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The Unconventional Treatment of Love in the Poem „Always“ by Pablo Neruda

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ABSTRACT

The present paper shows the love from a new point of view as depicted in the poem „Always“ by Pablo Neruda. It is a surprise that the lover in the poem is not jealous of the other men of his beloved for he is very confident about his own dedication towards her. And so, he yields every liberty to the beloved.

Keywords: *Unconventional; Celebration; Possessive; Restriction.*

1.0 Introduction

Love has been considered as one of the most celebrated themes in the literature of any language. Every era has its own new definition of love which is quite contrary to the earlier one. Pablo Neruda, a Chilean poet has done a considerable job on the theme of love. His collection of poems „Twenty Love Poems and a Songs of Despair“ has enjoyed the sale of several million copies and has gone through countless editions. Neruda’s treatment of love is quite new. His straight forward celebration of love and sex has been appreciated due to its unconventional style and uniqueness. He has been called unique in his treatment of love for he has challenged the traditional attitude towards love and has replaced idealism by sensuality and abstraction by concretion.

In the poem „Always“ the poet has defined love quite contrary to the love of conventional model. In the conventional love, the lover cannot tolerate his beloved to be in love with others.

He imposes a lot of restrictions over his beloved. The ideal conventional lover is fully devoted to the beloved and the beloved cannot even think about the other man but Neruda provides the full liberty to the woman. And so, the lover is not jealous with the men of his beloved:-

“Come with a mans
On your shoulders,
Come with a hundred men in your hair,
Come with a thousand men between your
breasts and your feet,

(„Always“, Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair by Pablo Neruda)

The ideal Conventional lover, usually, does not allow his beloved to go to the arms of other man while the lover in „Always“ allows all this to the beloved. He does not seem to be possessive about the beloved. He declares that he has no objection if his beloved comes with other men and he clears his point of view with the help of examples. He asks his beloved to come with thousand men but he assures her not to reject her. It seems as if he wants to say that her indigence in love-act with him cannot spoil his love for her. That is why he has compared his beloved with the river and himself with the sea. If the river carries a lot of garbage with it and mingles in the sea, the sea never becomes dirty. The sea takes the garbage into the depth and never allows it to come over again and the sea takes everything to eternity i.e., time which is the real destination of all and so the lover will accept the lady in any condition:-

“Come like a river
full of drowned men
which flows down to the wild sea,
to the eternal surf, to Time!”

(„Always“, Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair by Pablo Neruda)

Here the lover feels that his beloved will always be pious for him even after being in love with so many men and his love for her is so deep like sea that it can never be decayed. His love is eternal. His love is spiritual and other lovers can touch her lady’s body only and not her soul. Her soul will always be

untouched and she will always be lovable for him. This treatment of love is unconventional. He unceremoniously puts aside all the poetic conventions of virginity and purity.

In the concluding stanza, he gives an invitation to all the lovers of his beloved and permits his beloved to come with all her men. He loves the lady so much that her coming is the supreme reward of love for him and he may compromise at any point for her. He says:-

“Bring them all
to where I am waiting for you;”

(„Always“, Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair by Pablo Neruda)

The lover is waiting for the lady with so much intensity that he does not care of the men who are coming with her. Her love is so valuable for him that he is ready to bear anything.

The lover seems to be very confident. He is not emotionally insecure. He is sure that the physical presence of the other lovers cannot disturb the privacy of his own and his beloved. To consider:-

“we shall always be alone,
we shall always be you and I

alone on earth,
to start our life!”

(„Always“, Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair by Pablo Neruda)

He is sure that the presence of the other men cannot break their intimacy. No one can come in the way of their love. They will always enjoy the privacy because their love is spiritual and physical interference of the mortals cannot kill their joy and with these feelings and dedication, they will start their married life.

In short, the lover is quite contrary to the traditional lovers who are very possessive about their love. The lover in the poem does not care of the physical presence of anybody between them for he loves the lady so much that he feels that none can snatch his beloved from his.

Reference

- [1] Pablo Neruda, „Always“ “Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair, Published December 26th 2006 by Penguin Classics (first published 1924)