

## Supernatural elements in Ancient Mariner

Ancient Mariner is a romantic poem. Besides other romantic traits, it is enriched with the most natural treatment of supernaturals. The term Supernatural, denotes events or beings which are above the order of nature and beyond the ordinary laws of cause and effect. The events of the poem are natural, but behind them lies a supernatural world. In the middle ages Supernatural powers were considered to be integral parts of life and literature. They were dreaded and powerful enough to control human action. The Christian saints presented them as the holy truth. Even the Elizabethans showed the same attitude and Shakespeare gave them human treatment. Spenser opened the Wicked gate with his magic key and the readers found themselves in the fairy land Milton transported his readers to another world. But, Coleridge, unlike his predecessors, makes us visualise miracles and mystic light, while standing on the solid earth.

On the whole, the atmosphere of the Ancient Mariner is mysterious, but it looks credible. The description of Nature human touches, interposition of the wedding guest and the picture of the Return journey produce an effect of probability. The pivot of the poem is the Cardinal belief about Sin, Suffering and Forgiveness. The Mariner commits a sin by his wanton killing of Albatross, a bird that loves him. The Polar Spirit punishes him to suffer from the agonies of loneliness. At last he is forgiven and he teaches the necessity of love to all creatures.

Coleridge's treatment of Supernaturals is highly refined and subjective. It does not embody coarseness, crudeness and objectivity of his predecessors. It is above a delight in terror and goes to the level of purposive symbolism. The spiritual powers are made to work as agencies, through which vengeance, justice and mercy function. The two voices answer to justice and mercy. The effect of these spiritual forces on Mariner's soul has psychological values. It is not seen with the eyes. It is felt by mind.



conveyed by the terror it excites in the mind of the beholders.

"I moved my lips - the pilot shrieked  
And fell down in a fit."

Through out the poem supernaturalism is quite suggestive, subtle and intuitive. The reader is often left to infer himself what he understands by a supernatural agency or element. The fusion of the natural and supernatural imparts reality to the events and raises us upto the sublimity of an ethereal terror that enchants rather than repels. The natural elements are at their full play with occasional exhibitions of supernatural activities.

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"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
The Moon was at its side  
like waters shot from some high crag.

The Sun rises its natural course across the sky:-

"The Sun came up upon the left  
out of the Dea came he!"

Coleridge's Supernaturalism does not have any definite or fixed character. It cannot be said how much is real and how much is merely a subjective illusion. We cannot say that the scenes described by the Mariner are not the product of his heated brain. It is quite indefinite and uncertain. Coleridge's use of the occult force is a novelty in the poetic Supernaturalism. The wedding guest is held by the glittering eyes of the Mariner and is compelled to listen to his tale:-

"He holds him with his glittering eye  
The wedding guest stood still."

In order to make his Supernaturalism realistic and convincing, Coleridge humanises it. It does not appear in the hair-raising forms, but assumes human personality. It conveys morals for the normal every day human life.

Thus, we see that 'The Ancient Mariner' is full of mystery and richness of mental states. Coleridge takes the

the marvellous not for the sake of thrill or excitement, but for the sense of mystery that <sup>is</sup> awakened in the mind. Really, Coleridge has made an epoch in the Poetry of Supernatural. =

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