
The relevance of William Wordsworth's Philosophy of Nature in the 21st century

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It isn't the child peacefully cuddled in its mother's arms who is bothered by the growing urban jungles around; neither is it the old, waiting for the day of Judgement who are traumatised by the ever-changing catastrophe around. It's none but the youth who are pulled down, demoralised, saddened and left alone in the clumsiness of the endless development. Unlike the youth of the Romantic era, youth today are least at peace with themselves. They do not take short moral walks down the gardens or the lanes; they do not welcome the morning rays of the sun, they fail to recognize the serenity in their own music, they are clueless about the degrading innocence of the soul within-they walk blindly, unaware of who they are caged inside that burning bar of utter ignorance and pathetic oblivion. Unfortunately enough, these creatures can't even drink that magic potion to make them tall so that they can reach the key to Wonderland.

William Wordsworth, in his poem 'Character of the Happy Warrior' has asked: "Who is the happy warrior? Who is he whom every man in arms should wish to be?"-definitely the youth today have not found the factors that would lead them to become a happy warrior. They have started dwelling amongst those who find a guinea more beautiful than the Sun, and bag worn with the use of money has more beautiful proportions than vines filled with grapes. But none of these worked for that one great Romantic poet who contemplated with awe

the power within himself and the great possibilities of the human imagination - William Wordsworth! Possibly that one poet whose ways of escaping the loathsome hardships of human life have been the most convincing process of breaking down the cage which chains down all imaginations. Losing his parents at an early age which led to the loss of liberty in the hands of his confining relatives, his poetry is of protest born of his sense of having been denied a true home and the liberty to pursue the career of his choice because of an unjustly imposed condition of financial dependence. Somewhere down the line even today, in this particular era a youth too loses his/her liberty to the social prison of meaningless rules and regulations. They aren't accepted for the wild beauty in them rather they are given the minimal space...only if they abide by the "rules". So the life of Wordsworth was no less harsh than the life of a twenty first century youth. However, there was one quality that helped Wordsworth endure his pain-his imagination made him escape all the pain.

In most of his poems like 'The Prelude', 'The Excursion' or 'Tintern Abbey', Wordsworth uses Nature as the protagonist. It is like that one being whom you will never meet in your life, but who will always be there capturing the most significant place in your heart. With the gradual biological growth, human beings tend to leave back the warm meadows and the soothing lakes; all those become blurred. Wordsworth however pulls out the lost strings and ties them together to establish a chest full of memories:

"Once again

Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs

That on a wild secluded scene impress

Thoughts of more deep seclusion."

-Tintern Abbey

Wordsworth found solace, serenity, liberty, far away from the daily hustle of the ruthless city lights, in the lap of the calmness of Nature. For him it is not “a refuge from distress or pain, a breathing-time, vacation or a truce” but potentially at least Nature will provide a ‘life of peace, stability without regret or fear.’ Wordsworth is pretty well aware that rejection by the world gives rise to a despondent isolation in which self-certainty comes at the price of losing kinship with others; once one begins to trace emblems of oneself in the surrounding world, it becomes almost impossible to recover benevolent feelings of social sympathy. He, somehow, would not deny that Nature has formed him but wants to preserve a full sense of what it is that Nature has formed: an independent being who repeats, freely and with delight the loving behaviour which fashioned his independence originally. He has quite clearly proved through his writing that nature is nothing but a parallel that runs by our lives- natural brutality justifies an oppressive tyranny, natural harmony reflects not only God’s order but the settled order of the established state, and natural feeling encourages the rebel to believe that his/her impulse of defiance is right.

Wordsworth thought of escaping into the world of Nature can be seen as the cleanest possible way of bearing the harsh realities even today. His imaginary Lucy, his long lost Tintern Abbey, his dancing daffodils assure us of the fact that our lonely mind can be our greatest form of freedom. He never nodded his head with the society around, rather he completely overlooked the industrial world and set up his own Utopic world of perfection. This relieves us as, we once again get assured that it's okay to be different from the rest and have a winged mind. Wordsworth always believed that the right thinking and the right feeling persons must feel and cannot choose but seek; so does the inner self believe.