



RESEARCH PAPER

Interfacing of Supernaturalism and Religious Sensibilities: A Stylistic Analysis of S.T Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

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ABSTRACT

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the leading poet of British romanticism, is reputed as one of the creators of supernaturalism. This article aims to analyze S.T Coleridge's poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" from a stylistic point of view. The analysis is made under the aspects of semantic, grammatical, lexical, graphological and syntactic patterns. This stylistic analysis is helpful in understanding the basic and biblical concepts of the poem along with the ability to examine how supernaturalism creates a religious sensibility. Furthermore it also highlights the lexical items which are used by the poet in uncustomized or abnormal way to create a difference between the literary language that is used in poetic context and ordinary language used in daily life. The stylistic approach also depicts the variation in style and the impact of this variation on the mind of the readers. It also helps to examine various aspect of style like the structure, grammar, meaning and form. Style is generally dependant on linguistic level. it can be defined as the appropriate use of words or language in a sentence and it varies from text to text.

KEYWORDS Religious Sensibility, Stylistics, Supernaturalism, Trinity

Introduction

In The Rime of the Ancient Marine, Coleridge discusses the themes of religion (Christianity) that's why the poem is also called as The Biblical Rhyme, because most of the references have been taken from the Bible the sacred book in Christianity. Through the use of extended metaphor and supernatural imagery Coleridge symbolically portrays the fundamental role of religion and its impact on the life of those people who violate the rules and teachings of Christianity. He expresses this through the use of sharp parallelism in the Ancient Mariner, the treatment of anger between Nature (God) and Foe (Human). The central theme in the poem is sanctity of life and anger of nature in the form of revenge dominating much of poet's thoughts. Coleridge startles the readers with the perspicuity of the poem and metaphors that can be applied to many instances of life. The poem is dramatic monologue in which the poet by using supernaturalism to create a religious sensibility creates a mysterious setting which transports the readers to a state of awe and fear. The poem mostly represents the concept of trinity in implicit literary artifact and this paper ardently explores the use of stylistic devices used by the poet to create interface between supernaturalism and religious sensibilities.

Supernaturalism

Before considering the unique way of employing the elements of supernatural phenomenon in his poems the researchers consider it necessary to throw a quick and brief glance at the concept of supernaturalism. The supernatural elements are handled

in Coleridge's poetry in a very distinguished and unique manner. The term supernaturalism or supernatural (Latin. super supra above + natura , nature) pertains to bring above or beyond what one holds to be natural. In the case of one who has a strong scientific or non-metaphysical bent of mind the supernatural can be defined as anything unexplainable by natural law or phenomenon, while one who holds mystical or heavenly beliefs may have some conception of supernatural phenomenon, but might perceive the scientist's natural law on their own way as being sub natural. The term supernaturalism is often used interchangeably with paranormal or preternatural the latter typically limited to an adjective for describing abilities which appear to exceed the bounds of possibilities. Supernaturalism can also be defined as a noun derived from the adjective supernatural which is mostly used for events and beings that are above the order of nature that are out or beyond the ordinary laws of cause and effect in the human world. The medieval and primitive people were strong believers of supernaturalism. The people of that age looked at the phenomenon of nature with awe and wonders. The catholic legends and mystic experiences of many Christian saints sought to present the supernaturalism or supernatural as holy truths. The literature of the Middle Ages, the Romances and the ballads freely exploited the supernatural phenomena. The marvelous ghastly scenes, witches, ghost; demons appear frequently in medieval literature often creating hair raising, sensational feelings in the readers.

In the period of Renaissance the supernatural is presented in allegorical and symbolic cover as to make it more convincing, natural and sensational. Even in most of the secular societies religious miracles are typically perceived as supernatural claims as well as spell, curses divinations, the life after death and innumerable others. Such beliefs existed in many cultures of the world throughout human history. The characteristics for the phenomenon claimed as supernatural are *uniqueness, anomaly and uncontrollability*, thus lacking reproducibility required for scientific examination. It has mostly been observed that supernatural themes are often associated with paranormal and occult ideas, suggesting for possibility of interactions with the supernatural by means of summoning or trace for instance romantic qualities (Singh, 2007). Coleridge is rightly dubbed as a prominent figure of supernatural poetry. His work is signified for the touch of supernaturalism in order to serve his religious purpose to create religious sensibilities through his poetry which enable him to be called as the poet of supernaturalism. However supernaturalism is one of the important elements in the romantic poetry and used by romantic poets in order to get their specific aim and objectives. The way Coleridge manages to control this element in his poems is amazingly distinguished (Singh, 2007). Religious sensibility is all about religious impact glued in text by an author to propagate certain message. In case of current study it is a corresponding interaction between supernaturalism and Christian and Biblical narratives

Stylistics and Style

Style is involved in literary and non-literary, written or spoken types of language. But it is particularly associated with written form of the literary or poetic texts. Stylistics or style variation may also be analyzed in terms of linguistics e.g. rhetorical terms, morphological level, semantic terms, semiotic terms and utterance. It is derived from the Latin word 'elucutie' which means 'style' and means 'lexis' in Greek. It mostly refers to written or oral style of any language. According to Birch (1989) both language and style cannot move beyond a limit on the supremacy of words. Stylistics is a sub branch of linguistics and can be understood in depth as the scientific study of a language. Widdowson (1975) considers it as the study of literary discourse from linguistic orientation and it is a link between literary criticism and linguistics. Carter (1989) believes style generally depends on linguistic levels due to which every text and writing

is different from each other hence every genre is different. It can be taken as a manner of expression which is different in various contexts. It is a way the language is used in a given context for a given purpose. Broadly speaking it is related to the personality of the poets or writers and it is a very common issue that we use the term style without knowing its meaning. It mostly refers to the use of words, speaking style and sentence structure. Leech and Short (1981) consider style as the dress of thoughts; it is the way which is adopted by the poet to convey his message to the readers. It is upon the writer's will that how does he make his text understandable that the meanings can be conveyed to the readers. Present work has banked upon this stylistic tradition to seek the answer of the following research question.

Literature Review

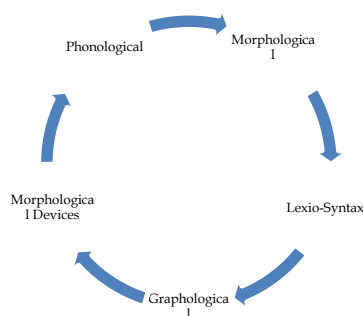
It is not possible to reach out and present all works on this topic but few works are discussed here relating to the jugular line of this topic. In any stylistics analysis, it is fundamental to review some of the concepts that are the germane to the up built of discipline. This section of literature review thus explicates some of the typical concepts of stylistics without which the worthwhile analysis can't be carried out. According to Leech (2007, p 13) "The aim of literary stylistics is to be more relational in a more interesting sense than that already mentioned; to relate the critic's concern of aesthetic appreciation with the linguistics concern concerns of linguistic description". Simpson (1997) emphasis and tells the readers that how much stylistic techniques are useful for the students of literature who are interested in literature and foreign languages and also helpful to those who read the course of "verse and drama" in specific. The writer arguments that students have not enough knowledge in specific subject because the courses related to literature they had chosen have not properly ready them for the higher study in the same field. The work highlights that stylistics approach to literature with its focus on the language (textual language) is helpful for taking literature as a course; it is very beneficial for the students in understanding and valuing the literary texts. The findings of Obafemi et al (2002) are helpful to understand language in literary texts. The main purpose of that research is to reveal that by applying a stylistic analysis techniques in dramatic text which are very helpful for literature students who wants to improve their language skills and understanding of literature. She advocates that language based approach (stylistic) is very useful in understanding of literature. Pennington (1997) deals with overview of the condition of English Language and teaching of literature in with respect to phonology. It discovers the problem and basic theoretical issues which are common in stylistic and literary criticism and also observes the consequence of many views for literary pedagogy and literary text analysis. The work gives a solution which is helpful in assimilating literature and language to the EFL students. This work provides that stylistics has a deep concern with language and literature, and it suits to EFC in the Ethiopian situation and gives that stylistics approach gives good techniques and conducting analysis and explanation. Daniel (1998) shares basic concepts of stylistics with the present paper. The purpose of this research is to observe type of motivation of the fresh man who are studying at the Addis Ababa University.

Stylistic Analysis of William Blakes Poem "A Poison Tree by Heidar&Zamzia (2018) explain Blake's poem *A Poison Tree* from stylistic point of view. The stylistic analysis of the poem is conducted through Derrida's notion of Deconstruction which is different from current analysis. Nevertheless the analysis of the poem is very helpful in understanding the basic concepts of stylistics along with the quality to reason and question to understand the basic concepts of poetry. A Stylistic Analysis of Two Poems by Jaffar (2014) consists of interpretation of the poems of famous poets of the English Literature namely the Irish noble laureate Seamus Heaney and E.E Cummings. In this

work the writer tries to reveal a Cumming's poem *Maggie and Milly, Moly and May* and Heaney's *A Kite for Aibbin* from stylistic aspects. The work also interprets the literary work by using the devices of stylistic with a view to clear their sense

Conceptual Framework

For the analysis of Coleridge's selected poem, few of the following elements of stylistic analysis are used as a part of conceptual framework designed for current study. Phonological levels describe the whole writing system punctuation and paragraphing as well as spacing. According to Crystal and Davy "Graphology is the analogous study of languages writing system or orthography" (1969,p.10). Leech believes that "Graphology exceeds orthography" (1969,p.39). In other words it can be defined as the systematic formation, punctuation and structure in the sentence. In this regard Alabi (2007) said that " A graphological discussion of the style among other features entails the foregrounding of annotation mark, ellipses, period, contracted form, hyphens, the colon, the semicolon, the dash, the quotation mark, italics, spacing etc" (p.170). Morphological Level deals with how many free morphemes and sound morphemes present in the poem. Free morphemes involves lexical and functional morphemes. According to Mark and Kr'sten "Mophology refers to the mental system involved in word formation or to the branch of linguistics that deals with words their internal structure and how they are formed"(2005,p.1). Morphological level can be defined as the construction of word by adding prefixes and suffixes to the root words. Lexio-Syntax deals with the combination of two words Lexio - syntax. Lexis means the vocabulary which is used in a language or in any writing for any purpose and syntax means sentence construction. How different words group together to make sentences and phrases. This pattern can easily be obtained through different means which include unusual or inverted word order. According to Tallerman " Lexio- syntactic choices are obtained through devices such as piling of usual collocates particular parts of speech, archaic words, metaphor, simile and oxymoron etc .(1998,p.1). Graphological devices include punctuation and paragraphing. Punctuation is the marks used in writing to divide sentences and phrases. These marks are full stop, hyphen, ellipsis, quotation marks, brackets etc. Paragraph means a separate part which contains information consisting of many sentences. Phonological levels include alliteration, consonance, assonance and onomatopoeia for the foregrounding of meaning but in case of current study it is not applied for semantic inquiry of the poem. **A morphological device like anastrophe** which is the inversion of natural or unusual words plays an important role in the emphasis and focuses the reader's attention. Ellipsis can be defined as the deliberate omission of a word or words which are mostly implied by the content. Its function is to create brevity, re- emphasis or ambiguity. Asyndeton is deliberate omission of conjunctions between a series of related clauses. It produces a hurried rhythm in the sentence. Anaphora can be defined as use of words that refers to or replaces another word that is used before on earlier in the sentence. Epizeuxis can be defined as the repetition of word or phrases without any break at all. Following is a labeled representation of commonly used steps for the stylistic parsing of any text.



It is not possible to exploit all above mentioned elements keeping in mind the space constraints of a single poem, therefore only relevant and needed aspects corresponding to the main idea of research question are utilized in the analysis section.

Results and Discussion

Stylistically analyzing the following stanza it has been observed that the use of lexical item Ancient by the poet makes it foregrounded, because 'Ancient' is usually used either for describing the non-human things or places which belong to or have been existent since the remote time or to have been extinct long ago.

It is an Ancient Mariner
 And he stoppeth one of three
 By thy long grey beard and glittering eye
 Now where fore stopp'st thou me?

(The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, 1-4)

In the title of the poem the word 'Mariner' who does not refer to long time ago, but a person who belongs to living world which is presented in the poem. To understand the language it is necessary that the respondents or readers should have the enough knowledge about that language to understand the philosophy of the poet. Thus this instance of lexical deviation builds up the image of the Mariner who has outlived many generations. Thus such deviant use of linguistic elements the poet characterizes the image of Ancient Mariner with some element of supernaturalism. The use of graphological deviation is employed by the poet in the first noun phrase of its title similar to middle English, while the poem was published in the eighteen century. Instead of *Rhyme* he used lexical item 'Rime' which makes it foregrounded in its look however when it is viewed at analysis level by applying stylistic tools the instance of foregrounded word or images also leaves the impression why the Mariner is detained out of three wedding guests which creates a semantic sense to the fact that The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a Biblical rhyme. Most of the references have been taken from the Bible the sacred book of Christianity. The digit of three creates a semantic sense that establishes a link of digit three with trinity, the very common concept in Christianity e.g. the holy God as the Holy Father, the holy mother and the holy son (Jesus Christ). The Holy Father (God) is supernatural in his role and work who exists but is invisible. The use of digit has also created a sense that the relation of God, who is superficial, the prophet (Jesus Christ) and humans is in perennial timeline. The use of lexical item 'glittering eye' the deviant use of established norms of language is also prominent stylistic strategy to make impact of religious supernaturalism. Instead of eyes, he uses eye as single eye. As a sensitive reader who knows it very well the use of grammatical deviation, the single lexical item *eye* possess all the potential of religious sensibility e.g. 'The Isocratic Eye' the third eye, having some divine force. The reference has been taken from the bible the glittering eye means a special eye which was granted to the followers of Jesus Christ, who were called as Apostles, with special or third eye they persuaded the people to enter into the Christianity. By the use of grammatical foregrounding the poet has created a semantic sense which establishes a link with religion. By doing so, the poet has created a religious sensibility among the mind of the readers. It is the quality of Coleridge to make a supernatural seem natural to get the specific results in the form of religious sensibilities. The use of lexical item wedding is also a word having religious connotation.

He holds him with his glittering eye

The wedding guest stood still

And listen like a three year child

The Mariner hath his will

The wedding guest sat on the stone

(The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, 14-18)

The implication of foregrounded or deviant elements helps to understand the religious philosophy of Coleridge. The semantic aspects of the poem help to dig out a deeper and broader meaning and also very useful to determine the association of compressed language which leads to more symbolic representation of Mariner's stopping one of three wedding guest with glittering eye (third eye). The graphical deviation foregrounds the word glittering eye so it invites the readers to dig out even a deeper or semantic meanings which sometimes seems a sense of non sense and then by the respondent or readers who have given it a literary sense. The wedding guest who was in hurry and having no time to listen the story of the Mariner was held by a bright eyed Mariner and given a look that the wedding guest was under a magical spell. The use of such supernatural imagery speaks for religious shade spreading over the whole narrative of supernatural events taking place in the poem. The improper use of grammatical items does not only share the semantic meaning but also shows the powerful inclination of poet towards his religion (Christianity). The another interesting thing about this poem is that the whole can be interpreted on the two great laws, the law of two and the law of three which help to manifest the philosophy of Coleridge and also put this idea very clearly that the whole poem has been written in the concept of trinity a very common religious concept. The use of Lexio-syntactic patterns used by the poet in the form of metaphor where he compares the attitude of wedding guest with the three years boy, which also creates a semantic sense. The three years child entering in the third year phase where many vivid changes occur, where he showed his interest in listening and at another of interpretation that the digit 'three' establish some link with trinity. The God, who is supernatural, his relation with Marry and the son who are physical.

Hecan't choose but hear

And thus spake on the Ancient Mariner

The bright eyed Mariner

(The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, 18-20)

The frequent use of mysterious digit three creates a religious effect in the poem. The Coleridge's supernatural as one finds it does not have any fixed or finite character; it is very difficult to decide how much of it merely revolves around subjective illusions or pure hallucination. By touch of supernatural his poetry turns into an indefinite picture of imaginary world or it is an open picture overwhelmed with fertile amazing imaginary nature. In order to make it a convincing and realistic in its nature Coleridge humanizes it. His supernatural is not only blood curdling and hair raising but assumes through the ordinary personality e.g. the Ancient Mariner; a normal human who suffers for committing a murder, an offensive act prohibited in their religion. This offense can be taken in same category as Adam and Eve approached the prohibited plant and did some

act against the will of God. Here the Mariner did sin against the rules of Christianity (God), who is supernatural in his role and in his existence. The poet's philosophy of religion can easily be depicted through the frequent use of supernatural imagery abundantly used in the poem. He symbolically illustrates the religious belief in the poem. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner can easily be seen as the journey of an individual through the stages of its relationship of the individual and religion.

At length did cross an Albatross

Through the fog came it came

As it had been a Christian soul

We healed it in God's name

(The Rime of Ancient Marine , 62-66)

Analyzing the poem at textual level it can be clearly identified as a graphological deviation. At the very start of this stanza the noun an Albatross occurs in bold letters. A typographical deviation reveals the climax of the poem and suggests that the Albatross is the entity around which the plot of the poem revolves. The phrase *Christian soul* has produced a semantic sense where the concept of soul can easily be studied in the religious context. The lexical item soul is supernatural in nature that exists but is invisible. The comparison of Christianity with supernatural image soul has produced here a religious sensibility which is very vivid and can easily be observed. The poem is saturated with religious references and forces till its very end. Keeping in mind the delineation of this analysis only a few lexically phonologically and semantically deviant references to religion have been discussed here. By applying the stylistics tools the poem reflects the different themes imbued in religious color that can be interpreted as a symbol of rational intellect. The supernatural imagery here is mere rhetorical in nature and exposes the relationship between the soul and religion. The use of phrases like hailed it in God's name also reveals the semantic sense that can establish a link with religion. The lexical item hailed can be taken in positive sense which means a warm welcome.

Conclusion

Coleridge can be called as the poet of supernaturalism. His poem The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a remarkable poem which describes the religious theme and to be called as Biblical Rhyme. In this poem the poet exposes the character of Ancient Mariner who has a two different role in a good or bad manner. His poem describes that Nature (God) is more powerful than a man. The study describe that sometime the evil role of one person brings about the destruction of other creatures or humans. For the effective style he has used many Lexio-syntactic patterns with the frequent use of metaphors, similes, paradoxes to depict the religious theme. The research shows that the attitude of poet towards the religion is very positive. For this purpose he has tried to use supernatural imagery or images to create religious sensibility. The supernatural elements have the quality to produce a religious sense. The Mariner becomes sinful by doing some offensive act of killing of a bird that represents the Nature or God. Throughout the research there has been an attempt to understand the phenomenon how supernaturalism creates a religious sensibility in a selected poem of Coleridge The research has indicated the importance of stylistic approach to the understanding of implicit and back grounded notions of an author. Stylistic analysis helps the readers how to know the constituent parts of the literary text and help us to document their operations, but in doing so it must be based on the terminology and methodology of

some other discipline which focus upon language in the real world. These disciplines include semiotics, sociolinguistics and linguistics and also some other disciplines which cover the context and pragmatic purpose of communication. The research comes to the conclusion that through stylistics tools such as foregrounding and its types one can easily reach the closest interpretation of a poem.

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