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HATRED IN POPE'S POEM DUNCIAD

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ABSTRACT:

The present paper aims to show the theme of hatred in Pope's famous satire 'Dunciad.' Hatred or hate is an emotion. It is an emotion of anger and resentment which can be directed against certain individuals, or groups. Sigmund Freud defined hate as an ego stressing that it was linked to the question of self-preservation. Pope's satire shows the same kind of hate of poor writers. Pope targets his contemporary critic Lewis Theobald. This theme is explored by taking lines 627 to 656 into consideration. The interpretative, analytical and evaluative methods have been closed in the present paper.

KEYWORDS: Hate, hatred, ego, self-preservation.

INTRODUCTION:

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) was born in London in 1688. His father was a Roman Catholic, and on account of his religion Pope was excluded from the public schools and universities. Hence he had to pick up most of his knowledge in a haphazard way. It is a fact that he read widely, but he could not become an accurate scholar. The want both of sound learning and of mental discipline is lit clearly seen in his work. His Pastorals were published in 1709 and his Essay on Criticism in 1711. He lived with his parents first at Benfield and then at Cheswick. In the meantime he completed his translation of Homer; it was his financial success and he was able to buy a house at Twickenham where he lived for the remainder of his life, and there he died in 1744. He is regarded the greatest master of the classical school of poetry. He worked patiently and steadily almost to the last with a sincere love of literature for its own sake which was very rare at that time.

Pope wrote a number of miscellaneous poems of which the most important are: (i) Four Pastorals — short poems on spring, summer, autumn, and winter (ii) The " Essay on Criticism — a poem of great interest as a popular interpretation of the literary creed of the age. (iii) The Rape of the Lock — regarded as Pope's master piece; the poem is a Mock-Epic in which trivial incidents are handled with all the dignity and seriousness which properly belong to the epic. The poem is the most perfect thing of its kind in English Literature.

Pope then turned to his translations of Homer's Iliad and Qdyssey. They serve as readable, drawing-room renderings of the Greek poems, but without fidelity to the original: Then we have Pope's satiric and didactic poetry "such as (i) Satires and Epistles of Horace Imitated. The Prologue to these — the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot — is especially valuable as the most frankly personal of all Pope's writings, (ii) The Dunciad — it is a long and elaborate satire on the 'dunces' i.e. the bad poets, pedants, and pretentious critics of Pope's day. (iii) The Essay 'on Man — it is a poem in four epistles in which Pope undertakes a defense of the moral government of the universe and an explanation of the physical and moral evil in it.



It contains many passages which are justly famous, and are often quoted, for their rhetorical beauty and power.

We notice a surprising diversity of opinion on Pope. Some critics of the eighteenth century felt that Pope was a good writer of the type of poetry he chose, but that the type itself was not one of the highest order. Dr. Johnson admires the polishing and laboring over the verse that comprised Pope's poetry. He comments that Pope is read with perpetual delight. In the nineteenth century we have Wordsworth who found little to admire in Pope, whereas Byron often expressed his admiration for Pope and praised-, him for his versification and imagery. Hazlitt regards Pope as a great master of the artificial style of poetry in the language but remarks that he was not a great poet. Matthew Arnold refuses Pope his position as a poet. T. S. Eliot, on the other hand, leads the new interest in neoclassic poetry in the 20th century and comments that 'Indeed it might be said in our time that the man who cannot enjoy Pope as poetry probably understands no poetry.' Tillotson denies the charge that Pope's poetry is merely personal and sheer invective. It is, I therefore, proper to see the merits and defects of Pope against this background. He had neither the imaginative power nor the depth of feeling without which great poetry is impossible. He was not a great thinker. His view of life was narrow and shallow, but that was the characteristic ? of the age in which he lived and Wrote. However, he was the embodiment of the kind of intelligence which was known as 'wit.' He was a clever and skillful literary craftsman and his style of writing was neat, compact, antithetic and epigrammatic. After Shakespeare he is the most frequently quoted of English poets. He is also the most accomplished master of the heroic couplet which he used for almost all his poetry, which explores a great variety of topics. The elements of his poetry are commonplace but suddenly rare.

ODE ON SOLITUDE

The poem finely expresses the simple joys and innocent delights of a lonely and leisurely life away from the noise of crowded life. An Ode is a poem addressed to some being, thing or idea expressing noble feelings in a dignified language. Here the poet addresses 'solitude' and expresses his desire for a simple and silent life. It seems that he is in favour of a simple, innocent and unambitious life.

According to Pope the man is really happy who lives in his own house at his own native place, where desire and anxiety is only to look after the small land which he inherits from his father. The man is happy who gets all necessities of life from his own land and who therefore has not to depend on things sold in a market. Thrice happy is the man who passes his days and hours without anxiety or suffering and who enjoys a healthy body and peaceful mind. He longs for sound sleep by night, his study and ease be mixed together. He wants to live unseen and unknown and further he wants to die unlamented, unnoticed by the world and with no monument to mark his burial place.

Pope is a poet who is most frequently quoted, but he is not much known for his lyrics, however the resent poem is an exception. It expresses a mood of the poet probably because of his chronic illhealth. Pope himself says that his life was one 'long disease'. Further he was known for the petty spitefulness of his nature which perpetually turned friends into foes. The history of his relations with his contemporaries is a tangled record of miserable jealousies and quarrels. It appears that the poet must have got tired of all this and hence the poem expresses the mood of solitude in a neat and compact style. Whatever the reason, Pope here produces a pleasant picture of a man who loves to lead a life of solitude.

THE REIGN OF CHAOS

The passage (lines 627-561 is taken from The Dunciad Book IV a satirical poem by Alexander Pope. The Dunciad is a long and elaborate satire on the 'dunces' i.e. - the bad poets, pedants (persons who lay too much stress on book-learning, technical knowledge, rules and adherence to rules) and pretentious critics of Pope's day. The epic machinery of this poem was obviously suggested by Dryden's Macflecknoe; but the inspiration probably came from Pope's innumerable quarrels with all sorts of people. The poem is cleverly written, but the total obscurity of most of the dunces attacked destroys much of its point for the modern reader.

The Dunciad was written by Pope during the last period of his career. The poem is his most savage review of poor writing and many critics consider it his master piece. The first version of the satire appeared

in 1728, entitled *Dunciad: An Heroic Poem*, in three books. The major target of the satire was Lewis Theobald who was the sharp critic of Pope's edition of Shakespeare. The work was said to have been suggested and encouraged by Swift, and it is to Swift that the work is dedicated. The *New Dunciad*: As it was found in the year 1741 added a fourth book in 1743. Now the butt or the target was not Lewis Theobald; but Colley Cibber, a minor poet and dramatist. Pope's satire crystalized in richly imaginative verse. The poem shows Pope's genuine concern with poor writing and bad poetry. Some critics believe that Pope used the *Dunciad* to pay back all the insults to his person and his work, or that it includes the grievances Pope had with minor literary figures of his day. But such a view amounts to an over simplification of the fact. In fact Pope was genuinely concerned with the problem of bad literature. He could not casually dismiss it by the hope that poor writers and bad poetry would never survive. Hence the *Dunciad* is rather a crowning achievement of the career of a poet dedicated to language, art and poetry. The poem is to be regarded as the finest illustration of a satire — which is a form of writing holding up a person or society to ridicule or showing the foolishness of an idea or a custom. Pope describes Dullness as the Queen of *Dunciad* with her court of bad poets and critics.

The lines 627 to 656 form the concluding part of the 4th Book Of the *Dunciad*. Here the poet describes the complete triumph of the Queen Dulness, in thundering, organ-like tones. Night and Chaos come to reign again (just as they did before the creation of this universe.) As a result of the triumph of Dulness, we notice the fall of Wit, Art, Truth, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Religion and Morality. We find that in these circumstances no flame or spark is left at all. The empire of Chaos is restored and light dies before the 'uncreating word.' Anarchy draws a curtain, and universal darkness buries everything.

This concluding part of the *Dunciad* is perhaps its most famous and its most challenging section. It reflects the basic seriousness of the poem which has as one of its subjects the relation of art to the divine order of things. The key to the poem is the importance of the 'Logos' (the word, or ultimate reality; esp. the creative and sustaining spirit of God.) as a symbol of man's creativity — poetry and art in particular. Pope saw a kind of Chaos, a complete destruction, in the work of bad writers during his time. According to Pope, this work of bad writers causes an undermining of civilization, a destruction of order and of the universe. He felt that bad writers (really minor and poor writers) were immoral, in the light of the destruction that their work would cause. He also expresses a feeling for the 'mystery of creation' i.e. artistic creation which is high' on the order of things.' About *Dunciad*, Warton remarks that poetical beauties are thrown away on the shabby subject; and it is a 'motley' work, not fitting Pope's exactness, however Dr. Johnson remarks that's beauties are well-known, its chief faults are its gross images; but he comments approvingly on concluding stanzas. Dobree considers the poem as the climax of Pope's achievement and especially praises Book IV. Wimsatt also praises Book IV, and comments that the work has its own characteristics rhetoric, satiric strength and remarkable compression.

CONCLUSION:

Sigmund Freud defined hate as an ego stressing that it was linked to the question of self-preservation. Pope's satire shows the same kind of hate of poor writers. Pope targets his contemporary critic Lewis Theobald. This theme is explored by taking lines 627 to 656 into consideration.

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