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Praxis

**A Peer-Reviewed Journal of
The Department of English
University of Rajshahi**

Editor

Dr. Md. Sakhawat Hossain

Associate Editors

Dr. Mahbuba Hasina

Dr. Md. Alamgir Hossain

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Editorial Preface

Praxis: Journal of the Department of English, University of Rajshahi is committed to maintaining rigorous academic and ethical standards in the publication of scholarly research in the English language, linguistics, and literature. As a double-blind peer-reviewed journal, *Praxis* ensures that all submitted manuscripts undergo an impartial and thorough evaluation process, safeguarding both academic integrity and intellectual merit.

The journal adheres strictly to a policy of originality. Submissions are unpublished and not be under consideration for publication elsewhere. Any form of plagiarism, including self-plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of academic ethics and results in immediate rejection. Authors are responsible for ensuring the authenticity of their work and for properly acknowledging all sources in accordance with recognized citation standards.

To maintain disciplinary coherence while encouraging intellectual diversity, *Praxis* accepts contributions primarily within the fields of English studies, linguistics and English Language Teaching. Interdisciplinary work is welcomed, provided it demonstrates a clear and substantive engagement with these core areas. All manuscripts are written in English and follow either the MLA (9th edition) or the APA (7th edition) style, depending on the disciplinary orientation of the paper.

The journal enforces a structured submission protocol. Manuscripts fall within the prescribed length and include an abstract and a brief author bio-note. Submissions are accepted in both print and digital formats, prepared according to specified formatting guidelines. To ensure equitable representation, each author is permitted to submit only one manuscript per volume. In cases of joint authorship, full disclosure of all contributors and their institutional affiliations is required.

The editorial board reserves the right to make necessary revisions for clarity, coherence, and consistency without altering the substantive argument of the work. Final decisions regarding publication rest solely with the editorial board, based on reviewers' recommendations and the journal's standards. Individual authors, and not the Editorial Board, are responsible for the views expressed in their writing.

Through these policies, *Praxis* seeks to uphold excellence, transparency, and fairness in academic publishing, fostering a scholarly environment that values critical inquiry, methodological rigor, and intellectual responsibility.

In Memoriam: Professor Dr. Idris Ahmed Md. Sakhawat Hossain

I had the privilege of being a direct student of Professor Dr. Idris Ahmed, and the memory of his classroom remains one of the most formative experiences of my intellectual life. He was not a teacher of abundance in number, but of precision and distinction; he took relatively few classes, yet each one bore the mark of rare excellence. His lectures were events that were often animated, lucid, and deeply engaging, without ever obscuring the depth of his scholarship.

What set him apart most strikingly was his method. He had the remarkable ability to render even the most extended and complex texts into something graspable without diminishing their intellectual weight. With a lightness of touch and a finely tuned sense of humour, he guided students into the depths of a text as if it were the most natural of movements. His wit was never ornamental; it was pedagogical and it was an instrument through which difficulty dissolved and insight emerged. Many of his students would testify that his classes were filled with mirth, yet never lost their seriousness of purpose.

In demeanour, he was at once formal and disarmingly intimate. His English was impeccable, measured, and refined, reflecting a deep command of language and tradition. Yet he was not bound by rigidity; at moments, he would slip into Bangla, often to delightful effect, using humour to draw students closer into the discussion. He had a characteristic habit of addressing students as “thou,” a gesture that seemed to collapse distance while invoking an older, almost Shakespearean intimacy. Standing before the class, he maintained an alert and penetrating gaze so that no student could afford inattentiveness, yet none felt excluded or disengaged. His presence commanded attention without coercion.

His intellectual range was formidable. He possessed a sharp and integrated knowledge of English literature, history, philosophy, and the broader Christian and Western intellectual traditions. Yet his scholarly vision was not confined within conventional disciplinary boundaries. His doctoral work on the literary techniques of *Surah Yasin* remains a landmark contribution that demonstrates his courageous attempt to bring Islamic textuality into the sphere of literary criticism. In doing so, he opened a space for dialogue between traditions that are too often kept apart.

Born on 31 December 1938, Professor Dr. Idris Ahmed completed his MA in English from the Department of English, University of Rajshahi, in 1960, and qualified in the then Special East Pakistan Civil Service (EPCS) examination. He joined the Department of English at the University of Rajshahi on 10 March 1973 and served there with distinction until his retirement as Professor on 30 December 2004. He passed away on 16 May 2022, leaving behind a legacy of intellectual brilliance, pedagogical excellence, and humane values.

Dedication



Professor Dr. Idris Ahmed
(31 December 1938-16 May 2022)

This Volume is dedicated to the cherished memory of Professor Dr. Idris Ahmed—a teacher of rare brilliance, a scholar of profound humanity.

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Beyond the Picturesque: Ecological Consciousness in Wordsworth's Poetry

Sutapa Saha

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Varendra University, Rajshahi

Sadia Sabrina Alam

Lecturer, Department of English, Varendra University, Rajshahi

Abstract

This study investigates the ecological consciousness embedded in William Wordsworth's poetry, moving beyond the aesthetic category of the picturesque to uncover a deeper environmental ethic. Positioned within an ecocritical framework, this research explores how Wordsworth's representations of nature challenge anthropocentric attitudes and propose a symbiotic relationship between human beings and the natural world. In English literature, writers from different eras, especially those of the Romantic era, have given special focus to mankind's relationship with nature in their writing. While the picturesque tradition often emphasized nature as an object of visual delight, Wordsworth reconfigures it as a moral, spiritual, and pedagogical force. Through an ecocritical approach, the concentration of this paper will be on William Wordsworth's belief regarding nature as a possible solution to the current environmental problems and natural calamities. Through close readings of selected poems, this paper analyzes how Wordsworth anticipates modern concerns about ecological crisis, industrialization, and alienation from nature. By bridging literature and environmental ethics, this study argues that Wordsworth's vision offers a proto-environmentalist blueprint for rethinking humanity's role within ecological systems, making his work deeply relevant to contemporary debates on climate change, sustainability, and environmental justice.

Keywords: Ecocriticism, Man and Nature, Nature Poetry, Romanticism, Environmental Consciousness

Introduction

Literature has long served as a crucial repository for documenting the evolution of human civilization, reflecting not only the intellectual and cultural aspirations of an era but also its anxieties, crises, and potential resolutions. Romanticism, emerging at the cusp of the nineteenth century, was deeply responsive to the rapid transformations brought about by the First Industrial Revolution—urbanization, mechanization, and the alienation of humankind from the natural world (Bate, 1991). In this context, William Wordsworth's poetry can be seen as a counter-narrative to industrial modernity, one that not only celebrates the beauty of the natural world but also advocates for a profound ethical and spiritual engagement with it. Far from mere aesthetic exercises in the "picturesque," Wordsworth's poems encourage readers to cultivate what Lawrence Buell (1995) calls an "environmental imagination," prompting reflection on human responsibility toward the natural world.

The urgency of revisiting Wordsworth's ecological vision is particularly relevant today, as humanity confronts the socio-environmental repercussions of what Klaus Schwab (2016) identifies as the Fourth Industrial Revolution—a paradigm defined by automation, artificial intelligence, and a blurred boundary between physical and digital realities. These technological advances, while promising unprecedented progress, also raise critical questions about sustainability, resource exploitation, and climate change. In such a moment of global ecological crisis, a return to the

ethical and spiritual teachings embedded in Wordsworth's poetry can serve as a means of rebalancing the fractured relationship between humanity and nature.

Eco-criticism provides a compelling theoretical lens for this exploration, as it emphasizes the interconnectedness of human and non-human life, advocating a shift from anthropocentric worldviews to ecocentric ones (Glotfelty & Fromm 1996; Garrard 2012). Yet, this approach does not demand the rejection of scientific or technological advancement; instead, it calls for a recalibration of human progress in harmony with ecological limits. Wordsworth's assurance that "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her" (Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, line 122) encapsulates this vision of reciprocity, where human flourishing is inseparable from the health of the natural world.

This paper, therefore, aims to move beyond the picturesque to uncover the ecological consciousness that underpins Wordsworth's poetry. It will investigate the causes and consequences of the conflict between humankind and nature, explore Wordsworth's reimagining of nature as teacher, healer, and moral guide, and argue for the continuing relevance of his work as a proto-environmentalist response to both the industrial crises of his age and the ecological emergencies of our own. As such, this study proposes to investigate the reasons and effects of the conflict between humanity and nature. Furthermore, it will focus on William Wordsworth's view of nature as a potential remedy for today's environmental issues through an ecocritical lens. In summary, the paper emphasizes that eco-criticism and related literary works act as vital calls to action, highlighting the delicate balance between humanity and the natural world and stressing the urgent need for environmental preservation.

In light of these concerns, this paper sets out to explore Wordsworth's ecological consciousness in a way that moves beyond the picturesque and engages with the ethical and philosophical implications of his work for today's world.

The following research questions and objectives frame the scope and direction of this study, based on a close reading of these selections: "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey", *The Prelude*, and "The World is Too Much with Us", "Lucy Poems", "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802," "Lines Written in Early Spring".

Research Questions

- How does Wordsworth's poetry move beyond the aesthetic picturesque to articulate an ethical, ecocentric vision of nature?
- In what ways do Wordsworth's key poems reflect and resist the industrial modernity of his age, anticipating contemporary ecological concerns such as climate crisis and alienation from nature?
- What insights does Wordsworth's ecological consciousness offer for reconciling technological progress with environmental stewardship in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution?

These research questions outline the main concerns of this study, guiding the analysis from Wordsworth's poetic vision to its resonance in today's ecological discourse. To address these questions systematically, the study adopts the following research objectives, which outline the methodological and thematic focus of the paper.

Research Objectives

- To contextualize Wordsworth's poetry within the Romantic-era response to industrialization and show how this context helps explain his ecological vision (Bate, 1991).

- To apply an ecocritical lens to selected poems in order to trace Wordsworth's shift from scenic representation to moral-ecological engagement.
- To highlight Wordsworth's contribution to proto-environmental thought, demonstrating how his work prefigures key concerns of modern environmental ethics, such as sustainability, biocentrism, and ecological grief.
- To argue for the relevance of Wordsworth's poetry in today's ecological and technological age, proposing that his vision can help cultivate ecological consciousness in readers and foster a sense of stewardship toward the natural world.
- To examine the tension between progress and preservation, suggesting that Wordsworth's ideal of harmony offers a framework for navigating the ethical dilemmas of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Literature Review

Contours of Ecocriticism

Also known as "green criticism," eco-criticism is a relatively new critical approach that examines the connection between literature and the natural world. Cheryll Glotfelty, a leading figure in the field, defined eco-criticism as "the study of how literature relates to the physical environment" (Glotfelty xxii). This deceptively simple definition paves the way for a wide range of inquiry, exploring not only how nature is portrayed in literature but also how literary works influence, challenge, or reinforce human attitudes toward the environment.

In his essay, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism," William Rueckert (1996) defines ecocriticism as "the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature, because ecology (as a science, as a discipline, as the basis for human vision) has the greatest relevance to the present and future of the world" (107). Eco-critics see nature as a living entity and reject the idea of human superiority over nature. In this regard, Lawrence Buell's seminal work *The Environmental Imagination* (1995) further broadened eco-criticism's scope by arguing that literature can develop what he called an "environmental imagination"—a skill to perceive and feel the interconnectedness of human and non-human life. Buell proposed that literature could act as a catalyst for ecological awareness, shifting readers from anthropocentric perspectives (where human needs take precedence) to eco-centric ones (where all forms of life are valued intrinsically). Greg Garrard, whose *Ecocriticism* (2012) remains a key textbook, outlined core concepts in the field: "nature" as a cultural idea, "wilderness" as a debated ideal, and "deep ecology" as a philosophical view that promotes the intrinsic worth of non-human beings regardless of their usefulness to humans.

Thus, eco-criticism is not merely a celebration of nature writing or pastoral literature; it is an inherently ethical and political mode of reading. It questions the anthropocentric narratives that have historically placed humans at the center of the cosmos and seeks to decenter human authority in favor of a more distributed, biocentric model. As such, eco-criticism is not only descriptive but prescriptive: it aims to raise ecological consciousness and to promote sustainable attitudes toward the environment.

Romantic Ecology

Jonathan Bate's *Romantic Ecology* (1991) was pivotal in linking eco-criticism with Romantic studies. Bate argued that Romanticism was not simply an escapist or nostalgic reaction to modernity but rather a profound intellectual and ethical engagement with the consequences of

industrialization. He described Romanticism as “a form of ecological consciousness,” (Bate 2–3) emphasizing that poets like Wordsworth anticipated many of the environmental concerns of later centuries.

The Romantic movement, emerging during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, coincided with the Industrial Revolution’s dramatic transformations: the enclosure of common lands, the growth of urban centers, and the mechanization of production. These developments alienated people from direct contact with the natural world, a shift that Romantic writers sought to counteract. In this context, Wordsworth’s poetry becomes a form of cultural resistance—an attempt to restore balance between humanity and nature. By foregrounding the moral and spiritual dimensions of nature, Wordsworth encouraged readers to see the natural world not merely as a backdrop for human action but as a living, dynamic presence with intrinsic value.

Bate’s concept of “Romantic ecology” positions Wordsworth as an early environmental thinker. His poetry does not merely describe landscapes; it interrogates humanity’s place within them and offers a model for ethical coexistence. This approach moves well beyond the sentimental or decorative portrayal of nature and toward an ecological vision that invites responsibility and care.

The Picturesque and Its Limits

Central to understanding Wordsworth’s ecological vision is the aesthetic tradition of the picturesque, which dominated eighteenth-century landscape appreciation. The picturesque emphasized the visual pleasure of irregular, rustic scenes—those that could be composed as though they were paintings. William Gilpin’s *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty* (1794) codified the principles of this aesthetic, encouraging viewers to treat nature as a spectacle framed for human enjoyment.

Wordsworth, however, found this purely aesthetic engagement with nature insufficient. While his early work does employ picturesque elements, his mature poetry moves beyond the surface appreciation of scenery to explore the deeper ethical, emotional, and spiritual significance of nature. As Bate observes, Wordsworth’s genius lay in transforming the picturesque into a “poetry of dwelling,” (39) in which humans are not passive spectators but active participants in the natural world.

For example, in “Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey”, Wordsworth does not merely describe a landscape; he reflects on how the memory of this landscape has shaped his moral development and his capacity for sympathy. The poem suggests that nature possesses a pedagogical power: it can teach, heal, and morally guide those who are attentive to it. This is a decisive move away from the picturesque, which often objectified nature as a scene to be consumed, toward a more reciprocal relationship in which nature is acknowledged as an agent in human life.

Interdisciplinary Relevance

Eco-criticism and Romantic ecology are not confined to literary studies but intersect with a range of disciplines, including philosophy, environmental science, and ethics. As Buell notes, eco-criticism is “a study of the environment as represented in literature and of literature as an agent in shaping attitudes toward the environment” (430). This dual function—representation and agency—makes eco-criticism particularly valuable for the environmental humanities, a field that seeks to understand how cultural narratives shape ecological thought and behavior.

Wordsworth’s poetry exemplifies this interdisciplinary potential. His work invites philosophical inquiry into questions of value (What is nature worth beyond its utility?), psychological exploration

of memory and perception, and even pedagogical application in encouraging environmental stewardship. In the age of climate crisis, Wordsworth's ecologically conscious vision offers a framework for rethinking human responsibility: rather than viewing nature as a resource to be exploited, we might see it as a community to which we belong.

This theoretical framework thus establishes the foundation for the present study: by reading Wordsworth through the lens of eco-criticism and Romantic ecology, the paper seeks to uncover the ways in which his poetry moves beyond the picturesque toward a moral and ecological vision of human-nature relations. Such an approach not only enhances our understanding of Romantic literature but also demonstrates its continuing relevance for contemporary environmental debates.

From time immemorial, man has maintained an affectionate relationship with nature. But with the development of civilization, the industry-based society started to flourish. With the rapid growth of industrial organization, man started to disregard the man-nature affinity, and thus affected the ecological balance adversely. This shift began with the Industrial Revolution in 18th century England. Ahmed et al. (2002) conducted extensive research on the consequences of industrialization in the Asia-Pacific region, entitled "The environmental impact of industrialization and foreign direct investment: empirical evidence from Asia-Pacific region", where the 18th-century Industrial Revolution has been mentioned as the catalyst of climate change. According to the article, "Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are significantly lower than before the onset of industrialization" (29778). Extensive research has been conducted and is still being done on the human hostility towards nature and the after effects of these on the environment. Kamboj et al., in the article "Human: A Destroyer of Nature", have specifically referred to how men are destroying nature and its harmful consequences. According to this article, numerous human activities, including overpopulation, pollution, the burning of fossil fuels, and deforestation, have an adverse effect on the physical environment. Climate change, soil erosion, poor air quality, and undrinkable water have all been brought on by changes like these" (Kamboj et al.1). In the article, "Wildfire, Smoke Exposure, Human Health, and Environmental Justice Need to be Integrated into Forest Restoration and Management", it is stated that, "Climate change contributes to increased burned area in seasonally dry forests through warmer seasonal temperatures, longer and drier summers, below-average winter precipitation, and earlier snowmelt" (D'Evelyn, Savannah M., et al. 367). This article basically focuses on the environmental and social crisis created by the increasing wildfire size and severity across the western United States and the trans-disciplinary approach to address the problems. Thus, significant efforts have been made to address humanity's destructive approach to nature, which disrupts the ecological balance. In this condition, the man-nature unity that has been focused on by Wordsworth, as a pioneer of the Romantic era, is urgently needed. Geoffrey H. Hartman sees Wordsworth's poetry as looking back for a better life (104). In Wordsworth's poems, the poet reflects deeply on human actions involving the pillaging of natural resources and environmental destruction.

The Necessity of an Ecocritical Lens

While an ecocritical reading highlights the interconnection between humans and nature, it does not necessarily advocate for the cessation of technological advancements. Instead, it reinforces the idea that "nature never did betray the heart that loved her" (Wordsworth 12). It celebrates the existence and stewardship of nature, emphasizing that the current wave of industrialization can augment human progress without compromising the well-being of nature. According to Peter Barry, the tone of the British tradition of eco-criticism is often admonitory, seeking to warn us of

environmental threats emanating from governmental, industrial, commercial, and neocolonial forces (242). This is corroborated by Bates, “who explores the politics of poetry and argues that as the first truly ecological poet, Wordsworth articulated a powerful and enduring vision of human integration with nature...and is of immediate relevance to great environmental issues today.” (1) Just as Wordsworth took solace in the presence of nature and offered its preservation as a solution to the imbalances created in society by the 1st industrial revolution, inequality created by the latest wave of industrialization also stands to be removed by the acknowledgement and protection of the symbiotic relationship between man and nature.

In contrast to other literary theories’ emphasis on the social and linguistic constructions of different notions, ecocriticism supports the very physical reality of nature- “[It] really exists, out there beyond ourselves...present as an entity which affects us and which we can affect, perhaps fatally if we mistreat it” (Barry 242)—a fact vehemently supported by Kate Sopper (1995) who exclaims, “it isn’t language...a hole in its ozone layer” (151); in other words, human beings constitute a significant portion of the vast, dynamic entity that is nature. As such, our actions play an integral role in shaping its future, just as global natural changes impact the prognosis of mankind in general, thus resulting in a mutually reciprocal relationship.

Thus, research is needed to explore whether Wordsworth’s writing can serve as a means of addressing the recent acute environmental problems. Hence, this paper aims to explore Wordsworth’s representative poems in an attempt to find a solution to the environmental crisis, focusing on his concept of a harmonious relationship between man and nature. And, in this regard, ecocriticism can be a bridge between these two, as ecocriticism is “one of the responses from literary criticism to the various consequences caused by capitalist modernity. For it has been a tradition for literature to deal with the relations between man and nature, both in the West and East” (Wang 290).

Analysis

Wordsworth’s Poetry of Ecological Crisis and Responsibility

Although industrialization brought remarkable technological advancements across the Western world, many historians now contend that it also led to significant declines in living standards for workers, both in the United Kingdom and other industrialized Western countries. Nonetheless, the rise of new middle and working classes fostered urbanization in industrialized societies, a sharp increase in populations, and the emergence of capitalism as a novel economic system. Industrialization seemed to showcase humanity’s capacity to dominate and harness nature by comprehending its laws through science.

Romanticism arose in the United Kingdom as a response to the Industrial Revolution. In the early 19th century, numerous English intellectuals and artists deemed industrialism cruel and unnatural, often reacting—sometimes violently—against what they perceived as the increasingly dehumanizing mechanization of daily life. In the sonnet “The World Is Too Much with Us,” Wordsworth highlights the modern estrangement from nature; he notes that while he does not pinpoint the exact reasons, it remains clear that “we are out of tune” (8) with the natural world because “The world is too much with us” (1), causing us to “waste our power” on “Getting and spending” (2). We transform nature into a mere tool for economic gain rather than maintaining a spiritual connection with it. Although the poem does not explicitly discuss industrialization, it encapsulates a Romantic critique of the materialistic and instrumentally rational mindset that characterized this era.

Wordsworth's Poems: An Artistic Response to the Industrial Revolution

Wordsworth's sonnet, "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802," also written in the early 19th century, offers a different perspective on London. It highlights the potential for renewal and a reconnection with the divine aspects of nature, even within the bustling city. However, this connection is only possible at this particular moment in the morning when the city appears harmonized with nature: its "Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie / Open unto the fields, and to the sky" (6–7). At this time, everything is described as "bright and glittering in the smokeless air" (8). The stark contrast to the city's typical state amplifies the experience, as Wordsworth notes that nothing, not even the wild landscapes with which he is typically associated, can compare: "Earth has not anything to show more fair" (1); "Never did sun more beautifully steep / in his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill" (10); "Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!" (11). "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" exemplifies the potential to restore our connection to nature within the heart of the emerging industrial capitalist era. This sonnet implies that Romanticism, while reacting against industrialization and urbanization, did not merely advocate a return to earlier ways of living but emphasized the importance of reshaping our relationship with the world—an equilibrium many Romantics felt industrialization had disrupted.

Wordsworth's Conception of Nature

Literature gives us the lessons of a healthy earth and, in turn, a healthy life. A friendly relationship between man and nature is urgently needed to save the Earth. For this, humanity must rethink its thoughtless attitude towards nature, as it has taken too long for modern society to comprehend the adverse consequences of mistreating nature. But Wordsworth understood this long ago and presented, in his writing, the harmonious relationship between human beings and nature as the solution for restoring the lost equilibrium. Literature has prophetic value. Thus, Wordsworth found a symbiotic relationship between humans and nature that we can call upon to remedy the current environmental imbalance.

William Wordsworth had been a worshipper of nature. To him, nature has an extraordinary importance. Wordsworth's target in endowing nature with a such superior place was an effort to broaden man's ecological horizon and highlight the Romantic view of nature, which suggested "a search for holistic or integrated perception, an emphasis on interdependence and relatedness in nature, and an intense desire to restore man to a place of intimate intercourse with the vast organism that constitutes the earth" (Worster 82). Actually, he was highly disturbed by the impact of the industrial revolution in 18th century England and thus, in reaction to this, he especially focused on reestablishing a close affinity between man and nature in his writings. He never liked the artificiality of city life. For this, again and again he went to nature for mental and spiritual tranquility. He believed that nature is a living being: nature has a soul of its own. According to, Wordsworth, "beneath the matter of universe there was a soul, a living principle, acting, even thinking. Wordsworth believed that there is a divine spirit pervading all the objects of nature" (Anjali 352). Thus, as a pantheist, he could see the presence of God in nature. He further said that there is a prearranged harmony between the soul of human being and the soul of nature. That means nature and human beings do have a communion of souls. Wordsworth, in his poems, presents nature with healing power. He viewed nature as the best teacher, nurse, moral guide and guardian to man. For Wordsworth, an individual who is brought up amidst nature is a perfect human being.

The poem "Lines Written in Early Spring" highlights nature's inherent harmony while underscoring humanity's failure to uphold it. Here, "Wordsworth places the speaker in the middle of Nature and shows that Nature is right and loyal to human being in its turn and it is man who should take the

blame for the broken bond between him/her and Nature” (Ramazani and Bazregarzadeh 5). The poem begins with the declaration of the all-pervasive presence of nature. Nature, in this poem, appears to be a personality, a divine spirit intermingled with each other and with every creation. Actually, the poem emphasizes the spiritual connection of nature with humans. So, the “link” (Wordsworth 5) is the link of soul- similarly, Ecocriticism advocates for the intimate association between man and nature. “Humans should understand the intricate and intimate relationship among plants, animals, humans and environment and develop an eco-friendly approach in order to maintain them in a state of dynamic equilibrium” (Sethi and Sangeeta 46). And, just like the ecocritics, the poet is aggrieved as men are denying this interconnectivity. Nature is presented as a living being, here. Trailing of “periwinkle” (Wordsworth, line 10) and breathing of flowers, all contribute to present nature as a living thing. “What man has made of man” (8) implies man’s direct involvement in destroying the pre-established interconnectivity. This can be seen as a reaction of the poet against man’s fight with each other and destruction of nature during the time of industrial revolution. And, the intensity of his mourning regarding this is noticeably expressed, when he reasserts the line, “What man has made of man?” (24). Industrialization caused the rapid spreading of mills and factories over the rural areas. Thus, in, “Lines Written in Early Spring”, “Wordsworth further emphasized the symbolic and spiritual role of ‘Nature’ in the concluding lines of the poem when he referred to its ‘holy plan’and lamented the course of human destiny”(Squire 240).

Wordsworth, similar to ecocritics, focuses on the preservation of natural world and thus, to preserve man –nature connectivity. Man should not be hostile rather be friendly with nature, says Wordsworth. Thus the question, “What man has made of man?” (Wordsworth, line 24) from “Lines Written in Early Spring” directs to the question, ‘what man should do?’ Or rather, ‘how should man deal with nature?’ In “Tintern Abbey”, Wordsworth suggested Dorothy to expose herself as much as possible to the effect of nature, and said, “Therefore let the moon/Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;/And let the misty mountain-winds be free/To blow against thee...” (Wordsworth, lines 134-137). In this poem, the writer advocates on man’s close bonding with nature and the ennobling effect of this bond on human mind and soul. According to William Christie, Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey” is “a poem of emancipation and enlightenment, discovering and celebrating the harmony—indeed, unity—of man and nature” (72). Nature, here, as a living entity, plays a vital role in restoring the peacefulness of his mind, as a teacher, nature flourished his humanity. Furthermore, finally, his soul flourishes when he gets the touch of nature. A “blessed mood” (41) is a gift from nature to him. With this awakening, guided by nature, he can “see into the life of things” (49) and discover the harmony among all the creations.

Wordsworth’s preference for nature and rejection of culture has been vividly stated in “Tintern Abbey”. Wordsworth clearly draws contrast between city life and country life. He exposes the fact that a man can find peace only in the lap of nature. The rejection of urbanization and the acceptance of rural and pastoral life makes this poem “Tintern Abbey” an ecocritical writing. Thus, he mentioned in “Tintern Abbey”, "But off in lonely rooms and 'mid the din / of towns and cities, I have owed to them / In hours of weariness, sensation sweet, / Felt in the blood, and felt among the heart;" (Wordsworth, lines 25-28)). And, being disturbed by the city life, in his imagination, he used to go to the bank of the river, Wye. Wordsworth had been inseparably connected with nature from his childhood. He has moved beyond youth and is now experiencing the richness of adulthood in close connection with nature. He is deeply emotionally connected to nature in every phase of his life. Nature is “The anchor” (109) of his “purest thoughts” (109); the “guardian” (110) of his “heart, and soul” (110) and of all his “moral being” (111). His intimate association with

nature makes his soul noble and, thus he can feel a “sense sublime” (95) that has got intermixed with nature. It is nature’s influence that he can hear the “still sad music of humanity” (91). With the touch of nature, his sense of fellow feeling flourishes. According to him, if nature takes care of his “genial spirit” (113), then it will never be affected or destroyed. So, the speaker passes his whole life in intimate contact with nature. Nature prepares him as a hood human being. Thus, maintaining a harmonious relationship with nature will make an individual a genuine human being.

Wordsworth said that nature never betrays its lover. (12) Nature’s companionship and teaching ennoble the inner mind of an individual. Thus, nature, in “Tintern Abbey,” plays the role of a living being: nature is personified here. Harmonious relationships between the souls of human beings and nature is the main focus of this poem, a major concern of ecocriticism as well. But modern men are destroying this valuable man-nature relationship. Therefore, “nature, instead of becoming a source of healing power [as stated in “Tintern Abbey”] is becoming a token of terror and destruction” (Jannat et al. 49)

Then, Wordsworth’s “Lucy poems” also “reflect the idea that humankind and the natural world are intricately intertwined with one another” (Sethi and Sangeeta 49). In “Lucy Poems,” Lucy is portrayed as a child of nature. She is being brought up amidst nature. In “Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower”, Nature is personified as the Headmistress and, the other forces of nature are the teachers of her. Being in intimate touch with nature her education goes on.

So, in “Lucy poems”, also, nature, is not presented just as a vegetation over there rather as a living being, and as a teacher, directly contributed to the life of Lucy. Thus, a very close link between Lucy, and nature is being presented in these poems. Eco criticism, always, gives priority on both nature’s living entity and this harmonized man- nature relationship. Lucy's formative years were spent in close contact to, and instruction from, the natural environment, as the poem "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower" illustrates” (Sethi and Sangeeta 46). Nature, as a mother, has adopted Lucy as her own child and promised to educate her according to her own way. In the poem, nature declared, “She shall be mine, and I will make/A Lady of my Own” (Wordsworth, lines-5-6) As a teacher, nature will teach Lucy both “law and impulse” (8). And, nature gives the assurance of the guardianship and care to Lucy, wherever she wanders amidst nature. She will learn calmness and peace from the “mute insensate things” (18). The gracefulness of the wild storm will shape her body silently. Lucy will lean to hear the murmuring sound of the “rivulet” (28), and the beauty of the music makes her face beautiful. Nature’s intimate touch makes her, a calm, beautiful, graceful, and wise lady. And, Lucy died very soon leaving the speaker alone in the nature. Being a part of nature, Lucy is also a part of the life and death cycle. Lucy can be a glaring example of how nature’s guidance can shape an individual’s inner capabilities.

Beyond the Picturesque: Wordsworth’s Proto-Environmentalism

Ecologists have strictly, rejected the concept of man’s domination over nature. According to them, Anthropogenic behavior destroys nature and thus, kills man-nature harmony. Man’s superiority over nature is the main reason for the destruction of ecological balance.

“Anthropogenic activities such as demographic increase, huge and indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources, urbanization, widespread industrialization, deforestation, climate change, global warming, modern over busy life style, unhygienic living conditions, improper disposal of waste products, unsustainable development etc. are mainly responsible for the disturbance to the ecological balance of the environment” (Verma 408).

Human actions can influence the equilibrium of an ecosystem positively or negatively. On the positive side, individuals can help maintain or restore ecological balance by implementing sustainable practices that honor and protect nature. Examples include reforestation, utilizing biofuels, conserving water, decreasing fossil fuel dependency, and harnessing renewable energy sources. Conversely, human activities can destabilize or damage ecosystem balance through detrimental practices that exploit natural resources. Examples of such negative actions include deforestation, overfishing, hunting, mining, pollution, climate change, the introduction of invasive species, habitat destruction, and a decline in biodiversity. (Edwin) A balanced ecosystem arises from various factors that collaborate to establish a harmonious relationship between living and non-living elements within an environment. Key components include natural cycles, food chains, biodiversity, and human activities. By recognizing these elements and their impact on ecosystems, we gain a deeper appreciation for the value of nature and can take steps to preserve or restore its balance. So, man's harmonious relationship with nature can benefit the individual with peace and gracefulness. In this regard, Wordsworth's *The Prelude* also focuses on a reciprocal relationship between human beings and nature. According to him, an individual's immersion in nature, can serve as a moral and spiritual cure for a materialistic society. Wordsworth advocates a return to Nature amid the rise of industrialization and urbanization. As an autobiographical poem, Wordsworth's *The Prelude* portrays how his personal growth intertwines with ecological insight.

Cheryll Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as an exploration of the integrated relationship between nature and culture, particularly through the cultural artifacts of language and literature (Glotfelty xix). In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth challenges the anthropocentric separation of nature and culture by depicting nature as a dynamic, active force that shapes human consciousness. The poem's ecological vision is vividly illustrated in Book 1, where Wordsworth describes a moment of communion with the landscape: "—With brisk and eager steps and came, at length, / To a green shady place, where down I sate / Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by choice, / And settling into gentler happiness". (1.61-64). These lines indicate the term by Jonathan Bate, Romantic ecology, that emphasizes reinstating humanity's bond with the natural world (Bate 40). Then, in Book 2, he describes his early education, outside the classroom, in close contact with nature. Here, he specifies the role of nature in shaping the human mind. In fact, he expresses his thankfulness to nature for having kept him innocent of the feelings of egotism and greed so widespread at the time.

Book 8 of *The Prelude*, titled "Retrospect—Love of Nature Leading to Love of Mankind," presents a retrospective analysis of his past and explores how his deep early love for nature eventually transforms into a love for humanity. Here, the close association between nature and human beings is shown by describing the joy offered by the pastoral festival in the Lake District. He also reflects his city life in London, which is totally contrastive to his life when he is in close contact with nature. So, Book 8 highlights the idea that appreciating nature can be the entry point to understanding humanity.

The historical context of *The Prelude*, written during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, is essential for interpreting its ecological significance. The Industrial Revolution brought deforestation, pollution, and the enclosure of common lands, disrupting rural communities and alienating them from their environments. Wordsworth, residing in the Lake District, observed these changes firsthand, prompting his critique of industrial values. In Book 12, Wordsworth reflects on nature's refuge as a source of moral guidance. He focuses on "a sentiment that resonates with modern environmentalist movements advocating for cooperation over exploitation. This eco-dialogue is crucial in an era where anthropocentric policies threaten

ecological balance” (Rizvi 108). Thus, Wordsworth always emphasizes the pre-arranged man-nature companionship. A person brought up in close association with nature can never harm it. Nature becomes vindictive only when men hurt nature, when man tries to supersede nature. Wordsworth had always been against man’s superiority over nature, and so are the eco-critics.

Implications for Ecological Humanities and Education

Today, during the 4th wave of the industrial revolution, there has never been a time of greater promise or one of greater potential peril. Neither technology nor the disruption that accompanies it is an exogenous force over which humans have no control. We are all responsible for guiding its evolution through the decisions we make daily as citizens, consumers, and investors. Therefore, we should seize the opportunity and power we possess to shape the Fourth Industrial Revolution and direct it toward a future that reflects our common objectives and values. To achieve this, we need to cultivate a comprehensive, globally shared understanding of how technology is transforming our lives and reconfiguring our economic, social, cultural, and human landscapes.

Conclusion

Beyond its aesthetic function, literature provides precisely such a space for reflection and reorientation, holding up a mirror to society and enabling individuals to see themselves and their world with greater clarity (Kenneth 293). In this context, an ecocritical reading of William Wordsworth’s poetry reveals how his work not only celebrates the restorative power of nature but also critiques humanity’s growing disconnection from the natural world, urging a return to ecological awareness and ethical responsibility. His vision resists the alienation of humanity from nature, offering instead a model of symbiotic coexistence in which nature becomes a source of moral guidance, spiritual restoration, and emotional grounding.

Ultimately, to move beyond the picturesque is to move toward stewardship. If we are to shape the Fourth Industrial Revolution into a force that elevates rather than diminishes humanity, we must reimagine our relationship with the natural world—seeing it not as a backdrop for human activity but as a co-creator of meaning and well-being. By revisiting Wordsworth’s ecological imagination, we can cultivate the creativity, empathy, and moral responsibility needed to ensure that the technological future remains aligned with human values and planetary health. The challenge, and the opportunity, is ours.

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