

CHANGING NATURE BUT UNCHANGING DIVINITY

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Abstract

Change is unchangeable. Life, in this universe filled with changes. Thoughts, feelings, senses, temperature, seasons, environment, etc. keep on changing. Every human begins a day with one thought and feeling, ends a day with different thoughts and feelings. This makes the life blissful and sad. Environment too remains the same. Amidst all these changes, one thing remains unchanged, i.e. divinity. Divinity never changed or will not change for anybody. It changes those who embrace it and gives boldness to face the changes of reality. The paper is an attempt to analyze these concepts under the light of Emily Dickinson's poems. Her poems on Life, Nature and Eternity unveil this and as a human she too experienced this. The poems of Emily Dickinson explain the passing mood of human thoughts, its pain and also give remedy to get relief from that pain. Here the researcher connotes the meaning of Nature, i.e. surrounding environment and human nature and thoughts and tries to connect the above concept with the real-life situation.

Keywords: *landscape, human thoughts, impact on life and changes, spirituality and divinity, impact on changing life etc.*

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Change is unchangeable. Life, in this universe filled with changes. Thoughts, feelings, senses, temperature, seasons, environment, etc. keep on changing. Every human, begins a day with one thought and feeling, ends a day with different thoughts and feelings. This makes the life blissful and sad. In literature, writers record the changing life events of human society and echo multiple life style of the changing cosmic village. Every change teaches the new lesson. Amidst these changes divinity remains unchanged. It changes those who embrace it and gives boldness to face the reality.

Emily Elizabeth Dickinson, acclaimed as “an epigrammatic Walt Whitman” by critics, sings on these changes. Though she does not belong to any congregation of her time, she has stubborn and unique spiritual thoughts. She sings on the changing nature of American landscape, changing nature of humanity, changing religious ideas and unchanging spirituality which makes her attain divinity. This paper is an attempt to analyse all these concepts under the light of Miss Dickinson’s poems.

Dickinson who is always seen as a lonesome poet sitting in her little solitary world at the window pane, observes every minute object of nature and gave an outlet to her keen power of observation. She comes nearer to William Wordsworth in her praise for the Nature, for her Nature holds a strong fascination by its chastening and benign influence. As a sensitive poet, she explores the multiplicity of Nature from its various angles and studies its various forms and finds out an attachment between Nature and Man. To her Nature is ‘heaven’, ‘harmony’ and not what human sees and hears. She finds great unity among natural things when season changes and says every creature walks along with the arrived season and does its duty with cooperation. She writes:

THE springtime's pallid landscape
.....

The lilacs, bending many a year,
With purple load will hang;
The bees will not forget the tune
Their old forefathers sang.

The rose will redden in the bog,
The aster on the hill
Her everlasting fashion set,
And covenant gentians frill,

Till summer folds her miracle
.....

(“Nature’s Changes”, *PbEDTS* 101)

Here the poet records the obedience and unforgetfulness of seasonal things. The seasonal flower of Spring lilacs unfolds its petals after many years, muted bees sing flawlessly during its turn and everything obeys the law of nature and welcomes its master, its shows their harmony. As Shelley finds unison of forest during Westwind, Emily finds the unity of natural things in Spring which paves way for summer. It shows the inter connectivity of seasons. Emily keenly perceives the changes happen in seasons, delve deeper into the heart of things and shares the moods of natural changes in different perspectives. “For her, nature was an endless carnival of entertainment.” (TPEDP 32).

In various poems like “April”, “November”, “The Snow”, “March” etc, she intones other seasonal changes. It takes the readers into the periodic landscape of America. Beyond the cycle of the year, Dickinson has great passion and love for the cycle of the day. It brings to light the fact that she truly adores the beauty of God’s creations. She is even fascinated by the common objects like sunshine, sun-set, sea, forest, birds, flowers and winds which stirred her imagination and filled her entire being with immense joy. When she visualizes the birds, bees or any natural things, she identifies herself with them and almost becomes one of them. In “Day’s Parlor” she admires and enjoys the beauty of breaking of day:

THE day came slow, till five o'clock,
Then sprang before the hills
Like hindered rubies, or the light
A sudden musket spills.

The purple could not keep the east,
The sunrise shook from fold,
Like breadths of topaz, packed a night,
The lady just unrolled.

.....

(*PbEDSS* 115)

She says that every birth of day has some speciality and always filled with surprise. According to her every sunset or sunrise, dews or flowers, birds or insects are the winged jewels that could alleviate mental sufferings and make her re-live as a child and fly as a free bird from all turmoils.

Dickinson never stops by singing only on the changing nature and its effect but she continues to write on the changing nature of human life. Here the researcher has connoted the term 'Nature' with the human nature especially the ways of thinking, acting and feeling. Most of her verses explain the struggles, thoughts and feelings of human. The poem "A Man" elucidates the struggle of man with fate:

FATE slew him, but he did not drop;
She felled--- he did not fall—
Impaled him on her fiercest stakes—
He neutralized them all.

She stung him, sapped his firm advance,
But, when her worst was done,
And he, unmoved, regarded her,
Acknowledged him a man.

(*PbEDTS* 45)

Here the poet boldly registers the pains suffered by a man in the battle with fate. She says fate seems to be cruel and demonic which tests the temper of human by stinging, piercing, slewing etc. But fate is nothing if it battles with a brave man as Death is nothing for John Donne. By saying she adds that the happening in life changes the intrinsic quality of a man. In "Fame is a fickle food" (*The Single Hound* 6)

and in "I'm nobody! Who are you?" (*PbEDSS21*), Dickinson illustrates how nature of human thoughts changes when he attains fame. In the former poem, the poet explains the effect of fame in human life. She compares fame with a fickle food which is not standard. In latter poem, she shows what is the nature and condition of man if he didn't attain any fame.

I'M nobody! Who are you?
 Are you nobody, too?
 Then there's a pair of us--- don't tell!
 They'd banish us, you know.

Through these words she brings the changes happen in the basic thoughts, action and feelings of human. Also, she expounds that one can achieve unique and standard nature when he realizes his identity and speciality.

After singing the changes she shows through her experience how divinity is unchanged and how it changes those who hold it. In her time, there were numerous changes in religious ideals, she too had some dilemmas and had undergone some changes as said by Martha Bianchi in her preface:

The advance and retreat of her thought, her transition from arch to demure, from elfin to angelic, from soaring to drowning, her inescapable sense of tragedy, her inimitable perception of comedy, her breathless reverence and unabashed invasion upon the intimate affairs of Deity and hearsay of the Bible, made her a comrade to mettle inspiration and dazzle rivalry (*The Single Hound* xiv). She faces boldly all the religious challenges and criticisms against her and overcomes her spiritual see-saw by finding the real and unfanatic spirituality, divinity and holiness. In "To this Apartment Deep" (*The Single Hound* 104), she considers a person's heart as 'God's holy place', she says if a man is attached with God he can speak daily with Him and can cleanse his heart from all his sins. She acted according to this. She has more love for God which makes her attain divine status. She says, "THAT Love is all there is, / Is all we know of Love; / It is enough ..." (*The Single Hound* 118). She stands still by the touching of this Love and burst out by saying if everyone realizes this love he/she cannot hurt others in the name of religion. Specially they will learnt to love their fellow beings and can "Guide the little one predestined/ To the native land" (*PbEdTS* 196)

She experienced all the changes and achieved the unchanging divinity by turning herself towards real spirituality. She is divine in nature and shows the

readers the way to live in this changing world. In addition, she demonstrates how to be unfanatic. Thus, the researcher still finds some gaps for further research.

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