

Juxtaposing the Metaphorical Depiction of Kamala Das' "Words" and William Blake's "A Poison Tree"

Mathusha. Sam. Lara, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. (F.T) Research Scholar
Dr. K. Vijila, M.A., M.Phil. M.Ed., Ph.D., Research Supervisor

=====

Abstract

The research paper intends to compare the metaphorical elements and the actual meaning of William Blake's 'A Poison Tree' and Kamala Das' 'Words'. The word Metaphor is associated with a figurative language. Metaphors are predominant in all the poems. In an elaborated term, Metaphors are the core cord to a poem. But do all the poems which have Metaphors create an impact? Well in that case William Blake's 'A Poison Tree' and Kamala Das' 'Words' are a success indeed. William Blake, a renowned writer from the romantic period and Kamala Das, an Indian English writer of the present era expressed their views on suppressed anger and dormant words are the theme of the poem. Their use of metaphors are quiet similar. Juxtaposing the poems lead to explore the metaphorical usage of both the poets.

Keywords: Kamala Das' "Words", William Blake's "A Poison Tree", Metaphor, Relating, Words, Society, Anger and Suppression.

Introduction

Metaphor is a figurative language which begins meaningless when it is analyzed by the actual word. The actual meaning is different from the actual word. For example: He 'rule with a iron fist'- No one can find a person who literally has an iron fist but the actual meaning is about the person's ruling quality which means how he rules his kingdom. The quality of iron is hard and heavy, by saying 'rule with iron fist', he rules his kingdom in a hard way and heavy handed. Metaphors can be an object or an activity or an idea which give complete whole new meaning than its actual form. William Blake and Kamala Das used it well in their poems. William Blake, an English poet was born in London, 1757. Contemporaries considered him as mad for his peculiar views and work. He was barely recognised by the people of his era but the later critic viewed him with high regards and his works were considered to be prophetic. Not only Blake's works are peculiar but he too is a seminal figure. He was not into monarchy, one of Blake's publisher's Alexander Gilchrist says, "Blake was evidently against the monarchy and he wanted a social reform and a revolution". The poem 'A Poison Tree' talks about the concealed anger and wrath against a person and the consequences of concealing. The poem is taken from the collection of "Songs of Innocence and Experience".

Kamala Surrayya Das, an Indian English Poet, Novelist and a short story writer was born in Kerala, 1934. Her pen name is Madhavikutty and Kamala Das. She got married very early at the age of 15. But marriage didn't stop her from becoming a profound author. Her works are tumultuous and a foreign author David McCutcheon says that "Kamala Das, the Indo-English poet, uses the technique of free verse in her poem, the originality and freshness of which arise out of her personality". She often mentions herself as a Iconoclast of her age. According to the Oxford dictionary Iconoclast means a person who attacks established customs and values. The poem "words" by Das is structured in free verses. It talks about the words which are implied by the society, to make her a failure. The poem is extracted from Kamala Das poetry collection. The aim of the paper is to compare the western poet William Blake's 'A Poison Tree' and eastern poet Kamala Das 'Words' to bring out the Metaphorical Depiction.

Discussion

An Era in which Blake lived was all about manners and etiquettes. Showing emotions and expressing their feelings are considered to be the most ill mannered behaviours. So people were trained to bottle up their feelings and emotions. Living in such era did not stop Blake from witting a poem to express his thoughts.

I was angry with my friend
I told my wrath, my wrath did end
I was angry with my foe'
I told it not, my wrath did grow (35)

The above given lines from the poem is about restrained anger and wrath. Wrath cannot grow not at least in literal form. But Blake tries to explain the consequences of not being transparent. As a critic Shiva Shankar Mishra says, " He speaks the discontent of his time". His voice is 'the voice of dissent'". (131)

And I watered it in fears,
And I sunned it with smiles,
And it grew both day and night
Till it bore an apple bright. (35)

While bottle upping the feelings, it turns out to be more problematic. It can lead to permanent separation or bitterness towards a particular person. The bitter feeling is compared to an apple here in this poem, It can't stay hidden forever the hatred feeling towards a person can't stay hidden inside a heart just like the fruit in the tree, when becomes bigger it will be visible to the eyes of everyone if we failed to pluck it sooner.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:11 November 2018

Mathusha. Sam. Lara, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. (F.T) Research Scholar

Dr. K. Vijila, M.A., M.Phil. M.Ed., Ph.D., Research Supervisor

Juxtaposing the Metaphorical Depiction of Kamala Das' "Words" and William Blake's "A Poison Tree"

The tree and the fruits are the metaphorical elements of unsolved anger and wrath. Blake continues to write and says his foe knows it's his and stole it and the next morning he was glad to see his foe stands underneath the tree and outstretched. So when the fruit is stolen which indicated the anger is taken away, his foe becomes his friend. Through the work, Blake recommends to leave wrath by expressing the emotions. He uses the Metaphor 'Poison Tree' to explain the consequences as well as the solution of the problem. His works are peculiar indeed.

Kamala Das, a writer of bold moves and guiltless outrage. Women writing in 90's in India is a revolutionary activity. She took up writing and conquered many hearts. She was born into a traditional Hindu family later converted into Islam. Not only her writings are bold but her actions too give her a label of Iconoclast.

“All round me are words and words and words,
They grow on me like leaves...”(32)

By writing the poem she warns herself and others that what can words do to a person and what it is capable of. Here, she says words are growing and words can never grow not in a literal form. It's the thoughts of it, when recollecting again and again. Some gives buoyancy and many gives disappointments. She compares words with chasm, a sea with paralyzing waves, a blast of burning air or a knife. She says to herself that words are nuisance and she should be aware of them. Knife, paralyzing waves and a chasm are the effectiveness of words. When one listens to it, it may create great damage to one's self or to others. The leaves which means the words grows in silence from deep within. The words get multiplied from deeper thoughts and one should get rid of it.

“... But I tell myself, words
Are nuisance, beware of them...”(32)

In the middle of the poem itself Das gives a conclusion of being aware of words. Like Blake she also tells, if failed to incise before develop, it may cause problems.

“... A Knife most willing to cut your best friend's throat...” (32)

Conclusion

Both the authors use a technique of using metaphors and expressing the ideas. The poems are highly philosophical. Yet achieved its goal purpose of convincing what it can do to a relationship and what can words do to self and others, through metaphors.

Works Cited

Blake, William. *William Blake Selected Poems*. edited by P.H.Butler. Guernsey Press,1982. Print.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:11 November 2018

Mathusha. Sam. Lara, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. (F.T) Research Scholar

Dr. K. Vijila, M.A., M.Phil. M.Ed., Ph.D., Research Supervisor

Juxtaposing the Metaphorical Depiction of Kamala Das' "Words" and William Blake's "A Poison Tree"

Kamala Das Poems. The World's Poetry Archive, Poem Hunter.Com, 2012. PP 32.

O'Neill, Judith. *Critics on Blakes*. London Press, 1971. Print.

Raphael, R. *Indian Literature: Aspects of Modern Poetry*. Vol.22, no.3,1979, PP.127-137.

Mathusha. Sam. Lara, M.A., M.Phil.
Ph.D. (F.T) Research Scholar,
Reg. No. 18111274012011
Dept. of English and Research Centre
St. John's College (Autonomous), Palayamkottai- 627 002
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli- 627 012
Tamilnadu
India
Laradave2552016@gmail.com

Dr. K. Vijila, M.A., M.Phil. M.Ed., Ph.D.
Research Supervisor
Associate Professor, Dept. of English and Research Centre
St. John's College (Autonomous), Palayamkottai- 627 002
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University
Tirunelveli- 627 012
Tamilnadu
India

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:11 November 2018

Mathusha. Sam. Lara, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. (F.T) Research Scholar

Dr. K. Vijila, M.A., M.Phil. M.Ed., Ph.D., Research Supervisor

Juxtaposing the Metaphorical Depiction of Kamala Das' "Words" and William Blake's "A Poison Tree"