



A study of John Donne and Rabindranath Tagore's selected poetic works in the light of Eco-criticism

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ABSTRACT:

There is massive destruction, exploitation, industrialization or domination of human nature for materialistic purpose is devastating our planet. So, we must be in the shelter of nature and not work with a mind to change or influence it, but rather be influenced with its natural surroundings. Both the poet's poetry makes us realize the essence, harmony and development of humans is to protect the green cover. Donne and Tagore as an eco-literary artist have voiced their deep -rooted disapproval against human activities and their earnest concern is to preserve and restore the ecological balance.

Keywords: Ecological connection in poetic works, Ecological ideas, ecological balance, harmony.

Introduction

John Donne, living in the 17th century of England, was the founder and the representative poet of The Metaphysical School. His poems have received much attention since the 20th century. The ecological ideas in his poems not only demonstrate ecological holism but also criticize anthropocentrism. Donne shows his belief in the harmonious relationship between man and nature; man shouldn't intend to exploit and dominate nature. (Sun)

Rabindranath Tagore was a social philosopher as well as a preacher in the history of Indian English literature. (Priya #)
Tagore's poems on nature are replete with his innate bent of romanticism. He is attracted by the sights, sounds and colors of objects of nature. For instance, in Gitanjali, the poet juxtaposes two contrary situations while talking about the playing on a flute by some villagers. He is surprised how Krishna was able to produce a celestial sound by playing on a flute made of a simple 'reed'. (KUNWAR and KHALI #)

Eco-criticism as an earth-centered attitude studies the nature and literature. It pays heed to the relationship between humans and the landscape. According to some researchers Eco-criticism deals with text analysis. These texts usually illustrate environmental concerns and investigate the ways literature treats the nature. This subject area has captured the attention of many scholars over the last three decades (Glotfelty, 1996: xviii).

The Flea

The conceits he employs and the arguments he puts forth reflect Donne's own reflections on his environment. Metaphysical poetry has many features that appear in John Donne's "The Flea." In the beginning of the poem the surprise in the eyes of both the boy and the girl indicates a specific mood. The couple contemplates that small, jumping creature with perplexity. They are ingenuous, and the possibility to be united without sin hooks their attention in a naïve way. The wit in the boy's court gains momentum in the poem and indicates that the girl is depicted being shy and less important than the court itself. She is delicate even in the brutal moment when she kills the flea, because she does not reject him bluntly. The flea as "three lives in one." This is in reference to the fact that the flea contains the blood of the speaker, the mistress, and of the flea itself, but it's also an allusion to the Holy Trinity: the Father (God), the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Ghost.

Donne adds a layer of religion to this conceit, arguing that to kill the flea would encompass three sins: "Though use make you apt to kill me, / Let not to that, self-murder added be, / And sacrilege, three sins in killing three", describing murder, suicide, and sacrilege in the destruction of the flea, here denoted as a sacred object. The flea becomes symbolic to existence of all in **harmony** in environment.

The Sunne Rising

The sun is being personified in the first three stanzas of this particular poem. John Donne is trying to communicate with the sun as if the sun is a human being and the sun is bound to follow the instructions being given to him. In the second stanza the poet had appreciated the sun but in the meanwhile he had criticized him for disturbing the lover and the beloved. In the third stanza, the role of the sun is being directed to revolve round his bed which is regarded as the centre of the entire universe. Donne has highlighted that love is simply incomparable.

Love as a Microcosm of the Universe. Like much of Donne's poetry, "The Sun Rising" uses metaphor to pack the entire world into a small space. This technique is grounded in the idea of a "microcosm," a popular Renaissance belief that the human body was a small-scale model of the whole universe. Donne uses irony to make fun of lovers who believe that the sun sets and rises on their emotions; time should literally stand still in honor of their emotion, leaving them to determine their own heavenly motions and seasons. We see how nature is connected with life through poetic works.

The Paper Boats

The poem is about an innocent child and her dreams. The child plays, down by the side of a stream, she makes paper boats daily and floats them down the running stream. She writes her name in big black letters on them. She also writes the name of the village where she lived. Tagore's poetry shows his deep humanism. His is a universal message of peace, love and joy.. The poem narrates the child's, experience of floating paper boats down the stream. The child imagines that some other child tries to compete with his boats by sending clouds down the air in the sky. Tagore's The Paper Boat is a small prose poem. Almost all his poems are prosaic. This poem is small in its size and thought. Tagore explores his mind as a child and relishes his own innocence after becoming an adult. Tagore depicts the worlds of innocence and knowledge with the help of poetry to reflect on human's relationship with nature and its harmony requisite.

Conclusion:

So it is quite obvious that Donne and Tagore were very much aware of the fact that in the progress of development and progress, the nature will be used, but he was also in the favor of nature to be used for development, and not for exploitation. Thus, the wholesomeness of nature could be preserved, so that the world continues to get the fresh air and a kind of solace from the nature. The creation of poetic works is a testimony of Donne and Tagore's work in the above mentioned poetry is a belief and attitude to this. This is all because of the fact that Donne and Tagore always regarded nature as living thing. So progress with destruction disturbs the environment and its genuine dimensions.

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