

## CHAPTER I

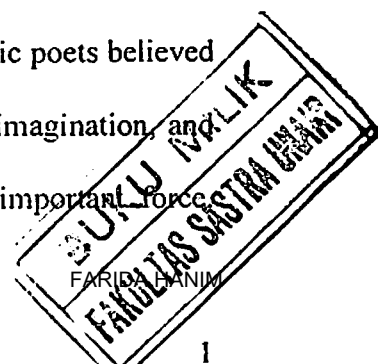
### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

The development of English literature shows indications of the changing taste in the eighteenth century. At that time, poets began to take an interest in the more melancholic aspects of nature, such as death, night, churchyards, etc. We can find the stress on sentimental and imaginative emotion and on loving contemplation of all in all its manifestations. They began to be interested in the charm of nature, in man, especially the oppressed. Their poems are against Rationalism and a reaction against Classicism. For example, James Thomson with his blank verse, *The Season* in which he paints nature's beauties in a general way, Thomas Gray with his most popular poems *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* in which he shows sympathy with the oppressed and the humble in his heroic quatrain, William Cowper with his spiritual wounds experienced in *The Task*, William Collins with his *Ode to the Evening*, and much more. We can say that it is the 'seed' of Romantic Era in English literature, or in other words we call it the Pre Romantic Era (Bakker, 43-45).

Romantic Era lasted from 1789-1832. It was a reaction against Rational, Classical values and a rehabilitation of intuition and emotion. There are a number of important elements in that Era.

First is imagination instead of reason. The Romantic poets believed that truth could only be discovered by intuition, imagination, and symbolism. For them, imagination was the all important force.



Second, Romantic Era escapes from visible reality. Romantic poets fled from the ordinary realities of everyday life. Nature was the key to the mystery of an unseen world. Another important element of Romantic Era is an interest in lowly subjects, the humble and oppressed, in children and animals. The poet shows anti-intellectual attitude, escapes from the realities of civilized urban life. Fourth, the Romantic poets began to describe the particular instead of the general, and the shift from social man to individual one. They believed that the mystery of things should be conveyed through individual and particular expression only. Lastly, the Romantic poetry is marked by the changing form of poetry. It is against the heroic couplet and began to use the spontaneous verse form (51-53).

The Romantic Era can be divided into two generations. The second generation of the poets included Byron, Shelley, and Keats, while the first generation belonged to Blake, Coleridge, Scott, and Wordsworth. Wordsworth is considered as "Nature's Priest", the greatest nature poet in English Literature, the oldest, and the most long-lived of the group.

William Wordsworth was born on April 7, 1770 at Cockermouth in Cumberland. He had been nurtured in the Lake District, where everything had led him to think well of man. His experience convinced him that man was naturally good. To him, nature is a living soul which enters all created things. His praise toward nature gives him poetic inspiration. He focuses his work around the themes of beauty and simplicity in nature. His poems are known to be influential,

because of the emotional and moral responses to nature and simplicity of life. He believed that nature was the most powerful thing that could teach people about life and how to fulfill one's life with happiness and wealth.

To him, nature exerted not only as a religious influence, but a moral force as well, accounting for many of the finer instincts of man's character. All of the living things are belonged to nature with all the power, beauty, and mystery. Even the body of human is natural and is sacred like every other part of nature. Human's minds are expression of their bodies, and everything that exists is part of nature. They should preserve biodiversity and the delicate ecological balances of the planet, not just as a matter of survival, but as a matter of personal fulfillment because nature as pure sensation, as a dramatic background, as a moral force, as a religious sacrament, and as a philosophical consolation in old age (L. Volpe, ed., 153-154).

His emotional and moral responses about nature and simplicity of life are shown in most of his poems, such as in *Tintern Abbey*, he constructs nature as both a healing entity and a teacher or moral guardian. While in his ambitious autobiographical poem, *The Prelude*, he discusses specifically the stages in one's appreciation of nature, from babyhood, through boyhood, to adolescence, young manhood, and maturity.

One of Wordsworth's works which attracts the writer's interest is *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. This poem was composed during his residence at Town-end, Grasmere. The Ode is written in eleven stanzas with frequent shifts in rhyme scheme and rhythm. It describes the memories of childhood before the changing of the world. "Long afterwards, in

1843, he remarked of the poem: ‘Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being.... with a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality’” (Lancashire, online). He attains his fullest realization about memory and imagination, he begins to gain the descriptions of nature, simply draw human characteristics out of their natural presences. His focus toward the use of nature has attracted the writer’s interest in taking *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* as the object of this thesis.

### **B. Statement of the Problem**

In this thesis, the writer would like to discuss the question below:

How is nature presented in the poem and what does it represent?

### **C. Objective of the Study**

This study is intended to know how nature is presented in the poem and what it represents.

### **D. Significance of the Study**

The thesis is expected to be useful for further literary research especially which concerns Wordsworth’s work. The writer hopes that the analysis of the poem may provide an example of the application of the Theory of Pantheism in

poetry. This thesis may also give a contribution to the study of literature especially in analyzing poetry.

### **E. Scope and Limitation**

To avoid a broadening of the analysis, the writer would like to limit the discussion on the poet and his particular work, *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. This may include the poet's life or biography, his way of thinking, his perception of life and nature, and especially the ideas, which become the basis of the writing of Praise of Nature in William Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. The focus of the analysis is the contribution of the ideas that express Praise of Nature.

### **F. Theoretical Background**

This writing is intended to find out how the poem reflects Praise of Nature. In doing so, the writer considers that it is important to discuss the ideas of the poem by using Semiotics approach. The basis of the theory is the sign that is any configuration to which there is conventionalized response. Here, the writer chooses to apply Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics. Peirce's ideas about Semiotics distinguished three types of signs: icon, index, and symbol. Whether a sign belongs to one category or another is dependent upon the nature of its relationship between the sign itself (which he called the referent) and the actual meaning. The writer also uses the theory of Nature-worship Pantheism to interpret

every signs in the poem in which the central belief of this theory is that nature evokes religious feelings of awe and belonging.

### **G. Method of the Study**

The object of this study is William Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*.

In this research, data collecting was undergone by gaining and collecting the important information from printed materials such as books, dictionaries, and also internet. It was focused to find out two kinds of data resources; first, the primary data that is the studied poem. Second are the other sources dealing with the literary approach used in the analysis of the poem.

The analysis in this thesis is done by applying the method of general interpretation. The writer interprets every sign in the poem by using the theory of Nature-worship Pantheism as the framework and the Semiotics theory conceptualized by Peirce as the approach.

### **H. Definition of Key Terms**

**Romanticism** : a literary and artistic movement in Europe toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that sought to assert the validity of subjective experience and to escape from the prevailing subordination of content and feeling to Classical forms; the spirit and attitudes characteristics of Romantic thoughts.

**Pantheism** : the doctrine that this material world is no different from God, that “all (this is) God.” The universes, and all beings in it, are the real manifestation or transformation of God.

**Naturalism** : a position that attempts to explain all phenomena and account for all values by means of strictly natural (as opposed to supernatural) categories.

**Nature-worship**: admiration or love for the whole universe and every created (not man-made) thing.

# **CHAPTER II**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**