

The Development of Poetry from Anglo-Saxon to Classicism

Abstract

Poetry conveys the idea of a poet to reader .A reader can understand what a poet is saying in the written words and he may vision the idea of a poet in abstraction only if he[reader] transfigured himself with the characterization in poem. In order to answer these questions it is important to study poetry but before that one should know what is poetry and when poetry came into existence and find out the genesis of poetry. Hitherto the critics came to know very little .The poets like Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser developed it into a full-fledged domain and prepare readers to consider it is an intellectual domain and not just take it as a workman-ship of an emotional poet.

Keywords: Classicism, Anglo-Saxon, Reformation, Renaissance

Introduction

It is very difficult to define poetry but poetry is a communication like when a poet writes, a reader can Comprehend, then there is sound communication take place but on the other hand. If a reader finds trouble in getting on the idea of poet there is no communication and leaves a reader in confused state .This is one side of picture the other side said how the poetry become powerful tools in the hands of the poet. This present paper studied the development of poetry from Anglo-Saxon period to renaissance and it was believed it had started in 11th century and still in the evolution stage.

Aim of the Study

The aim of study is to study of poetry from Anglo-Saxon period to classicism. Second how poetry became predominantly genre in those times and how it later on sway over other domains in literary fields.

Poetry is communication a man communicates with other and share thoughts with each other is a common communication .Same is the case of poetry wherein a poet communicates with his readers. Poetry is not a new genre it began when the civilization of human being came into existence. What is poetry exactly, a few lines on a paper, actually yes ,it is poetry but in the few lines a poet make a small wonder of world as well as universe .Moreover, when the poet is not talking about world or universe he talks about the emotions and according to the poet, emotions are not measured by any scale but emotion can be felt. Through scientifically research it is proved that the existence of poetry came into being when man realised he needed emotional tranquilizer.

In the world of English literature, our first poetry came before us in the form of Beowulf-a greatest epic, prototype creation in our literature .The story of the poem depicts a saga of scyld, king of the spear dances .This work inspired number of scholars to work upon and brought forward research that explained the mystery behind the poem .The rhythm used in the poem was alliteration that arouses a pleasant felling in a reader. Beowulf was a trend setter that gave sound beginning that was being carried forward by widsth. It was also one of the greatest poem .The poem tells the tale of wandering life of the gleeman who goes forth in the world and gets recognition and rewarded for his singing .The Anglo-Saxon period produced poems that were harbinger and blew the trumpet for felicitation the poetic genre. Chaucer came into literary world and sway over all the poets. Actually it is not wrong to say he himself wrote the history of English literature in the form of his poetry. He was greatly inspired by the French and Italian poetry. He used French and Italian masters in his poetry after commingling his own idea with foreign poems. He started his career with the first period that was his French period. He produced Romance of the rose, an imitation of French work but the best poem of this period of him was 'The death of blanche the duchess'. He dedicated this poem to the wife of his Patron,jhon of gaunt. He did a little in this period, In fact he only emulated his masters .In 1358, by that time his French period was over and



Geeta Lakhotra

Assistant Professor,
Deptt.of English,
G G M Science College,
Canal Road,
Jammu

he turned to write in Italian. In that, he produced work under the influence of Petrarch whom he considered his master. As the time advanced English language improved and Chaucer who worked a lot to make it more popular among the masses, facilitated English people to make it national language of England. Having done so he left Italian, French and turned to English. He wrote *Canterbury tales*, this work is a landmark in the history of English these tales are a collection of 24 tales. Actually its frame works tells how pilgrims took up the pilgrimage to Thomas-Becket tomb and meet in the tabard inn in Southwark, to refresh themselves from the tedium of journey they proposed a plan to tell tale during their halt at inn. Chaucer before giving these tales to shape he wrote 'prologue' where he introduced his characters and while describing them, he left no section of the society untouched. So *Canterbury tales* presents a shining glimpse of English society of the 14th century. In 1400 Chaucer passed away but he left indelible mark in the English history. Actually he polished off the poetic genre and gave it a new outlook to English languages as well as literature. Although he was a court poet yet he paved way for the English poets, who were about to take over the stage of poetry in the later ages. As a Chaucer age was over Renaissance came into being and brought forth those talents in poetry, that not only changed the definition of poetry but also added new dimensions. These talents were Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt, they invented the new form of poetry sonnet and made popular in England. They did not imitate it but they together produced love poetry and compiled it in *Tottel Miscellany* in 1557. The contribution of Earl of Surrey and Wyatt revived poetry from dark ages. Although Chaucer was a first one who did a commendable job in reviving poetry yet these two or three poets were solely responsible for bringing poetry into the lime light. Spencer guided the poets to write poetry in English unlike Chaucer he wrote every poem in English. Although he took care of heirloom that he received from Chaucer yet he loathed to imitate the predecessor in his works. Spencer fame rests mainly on "The fairy queen". The poem is of twelve books he published six only seven came out after his death. This work modelled on it romantic epic. This poem gives a dream world, fashionable society and wisdom of the world. Spencer tried his luck in sonnets to which he addressed to his lady love. He along with the sonnets he gave their sequel in form of two marriage poems. Out of one was addressed to his marriage and other to some court personage. Shakespeare joined the fray and carried out the seminal work of predecessors like Chaucer, Spencer and other harbingers. However, he started the work from there where these geniuses had left. Shakespeare basically was dramatist but he set an example by creating such an extraordinarily phenomenal work his sonnets which he addressed to his patron, are of his experiences and feeling. Shakespeare innovated the technique of poem he didn't replicated the Paradigm of his predecessors in poems but he craved a place for himself. He romanticized the poems and placed the genre at

topmost levels but after his death the poetry became a Chagrin in the hand of latter poets especially Ben Jonson who was the poet of brain not of heart. The pleasantries memories of Shakespeare works still cherished in the English peoples mind when John Milton pursued the stage of English poetry. John Milton was puritan by heart He wrote poetry on 'god' because he lived a miserable life and sought blessing for himself. He disliked to write romantic poetry. In place of romanticism he wrote poetry on the weakness of first man Adam. His work *paradise lost* is his prime work and it is respected as a holy book in England. This poem talked about resurrection, blessing of god on man, and interpreted themes mysterious are the ways of the god. Chaucer visioned poetry in court, Shakespeare versioned poetry in the eyes of mistress but Milton sat poetry at erected stage where god resides. So this is the evolution came in poetry slowly and steady. Every famous poet of his century brought forward necessary evolution in poetry writing that change not only changes the outlook of poetry but its appeal to the readers as well. The era of renaissance, Anglo-Saxon, reformation gave new style to poetry. With sensible efforts poetry become very prominent it left other genre far behind. Renaissance drew out poetry from the dark ages, reformation introduced secular elements in poetry but with the advent of restoration age fashion hypocrisy, trickery prevailed over in poetry. Basically restoration overthrew all the tenets of Elizabethan and middle ages and established new provisions for writing poetry. John Dryden was the chief poet, he was inspired by Milton and Chaucer. He wrote poetry on the contemporary issues. His poetry seemed to arise the mental power not sincere feeling in heart. his work 'the rape of the lock' focused on affection pedantry, ostensible manners along with perfect toiletry of the society. He was appreciated by his critics and by dint of his work he acclaimed world-wide popularity. Pope followed the culture of Dryden. He actually introduced classicism, in terms of artificially that reflected in the erstwhile age poets no longer wrote naturally, but artificially, with strange a fantastic verse form to give effect this is the general character of the poetry of classicism.

Conclusion

Poetry is a poet's creation poet creates and reader re-creates. Once Aristotle wrote about poet that the ablest poet can purify the mind of his audience by his emotions of pity. This tenet applies to all poets who establish it as a genre form, reformed it and continue to adopt it.

References

1. *The use of poetry and use of criticism*, Eliot, T.S, Harvard University Press.
2. *The History of English Literature*, Legouis & Cazamian's
3. *The History of English Literature*, William J. Long.
4. *A History of the English language*, Albert C. Baugh & Thomas Cable.
5. *Reading & Understanding*, M. Jones.