



## **Romanticism in Different Milieus: A Comparative Analysis in the Works of William Wordsworth, J.P Clark, Jibanananda Das and Pablo Neruda**

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### **Abstract:**

All the poets of different ages have provided us with literary texts pertaining to the ages they belong to. Each text highlights the literary period in which it was written. The most beautiful part is the approach through a concise and compact manner with every detail resonating with an idea of brilliance. It is said History repeats itself. It is a famous saying that actually goes with time and often the contrast with certain events provides us an idea on how the repetition of events occur. Different regions and time period are subjected to different type of changes. However, the shocking fact is the similarity - the magic of the ages, the sheer resemblances that prevailed which provides the readers a continued sense of attachment. The similarity that has been found in every text provides a deep connection with the lives of the readers as well. It does make everyone feel about the required emotions that are felt but is not introspected further. The Romantic Movement (1789-1837) which celebrated the themes of nature, supernaturalism, solitude and that of individualism made this movement as a path breaking one from that of the previous ages. The celebration of nature and the breaking of norms that prevailed in society is the main key point to be taken into consideration. However, the most appreciable part is that the concept of Romanticism is found in different ages and in the works of the poets. William Wordsworth the pioneering figure of the Romantic Age dealt with the abundant beauty of the common world and the natural pleasures as seen in his other poems such as *The Prelude*, *Lines Composed A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey*, *The Excursion*. Jibanananda Das (1899-1954) also known as the 'Ruposhi Banglar Kobi' imagined nature filled with the hues of different colours and dominated the field of poetry. His poem "One Day I shall Come Back" is included in the collection of poems named as *Dhushar Pandulipi*. Pablo Neruda is a well known Chilean poet of the twentieth century. He is best known for his love poems, nature poems and the writings related to politics. The love poems include, *Tonight I Can Write*, *Body of A Woman* and others. J.P Clark, who was an African poet of the twentieth century, famous for his nature poems and the intricate details of nature in his poems such as *The Casualties*, *Ibadan*. This research paper will help readers with the fresh analysis of certain poems in a completely different perspective.

**Keywords:** Nature, Romanticism, Pablo Neruda, Solitude, Imagination, William Wordsworth, Supernaturalism.

## Introduction

The world around us is heading towards a drastic change. The more we are weaving our lives with the concept of digitalization; or rather to be more precise urbanization; the more we are losing our love for nature. The importance of joy in little things are just getting eradicated with time. Simple aspects of life are losing their value in the eyes of people. The era of Romanticism where Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley had reigned. It had made the influence of views to a different extent is missing like the block of puzzle. The condition of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is obviously different from what it had been earlier. What has not been updated in the last few decades? We have seen the arrival of the laptops to the arrival of the pocket friendly smartphones, which took the place of the cordless and the corded landline phones. The scenario is such that these telephones will soon be a piece of antique and also cultural identity within the next few years.

The world around is moving in a fast-paced motion. It is also developing miracles now and then. The age of Artificial Intelligence (A.I) has provided us with several platforms for the successful completion of tasks. The exact purpose that was required to be served has been missing somewhere. In the first half of the year 2025, the trend of Ghibli Art took over the internet. The background of the art that existed was just superficially ignored to the worst possible extent. The artist behind this art form that is Hayao Miyazaki, the Japanese filmmaker and animator made this art form more lively with days of hardwork and perseverance, but just a few instructions which is known as prompt, simply disrupts the hardwork behind this. The study of literature is incomplete without the History of Literature. The literary ages or the literary period in the realm of literature is often named after the great literary personalities. It is because of their contribution or even due to the major historical and political background that unleashes the anatomy of ideas. This twenty-first century world would rather be termed as 'The age of Set-backs'. It is an age where art forms lose their

existence. The basic form of expression is hindered. As seen these days the overuse of the technologically equipped apparatus leads to this.

While coming to the very part of existence. The small components of our lives make our existence much more beautiful. The childhood that we have spent in playing different form of games in a park, or even a playground holds more memorable incidents. The minute of objects often depict emotions. Colours that pave the path to colour the world around us hold no significance. It is through the medium of colours our world turns to be more mesmerizing. In the era of rat race the minimum amount of time required to think about certain things is just getting erased. Social media has become our new form of existence. Nature which has the power or capability to heal people without any kind of specific demand is accessed through the medium of social media. This turns out to be more ironic. The love for nature is just fading away so is nature providing us with the impacts for us to repent.

### **Methodology:**

The methodology for this research paper employs a comparative literary analysis. It focuses on the cross-cultural and trans-historical manifestations of Romanticism and is found across the different ages. The study examines how core Romantic themes transcend specific time periods and geographical boundaries.

It further explores the abundant beauty of the common world and the hues of natural settings. It also examines the “solitary strain” and lonely entities that persist across different poetic traditions. The investigation portrays, how imagination serves as a fundamental involvement for poetic creation and analyzing motifs of self-exploration and reimagination.

### **Solitary strain affecting the overall development of an individual:**

Poetry is one such branch of literature that provides the quintessential overview of every detail in a more mesmerizing manner. The different ages of literature, be it of any language

have witnessed poets compactly showcasing their inner charisma. The various poetic traditions flourished over the ages. The history of English literature has such ages where different themes are explored, according to the need and choices of people. Coming directly to the Age of Romanticism, the socio-political background has much to contribute to embody the flavour of nature. The lenses of the poet are highly magnified in observing the minutest of details of nature and drawing a comparison with their beloved or with the beauty of imagination, imagining the natural world as someone who is close to their heart. In the eighteenth century imagination was not a basic point in poetical theory...but for the Romantics imagination is fundamental, because they think that without such involvement poetry is impossible. (Bowra, 1999, p.2). Romantic period had stalwarts like William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats. They redefined the age in a greater manner. The late eighteenth and mid nineteenth-century was the time period where intense political vigour was present. The French Revolution which also took place from 1789-1799 was a significant point to be marked behind this age (Long, 1919, p.370).

Individualism and imagination are considered as the main theme of Romanticism. Wordsworth's poetry as stated by the man himself is 'emotions recollected in tranquillity'. The effect of his poetry on the later ages was intense. Nevertheless, the most awe-striking part of literature or even about poets and authors are they have the power to make people realize the worth of certain things in a very distinct style. Their style of approach and certain themes fail to fade, even after the passage of two centuries. William Wordsworth, the leading figure of Romantic Age, was known for his poems written in the countryside of Scotland, along with his sister Dorothy Wordsworth and his bosom friend, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. J.P Clark was an African poet of the twentieth century. He was famous for his nature poems and details that pertained to nature in his poems. It had a deep connection to nature is what makes the reader find a sense of similarity between William Wordsworth and J.P Clark.

The main motive behind this research is to provide a cross connection between the poems *The Solitary Reaper* by William Wordsworth and *Night Rain* by J.P Clark. The tone in both the poem is found to be sadistic and emotional one. *The Solitary Reaper*, as the title suggests, is about the life of a reaper in the fields and the daily turmoil that she has to face. ‘Night Rain’ as well provides the sufferings of the common people in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. As class differences were a turning point in both English literature and African literature, it is well evident in the poems also. Wordsworth in *The Solitary Reaper* focuses on the working class, toiling daily in the field and the song she sings acts as the barrier to overcome the pain she endures. J.P Clark’s use of certain imagistic views in the poem, *Night Rain* such as the wet wings of that of owls, and bats are used to depict the condition in which the speaker’s family members are living. The most creative aspect of both the poems is the gender dynamics that are discussed in a deeper context. The solitary aspects are the first point to be noticed. The usage of the terms like ‘alone’, ‘single’ as well as the phrase “Alone she cuts and binds the grain” in ‘The Solitary Reaper’ provides the idea that being a woman she has to work in the fields to earn a living. The entire process is seen to be done alone. The similar site is experienced in ‘Night Rain’ also ; the family experiences a horrifying condition in the turbulent weather and the mother is present trying to protect them in that weather. There is no reference of a fatherly figure. As stated there showing the whole responsibility solely lied on the shoulder of the mother. Despite of having a family she has to experience things in solitude. There is none to share the burden with. The background on which the poem is set is related to that of the war. One of the lines in the poem suggests,

“For the plaintive numbers flow, For old, unhappy, far off-things, and battles long ago.”

(Wordsworth, 2018, p. 85)

Despite the heart wrenching incident occurring a long time ago it still makes the woman think about it twice. The underlying factor of that section is poverty. The war condition weakens

the society and brings out the skeleton that persists inside. The theme of nature that is being highlighted is the main focus that need to be referred to. The use of rhetorical devices such as hyperbole is well evident here. The line,

“No Nightingale did ever chaunt

More welcome notes to weary bands

Of travellers in some shady haunt,

Among Arabian Sands;” (Wordsworth, 2018, p.85)

The imagination of the poet is remarkable. The usage of far-off imagistic places like that of “Among the farthest Hebrides” (Wordsworth 85) denotes Wordsworth’s love for travelling as well as nature. The most innovative of all things in Clark’s poem, is the attention that the speaker pays in minute things. The use of imagery in the riverside area as the poem is set in the Niger Delta provides us an idea of the situation. The choice of appropriate words like that of ‘fish,’ ‘owl’, ‘bat’ made the speaker compare his life to that of the animals. The line, “Falling like orange or mango” (Clark 81) portrays a simile depicting the intensity of rainfall. In both the poems, the poets are of different region and time period but their way of portraying nature has made the readers feel they both belong to the same era. The nature that we often neglect is brought up by them. In addition, Wordsworth’s poetic ideas revolve around the correlation between nature and human emotion. He firmly believed that nature possesses the ability to mirror the sentiments of its beholder, offering solace during times of sorrow and delight during moments of joy.

### **The Art of Finding One’s Beloved amidst the Beauty of Nature and Imagination:**

Nature is considered as the medium through which the poetry of humanity often blossoms into love. The capability of nature to capture the essence of the human mind is something

definitely beyond imagination. The most fascinating part of the Age of Romanticism is obviously the imaginative power. The power is also blended with the love for nature. The way of imagining one's beloved with certain components of nature are often beyond imagination but the poets have the superpower to bring forth the imagistic views. The Age of Romanticism has already provided us with an idea based on solitude, imaginative power and the love for nature. The most attractive part in the case of literature is that the ideas transcend any kind of boundaries and are overflowing with no obstruction. As, we all know that despite the poets belonging to different ages, often the outlook on different topics turn out to be similar. Considering the case of love, the most common approach that we have found among poets is that they often resort to expressing their inner joyous feeling of love by finding their lady love in places where she are not usually found. Imagination of the poets do play a significant role in providing a space for the lady love.

Coming to the topic of the 'beloved,' the poets have crafted the art in a different approach. Considering the two poets of different region and age that are similar in their instincts or ideas. Jibanananda Das, a renowned figure in Bengali Literature, had the capability to weave narratives from the surrounding areas which were based on ground reality and the socio-political conditions that prevailed at that time. Being an active figure, from the 1920s to the 1950s, the underlying conditions that made a huge chaos among the commoners, made a disturbing effect on the poet as well. This particular time period was known to humanity for the Partition of Bengal and also for the Bengal Famine. Wordsworth was the pioneering figure of the Romantic Age in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. We find almost the same taste in the early twentieth century in Bengal. The ardent love for nature is well evident in the works of Jibanananda Das, for example, in the poem "What Else Before Death" he quotes,

'the dim women at the river sprinkling the flowers of fog;'

'the moist smell of rice carried by the waves into the eyes  
of the solitary fish'

'the shadow of the thatched roof is etched in the  
moonlit yard' (Das Gupta, 1972, p.16)

Pablo Neruda, a well-known Chilean poet of the twentieth century, is best known for his love poems, nature poems and political writings. He was also a political activist, which made him confront the military forces and other situations as well. The writings of Neruda provide us with a Latin American flavour. Also, his way of portraying nature differently can be found as well. However, the main purpose is to find the similar aspects in both the poets of two different regions.

There is a motive behind selecting the poems *In My Sky at Twilight* by Pablo Neruda and *Banalata Sen* by Jibanananda Das. Both poems have crafted an idea of self-exploration and that of reimagination. The most engaging part of both the poems is the instillation of life in things which are not even perceived as beautiful if considered by ordinary man and also the depiction of things, ordinary in use which constitutes our lives (Das Gupta, 1972, p.20). Other poets often produce the perfect of things in front of us, sketching the best of humans or other things in the most appealing way possible but the perspective with which the both of them have presented the readers the imperfect of things, that has proved to be more perfect as in this case. The solitary nature that persisted in both poets is well evident from the way it is described. The description transcends any kind of boundaries, the line,

“For aeons have I roamed the roads of the earth

From the seas of Ceylon to the straits of Malaya

I have journeyed, alone, in the enduring night,” ( Das Gupta, 1972, p.31)

This line in “*Banalata Sen*” portrays the usage of allusion, which has provided more depth to the line. The presence of the similar kind of lonely entity has trespassed every age is what is being meant here and also the depiction of the love that the poet has for his beloved which doesn't get affected by any kind of distance. The same goes with the poem, “In My Sky at Twilight”, distance plays a pivotal role in the culmination of the idea, the line,

“You are mine mine, I go shouting it to the afternoon's

wind, and the wind hauls on my widowed voice” (Neruda, 2003, p.61)

The presence of the lady love is inevitable and the speaker's way of conveying love is absolutely different. The solitary strain that affects both the poem are the carefully usage of the times of the day. “Night” and “Twilight” are the exact times used to make it more vivid. Often, both these terms “Twilight” and “Night” are denoted with that of darkness. What darkness often shows is loneliness, and that is what is discussed here. Just like finding a stream of light amidst darkness, the poet imagines his lover to be present at that moment. The line,

“Your plunder stills your nocturnal regard as though it were water” (Neruda, 2003, p.61)

The poem ‘*In My Sky at Twilight*’ delineates the concept of soothing the speaker during the lonely hours. The usage of the simile is what makes the right comparison. The choice of words depicts the uncompromising love that forms the main plot here. In the case of *Banalata*

*Sen* the line that provides the necessary information is,

“I saw her, as a sailor after the storm

Rudderless in the sea, spies of a sudden

The grass green heart of the leafy island.

“Where were you so long ?” She asked, and more

With her bird’s-nest eyes, Banalata Sen of Natore.”(Das Gupta, 1972, p.

31)

The concerning part that lies deep down is what makes the readers drag the similarity between them. The gender dynamic role that is found in the poem is also of immense importance. The portrayal of the female figure in terms of nature as a timeless symbol of beauty and wavering support is well narrated here.

“Her face the sculpture of Sravasti.” (Das Gupta, 1972, p.31),

In Jibanananda Das’s work it showcases the enchanting beauty. “Huntress of the depth of my eyes” (Neruda 61) another phrase in the poem by Pablo Neruda is the key factor in the poem. The usage of words like that of, “fireflies”, “cloud”, “sky”, “warm sun”, “ grass green heart of the leafy island” in both the poems provide the connection to nature in minute details. In spite of the milieu being different in both the poems, the thought process has proved to be of similar origin. This study demonstrates which synthesizes four core Romantic elements nature and nostalgia, melancholy and solitude, supernaturalism and imagination. The motif of the timeless journey within a distinctly Bengali modernist framework. While the poem resonates deeply for the thematic and aesthetic impulses of Romanticism, it simultaneously remains anchored in the geography, cultural memory, and historical consciousness of twentieth-century Bengal.

### **Analysis :**

This research paper explores the enduring and universal nature of Romanticism by comparing the works of four poets from diverse geographical and temporal backgrounds: William

Wordsworth (English), J.P. Clark (African), Jibanananda Das (Bengali), and Pablo Neruda (Chilean). The study argues that while these poets operated in different milieus, their work resonates with core Romantic themes such as nature, solitude, imagination, and individualism.

### **Conclusion:**

Ages after ages pass by but certain things that prevail in our everyday life often hold significance. Nature has been the basis of our existence. Every drop that falls, every tree that sheds its leaves has a connection in between. The one who notices that, questions the reason behind it provides the perfect link to think wisely. The introspection of thoughts reflects the inner sense of wisdom with the different concepts as well. Often the age changes, the time period is utterly different, the socio-political background is subjected to changes but the overall theme or point matches due to several factors at times. History repeats itself and so is the conditions and concepts. Not every thing remains outdated or goes away with time. Some things are said to remain forever. It is where memory plays a pivotal role. The literary personalities are the ones pointing this in a larger and broader way for the audience. The political thought of Rousseau remained the basis of political democrats of Europe. His famous saying, “Man is born free and he is everywhere in chains” came as a challenge to the old order. In this ways, the revolution has been seen as an impact on romantic poet of the new era.

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