives on each visit.

Wordsworth writes about nature in "Tintern Abbey" in which the poet reveals his pantheistic worldview. He emphasises that God is present in every natural form. Richard Gravil (2000) argues that the poet's pantheistic beliefs can be understood by expressing "God was everything and everything was God"

(Gravil, 2000, p.41). Wordsworth's pantheistic viewpoints are presented in the poem in which he responds:

[. . .] the one interior life

That lives in all things [. . .]

In which all beings live with God, themselves

Are God, existing in mighty whole. (Quoted in Riasonovsky, 1992, p. 72)

Nature is both a creation and a reflection of God, his affection for nature is intrinsically connected to his devotion to God.

According to James Benziger (1950), "It was through Nature that Wordsworth experienced some contact with the Divine..." (p.160). In his opinion, an individual who adores God also adores nature. Nature is not only a guardian but also a valuable teacher for humanity. Nature ought to be regarded with the same reverence as a sentient being that demands cultivation.

In "The Solitary Reaper," Wordsworth describes nature in terms that are meant to trigger imagination and wonderment. Wordsworth finds a vast amount of mystery in the natural world as the speaker in the poem. Thus, the Solitary Reaper is the definition of the natural woman who works in the fields and is very close to nature. The poem reflects the narrator's story of encountering, perhaps from afar, a lone woman working grain fields, singing while she labours.

Wordsworth's poem "Michael" is the stones of Michael's unfinished sheepfold. The poem represents the broken bond between father and son, the death of the family's lineage, the symbolic decay of old-fashioned values in the face of modern industrialism, and the general decline of a rural community. On the other hand, the poem, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud", presents the theme of nature in which crowd is part of the speaker's personification of the daffodils. This helps to establish the outdoor setting of the poem and makes it clear that the natural world is a key part of the poem's meaning. The poet shows his joy at the sight of the beautiful daffodils but also reflects the philosophical depth of his mind under the enchantment of nature.

Wordsworth's poem, "Lucy Gray", revolves around nature and the loss of a loved one. The poem narrates the tragic story of Lucy Gray, a young girl who vanishes during a snowstorm while on her way to town. Her connection with nature is highlighted as she enjoys her surroundings, even in her last moments. Wordsworth thinks that the calming influence of nature can shield his readers from the chaos of city life and that its nourishing power might aid in our personal development. On top of that, it possesses a heavenly power that may alleviate suffering, restore memories, and cure hurt emotions. He deftly weaves together the natural world, the divine, and the human mind. He longs to impart the boundless strength and blissful harmony of nature to his sister, who embodies the simple joy of nature.

5. Jasimuddin and Wordsworth

Jasimuddin is well-known for his representation of rural life and nature through the eyes of rural people. His poetry's structure and content are strongly reminiscent of Bengal folklore. His work, *Nokshi Kanthar*

Maath (Field of the Embroidered Quilt), is regarded as a masterpiece. On the other hand, Wordsworth is regarded as one of the best romantic poets of nature. He is the master of natural poetry. He considers nature to be his guide, friend, and nurse.

The sequences of *Naksi Kanthar Math* have been fortified on the porch of love of two protagonists: Rupa (Rural boy) and Saju (Rural girl), realistic depiction of pictures of usual day life of a person, habitual household day works, expertly personification of rural festivals and celebrations, pastoral quarrel, dispute with land, law suits etc. Its apiece sequence is independent, realistic and poetic. The story of Rupa and Saju was fortified as a tragedy by the poet as two lives sacrificed their lives for the cause of love. On the other hand, the poem, “Kabor” is a painful life of a Rural elderly. In last part of his life, he reveals his mournful experience to his grandson. He describes the death of his wife, son, daughter, granddaughter and daughter with painful voice. The elderly are waiting for the last day of his life. The elderly show the grave-yards to his grandson and his sad memories of their tragic deaths.

“Lucy Gray” presents the identity of Lucy. She represents more than one person and that she is the combined representation of all the people that Wordsworth loves and loses. She seems to possess a supernatural perfection and flawlessness of character. Her spirit seems to haunt Wordsworth, and he dwells upon her. The sheer number of poems that mention her reveal that he was forever thinking about her, or those whom she represents. On the other hand, in the poem, “Michael”, it is found that Michael loses half his land when he uses it as a surety for a nephew who meets with financial misfortune. When Luke reaches the age of 18, Michael sends Luke to stay in London with a merchant that he might learn a trade and acquire sufficient wealth to regain the land that Michael loses. It breaks Michael’s heart to send Luke away and he makes Luke lay the first stone of a sheepfold as a covenant between them that Luke will return. However, Luke is corrupted in the city and is forced to flee the country and Michael lives out his life without his son. He returns sometimes to the sheepfold but no longer has the heart to complete it. Wordsworth’s poem “Tintern Abbey” is the memory of pure communion with nature in childhood works upon the mind even in adulthood, when access to that pure communion has been lost, and that the maturity of mind present in adulthood offers compensation for nature. On the other hand, Jasimuddin’s poem “Amar Bari” is a depiction of rural setting. In the poem the poet invites his beloved to his village home. When a friend goes to the poet’s house, the poet entertains him with rice paddy, binnidhan khai, kabari plantain from the house tree and rural curd. The poem also has a detailed description of how the guest’s life is enhanced by the proximity of nature. Apart from this, the poet says that he plays with his friend all day long. The poet tells his friend which way to go home, how to know home. Bengalis have a reputation for hospitality since ages. Nature also tries earnestly to entertain and delight the invited guests. Wordsworth presents Nature in divergent ways in his poetry. He views Nature as a source of love, perpetual joy, soothing and healing power, knowledge and spirituality. Nature and God become one for him. He believes that Nature is the Universal Spirit guiding anyone who like to be guided by her. His poems depict his strong love and passion for Nature. He presents her as a perpetual source of joy and teaching. He views her as a universal teacher. He believes that she retains soothing and healing power.

He employs nature in his poetry to provide relief from the weariness of humans, with a heavy presence of the sublime, such as tall cliffs and inland whispers. His poetry presents the rural lives of English men and women.

Jasimuddin did not write for readers who lived in affluent cities. His goal is to reach out to sizable rural populations throughout all of undivided Bengal. The Bengalee folk poet is headed towards becoming a living legend in a few years once he devotes himself to writing poetry. Renowned folklorists are always interested in him. Following the hundreds of millions of copies of his plays, poetry collections, and song recordings that are sold, he becomes somewhat of a cult in Indian subcontinent.

Wordsworth thinks that mystical or spiritual experiences lead to the creation of poetry. Nature is a reflection of God. He imagines that by honouring nature, man find happiness. He is a devoted lover of the natural world. He is regarded as the finest poet of nature because of the profound affection. On the other hand, the rural characters created by Jasimuddin belong to a certain group of rural people whose experiences are hardly ever told. They speak without voice. His rustic perspective gives the underclass a voice when he writes poems and develops his characters.

Wordsworth's literary genius, ability to capture emotions, personification of human life through nature, and advocacy of a lifestyle that brings people back to nature earns him the title of Romantic Poet. His writings express his ardent devotion to the natural world. He portrays natural objects as an endless source of inspiration and knowledge. He is a universal instructor in his eyes. He thinks that he still has the ability to heal and soothe. The poet considers himself to be a living being and observes a strong bond between him and the people around natural objects. His poetry frequently returns to the idea of nature. how the poet portrays nature, the majority of his poetry are easy to understand and appreciate. However, rural people are often closely connected to the natural world and engage in agricultural activities like farming and animal husbandry. In contrast, urban people are fast-paced and more individualistic, with people often focused on their careers and personal goals. It is found that simple diction and versification are found in their poetry. Most of the rural characters are found to play their role as protagonists as we can notice in their rural settings and characters.

6. Conclusion

Jasimuddin is regarded as the Palli Kabi (Rural Poet) due to his exceptional portrayal of rural Bengal. He clearly depicts his religious influence when portraying the lives of rural people. He is the legendary figure for the revivals of pastoral literature in Bengal during the twentieth-century. Jasimuddin is one of the pioneers of the progressive and non-communal cultural movement. He is an ardent supporter of socialism and of Bengali nationalism. On the other hand, Wordsworth is a very influential English romantic poet of eighteenth and nineteenth century. The poems illustrate his profound adoration and fervour for nature. He portrays himself as an everlasting fountain of happiness and enlightenment. The poet regards himself as a sentient being and observes a strong connection between her and the human

race. It is found that Jasimuddin's and Wordsworth's poems can be comprehended and appreciated by closely analysing their portrayal of nature.

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