



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH AND ROMANTICISM

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Abstract: William Wordsworth remains a key figure in any assessment of writing from the English Romantic period. Fashionable approaches and methods may evolve, but in the context of English Romanticism, they are evaluated based on a established group of key writers. In these discussions, Wordsworth is frequently the main focus, either as a strong supporter of the new theories or as an author whose influence must be challenged to demonstrate the new ideas' creativity and uniqueness. It can be stated that Arnold's predictions have turned out to be correct, while Swinburne's have not. Wordsworth and Byron are the figures who continue to be recognized as key influences in the Standard English poetry of the Romantic period, rather than Coleridge and Shelley. Wordsworth and Byron exemplify the key contrasts in the sensibility and style of their time, with Wordsworth representing a steady English identity and Byron displaying a varied cosmopolitan approach. However, the acknowledgment Wordsworth received during his lifetime was not entirely clear-cut.

Key words: Living soul, common man, emotion, imagination, feeling.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) was a key figure in the Romantic movement. He was one of the founders of Romanticism, a literary movement that started in the late 18th century and lasted until the middle of the 19th century. It highlights the person and their distinct perspective, which is frequently shaped by emotional and irrational thoughts. It also demonstrates appreciation for nature overall and honors ordinary individuals. Romanticism led to significant changes in society, and various revolutions took place during this time, rapidly spreading across countries such as France and the United States. Romanticism was a response against the ideas of order, calmness, harmony, balance, idealization, and rationality that were often associated with classicism, especially late 18th century Neoclassicism. The Romantic Period starts in the second half of George III's reign and concludes five years before Victoria becomes queen. It was linked to the various stages of the French Revolution in a political context. The French Revolution of 1789 was not limited to France. It brought a sense of renewed energy to the entire civilized world.

It was seen as the beginning of a new era, suggesting that it would move away from past wrongdoings and guide humanity toward a time of true democratic values, including freedom, equality, and unity. Wordsworth, who regarded the Revolution as an introduction to a new era. As Prof. Herford has aptly defined it.

“is an extraordinary development of imaginative sensibility”

(Roy and Chakraborty's H.E.L , Pg .242)

During the French Revolution, Europe experienced the extreme actions of the Reign of Terror, the dramatic ascent of Napoleon Bonaparte, and the return of the Bourbon monarchy. Following the Battle of Waterloo, European monarchs made significant efforts to eliminate democracy and popular governance. At that time, Wordsworth's poetry reflects both the positive response to the principles of the French Revolution and his eventual disappointment.¹

The Romantic period produced a significant amount of literary work. The Elizabethan era did not produce as many literary works as the period being discussed. The new concepts introduced by the French Revolution inspired the English, and many prominent poets emerged during this time. The period was characterized by a significant output of novels, a revival of essays, and an increase in the work of critics and other writers. This time is considered the most productive era in English literature. The poetry of this period was its highlight, just as prose was the focus of the previous era. The new group of writers, particularly poets, addressed a variety of topics. They utilized the knowledge and experience from individuals of all ages. Shelley and Keats revisited and utilized the works of classical writers. Coleridge, Scott, Keats, Southey, and several other authors drew inspiration from the Middle Ages. The novels, satires by Byron, and periodical essays of that time examined and explored contemporary society. According to Edward Albert,

“Wordsworth is a man possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, and one who has also thought long and deeply.”

(H.E.L, by- Edward Albert, pg. 295”)

They viewed nature not only as a pleasing sight but also as a significant moral and spiritual influence. Wordsworth's appreciation for nature reaches a deep respect that encompasses both love and spirituality. He views nature as a companion, teacher, and source of guidance. He believes that she brings coherence to everything and offers people the understanding needed to solve the mysteries of life. Scott's initial poetry is inspired by German literature, and this new influence can also be seen in the works of Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, and other writers from that time. Over time, German influence on English grew stronger, reaching a significant level by the middle of the 19th century. In the context of the Romantic Movement, the term 'Return to Nature' (H.E.L, by Edward Albert, pg. 289) refers to reconnecting with both the visual and auditory aspects of the natural world, such as trees, plants, flowers, birds, forests, and fields. It also signifies a return to the basic simplicities of life found among people living in rural areas that are removed from advanced civilization. The movement for the return to nature was the product of the reaction against the urbane and artificial traditions of the Augustan school of poetry. English Augustan poetry was a poetry of city- life. The muse of the time loved best to frequent the coffee-house and the drawing room, and despised the solitude.

The phrase “return to nature” also means broadly the return to the life of the Middle Ages when the people's life was free from the complexities and artificialities of the modern civilized life. The glorification of childhood is an aspect of the return to nature, because a child represents the quintessence of nature. Thus, the slogan ‘return to nature’ has mainly four facets: -

Return to the sights and sounds of external nature.

I) Return to the simple life of country- folk

II) Return to medieval life

III) Return to childhood.

William Wordsworth is the most notable poet who embodies the idea of "Return to Nature."¹(The Prelude – by William Wordsworth). He embodies a complete representation of its various aspects: the reconnection with the sights and sounds of nature, a return to the simple life of rural people, and a revival of childhood experiences. Among all poets who have addressed the natural world, none compares to Wordsworth in

accurately depicting its sights and sounds. Robert Burns or Thomas Gray tends to project their own feelings onto natural elements, resulting in their nature poems reflecting more of the poet's perspective than that of nature itself. Wordsworth has presented the nation with elements of nature such as birds, flowers, trees, wind, and sky in their natural state, allowing them to convey their own meanings. Additionally, no other poet has discovered as much beauty in nature. In his perspective, there is nothing unattractive or ordinary in the world. Wordsworth's perspective on Nature changes throughout his life. In his younger years, he viewed natural elements such as streams, hills, flowers, and even the winds as his friends. In his later years, particularly after becoming disillusioned with the French Revolution, he began to view nature as a significant moral and spiritual influence. He believes that nature is the best companion, teacher, and guide for humans. He believes that nature can guide people from one joy to another and support their spiritual well-being, but only if they engage with it in the right mindset. She can inspire in a person a positive state of mind, or spiritual joy, that allows them to discover answers to the challenging questions of life. Additionally, nature can provide people with the most effective education available.

“one impulse from the vernal wood
 May teach you more of man,
 Of moral evil and of good
 Than all the sages can.”

(The Tables Turned – by William Wordsworth)

Wordsworth signifies a return to the natural world, as well as to the basic simplicity of life. He goes beyond the complexities and superficial aspects of society to identify the qualities that are shared by all humans. He concentrates on the fundamental emotions and instincts that have been essential to life throughout history. Since these basic feelings and instincts are present in individuals who are not influenced by modern civilization, he reverts to the lifestyle of people living in rural areas—those who engage in natural and uncomplicated living. The characters in his poems include the leech gatherer, the schoolmaster, the elderly shepherd, and the old beggar. They are just men as they are naturally, with minimal influence from societal norms. They all have fundamental human qualities such as love, courage, strength, simplicity, and hard work. These qualities represent the connection between humans and nature. Naturalism in English poetry is most prominently represented by Wordsworth. Poets such as Dryden, Pope, Thomson, Collins, and Gray have existed.

But “Wordsworth’s place in the romantic movement is pre-eminently that of the interpreter of nature to man, revealing her as the indwelling consoler and fortifier of the heart that is true to her lessons”.

(H.E.L – By Roy and Chakraborty pg. 243)

They viewed nature as a collection of natural sights and landscapes that were secondary to human needs. It was not a topic for poets, separate from humanity, appreciated solely for its own value and described purely for that reason until Wordsworth addressed it in his poetry. In Wordsworth's poetry, nature is prioritized over humanity, which is depicted as secondary to the natural world. This highlights Wordsworth's advantage compared to other poets who focus on nature, which is why he has been appropriately referred to as the "high-priest of Nature"¹ (The Prelude – by William Wordsworth). Wordsworth had a deep and intense passion for nature. He appreciated the natural beauty of the outdoors very much. With the careful attention of someone admiring the physical attributes of their romantic partner, minutest details of the beauties of Nature, as in the following lines from The Prelude,

“while the stars
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the West
 The orange sky of evening died away.”

(Wordsworth’s The Prelude, bk1;
 Childhood and schooltime; lines 465-489)

William Wordsworth's status in English poetry as "the high poet-priest of Nature" is based not just on his vivid descriptions of Nature's forms, colors, and sounds, but also on his spiritual understanding of Nature and its beauty. William Wordsworth's view of Nature is fundamentally pantheistic. Wordsworth, similar to a pantheist, suggests that all elements of nature are essentially united and that a mysterious essence or being exists within all natural objects. This essence grants each element—such as flowers, wind, and trees—its unique life and spirit. This universal spirit reflects on, provides for, and supports both the elements of nature and human thought. For Wordsworth, the beauty of nature represents a visible sign of a divine and all-encompassing presence. Shelley shares this faith with Wordsworth and gives a triumphant expression to his pantheism in *Adonais* (Stan.XLIII). William Wordsworth holds the view that a spiritual connection between humans and nature can occur, as both are parts of the universal essence of God. He believes that people do not create moods in nature through their imagination, contrary to what many poets have suggested. Nature expresses her mood to humans in a way similar to how a person would. The birds do not sing cheerfully or sadly based on the man's emotions; they express their own feelings through their songs. Wordsworth believes that Nature is the most effective teacher. She can provide the best education to someone who is eager to learn. In "The Table Turned," he states:

‘one impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good
Than all the sages can.’

(Wordsworth's *The Tables Turned*; 21st line)

At times, she selects certain charming young women to be her favorites, to whom she gives special attention and affection in their education, similar to what she did with Lucy. Nature provides a constant source of strength for those troubled by worldly concerns. She strengthens those who support and guide others. She provides assistance and support, strengthens a person's faith, offers spiritual and moral guidance, and leads him to engage in acts of kindness and love. Nature provides guidance, healing, joy, elevation, education, and strength to those who embrace it. William Wordsworth is primarily known as a poet of nature, but he also writes about humanity. As a poet focused on humanity, he prioritizes the fundamental aspects of human nature. He believes these essential qualities are most evident in ordinary individuals living in rural areas, away from the influences of artificial civilization. He believes that the true nature of human emotions is often hidden by significant political events or impressive careers. She addresses the topic of daily experiences, including both simple joys and sorrows. So, she deals with the matter of everyday experience – the "humblest mirth and tears" (Wordsworth's narrative poem *Peter Bell: A Tale in verse* (1819)).

Additionally, he shows minimal interest in the characteristics that set individuals apart from each other. His focus is on the traits that are shared by all people. The characters in his poems include a leech collector, a schoolteacher, an elderly shepherd and his son, or an old beggar. They are neither clearly marked types; nor are they individuals.

“Wordsworth himself declares his preference for incidents and situations from common life :to obtain such situation , humble and rustic life was generally chosen , because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity. Over these incidents Wordsworth proposes to throw a certain colouring of the imagination whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect.” (H.E.L -by Albert Pg. 295)

They all have fundamental human qualities such as love, bravery, strength, simplicity, and hard work. These qualities represent the connection between humans and nature. William Wordsworth's contribution to the *Lyrical Ballads* primarily involved his use of the ballad form and reworking its traditional themes. He also aimed, as he later discussed in the well-known Preface, to develop a suitable language for his poetry. He

explained that he preferred to depict a simple and rural way of life because, in such circumstances, the fundamental emotions of the heart have a more favorable environment for growth and can express themselves more clearly and forcefully. Burn's poems in everyday language gained their power from the energy of a vibrant, spoken dialect. Wordsworth did not find any suitable alternative to 'standard' English for poetry, despite his strong wish to move away from the artificial elements of the tradition he inherited from eighteenth-century poets. His viewpoint on 'humble and rustic life' (William Wordsworth's Preface to Lyrical Ballads; 1800-1802)

may not be that of a ploughman, but it does not demand any expression of passions or emotions and values which stand apart from those which belong to exclusively aristocratic or urban civilization.

In Book VIII of *The Excursion* (1814), Wordsworth records his notions about a newly built district of northern England as a,

“a huge town, continuous and compact,
Hiding the face of earth for leagues.....

O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires Hangs permanent'.

(William Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814)

Book VIII) *The Personage* pg. 349-350

(the short oxford history of English Literature pg. 363)

It is set against the difficult and unattractive backdrop of the fast-paced industrialization occurring in much of Britain during the late 18th century. He believed that being born and educated in the mountainous northwestern regions of England, which include the Lake District, gave him a strong awareness of the natural environment and the interactions between people and nature. The "sad music of humanity" (Tintern Abbey) serves to calm and quiet feelings of restlessness. His strong love for nature and its lessons appears to overshadow other viewpoints, especially those concerning the significant class divisions caused by urban industrialization, the decline of rural populations, or the urgent social issues raised by the French Revolution. In his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth refers to "emotion recollected in tranquility," (Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*) which is an emotion that is specifically inspired by nature. This emotion can then be expressed and demonstrated through various moral and social situations. The comprehension of society is fundamentally based on and arises from the primary experience of a natural world that remains mostly unaffected by human mismanagement.

If he defines himself by his understanding of the natural world, as opposed to the mechanical environment around him, he is likely organizing his political and social views based on the principles of mutual responsibility that he has seen in rural areas, contrasting them with those found in urban settings. His early poetry expresses a protest against unnecessary suffering, injustice, misunderstanding, and inhumanity. Although he initially chose not to publish his radical work "Salisbury Plain," which he began in 1793, he continued to develop the revolutionary themes found in "The Ruined Cottage," published in 1797. These ideas eventually led to the publication of Book I of "The Excursion" seventeen years later. In the final poem included in different editions of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798, 1800, 1802), titled "Lines Written a few miles above Tintern Abbey, Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798," Wordsworth provides an explanation for his decision to distance himself from politics. Here is the sensation of memorized natural scenery, 'felt in the blood, and felt along the heart' (Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*), that brings 'tranquil restoration' (Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*) to the soul which is being troubled and painful and the recall 'still, sad music of humanity' (Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*) that is made for a reminding and recapitulations of restlessness. His strong affection for nature and its lessons appears to overshadow other viewpoints, especially those concerning the sharp class divisions created by urban industrialization, the decline of rural populations, or, most importantly, the significant social issues raised by the French Revolution. In his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth describes "emotion recollected in tranquility" as a feeling that is specifically inspired by nature and then expressed outwardly. He also mentions the idea of mismanagement in this context, and used or picturized in different ways through moral and social events. The comprehension

of society is fundamentally based on and influenced by the direct experience of a natural world that remains mostly unaffected by human activity. While many of Wordsworth's works in Lyrical Ballads depict tragic or sorrowful events using straightforward language suitable for the ballad style, other poems in the collection express a more positive, albeit passive, reaction to their surroundings and sensory experiences. The type of dialogue (as in 'Expostulation and Reply') or as a further informal response to justified question ('The Tables Turned'), entails the pages from books of nature as the teacher and as the giver of an 'impulse from a vernal wood that may teach more than all the sages can' (The Tables Turned). 'Tintern Abbey' is the longest poem in the collection and clearly avoids the straightforward style of a ballad. It serves as both a conclusion to the collection and provides a focus that goes beyond just telling a story. The poem shifts from the narrative approach seen in 'The Thorn,' which combines personal experience, speculation, and rumor, to one of reflection and contemplation. In this context, the isolated narrator suggests a listener, which includes the friend (Coleridge), the sister (Dorothy), and the unspoken presence of a broader humanity, symbolized by the smoke rising from distant cottages. The poem's reference to "the best part of a good man's life" (Tintern Abbey), and his "small, unnamed, forgotten acts of kindness and love" (Tintern Abbey) creates a connection between individual morality and the broader influence of nature. A vision can be turned into action. Wordsworth emphasizes the positive impact of nature on moral development and the connection between a love for nature and a love for humanity throughout his lengthy autobiographical poem, The Prelude.

This poem was initially written in 1799, expanded in 1805, revised several times until 1839, and was published after the author's death in 1850 with a title selected by his widow. It reflects the development of a poet's mind and seeks to organize key events from a poet's life into an idealized form of self-representation. The numerous revisions altered both the structure of the narrative and the perception of how Wordsworth interpreted his own creative journey.

If Keats, who was unfamiliar with The Prelude, could recognize the aspect of the 'egotistical sublime' (Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey) in Wordsworth's writing, then this autobiographical approach inevitably positions the poet as the central figure in his own poetic journey, specifically during the time leading up to his self-expression in poetry.

The boy's childhood in the Lake District, influenced by both beauty and fear, along with his teenage experiences at Cambridge, his feelings of confusion in London, and his initial excitement about the progress of the Revolution in France, all contribute to his journey in understanding his path as a poet. In spite of its various accounts of action, of learning, and of secular vision, the poem continuously returns to the idea of the life of retirement where the imagination is free and most creative and to the single figure, observing his nature and its inherent power.

Wordsworth serves as a clear example of the power of poetry, which brings a new perspective to the world. He is recognized as a strong and unique poet whose work combines poetry and philosophy, as well as nature and humanity, creating a sense of universal harmony. Wordsworth primarily focuses on themes related to nature. However captivating natural scenes might be, his poetry does not reflect a love for them. He is a lover of nature, appreciating the joy and tranquility found in its landscapes, water sources, birds, and flowers. An analysis of poems like 'The Prelude' and 'Tintern Abbey' shows that Wordsworth experienced three different stages in his education by Nature, as well as three corresponding phases of his affection for it. In the initial stage, he describes Nature as being related to physical enjoyment or animal behaviors.

"But secondary to my own pursuits
And animal activities, and all
Their trivial pleasures."

(Wordsworth's The Prelude, bk.viii)

Over time, these activities and pleasures became less appealing, but his appreciation for Nature, simply for its own value, became stronger and more profound. Wordsworth struggled to articulate this second phase of his affection for Nature.

"I cannot paint
 What then I was.
 The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion."
 (Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

He viewed the tall rocks and mountains as something he desired. The second phase continued, according to his own statement, until he went there after more than twenty-two years. This was followed by a crisis in his political beliefs that deeply challenged his faith in humanity and life. He dedicated some time to reading Godwin's Political Justice, where Reason is depicted as the guiding force behind all human behavior. However, that effort proved to be ineffective, and soon, although slowly, his appreciation for nature was restored with the support and affection of Dorothy and Coleridge.

In this third phase, the poet had moved away from a previous authoritarian style and entered a period characterized by profound reflection and spiritual consideration. Wordsworth's affection for her took on a spiritual quality and was intertwined in his thoughts with his love for humanity. He discovered a profound spiritual meaning in Nature, while humanity, as a whole, recognized its appropriate role in the framework of creation through Wordsworth's perspective. He became a poet of humanity as well as of nature. He began to view nature as a form of religion and understood that "there is a spirit in the woods." (Wordsworth's NUTTING). He identified himself as "a worshipper of Nature." (William Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey; lines 152-153).

He started to think that people should look to nature for spiritual and moral instruction and proposed his clear, although somewhat unusual, idea: "Let Nature be your teacher" (Wordsworth's The Tables Turned). He viewed in books a tedious and never-ending struggle and considered them to be an inadequate teacher compared to Nature.

He confidently claimed that a single insight from a spring forest could provide greater understanding of moral good and evil than all the wise people combined. He believed that every natural object had its own moral existence.

"To every natural form, rock, fruit, or flower,
 Even the loose stones that cover the Highway,
 I gave a moral life."
 (Wordsworth's The Prelude Bk. iii)

He strongly believed that "every flower appreciates the air it breathes," (Wordsworth's Lines Written in Early Spring) and even the simplest flower evoked feelings within him that were "too profound for tears" (Wordsworth's Immortality Ode). In his sonnet, which begins with "The World is too much with us," he expressed his frustration towards Englishmen who, due to their focus on materialism, failed to recognize the value of Nature. He was very certain about the enduring impact that a beautiful natural setting had on him, both now and in the future.

"But that I know, where'er I go,
 Thy genuine image,
 Yarrow! Will dwell with me-to heighten joy.
 And cheer my mind in sorrow
 (Wordsworth's Yarrow Visited)

Or in his emphatic assertion-

"While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts

That in this moment there is life and food
For future ears".
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

For Wordsworth, the education provided by Nature was a genuine concept and not just an imaginative idea. In *Ruth*, he discussed how the natural environment can impact a person's mood and personality. The poem illustrates how natural elements like winds and storms, along with the beauty and calm of tropical regions, contributed to the growth of wild islands and passionate feelings within a young soldier. In one notable lyric, he praised the development of a girl who had matured over three years "in sun and shower." (Wordsworth's *Lucy Poems*).

Wordsworth's revived appreciation for Nature also led him to develop an appreciation for humanity. He formulated a perspective in which both humans and Nature are seen as equal and coexist within the broader context of creation. He depicted humans in their most basic form and, in his poetry, focused on the unrefined individual who had not been influenced by social norms, or on the innocent child whom Wordsworth considered a significant prophet and blessed visionary. The aged leech collector educated Wordsworth about the principles of Revolution and Independence, while the elderly beggar from Cumberland showed him that even the simplest beings in nature have value. Wordsworth emerged as a poet who focused on both humanity and nature, portraying humans in relation to nature and elevating nature to a level comparable to that of humans. He observes nature as vibrant and full of emotion. He perceives people as integral to nature, displaying passion and excitement in their unique relationships with the beauty and majesty of the natural world. Wordsworth is a poet who reflects deeply on his thoughts and feelings. His thoughtful reflection appears to connect him with both Nature and human strong emotions and reflect feelings that are recalled during peaceful moments, rather than simply catering to a preference for decorative language and imagery. His goal, as demonstrated in his poetry and criticism, is to present the poet as someone who connects with the everyday interests of people, making poetry more accessible and relatable to humanity and the natural world, which provides an ideal backdrop. In his opinion, the language of poetry is the same as everyday language.

"....I have chosen subject from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men".

"My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men."

(Wordsworth's Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*)

A key characteristic of romantic literature in the early 19th century is often referred to as the "Return to Nature." The phrase "Return to Nature" is frequently misunderstood and misused. In a technical sense, it refers to a reassessment of and renewed interest in nature as expressed in romantic literature, particularly in romantic poetry. The term "Return to Nature" refers to the significant presence of Nature in English poetry following the more straightforward, social, and critical poetry of the 18th century, marking the beginning of romanticism in 1798.

During the resurgence of interest in Nature within 19th-century English poetry, several names stand out. Among them, two poets are especially esteemed for their appreciation and admiration of Nature. The two poets being referred to are Wordsworth and Shelley, and in the context of English poetry about Nature, there are few others who can be mentioned alongside them.

Among the romantic poets of the early 19th century, Wordsworth is known for his focus on Nature, while Shelley is recognized for his emphasis on human aspirations. He is considered not only a lover of Nature but also its priest and worshipper. His poetry, which is quite extensive, primarily focuses on the beauty, tranquility, and grandeur of Nature. In his notable poems, such as "The Prelude," "Tintern Abbey," "Immortality Ode," "Michael," and "Ruth," Wordsworth demonstrates his strong and unwavering commitment to Nature, earning him the title of the poet-priest of Nature. Wordsworth, as a poet who focuses on nature, is a romanticist similar to Shelley, but he leans more towards mysticism. In his view, Nature is

not just an outward display of beauty, color, shape, and scent. He views Nature as a living force and as living beings. In his well-known poetic autobiography, "The Mighty Being," which does not follow the typical structure of a prelude, he clearly expresses his mystical perspective on the essence of Nature.

"No familiar shapes
Remain, no pleasant images of trees
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men."
(Wordsworth's The Prelude Bk. 1)

He views Nature as a living entity, a powerful force present in all natural objects as well as in human consciousness. This is clearly expressed in his well-known spiritual autobiography 'Tintern Abbey', where the poet acknowledges his gratitude to Nature.

"And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused.
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

This is referred to as the pantheistic belief in Wordsworth's appreciation for Nature. Lines Written a few miles above Tintern Abbey highlights the deep, non-dogmatic pantheism of Wordsworth. This is an aspect of his mystical Nature philosophy, where complete unity and perfect harmony are attained through significant diversities. Various natural elements and the human mind are united by a single creative force, referred to as cosmic power. This force is present everywhere and imparts both individual characteristics and collective harmony to all things. The poet describes a universal spirit that exists everywhere and gives life and energy to everything.

a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air
And rolls through all things."
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

Wordsworth's appreciation for Nature is always presented in a concrete way, rather than as an abstract concept. His poetry acknowledges the tangible aspects of nature, which are expressed in various shapes, colors, scents, sensations, and sounds. Wordsworth also represents these external elements of nature in his famous poem, "To The Skylark." The bird's high flight and its focused observation of the nest below are clearly and accurately depicted. The skylark is envisioned as a symbol of the wise who rise high but do not wander, staying loyal to their connections with both Heaven and Home. Wordsworth is attracted to the peaceful and isolated aspects of nature. The beautiful scenery of nature near the River Wye, as described in 'Tintern Abbey', clearly demonstrates this. The entire scene is depicted with a focus on its isolation and calmness. The area is completely isolated and very calm, and this remote setting encourages thoughts of

even greater solitude. The steep and tall ²cliffs, the landscape, the calmness of the sky, the clusters of orchards, the small lines of hedgerows, the rural farms, and the wreaths of smoke rising quietly are all described with clarity and precision, as a keen observer of nature would depict them. The description is accurate and vividly conveys a sense of calmness and greenery everywhere, as shown by phrases like

"Are clad in one green hue" and "Green to the very door."
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

Wordsworth's appreciation for nature is an important aspect of his poetic beliefs, clearly demonstrated in his autobiographical poems, "The Prelude" and "Tintern Abbey." His love for nature is unique and profound, and it persists throughout his life, although it changes as he encounters new experiences. Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" is especially defined by three stages of his emotional reaction to nature. The poem serves as a genuine personal statement about his shifting feelings towards Nature. It provides a clear and strong description of his perspective on Nature at various stages of his life: childhood, youth, and adulthood. It shows his deep connection to nature and how his perception of it evolved from the joyful experiences of childhood to a broader, more spiritual understanding in adulthood, where he appears to be at rest.

'In body, and become a living soul'.
(William Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey;
Line 47)

His other celebrated poem 'Immortality Ode', in the like manner, reveals the poet's attachment to Nature and admits how his love for Nature is sound and strong all through, though its character has not remained the same. From the spiritual vision of his childhood, in which every common sight of Nature seemed 'appareled in celestial light' (Wordsworth's Immortality Ode), the poet speaks of his mystical, philosophic visualization in manhood when he perceives in Nature something tender, tragic, but profoundly meaningful.

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."
(Wordsworth's Immortality Ode)

Wordsworth, as a poet who deeply appreciates and admires Nature, consistently believes in the positive influence of Nature on human life and character. He is clear and firm in his belief that Nature is important to humans and has a positive influence on their minds and morals from childhood through old age, even in times of loneliness, fear, pain, or sorrow.

".....Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her".
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

She has always offered him comforting thoughts of gentle happiness to help bring him peace and comfort.

"tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy,"
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

In conclusion, Wordsworth's poetry emphasizes the uplifting influence of Nature. Nature's education is thorough and fundamentally different from the formal education provided in human society. In this instance, the poet confidently states that Nature is the main teacher and moral guide for humanity.

“ One impulse from the vernal wood
 Can teach you more of man
 Of moral evils and of good
 Than all the sages can.”

(Wordsworth's The Tables Turned)

(The short oxford history of English Literature – by Andrew Sanders)

The poet emphasizes that Nature serves as a caregiver, mentor, protector, and the essence of human morality. Wordsworth's perspective highlights a world where Nature and humanity coexist in unity and harmony. The natural world is the best environment for people to maintain their humanity and connection to the divine. Wordsworth views the poet and their work as two integral components of a single spirit that is vibrant and dynamic in its spiritual function, encompassing the entire universe and forming the basis of creative cosmic energy.

In terms of the poetic imagination, Wordsworth conveys the idea of

“theBeing that is in the clouds and air, the soul that penetrates all things, the spirit, the mystical essence, the divine knowledge that, as far as he was concerned, lies behind all nature. Lastly, in one of the most exalted poetical efforts in any language, he puts into words the idea of the continuity of life that runs through all existence.”

(H.E.L Albert pg. 299)

A critic has noted that Wordsworth's poetry successfully combines philosophical ideas with poetic beauty. Poetry and philosophy are closely related, and the poet can be seen as a type of prophet. This is especially relevant in the poetry of Wordsworth, particularly in his major works. His significant works have earned him lasting recognition among readers across generations, as his mystical philosophy is conveyed in poetry that is both profound and engaging.

It is widely recognized that "Immortality Ode" is a significant philosophical poem. The poem contains philosophical reflections and illustrates Wordsworth's deep meditative talent, which elevates him like a skylark while also acknowledging the importance of artistic expression in poetry. The theme of "Immortality Ode" is very spiritual. The poet addresses the spiritual reasons behind the loss of childhood perspective as one reaches adulthood. The poem addresses, as part of its philosophy, the Platonic idea that the human soul exists before birth. The poet conducts a deep examination of the nature of childhood faith, simplicity, and wisdom. According to the poet's philosophical perspective, childhood possesses a significant spiritual quality. The poet effectively conveys a spiritual understanding of the soul's existence both in heaven and on earth. The poem highlights Wordsworth's philosophical perspective on how Nature influences the spiritual growth of individuals during their lives. Nature prompts individuals to reflect on thoughts that are difficult to express emotionally.

“To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears. “

(Wordsworth's Immortality Ode)

The "Immortality Ode" includes many speculative and philosophical concepts, but its greatness lies not just in listing these ideas. Instead, it is the successful combination of serious philosophy with expressive poetry that makes the work outstanding. The rhythmic quality and spontaneous expression typical of a great ode are always present in Immortality Ode. The poet skillfully brings together creativity, emotional themes, and poetic language to create a notable work of art. The presence of philosophical concepts and mystical ideas does not turn the poem into a dull, idea-promoting, instructional lecture. The poet uses suitable imagery and a rhythmic quality to convey, in straightforward language, profound thoughts that are difficult to express through tears. An example of this can be provided below:

We will grieve not rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
(Wordsworth's Immortality Ode)

Some may clearly notice the creative elements and the unclear doctrines in the Ode. The key components of excellent poetry, as defined by Milton—simplicity, sensuousness, and impulsiveness—are clearly present in this ode. It is recognized as a classic in its own category, merging ideas and music, and is titled "Musical Thought." Tintern Abbey, similar to the Immortality Ode, is also a significant philosophical piece that effectively showcases Wordsworth's qualities as a philosopher. The main focus is on Nature, and the poem describes Wordsworth's close and personal connection with Nature as her priest and admirer. The poet serves as a representative of Nature. The poem has autobiographical elements and reflects Wordsworth's assessment of Nature's importance in human life and behavior, suggesting that Nature is always supportive of those who appreciate it. Additionally, the poem presents a pervasive spirit that exists within everything, conveying a sense of mysticism through its poetic expression.

The poem's beauty remains unaffected by its themes of nature or spiritual mysticism. The poem is always clear and straightforward in both its ideas and its language. The poem demonstrates its artistic quality through its creativity and spontaneity, as well as its imagery and sound, making it an enjoyable read for those who appreciate poetry. The poet creates images that are both vivid and realistic, using a straightforward language that is rich in meaning yet accessible, reflecting everyday life. Tintern Abbey does not have the straightforward language that is often associated with certain works. However, the way Wordsworth views poetic language is still present in this piece. The profound ideas are conveyed in simple and pleasant language that has a strong impact, even though it does not follow a specific rhyme scheme and is written in blank verse. Tintern Abbey, officially titled *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*, functions as a form of poetic autobiography, akin to Wordsworth's *The Prelude*. It reflects the poet's personal experiences and actions. It is a reflective description of the poet's strong relationship with Nature over the course of his life. Tintern Abbey can be seen as a poem that expresses Wordsworth's feelings and thoughts about the beauty of nature at different points in his life: childhood, youth, and adulthood. The poem, like *The Prelude*, describes the growth of his poetic spirit in relation to Nature, based on his experiences and thoughts throughout his life.

The poem is based on a real-life experience that the poet had. On July 17, 1798, Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy traveled to Tintern and Chepstow. Wordsworth composed this notable poem while visiting Tintern Abbey. He had visited the location alone about five years earlier, in 1793, and it left a significant impression on him. This visit confirmed that impression. The poem reflects the poet's personal experiences and is evidently based on their own life. It clearly shows that Wordsworth has a deep appreciation for Nature. Regarding this poem, Mr. Myers, a well-known critic of Wordsworth, observes that "The Lines Written Above Tintern Abbey" have become an important reference or significant representation of Wordsworth's ideas. The statement summarizes that the value of a poet's biographer lies in their ability to elaborate on the poet's personal experiences. It emphasizes that the poem contains a significant personal aspect, which aligns closely with the core nature of romantic poetry, particularly its focus on subjectivity. The critic, Myers, accurately highlights the subjective nature of Wordsworth's poetry, which is a key feature of his romantic talent. This lengthy poem is entirely autobiographical in nature, although the details it provides focus more on the internal aspects of the poet's thoughts and feelings rather than on external events. It might be more accurately viewed as a spiritual and moral autobiography of the poet in Wordsworth. The time when Wordsworth wrote these lines can be considered the beginning of his moral and spiritual beliefs, as well as his poetic style. This grew into flowers and fruit over the course of his long life, but the foundation for all of this was established at a very young age. The poem clearly demonstrates this development in poetry. Additionally, the poem demonstrates Wordsworth's strong affection for his sister and the impact she had on him. The poet states in his poem that the entire scene is especially meaningful to him because of his

connection to his sister. The poet states that even if Nature had not provided him with lessons in sobriety and wisdom, the presence of his sister would fulfill that need, and he would find joy as long as he keeps her in mind. The final part of the poem is directed solely to her. The poet's deep desire to see in her what he used to be is very personal.

“Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once”.
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

The final speech reveals the poet's honest acknowledgment of his constant connection and commitment to Nature as a devoted admirer. He expresses that he has long been a worshipper of Nature and continues to serve her with enthusiasm and affection "with a much stronger commitment to a purer form of love." (Erich Fromm in *The Art of Loving*). This all provides clear evidence of the poem's autobiographical nature. Wordsworth is often referred to as the poet-priest of Nature. Nature serves as the central theme in many of his poems. His dedication to her is so profound that it not only serves as a foundation for his poetry but also transforms into an active force that engages with human emotions and ultimately reaches a spiritual dimension. He clearly states that Nature has a significant impact on the development of the human soul, serves as a source of joy and knowledge, and connects the human soul to the universal spirit. This evaluation of Nature adds a mystical quality to his poem and provides insight into his perspective on the relationship between Nature and humanity.

Wordsworth, known for his focus on Nature and humanity, is clearly represented in Tintern Abbey. In the poem "Tintern Abbey," Wordsworth's views on nature are clearly expressed. It has a personal aspect and shows the poet's genuine connection with Nature at various points in his life. The poem appears to align with his significant poetic autobiography, *The Prelude*, where the stages of the poet's developing love for Nature are clearly outlined. According to Myers, a knowledgeable critic of Wordsworth, Tintern Abbey is recognized as a significant expression of Wordsworth's belief in Nature. The poem not only expresses the poet's deep affection for Nature but also reflects his evolving perspective on it at various points in his life, including his childhood, youth, and adulthood. The poem effectively illustrates how Nature has influenced the poet's thoughts at various times throughout his life. This lengthy poem is clearly autobiographical and effectively captures the poet's connection to Nature, while also providing an important examination of the progression of his affection for it. The poet examines how his thoughts reacted to her request at different stages of his life: childhood, youth, and adulthood. The poem clearly illustrates the development of Wordsworth's poetic connection to Nature. It holds autobiographical significance, and examining these stages is thought-provoking.

The initial stage focuses on Wordsworth's actions and affection for Nature during his childhood. He had a strong affection for nature at that time, but this feeling was based on the joyful movements of animals in their natural environment. The simple joys of his youth were enjoyed through a carefree lifestyle in nature. It was a physical activity of a fit and athletic young boy that formed the basis of Wordsworth's connection to Nature during his childhood. He then leaped over the mountains, ran after deep rivers and quiet streams, and moved freely through nature in search of enjoyment and recreation. He was engaged in lighthearted activities in nature, similar to someone who is trying to escape something they fear rather than pursuing something they cherish.

During his childhood, he experienced a strong, energetic, and playful affection for the natural world. The next phase began. The boy became a young man. His affection for Nature was still strong, even though it had changed significantly. The young poet was attracted to the beautiful views and pleasant sounds of nature. The rushing waterfall troubled him as if it were an obsession. The tall rock, the mountain, and the deep, dark forest, with their varying colors and shapes, became a source of desire for him. He felt content with what he observed and experienced in nature's beautiful surroundings and did not seek additional meaning from thoughts or interests beyond what he could see. This was a moment of simple visual and sensory enjoyment of nature, without trying to evaluate its importance in human life.

In the third and final stage, there was a more composed transition to Wordsworth. He was no longer an athletic young man or a passionate youth. He became a thoughtful philosopher of Nature during his adult years. He no longer had his previous interests in or affection for physical or visual pleasures found in different natural settings. He still appreciated nature as he did before, but not through his youthful adventures or sensual enjoyment. His appreciation for nature developed through thoughtful reflection and meditation. He appeared to have a strong sense of ethics, insightful understanding, and a sense of spirituality. He developed a profound awareness that allowed him to understand the deeper essence of Nature. He no longer viewed nature as a lifeless entity; instead, he saw it as a living presence that energizes and revitalizes all conscious beings. This was the setting for the poet's expression of a universal force that exists everywhere. The poet understood the constant harmony that exists between Nature and humanity. He listened to the quiet, sorrowful sounds of humanity in the heart of Nature. He was able to recognize the existence of a Universal Spirit, a Supreme Being, influencing "all thinking things" (Tintern Abbey) and "pervading all things." Wordsworth's pantheism is a significant aspect of the mystical elements found in his nature poetry. Nature served as his primary source of inspiration, knowledge, and moral improvement, and he clearly stated its role as:

"The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart and soul.

Of all my moral being."

(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

This description of the various stages in the poet's love for Nature clearly shows his consistent respect for and strong belief in Nature throughout his life. His appreciation for nature undoubtedly changes at different stages. The poet's genuine and deep connection to Nature, in any form it takes, is clearly evident. Wordsworth is well-known in poetry mainly for his distinctive focus on Nature. He is described as a serious poet focused on nature however, he notices that there is more. He is not only a poet who writes about the beauty and allure of the natural world, but also a philosophical poet who explores the deeper aspects of nature. His poetry reflects a philosophical perspective on nature. As a philosopher of Nature, he holds a romantic perspective that allows him to see light that has not previously existed on the sea or land. According to Wordsworth's romantic and mystical perspective, Nature is infused with life and spirit, elevated by the presence of a universal force. Tintern Abbey is an example of Wordsworth's poetry that focuses on nature. According to Young, no other poem conveys Wordsworth's feelings about Nature as clearly and strongly as this one. The poem serves as a straightforward and genuine expression of the poet's deep respect for Nature. It shows him not only as a passionate lover but also as a devoted admirer of nature, akin to a priest of nature. The poem effectively conveys, similar to Wordsworth's notable work *The Prelude*, the belief that recognizes a powerful presence in nature and perceives its cleansing effect on human thought, ethics, and spirituality. The poem clearly reflects the philosophy of Nature as expressed by Wordsworth.

The poem takes place during the poet's visit to the bank of the river Wye, a location he had previously visited five years earlier. The well-known sights of the area made him recognize the many benefits that this natural beauty had given him while he was away. The poet notes that even while he was away from the location, he maintained a connection to it through his imagination. The memory of the location provided a soothing and refreshing influence on his troubled mind, which was disturbed by the noise and activity of urban areas. That memory calmed his anxious thoughts and restlessness, leading him to a sense of peace and calm.

The poet describes in the poem how the memory of the beautiful sights near the River Wye brought him a subtle feeling of pleasure, leading to feelings of kindness and love. The beautiful natural location positively influenced his thoughts and gave him a unique feeling of joy, similar to suddenly recalling a long-forgotten act of kindness or love. The poet also acknowledges that the memory of this beautiful natural place provides him with a spiritual perspective, helping him rise above everyday life. He had the ability to understand the

essence of life, became a conscious being, and recognized the widespread effects of joy and harmony present in both nature and humanity.

Wordsworth highlights the lasting impact and supportive influence that a beautiful natural location, such as the area near the river Wye, has on him, reminding him of his appreciation for nature. He stresses that this location provides not only immediate enjoyment but also reserves resources for future use. He clearly expresses his firm belief in this idea.

While here I stand not only with the sense
Of present pleasure,
but with the pleasing thoughts future years.
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey Lines 62-65)

The poet's philosophical argument about Nature extends further. He outlines the different stages of his feelings for Nature. The poem is a genuine and personal expression of his shifting feelings toward Nature. It presents a clear and strong expression of his views on Nature at various points in his life, including his childhood, youth, and adulthood, and clearly reflects his pantheistic yet non-dogmatic philosophy regarding Nature. The poet expresses his connection to Nature throughout different stages of his life, even though his feelings and attitude towards Nature may change. The poem "Tintern Abbey" highlights, especially, the deep and non-dogmatic pantheism associated with Wordsworth. He sees nature as something alive and vibrant, not as lifeless or inactive. In his perspective, every natural object is alive, energized by a vital force. In this poem, the poet envisions a universal spirit that exists throughout everything. He draws on his own experiences with an authentic motivation.

A sense sublime
Of something far more interfused
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And rolls through all things.
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey Lines 95-102)

This is reflected in his understanding of the unifying force that influences and connects everything, integrating both the natural world and human thought into a single cosmic process. This represents his pantheism, which is the core of his philosophy of nature, and it is clearly expressed as the central idea of the poet's philosophical perspective in the poem. Wordsworth's spiritual philosophy is the basis for his respectful attitude toward Nature. Nature serves as an important teacher for him, helping to develop his mental calmness, moral fortitude, and spiritual understanding. She becomes the main source of his inspiration, knowledge, guidance, and moral improvement. The poet clearly acknowledges the positive influence of Nature in human life. His acknowledgment of the role is effectively conveyed in his clear statement:

The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

The poet's beliefs are connected to the positive influence of Nature on human life. He is clear and firm in expressing the importance of Nature to humanity and the positive impact it has on people's thoughts and ethics. In the final part of the poem, he clearly and directly expresses his thoughts to his sister, Dorothy.

"Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her, 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy....."
(Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey)

According to the Wordsworthian idea, nature enhances human understanding, instills a feeling of peace and beauty, inspires noble thoughts, and shields individuals from negative influences and harmful forces. Under her gentle guidance, people recognize a complete harmony and ongoing joy in the entire world around them, feeling comforted by the understanding that everything is filled with blessings. This idea is central to Wordsworth's philosophy of nature. It clearly shows his position as a philosopher in poetry. He is recognized as an exceptional master due to his impressive ability to blend deep philosophy with remarkable poetry, a skill that only a great philosopher-poet can achieve.

The opening lines of Wordsworth's well-known poem, "Tintern Abbey," provide vivid descriptions of the natural scenery around the River Wye. The location, which the poet visited about five years ago, remains memorable for him. As he observes familiar sights and hears recognizable sounds once more, his memory starts to bring back the experiences he had during his initial visit. Wordsworth is a poet who focuses on Nature, and what stands out in his portrayal of it is his emphasis on the sense of calm that exists throughout the natural world. The current poem reflects his particular perspective on the calmness and lushness of the natural world surrounding this beautiful location. The poet observes that the scenery around the River Wye is characterized by a unique sense of calm. The location is completely isolated, and the remote surroundings encourage deeper reflections on solitude. The poet listens to the gentle sound of the river water as it flows down from the mountain spring. He looks at the tall, steep mountains and the calm sky above where the land reaches the far horizon. The entire area is characterized by beauty and tranquility, with the large sycamore tree providing shade in a space that appears to be completely covered in green. Unripe fruits, fresh grass, leaves, and small wooded areas all blend together in a uniform green that extends right up to the cottage door. The landscape is enhanced by the extensive rows of hedges that appear to go on indefinitely and grow in a somewhat untamed manner.

The entire area is very peaceful and appears to have no signs of human presence. He casually noticed a coil of smoke rising from the distant forest, which suggests that there are some humans present—either a hermit or nomadic people living within the woods. The description is accurate and reflects Wordsworth's appreciation for the subtle beauty of nature. His message of calmness and the vitality of nature is strongly reflected here. He seems to be a painter who captures the beauty of nature. His imagery, filled with elegance and vibrancy, reflects his appreciation for the calm and peaceful elements of the natural world.

Between his first visit and second, Wordsworth was far away from the lovely natural spot near Tintern Abbey. The place, with its impressive sights and sounds, was physically removed from him. Nevertheless, it was not completely cut off from him as 'a landscape is shut out to a blind man's eye'(John Milton's On His Blindness) Though absent from the place, he remained present there through the perception of his romantic vision. The memory of the location stayed in his thoughts consistently over the five years between his first visit in 1793 and his second visit in 1798. He owed the place in several ways for the benefits it provided him. The memory of the beautiful natural scenery helped him feel calm and rejuvenated whenever he was alone during his free time, especially when he felt troubled by the noise and activity of cities and towns. That memory helped alleviate the weight on his heart and brought him feelings of pleasure. It deeply affected his thoughts and emotions, bringing him a sense of mental peace and calm.

Additionally, the memory of the location had quietly evoked in him a sense of joy that seemed to be linked to feelings of kindness and love. The poet believed that the unique beauty of nature reminded him of a significant experience. He began to share in the feelings a person might have when recalling, perhaps unknowingly, a long-forgotten act of kindness and love that he had done in the past.

The Romantic period in English literature started with the release of "Lyrical Ballads" in 1798. The preface to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads in 1800 served as a declaration of new artistic goals, in which Wordsworth criticized upper-class themes and the poetic language of the earlier neoclassical period. He advocated for writing about everyday life using "language really used by men." (Wordsworth's The Prelude). Romanticism is linked to creativity, imagination, emotions, spontaneity, an interest in history and the distant past, personal perspective, individuality, appreciation for nature, mystical and supernatural elements, aesthetic awareness, and primarily the use of simple words and style. William Wordsworth's poetry

exhibited many of the features associated with romantic poetry. Wordsworth's poetry promoted the principles of freedom, equality, and brotherhood.

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