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John Keats's Sensuous Imagery in ''ODE ON A GRECIAN Urn”

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"Ode on Grecian" is different from other "Odes", because it is not desperate one.

Here he discusses two major themes.

1) the ethics of beauty
2) the permanence of art

Keats is in the favors of imagination and art. Because he thinks that it provides pleasure to human nature.

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I. Biography

John Keats was born in 1795. He was one of the most pioneer personality of 19th century. He was a romantic poet and also known as a sensuous poet, because he used audio-visual images in his poetry. He wrote poetry for himself only. Because for him, poetry is that type of art that gives delight to our senses not for the representation of philosophical thoughts and ideas of anyone.

He covers all the themes that appeals to our sense. He actually claims in one of his letters;-

" O for a life of sensation

than of thoughts "

As the theme of this poem that sums up in last two lines.

' Beauty is truth, truth beauty'

This article is basically about the analysis of the poem, and it's difficult to analyze the nature of the language of literature. As Brook (1975:3) says, "the language of poetry is the language paradox. It is not common language".

II. Method

The method used to analyze this poem is "The New Criticism mechanism", that provides the deep study of the works of literature.

III. Findings and Discussion

"Ode on a Grecian Urn" is basically a praising poem in which Keats praises the beauty of the Urn. There are total five stanzas, each having ten lines.

1st Stanza

This stanza is about the "Urn", the poet praise the Urn while gazing it. He calls it "unravished bride" and "foster child". Firstly, he praises its quite presence on the Earth that is away from the worldly affairs still. That's why he calls it "unravished bride". Poet calls it foster child, because no one knows its parentage and time takes him as foster child. The Urn is representing the countryside . The poet raises the questions that what are all these pictures? He admires this art and says,

" flowery tale more

sweetly than our rhyme"

He actually gives preference to art over poetry. Here he use different images like pipers trees represented on the Urn.

2nd Stanza

In the second stanza Keats speaks about the superiority of art over nature. As he is in the favor of imagination because it gives pleasures to human beings. Imagination is always attractive for everyone. A real life scenes come to an end but imagination will always come with continuity. He says that things lose its charm when it happens. Like emotions of anyone gets satisfaction in imagination. He says that in imagination he can hear, unheard melodies that is related to our senses.

" Heard melodies are sweet,

but those unheard"

Everything that preserve through art has no end. Like the piper's song, leaves of trees and the love will remain fresh forever. In fact the beauty of that girl will never vanished and she will remain young and beautiful.

3rd Stanza

The notable thing in this stanza is the repetition of word "happy". Why he repeat this word? Because he thinks everyone is happy of imagination. Piper is happy, because his song will remain fresh and new forever. Trees are happy because they never shed their leaves and remain as it is. Love is enjoyable till than it attains the last stang. In real love one gives sorrow and

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sadness, but in imagination, there is no misery and sadness. That's why, he prefers imaginative world over real world. The joy of art is something eternal and is far more satisfying than joys of real life which end in a sad satiety

4th Stanza

Here he discusses an imaginative picture of town delineated on the Urn. The town is empty because its inhabitants are busy somewhere else in ritual ceremony. This picture is depiction of his fancy. He also talk about the permanence of art .That town will remain empty forever. By seeing this picture he raises some questions? That for whom God and goddess this sacrifice is doing? From where they people are?

He also says that town will remain empty and it will not come to know where its inhabitants? In the words of Dohner" the picture of the victim is complete and perfect. The attitude of heifer stretching out her neck to low at the skies is quite natural; so the soft glossiness is indicated by silken flank.

5th Stanza:

In this stanza, he sums up the message of this poem in five pregnant words.

" Beauty is truth - truth beauty "

For him beauty is everything, as he said;

" A thing of beauty

is a joy forever"

- Keats: Fndymion

He continuously gazes at the Urn for its beauty and the pictures curved on the sides of the Urn. The sense of sight is active.

" O attic shape ! Fair attitude !with Brede

Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed; "

(41-43)

Then he calls a friend to man, it's simply means that for him, art is the friend of human beings. He expresses his idea about the "ethics of beauty" and " infinity of art"

IV. Conclusion

This Ode is different from other Odes of the Keats because this Ode is not the desperate one and having wonderful theme, i.e. beauty and permanence of art. The poet use different sensuous images to convey his message. He use different techniques to make beautiful his ode. This poem is paradoxical poem.

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