



THE TUMBLE OF FRENCH REVOLUTION: THE UPSURGE OF WORDSWORTH'S BELIEVE IN NATURE AND HUMANITY

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Abstract

A revolution is much more than a simple series of rebellions by a nation. In France, on Parliament's pronouncement to increase taxes by Louis XVI, the previously poor populace revolted by the rule of reason and trust in human nature, asserting equality amid all without split of birth. Unluckily, the people were offered these noble concepts in the shape of unclear aims to be achieved. The terror and rise of Napoleon were the culminations of the revolution, with no stopping then. The French Revolution, as a prognosticator of equality and brotherhood shattered into terror and blood craving rebellions; a truth beyond acceptance, particularly for the romantic poets of England. This study, after a thorough investigation of effects of revolution on English Romantic poets, traces the phases of Wordsworth was an ardent supporter of movement who later plunged into frustration and sheer despair with failure of French revolutionary ideas. The textual thematic analysis further investigates through the excerpts from collection of Wordsworth poetry that the poet is not an escapist, but his views administered the terror of the French Revolution. The



further investigation of the poetry elucidates that Wordsworth reconstructed his relation with nature in a new potency in some phases in his life. It is inferred that the poet discovered that relation with nature would lead to rebirth of humanity by renewing the faith in goodness and nurturing power of nature. The result was that the turmoil of French Revolution added compassion and love in Wordsworth for nature and humanity.

Key words: French Revolution, Terror, Romantic poets, Wordsworth, humanism

Introduction and Background

A revolution is not solely based on a succession of revolts by a nation. It is more complicated than a gruesome fight over bone amid parties. It is not just a street-fight and a simple alteration of government. A revolution is an insurrection that need eras to take root in the soil. French revolution, before, during, and after 1789, had been dealt in various dimensions by the influenced writers of different ages. Since its occurrence, the event has been studied as a cultural phenomenon, including plays, fine arts, buildings, construction and style, etc., and was extended to aspects of societal and radical turmoil. These issues resulted in imagery by meticulously re-creating conventional comprehension of this vigorous era of the past. This effected many writers in every period and triggered the sensitivity of poets, especially the English poets of the 18th century in portraying different dimension by each romantic poet.

Revolution in France

In France, the establishment of Ancient Regime or Old Regime divided the people into three sets, known as the Estates of the Realm . The chief Estate belonged to the clergy of Roman Catholic, the following Estate comprised of French elite, and the Third Estate comprised of the populace, unrecognized of nationality. The entire France unified under the watchword, one king, one commandment and one belief . The Parliament of Paris met at Versaille in private, which initiated chaos amongst individuals, who felt that they were left in the obscure, with no consent and knowledge about the decisions about the country. With the decision of the Parliament in increase of taxes to pay off the debt raised from numerous combats battled by Louis XVI, the population which was at present deprived, turned against the setups in government. Enthused by the enlightenment and keenness for liberty in the realm of religion, primarily by the Protestants, along with freedom and turning France into a republic, principles like despotism, dignity, fortunate clergy and control over public life were begrudged.

The American revolt, on the other hand invigorated the powers of the middle-class rebels. Hume, Rousseau, Hobbes and many others were stimulated by the notions of liberty, equivalence, political and religious freedom. If, “man was born free”, as reason declares, why, “he is everywhere in chains”, professed the observation. The ideas of equality pierced into the very lowest ranks, hoping to convert the hearts of the meekest.



The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime Enchantress

But these communistic objectives were not conveyed plainly in the minds of common people. The ideas of freedom were political and economic organizations were presented to the people only in the form of unclear goals, which followed negations. Even after the king had to divide his supremacy with an elected Legislative Assembly, the failure of the administrative structure left France in a condition of muddle.

The deviation from a simple aim to the powers of evil, like Rule of Terror, autocracy of Napoleon, the conservative policy of Metternich and the Holy Alliance, are the desultory results of the revolution, which the London Times (Jan. 25th) expresses as the, “deadly destructive to the peace and happiness of Mankind”. Historically, ‘the Terror’ is the period when the Jacobins controlled the government and as reported by London Times, “carried their bloody purpose to the uttermost diabolical stretch of savage cruelty”. The Jacobins aimed to win the war along with the civil war by establishing the Revolution ideologically in France. The September Massacre was the result of the explosion zenith of mutiny and recklessness in France. The London Times records the event of September Massacre as, “the mob think no more of killing a fellow-creature, who is not even an object of suspicion, than wanton boys would of killing a cat or a dog”. Further the London Times (1792) reported that the mob suspected, “every person who had the appearance of a gentleman, whether stranger or not, was run through the body with a pike. He was of course an Aristocrat, and that was a sufficient crime. A ring, a watch chain, a handsome pair of buckles, a new coat, or a good pair of boots in a word, everything which marked the appearance of a gentleman, and which the mob fancied, was sure to cost the owner his life. EQUALITY was the pistol, and PLUNDER the object.” The preys of the Terror were the blue-blooded aristocrats, and the peasants constituted the majority of victims overall by standing in contradiction to the Revolution in the Vendée. King Louis XVI was beheaded in 1793 and The London Times depicts that this, “barbarous murder”, is committed by, “ferocious savages of Paris” who are the, “veriest wretches”.

The former nobles (as the nobility was abolished in 1790), and the people who had chosen to emigrate, stayed underneath the Revolution and later when they returned to France, were executed under the supposition that they were the undercover agents of counter-revolution. A different group of executed people in 1792 were the obstinate priests who had declined the loyalty pledge to the constitution. The London Times (1792) delineates the happening as, “the heads and bodies of...the principal Clergy and Gentlemen...have been since particularly marked as trophies of victory and justice!!! Their trunk less heads and mangled bodies were carried about the streets on pikes in regular calvacade” and, “The sudden massacre of the Ministers in bizarre Court of Justice, or Court of Vengeance and Wild-justice, quickly style itself, by negotiating with the Prison-Registers laid in front”.



Maximum killings occurred in regions of war or civil war, in areas like Lyons, Vendée, and Marseilles. It is recorded that a total of 2,639 death sentences occurred in Paris. The over-all death sentences during the Terror were 16,594. But, a number of deaths occurred without formal death sentences, enacted in a court of law. Moreover, numerous people died in choking due to overcrowded and unhygienic prisons, while they awaited trial. Many deaths during the civil wars and federalist revolts were authoritatively not chronicled. The American historian Greer, recorded 41,000 victims. Pierre Chaunu, entitled Vendée as a 'genocide' and recorded deaths of 500,000 rebels. Similarly, Jean-Clément Martin, advocate up to 250,000 insurrectionaries and 200,000 republican deaths. The London Times (1792) printed, "twelve thousand persons...this number will be considered as a gross exaggeration...eleven thousand persons were massacred in Paris...". Another slaughtered group were the radicals, who were accused of conspiring against the Revolution, including the Girondins, the Hébertists, the Robespierrists.

The London Times (1792) printed that, "The Commissioners once more attempted to bring back the ungovernable and infatuated multitude to a sense of justice and humanity; but they could not make the least impression on their minds, or check their ferocity or vengeance." The Jacobins desired to create radical philosophy and believed in the minds of the people, so, "The 'people' were no longer meant to be only awestruck spectators, but active citizens cooperating with the machinery of terror". From then onwards, the Terror twisted from the disaster of an ideologically-driven effort to the rebirth of the Republic of Virtue in the French culture. The aim was to change the thinking of the people and their behavior demanded political conformism and submission, along with an energetic pledge to the Jacobin future dream. This engaged a cultural revolt, that expected a new breed of human being. The consequences of the French Revolution awe struck the entire world, first with hope than with dismay.

French Revolution and its effects on arts and Literature

By the end of 1989, the focus had been on what had actually happened and the scholar's vengeance attitude about the history expanded over the dominion of the fine art and the art, entertainment, pedagogy and communication. As a result, most delightful records and briefer revisions appeared in literary works, artistry, playhouses, ballet, masque, melody, construction and layout, festive occasions, style, the journalists, education, and even cathedrals as they were entangled in the radical play too. A few of the initial and utmost significant works comprised of Mona Ozouf's examination of radical and evolutionary occasions (1976), Thomas Crow's explanation of the rise of public painting shows called salons (1985), Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche's overview to the "revolution in print" (1989), and Emmet Kennedy's A Cultural History of the French Revolution (1989) with topics from theater to pornography.

Another strain attended mentality study, the radical and social life by learning about the ways, rites and traditions of speech and behavior that are linked to the era of revolt, with new methods of politics in highways, clubs, meeting galleries, and at crown court. Other deviations focused on ordinary people and women, as their homes were equally at stake in radical culture as the



community domain. They were removed, avoided, reconfigured or re-politicized. Besides, the depictions, signs, and codes forced upon them by first the kingdom and ecclesiastical order and, later by the new community and general administrations and internal radical administrations needed to be attended to. The Great French Revolution was made of two great currents: the ideas about the political restructuring of States, and the other was of action which rose from farmers and town workers, who wished to gain instant progresses in their economic situations. These two currents met and joint the effort to comprehend a common purpose which would help both, and the result was the Revolution.

Romanticism is another enlightened standard of human truth and freedom that is directed by the French Revolution and unlocked Counter-Enlightenment towards an original historical drive.

The English Literature of Romantic age and the impact of the French Revolution

The influence of the French Revolution on Romanticism is evident in many well-known writers of the Romantic era like William Blake, Edmund Burke, William Wordsworth and P. B. Shelley.

Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all!

The high hopes of French Revolution and the desolation that followed, affected the creative minds and resulted in production of a disillusioned and a false hoped literature. The violence, bloodshed and chaos could not be ignored, but still the romantic poets fought to wage the lost battle. The followers of the French Revolution had joined the philosophy with all their head and heart. The ideals of the revolution were the radical promises that were emotionally and intellectually accepted by the revolutionists. As Shelley utters,

“The loathsome mask has fallen, man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man;
Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree; the king
Over himself; just gentle, wise.”

The main downfall causes of French Revolution are the monetary inequality, fiscal disaster, communal and political issues. The unstable government organization, extensive starvation and malnourishment were wide spreading in France. But, it was mainly the disinclination of the peasants to pay off the feudal taxes. The middle classes, vigorous and willing for the task, felt capable to collapse the incapable, frivol, debauched government from the palace aristocracy, which was dragging the kingdom to a ruin. And behind the scene, the public were transformed into, “French barbarians. They delight in that kind of murder, which is attended with cruelty,



and rejoice in every occurrence which can debase and unsex the feelings of man". William Blake feared the consequences of the French Revolution to be replicated in his country too. Blake in London in 1792, depicted a civilization that was disturbed where, "all souls and bodies were trapped, exploited and infected." In the start of the poem, Blake declares that the streets and the river Thames are "charter'd", thus depicting the capitalist intentions of the government. He further elaborated that the roads and stream were clandestinely retained with ill and unhappy people. Blake depicted grief of folks as,

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear:

In the Chimney Sweep, he presented corruption and disorder. As, the toil of chimney sweepers was periodic so the church termed them a threat and dreaded their abilities. Blake criticized the Catholic Church to take part in child labor.

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls

The cycle of depression was handed down generation after generation. The harlot in the same poem was portrayed to be destitute by caring for her newly born, who was the consequence of business not passion and this depression would be placed on her child and their children later. Besides, the harlots would transmit on illness to wealthy men who hired her, which later would be passed on to their wives. The ostensible endless series of depression and despair that the people in the poem depicted are the straight images on the catastrophe of the French Revolution. Percy Bysshe Shelley also made his impact to literature in the conclusion of the French Revolution. Shelley's England in 1819 described the civilization which resulted out of fiasco of the French Revolution. He discussed the incapable kings, who were deaf and blind to humanity misery. Though, the phase of transient from philosophy to action and from a model to reality, was yet to be achieved. The action from the masses, somehow, appeared as London Times (1792) described them as, "they could spring only from a base, cruel and degenerate nature". Similarly, the occurring of French Revolution as, "hideous, dim-confused; which it is painful to look on; and yet which cannot, and indeed which should not, be forgotten". Shelley portrayed the English rulers who were disengaged from their duties and people, but were continuously drawing upon the life, soul and value out of the hungry people. The people scarcely had the land to walk upon, whereas the leaders, who were blinded by their treasure were incapable to feel the effects of their self-seeking deportment.

Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;
A senate, Time's worst statute, unrepealed—
Shelley reflected upon the law-and-order societies, where the political power, aristocrats and



the clergy ruled and the people were only regarded a weight to the governing category. By announcing the rule of logic and faith in humanity, Shelley turned against the administrations that abridged man to suppression and commanded freedom with the elimination of primitive tolls. Thus, many romantic writers were enthused by the wreckage of the revolution. The average person was powerfully emotionally and psychologically affected by these authors. The ardent ideas of revolution enabled them to yield fervent works of art through literature.

The undertaken research focuses on exploring the effects of revolution that influenced the Romantic poets of England, particularly William Wordsworth. Browning called Wordsworth a turn-coat and an opportunist, though Wordsworth witnessed the diminishing hope of the French revolution and the expectations of elevation in societal and economic transformation also underwent a turmoil. Thus, torn in between patriotic loyalty to Britain and humanitarian loyalty to the rights of man, his thoughts were depicted in various poems. Thus, aspects like Wordsworth's ideological and emotional attachment to the movement along with the effect of Terror and the rise of Napoleon abandoned his revolutionary faith and later the regain in humanity, are investigated and traced in this study and presented in chronological phases through textual thematic analysis of selected poems of Wordsworth. To investigate the notion, data is collected from multiple means, like collection of Wordsworth's poetry, periodicals, records and web sites are used in this research.

Analysis and Discussion

Wordsworth's approach to life underwent several phases. Initially, Wordsworth was influenced by French philosophers like Locke, then Hume, followed by Rousseau and the later by Godwin and Kant. Just a century before the fall of Bastille, Locke in an essay compared human mind to a blank paper which could hold experience to a certain limit. The philosophy of revolution, however, rested on the ideas of Locke, claiming dearth of faith in spiritual and transcendental. Thus, the higher super sensuous truths were denied and the mind was termed incapable of creating anything. To this, Hume added by inquiring about the place for transcendent knowledge, God, immortality or soul, but only in the physical life. Later, the visibility of Kant's influence in Wordsworth's poetry was prominent. There are various stages of Wordsworth's life in pursue of truth, inner peace and insight of life.

The first phase

The poems written before 1789, like the Evening Walk, suggested no spiritual experiences, but only an observation of objects of nature, in the true Locke's fashion.

How pleasant, as the sun declines, to view

The spacious landscape change in form and hue!

Before the journey to France, the poet trusted the spirit of the things and he found to possess the, "first great gift, the vital soul" and "subordinate helpers of the living mind". The vital soul and living mind were active and not simple passive sheet of blank paper, as Locke termed. The



sensitive quality of this mind was seen in the bird snaring and boat stealing recollections, as he heard, “the solitary hills low breathing” and

“A huge peak, black and huge,
as if with voluntary power instinct,
Up reared its head”

For many days, his sense of fact was blocked by obscuring the known things from his vision. There were no plants, sky, ocean or green fields, but the continuous company of, enormous and expansive spirit and kinds that were not part of breathing menfolk.

This vital and vivid experience was a mesmeric influence and an exaltation of nature beyond the limits of nature. His, “latent qualities” connected him to the “essences of things” confirming the presence of an imminent spirit. The key stone to his faith was the “naked being” bringing the highest joy, as he was satisfied by sensing a being that existed above,

And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart

The material world turned vitalized and the fields, rocks, flowers lay, “bedded in a quickening soul” leading to a Being that was beyond time and place. Thus, the mind of the poet was a receptor of the veiled spirit. So, the living mind and vital soul meant creative energy . Against Locke’s blank paper, Wordsworth found some active creative power within him.

How life pervades the undecaying mind

How the immortal soul, with godlike power

Wordsworth sensed a mystic power with nature, with faith in things and mind calling it, reason in its most exalting mood, which attests the advent of inspiration of Hume. Till the age of 22, nature was a desire and man a figure in it. He was enclosed in mystical light and saw man in utter goodness. He saw nothing of human vice. Even the evil in London social life made no long-lasting impression upon him. Thus, with this impact of man enfolded in natural goodness, he went to face the French Revolution.

The second phase

When the French Revolution occurred, Wordsworth was just nineteen. He breathed in the stimulating air of the transformed atmosphere and cried,

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven”

But, before the terror of '93, Wordsworth had passed from youth to manhood. There is a precise part of French Revolution which had a great consequence on Wordsworth’s poetry and fame. Wordsworth’s vigor, in the true Rousseau spirit, thus expresses,

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
Upon our side, we who were strong in love!

The above lines clearly depicted the debate of critics for Wordsworth possessing healthy emotions or the tendency to reason. Mathew Arnold argued that Wordsworth’s greatness lied



with strange supremacy of the delight of nature and in humble basic affections and duties. However, Edmond Scherer viewed that whatever that Arnold suggested described only Wordsworth of the pastorals, not his highest inspirations. Coleridge also proclaimed him to be a philosopher. So, Arnold admired the emotional and universal poet, whereas Scherer along with Coleridge and Wordsworth himself, looked upon the intellectual side and a contributor to history of thought. Thus, twofold greatness of Wordsworth was revealed in his being poet of healthy emotions and revealer of a higher gnosis sublimity to reason. This made him a thinker, if not a philosopher. The sublime shift to find hope and faith transported Wordsworth back to contact with French Revolution. The poet spent his boyhood in loneliness, amid woods and lakes, growing a unique and powerful experience, argues. In the sole company of nature, the world materialistic issues and frivolities were unknown to him. Wordsworth's attachment to revolution was emotional. During his two visits in 1790 and 1791 to France, he witnessed rage and ruin, he stood, "unconcerned, tranquil, almost". The reason for this indifference lies in his belonging to a distant rural locality with no acquaintance to the French politics. A mystic dreamer, a nature lover, who was not humanized yet.

Crossing the channel and facing the realities of life, the endeavors of Revolution, abnormal society, curiosity in man and matters, became the center of his feelings. Innocent, inexperienced and ignorant, suspecting no evil, he became a keen supporter and follower of happiness of mankind. The fourteenth part of Prelude presented the experiences of his life. He deliberated about his sojourn in France and the influence of the Revolution. In 1790, a year later the raid of the Bastille, Wordsworth toured France to observe the sight of, "human nature being born again" (The Prelude)

His interval in France begun in Book 9, Residence in France, taking the reader along onto his voyage of witnessing the historic visions of the Revolution. Wordsworth says,

"I saw the Revolutionary Power,
Toss like a Ship at anchor, rocked by storms"

He knew the power and the reality that it wasn't precisely what was prearranged by the people. He mistrusted something, but could not understand as he had the, "stranger's ears, To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub wild!". Thus, he sensed some the master plans in nature that he had scanned and at times read with attention. But was too a stranger to penetrate into the depth of situation, as he proceeded that there was something strange, an undefined presence, a look, or a hope, an uncertainty or fear that he scanned vividly and also investigated and observed each gesture of rage, and irritation, and despite.

He depicted to the reader the real scenario through intense imageries and detailed desires. The period Wordsworth spent in France added enormously to the most praised work of his life-time. Wordsworth recalled his experiences in France at a stimulating period of antiquity, but also by using his creative mind, he was enabled to carry to life the persons who had lived through this era of disturbance and revolution. At first, Wordsworth considered that the French Revolution was rational that the ravenous peasants, who are overloaded and sick, treated harshly for uncounted years by the nobility, should finally rebel against the merciless. But the disability for



action on behalf of middle and educated classes could not be ignored, if, it was not for the peasants, who were motivated by limitless insurrections which lasted for four years, and provoked the middle classes to battle both King and Court. Reporting on September Massacre, the London Times (1792) expressed the motley group of riots to be composed of, “almost as many women as men, many without arms, and very little provision. A principal object with them is to destroy the corn and lay waste the country.”. In the words of Wordsworth, the mob differed in age and temper, but were ruled by sole essence that ruled every heart.

Wordsworth’s involvement to the French Revolution was not just philosophical, but based on reflections and meditation on the contemporary issue, but it was emotional too.

—philosophic war,

Led by Philosophers

He was still a fresh young man from Lake District, who thought equality and freedom as natural courses of life; ignorant of real situations of world and France, of such diverse and upheaved state of natural life. His love of nature, a beautiful image of man was not improved yet. What Wordsworth saw on French roads were people, who,

Were bent upon undoing what was done:

This was their rest and only hope;

therewith No fear had they of bad becoming worse

Wordsworth met Beaupuis at Blois and was revealed to the government and monarchy evils, rights and loyalty and agreed to the first principal of revolution, the natural goodness of man.

He believed in the noble aim of the people which were, “arguments sent from heaven”. Though, in Descriptive Sketches, he presented glimpses of Rousseau’s primitive life and golden age, but his politics was simply believing in, “equal rights and individual worth”. With anguish and fever for the people, he went to Paris.

The third phase

The fast-changing conditions of the country left all in awe and stricken, “in the history of mankind, we have no precedent of such wanton and disgraceful excess”, reported the London Times. The king had fallen and Wordsworth wanted to die for the revolt, for the cause, on an alien land. But the crises were too inhumane to be accepted. In the words of Carlyle “man after man is cut down; the sabres need sharpening; the killers refresh themselves from wine-jugs. Onward and onward goes the butchery; the loud yells wearying down into bass growls” . The London Times further described the day of beheading of Madam Corday that, “The fish women and others, belonging to the markets, were near tearing her to pieces”. Wordsworth was hurled back home when conditions went critical.

To England I returned,...

Should to the breast of Nature have gone back,

With all my resolutions, all my hopes,

A Poet only to myself, to men Useless

But the turning of events, the fear and the upsurge of Napoleon 1796, with invasion on other



land, and walking upon the promise of liberty, gagged the morals for which the French Revolution stood. According to the London Times, “the carcasses lie scattered in hundreds, diffusing pestilence all around”. London Times also described the, “atrocious act” of the, “inhuman monster” who dared to, “slap on her cheek” after the execution of Mad.

Oft said I then, And not then only,
“What a mockery this Of history,
the past and that to come!

Now do I feel how all men are deceived,
Reading of nations and their works, in faith,
Faith given to vanity and emptiness;

But the fact is that Wordsworth at that time was uncertain amid dual devotions: his loyal faithfulness to Britain and his humanitarian faithfulness to the privileges of man. As the London Times added that, “they (the French) cannot expect friendship nor intercourse with any civilized part of the world”. This misperception was confronted by Wordsworth in his narrative poem, *The Prelude* in excessive particulars. Back home he was a changed man and improved. But, he found no peace at Cumberland. His soul was on fire, when he received the first shock in 1793, when England raised war against France. For the poet his country fought against the rising spirit of liberty in France.

But he mentally tried to fight these and reconstruct the new. The carvings were too strong to be erased from Wordsworth’s mind, as Carlyle explained the prisoners with fear of assassination, “clasped each other spasmodically, and hung back; gray veterans crying-‘Mercy, Messieurs; ah, mercy!’ But there was no mercy”. Though, the reforms of revolution humanized him and its philosophy exposed his experiences, but stimulated his constructive powers and helped build a new faith. He further declared in 10th Book of *Prelude* that the, “truth is most painful to record!”, Wordsworth validates the incorrect expectation individuals possessed,

“Such ghastly visions had I of despair,
And tyranny, and implements of death,
And innocent victims sinking under fear,
And momentary hope, and worn-out prayer,
Each in his separate cell, or penned in crowds
For sacrifice, and struggling with forced mirth
And dungeons where the dust
Was laid with tears.”

A massacre which, “human nature would fain find incredible”. London Times described that, “the affairs of France very naturally engross the whole of the public attention”. In *Apology for French Revolution*, Wordsworth justified the regicide. The execution of Robespierre confirmed his faith in righteousness of public. But the poet’s hope shattered as the oppressed started to invade the world. According to the report of London Times (1792), that the mob, “were continuing to rush in great number towards the different prisons, and were there exercising their vengeance...”.



The fourth phase

Wordsworth was stunned by the future proceedings and he shunned his revolutionary trust and kindness. The London Times depicted the French at the time of execution of the king as, “The name of the Frenchman will be considered as the appellation of savage, and their presence shunned as a poison”. Wordsworth felt betrayed and thus, he replaced emotion with intellect,
till around my mind, they clung

Then, the arrival of terror and anarchy broke Wordsworth’s spirits. To quote the London Times (1792) which depicted the event as,

Are these “rights of Man”? is this the freedom of Human? The greatest vicious four-foot oppressors that reached the unmapped deserts of Africa, in the point of compassion, grow greater to these two-legged Parisian creatures. -Common Brutes do not kill the others.

Wordsworth had discovered faithful aspects of devotion and faithfulness in Revolution fundamental, which turned and tossed, shattering his faith. The description presented by Carlyle was far away from the imagination of Wordsworth, which defined the massacre in Paris prisons where the prisoners killed, “another sinks, and another; and there forms itself a piled heap of corpses, and the kennels begin to run red. Fancy the yells of these men, their faces of sweat and blood; the crueler shrieks of these women, for there are women too: and a fellow-mortal hurled into it all!”.

The zeal for revolution was replaced by sorrow, vexation and disappointment for Wordsworth. A rational approach made him see the hollowness of the revolution. Wordsworth deserted the facts and retired to a world of thought, with notional plans that were hoped to fulfil expectations of man. Thus, from the emotional excitement, Wordsworth came to the bed rock level of rationalists. Wordsworth managed to pass through the trial by logic under the influence of William Godwin’s “reason’s naked self” which helped him form new hopes for future.

What delight

How glorious! In self-knowledge and self-rule

To look through all frailties of the world

Wordsworth’s mysticism of nature and natural goodness of man were obscured. The September Massacres, was the evidence of an event when, “the city had been a scene of bloodshed and violence without intermission since Sunday afternoon, ... the unhappy victims were butchered like sheep at the slaughter house”..

Carlyle suggested various names and titles like Butchery and Massacres and stated that it was the most savage in the records of the world. It was the horrible time, when man’s soul, repulsed apart the barriers and ruled and demonstrated the lairs and complexities inside it.

’Tis true, had gone before this hour,

dire work Of massacre, in which the senseless sword

Was prayed to as a judge

The justifying and perceptive procedure that was favored by Godwin swept away the ideas of spiritual presence in nature, soul and being. The emotional enthusiasm of Revolution humanized Wordsworth, but the revolutionary philosophy mentally bankrupted him, erasing all



traditional ideas.

Now believing, now disbelieving

Endlessly perplexed

The London Times reflected upon history that when Goths and Vandals leveled gates of Roman, they were not man from the uncontrollable hunger of the basic formation. They never violated the chastity of women. And, the mob of the September Massacre, insulted Princess De Lamballe before assignation. The newspaper reports that, “her thighs were cut across, and her bowls and heart torn from her, and for two days her mangled body was dragged through the streets”.

The fifth phase

It was vital for Wordsworth to say adieu to reason. Wordsworth experienced the link of soul with the nature. Nature is more than emotion. It's a revelation and brings knowledge beyond intellectual. This higher knowledge idea makes sense why Wordsworth retired to mountains to, “construct a literary work that might live”. This led Browning to label Wordsworth a chancer and an opportunist.

Wordsworth, thus, begun the journey of reconstruction when Dorathy took her brother away from the rational discussions of the urban to knowledge of youth, to lakes and mountains. There, head and heart conflict began once more. He felt how his sanities, “the bodily eye” held his inner faculties. He confessed he had cut his head and heart from his former sources. In natures presence, he regained a sensitive being, a creative soul . He redefines creative imagination as, “reason in its most exalted mood”, an ability stirred by nature only leads to divine truths.

At Snowdon, the sea of mist is a majestic intellect, which, “broods over the dark abyss”. The majestic mind leads to the transcendental power. The mind was stimulated by senses to create ideal forms, and amends the appearance of the external things. The grand understanding found equivalent in the maximum human cognizance. The thoughts like that of Wordsworth found inspiration from the beauty of nature to their creative faculty, thus built the vision of transcendent things. The human soul could communicate with universal soul of higher truth sharing truth with creative human spirit. This helps gain Wordsworth a gnosis more than reason itself.

Tintern Abbey, was written after getting through the dilemma of revolution and its impacts. He revisited the place after five years and has, somewhat, changed. The vague youth had gone and life gained a new meaning. And now, nature was

A presence that disturbs me with the joy

Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime

of something far more deeply interfused

Later, Excursion was an attempt to get an optimistic view of life. Wordsworth was the prey of pessimism, but after he found his way back to nature, he turned imaginatively creative, regaining a healthy equilibrium. This poem, was indeed an anodyne for the evil and it constructs new life from the failure of Revolution philosophy. It is a history of thought, a work



of thought reconstruction and rebuilding. The two characters Solitary and Wanderer are the representatives of Wordsworth himself and present the post-revolutionary moods. The Solitary is missing in the mystical wood of despair and the Wanderer found the light. Like Rousseau and Byron, the Solitary despises the social man and becomes a hermit, but he does not either favor primitive man for his being ignorant, fearful, superstitious and unlawful. Solitary had joined the French Revolution, cutting away from past. But the evil forces joined and the movement collapsed. Solitary took help from Speculation but received no solace and turned a misanthrope, in his hermitage, awaiting death.

The Wanderer, a seer not a technical philosopher, spent life of Prelude, received intense experiences, and possessed power of inner truth and vision. He appealed emotions and Kantian principles,

And melancholy fear subdued by faith

Wordsworth was an alien to revolution and trusted fate and God's love. These claims were the result of poet's link with the spirit of universe. Nature revealed supreme truths to the searching human mind. The relation of man to universe is like a child with a sea shell to ears and listens to murmurs inside.

Many are blind and deaf to the tides and the sounds. But Wordsworth is a prophet, who gained a gnosis, unattainable by ordinary reasoning. Here too Wordsworth declares that human mind is receptive and artistic. The soul turns the deadly objects into a light for senses. The Kantian ideas of pure reason were independent of time and space, substantiating his own perceptions. The faith in mind is superior to the sense impressions.

Possessions vanish and opinions change

And passions hold a fluctuating seat

But by the storms of circumstance unshaken

And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,

Duty exists

Thus, the Wanderer, restored his confidence in man. The well-being and potency of awareness depends upon the body. The Wanderer assists the Solitary to leave the broodings and to join the healthy motion of nature, to run, climb, dive and, "sink in evening in sound repose" (Excursion). The promises of French Revolution were out of human possibilities and limitations and it failed. There was no need to go to the other extreme, blank despair. Misanthropy was abnormal and high hopes could not be achieved in a day. The evils of French Revolution could be astounded by virtue and patience only. To live in suffering was not adequate, but to live in a society full of love, generated by nature. For Wordsworth, nature was the first and last. It covered the human relations and fostered them too.

Conclusion

The French Revolution has been a turning point in the history of humankind by inspiring politicians, writers, artists, thinkers, and poets around the world. The fall of Bastille begun a new political history in France and eventually enveloped England by kindling spirits of liberty,



democracy and fraternity. The French Revolution, benefitted the world with its liberating philosophy of human truths and radical independence. But, at the same time, it also enunciated the contemporary concepts and bombast of terror. The pursuit of happiness was wanted by every human and not everyone desired to shed blood to attain it. The turning of revolt into a disaster was a turmoil for its followers. Among the effected were the romantic poets of England who had started to supported the movement as a messenger of hope and survival. The movement's devastation into terror and blood thirsty rebellions had turned into a reality beyond acceptance.

The whole world was influenced and affected by the Revolution and William Wordsworth was no exception. Wordsworth, whose bosom was burning with fire of enthusiasm and hope for a change for the down trodden and ignored; smoked into ashes. The great turn of things was a shock beyond his wildest imagination, and threw him into a plunge of disappointment and sheer despair. But, his thought process and reflection on the consequences, along with creativity and imaginative power, rebuilt his contact with nature, and embalmed him and he took a rebirth with a new vigor and vitality. The poet was not as escapist, but the terror of the French Revolution and expectancy of the revolution and the after effects were meditated and the hope of rebirth of humanity was found to be still living in the bosom of the poet. Wordsworth's creative powers and the nature of reactionary passion brought a new view of life which was an anodyne for the despair and disenchantment of failure of movement:

A prime Enchantress—to assist the work

Which then was going forward in her name!

Thence, Wordsworth ultimately learnt that survival was possible only by returning to the basic spirit and foundations of humanity, i.e., return to nature for guidance, mentoring, physical and mental health. Thus, instead of looking for remedies around in devastated world, consultation with nature was the sole remedy as nature never betrayed and deceived. Since time immemorial, nature had been simple, pure, and true. He learnt to build actions on inner reflections with a transcendent faith and knowledge. He ultimately learnt that in the middle of grief lied a spirit that glowed its way towards revitalization only through believe that times change. Thus, each sorrowful moment is followed by something that rejuvenates the natural spirit to regrow and progress. Life never halts and each grief hid the embryo of another new life in its bosom. Man confronts consequences of his own actions. This might cause distress and torture, but Nature has its own way and its course never ends and allows life to find its way out of borders. Wordsworth contemplated and realized this power of nature that leads to an experience of learning and encourages to live on with betterment by learning from past. Therefore, it is suggested that in the history of thought, Wordsworth carved his name through rationalism and sensational philosophy of French Revolution and poured his thoughts in form of poetry to encourage the depressed and distressed by unfolding healing powers of nature.



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