

Archaism: Survival of Heritage Of The Past

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Classical or ancient culture has its own dignity. So archaism also has its own dignity or grandeur. Archaism can be considered as the survival of ancient ethical values and culture.

Archaism:-

Archaism means the survival of the language of the past into the language of the present. When the poet uses vocabulary of the past writers, it can be called as Archaism. So use of vocabulary of olden times can be called as Archaism.

The basis of archaism was laid down by Aristotle. This convention was carried on by the poet's in English literature also. The poets used archaism only to imitate the model of a particular writer or school of writers of the past. So we find archaism in English poetry when the poet desires to write in the manner of a certain poet or writer of the past.

2 USE OF ARCHAISM

We find such use of archaism during the period of 1600-1900 in English poetry. This period is called a standard archaic usage in English poetry. We find influence of the writers of the past like Spenser & Milton on the modern English poets. However, the poets of 18th or 19th century modified or changed the archaic elements or old words in their poetry. Such poets got an inspiration in the literature of the past. So Coleridge; D. G. Rossetti & Morris got inspiration from the literature of the past ages. These poet's kept alive in their poetry such archaic words as behold, thou, quoth, burthen, damsel, eflsoons, eld, ere, fain, hither, oft, thee, quoth, , smite, sprite, unto, wight, thy, wot, yonder.

3 ARCHAISM AND GRAMMATICAL FEATURES

Some grammatical features were used or retained up to 19th century. Other grammatical features such as the second person pronouns like thou, thee were used by Victorian poets. In the same verbal endings st and th are also used. The old negative and interrogative forms without any auxiliary such as I know not, saw you anything are also used. Such grammatical features were used by the poets of 19th century. The grammatical variants or varied forms were also used. These variants are such as 'tis, 't was, 'gainst, ne'er, e'en, o'er, spake, holped, were also retained.

4 ARCHAISMS AND ORTHOGRAPHY

Even in orthography or spellings archaic words were used. In late 18th century poetry we find such different use of spelling or orthography such as chant which was used as chaunt. The word mariner was used as 'marinere' as in Coleridge's poem 'Rime of Ancient Marinere.

5 TRADITION OF ARCHAISM

We find that the tradition of Archaism was continued till twentieth century. However the poets like Hardy, Yeats, Robert Bridges continued to use the tradition of archaism in their poetry.

We also find the vogue or use of archaism in Modern English because of the influence of Authorized Version of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer and the works of Shakespeare.

6 **Function of Archaism :**

Main function of archaism is the poetic heightening of language. It means wherever poet uses archaic language, his poetry becomes noble or is heightened. Archaic language has dignity and solemnity. This dignity & solemnity is found in archaic language because of noble achievements of writers of the past. Archaic language also gives a sense of cultural continuity. It means that the use of archaic language links the modern poetry to the culture of past ages.

Religious fervour or emotional ethos or atmosphere of the past culture is brought by the use of archaism. So there is a sense of grandeur in archaism or old language. There is a kind of overflow of emotions in the use of archaism.

We also find sublimity in the use of archaism. The 19th century prose writers used archaism for its sublimity. They used biblical or poetical language at the points of emotional climax. So loftiness of tone is given to language by the use of archaism.

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