

ROMANTICISING PANDEMIC

Apoorva Mishra

Student,

Master of Arts, Comparative Indian Literature

Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies

University of Delhi, New Delhi, India

Abstract

Life is not a bed of roses while Romanticism creates an imaginary space for it. This paper titled 'Romanticising Pandemic', ponders over the impacts of COVID-19, on environment with the bringing back of strewn nature and audacity towards the romantic culture of a common man. This paper analytically discovers the path to inner exposure of an individual amid the complications of a globally hit pandemic, in order to rebuff its repercussions on subjective intellect, aesthetic, morale, cogitation and hypothetical reach. It has been discussed here that how pandemic has embraced the nature's antiquity which had been ignored since long while scathed the romanticism of human. Due to this pandemic, the internecine relation of isolation, embracement of women, spirituality, landscape aesthetics has been lacerated while the pandemic itself has echoed the romanticism in its own way and romanticism has suffered to replicate the prevalent understanding of it. Rendering the emphasis on romanticism, this paper addresses the impetus of literature, melancholy, imagination and exaltation of primitive and subsequent.

Keywords : Romanticism, Literature, Aesthetic, Nature, Human, Imagination, Woman

ROMANTICISING PANDEMIC

- Apoorva Mishra

Romanticism is boundless which includes individual as well as global, living as well as non living, creation as well as destruction and also every time it develops a new perception. Depiction of romanticism in contemporary as fantasizing, sappy or unrealistic is just a false notion which has to be disavowed to explore its actual inspiration and amplitude because the erratic behaviour towards Romanticism is only spoiling & loosing its intuitivism and hyper physical motivation. Romanticism recreates and is concept of embracement not to be suppressed against the odds and this makes it theory of inevitable.

COVID-19 is rewriting the initial era, of Romanticism during Swedish Flu, in its own way. Wordsworth & Coleridge's romanticism is recollecting its time with the natural conditions while the Shelley's idea of romanticism has been embroiled. In this pandemic the remnants of outcry among humans can be witnessed everywhere; increasing- suicides, domestic violence, thefts and robberies, black-marketing, diseased prone individual, cereal accumulation, unsystematic migrations and collapsed economies. Contrary to these situations of human, environmental conditions have attained a better status, as at global level, air quality index has been improved, depleted ozone layer has recovered up to good extent and ultimately ecological misery has met its green and blooming past, leaving phase of its sufferance apart. Romanticism, of landscape aesthetics has succeeded in recuperating its estrus but the humanistic approach of its characteristics towards woman, individual, imagination, isolation and literature has reached to an abject level. Worsening human behaviour is heading towards outbreak of every time the most devastating havoc of all time. Resumption of common human values and their preservation in actions may help in healing the already gifted planet which would be easier than claiming a new one. Climate crisis is very sensitive and significant subject of recent times while this pandemic has played role of water, to one dying of thirst. Increasing pollution, deforestation, trophy hunting, rapid increase in endangering species; has already almost gagged the ecological world.

Nature's sublimity is adamant to any physical force and it is outgo of rectitude while the product of fortitude. Sublimity of nature is a cicerone to abyssal of epistemology which propitiate up to ecstasy. Romanticism is the best and only conception developed till present to embrace the bitter sweet chime of human and nature. One cannot get into Romanticism without bringing rationality and imagination together. Maintaining balance is the key to ensure sustainable existence whether it is in life of an individual or it is about various divine creations of this universe. Extremes of anything, are always doleful at some point of time and upholding the mid position of extremes is the balanced position where one can hope for further existential sapidity. Human and nature are also two extremes and biased behaviour towards only one of these would be destructive, as focusing only on nature and its conservation will restrict the development of human civilization while blind development which is only human centric will end this divine wealth of nature. At the both extreme conditions, human and nature, survival of anyone of these is not justified, which fails the idea of spiritual coexistence and the motive behind two different but complementary creations and here comes the responsibility of human towards nature that human has to maintain the balance and nurture its own existence without thrashing nature's mammon.

Pestilence romanticises not always towards either positive or disastrous but also reveals the grass root reality of morale and conscience at individual level on humanitarian grounds. Romanticism has thoroughly pondered over the embracement of women, her divine instinct and also struggled to change existing mentality of the social system, to repent and induct women at her place, deserving equal rights being part of an egalitarian society. The wave to redefine and improvise the perception and treatment has been slowed down with time and the peccancy against women are evolving, of new forms in new ways; declining the objective of romantic era. Women are first one in row to face consequences of crisis, this time too, loosing employment of lady stifles the whole family and herself, while, if it is of a man, and when the burden of family disturbs the man; again venting anger of a man is going to victimize others; either child or lady of that family would suffer his rage and girl child would be the first one to give up education and stop going institute in case of financial breakdown while domestic uneasiness of women has no way out.

Women has less mortality rate, vulnerable mobility conditions, physical complications and its blanket impacts are widely discussed topics but there is also a pathetic drawback which is exerting the way of romanticism into a trough of grotesque chic and that is domestic violence. Unpaid work of women can be easily atoned with care, respect and sangfroid attitude towards them and it is actually this easy because it is ethical beauty and divine instinct of women to be so; still the act to ostracize and vilify women, is ostensibly ignoring the introductory feature of romanticism and this standpoint is ultimate of ordure culture of evolving human generations. All the disgrace or injustice be it domestic abuse, professional discrimination or even social subjugation, towards women, are associated with deteriorating human behaviour and it solely is responsible for these grinning perversions against women and blaming past(for it) and tagging it as orthodox corrupt system or backward ideology which actually has no relation with contemporary circumstances and had its own rationale basis for the ancillary demands of time; is merely a prominent excuse to hide and cremate the stigmas of their aberrant beliefs and doings with shadow of those who don't even exist to counter their part.

If increase in domestic violence was so predictable and is a common threat in major times of crisis and still it is happening this time too, then how did we evolve? What is the genuine criteria of development for human? Technical evolution is the only term in human dictionary for development? The global world is developing but human, as a political animal and social being, is not. Countries have released datum stating 40 to 50% rise in cases of domestic violence and in majority, reason mentioned is lockdown and crisis, which has deliberately imprisoned- people within four walls. But is it rational to accept it as basic cause? Ideological differences and problematic events are inalienable principles of human existence but having no ethical terms and introspection of inner aesthetics is only imbecility to dig own grave. Psychological illness is deadlier than the actual illness and if illness damages physically, it is psychology which settles with the recovery conditions primarily. Psychological pressure once grew will definitely approach someone to compensate; either self or others and it results in self destructive impacts as depression or suicide or other mental disorders further developing a diseased prone individual while on others, it results in professional rivalry, domestic violence, child abuse, doomed parenting quality, marital

conflicts and sometimes heinous crimes as well like rapes, assaults and brutal murders; which is much problematic being a contagious psychological impact where now a well person is also suffering a different kind of pressure and melancholy.

Trending personality traits of being introvert and love for being alone are seemingly not working well these days as terms like quarantine, isolation and even testing have become creepy and the people actually encountering these predicaments are demanding special treatment and company of people. People are adopting various ways to get in touch with others and hold their minds not to feel alone or imprisoned. While Isolation is a problem only when one fails to segregate the world of compact illusions systematically nevertheless this conception has been diverted and mislead, and that is why it has actually become desolation this time. Psychological strength is major factor in determining the flank and stand of an individual and that strength is product of inputs the individual chose to possess. Watering and wiping leaves would keep the tree green for a very short stretch but watering roots would let them grow; rich in nutrients, natural in colour, alive in fragrance and to bear healthy fruits. Similarly, Spiritual Aesthetic improves moral health, psychological strength and develops a truly stable health of a person. Explication and refinement of stuffy and warped nous only has ability to muffle the dark imperfect; and espouse the ethical inflorescence of whole human race by omitting obscurantism; replacing it with spiritual epistemology and ideological renaissance.

Physical world and psychological worlds are epitome of unanimity as Physical aesthetics are subjected to psychological aesthetics and it tends to posit ethical judgment as aesthetic judgement. If India is a beautiful country, it doesn't mean it has only physical aesthetics, that time it is expressing a synoptic emotion of that natural, cultural, traditional, moral anthology- of individual as well as community. The purpose of aesthetics in literature, art and music is not to please our senses organs but to be felt and emulated by ontological features of human. Aesthetics in Romanticism has much wider diapason than a parochial idea of physical beauty and even embellishment of figurative beauty; which has become a popularized phenomenon suppressing its fundamental spirit. Aesthetics in nature provokes the beauty in thoughts of individual, cognitive aesthetics in an individual is precursor of

affluent outturn to literature and literary aesthetics is subjected to ethical judgment as it is amenable for a morally valid environment. Advocating Kant's theory on aesthetic judgment, it would be justified to add that aesthetic judgement and ethical judgement are interdependent. Our aesthetic preferences define our ethics or can say our ethical inclination decides the measures of aesthetics we adopted and rely upon. Ethical judgment of author within literature allocates the officinal appanage of literary affiliations to its reader at explicit level of manifestation; and aesthetic judgement directly shore up the reader's response, hitting personality traits and instinct at the nuance point of mental and spiritual appeasement and ultimately ethical judgment deciphers the literature to decide the side of inclination between two; paving way towards either emancipation of life and soul, or evanescent worldly pleasure.

The literature to refer is the harbinger of ocean of thoughts which are going to dominate the mind. Not only literature can be romanticised but literature itself helps to exhort that how to romanticise the grim days. Literature doesn't interpret only a single aspect towards pandemic, that of explaining the criticality of timeshare or telling its stories rather it digs out various facets from roots to fruits and what all types of fertilizers and nutrients were needed using different lenses with different methods, measures and theories. Literature is a medium of expression to stir the reader's psychology and the whole mindscape which also makes it responsible for evoking variety of emotions while it has been circumscribed with time and other variations.

Literature is an art to convince which must not be bound to a specific portrayal of a condition whether it being focused on caste, religion, race, personality, gender or even financial status because if King's misery deserves a novel on it while a common man's strife has no ear to listen, it is verily iniquity to literature. Literature is locus to reignite the conscience in dilemmas of spiritual turmoil and offers courage to believe that we owe the world at least till we exist and are entitled to shape conditions accordingly. Considering the white man's burden, it is needed to retrospect the contemporary altered culture of thinking, writing and reading while reading must be aimed to adopt and follow the conscience hidden in it and the choice of literature depends upon the desires of reader that in what kind of

imagination and fallacy he want his mind to immerse in. When Lawrence Buell says “...trust in power of imagination is not a literary scholar's idiosyncrasy”, that means, it flows directly into the conscious or subconscious mind of its reader to convince them that the direction of author’s conscience is reflecting reality somewhere beyond the fact that if reader is prepared to adopt it or not. Imagination is the emanation of any literary creation, deriving the sophisticated into intuitive knowledge. Imagination has no condition but it has ability to overtly fulfill clandestine appetite and literary practices are best medium to reify and pass it on to others. One cannot get into Romanticism without bringing rationality and imagination together, so the ethical demand of this idea is portrayal of unbiased, intellectual and truly moral idolon, and adherence of it, is identity of an author. Literature is therapeutic but a responsibility first and it begins with the imagination of author and stops at the execution by the recipient.

World has grave urge to realize the significance of Romanticism, not only in times of abrosia but in every epoch of change and even heyday. Everywhere human is running in a scamper, a race to lead in lives but question is; Are we actually living life? Do we have really time to play seesaw of compassion and sense of consciousness towards nature, another individual and one’s own soul and body even amid such life of stipulation? Then why human willingly choose to encore the prior morbus and deny the spiritual philosophy of life but again readopting it in times of crisis only.

Romanticism and ‘Sturm and Drang’ movement shares the basic idea of embracement and an whole epoch of innovative narratives and assertions on nature, individualism, feeling and rational enlightenment but the lesson to soak up is that lack of wide perception and austerity led ‘Sturm and Drang’ to languid mien and ultimately a taciturn but marrowy disquisition, so in order to parry romanticism, adoption of self-discipline and harnessing the fundamental features of romanticism without any rencontre would be auxiliary in providing affirmative response of it. Therefore, Political discourse needs to be shifted into ethical discourse; and rhetoric to cogent step in aid of the execution. Denial of critical thinking and literary reasoning towards the necessities in times of any epidemic would be injustice to the whole human community. Thus, Collective approach of aesthetics towards literature,

environment, imagination and human beings is the only way to attain the germane epistemic of romanticism and tenable accomplishment of inspiration.

Work Cited:

- Leitch, Vincent B. Gn. Ed. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma, 2001. Print.
- Bivins, Zachary. "On the Pleasures and Perils of Romanticism". *E notes*. Medium, 26 September 2018. Web. 16 July 2020, <https://medium.com/enotes/on-the-pleasures-and-perils-of-romanticism-8147fc9f2f6b>
- Nayar, Pramod K. "What the Humanities Can Teach Us During a Pandemic". *The Bastion*, 11 April 2020. Web. 28 June 2020, <https://thebastion.co.in/ideas/what-the-humanities-can-teach-us-during-a-pandemic/>
- Shewry, Teresa. "Literature and the Environment: Fictions of Nature, Culture, and Landscapes". 14 December 2013 Web.10 July 2020, <https://www.environmentalhistory-au-nz.org/2013/12/literature-and-the-environment-fictions-of-nature-culture-and-landscapes/>.

