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Moments of mystical illumination: Unity, transcendence, and natural ecology in English Romantic poetry

Abstract:

This article delves into the moments of poetic illumination in the late 18th and early 19th-century English Romantic poets. Arising from their deep connection with nature, these instances, present from the precursors to the first and second generations of the Romantic Movement, vividly portray poetic imagination transcending the speaker's self (i.e., ego) to yearn for unity, engaging in a universal consciousness beyond the individual self. Deeply entwined with natural ecology, these moments of oneness resonate with the mystical traditions of both Eastern and Western philosophies, emphasizing the ephemeral self and the eternal universal consciousness accessible during transcendent lucid awareness. Using an Eco-critical lens and employing a psychoanalytical lens based on Carl Jung's collective unconscious, the article illustrates how these moments reflect deeper, universal aspects of the human psyche. It explores how Romantic poetry foreshadows post-humanist ideas by highlighting the interconnectedness of all life forms and rejecting human exceptionalism. By imbuing natural ecology with a sense of pantheistic existence, Romantic poetry assigns to nature an active role in mediating moments of transcendent illumination. The article also examines the implications of recognizing non-human aspects of nature for conserving ecological systems, endangered in the present Anthropocene era.

Keywords: nature, Romantic poetry, ecocriticism, Carl Jung, collective unconscious, psyche, post-humanism, pantheism, transcendence, Anthropocene.

INTRODUCTION

The Romantic period was an important movement in English literature as poets began to explore aspects of nature, spirituality, and human perception in highly emotive, imaginative, and often-mystical terms. The English Romantic poets— Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats—perceived nature as a source of inspiration corresponding to their profound spiritual communion with the environmental settings. Wordsworth, in particular, considered Nature to be a living presence that did not just satisfy our senses but also evoked a spiritual connection between the observer and the outside world **(**Koguchi, 2001; Hubbell, 2010). In contrast, Coleridge saw the mystical aspects of nature and suggested a deeper, more transcendental understanding of the natural world (Cheyne, 2022). Lord Byron, on the other hand, saw Nature as a reflection of mankind and thus an indication of a very close relationship between human nature and the natural world (Whitney, 2022).

Whereas for Shelley nature provides a healing power that refreshes the spirit of man (Ruston & Hoagwood, 2005), for Keats nature was loving and beautiful in its capacity to call forth highly sensuous effects and provide a strong impetus for creativity and imaginative visions (Khan, 2021; Pyle, 2003). For both poets, nature was a source of insight, not only for personal inspiration but also for understanding the human condition and contemplating the connection between humans and nature. Predicated upon their relationship with the natural world, the Romantic poets developed themes in poetry about beauty, mortality, and the

sublime as realized through interaction with and in the presence of nature. In its totality, Romantic poetry conveyed profound emotive and philosophical experiences of moments of illumination and oneness with nature that are of interest to the readers till the present time.

The Romantics aimed to educate and change the behavior of their readers toward taking more care and showing more appreciation for nature, reflecting a growing ecological sensibility. Their works highlighted ecology's interdependence with, and importance to, human culture, emphasizing the profound influence of nature upon human experience. Thus, the mystic vein in Romantic poetry shows the poets' attempts to transcend ordinary experience and reach a higher, deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them (Beyad, & Vafa, 2021; Khan et al., 2023). Romantic poets demonstrated the relationship of all things and the sublimity of the natural world, making it mysterious and inviting for readers to find their true selves in moments of enlightenment. These poets used intensive images and symbolism aimed at awakening feelings and prompting readers to reflect on humanity's connection with nature (Wilson, 2009). They are interested in nature and the place that human beings and spirituality have within it; they want to create a sense of wonder in us, to make us see the world in a new way, and to appreciate the beauty within us and around us.

This article investigates the moments of poetic illumination in English Romantic poetry, exploring how these moments reflect deeper, universal aspects of the human psyche and foreshadow post-humanist ideas by highlighting the interconnectedness of all life forms and rejecting human exceptionalism. The article adopts an ecocritical approach mediated through the psychoanalytical lens of Carl Jung's insightful ideas about the nature and function of the collective unconscious, facilitating common experiences across geographical, cultural, and personal differences. Based on an analysis of selected poems of Blake, Wordsworth, and Keats, analysis in the current article shows that moments of mystical illumination in Romantic poetry transcend individual experiences and touch on broader, universal themes. Ultimately, this study aims to shed light on the significance of natural ecology and its role in fostering profound cosmic awareness, as evident in the works of various Romantic poets. In specific terms, the article seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do English Romantic poets employ nature as a channel for exploring deeper truths about the self and the universe, particularly through moments of poetic illumination?
2. In what ways do the poetic techniques and themes used by Romantic poets reflect their understanding of the natural world and their quest for unity with the divine?
3. How does the treatment of nature in Romantic poetry contribute to our understanding of the interconnectedness between human nature and ecology?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of mystical illumination in Romantic poetry reflects the poet's profound connection to the natural world and their quest for unity with the divine. According to

Teasdale (2001), mystics and poets share a common goal of expressing intangible experiences through language, seeking to transcend the limitations of everyday perception and articulate the ineffable aspects of existence. This quest for transcendence is evident in the works of Romantic poets such as William Blake, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who often employed nature as a channel for exploring deeper truths about the self and the universe. Wordsworth, in poems like "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey," reflects on the transformative power of nature, describing moments of sublime illumination where the boundaries between the self and the natural world blur (Rawes, 2007). Analogously, according to O'Connell (2006), the visionary approach of Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan" is defined by its attempt to communicate a dream-like composing process of poetry in an altered state, demonstrating the artistic act in relation to the mystical experience. Regarding Blake's integration of visionary art and poetry as in the Songs of Innocence and Experience, McQuail, (2000) argues that it exemplifies this aspect of mystical illumination in which the poetic speaker partakes in the totality of existence through transcendent imaginative participation. A similar, impulse emerged during the Victorian age in John Ruskin and William Morris, who strove to reunite enigmatic sense and art against the materialism brought by industrialization.

In the context of Islamic tradition, mystical illumination was one of the central preoccupations, especially in the tradition of Sufism and Islamic philosophy. For example, al-Ghazali—one of the prominent Islamic scholars and poets—dealt with the concept of "mystical unveiling" (kashf) as a way to reach spiritual enlightenment and oneness with the divine (Gianotti, 2001). Poetic production abounds within the works of mystical poets such as Ibn al-Farid and Ibn Arabi from the Mamluk era, using feminine imagery, wine, and nature used to depict divine love and the search for spiritual union. Such a use of symbolism invites readers to find the secret truths in the verses. According to Rigby (2016), rejecting the empirical philosophy of the eighteenth century, Romantic poetry builds on an alchemical understanding of the world and the creative process as a means of achieving oneness and visionary enlightenment. This is evidenced, for instance, in Coleridge's works which used alchemical symbols to find out how the power of imagination can reveal deeper truths about reality. The use of mystical illumination in Romantic poetry is indicative of a profound desire to transcend the limitation of ordinary experience and gain access to a higher, deeper understanding of self and the universe. The Romantic poets wanted, through their poetry, to speak to the oneness of all things, beautiful and mysterious natural phenomena, and invite the reader to a journey of self-discovery and spiritual oneness with creation around them.

The application of a psychoanalytical lens, especially from the point of view of Carl Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, gives a robust theoretical foundation for the explanation for moments of poetic enlightenment in English Romantic poetry (Faflak, 2009). Jung (1991; 2014) said that the collective unconscious is an accumulated deposit of shared, inherited memories and experiences affecting the behavior and perceptions of an individual. These are shared archetypes that are manifest across cultures and individuals vastly separated from each other in spacial or temporal terms. According to Dawson (2008), when applied to Romantic poetry, a moment of poetic enlightenment could therefore reflect not only feelings or a personal experience but something more profound and universal in the

human psyche, shared across cultures and time. These moments illuminate and bring to the empirical world in symbolic forms the archetypal structures of the psyche that are deep-seated fundamental aspects of the psyche such as the search for meaning, the fear of death, or the desire to feel transcendent reality beyond the physical mundane existence (Jung, 1966).

In considering how Romantic poets draw on the collective unconscious in their writing, we can gain an understanding of the universal themes and symbols that are rooted in their poetry. For instance, Wordsworth's reflection on nature's remarkable beauty in "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" can be construed to represent the collective human experience of being in awe and wonderment in the presence of nature. Similarly, the exploration of mystery and fantasy in "Kubla Khan" has significance for the human race fascinated by the unknown and the unconscious. Through a psychoanalytical approach, we can understand how Romantic poets build on the collective unconscious latent in the human psyche to fashion works that would stand the test of time (Khan et al., 2023; Faflak, 2009).

Romantic poetry, with its emphasis on the shared existence of all living forms, is an antecedent of the essential post-humanist ideas that became prevalent in the last century in the face of increasing ecological challenges in the Anthropocene age. According to Susen (2022), post-humanism, in general terms, questions human exceptionalism, which places humans above and outside nature. Post-humanism stresses that human beings are bound to and dependent upon the natural world (Badmington, 2003). This challenging of human exceptionalism by Romantic poetry can be seen as an early enunciation of the more inclusive view of nature by post-humanist thought. For example, in Wordsworth's poetry, nature is often portrayed as having its own voice and agency, capable of influencing human thoughts and emotions. Romantic poetry accentuates the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living things, challenging the often taken-for-granted superiority and centrality of humans and fostering a more amiable, respectful attitude towards nature.

METHODOLOGY

The current study employs a qualitative analysis of content in examining selected poems by William Blake, William Wordsworth, and John Keats, specifically concentrating on key excerpts regarding moments of transcendence and mystical unity with nature. The poems are selected based on their relevance to the current investigation regarding the role and essence of poetic illumination in connection with the natural world. The analysis begins with the selection of the relevant poems, analyzes the aspects of the moments of visionary poetic transcendence, and examines how these moments mediate a unification of the human and non-human aspects of nature, i.e. between the poetic speaker and the non-human aspect of nature that provides impetus for this unification. These passages are then read closely to tease out themes, symbols, and metaphors that contribute to the mystical unity and transcendence depicted. The close reading of the literary texts is based upon considerations of themes, imagery, metaphors, assonance/dissonance, and other figures of speech used as poetic devices (Brummett, 2018; Liamputtong, 2009).

In terms of theoretical orientation, the current study is grounded on the framework of Ecocriticism which places this paper within the broader discourse around the function and depiction of nature in literary texts (Mishra, 2016; Oppermann, 2006). It also draws on psychoanalytic theory, especially Carl Jung's concept of a collective unconscious, in discussing how such moments of transcendence reflect deeper universal aspects of the human psyche (Jung, 1991; 2014). The analysis situates Romantic poetic production within the larger discourse of the significance of preserving and promoting the ecological health of our planet not from an anthropocentric perspective only, in which nature is seen to be of relevance to humans and that accords it importance, but, more importantly, nature being the most important part of our global ecology for its own sake. Complementarily, the analysis explores moments of oneness with nature in terms of their significance for holistic psychic health and a balanced nurturing of the human psyche when it is in accord with nature and keeps an active communion with it. Overall, this analysis presents a thorough study of moments of poetic illumination in the chosen poems that affirm the Romantic poets' profound bonds with nature and their insight into the salience of maintaining harmony between nature and the inner human experience of life.

ANALYSIS

"The Tyger," by William Blake, is a contemplative poem in respect to the mysteries of the nature of the world—a world of amazing beauty, power, and paradoxes. Shown in bright images and vivid symbolism, the poem contemplates creation, divine presence, and the sublime, stimulating the reader to contemplate his or her place in the universe. It starts with the speaker being in awe of the Tyger, as it is "burning bright" in the "forests of the night." These very first words create an overwhelming feeling of awe, making the Tyger a symbol of beauty and danger. Structured in the form of a series of rhetorical questions, the poem asks what "immortal hand or eye" could have created such a creature with its "fearful symmetry" that has a ferocious beauty, a source of awe, danger, and visual appeal:

> Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
> In the forests of the night;
> What immortal hand or eye,
> Could frame thy fearful symmetry?
>
> In what distant deeps or skies.
> Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
> On what wings dare he aspire?
> What the hand, dare seize the fire? (Lines 1-8)

All these questions indicate the surprise and amazement of the speaker at the creation of the Tyger, which makes one believe that it is not any animal but a divine piece of art. The term “immortal” seems to imply that the process of Tyger’s creation is simply impossible for human imagination; it is something done by a transcendent being, a universal force, or cosmic conscience. The speaker continues to be surprised by the creation of the Tyger and the creator’s nature. A few lines below, the questions become more intimate, and the speaker

presents these images: “And what shoulder, & what art. Could twist the sinews of thy heart?” As the poem unfolds, the speaker becomes even more awestruck by the creature’s creation and asks himself about the creator and the creation process. In other words, by asking “what immortal hand or eye” could frame where the Tyger’s dreadful hand was, the speaker wonders who or what universal forces have made the Tyger.

The poem captures a sense of mystery and wonder about the creation of the Tyger, as the speaker struggles to grasp the divine or cosmic power behind nature’s most enigmatic creations. The repetitive questions and vivid imagery create a sense of astonishment and awe, as the speaker questions and approaches the mystery of the Tyger with wonder and humility. “The Tyger” may be read as a poem that examines the themes of revelation of paradoxical aspects of nature and the transformative power of the divine presence in nature, as the speaker tries to understand the divine or cosmic forces that guide nature. Demonstrating the mystical paradoxical nature of creation, the Tiger is both a beautiful creature and a ferocious hunter. The poem stresses this as a point of convergence and unification for human perception because nature cannot be grasped in its totality but can be cherished as a distinct entity that has its own special existence, although often perplexing and beyond human understanding. The poem exalts in a mystical participation in the essence of creation, an essence that is at the same time both illuminating and perplexing for the human understanding of the poetic speaker.

“The Lamb” by William Blake, on the contrary, is a poem that embodies the innocence and purity of a lamb, representing it as evidence of divine power in the world. At the very beginning of the poem, the speaker addresses the lamb directly, asking the question of who made it. Once again, as in the previous poem, the speaker puts a rhetorical question about who might be the creator of the lamb and then goes on to answer it in terms of hints about the identity of the creator. The lamb is characterized as a gentle and innocent creature, which symbolizes the quality of innocence and good. In other words, the lamb can be understood as the purity of the Lord. For example, “He is called by thy name, For He calls Himself a Lamb.” This representation of the lamb as the power gives the poem a theme of purity of the opposite appearance of divinity.

> Little Lamb, who made thee?
> Dost thou know who made thee,
> Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
> By the stream and o'er the mead;
> Gave thee clothing of delight,
> Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
> Gave thee such a tender voice,
> Making all the vales rejoice?
> Little Lamb, who made thee?
> Dost thou know who made thee? (Lines 1-10)

The previous poem, “The Tyger,” is focused on the contrastive dark and beautiful aspects of nature and presents the tiger as the symbol of power, wild traits, and impressive beauty. The poem questions both the creativeness of divine powers and the coexistence of innocence and terror in the world. The tiger is described as a beautiful creature that can cause

tremendous pain but is also majestic in its beauty and the terror that it inspires. By juxtaposing the lamb and the tiger, the author shows a central duality in nature of existence and tells that terror should also exist, and, in terms of this poem, it shares the same importance with innocence. It shows the universe as a mysterious world, full of uncertainty and contradiction, separating heaven and earth. "The Lamb" and "The Tyger" are two parallel poems depicting the divine and mysterious aspects of creation in nature. In "The Lamb," the poet describes God's heaven-bound creatures in perfect innocence, joy, meekness, and mildness, while the Tyger symbolizes a powerful and terrifying nature that shrouds its intentions in secrecy and darkness. Both poems evoke a complex and majestic image of the universe where the speaker partakes in the essence of existence in moments of illumination and oneness with the natural world.

William Wordsworth's poem "Tintern Abbey" narrates the subjective experience of the connection between the human and natural world, showing how being is one and that nature can affect the human mind and feelings. The author conveys his vision of nature as a comforting and inspiring place wherein an individual can find solace and spiritual rekindling through reliving past experiences refreshed by the site of the abbey that he visited several years ago. Wordsworth reflects on his past walks in Tintern Abbey when he was young when nature was an inexhaustible source of elation and pleasant sensations for him. The beauty of nature gave him "an appetite; a feeling and a love, / That had no need of a remoter charm, / By thought supplied, nor any interest / Unborrowed from the eye". With this passage, the poet shows that for him, nature is not just the world surrounding him but an almost spiritual experience that cannot be perceived only with the senses.

Wordsworth considered nature, and being in constant touch with it, as a necessary part of a holistic human existence. At the time of composing "Tintern Abbey," he is no longer a carefree young man but a mature person who finds an epiphany and rebirth of his soul as he comes into contact with the serene natural beauty of this ancient abbey.

> For I have learned
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue.—And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. (Lines 90-104)

As Wordsworth reflects on his past experiences in relation to the abbey, he notes how his perception of nature has evolved. He no longer sees nature "as in the hour / Of thoughtless

youth," but rather as a source of profound insight and spiritual awakening. He describes hearing "the still sad music of humanity" in nature, suggesting a deep empathy and connection with the human experience. Wordsworth goes on to describe a sense of oneness with nature, feeling "a presence that disturbs me with the joy / Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime / Of something far more deeply interfused." This highlights Wordsworth's belief in a divine presence in nature, something that is both immanent and transcendent, existing in the light of the sun, the ocean, the air, and the mind of man. This collective understanding of the world and humans compels the reader to think of creation as a totality not separate entities like animate, inanimate aspects of nature or human and non-human. This sense of oneness with nature leads Wordsworth to declare, "Therefore am I still / A lover of the meadows and the woods / And mountains; and of all that we behold / From this green earth; of all the mighty world / Of eye, and ear."

By comparing Tintern Abbey with another poem by his contemporary poet William Blake, The Tyger, one can see how Romantic poets of this era constructed nature as an enigmatic existence full of complexity, opposites, and contradiction, needing to be understood as a manifestation of a transcendent unity and preserved for its own purpose. Thus, while The Tyger investigates the darker, more mysterious elements of natural phenomena, Tintern Abbey looks to the other side of the coin and celebrates the fabulous declarations of its beauty and peacefulness: just like both of these elements are representative of the same fundamental truths, so do these two authors regard them as essential for the nature of man. “Tintern Abbey” is a moving tribute to the beauty and importance of nature and identifies it as a source of spiritual awakening and transcendent experience.

Finally, the passage of time is also one of the crucial themes of the poem. After five years, upon returning to Tintern Abbey, Wordsworth reflects on how he and the landscape changed during that time. Thus, the abbey serves as a symbol of nature’s continuity and its impact on human life. While nature seems to stand still, human perception, body, and affairs are in a constant state of flux and change to which nature provides a serene and compassionate background. At the same time, the poet's focus on time also refers to his own experiences as he nostalgically remembers his previous visits to the abbey. In this way, a sense of awe and wonder in the face of nature is critical to Wordsworth's poetic vision. He vividly portrays the abbey and the surrounding landscape as beautiful, grand, and sublime. However, nature is not only a physical entity for the poet but also a living force, a transcendent presence, and a source of inspiration and spiritual enlightenment. As a result, Wordsworth indicates that nature becomes a way to comprehend oneself and the world, attaining a sense of the interconnected continuum and unity of existence in all its living and non-living forms.

Keats’ “Ode to a Nightingale” instantiates a moment of visionary flight, a singularity of oneness with the bird and, through her, with nature in general. The speaker’s experience of being one with the nightingale represents a more profound insight, where human and non-human nature merge into one: “Away! away! for I will fly to thee,/Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,/But on the viewless wings of Poesy”. Showing negative capability through self-negation, the speaker reveals his desire to overcome his corporeal nature, becoming one with

the bird and seeing reality from its standpoint. The experience of unity with the nightingale implies unity with nature as a whole, in which human and non-human aspects are not divided in a moment of visionary participation with the world around the speaker. Thus, the speaker implies that living beings, such as humans and birds, actually have a common soul, a collective unconscious, which transcends their identities. The bird, although mortal in its individual manifestation, is called immortal in its essence as a species and a producer of heavenly music that has connected generations upon generations of people with their inner selves and with the outer world:

> Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
> No hungry generations tread thee down;
> The voice I hear this passing night was heard
> In ancient days by emperor and clown: (Lines, 61-64)

In a visionary moment of oneness with the common unconscious (or universal consciousness), space and time are negated, making it difficult for the sensory perceptions to keep track of day-to-day "reality". This point is underscored by the speaker's lack of assurance about whether he is awake or asleep: "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?". The speaker's lack of ability to understand where he is shows the intoxicating and fleeting experience of transcendence, outside the fabric of space and time. By going beyond his ego self, the speaker makes the case for preserving and conserving what is valuable to humankind. The beauty and transcendence of the natural world, which allowed the poet to go beyond his ego self and partake in the collective consciousness of all beings in the universe, are examples of the mutable transcendent spirit.

Finally, "Ode to a Nightingale" is a strong ode to the beauty and transcendence of nature. Keats's poem captures the speaker's moment of visionary oneness with the nightingale, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all existence and the need to treat nature as a natural manifestation of a unifying common essence in the universe. On the other hand, he emphasizes the fleeting nature of mystical illumination and unity of being that are enthralling but also transient, real but rare, sweet and intoxicating but served to the visionary minds in small potions. Through the poem, he makes us aware of the importance of the continuity of nature's existence by considering the value of all existence. Furthermore, Keats urges us as readers to recognize and embrace the present moment by being conscious of its presence and relish in the beauty of the here and now. Through conscious awareness of and introspective participation in the experience of nature, we can remain cognizant of the grand scheme of nature (both living and non-living) and all creation fit together in a web of oneness and transcendent interconnection.

CONCLUSION

Focusing on William Blake, William Wordsworth, and John Keats' poetic works, this article examined moments of poetic illumination in English Romantic poetry exemplifying the indissoluble connection between the human and nature, which suspends the isolating narrowness of self. Such moments allow the poets to dissolve their finite selves and seek unity with the universal consciousness. The analysis showed that the Romantic poets deploy vivid imagery and symbolism in presenting nature as a source of mystical illumination, and they

invite the readers to connect these images to their own experience and meditate on their place in the cosmos. Relatedly, Avis (2013) laments the modern culture's aversion to the symbolic aspects of existence and complains that they are often dismissed as 'a mere metaphor', 'only symbolic', and 'just a myth', whereas, in essence, these are key means of understanding and experiencing oneness with the divine presence and our collective unconscious. Avis terms the romantic poetic approach of Blake, Wordsworth, Keats, and others as an "alternative tradition" that demonstrates that we can draw on "non-theological disciplines from literature to philosophy of science, to show us that God is appropriately likened to an artist or poet and that the greatest truths are expressed in an imaginative form" (p. 39).

More broadly, the article's findings show that in asserting the active role of nature in mediating such transcendent moments, Romantic poetry anticipates post-humanist perspectives in rejecting the human place above all life forms and emphasizing the interconnectedness of all living beings. The Romantic poets did not share an anthropocentric view of nature; rather, they were focused on the non-human. This view is critical for ensuring the conservation and protection of ecological systems, especially given the reality of the Anthropocene era and the result of large-scale human impacts on the natural world. This connects with McLane (2000) who analyzed the crosscurrents and mutual influences between Romantic poetry and the human sciences of the times. He saw that the Romantics explored the possibilities and limits of human beings, language, and the potential of our species to live in harmony with the totality of ecological existence. According to McLane, these poets internalized and transformed key ideas about imagination, perfectibility, and immortality that were of current importance in their time and reformulated them in aesthetically rich and emotively evocative language that allows readers to live a sense of oneness with the ecological world and creation at large.

The analysis in this article underscores the deep connection between the natural outer world and the human psyche, as reflected in moments of joy derived from visionary oneness with the natural world. Moments of poetic enlightenment perceived through the lens of the collective unconscious are illustrative of some universal realms of human experience, such as the quest for meaning, fear of death, and the aspiration to transcend the empirical world of being. Building on Jung's theories around the nature and role of the collective unconscious (Jung, 1991; 2014), Daniels (2021) illustrates through his empirical psychological studies that human consciousness has altered states and processes to experience a deeper sense of who they are and what is the essence of their connectedness to nature and spiritual dimension. Unlike his mentor Sigmund Freud who was interested in exploring pathological aspects of the psyche, Carl Jung explored dreams, mythology, and literature seeking to uncover universal patterns of the human psyche that are manifest across distant places and different times (Jung, 2012). The moments of poetic illumination analyzed in the current study indicate that accessing the latent liminal potentiality of the personal and collective unconscious through nature not only mediates creativity and psychological development but also makes visible natural ecology a distinct entity that is valuable for its own sake irrespective of any anthropocentric point of reference. In essence, Romantic poetry is an excellent reminder of

the need to foster a greater sense of respect and appreciation of all entities in an interconnected world of human and non-human aspects of nature.

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