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THE UNRESTRAINED LOVE FOR BEAUTY AND LOVE; AND THE INEVITABLE RECOIL FROM IMAGINATIVE WORLD TO REALITIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF JOHN KEATS AND AKHTAR SHERANI'S SELECTED POEMS

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to bring out the elements of similarity and dissimilarity in the poetries of two across-the-continent young romantic poets: Akhtar Sherani and John Keats. The further sheds, in particular, light on the explicit demonstration of beauty and love in the selected few poems by both. There is a translation offered for each of the selected verses from Sherani's poetry. The paper uses the theory of comparative analysis to inspect the poems in question. Keats seems to be slightly getting afloat the romantic trajectory and is often a little perplexed in a flux when he is disillusioned, and under fear changes gears and succumbs to harsh reality. Sherani, though saunters in the wilderness of a pure romantic aura, doesn't get impeded easily as his disillusionment is dawned upon him beforehand. The paper is qualitative in approach and exhausts nearly all websites, journals, and the related stuff to properly employ and approach the poems under study. The paper concludes that John Keats is more romantic than Akhtar Sherani and that Keats's understanding of reality is impulsive and judgmental, whereas Sheri pauses somewhere in that pure magic of imagination and torches the way back to see if

that reality is subsumed or not. Both the poets in tandem love beauty and Nature and their love flies from the transient to intransient, from body to the intangible abode.

INTRODUCTION

The poetry of John Keats does not enjoy a singular taste, not does he himself. He had been for this very reason under the duress of a stolid and never-dying criticism. The more Keats was lost in the immanent, the greater was the pain he felt within himself and was more tortured and tormented by the harsh critics. But he was engrossed in his own appreciation of beauty and love. The problem is that we cannot grip him at a single point, at times he is left morose to see the false charisma of life turns into sharp return of a disillusioned world full of problems and fevers. The same we witness in 'Ode to the Nightingale' by saying that 'Where youth growth pale, and spectre thin and then dies/ Where to think is to be full of sorrow/ and /The wearisome, the fever and the fret. While on one hand he enjoys the subtlety of a world of beauty but on the other hand he shuns this world and finds solace in death and disappearance. In the single 'Ode to the Nightingale' he oscillates between what to love and what to forgo. First he tries to avoid the pangs of death of life's realities by escaping this transient world and to go to the wilderness and imaginary world and then when he comes to his senses, he understands that it's implausible to escape, he then suffers from contemplative morose and longs for death.

Now more than ever it seems rich to die
To cease upon the midnight with no pain
(Ode to a Nightingale)

Also at another point he terribly asks death to overtake him by saying that 'Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme and 'have been in love with easeful Death. Therefore, Keats and his passion can't be contained and imprisoned. In 'La Bella Dan Sans Merci', Keats passionately and insanely flies in the appreciation of desert and to see if a physical reality of a disturbed dream exists. He is informed by his poetic imagination that there is that perfect damsel ensnaring him within. And that world is shared with him by Sherani too, but Sherani gives him a spiritual and religious love, and that his torch light is steadied towards heaven and paradise.

'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever', Keats, now, has another world of beauty in his mind. He translates the essence of beauty into another aspect. He creates a vacuum of his own imagination and brings the impermanence of beauty to a still and intangible abode from that Fanny Brawn's transient beauty to a more philosophical and never-dying transformation of beauty.

Both Sherin and Keats suffer from the transformation into an imaginary world; their love for beauty, though, replenish their selves with violent passion but at last they fear desolation and revoke. Keats turns more impassionate while treating beauty, love and Nature and therefore, the spell and the track with which he joins that abode, is similar paced when he retreats. Sherani, on the hand, does go to that wilderness, what Keats does, but his subsuming and diffusing into that romantic aura is a slow and deliberate process where he understands that romantic allure, so that once for all, he melts into that, he is hard to come back.

This lack of a retreating impulse in Sherani and this impulsive retreat in Keats discriminates Sherani from Keats and this the theme of this paper.

Statement of the Problem

The issue discussed in this paper is the strikingly fine thematic concordance and discordance in the selected poems between John Keats and Akhtar Sherani's poems. The issue discussed here is the poetic appreciation by both Keats and Sherani of beauty and its longitudes, and the appraisal of Nature and real embodiment which the Nature wears. The research is also looking into how beautifully these two poets retreat from romanticism to de-romanticism. The research point is how romanticism is impacted through these approaches by these two like poets.

Significance of the Study

The study is an interception in the research academia on run on romantic poetry and the approaches different researchers have taken. This study is a unique contribution to the world of imagination and romanticism in poetry. Other researches in this field have been confined to the aspect of only the demonstration of love and beauty in Keats world of romanticism but this study takes an entirely different and unique approach by expanding its milieu to Keatsean and Sheranian take on romantic flavor and their recoil to the realities. It discusses how Keats and Sherani have been instrumental to the cause of poetry and how to blend with different techniques the romantic as well as real aspects of poetry. This research brings about those aspects in which Keats and Sherani have gone to the fathomless worlds of romantic heroes like the Spenserian Knights and have then tried in various ways to come back. The strong points that this research makes is Sherani stays in the romantic world by furnishing more congenial fuel to his imaginative skills, while Keats retreats with stolid disillusionment.

Research Questions

1. What are John Keats and Akhtar Sherani's approaches to beauty in the selected poems?
2. How is Nature demonstrated in Keats and Sherani's poetry?
3. What is the subtle difference between John Keats and Akhtar Sherani's retreat to reality from an imagined idealized world?

Objectives of the Study

- * To find out the thematic connection between Keats and Sherani's beauty and love incarnation
- * To explore the similar aspects related to love and beauty in Keats and Sherani's poetry
- * To analyse the ways through which the difference between John Keats and Sherani's retreat from romanticism to the real world is found out.

Delimitation of the Study

The study though encompasses nearly all aspect related to the aspects of beauty and love, but as the scope and space of the paper only allows for the ways through we see the commendation and appreciation of beauty incarnated by John Keats and Akhtar Sherani in their beauty and love poems. Poems such as Keats's 'Grecian Urn', 'Ode to Autumn', 'Endymion' and Akhtar Sherani's 'My Modern Hobby', 'the Young Girl', 'Love Under the Tree' are core to investigation in this paper and generally the paper is confined to this. 'Ode to the Nightingale' and a few other poems have also been discussed just for supporting the arguments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers have used an eclectic approach to conduct this study. This research is qualitative in nature and employs a combination of textual analysis and Daniel S Weld's Theory of Comparative Analysis (1990). As this theory suggests that themes are most central to analysis and are generally researched first. Also, according to this theory, approaches to a text are seen and researched from an angle of a comprehensive analysis which entails and covers cultural, thematic, contextual and biographical analysis. Therefore, this paper uses the method by first analyzing the texts of the poem, bringing out elements concerning subject of the paper, and then there is a comparative thematic and subject matter analysis is made. Textual analysis was further used to study its stylistic ground and poets' semantic understanding is further carried out. Then all the analysis was concluded in the referential part of the paper. The questions and objectives were properly juxtaposed and evaluated and research queries were made under its impression.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Both Keats and Akhtar Sherani find solace, peace and tranquility in love. Their concept of love has different dimensions. Keats loves past, nature and beauty. In love with natural things, he, at the same time, is spiritual and physical as well (Yuksel, 1990). We find physical love in the poetry of Keats. Love, in Keats's poetry, is abstract; it can be found as affection, obsession, pleasure or infatuation. A single interpretation of Keats' love is impossible at all. In his poem, 'The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone', Keats describes the beloved as sweet and tender. She was soft spoken and was warm, bright yet tender. This love of a lover left him forever. Her beauty, her warmth, whiteness and all that was paradise about her faded away from him.

The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone!
Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer breast
(Line 1-2)

For Keats Love is also a source of physical satisfaction when he describes that she left him before it was time and the 'fragrant curtain'd love' changed into unbearable darkness. Overcome by grief he takes refuge in the Lord, who alone can redeem him from his misery. He believes that since he had read the 'missal', hymn book, fasted and prayed, the Lord would allow him to sleep peacefully in spite of his anguish.

Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave
The woof of darkness thick, for hid delight
(Line 11-12)

In a letter to his beloved, Fanny Brawne, John Keats writes; "I almost wish we were butterflies and liv'd but three summer days – three such days with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain."

John Keats was a passionate lover. He loved poetry, he loved women, he loved beauty, he loved nature, he loved humbleness, he loved spirituality. The lapse of Keats's love is very vast. And that is why he said,

Love is my religion – I could die for it

For Keats, love is present in our blood and soul forever. In our hearts love prevails throughout the age. Love is the rhyme of our hearts as it is more endearing. The theory of Keats's immortality also shows that love is immortal in this mortal world. Love lasts forever.

Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!
(Ode on a Grecian Urn, Line 18-20)

Love is always advancing and going forth in our lives. It charms every day in a new way. It is so rooted deep within our hearts that it provides as warmth and panting. Love keeps us young in our entire lifetime. That is what Keats has elucidated in his poem; 'Ode on a Grecian Urn.

"Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue."
(Line 21 - 30)

In Akhtar Sherani's poetry, apart from his sexual love, feelings of attachment to the beloved are prominent. That is to say, the idea of his beloved girl, the idea of beauty, comes close to transcendence. It is this romantic feeling that fuels the longing for love. A romantic atmosphere is created which gives them peace of mind and comfort. Akhtar is also a fan of this imaginary paradise and a beautiful way to escape from life and its bitter realities. His poetry takes Akhtar on a journey to the paradise of the imaginary world. This idea refines man's deprivation through imaginary acceptance. In this state of affairs, everyone suffers in his youth. This state of mind is natural and romantic. We can feel this

poetic concept in the poetry of Akhtar Shirani, which seems to be unique and heartwarming idea compared to other Urdu poets. In his love poetry, there is a feeling of sadness and melancholy. And that is because the colorful and beautiful world is not available to everyone, so, one finds himself disgusted with the world. But, Akhtar's passion for love is still permanent. He seeks solace, comfort and peace in love (Hassani, 1974).

"محبت ہی نے مجھ کو درس گل چینی سکھایا ہے
اور اک مدت سے اپنے باغ کا مالی بنایا ہے
خوشی کی بے خودی بے حد و بے اندازہ ہوتی ہے
فضاؤں سے لپٹ جانے کی حسرت تازہ ہوتی ہے
اور اس کے بعد میں ہوتا ہوں اور وجدان کا عالم
محبت، شاعری، احساس اور بیجان کا عالم"
(میرا موجودہ مشغلہ)

Translation

*[Love has illuminated me with the flower-care
And so far, love has made me the gardener
Of my flower-bed. Love gives me infinity in happiness,
Then, the longing to be lost in the air becomes high
Then I become friend with the world of ecstasy and conscience
A world of love, poetry, emotions, ebullition]*

Akhtar's concept of love is vast than anything. For him love is everything. Love is not the name of a specific emotion for Sherani. Love is the freaks of ocean, songs of breeze, colors of rose-gardens, innocence of maidens, decency of nymph, dance of flowers and trees and more than the harmony of waterfalls. Human's presence is love in this world. Love is the blood of our souls.

"محبت کے لئے آیا ہوں میں دنیا کی محفل میں
محبت خون بن کر لہلہاتی ہے مرے دل میں
ہر اک شاعر مقدر اپنا اپنے ساتھ لایا ہے
محبت کا جنوں تنہا مرے حصے میں آیا ہے
محبت مبتدا میری، محبت منتہا میری
محبت سے عبارت ہے، بقا میری فنا میری
محبت آرزو میری، محبت جستجو میری
محبت خامشی میری، محبت گفتگو میری
محبت ہی مرے نزدیک معراج عبادت ہے"
(میرا موجودہ مشغلہ)

Translation

*I have come for love to the gathering of this world
Love becomes blood and flutters in my heart
Each poet has imported his own destiny
The lunacies of love have come to my part alone
Love is my beginning, love is my decay
Love is my survival and my annihilation
Love is my ardent desire, love is my quest
Love is my silence, love is my colloquy
Love is the ascension of worship to me*

Akhtar's poetry makes it clear that he has various forms of romance that are full of the sanctity of love. He made this impression the subject in his poetry which is the demands of human beings in which the desire for a body and pleasures in the imagination of the beloved's lap are paid attribute as this is the need of our soul and body. In the desire of love, he enumerates the various attributes of a woman which are found in attractiveness, beauty and color. There is a beautiful picture of love and its blessings on this universe portrayed in Akhtar's concept of love. The whole beauty in this universe is because of love.

Akhtar Sherani's imagination is guided by love. Under the leadership of this beautiful child, he wants to reach a world of love. Where the densities, sufferings, inconveniences and imperfections of material life cannot touch his feet. This can be considered as we find Salma, a beautiful maiden of Gujrat, Rehana, who roamed in the valleys like a flat beautiful dear and Azra, who had a marble body, were colorful interpretations of wine and poetry. We find all these things repeatedly and charismatically in his poetry.

"تو کیا جانے کہ سودائے محبت کس کو کہتے ہیں
محبت اور محبت کی لطافت کس کو کہتے ہیں
غم ہجران بے کیا اور سوز الفت کس کو کہتے ہیں
تو کیا جانے غم شب ہائے فرقت کس کو کہتے ہیں
ترے اظہار الفت کی فصاحت رات بھر کی
محبت آہ نیری یہ محبت رات بھر کی ہے"
(میرا موجودہ مشغلہ)

Translation

*You are heedless of what love indenture is
What love is and what its elegance
What is torment of detachment and intimacy's warmth
What is love craze and what dreariness is
So what you call the night of detachment?
The eloquence of expressing your love is all night long
Love ah this love of yours is all night long*

Sometimes it feels like that all the elements of Akhtar's poetry is sharing a strong influence of love on it. The ocean of love has been touching Akhtar's power of thoughts and his soul. Akhtar finds solace and peace in love as Keats does. He finds himself out of this world in the feelings of love. His love is made from the leaven of both Platonic and sexual love. It begins with physical and sexual love. But its ascension is imaginative love. Where love is more important than the beloved, where love becomes everything.

"میں اس دہن میں مکان و لامکان کو بھول جاتا ہوں
خیال گلستاں میں گلستاں کو بھول جا تا ہوں"
(میرا موجودہ مشغلہ)

Translation

*I forget place and time in the song of love
In the feelings of love, I forget the beauty of Eden*

The concept of beauty in the poetry of John Keats and Akhtar Sherani

Sheranian concept of beauty is eternal and alive, it may be called 'a phase of beauty'. On the other hand, Keats's concept of beauty is considered as mortal, transient and impermanent. It has gotten its own importance and an eternal joy; these lines by Keats express his impermanent status of beauty beautifully.

She dwells with beauty--- Beauty that must die;

And joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
(Ode on Melancholy, Line 21-22)

But he does not convey the idea that Keatsian concept was wholly impermanent and temporary. He believes in the eternal beauty. His odes explicitly convey the idea of the eternal beauty in this sense. He also loses himself in the beauty around him as Sherani does. We find different dimensions of beauty in Keats' poetry. Beauty is a source of happiness, a source of joy, a source of power and a source of truth. The stage of happiness is being shown in his long poem 'Endymion'. It is natural and usual for a human to accomplish the goals of happiness and liberty by dignity of his patience, forbearance, phlegm, fortitude and resilience, which Keats very vividly points out to the freedom from self-hood and other worthy pursuits. This, as a result, pushes one to a high point of happiness. That happiness can be attained with love. A person indulged in love feelings will have no limits of self-hood and selfishness. He/she should be out of these circles in order to attain happiness, peace and harmony in his/her life with love (Jonathan, 2015).

Beauty is truth, truth beauty, —that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.
(Ode on a Grecian Urn, Line 49-50)

The immortality of beauty is also there in Keats's poetry. It has been exemplified by using the 'Grecian Urn' in his poetry. He attempted to communicate his bliss and euphoria in the shape of a Grecian urn. He has shaped the Grecian urn embedded in the scenes of men and maidens dancing and playing. The poem; "Ode on a Grecian Urn" can be called the embodiment of his ideas regarding the influence of beauty upon human life. Beauty is not a thing which can be vanished but immortal for Keats. The urn described in this poem is created centuries ago, which shows the strong intentions and affirmations of Keats about the immortality of beauty. The artist has died centuries ago but the art and beauty created by his figures are still alive which as a result made him immortal too. There is a perfect correlation between his persistent and longing for permanence in the changing world (Song, 2019). The urn captures the moments of intense experience and freezes them into a solid immortality. He loves the idea of something being permanent there which cannot be changed forever;

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou cannot leave

Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare.
(Ode on a Grecian Urn, Line 15-16)

The aestheticism of Keats is highly influenced by Edmund Spenser. The concept is inclined to the passion of beauty which John Keats has at its peak. He was so passionate lover that for him poetry should be the embodiment of beauty, not a medium for the expression of religious or social philosophy. Beauty is perceived by Keats through his natural and spontaneous supplication of senses. He has an excellent sense of perception. His feelings for different things are more intense than common people. Haydon, his friend, observed that "the humming of a bee, the sight of a flower, the glitter of the sun, seemed to make his nature tremble; then his eyes flashed, his cheeks glowed and his mouth quivered." "He had a deep insight to see beauty even in those things that are not thought beautiful by ordinary people. He looked at the autumn and says that even autumn has beauty, charisma and allure".

Where are the song of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, –
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
(Ode to Autumn, lines; 21 - 24)

The Sheranian concept of beauty is more mature, everlasting and permanent. The tenderness in his lines is so advanced that the physical love described by Akhtar does not seem odd. Because we had a common tradition of avoiding things like these in Urdu literature because of our cultural norms. It shows his power of communication that he can convey such things in a manner which seem beautiful. Woman has been a charming element in his poetry. Despite acknowledging some of the most striking abilities of women, Akhtar considers women to be the embodiment of love and beauty (Hassan, 1955). He is also impressed by its beauty and also enjoys it. Neglecting to praise the beauty of a woman is tantamount to committing sin in Akhtar's religion of love. It is very detestable to him that a woman may purchase her beauty or coyness. He loves the innocent and untouched manifestations of beauty. A woman is a flower that blooms when touched, so her aesthetic sense is bound to the limits of her mind and consciousness. That is why he never got the courage to intervene. This is how he describes the superiority of the woman over a flower;

"بہشت حُسن کی تازہ کلی کے دھوکے میں
کلی نے بھی تمہیں دیوانہ وار دیکھا ہے
کسی خیال میں کھوئے ہوئے ہمیشہ تمہیں
سحر نے محوگل و شاخسار دیکھا ہے"
(بار بار دیکھا ہے)

Translation

*In deceit, fresh sprout of Eden's beauty,
Blossom has gazed at you in craze.
Lost in thoughts, the dawn has stared at you
As you are a blossom of flowers*

It is the importunity of human nature that it must be looking for beauty in some parts of its life. And when it searches, the whole world seems to be an obstacle

and an enemy to its relief. Akhtar Sherani's beauty has the same feelings. He is seen searching for the beauty, repose and serenity of a woman, scenes of nature and love for homeland. This sentimentality has been further ignited by his aesthetics. Love for beauty is his motto. This search of beauty takes him on a journey to heaven.

Akhtar Sherani's poetry not only portrays the beauty of woman in this world but his romance also takes him to the mountains, valleys, meadows and deserts in the search for beauty. Like a true romantic he discovers some aspects of beauty in his imagination and puts them in his poetry beautifully. He uses imageries for the expression of his beautiful and in this case, his imageries are very appealing. In the expression of beautiful scenes, he sometimes forms an imaginary world.

"کبھی چمن میں گئی ہو تو مست پھولوں نے
نگاہ شوق سے آئینہ وار دیکھا ہے
روپیلی چاندنی نے رات کو گھلی چہت پر
اداسے سوتے ہوئے بار بار دیکھا ہے"
(بار بار دیکھا ہے)

Translation

*If you, ever been to the garden,
With fingers in mouth, Flowers have gazed at you
On the open roof at night, moonlight
Has seen you oft sleeping with conceit*

CONCLUSION

From all the discussion above, it is safe to conclude that the romantic poetry of both the poets: John Keats and Akhtar Sherani is central to the understanding of the romantic poetry. Their voices demonstrate a strong resilience for beauty, love and Nature and spirituality. Keats appears to be more sentimental and emotional, though there is a force of natural argument in his poetry. He oscillates between the two extremes of romanticism and realism, and never he seems to be touching down at the middle, and which is more from his arguments, it is seen that sentimentally in Keats overpowers his sensibilities. His recoil to reality is, if compared with Sherani's poems (here), quite instant and impulsive. Sherani, on the other hand, is mature, sensible, and less sentimental. Although, the paper doesn't underpin this argument that he was entirely given over to realism or sensibility, but the elements of reality overbalance the elements of sentimentally. He keeps the romantic tendencies under restraint and that is why he is slightly different to Keats's approach. The paper infers that both the poets are purely romantic and can't subside easily the romantic aura; both have been at various points found wanting for a feel of classic values.

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