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Mr.Harrison

Honors English 3

Fireside Poets Essay

Romanticism is a powerful and real source of feeling in poetry. Many authors suggest different ideas of Romanticism but to me, one author stands out, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Through "The Village Blacksmith", Longfellow shows his interpret of romanticism. Longfellow elegantly provides a man who has lost, but hasn't given up as a person. What's more romantic than a man who lost the love of his life, but carried on for his children? Longfellow best reflects the major romantic themes of love of nature, optimism, and individuality.

Through nature is beauty, and with beauty there is pain. Nature is unchanging, and was created to be appreciated. In "The Village Blacksmith", Longfellow starts off his poem by showing the location of the certain blacksmith. When he says, "Under a spreading chestnut-tree, The village smithy stands"(1-2), it's showing where the blacksmith is. It's almost showing that the blacksmith is big compared to the tree, which is compared to the village. Longfellow also shows nature through death. In nature, death is inevitable, and it's something everyone will one day have to deal with. When he says "How in the grave she lies;And with his hard, rough hand he wipes A tear out of his eyes."(34-36), I believe this coincides with nature because of the subject of death. It's showing that as big as a man can be, everyone still has a soft side.

Being optimistic can come with the trait of being self reliant. The village blacksmith is extremely optimistic, everyday life for him is self reliant. When Longfellow says "His brow is wet with honest sweat, He earns whate'er he can, And looks the whole world in the face, For he owes not any man."(9-12), it shows how hardworking he is. The blacksmith is earning as much money as possible to provide his family with a good life, looking past the heart break that was still with him everyday. Longfellow also shows optimism when he says, "Toiling,--rejoicing,--sorrowing, Onward through life he goes"(37-38), shows that with all of the everyday feeling of heartbreak, and sorrow he feels, he gets through, and continues with his life. Optimism for the blacksmith is shown mostly through his work, and love for his family.

Being an individual makes people who they are. Without individualism everyone would be the same. The village blacksmith in particular is quite an individual, he's huge, yet in a way so gentle. When Longfellow says "The smith, a mighty man is he, With large and sinewy hands; And the muscles of his brawny arms Are strong as iron bands."(3-6), shows that the blacksmith was a big man, with big hands. He definitely wasn't a small guy, that individualized him. Longfellow also says "Something attempted, something done, Has earned a night's repose."(41-42), shows that the blacksmith tried new things, and succeeded in some. From all the days and nights he spent working and trying to provide for his family, he's earned a night to take a break, he's outdone himself and deserves it.

In conclusion Longfellow depicts romanticism through "The Village Blacksmith". Through nature, optimism, and individuality, Longfellow best reflects major romantic themes. In poetry there are poets who get in depth with feeling better than others. Romantic writers like Longfellow is a great example of an author who adds feeling to their poetry. Feeling is an important factor in romanticism, without it it's just a regular everyday poem. That's why feeling and Romance are so important in romanticism. Romanticism had a short period in history, but it for sure left its mark on the world.

Nature

"Under a spreading chestnut-tree, The village smithy stands"

'How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes A tear out of his eyes."

Optimism

"His brow is wet with honest sweat, He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face, For he owes not any man."

"Toiling,--rejoicing,--sorrowing, Onward through life he goes"

Individualism

"The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms Are strong as iron bands."

"Something attempted, something done, Has earned a night's repose."