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Portrayal of Nature in Arundhati Subramaniam's Poetry

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Abstract

This research article explains about how Arundhati Subramaniam a Indian English writer uses nature in her poems. Nature serves as a rich source of imagery and symbolism in her poetry. She often intertwines environmental and ecological concerns, highlighting the urgent need for conservation and the consequences of human actions on the natural world. Her poetry serves as a powerful reminder of our responsibility to protect and preserve the environment. Also, the article speaks about the importance of symbols in poems to convey the deeper meaning to the reader.

Keywords: nature, imagery, symbolism, environment, conservation, human experience

Introduction:

Arundhati Subramaniam as nature lover:

As a nature lover, Arundhati Subramaniam demonstrates a deep appreciation and affinity for the natural world. Her poetry often reflects her connection to nature and her keen observations of its beauty, rhythms, and wonders. Through her words, she explores the various aspects of nature and celebrates its significance in our lives.

Subramaniam's poems often depict vivid imagery of landscapes, flora, fauna, and natural elements. She intricately weaves these elements into her verses, capturing the essence of nature and inviting readers to immerse themselves in its splendor. Her keen attention to detail and ability to evoke sensory experiences through her poetry reflects her profound love for the natural world.

Furthermore, Subramaniam's exploration of nature goes beyond mere description. She delves into the deeper meaning and symbolism that nature holds. She recognizes the interconnection between humans and the natural environment, emphasizing the importance of preserving and cherishing our natural surroundings. Through her poetry, she inspires a sense of awe and reverence for nature, encouraging readers to recognize their place within the larger ecological web.

Subramaniam's love for nature is not limited to her poetry. Her work as an arts journalist, curator, and editor reflects her commitment to promoting nature-based themes and environmental awareness. By exploring nature through various artistic mediums, she advocates for the preservation of the natural world and encourages a deeper understanding of our relationship with it.

Overall, Arundhathi Subramaniam's love for nature is evident in her poetry and her wider engagement with the arts. Her deep appreciation for the natural world is reflected in her words, fostering a sense of wonder, connection, and environmental consciousness among her readers.

Importance of symbolism in poetry:

Symbolism in poetry is a powerful tool that allows poets to convey deeper meanings and evoke unique emotions in readers. It serves as a literary shorthand, using metaphors, images, and indirect references to expand the scope and impact of the poem. By avoiding direct statements, symbolism in poetry encourages individual associations based on personal experiences.

The concise nature of poetry, using fewer words than prose, enhances its ability to stimulate reactions in readers. Symbolism in poetry allows poets to create rich and multi-layered works that invite diverse interpretations, eliciting strong emotions and expanding the boundaries of artistic expression.

Historical background, Definition and Meaning of Symbolism:

Symbolism in the arts is a movement that emerged in the late 19th century as a reaction against the naturalism and realism prevalent in that period. It is characterized using symbols, metaphors, and allegorical representations to convey ideas, emotions, and spiritual concepts.

Symbolic Language: Symbolist artists sought to express subjective and inner experiences using symbols, rather than representing the external world in a realistic manner. Symbols were used to evoke emotions, suggest hidden meanings, and create a sense of mystery and ambiguity.

Subject Matter: Symbolist works often focused on themes of spirituality, dreams, the subconscious, mythology, and the supernatural. They explored the realms of the unconscious mind, the mystical, and the irrational aspects of human existence.

Key Figures: The article mentions some influential Symbolist artists and writers, including poets like Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Arthur Rimbaud, as well as painters like Gustave Moreau and Odilon Redon. It also discusses the role of Symbolism in the works of composers, such as Richard Wagner and Claude Debussy.

Cross-disciplinary Influence: Symbolism had a profound impact on various art forms, extending beyond literature and visual arts. It influenced music, theater, and even architecture. The article touches on how Symbolist ideas found expression in the works of composers, playwrights, and architects of the time.

The Importance of nature in English poetry:

The role of nature in English poetry is significant and has been explored by numerous poets throughout history. Nature often serves as a source of inspiration, a backdrop for contemplation, and a symbol of various emotions, themes, and ideas.

English poets have frequently drawn upon the beauty, tranquility, and power of the natural world to convey their thoughts and feelings. They use vivid descriptions of landscapes, seasons, weather, flora, and fauna to create sensory experiences and evoke emotions in the reader.

Nature in English poetry can symbolize aspects such as beauty, harmony, vitality, renewal, and the sublime. It can also be associated with human emotions, reflecting the poet's inner state, or offering solace and a sense of connection to something larger than oneself.

Moreover, nature in English poetry often interacts with human experiences and emotions, creating juxtapositions and exploring the relationship between humanity and the natural world. Poets may explore themes of the human condition, the transience of life, the cycles of nature, or the contrast between civilization and the untamed wilderness.

The frequently used symbols in her poems:

1.Trees: In Subramaniam's work, trees serve as a recurring symbol that carries multiple layers of meaning. Firstly, trees represent strength and resilience. Just as trees firmly root themselves in the ground and withstand various environmental conditions, they symbolize the ability to endure and overcome adversity. This resilience can be seen as an inspirational quality that the poet may admire or seek to embody.

Additionally, trees are often associated with growth and change. As they go through the cycle of shedding leaves in autumn and regenerating them in spring, trees represent the natural process of renewal and transformation. This aspect of trees symbolizes the potential for personal growth and the ability to adapt to new circumstances. It can reflect the poet's exploration of personal development, the passage of time, or the cyclical nature of life.

2.Birds: Birds are another common symbol in Subramaniam's poetry, birds hold symbolic significance, often embodying various themes and ideas. One primary symbolism associated with birds is freedom. Birds are known for their ability to soar through the sky, unrestricted by earthly constraints. This aspect of freedom can represent the desire for liberation, breaking free from societal or personal limitations, and embracing independence.

Birds are also associated with grace and beauty. Their elegant movements, vibrant plumage, and melodic songs evoke a sense of aesthetic appeal. Subramaniam may use birds as a metaphor for the beauty found in nature or human experiences, highlighting the delicate and captivating aspects of life.

Furthermore, birds symbolize flight, which goes beyond their physical ability to navigate the skies. Flight can metaphorically represent the transcendence of earthly limitations, the pursuit of higher aspirations, or the quest for spiritual enlightenment. The imagery of birds taking flight suggests the possibility of reaching new heights of awareness, expanding one's perspective, and seeking a deeper understanding of oneself and the world.

3.Water: Water is a symbol of life and renewal in Subramaniam's poems, that carries several symbolic meanings. First and foremost, water symbolizes life and renewal. It is essential for sustaining life, and its presence signifies vitality and growth. Water's association with renewal suggests the cyclical nature of existence, highlighting the idea of constant change and the potential for rebirth.

Water is also closely tied to the flow of emotions. Just as water flows and meanders, emotions can be fluid and dynamic. The poet may utilize water as a metaphor to depict the ebb and flow of human emotions, ranging from calmness and serenity to turbulence and intensity. Water serves as a vessel to explore the depth and complexity of the emotional landscape.

Additionally, water can represent purification and transformation. It has the power to cleanse and wash away impurities, both physically and symbolically. Subramaniam may employ water as a symbol of purification, inviting readers to contemplate the purifying aspects of water and its potential for personal growth and spiritual transformation.

4.Flowers: In Subramaniam's poetry, flowers, particularly lotus flowers, hold significant symbolism that conveys several profound meanings. Flowers, in general, represent beauty and often serve as metaphors for the exquisite aspects of life. They capture the eye with their vibrant colors, delicate petals, and enchanting fragrances.

Lotus flowers, specifically, carry additional symbolism in Subramaniam's poetry. The lotus is often associated with spiritual awakening and enlightenment. It holds great significance in various religious and philosophical traditions, particularly in Eastern cultures. The lotus grows in muddy waters, emerging from the darkness and muck to blossom into a stunning flower. This growth pattern mirrors the journey of the soul or the human experience of transcending difficulties and finding inner beauty and purity.

The lotus can symbolize the journey from darkness to light, signifying the pursuit of spiritual growth and the quest for higher consciousness. It represents the ability to rise above challenging circumstances and transform oneself, just as the lotus blooms above the murky waters. The lotus flower serves as a metaphor for the human potential to transcend limitations, find inner harmony, and attain a state of enlightenment or self-realization.

By employing the symbolism of flowers, especially lotus flowers, in her poetry, Subramaniam explores themes of beauty, spiritual growth, and the transformative power of the human spirit. The lotus becomes a powerful symbol that encapsulates the journey from adversity to illumination, from ignorance to wisdom, and from darkness to light.

5.Sky: The sky emerges as a symbol of infinity and the expansive nature of the universe Subramaniam's poems. It represents a boundless expanse that stretches beyond our earthly existence. The sky, with its vastness, symbolizes the limitless potential of the human spirit and the capacity to transcend earthly limitations.

The sky often serves as a metaphor for the infinite possibilities that lie beyond our immediate reality. It invites contemplation of the larger questions of existence and the vastness of the universe. Subramaniam may employ the imagery of the sky to inspire readers to explore their own potential and reach beyond the constraints of their everyday lives.

Furthermore, the sky symbolizes the transcendent and the spiritual realm. It can evoke a sense of awe and wonder, encouraging readers to contemplate the deeper meanings of life and their place in the universe. The sky's vastness reflects the expansiveness of the human consciousness and the possibility of reaching higher levels of awareness or spiritual enlightenment.

By utilizing the symbolism of the sky, Subramaniam's poems invite readers to contemplate their own potential and the vastness of the world around them. The sky becomes a metaphorical space that expands the horizons of the human experience and encourages a broader perspective on existence.

Conclusion:

In conclusion Subramaniam's work inspires readers to develop a sense of wonder and environmental consciousness, urging them to reflect on their role in preserving the planet. She not only celebrates its beauty but also addresses environmental concerns, highlighting our responsibility to preserve the natural world. Her poetry inspires readers to develop a sense of wonder, environmental consciousness, and a deeper understanding of our connection with nature. Through her use of symbols, she adds depth to her poems,

inviting readers to explore the intricate relationship between nature and the human experience. Ultimately, her work encourages us to value, protect, and cherish the magnificence and fragility of the natural world.

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