



REVIEW ARTICLE

Vol. 3. Issue 1.,2016 (Jan-Mar.)

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

ROBERT FROST ON WORDSWORTH

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ABSTRACT

Frost in his tribute begins by presenting Wordsworth's poetic forms, through his concepts of essential and intellectual Wordsworth by comparing him to his contemporary romantic poets like Byron, Shelley, Keats etc. , with each one of them differs from each other in tone, meter, style, structure etc. Frost praised the lyrical quality in the poetry of Wordsworth . Wordsworth's quality of seeing into the insight of the simple and ordinary objects is something Frost appreciated the most. He laid importance to Wordsworth dictum of 'write with your eye on the object' alongwith his own belief of 'writing with your ear to the voice'.



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This is what Wordsworth did himself in all his best poetry proving that there can be no creative imagination unless there is a summoning of experience, fresh from life, which has not still been evoked. The power however to do this does not last very long in the life of a poet. After ten years, Wordsworth had very nearly exhausted his giving us only flashes of it now and then. As language only really exists in the mouths of men, here again, Wordsworth was right in trying to reproduce in his poetry not only the words – and in their limited range, too actually used in common speech- but their sound.

Robert Frost in his *Tribute to Wordsworth* published in *The Cornell Daily Sun*, March 1963 begins by quoting the following lines from "The Glories of Our Blood and State", a poem by James Shirley –

THE GLORIES of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:
Sceptre and Crown 5
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made

simple language, quite boring both sometimes, flavoured or unflavoured style for common men and for elite and high readers, Wordsworth touches the heart of everybody. The cloyingly sweet tone in which he speaks Frost then goes to highlight the intellectual Wordsworth to the listeners. He begins with the popularity that Wordsworth had during the time when he was poet laureate.

I think that's essential Wordsworth. That lovely banality and that penetration that goes with it. It goes right down into the sole of men. This insipid tone. Now that's the Wordsworth I care for.

To explain the intellectual Wordsworth Frost first recites a poem by Keats and in the background of him will go on to explain Wordsworth just as he did while explaining his talk on Essential Wordsworth. Frost quotes from Keats' famous poem 'Hyperion' which is written for the most part in blank verse.

Frost denotes that Wordsworth was fully aware of the age he was living in and the style that he adopted suited to that age and period to which he belongs. The political instability that Frost wishes to point out that existed in his time, he explains, by reading another poem "London 1802" by Wordsworth which shows that the English society has become infectious to immoral values, corruption and dirt.

Frost concludes his speech by saying that he tried his best to present Wordsworth's poetic forms, through his concepts of essential and intellectual Wordsworth by comparing him to his contemporary romantic poets like Byron, Shelley, Keats etc. , with each one of them differs from each other in tone, meter, style, structure etc. ..

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