

## **POETRY: THE HIGHEST CROWN OF LITERATURE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

It is an established fact that of all the literary genres, poetry is generally considered as the highest form of literature. It influences an individual's life the most as it manifests diverse hues and colours of human life. The historical context of poetry's elevated position is examined, tracing its origins from ancient epic narratives to the intricacies of Shakespearean sonnets. This historical perspective highlights the consistent and profound role that poetry has played in shaping the literary landscape over the centuries. Distinctive features that set poetry apart from other literary forms are also scrutinized, including its condensed and precise use of language, the incorporation of figurative devices, and its ability to evoke profound emotional and intellectual responses. Poetry's capacity to create an aesthetic experience through the careful manipulation of rhythm and sound further reinforces its unique position in literature. In fact, critics regard poetry as the most ancient art which is the product of humans' imagination. In comparison to fiction, prose and drama, poetry is the means through which the feeling of love, sorrow and anger can be expressed in a better way.

**KEYWORDS:** Form, Genre, Imagination, Literature, Mirror, Poetry.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Poetry is, in fact, a constant, being produced by all non-civilizations from ancient to modern times. Throughout its extensive history, the individual art of high emotions sublimated into perfect language of poetry. It has approached a vast array of subject-matters including love, social issues, war and beauty of nature. That is why, W.H. Auden rightly and aptly remarks that poetry is clear expression of mixed feelings. As particular exercise of the mind and soul, and a unique way of apprehending reality, poetry is generally regarded as a self-sufficient universe that intensifies and

enlarges life experiences. Pointing to inner knowledge rather than real circumstances, poetry activates different layers of perception. By sweeping away human thoughts, poetry feeds emotion and soothes suffering. The main function of poetry is to give pleasure or what we should say aesthetic pleasure. But, at the same time, poetry is also the art of uniting pleasure with truth as says Dr. Samuel Johnson. No doubt, poetry also instructs as William Wordsworth has rightly remarked that poetry can teach us in a better way in comparison to a teacher and preacher. Robert Frost is also right in saying when he asserts that a poem begins in delight, but end on wisdom. In that way, poetry serves the purpose of art for life's sake. So, a real poet will treat art of poetry writing as wine where only the pleasure values matter. Taking into consideration, the view point of poetry as propounded by the classicists who opine that delight is chief, if not the only end of poesy. Dr. Johnson says in this regard that the function of poetry is it to enable the readers better to enjoy life or to endure it.

Imagination is the hallmark of poetry writing. A poet, with his or her far-fetched imagination, can portray whatever he or she wants. There is a difference in the perception of a poet and of an ordinary man. For example, a poet will find ways of defining love in beautiful metaphors but they would not truly get it until they have felt it right to their very core. On the other hand, an ordinary man will define love on the apparent level. So, poetry is not written, it is just a flow of feelings like a stream unchecked with imagination playing at its best. According to Dryden, poetry gives pleasure only when generally and not perfectly understood. It is through the poetry of a poet when he is taking himself, but the reader sees himself instead. With the help of imagination, a poet can present things in a broadway as Jim Morrison says that if poetry aims to achieve anything, it is to deliver people from the limited ways in which they see, they feel. In fact, in nutshell, poetry is a painting of feelings with the colors of words.

In the same way, painting is a silent poetry, and poetry is painting of feelings, emotions and ideas that speak. During the Elizabethan period, there was a rich harvest of poetry creation. Love as the recurring theme can be seen as the subject-matter of the poets in this period. As literature is the most interesting and significant expression of humanity, so is the poetry that also depicts human nature in a vivid and graphic manner.

William Shakespeare's poetry is a powerful rendering of human nature in real sense of words. The intensity of passion and thoughts that is present in his sonnets, is really an exceptional quality that the readers come across. The statement of poetry given by Edgar Allan Poe that poetry elevates human's soul, is also applicable on Shakespeare's Poetry. In Shakespeare's poetry, one

finds the ability to touch those things which are not present in reality. His poetry is not only melodious and lyrical by means of rhymes scheme imported by him, but it also touches somewhere where our hands could not. The Elizabethan poets practiced Romantic poetry. All of them, through their poetry, seem to sense romance in the air. Through their writings, their sharpened senses scent something that is different and rare. During the neo-classical period, the concept of poetry changed considerably. The neo-classical poetry is known as an artificial poetry or drawing room poetry because of heroic couplet as the metre used in it. Alexander Pope and John Dryden practiced satirical poetry imbued with realism of the society. But, like the Elizabethan poets, it was not lyrical and melodious.

Certain rules and conventions followed by neo-classical poets made their poetry as monotonous and mechanical. It was not as penetrating as the Elizabethan poetry. So, the neo-classical readers hardly experienced poetry in real sense of words because if a poem has not ripped apart your soul, you have not experienced poetry. Like other genres of literature, poetry too, is an exposition of reality. Albert Camus says the fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth. Poetry also serves the same function. The Romantics have a different conception of poetry. A poet is a man speaking to men who depicts human nature in true sense of words as says William Wordsworth. So is poetry written by a poet who depicts human attributes in a vivid manner. A poet also understands the mystery of life. After reading poetry, one can understand how to adjust to the time of life, the ups and downs of life. In this way, a poet renders great service for humanity by writing poetry whose ink will never run dry.

So, the ideas of a poet are based not on ‘art for art’s sake’, rather ‘art for life’s sake’. So, poetry is not only a fancy way of giving you information, but it is also an incantation. It is actually a magic spell which changes things and changes us also. It is a means of bringing transformation. As feelings and emotions are the common attributes in human beings, so everyone among us is a poet as some of us are gifted enough to recollect those feelings and emotions and capture it in magical words. The same purpose is served by a poet.

William Wordsworth’s idea of poetry that poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression is the countenance of all sciences, is highly philosophical. On the other hand, Keats’ conception of poetry is highly Romantic when he says that poetry should surprise by a finer excess and not by singularity. It should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a remembrance. As it is the case with fiction and drama through which one gives vent to his or her emotions and feelings, in the same

way, poetry is also not throwing down words into the void to fill a page, it is all about writing in tears of agony and rage. Various poets have explored diverse statements of poetry. William Wordsworth's poetry, for instance, is based on two important phrases: 'emotions recollected in tranquility', and 'spontaneous overflow of powerfully feelings'. Emotion recollected in tranquility means that a poet produces his or her best poetry in solitude and isolation.

This idea has also been illustrated by Pablo Neruda when he says that poetry in an act of peace. Peace goes into the making of a poet as flour goes into the making of bread. In other words, we can say that to a poet silence is an acceptable response, even a flattering one. So, poetry is all that based on tranquil souls of an emotional art and humanity works of thoughts and deal with the metaphysical writings. The best mood of writing poetry is loneliness. It gives all strength you desire and want while writing poetry. The main purpose of poetry is also to expose the hidden and mysterious things, whether human attributes or the reality about something. Poetry is a means to lift the veil from the hidden beauty of the world and makes unfamiliar objects as if they were not familiar. Wordsworth's poetry has the ability to present ordinary things as extraordinary. In this way, poetry is art, poetry is emotion, that captures the hidden beauty of the world through words.

In this way, poetry is not only the few written lines, but it serves as an important function. The main function of poetry is to inspire as well as to instruct. It is an initiation into the concealed order of the world. The intense gratification that one receives from poetry; its unrivalled authenticity and honesty; its appeal to human nature; and how it makes ultimate sense of the self, open for individuals new vistas to interaction and communication. Because of its expressive boundaries virtually unlimited, poetry ennobles, enlightens and entertains. Poetry goes beyond strict localization and cultural arbitrariness when it is translated from one language into another. In that situation, poetry generates a sense of spiritual compatibility and communion between the collective identities of world.

So, the above discussion leads to the tentative conclusion that poetry is the most precise form of literature. It is just the evidence of life. If your life is burning well, poetry is just the ash as remarks, Leonard Cohen. The best poetry is created when an emotion has found its thought and the thought as found words. In other words, poetry is simply the most beautiful impressive and widely mode of saying things. So, poetry mirrors which makes beautiful that which is distorted. But it has been witnessed that most poets tend to waste every sentence, every word and every punctuation in their poetry.

The real beauty of a poem does not depend upon what you are saying, but on how you are saying it. So, poetry is the highest form of literature that reflects life in different shades and colours.

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